

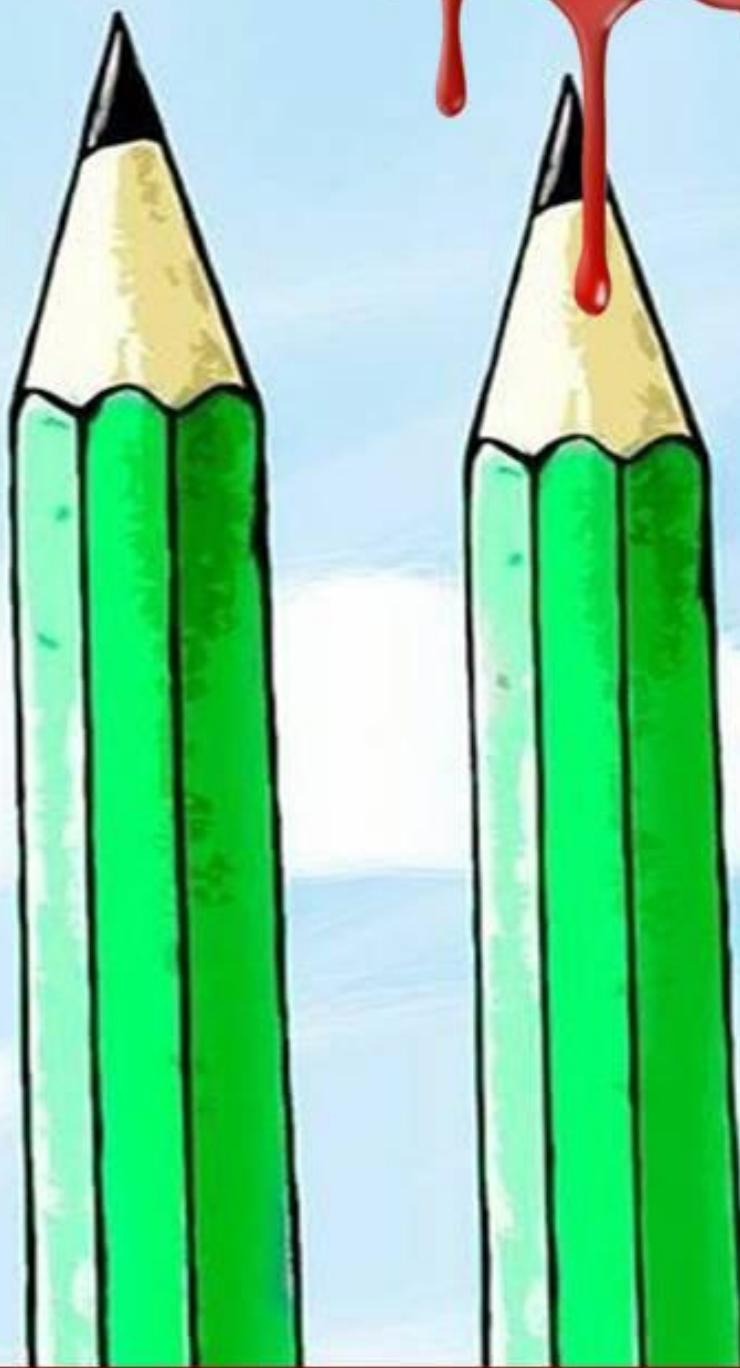
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Why won't Hamas label Islamic State as terrorists?

Source: <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2014/12/hamas-islamic-state-gaza-terrorist-attacks.html#>



Palestinian members of Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades, the armed wing of Hamas, pray before a military parade marking the 27th anniversary of Hamas' founding, in Gaza City, Dec. 14, 2014. (photo by REUTERS/Mohammed Salem)

The first clash between Hamas and Islamic extremist groups occurred in August 2009, before the emergence of the Islamic State (IS). Back then, the security forces affiliated with Hamas stormed into the Ibn Taymiyah Mosque and killed Abdul Latif Moussa and 16 of his followers, following his declaration of the "Islamic Emirate in Jerusalem." Hamas fought against extremism, bombed the mosque and killed those espousing the same Islamic ideology.

Five years later and the threat of Islamic extremism has emerged in the Gaza Strip once again. It was not long before IS announced its presence in Gaza on Nov. 2. Shortly after, two consecutive blasts rocked the French Cultural Center (photo) and the homes of Fatah activists during the past three months. A statement made in the name of IS claimed responsibility for the cultural center's blasts. However, Hamas has yet to issue a statement condemning the group and has yet to denounce terrorism.

Hamas leader Ahmed Youssef told Al-Monitor, "There is no proof that IS is present in Gaza.

Why would we condemn IS and the Salafist movement, when there is nothing to prove their involvement in the explosions? However, should it turn out that IS was actually behind the blasts, we will certainly condemn it."

Hamas spokesman Sami Abu Zuhri justified Hamas' lack of condemnation, saying, "There is no definition of terrorism for us to denounce its acts. It is a term used by many countries for political purposes."

Abu Zuhri told Al-Monitor that there is no organization operating in the name of IS in Gaza. "A few young people are influenced by



this ideology, as many Arabs and Muslims have developed a deep

2

sense of injustice at the hands of international parties," he said.

Abu Zuhri stressed that Hamas is moderate and does not believe in any extremist ideology, yet it is not hostile toward those that did not offend it. The problem does not lie in espousing different ideologies, but rather in about those who try to take the law into their own hands. "We judge the credibility of any organization by the extent of its effort to face the occupation forces," he added.

Asked whether Hamas sees IS as an extremist group, Abu Zuhri said, "Hamas is responsible for the Palestinian arena and will not take any stance toward any other non-Palestinian group, as we believe that this ought to be dealt with in the concerned countries."

The change in Hamas' stance raises many questions. While a few years ago it fought against terrorism, today it is reluctant to take any stance. In this context, Youssef said, "We fought an insurgency at the time. We did not claim to fight terrorism."

Al-Monitor managed to reach one of the security officers who participated in the attack on the Ibn Taymiyyah Mosque. The source spoke on condition of anonymity, given it is a matter of great sensitivity. "We didn't have any problem with them [Salafist jihadists] as a group upholding a certain ideology. However, when they started to go out wearing explosive belts, claiming that the people and the government of Hamas are infidels, it became our duty to stop them," he said.

"Abu Ibrahim Al-Souri [a Palestinian mujahed from Gaza] was behind the incitement. He influenced a group of young people and convinced Moussa to declare the emirate, although he was well aware that the latter was not involved in politics. We tried to prevent Moussa from declaring the emirate in his speech, but he did not heed our warnings and threatened us with explosive belts, and we all know how it ended," he added.

The source said that the situation remained tense with the Salafist groups until clerics from Kuwait and Qatar visited the Gaza Strip in May 2013 to mediate on behalf of them, provided that they would not cause any distress in civil society or organize groups based on al-Qaeda's ideology.

"Should any Salafist group, whether IS or any other organization, declare the caliphate in Gaza, we will strike with an iron fist," the security officer said. He stressed that during his

recent meeting with one Salafist leader, the latter said that Salafists support IS, but they will not declare it in the Gaza Strip as they do not wish to clash with Hamas.

As for Hamas' decision not to condemn IS — although it claimed responsibility for the bombing that occurred in Gaza — the security officer said, "There is a decision not to take any stance toward IS. We are all Islamists, and it is ideologically difficult for us to condemn them as terrorists. We are accused of the same by the West and some Arab countries," stressing that they will never join the US alliance, even in the media discourse.

If condemning IS is the current "trend" today, why does Hamas not follow suit and get the blessing of Egypt, which is closing the Rafah crossing under the pretext of extremist groups in Gaza, as 1.8 million citizens are besieged in the Gaza Strip?

"We wish stability for Egypt and we are not involved in what is happening there. We will not allow anyone to drag us into the domestic Egyptian situation. However, we are committed to the stability of all Arab countries and we condemn all crimes against innocent people at the hands of any party," Abu Zuhri said.

Political analyst Hani Habib told Al-Monitor, "Hamas will not condemn terrorism as there is no clear definition of terrorism agreed upon internationally. Therefore, Hamas as well as other groups, are reluctant to generalize such a concept, which may include forces fighting for just causes."

Youssef, who spent most of his life in the United States, believes that not everyone who takes up arms to fight for just causes is a terrorist. He said that Hamas does not use these Western terms, "The US used to call the Afghans who fought the Soviet Union mujahideen, but when they started fighting against America, they became terrorists."

He also said that if the insurgency in Syria and Iraq is seen as terror, based on the killings taking place there, then the United States and Israel, which have killed thousands of innocent people, ought to be condemned as well. "Nevertheless, we condemn all acts that fall outside the context of the international law and Islamic teachings," he added.

Only time will have answers to all the questions in the Gaza Strip. The dramatic turn of events have changed the situation in Gaza. Indeed, after being ruled by



authorities that uphold security and safety in Gaza for seven years, people are awaiting the results of the investigation committees in more

than seven bombings, and wondering if terror has come to the Gaza Strip.

Radicalization and the lone wolf: what we do and don't know

By Anne Aly

Source: <http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20141219-radicalization-and-the-lone-wolf-what-we-do-and-don-t-know>

Dec 19, 2014 – Even with the growing body of empirical research contributing to understanding radicalization, cases such as that of Man Haron Monis raise questions about whether individual actors, known as "lone wolves," are terrorists, violent extremists, radicals, or simply lone gun men. Contrary to popular belief, ideology and religion play a less important role in radicalization. Current research indicates that the emotional appeal to personal identity and group solidarity are far more significant factors in radicalization. What recent lone-wolf cases — Man Haron Monis in Sydney, Canadian Michael Zehaf-Bibeau, Anders Breivik in Norway, and Mohammed Merah in France — tell us is that, unlike the strategic model of terrorism as a rational choice to carry out acts of violence in the name of a cause, these modern-day lone-wolf terrorists may be more like lone gunmen than terrorists. The events of the Sydney siege this week evolved amid a torrent of speculation and theorizing about the motivations and intent of the hostage-taker Man Haron Monis. Some media reporting during the Sydney siege even sought to compare the incident to America's 9/11 and the London bombings in 2005. The fact Monis forced his hostages to raise the flag bearing the Islamic testimony of faith certainly suggested that he may have been a radicalized violent extremist acting with a political or ideological motive.

The process of radicalization

Violent extremism describes a situation in which the extreme belief in a social, political, or ideological cause is coupled with a belief that violence is necessary and justified as a means to further that cause. Very few extremists actually become radicalized to the operational phase where they carry out acts of violence — but those that do can perpetrate horrendous crimes in the name of their adopted cause. Terrorism is a form of violent extremism. Although there is no universally agreed upon

definition of terrorism, most definitions include elements of violence or the threat of violence carried out for the purpose of spreading fear (or terror) and coercing governments and societies.

There is still much we do not know about the exact nature of radicalization to violent extremism. That is because there is no singular profile to explain who becomes a violent extremist and why. Most theories or models of radicalization concur that it is a process, not necessarily linear, by which an individual progresses through a mild interest in a political, social or ideological cause to accepting the use of violence as a valid means of furthering that cause.

The factors that result in radicalization are complex and varied. They include individual psychology, personal and group identity, demographics, individual circumstances, and contact with radicalizing settings or influences, including personal contact with recruiters or influential people.

What about the Internet?

Research suggests that the Internet plays some role in radicalization though assumptions about the role of the Internet in self radicalizing individuals are overstated. Empirical evidence supports the assumption that the Internet creates more opportunities to become radicalized and serves as a space for individuals to find support for their ideas among like-minded individuals.

But there is no support for the assumption that the Internet accelerates radicalization and promotes self-radicalization without physical contact.

Research has also shown that theories and assumptions about radicalization are not supported in many cases of violent extremism. The marginalization hypothesis that argues that radicalization is a result of individual frustration and alienation does not explain why



some who have travelled to fight alongside the so-called Islamic State come from well-adjusted family backgrounds and were well integrated in the broader community. Contrary to popular belief, ideology and religion play a less important role in radicalization.

Current research by the Countering Online Violent Extremism Research Program at Curtin University, with which I am involved, indicates that the emotional appeal to personal identity and group solidarity are far more significant factors in radicalization.



Michael Zehaf-Bibeau



Anders Breivik



Mohammed Merah

The “lone wolf” theory

Even with the growing body of empirical research contributing to understanding radicalization, cases such as that of Man Haron Monis raise questions about whether individual actors, known as “lone wolves,” are terrorists, violent extremists, radicals, or simply lone gun men.

We normally associate terrorism with large-scale or mass casualty attacks such as 9/11 and the Bali bombings in 2002 — attacks of the sort that requires significant planning, resourcing, and coordination — often transnational.

But the strategy of leaderless or single-actor terrorism dates back to the nineteenth century anarchists who carried out political assassinations and bombings. In the 1980s and 1990s the strategy of using single individuals to perpetrate attacks was adopted by the white supremacist movement in the United States as a way of thwarting government crackdowns on their activities.

In fact, the term “lone wolfism” was introduced by Tom Metzger, a white supremacist.

Over the past few years lone-actor attacks have become more and more prevalent. Lone wolves are individuals who commit acts of violence in support of a group, though they may have no formal links to that group.

Examples include Canadian, Anders Breivik in Norway, and Mohammed Merah in France.

Each case is unique, but all share the hallmarks of the lone actor. Breivik demonstrated extreme right-wing political views and wrote a 1,500-page manifesto rationalizing his attacks and his extremist ideology. Michael Zehaf-Bibeau, who shot a Canadian soldier earlier this year, had his passport cancelled and was suspected of planning to travel to abroad as a foreign fighter.

French gunman Mohammed Merah, who killed seven people in a shooting spree in France in 2012, claimed to be an associate of Al Qaeda. In each of these cases, including that of Monis, ideology or politics certainly appear to be the motivating force behind the violence, suggesting the actors were radicalized.

But there are also other factors to consider when distinguishing lone-wolf terrorist acts from similar attacks with no apparent motivation other than the actors own mental capacity or tendency for violence. Both Bibeau and Monis had criminal records and a history of violent behavior.

Reports on Bibeau describe his behavior before the attack as disturbing. Monis also exhibited erratic behavior and could possibly have had a mental illness.

Official reports on Breivik indicated that he developed paranoid schizophrenia. Like Monis, Breivik exhibited high levels of narcissism and grandiose delusions.

What these cases tell us is that, unlike the strategic model of

terrorism as a rational choice to carry out acts of violence in the name of a cause, these

modern-day lone-wolf terrorists may be more like lone gunmen than terrorists.

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Learning Lessons from the Sydney Siege: How did Man Haron Monis Slip Through the Net?

By Dr Tobias Feakin

Source: <https://www.rusi.org/analysis/commentary/ref:C5492B299F3B9E/#.VJNnC14AB>

The tragic end to the hostage situation in Sydney's Central Business District has, in many ways, left more questions than answers for the Australian government and public.



Despite the professionalism of the police and security agencies responding to the event, who throughout the day kept the situation under relative control and managed to keep casualties to a minimum when bringing the situation to a conclusion, there are queries about how an individual as clearly volatile as Man Haron Monis could have gone unmonitored and was able to carry out such an act. This leads to questions about the current gaps in Australia's counter-terrorism approach and broader criminal justice system that allow an individual with his

background to slip through the net.

Commenting in the immediate aftermath of the incident, Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott stated: 'How can someone who has had such a long and chequered history not be on the appropriate watch lists and how can someone like that be entirely at large in the community?' Made whilst standing alongside the Commissioner of the Australian Federal Police (AFP), such a strong, critical statement made so soon after the conclusion of the standoff is clearly intended to challenge the agencies involved in countering terrorism. Abbott has further reinforced his anger by commissioning an official enquiry into the situation in order to make sense of exactly what went wrong.

Man Haron Monis – Mentally Disturbed Criminal, Terrorist or Both?

We now know that the hostage taker was a man called Man Haron Monis, an Iranian immigrant who arrived in Australia in 1996 and claimed political asylum in 2001. His background was a patchwork of past violent criminal offenses, Islamist extremist beliefs and mental health issues. He had been on the 'radar' of the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation, the AFP and the Department of Immigration since the late 2000s, yet had somehow 'slipped off' their national watch lists in 2009. Evidently, even if he was on watch lists, it is not certain that this would have prevented the attack, but nevertheless we are left with difficult questions as to why he was not under closer observation.

Questions have been raised about whether Monis' actions constitute an act of terrorism, or whether he was a seriously disturbed criminal who felt he had nothing to lose. During the siege he made three demands:

- 1). For an Islamic State flag to be delivered for the exchange of one hostage
- 2). For media to broadcast that the siege was an attack on Australia by the Islamic State
- 3). For Mr Abbott to contact 'The Brother' – understood to be Monis – on a live feed in exchange for five hostages.

He received none of these, yet the nature of the demands demonstrates that despite his background, Monis had decided to conduct these actions under the auspices of ISIS as an act of terror. ISIS

'fanboys' on Twitter were clearly confused and somewhat amused by the whole episode, yet there was a reluctance to identify too closely with Monis due to his Iranian heritage and previous Shia faith. However, this becomes a moot point given that ISIS have worked hard to spread their message widely in order to reach as broad an audience as possible, and as it is so easily available online, people such as Monis, who are clearly unstable and looking for something to identify with, are able to read and engage with ISIS videos, statements, battle reports, and ideology.

Harnessing the Lost and Dangerous – Terrorism of the 2010s

ISIS has encouraged its supporters to carry out attacks using low-level weaponry in their own nations to promote ISIS and draw more supporters to their cause. Abu Muhammad al Adnani, ISIS chief spokesperson underlined this in September 2014 stating:

If you can kill a disbelieving American or European - especially the spiteful and filthy French - or an Australian, or a Canadian, or any other disbeliever from the disbelievers waging war, including the citizens of the countries that entered into a coalition against the Islamic State, then rely upon Allah, and kill him in any manner or way however it may be. We have seen others with backgrounds similar to Monis responding to this kind of rhetoric. Most recently, Michael Zehaf-Bibeau who shot dead a soldier and attempted to storm the Canadian Parliament building in 2014, was found to have a background of drug abuse and crime, and was a recent convert to Islam. There is clearly a danger that the pattern of 'amateurish' individuals attempting random attacks could continue in years to come.

Joining the Dots – Government Responses to the Lost and Dangerous

So what can be done to slow this trend? The answer, at least partially, has to be found in the ability of government to clearly articulate its counter-terrorism strategy and the responsibilities that accompany that approach

to all of its social service departments. This necessarily includes those that deal with Health, Social Services, Education, Immigration and Borders, Defence, Policing, Prison and Probation Services, and Communities. Australia needs to update its 2012 Counter-Terrorism Plan so that it contains an up-to-date assessment of the threat, and incorporates the wider government framework within that. It also needs to provide a means of reporting individuals who are perceived to be, or carry a history of being, a risk to society, along with a workable way that departments can access that information in order to make decisions regarding issues such as gun licenses, for example.

Secondly, and vital for Australia, is that it creates a more robust Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) programme which contains clear intervention strategies for those who present a potential risk of becoming further involved in extremist activity. Monis was beyond this threshold as he should have already been a known entity to probation services and police alike, but for those at an earlier stage this is imperative. Australia has just announced funding of some \$13.4 million towards boosting community engagement programmes which focus on preventing Australians from becoming involved with extremist groups. That is to be applauded. But before the money is invested it would be wise to have a strategy outlining what the government wants to achieve and to ensure that it is being spent in areas that have most impact. As yet, there is no comprehensive strategy for this new four-year programme of work. That should be a priority.

It is tragic that two hostages died and four injured during the dramatic scenes that took place in the early hours of the 16th December in Sydney, but the outcome could have been much worse. It remains vital that the agencies involved identify how Monis slipped through the gap and reflect upon the lessons learnt from this episode. The official enquiry that Abbott has commissioned will be under intense pressure to deliver results, and fast.

7

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Swimming in a Turbulent Sea? Non-State Threats to the Islamic State

By Nicholas A. Heras

Source:[http://www.jamestown.org/single/?tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=43220&tx_ttnews\[backPid\]=7&cHash=ff329b8c0001c76835d83a86a60222d#.VJDhf8MAQ](http://www.jamestown.org/single/?tx_ttnews[tt_news]=43220&tx_ttnews[backPid]=7&cHash=ff329b8c0001c76835d83a86a60222d#.VJDhf8MAQ)

The focus of this analysis is Syria, specifically the territory under the control of the Islamic State organization in eastern and northern Syria. Moving from Aleppo's eastern suburbs in northwest Syria to what was once the Syrian-Iraqi border, this territory includes large areas of eastern Aleppo governorate, a majority of Raqqqa governorate, the southeastern regions of al-Hasakah governorate and the majority of Deir al-Zor governorate. In these areas, the Islamic State has been actively seeking to install itself as a state authority with a monopoly on the use of violence, although not without meeting resistance both within its territory and on the borders of its potential territorial expansion.

Newly installed as the predominate armed opposition faction and socio-political authority in a large area of eastern Syria, the Islamic State uneasily wears the mantle of rulership over a region where its organization is currently, but not necessarily indefinitely, the most powerful "tribe". It is estimated that the size of the territory that the Islamic State currently has authority over includes 35 percent of Syria's prewar population (Radio Sawa [Dubai], November 24). The degree to which the Islamic State is able to influence the socio-political and ideological orientation and to exert direct control over the populations of the communities over which it claims authority in both Syria and Iraq is likely to vary considerably within this.

The Syrian military and its auxiliary forces represent a threat to the Islamic State's monopoly of force in the regions of Syria where it is seeking to build its jurisdiction. Relatively isolated but functional Syrian military units operate from air bases and artillery positions near the city of al-Hasakah and al-Qamishli in al-Hasakah governorate and at a military airbase in the city of Deir al-Zor, allowing the remnants of the Syrian military in the region to continue to apply pressure to the Islamic State (al-Masdar, November 28; *al-Safir* [Beirut], October 15; *al-Sharq al-Awsat*, October 15; Reuters, September 15). Loyalist militias organized under the National Defense Force

(NDF) network, such as those which include Sunni Arab tribesmen from the ethnically and religiously mixed northeastern Syrian cities of al-Hasakah and al-Qamishli and their suburbs, generally supported by Syrian military artillery or airpower deployed from local military airbases, also pose a threat to the expansion of the Islamic State organization (al-Masdar, November 20; *Daily Telegraph* [London], November 16; ARA News [Sanliurfa], November 14).

Islamic State: The Most Powerful Tribe?

The majority of the population in northern and eastern Syria upon which the Islamic State is exerting its rule is composed of Arab Sunni tribes (Reuters, November 27; Radio Sawa Dubai], November 24; Reuters, October 13; *al-Quds al-Arabi*, October 11). [1] Arab tribal populations in Iraq formed the core of the Sahwa (Awakening) movement militias that, with significant U.S. assistance, confronted and weakened the Islamic State of Iraq, a predecessor of the Islamic State. U.S. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Martin Dempsey acknowledged the Islamic State's effort to subordinate and integrate Syrian and Iraqi tribes into its socio-political structures of authority when he said "ISIL [the Islamic State] actually has tribal objectives, it eats its way tribe-by-tribe as it goes." [2] The Islamic State is highly conscious of the need to prevent the formation of a Syrian Sahwa movement and readily brands its rivals for power derogatorily as "Sahwa" (Reuters, November 27; Syria Direct [Deir al-Zor], January 30).

Aware of the damage that the resistance of tribally-organized and directed militias did to its past efforts at ruling a state, the Islamic State organization has been especially concerned with being seen to be associated with both providing order and social welfare as part of its governance in Syria, as well as being feared as a harsh and vengeful enforcer of its rule (Orient News [Dubai], November 24; Reuters, August 12). [3] To

date, the largest and most famous rebellion against the Islamic State occurred in July, when the al-Sha'ytat clan, which is located in both eastern Syria and northwestern Iraq and has ties to the larger Shammar and Aqaidat tribal confederations, rose up in a series of villages near the city of al-Mayadeen, southeast of Deir al-Zor (*al-Hayat*, October 3; *al-Alam* [Tehran], July 31). Al-Sha'ytat tribesmen rebelled due to grievances over issues including the control of local oil wells, the right of tribesmen to bear arms and other socio-political animosity toward the Islamic State. An estimated 700-800 al-Sha'ytat were killed in the fighting or were executed by the Islamic State (*Anadolu* [Ankara], November 9; Reuters, August 16). Thousands of displaced al-Sha'ytat were reportedly given permission to return to their homes and were granted limited autonomy by the Islamic State leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi in return for giving oaths of non-aggression, active prosecuting fellow tribesmen that conspire against the Islamic State and following a promise by al-Sha'ytat tribesmen to obey the Islamic State's commands (*Daily Star* [Beirut], November 7).

Eastern Syrian tribes, in addition to that of al-Sha'ytat, are also reported to be revolting. A sub-tribe of the large Dulaim confederation, one of the largest and most powerful tribes in western Iraq, supposedly expelled local Islamic State fighters from their village of Namlia east of Deir al-Zor city, seized Islamic State arms depots in the village, formed a new tribal militia called Liwa Thuwar al-Deir al-Ahrar (Free Deir al-Zor Revolutionaries' Brigade) and erected checkpoints outside of the village to prevent Islamic State counterattacks. Liwa Thuwar al-Deir al-Ahrar declared that it wants to be the hub of a tribal rebellion against the Islamic State in its area of Deir al-Zor governorate (*Syria Mubasher* [Deir al-Zor], November 19; *al-Dorar al-Shammiya* [Beirut], November 18). Prior to the capture of Mosul in Iraq in June and the popular momentum that it gained from that offensive that then led to the fall of Syrian city of Deir al-Zor in July, the Islamic State shared influence and authority over the predominately tribal population of southern al-Hasakah governorate and Deir al-Zor governorate, with several other armed opposition organizations (*al-Jazeera* [Doha], July 15; *The Daily Star* [Beirut], July 15; AFP, July 14). The most prominent among these factions was the official al-Qaeda affiliate in

Syria, Jabhat al-Nusra (JN – Victory Front), while various other tribally-organized militias ranging from the militant Salafist Harakat Ahrar al-Sham al-Islamiya (Islamic Movement of the Free Ones of the Levant) to the Free Syrian Army (FSA) and its affiliated militias also existed in these regions of Syria in cooperation and competition with the Islamic State (then known as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS)). ISIS's cooperation with these factions, particularly in Deir al-Zor, was driven by a motivation to prevent the pre-existing tribal conflicts held by the members of its local affiliates from escalating into more widespread conflict between ISIS and the other armed opposition factions in the area (*Zaman al-Wasl* [Deir al-Zor], April 21; *al-Safir* [Beirut], March 31).

In particular, Jabhat al-Nusra was a powerful competitor to the Islamic State in and around the city of Deir al-Zor and in the southeastern districts of al-Hasakah governorate along the Khabur River prior to the defection of or displacement of the majority of its tribal militia affiliates to the Islamic State (*Syria Direct*, August 5; *al-Safir* [Beirut], July 15; *Masar Press Agency* [al-Hasakah], April 24; *al-Arabiya* [Dubai], April 19). As a result of the ideological competition presented to the Islamic State by Jabhat al-Nusra, the Islamic State organization has sought to aggressively co-opt or displace JN influence in these newly-conquered regions of eastern Syria, in a manner similar to when the Islamic State seized control over the Syrian city of Raqqa in July 2013 (*al-Akhbar* [Beirut], November 5, 2013).

Traditional lines of Arab tribal leadership in eastern and northern Syria have been weakened by decades of Ba'ath Party policy designed to undermine competition to its rule by the tribes, in addition to endemic economic deprivation and stresses resulting from the Syrian civil war. [4] The military and social organization of the Islamic State organization and JN, prior to the Islamic State's July 2014 offensive in eastern Syria, have utilized the pragmatism of these weakened Syrian Arab tribal groups to assertively co-opt the region's generally under-networked tribal militias. [5] Further compounding the complexity of the armed opposition to the Islamic State in eastern Syria is that prominent tribal opposition leaders such as the important Bagara tribe's Shaykh Nawaf al-



Bashir, who at one point was believed to head an armed organization affiliated with the Free Syrian Army, have failed to organize or sustain a rebel opposition movement to counter militant Salafist groups such as Jabhat al-Nusra and the Islamic State. There have also been significant defections of tribesmen to these militant Salafist organizations (*al-Safir* [Beirut], May 14; *Zaman al-Wasl* [Homs], March 23, 2013; *al-Safir* [Beirut], February 21, 2013).

Also, the Islamic State has shown itself adept at working in an environment of socio-political, ideological and violent competition among competing armed groups and the group has willingly participated in the complex ethnic conflict that has flared into violence between Arabs and Kurds on the northern and western borders of its territory (*Daily Telegraph* [London], November 13; ARA News [Sanliurfa], August 17; Al-Monitor, August 6, Rudaw [Erbil], April 14). [6] Complicating the militant group's attempt to achieve dominance in Syria, however, are forces loyal to the Kurdish-majority militia network the Yekiniyen Parastina Gel (YPG – People's Protection Units) and the YPG and Arab FSA affiliates' joint operations command centers in and around the area of the city of Kobane (known as Ras al-Ayn in Arabic) (*al-Arabiya* [Dubai], November 30; Sputnik News Agency [Moscow], November 27; Reuters, November 27). [7] The potential cooperation between local Sunni Arab tribal militias and Kurdish forces in al-Hasakah governorate as a counter-balance to the Islamic State, such as those raised by branches of the Shammar tribal confederation, could present another potential Arab tribal threat to the Islamic State organization (ARA News [Sanliurfa], June 8). Shammar tribal fighters from Iraq, together with their Syrian kinsmen, recently cooperated with Iraqi Kurdish peshmerga forces to seize the Iraqi side of an important Iraqi-Syrian border crossing from the Islamic State in September, underlining the potential value of such alliances (Reuters, September 30).

A Possible Assassination Campaign against the Islamic State

In addition to potential for armed tribal uprisings against the Islamic State in Syria, there are reports of the formation of networks of anti-Islamist State fighters who are seeking to engage in a war of attrition against the group. The most noteworthy of these

organizations is Saraya al-Kufn al-Abyad (White Shroud Brigade), which announced its formation in the area of the eastern Syrian-Iraqi border town of Abu Kamal in late July (al-Aan [Dubai], July 28; Tahrir Sooria [Deir al-Zor], July 24). [8] Styling itself as a popular resistance, Saraya al-Kufn al-Abyad claims to conduct irregular warfare against the Islamic State, using targeted assassinations, kidnapping and improvised explosive devices (IEDs). They also claim to have killed over 100 Islamic State fighters (Reuters, October 13; ARA News [Sanliurfa], September 10).

Some of al-Sha'ytat tribal youth who had participated in the uprising against the Islamic State have been reportedly recruited into Saraya al-Kufn al-Abyad, including Syrian opposition activists who had not been previously rebel fighters (Shaam Times [Damascus], October 22; *al-Hayat*, October 13; Reuters, October 13; *al-Akhbar* [Beirut], October 1). The organization's messaging emphasizes that it is composed of local Syrians, hence their mantra of Saraya being part of a people's rebellion against the Islamic State, and it strongly decries the abuses of the foreign fighter battalions that are part of the Islamic State organization (al-Aan [Dubai], July 28). It is also reported that some fighters from three of the ideologically Salafist rebel groups that had existed in Abu Kamal prior to the Islamic State's rise predominance in the area may have joined the purported Saraya al-Kufn al-Abyad network. [9]

The narrative of an organized network of Syrian armed opposition guerilla assassins seeking bloody revenge against the Islamic State has been questioned by Syrian opposition media. A sardonic editorial in Orient News, a media outlet that typically supports the objectives of the Syrian revolutionary movement, derided the publicity surrounding the potential existence of an organized network of anti-Islamic State assassins under the command and control of a Saraya al-Kufn al-Abyad network. It referred to the purported leader of Saraya al-Kufn al-Abyad as a "cowboy of revenge," and derided stories in the media about the network's existence as the stuff of a movie plot with "action and excitement" (Orient News [Dubai], October 17).

Related to the reported existence of Saraya al-Kufn al-Abyad are claims that FSA operatives,



posing as cooks for the Islamic State, infiltrated a major training camp in Deir al-Zor governorate, which is said to have a training capacity of 1,500 Islamic State fighters, and poisoned food intended for Islamic State fighters. Heralded as a victory for the FSA in the region, “tens” of Islamic State fighters were reported to have died as a result (al-Arabiya [Dubai], October 6).

The Islamic State in a Turbulent Sea?

While there is the potential for a cadre of anti-Islamic State saboteurs, from the FSA or other armed organizations such as Jabhat al-Nusra, to target the Islamic State at the local village level, there is at present no coherent armed opposition network or coalition that has demonstrated that it is ready to lead a broader organized rebellion against the Islamic State in its territory in eastern Syria. Outside of these areas, however, the Islamic State’s compelling power is more limited and it is reduced from an organization that demonstrates state-like

authority to another competing, albeit powerful, armed opposition faction.

Current political conditions in Iraq, where factions of the Sunni armed opposition movement are still cooperating with the Islamic State, are also likely to strongly impact the calculations of local Syrian tribal groups, especially those of the larger confederations such as the Shammar, Jabbour, Baggara, Aqaidat and Dulaim that are located throughout the eastern Syria and western Iraqi regions. As of the present time, those rebellions that have occurred against the Islamic State have not been effective in dislodging the militant group from those areas where the revolts occurred. These rebellions are likely to not be effective until they become part of a larger, networked armed opposition campaign or part of a momentum-building, general tribal revolution against the Islamic State. Armed opposition to the Islamic State in this region of Syria is just as likely to occur as a result of a resurgence of Jabhat al-Nusra or other militant Salafist and Islamist factions as it is to come from the FSA.

► References are available at source's URL.

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11

The Islamic State: What Victory Means

By Michael W. S. Ryan

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The fall of the Ming dynasty was consummated in 1644 with the suicide of its emperor. In the continuing chaos that followed, the replacement of the old order did not come at the hands of peasant rebels or of disaffected government or military officials; instead, the new order came from an entirely different direction, from a tribal group calling themselves the Manchus. Jonathan Spence, a historian, explains how this transformation occurred: “Their victory was based on their success in forming a system of military and administrative units and the nucleus of a bureaucracy long before they were able to conquer China.” [1] History rarely repeats itself in a perfect fashion. But like the Manchus, the Islamic State, now calling itself the Islamic State, has been attempting to overturn and conquer the order of the central Middle Eastern lands that has

existed since the end of World War I, beginning with nothing more than a few military and administrative cadres and a shared identity. Of course, there are differences: the Manchus were a tribal ethnic group spread over a large territory and the Islamic State is a group with a shared ideology, which it hopes to spread over an immense area. However, the Islamic State appears to be using Abu Bakr Naji’s concept of “mutually reinforcing bonds of faith-based loyalty” to substitute for actual tribal loyalty. The key to this is creating a community that transcends borders, nationalities and ethnic groups, much like the great Sufi orders throughout Islamic history. The Islamic State has strongly emphasized the need for “community” spread from the territory it controls, reaching to the territory of its enemies. The



Islamic State seems, moreover, to accept Abu Bakr Naji's statement, "Our jihad is the jihad of a community not the jihad of a movement." [2] Ultimate victory for the Islamic State would be to replace the global jihadist movement (promoted by al-Zawahiri) with a community led by the Islamic State group's self-proclaimed caliph from a base in the heartland of the Arab Middle East.

Founded by the ultra-violent Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi, the Islamic State started as an independent Salafi jihadist group fighting U.S. forces and targeting Shi'a in Iraq, then after months of negotiations evolved into an al-Qaeda affiliate. The Salafi jihadist group in Iraq was never a true affiliate, however, even though al-Zarqawi pledged allegiance to Bin Laden. It was more like a fellow traveler sharing the same penultimate goal of forcing the U.S. to withdraw from the Middle East and an ultimate goal of nothing less than world domination. Sharing these goals places both groups within the global Salafi jihadist movement of which al-Qaeda under Bin Laden and al-Zawahiri claimed to be the vanguard. The Islamic State, on the other hand, now claims to have fulfilled al-Zawahiri's vision of establishing a defensible Islamic emirate in the heart of the Islamic world to act as the base for restoring "the Rightly Guided Caliphate." [3] To achieve this goal, both al-Baghdadi and al-Zawahiri claim to be following a "prophetic methodology" (*manhaj al-nubuwa*). However, al-Baghdadi is a man in a hurry, whereas both Bin Laden and al-Zawahiri thought that their victory would be far off.

The Islamic State and al-Qaeda share the same guerrilla tactics and doctrine, the same ultimate goals and ideology, and even some of the same funding sources. The organizations disagree, however, on tactics, leadership, organizational concept and, most of all, timetables. From the days when the businessman Bin Laden was in charge, al-Qaeda has functioned like an international corporation of jihad, with a headquarters, regional affiliates, and partners. With a trained religious leader in charge, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the Islamic State considers itself a worldwide community based in a defensible emirate in the heart of Muslim lands. This distinction makes a great difference to the Islamic State group's near-term and intermediate-term goals and defines how it sees victory.

Near-Term Victory

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi's dynamic leadership has galvanized the remnants of al-Zarqawi's original group based in Iraq to create an international militarized community that is challenging the established world order. Unlike al-Qaeda, the Islamic State may already claim to have achieved near term victories. The first victory was survival in the face of the intense operations launched against it (2007-2009) by U.S. military forces and their Iraqi Sunni Arab allies (the Awakening Councils), followed by a rebirth according to an explicit plan to be executed after U.S. combat forces left Iraq (Terrorism Monitor, August 8). The most important tangible victory flows from beyond their 2010 plan, namely al-Baghdadi's decision to spread his effort into the fertile chaos of the civil war in Syria. The result of this decision was the Islamic State group's rapid seizure of control over large strategically important Sunni population centers in both Syria and Iraq, which they loosely united as an Islamic emirate. Closely allied to this major victory is their lengthy and carefully staged claim that Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi is not only the "commander of the faithful" within the emirate but also the Caliph for all Muslims and a descendent of the Prophet Muhammad. This audacious claim has proved advantageous in recruiting fighters to the jihadist cause. Another major victory is the Islamic State organization's financial success, which is based on criminal operations over a number of years, including prison breaks, bank robberies, human trafficking, ransoms, shake-downs and profiting from the general spoils of war, such as the illegal sales of antiquities and petroleum products.

The key intangible victory is their successful use of polarization techniques to draw individuals and some jihadist groups into their community. Abu Bakr Naji argued that ordinary Muslims are resistant to being drawn into battle, so jihadists must use polarization techniques to attract them. Naji suggested that money could be used for this purpose and the Islamic State is well known for its liberal use of funding to promote its brand of violence. In Iraq and Syria (and recently in Saudi Arabia), the Islamic State stokes sectarian antagonism between Shi'a and Sunni populations to the point of civil war. Professional propaganda glorifying violence,



such as videos of beheadings and summary executions, has also become a major recruitment tool, especially to attract foreign fighters. Departing from al-Qaeda's perception of lurid violence as a factor that loses the support of ordinary Muslims, the Islamic State has transformed a major jihadist vulnerability, ordinary people's horror at wanton violence, into strength. The Islamic State publicizes violence against those perceived as "the other," such as Shi'a, non-Muslims, such as Yazidis, and foreigners. The ordinary Sunni Muslim inhabitants of Raqqa or Mosul, for example, may resent or even detest the Islamic State, but may not feel personally threatened if they do not openly resist. Some of them may even join local the Islamic State police forces or participate in other support activities, such as smuggling, for the sake of good pay and privileges. To Americans, the group's violence may seem indiscriminate, but it discriminates along lines promoted by its own propaganda. All these short-term victories are also still vulnerabilities. As Clausewitz wisely asserted, actual war always involves friction. For example, the Islamic State organization's violence that discriminates in theory often becomes indiscriminate in practice and brutal actions against U.S. citizens could lead to an escalating U.S. response that is beyond Islamic State's ability to cope. But if the Islamic State in its present form can survive for a decade, while consolidating territory and indoctrinating children in schools where ideology and propaganda replace history and geography lessons, these vulnerabilities could be greatly weakened.

Longer-Term Victories

In the longer term, victory for the Islamic State is the survival of its proto-state (the "Khilafah") in Syria and Iraq, based on cementing alliances with local tribes and destroying local enemies. As long as the Islamic State is seen as winning, it will be able to persuade foreign jihadists to travel to replenish and increase its fighting and administrative cadres. [4] Another mid-term victory for the Islamic State would be significant progress in ideological cleansing of the major jihadist groups in Syria and the other central Arab Muslim countries. Such cleansing was aimed originally at undermining the effectiveness and therefore the legitimacy of Iraqi security forces and the Sunni Awakening Councils. This goal was clearly articulated in

strategic planning documents written in 2010 by the group in anticipation of the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Iraq. Ideological cleansing is now also a central factor in Syria where it is aimed mostly at other jihadist groups rather than at the central government. Ideological cleansing entails degrading other jihadist groups' capabilities or persuading them to swear allegiance to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. [5] The Islamic State values highly the assimilation of other jihadist groups beyond Iraq and Syria, as shown in al-Baghdadi's audio statement after his reported wounding in a coalition attack, in which he cited pledges of allegiance proffered by groups in Yemen, Sinai, Libya and Algeria.

Perhaps the most important mid-term victories for the Islamic State include further consolidation of control over portions of Syria and Iraq with a likely attempt to take Damascus if other jihadist groups rally to the Islamic State organization's side. In the meantime we should expect the Islamic State to continue to inspire and support sectarian conflict inside Saudi Arabia, which has already surfaced in Islamic State-allied extremist attacks on Shi'a citizens in the Kingdom's eastern region (Terrorism Monitor, November 21). With the Sunni-Shi'a regional struggle already ablaze, further polarization within Saudi Arabia could be the basis for an insurgency not from the Shi'a, but from the extremist Sunni jihadists that oppose the al-Saud dynasty. The Shi'a issue will give jihadists the local cause that al-Qaeda could never find in its 2003-2006 terrorist insurrection in the Kingdom. Islamic State propaganda and leadership statements indicate that such a plan against Saudi Arabia is in the works.

Another current Islamic State target is Jordan. If al-Baghdadi could engineer a serious internal challenge to the Jordanian monarchy, it would strengthen the group's brand significantly. Finally, we should expect the Islamic State to attempt to make inroads among Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza, but such a venture would need to overcome strong nationalist tendencies among the population. Succeeding in any of these adventures would be very difficult for the Islamic State, however, even the slightest progress along the path to success would be claimed as further evidence for the Islamic State propaganda that "our state is victorious." [6]



What al-Baghdadi's Death Would Mean

Can the Islamic State succeed if al-Baghdadi is killed? The United States has pursued a decapitation strategy against al-Qaeda and the predecessors of the Islamic State with mixed results. Al-Baghdadi, however, is different because he is the most successful operational leader to emerge from the jihadist movement. He is important not only as a symbol, but also as a strategic thinker and manager who gave new life to a moribund group. Nevertheless, the most likely answer is that the Islamic State would survive his assassination, but their surviving capabilities would depend on the actions of his inner circle and their ability to survive the loss of a man who is both their organizational leader and their designated caliph.

The Islamic State is a kind of "proof of concept" for the next stage in the global jihadist movement. Continuity of some kind would be

needed to carry the Islamic State concept of a new caliphal community forward. It took the Islamic State more than a year of careful argument to establish al-Baghdadi's credibility as the caliph of the current age. The Islamic State follows a tradition that allows only one living caliph at any time. Thus, the group cannot have a second caliph in the wings, so to speak, or groom a successor caliph while the current one reigns. Moreover, the Islamic State follows the A'maq cycle of *hadith* that predicts an Armageddon in Syria between the dark forces of the West and a triumphant Muslim army from the south. [7] Al-Baghdadi is the implied leader of that army. If al-Baghdadi is out of the picture before his caliphate is firmly established, the Islamic State organization will be seriously challenged, but with resourceful lieutenants in charge, it will not be finished without a further fight.

► Notes are available at source's URL.

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Boko Haram, Islamic State and the Archipelago Strategy

14

By Jacob Zenn

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This paper will explain how in northeast Nigeria, Boko Haram can be understood as currently operating between the *tamkin* (authority) and *khilafah* phases of jihadist methodology, while in northwest Nigeria, it is currently in the phase of *destabilizing taghut* (tyrants). The paper will then focus on Boko Haram's expansion from northeast Nigeria into Far North Region, Cameroon by taking advantage of cross-border kinship networks in the same way that the Islamic State organization has done in Iraq and Syria and the Taliban have done in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Following this, the paper will show that while Boko Haram initially received training, ideological guidance and funding from al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), it has more recently begun to model its ideological and military doctrine after the Islamic State organization and, in turn, has started to receive recognition from Islamic State. Finally, the paper will conclude with an explanation of Islamic State's "Archipelago Strategy" and where Boko Haram fits within this structure.

Northeast vs. Northwest Nigeria

Boko Haram's main area of operations is in northeast Nigeria, particularly Borno, Adamawa and Yobe States, where it controls approximately 20 towns. The largest towns that fell under Boko Haram's control in 2014 are Bama with 200,000 people and Mubi of 150,000 people (the latter has since been retaken by anti-Boko Haram vigilantes). When Boko Haram captured Mubi, it first occupied

key government and religious buildings, appointed a new amir and renamed the city as Madinat al-Islam (City of Islam in Arabic). This is consistent with Boko Haram's long-stated objective to kill pre-existing amirs in areas under its control and install its own amirs to ensure – in the words of Boko Haram leader Abubakr Shekau, "they will never be part of Nigeria again" (*Vanguard* [Lagos],

November 28). Boko Haram also renamed Gwoza as Dar al-Hikma ("House of Wisdom") and installed its own amir in this and other towns. Several days before capturing Malam Fatori on Nigeria's border with Niger, a Chadian faction of the group issued a video saying they captured anti-Boko Haram vigilantes after they crossed into the "Islamic

Haram's ideology about the caliphate that it has declared and their offspring will become the next generation of radical militants. Boko Haram is also cutting off road and bridge access and placing landmines around Borno's perimeter to turn it into an "island" that will be the base of its new Islamic State.

In northwest Nigeria, Boko Haram is engaged



"State" and then showed the beheading of three vigilantes (*Daily Trust* [Abuja], November 10). In areas under Boko Haram's control, the militants are imposing Shari'a punishments such as stoning, whipping, hand-cutting and beheadings and are recruiting hundreds, if not thousands, of teenage boys and girls, while threatening those who do not join "jihad" with death (*This Day* [Lagos], August 20; *National Mirror*, July 22). The more than 250 schoolgirls Boko Haram kidnapped in Chibok are likely being used as modern day "comfort women," whose children will grow up steeped in Boko

in a campaign to destabilize the government and existing power structures by carrying out bombings in major cities. The attacks in these northwest areas are sporadic but have a high impact as they have large death tolls and are in major population centers or key targets, such as motor parks, churches and mosques, prisons and police headquarters. The network that has carried out the most significant attacks in northwest Nigeria includes Nigerian members of the North African militant group al-Qaeda in the

Maghreb (AQIM) who began returning to Nigeria in 2011 and formed the Boko Haram faction Ansaru, which was designated as a foreign terrorist organization by the UK and later the United States. Its leader was longtime Groupe Salafiste pour la Prédication et le Combat (GSPC, the predecessor to AQIM) kidnapper, Khalid al-Barnawi. In 2012 and 2013, Ansaru kidnapped and killed 10 foreign engineers in Nigeria and ambushed Mali-bound Nigerian troops. In addition, the 12 female suicide bombings carried out in northwest Nigeria since the Chibok kidnapping in April 2014 represent the combined capabilities of reintegrated remnants of Ansaru's network into Boko Haram to activate new "sleeper-cells" in northwest Nigeria (*Vanguard* [Lagos], December 2).

Composition and Leadership

Around 75 percent of Boko Haram's estimated 15,000 members are ethnic Kanuris, including Boko Haram founder Muhammad Yusuf and current leader Shekau. Kanuris are the descendants of the Kanem-Borno Caliphate (based in Borno State), which lasted from approximately 900 to 1900 A.D. This Caliphate was divided between Nigeria, Niger, Cameroon and Chad at the onset of the colonial era in the 1800s. Yusuf lamented "Borno's amalgamation to the infidels" as well as the shift of religious power to Hausa-Fulani leaders of northwest Nigeria who "mixed Islam with democracy and secularism," political power to Abuja and economic power to "Christian" southern Nigeria. [1]

Moreover, the three key factors contributing to Boko Haram's appeal in these regions include:

- Borno has little economic vitality or job opportunities, in addition to ecological and related agricultural problems caused by the shrinking of Lake Chad
- The relative deprivation of Borno compared to other more wealthy and powerful parts of Nigeria
- The potency of *takfiri* ideology, which is used to justify killing Muslim leaders in northwest Nigeria, politicians connected to Abuja and the Christians of Nigeria who increasingly moved to parts of northern Nigeria in the 20th century.

Boko Haram's operational environment is similar to that of the Islamic State organization and the Taliban. The Islamic State is based in a majority Sunni Arab area of the Syria-Iraq

border region, whose inhabitants have seen their land divided into the countries of Iraq and Syria by colonial-era governments. Islamic State recruitment there is also fuelled by dissatisfaction that political power has also shifted to a Shi'a and Iranian-backed government in Baghdad and that Syria retains an Alawite-Shi'a government despite decades of efforts by Sunni Arabs, particularly the Muslim Brotherhood, to oust the al-Assad family. Likewise, the Taliban is a majority Pashtun movement, which has seen its traditional lands divided between Afghanistan and Pakistan and political power shifted to Pakistan's Punjabi elites. While the Pashtuns have power in Kabul, they are weak in the Tajik and Uzbek majority areas of northern Afghanistan. A further common factor is that the Islamic State, Taliban and Boko Haram all struggle to expand beyond their ethnic base, while nonetheless seeing a pan-ethnic caliphate as favorable to a nation-state.

International Connections: From al-Qaeda to Islamic State

Boko Haram was considered to be a "domestic" or "peaceful" movement until Nigerian security forces killed Yusuf in 2009 and Shekau declared jihad in 2010. However, some members have been training with AQIM since 2002 while others went to Afghanistan. Yusuf meanwhile made it clear that Osama bin Laden, the Taliban, Sayyid Qutb and Ibn Taymiya were the only "pure" Salafists and that a confrontation with the Nigerian state was inevitable. In addition, Bin Laden provided funding to Salafist groups in Nigeria, some of which found its way to Boko Haram, and he maintained contact with Boko Haram via Sahelian militants in his External Operations Unit in Pakistan, which included individuals such as Yunis al-Mauritani. [2]

These Sahelian militants also maintained contact with AQIM leaders, such as Abdelmalek Droukdel and southern commander Abu Zeid, and factional leaders, such Mokhtar Belmokhtar and Ansaru founder Khalid al-Barnawi. This is why an Ansaru member, Abu Ali al-Nigeri, participated in claiming their involvement in the Belmokhtar-led attack on the In Amenas gas plant in Algeria in January 2013 and Ansaru propaganda materials were found in Belmokhtar's compound in Gao, Mali after he



fled the city in 2013 (Magharebia.com, February 7, 2013). AQIM's fingerprints were also on Ansaru's (then al-Qaeda in Lands Beyond the Sahel) first kidnapping of a British and Italian engineer in Kebbi in May 2011 (*Vanguard [Lagos]*, August 4, 2011).

AQIM's kidnapping of a German engineer in Kano on January 26, 2012 – the same day Ansaru announced its formation in that city – also led to the demand for the release from German prison of an Islamic Jihad Union (IJU) website administrator, Filiz Gelowicz. She was connected to Bin Laden's External Operations Unit via her husband, Fritz Gelowicz, who was a German Taliban member in the "Sauerland Plot" on Ramstein Air Base in Germany in 2007 (*Spiegel*, August 28, 2009; *Punch*, April 15, 2012). AQIM also asked for the release of Abu Qatada al-Filistini from prison in that kidnapping, whose writings on kidnappings were found at Abu Zeid's abandoned compound in Mali in 2013. These demands followed Droukdel's promise that Bin Laden would negotiate for AQIM hostages (France24, November 19, 2010). [3]

AQIM also supported Boko Haram with financing, training and arms after 2010, which Droukdel promised to the "Nigerian mujahideen" after Yusuf's death in order for them to attack "Crusaders." This in turn facilitated the UN Headquarters attacks in Abuja in August 2011, which was masterminded by Yusuf's third-in-command, Cameroonian Mamman Nur, and resembled AQIM's attack the same day at Cherchell barracks in Algiers, as well as AQIM's attack on the UN in Algiers in 2007 and al-Qaeda in Iraq's (AQI) attack on the UN in Baghdad in 2003. AQIM funding also enabled the Christmas Day church bombing in Nigeria's Niger State in 2011 and church bombings in Kaduna on Easter 2012 (Magharebia.com, September 9, 2011). AQI was also the only al-Qaeda affiliate other than AQIM to send condolences to the "Nigerian mujahideen" after Yusuf's death in 2009.

AQIM's rejection of Shekau for the killing of Muslims and the reputation problems that this created for al-Qaeda led AQIM to support the founding of Ansaru's first cells in Kaduna and Kano. Ansaru also recruited northwest Nigerian ethnic Hausas and other Salafists, who rejected the northeast Kanuri leaders, such as Yusuf and Shekau, whose *takfiri* ideology justified the killing of anyone opposed to Boko

Haram. However, Ansaru has likely reintegrated with Boko Haram in Borno and northern Cameroon due to the French military intervention in northern Mali in 2013, which cut Ansaru's links to AQIM and its "cousin" militant group, MUJAO; this has effectively left Ansaru on "life support." This reintegration explains why Boko Haram has kidnapped 21 foreigners in northern Cameroon since February 2013 (France24, November 15, 2013). However, unlike Ansaru, which killed its captives, Boko Haram has ransomed these captives for millions of dollars and the release of weapons traffickers from Cameroonian prisons. Boko Haram's cross-border Kanuri kinship ties have also facilitated its expansion into Far North Region, Cameroon, where it recruits, kidnaps hostages for ransom and launches attacks into Nigeria. Boko Haram also kidnapped one German development worker in Adamawa, who remains in captivity (Deutsche Welle, November 1). Notably, like the Islamic State, Boko Haram has taken the national ID cards of Cameroonian citizens and burned them in public gatherings.

Despite its previous position as part of al-Qaeda's global movement, Boko Haram now appears to have shifted almost completely into the Islamic State's orbit since Islamic State leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi announced the creation of a caliphate in July, as underlined, and one month later, when Boko Haram leader Shekau announced his support for al-Baghdadi (*Vanguard [Lagos]*, July 13). On November 1, Boko Haram also released a video statement featuring Shekau along with 14 militants and 4 armed SUVs in the background (*Leadership [Abuja]*, November 10). [4] The video showed an ideological shift to Islamic State:

1. The opening showed, for the first time, the Islamic State-styled *rayat al-uqab* (banner of the eagle, more commonly referred to as the black standard or banner) flag as part of the Boko Haram logo.
2. A new media agency, Ghuraba (strangers), possibly named after a media wing in Syria that has published martyrdom statements of Chechens, claimed to be responsible for the video's production. This agency is likely the reason why the video is of higher quality than previous videos. Only the Boko Haram video released prior to this one, in which Shekau said that Boko Haram had created an Islamic state

with the Islamic State organization's signature *nasheed* (Islamic chant) "My Umma Dawn Has Arrived" playing in the background, is of the same quality. Boko Haram may be using new funding to upgrade the quality of its media output.

3. The end of the video showed archive clips of Boko Haram founder Muhammad Yusuf with Arabic subtitles saying the purpose of combat is to create an Islamic State. Yusuf has rarely, if ever, been featured in Boko Haram videos since his death in 2009.

In addition, on November 10, Boko Haram released a 44-minute video via its usual intermediaries at AFP. [5] Key points from this video are the following:

1. Shekau appeared in a mosque with militants and delivered a sermon. This is the first time Shekau has appeared in a mosque setting since Boko Haram went underground in 2009 and launched their insurgency. Shekau's "stage" is similar in symbolism and style to al-Baghdadi's video sermon in a mosque in Mosul in July where he declared the establishment of a caliphate in Iraq and Syria.
2. In the video, Shekau also wore an *imam*'s attire for the first time since 2009. Given the close-up shots of Shekau in the video, this may also be the real Shekau (as opposed to reported imposters) because the producers were not attempting to obscure his image. One of the purposes of this video may be to mirror the way Islamic State felt compelled to dispel rumors about al-Baghdadi's existence in the video at the mosque in Mosul, so this video showed several close-up shots of Shekau's face to prove he is alive. Al-Baghdadi's video, like Shekau's, also heralded his return to the role of an *imam* after years of fighting as a jihadist leader.
3. In the video, Shekau declared that Boko Haram established an "Islamic caliphate" and conveys greetings to "brethren" in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Azerbaijan, Shishan (Chechnya), Yemen, Somalia and "the caliphate in Iraq and Syria." Notably, Shekau did not include specific reference to al-Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahiri or other al-Qaeda affiliates, as he did in prior videos and statements.
4. The video switched to a scene of al-Baghdadi announcing his caliphate in Mosul, which further underscores Shekau's

attempt to mimic the leader of Islamic State. No evidence exists, however, that Shekau is trying to rival al-Baghdadi's caliphate, presumably because, according to some religious interpretations, there should only be one caliphate. Rather, Shekau seems to be both complimenting and complementing al-Baghdadi's self-described caliphate in an effort to increase his image.

5. The video, like Boko Haram's October 31 video, was of high quality and another new media agency – generically called "media office" – claimed credit for the video's production. Presumably, Boko Haram received new funding or used its own funding to upgrade the quality and frequency of its video production.
6. The video showed a Boko Haram military parade with militants doing "wheelies" with tanks (like the one the Islamic State has shown of its militants doing antics), locals (maybe pressured) cheering when Boko Haram enters their towns and scenes of life in Boko Haram's caliphate. These scenes are similar to how the Islamic State organization shows documentaries of life under Shari'a law in its caliphate.

The key takeaway from these videos and Boko Haram's shift to seizing and holding territory like the Islamic State is that Boko Haram is showing its ideological and military strategic contiguity with al-Baghdadi's organization. This continues a trend of new groups from Jund al-Khilafah (an AQIM faction) to Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis of Egypt to Mujahideen Indonesia Timor to Abu Sayyaf in the Philippines to Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) to factions of the Pakistani Taliban and other "dissidents" from al-Qaeda affiliates showing support for the Islamic State. These supporters of IS are not necessarily taking orders from the Islamic State, but they may justify their own attacks and operations on the grounds that the Islamic State organization is doing the same, or vice-versa. For example, the suicide bombing Boko Haram carried out at a Shi'a Ashura procession in Yobe on November 3, attempted to bring Islamic State-styled sectarianism to Nigeria and it also used the idea of "Sunni Islam" (or, rather, anti-Shi'ism) to attract recruits (News247.com.ng, November 3). At the same time, in its online magazine *Dabiq* 4, the Islamic State justified its kidnappings and sexual



enslavement of non-Muslim Yazidi women in Iraq by citing Boko Haram's kidnappings of schoolgirls in Chibok and other parts of Nigeria, who are mostly Christian. [6] And in *Dabiq* 5, the Islamic State recognized the pledges of loyalty to it from Boko Haram, Abu Sayyaf and Mujahideen Indonesia Timor. [7]

There are several reasons why Boko Haram and other jihadist groups are increasingly showing support for the Islamic State organization:

1. The Islamic State is reportedly offering money to jihadist groups who show affiliation with IS and this in turn enhances the legitimacy of Islamic State. For example, the well-connected Nigerian journalist, Ahmed Salkida, has said that Islamic State would encourage jihadists who could not travel to Syria to travel to Nigeria or Libya and noted that Islamic State is in fact now assessing whether to provide financial support to Boko Haram. [8]
2. Al-Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahiri has seemingly neglected jihadist groups from peripheral areas of the Muslim world, including Boko Haram in Nigeria, whereas his predecessor, Osama bin Laden, financed these groups as "start-up" jihadist groups, including Jemaah Islamiyah (now evolved into Mujahideen Indonesia Timor), Abu Sayyaf and even Boko Haram.
3. *Takfiri* groups like Islamic State, Boko Haram and Jund al-Khilafah care less about their public image than al-Qaeda, which now wants to show a humane side. This is

► Notes are available at source's URL.

Jacob Zenn is an analyst of African and Eurasian Affairs for The Jamestown Foundation.

The "Islamic State" Crisis and U.S. Policy

By Kenneth Katzman (Specialist in Middle Eastern Affairs); Christopher M. Blanchard (Specialist in Middle Eastern Affairs); Carla E. Humud (Analyst in Middle Eastern and African Affairs); Rhoda Margesson (Specialist in International Humanitarian Policy); and Matthew C. Weed (Analyst in Foreign Policy Legislation)

Source:<http://news.usni.org/2014/11/04/document-report-congress-isis-u-s-policy>

The Islamic State is a transnational Sunni Islamist insurgent and terrorist group that has expanded its control over areas of parts of Iraq and Syria since 2013. It threatens the governments of both countries and potentially

similar to how the AQIM-supported faction Ansaru broke from Boko Haram in 2012 on account of its "inhumane" attacks on the "Muslim ummah." Shekau has also long praised al-Baghdadi's hardline *takfiri* predecessors, AQI's al-Zarqawi and Abu Omar al-Baghdadi (Sahara Reporters, January 31, 2012).

4. The Islamic State's battlefield successes – or propaganda portraying its successes – has encouraged other groups to "Join the Ranks", in the words of the title of a recent Islamic State video showing foreign fighters.

In conclusion, Boko Haram has increased its military strength every year since its insurgency started in 2009 and has repeatedly shown its ability to evolve its ideology to follow the leading jihadist trends of the times and to build wider international networks. In 2015, Boko Haram can be expected to continue this trajectory further. The upcoming Nigerian presidential elections in February 2015, combined with the revival of the Niger Delta militancy in southern Nigeria and the growing concern and possible military action of international forces in Nigeria are key themes to watch over the course of the next year. Moreover, if Boko Haram continues to expand into Francophone countries like Cameroon, Chad and Niger, the question remains whether France will be compelled to mobilize an intervention in these countries as it did in Mali in 2013.

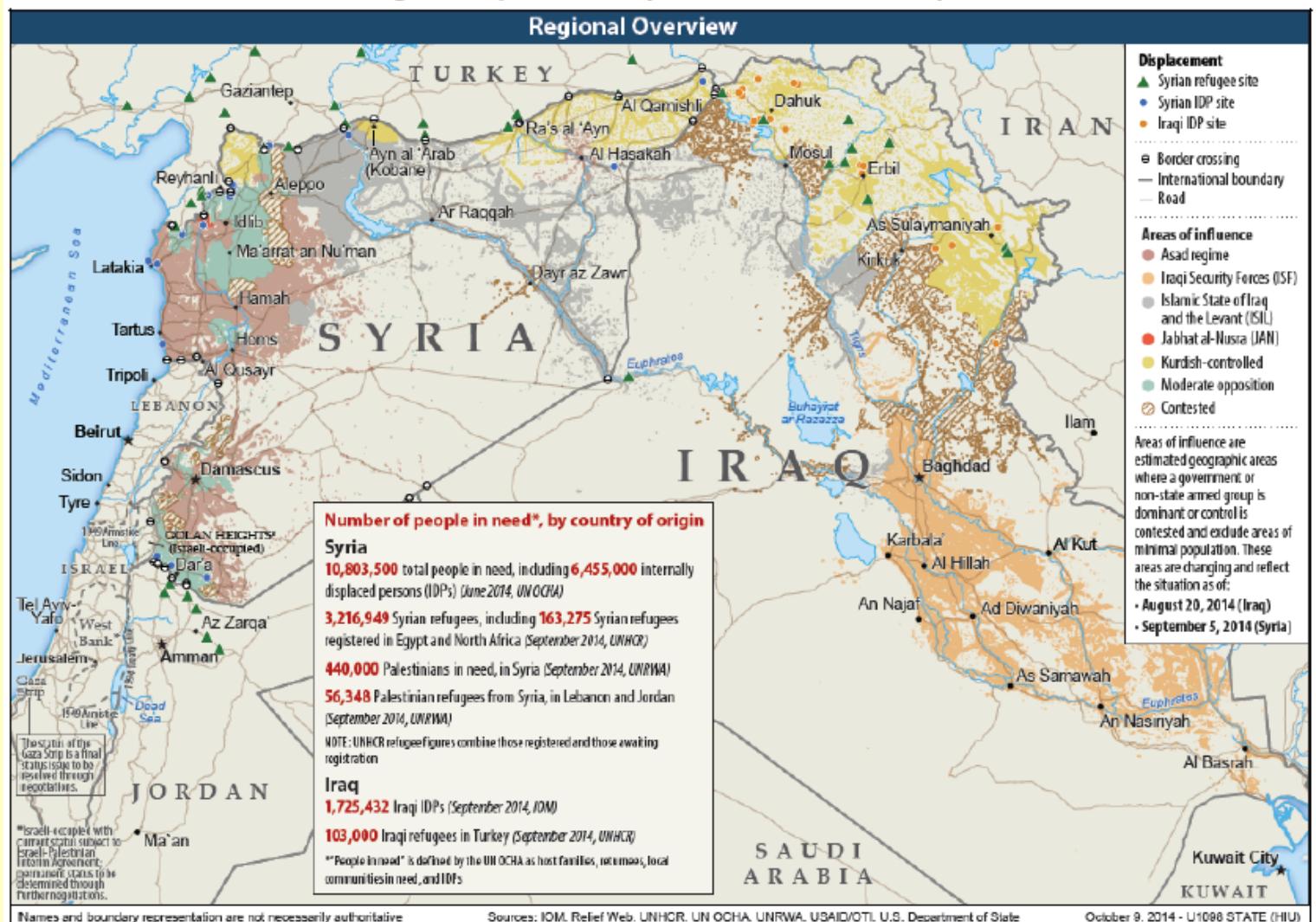
19

several other countries in the region. The emerging international response to the threat is multifaceted and includes coalition military strikes and assistance plans.

There is debate over the degree to which the

and Iraqi adversaries, including some civilians,

Figure 1. Syria and Iraq: Conflict and Crisis Map



Islamic State organization might represent a direct terrorist threat to the U.S. homeland or to U.S. facilities and personnel in the region.

The forerunner of the Islamic State (IS) was part of the insurgency against coalition forces in Iraq, and the organization has in the years since the 2011 U.S. withdrawal from Iraq expanded its control over significant areas of both Iraq and Syria. The Islamic State has thrived in the disaffected Sunni tribal areas of Iraq and in the remote provinces of Syria torn by the civil war.

Since early 2014, Islamic State-led forces, supported by groups linked to ousted Iraqi President Saddam Hussein and some Sunni Arabs, have advanced along the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, seizing population centers including Mosul, one of Iraq's largest cities. Since then, IS forces have massacred Syrian

often from ethnic or religious minorities, and executed American journalists. Islamic State fighters also have launched offensives in Iraq's Anbar province and against a key Kurdish enclave in north-central Syria. The Islamic State's tactics have drawn international ire, increasing U.S. attention to Iraq's political problems and to the war in Syria.

On September 10, President Obama announced a series of actions intended to "degrade, and ultimately destroy" the Islamic State organization. The United States is leading and seeking to expand a multilateral coalition that is undertaking direct military action; providing advice, training, and equipment for partner ground forces in Iraq and Syria; gathering and sharing intelligence; and using financial measures against

the Islamic State. The objective of these measures is to progressively shrink the geographic and political space, manpower, and financial resources available to the Islamic State organization. U.S. officials refer to their strategy as "Iraqfirst" and "ISIL-first," amid criticism by some in Congress that more attention should be paid to the civil war in Syria and more effort should be made to oust Syrian President Bashar al Asad.

The U.S. desire to show progress against the Islamic State and in the recruitment of regional partners raises questions of whether the U.S. mission and commitment might expand. The Administration has ruled out deploying combat forces to either Iraq or Syria, but it has not ruled out providing forward aircraft controllers, additional military advisors, or other related

groundbased military assets. Some experts assert that coalition partners inside Iraq and Syria—Iraqi government forces and select Syrian groups—are too weak to defeat the Islamic State and will eventually require help from U.S. combat troops. Several regional coalition members apparently seek an expansion of the U.S.-led mission to include an effort to oust President Asad of Syria.

For details on Islamic State operations in Iraq and U.S. policy toward Iraq since the 2003 U.S. invasion, see CRS Report RS21968, *Iraq: Politics, Governance, and Human Rights*, by Kenneth Katzman. For information on the Islamic State's operations in Syria, see CRS Report RL33487, *Armed Conflict in Syria: Overview and U.S. Response*, coordinated by Christopher M. Blanchard.

► Read the full document at source's URL.

Imagine No Religion: The Western Media and Islamic Terror

By Raymond Ibrahim

Source: <http://www.meforum.org/4933/imagine-no-religion-the-western-media>

As the West experiences a rise in the sort of terror attacks that are endemic to the Islamic world—church attacks, sex-slavery and beheadings—it is only natural that the same mainstream media that habitually conceals such atrocities "over there," especially against Christians and other minorities under Islam, would also conceal the reality of jihadi aspirations "over here."

As *The Commentator* reports:

[T]he level of the [media] grovelling after the tragic and deadly saga in Sydney Australia over the last 24 hours has been astounding. At the time of writing, the lead story on the BBC website is of course about that very tragedy, in which an Islamist fanatic took a random group hostage in a cafe, ultimately killing two of them. He did this in the name of Islam. But you wouldn't get that impression if you started to read the BBC's lead story, which astoundingly managed to avoid mentioning the words Islam, Islamic, Islamist, Muslim, or any derivations thereof for a full 16 paragraphs.

The New York Times, which led by calling the terrorist, Man Haron Monis an "armed man", waited until paragraph 11.

In the Guardian's main story – whose lead paragraph simply referred to a "gunman" —

you had to wait until paragraph 24. If you'd have blinked, you'd have missed it. [...]

In the wider media, reports about Muslim fears of a "backlash" have been all but ubiquitous.

If these are the lengths that Western mainstream media go to dissemble about the Islamic-inspired slaughter of Western peoples, it should now be clear why the ubiquitous Muslim persecution of those unfashionable Christian minorities is also practically unknown by those who follow Western mainstream media.

As with the Sydney attack, media headlines say it all. The 2011 New Year's Eve Coptic church attack that left 28 dead appeared under vague headlines: "Clashes grow as Egyptians remain angry after attack," was the *New York Times'* headline; and "Christians clash with police in Egypt after attack on churchgoers kills 21" was the *Washington Post's*—as if frustrated and harried Christians lashing out against their oppressors is the "big news," not the unprovoked atrocity itself; as if their angry reaction "evens" everything up.

Similarly, the *Los Angeles Times* partially told the story of an Egyptian off-duty police officer who, after identifying Copts by their crosses on a train, opened fire on them, killing one,

21

while screaming "Allahu Akbar"—but to exonerate the persecution, as caught by the report's headline: "Eyewitness claims train attacker did not target Copts, state media say." A February 2012 NPR report titled "In Egypt,

"If you tell a lie big enough and keep repeating it, people will eventually come to believe it."

- Joseph Goebbels,
Nazi Propaganda Minister



Christian-Muslim Tension is on the Rise," while meant to familiarize readers with the situation of Egypt's Christians, prompts more questions than answers them: "In Egypt, growing tensions between Muslims and Christians have led to sporadic violence [initiated by whom?]. Many Egyptians blame the interreligious strife on hooligans [who?] taking advantage of absent or weak security forces. Others believe it's because of a deep-seated mistrust between Muslims and the minority Christian community [what are the sources of this "mistrust"?]."

The photo accompanying the story is of angry Christians holding a cross aloft—not Muslims destroying crosses, which is what prompted the former to this display of Christian solidarity.

Blurring the line between victim and oppressor—recall the fear of "anti-Muslim backlash" whenever a Muslim terrorizes "infidels" in the West—also applies to the media's reporting on Muslim persecution of Christians.

A February 2012 BBC report on a church attack in Nigeria that left three Christians dead, including a toddler, objectively states the bare bone facts in one sentence. Then it jumps to apparently the *really* big news: that "the bombing sparked a riot by Christian youths, with reports that at least two Muslims were killed in the violence. The two men were dragged off their bikes after being stopped at a roadblock set up by the rioters, police said. A row of Muslim-owned shops was also burned..."

The report goes on and on, with an entire section about "very angry" Christians till one confuses victims with persecutors, forgetting what the Christians are "very angry" about in the first place: nonstop terror attacks on their

churches and the slaughter of their women and children. A *New York Times* report that appeared on December 25, 2011—the day after Boko Haram bombed several churches during Christmas Eve services, leaving some 40 dead—said that such church bombings threaten "to exploit the already frayed relations between Nigeria's nearly evenly split populations of Christians and Muslims..." Such an assertion suggests

that both Christians and Muslims are equally motivated by religious hostility—even as one seeks in vain for Christian terror organizations that bomb mosques in Nigeria to screams of "Christ is Great!"

Meanwhile, Boko Haram has torched 185 churches—to say nothing of the countless Christians beheaded—in just the last few months alone.

Continuing to grasp for straws, the same *NYT* report suggests that the Nigerian government's "heavy-handed" response to Boko Haram is responsible for its terror, and even manages to invoke another mainstream media favorite: the poverty-causes-terrorism myth.

Whether Muslim mayhem is taking place in the Islamic or Western worlds, the mainstream media shows remarkable consistency in employing an arsenal of semantic games, key phrases, convenient omissions, and moral relativism to portray such violence as a product of anything and everything—political and historical grievances, "Islamophobia," individual insanity, poverty and ignorance, territorial disputes—not Islam.

As such, Western media keep Western majorities in the dark about the Islamic threat, here and abroad. In short, the "MSM" protects and enables the Islamic agenda—irrespective of whether its distortions are a product of intent, political correctness, or sheer stupidity.

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4 Gitmo Prisoners Released For Return To Afghanistan

Source: <http://www.npr.org/blogs/thetwo-way/2014/12/20/372092432/4-gitmo-prisoners-released-for-return-to-afghanistan>



23

The entrance to Camp 5 and Camp 6 at the U.S. military's Guantanamo Bay detention center at Guantanamo Bay Naval Base, Cuba, in a photograph taken earlier this year.

Dec 20, 2014 – The United States has released four Afghan detainees from the U.S. military prison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, who were returned to Afghanistan — the latest in a series of releases of inmates in recent weeks. Reuters says: "The men were flown to Kabul overnight aboard a U.S. military plane and released to Afghan authorities, the first such transfer of its kind to the war-torn country since 2009, a U.S. official said."

The four were released at the request of Afghanistan's new president, Ashraf Ghani, The Associated Press reports.

The AP says:

"Obama administration officials said they worked quickly to fulfill the request from Ghani, in office just three months, to return the four, who had been cleared for transfer as a kind of

reconciliation and mark of improved U.S.-Afghan relations.

"There is no requirement that the Afghan government further detain the men, identified as Mohammed Zahir, Shawali Khan, Abdul Ghani and Khi Ali Gul."

In a Pentagon statement, the U.S. said it is "grateful to the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan for its willingness to support ongoing U.S. efforts to close the Guantanamo Bay detention facility. The United States coordinated with the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to ensure these transfers took place consistent with appropriate security and humane treatment measures."

Even so, The Washington Post reports: "The United States and Afghanistan have not started serious discussions about repatriating the remaining eight Afghans still held at Guantanamo Bay, said the official, speaking on the condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the transfers.

Last month, five Guantanamo detainees, four of them Yemenis, were sent to Georgia and Slovakia. And, earlier this month, the U.S. transferred six inmates to Uruguay. The latest release comes as no real surprise, as it is part of a larger U.S. effort to draw down the inmate population at Guantanamo, which President Obama, in his first campaign for the White House, promised to close.

Carol Rosenberg, who covers Guantanamo for *The Miami Herald*, tells NPR that Ghani formally requested the four be transferred

"because they were at the front of the queue, meaning they were on a list that was approved a long time ago. So, it was easier to get them out than, say, the other eight Afghans are still at Guantanamo."

"In January 2010, the Obama administration drew up a list of people who would be approved for release," Rosenberg says. "These four men were on it, along with dozens of others. Many of them had previously also been approved for release during the Bush years."

"What we're seeing here is the release of people who were informed in 2008, 2009, 2010, that they would be allowed to go under certain circumstances. But, as I think we all know, the process pretty much got stalled by violence in the various countries where some of these people would be going," she says.

EDITOR'S COMMENT: Just to pose a question: "Imagine that you were one of the four inmates released. You missed 10 yrs of your life in a foreign (enemy) prison for a cause and you survived. Then you are back home. What would you do?" Possible answers: (1) Become a normal citizen; open a shop or continue your previous profession; (2) Preach peace and promote friendship and collaboration among nations and people (even with infidels and crusaders); (3) Regain strength and contact again old friends continuing the fights for which you have been imprisoned. Choose the one that fits better to your logic.



24

Pakistan – 500 convicts to be hanged in coming weeks

Source: <http://www.terrorismwatch.org/2014/12/500-convicts-to-be-hanged-in-coming.html>

Around 500 prisoners convicted on terrorism-related charges will be executed in the next two to three weeks,

Interior Minister Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan said on Sunday while sharing with the media details of a national action plan against terror.

"The interior ministry has cleared these prisoners for execution and their mercy petitions have already been rejected by the president," Nisar told a news conference in Islamabad.

The decision to lift the moratorium on the death penalty in terrorism-related cases was taken before the Peshawar school attack, the minister clarified. "Army chief General Raheel Sharif had taken up the issue [of capital punishment] with Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif before the Peshawar tragedy."

Nisar warned that the decision to execute convicted terrorists could have severe repercussions as suggested by intelligence reports. "But we should not let our guard down

if we want to avenge the victims of the Peshawar attack... we are in a state of war," he said. "We will win this war."

About the national action plan against terrorism, the minister said the civilian and military leadership would sit together on Tuesday to discuss the strategy being prepared by counter-terrorism experts and the National Action Plan Committee (NAPC) before giving a final nod for action to the armed forces.

"The experts' group will most probably give its recommendations to the NAPC on Monday [today]," he said. "The panel will then discuss the plan in the evening [on Monday]."

According to the minister, the experts received a briefing at the military headquarters and would continue their marathon meeting throughout Sunday night.

Sharing other steps the government has taken in the aftermath of the Peshawar



massacre, Nisar said his ministry has asked all four provincial chief ministers to convene weekly meetings of police officers and discuss measures to counter any retaliatory moves by militants in response to the ongoing action against them. He added that all provincial police chiefs have also been directed to meet their district police officers and chalk out a strategy to keep a check on strangers in every city.

In response to a question, the minister said an Ulema conference would also be convened in the coming weeks to discuss security issues.

Nisar said the terrorists who carried out the Army Public School attack were Pakistanis, as initial reports had suggested. He added that the police and security forces have arrested several people suspected of planning the dastardly attack in the aftermath of the tragedy. During his briefing, Nisar stressed that the Pakistan Army does not target women and children. "The Pakistan Army has never targeted the families and children of militants," he said, adding that before launching the offensive in North Waziristan Agency in June, the country's civil and military leadership had the mutual stance of ensuring 'minimum to no casualties'.

"If our aim was to target civilians, we could have wiped out Miramshah – where both

militants and civilians live side by side – with a couple of strikes," the minister said. "But we do not target non-combatants."

Nisar said fighting terrorists was easier for other countries since terrorists looked different from native populations. "But in Pakistan, militants and their sympathisers look like us and live among us. It is an internal war for us."

He urged the nation to unite in the fight against terrorism just as it united in grief following the Peshawar attack. "The army has been fighting terrorists for some time now but the nation needs to stand up and join the fight," he said.

The interior minister asked citizens to report any suspicious activity to the nearest police station. "A helpline will be set up within a week so that people can report suspicious activity," he said.

He requested the media to refrain from giving coverage to militants and urged hotels and homeowners to thoroughly check potential tenants' credentials and backgrounds before renting out their property.

Nisar also appealed to mosques and madrassas to report suspicious people and asked cellular service providers to issue SIM cards only after thorough scrutiny. "The security of the nation is our top priority," he said.

25

Driver attacks pedestrians in Dijon

Source: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/dec/21/france-dijon-driver-attacks-pedestrians>

Dec 21, 2014 – A lone assailant shouting "Allahu Akbar" (God is great) rammed French pedestrians with his car in the central town of Dijon on Sunday night, injuring 11 people, in the second such attack in France in two days.



On Saturday, a **Muslim convert from Burundi** tried to stab a policeman at a police station in a town near Tours in central France. He was shot dead during a tussle with police who attempted to disarm him after he too shouted "Allahu Akbar" while brandishing his knife. Three police officers were injured.

The two incidents raised concerns that the attackers may have heeded a call from violent jihadists from Islamic State who have called on individuals to take up arms around the world in revenge for coalition bombings against their militants in Iraq and Syria. But French officials cautioned that the attackers in both incidents had acted alone and appeared to be suffering from mentally

illness.

The attacker in Dijon, who shouted to passers by that he was acting on behalf of "the children



© picture-alliance/dpa

of Palestine," was described by police as a **40-year-old** who had been **receiving psychiatric treatment** until the middle of last month. He was arrested after driving his Renault Clio into five separate groups of people during a half-hour period, injuring 11 people including two seriously.

night, but there aren't attacks every night." He said the police investigations would show whether there was any connection between the two incidents.

Bernard Cazeneuve, the interior minister, said the man who attacked the police on Saturday in Joué-lès-Tours had not been known to police for anything other than delinquency. But the minister said that, in a sign of radicalisation a few days before the attack, he had posted the black Islamic State flag on his Facebook page.

The Burundian, a former rapper who had been known as Bilal since his conversion, was "very mysterious and very unstable," said Cazeneuve. "The investigation will show what his psychological state was."

Manuel Valls, the French prime minister,



26

Jerusalem – similar methodology

After the attack, the Socialist party defence spokesman, Eduardo Rihan Cypel, said that there was no need to panic.

A spokesman for the centre right UMP party, Bruno Beschizza, said that "mentally ill people are in front of their [computer] screens every

expressed his solidarity with the victims and sent condolences to their families. Police and paramilitary gendarmes were ordered to tighten security at police stations and barracks in the light of Saturday's incident.

The incidents in France follow last week's siege at the Lindt cafe in



Sydney, Australia, by an apparently mentally unstable self-styled Muslim cleric. The hostage-taking was brought to a bloody end on Tuesday after 16 hours. Two of the hostages died, as well as the Iranian gunman who was believed to have acted alone.

France has a sizeable Muslim minority which represents more than 7% of the 66 million population.

According to authorities, more than 1,000 French nationals have been in contact with jihadist networks in Syria and Iraq.

EDITOR'S COMMENT: Two problems identified: (1) **Adaptivity**: similar methodologists in France and Israel – car attacks against pedestrians (especially in bus stops). Wide usage of knives and hatchets instead of firearms and bombs. Easy to find, cheap, impossible to detect or ban. Used in many terrorist assaults worldwide – initially from Chinese Uighurs. (2) **Mass media and authorities' status**: it is of interest the phraseology used by *The Guardian*: "Driver", "lone assailant", French Police: "receiving psychiatric treatment" but also from Socialsit Party: "no need to panic". It seems that the word "jihadist" is forbidden; that there is always the easy excuse of disturbed mentality and that populace worldwide is considered as idiotic that have to follow and believe the not panic suggestions. Until the next time...

UPDATE (Dec 22, 2014): ● An "Allahu Akbar" van against citizens into a mulled wine stand at a Christmas market in Nantes' Place Toyale (France). 5 were seriously injured; within seconds of veering into crowds the man stabbed himself 9 times. ● Six people have been killed and eight others injured after an out-of-control bin lorry crashed into pedestrians in central Glasgow. The council vehicle then crashed into the Millennium Hotel, near Queen Street station in George Square, at 14:30. Police Scotland has declared a major incident but said there appeared to be nothing "sinister" about the crash. Is it?

CCTV doesn't work so we'll spend money on 'bobbies on the beat', says police force

Source: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/crime/11306606/Police-force-plans-to-drop-CCTV-for-bobbies-on-the-beat.html>

27

Dec 21, 2014 – A police force is preparing to abandon round-the-clock monitoring of CCTV cameras and spend the money on 'bobbies on the beat'.

Dyfed-Powys Police discovered its network of security cameras was failing to cut crime and is poised to drop monitoring the CCTV feeds to save cash.

An independent report found the cameras had "little success in deterring violent crime or anti-social behaviour".

Christopher Salmon, the force's police and crime commissioner, said: "We must spend every pound where it delivers.

"In the meantime, I'm giving the public what they ask me for - more bobbies on the beat."

Mr Salmon said he will discuss the inquiry findings with the Chief Constable Simon Prince and county council leaders before agreeing to stop the CCTV monitoring in the New Year.

"I look forward to our discussions to agree a solution for CCTV that delivers value and that most of all is effective," he said.

"This research will be an important reference point as we develop a strategy."

The cameras are expected to remain in position but will not be routinely monitored.

Footage could be retained and used in criminal prosecutions on a case-by-case basis.

Records in the force showed that for the year to August only 1.5 per cent of case files used publicly-controlled CCTV evidence, and 2.2 per cent used evidence from private systems.

The force's biggest investigation of recent years was the hunt for missing schoolgirl April Jones which used CCTV images which caught killer Mark Bridger's car on the night of her disappearance.

Piecing together footage from a variety of private and public cameras, police were able to paint a complete picture of his movements which formed a central part of the prosecution case.



The consultants hired to write the new CCTV report concluded that while cameras had a modest impact on crime levels they were at their most effective in reducing car crime in car parks.

John Munton, Neighbourhood Watch representative for Wales, said: "We need to keep CCTV in some form. A lot of the population feel safer with it around."

"CCTV can pick up a lot of information and it may well be that the police can't act on the

footage there and then, but they can refer to it later to build a case against someone, such as a drug dealer.

"I would certainly be reassured by the sight of CCTV, and I support the idea of CCTV wherever it is because it's a deterrent, and contributes to future crime prevention.

"The issue with unmonitored CCTV is that if it captured an incident as it was happening there would be no-one there to alert the police."

1,000 CCTV cameras to solve just one crime, Met Police admits

Source: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/crime/6082530/1000-CCTV-cameras-to-solve-just-one-crime-Met-Police-admits.html>



28

Aug 2009 – Each case helped by the use of CCTV effectively costs £20,000 to detect, Met figures showed.

Critics of Britain's so-called 'surveillance society' said it raised serious concerns over how police forces used CCTV cameras to fight crime.

Britain is one of the most monitored countries in the world, with an estimated four million cameras nationwide.

An internal report released by the Metropolitan Police under Freedom of Information laws disclosed that more than one million of these are in London alone.

However, it cast doubt on the use of the cameras as a crime fighting tool.

It said: "For every 1,000 cameras in London, less than one crime is solved per year."

The report, written by Detective Chief Inspector Mick Neville, who

runs the Metropolitan Police's Visual Images Identifications and Detections Office, found that the public "have a high expectation of CCTV and are frequently told they are captured on camera 300 times per day".

Public confidence was dented when the police often stated there was no CCTV working when a crime has been committed, it said.

It also said that increasingly members of the public were complaining that officers had not bothered to view available CCTV images when trying to track down criminals.

It disclosed a "significant rise in the level of complaints from the public, where it is perceived that police have not viewed CCTV. This is now approaching 100 per year."

The report found that untrained officers were often downloading and viewing CCTV images in their hunt for evidence. The cameras were effective in crime-fighting if the images and information from them was used properly.

Detective Superintendent Michael McNally, who commissioned the report, admitted there were "some concerns" about how CCTV was being used.

The report also revealed concerns at Scotland Yard that the Conservatives could cut back on numbers of cameras or the way that they are used if the party wins the next general election, likely to be next May.

Under a section headlined "Strategic Issues", the report said: "Potential change of



Government - the Conservatives are not CCTV friendly - we need to start showing that we are targeting serious crime."

Earlier this year separate research commissioned by the Home Office suggested that the cameras had done virtually nothing to cut crime, but were most effective in preventing vehicle crimes in car parks.

A report by a House of Lords committee also said that £500million was spent on new cameras in the 10 years to 2006, money which could have been spent on street lighting or neighbourhood crime prevention initiatives.

A large proportion of the cash has been **In London, where an estimated £200 million so far has been spent on the cameras.** This suggests that each crime has cost £20,000 to detect.

Britain has 1 per cent of the world's population but around 20 per cent of its CCTV cameras - which works out as the equivalent of one for every 14 people.

David Davis MP, the former shadow Home Secretary, said the latest report "should provoke a major and long overdue rethink on where the Home Office crime prevention budget is being spent".

He added: "CCTV leads to massive expense and minimum effectiveness. It creates a huge intrusion on privacy, yet provides little or no improvement in security.

"The Metropolitan Police has been extraordinarily slow to act to deal with the ineffectiveness of CCTV, something true both in London and across the country.

"A combination of overdependence on CCTV and ineffective use of the cameras means that this money could have been much better spent on more police officers."

Chris Grayling, the shadow Home Secretary, said: "It's just not possible to fight crime with technology alone, CCTV can help in some situations but there is nothing to beat getting more police back from behind their desks and on to the streets."

Anita Coles, policy officer for campaigning group Liberty, said: "Being the world's camera hub comes at a price; not just to our privacy but also to our pockets.

"CCTV has cost millions and yet as it's not properly regulated there is little evidence of targeted and effective use. In these hard times our money would

be better spent on proven methods of crime prevention such as better street lighting and more police on the beat."

Eamonn Butler, the director of think tank the Adam Smith Institute, said: "It is obvious that the boom in CCTV cameras is not making us the slightest bit safer.

"There is no evidence that it saves us from gun or knife crime, or for that matter that it stops terrorists – many terrorists are only too glad to advertise their evil deeds.

"Nor are cameras much good in getting convictions. Evidence from them is only allowed in court if the images are securely stored and handled, so that there is no possibility that they have been tampered with."

The National Police Improvement Agency is currently undertaking a review into the effectiveness of CCTV.

A Metropolitan Police spokesman said the CCTV detection rate was based on "an estimate only and based on a small sample". She added: "They do not reflect the complete picture of cases resolved in London in which CCTV evidence is an important factor." The Home Office defended the use of CCTV, with a spokesman saying cameras could "help communities feel safer".

Lone-wolves in the UAE: the blueprint of an evolving threat

By Riccardo Dugulin

Source: <http://securityobserver.org/lone-wolves-in-the-uae-the-blueprint-of-an-evolving-threat/>

On December 1st, a single assailant turned global attention to the security situation in Abu Dhabi, capital of the United Arab Emirates



(UAE). An Emirati woman stabbed and killed an American school teacher in the female bathroom of the Boutik shopping mall^[i]. What appeared to be a violent criminal attack has in fact been dubbed by local security officials a 'lone terrorist act'^[ii]. The perpetrator had also conducted reconnaissance in the area of the personal residence of an American doctor residing in Abu Dhabi and placed a low-grade explosive device in front of his home. The makeshift bomb did not detonate^[iii]. The school teacher and the doctor were explicitly targeted because of their nationality. Since then, the perpetrator of these terrorist acts has been detained by local security forces, while the foreign ministries of the United Kingdom and the United States warned their citizens to exercise heightened caution in the country. The December 1st attack came as a shock to foreigners in the UAE and to Emirati nationals since the country has so far been spared from lone-wolf attacks. In addition, authorities managed to foil organized attempts to



destabilize the local security situation. However, the dramatic event that unfolded in Abu Dhabi marks an evolution of the threat posed to the overall operating and living environment in the UAE and more generally in the Gulf. This comes against the backdrop of an ever-strengthening anti-terrorist posture taken by the Emirati government. In fact, following the 1996 and 2001^[iv] period during which the country maintained an ambivalent stance by recognizing Sunni extremist movement like the Taliban in Afghanistan, the UAE took a leading role in the regional and global fight against Islamist terrorist movements. This evolution toward a pro-active military and security role in the region was embodied by the operations led by Major Mariam al-Mansouri, the Emirati fighter pilot who conducted air combat operations against the Islamic State (IS), formerly known as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (IS) in September 2014^[v]. The UAE's position in the fight against IS and international radical Islamist movements has ultimately resulted in the implementation of the Federal Law n°7 in November 2014 that led to the definition of a list of 85 organizations based in the UAE, the Middle East, Europe and the United States as terrorist groups sent a clear signal. This legislative move effectively bans all financial and logistical support by Emirati nationals and companies as well as people residing and institutions based in the Emirates to organizations classified as

30

terrorist groups. Emirati authorities are determined to conduct a far-reaching fight against all those providing financial, political and operational support to Sunni extremist groups[vii].

As the Emirati policy is evolving, threats posed to the country's security environment are also being reshaped. The attack in Abu Dhabi is part of a current trend of fragmentation concerning terrorist actors. This trend has recently been exemplified by attacks in Canada, France and Australia.

The most publicized terrorist plot against the UAE dates back to 2009. More than 45 suspects were arrested for allegedly wanting to target the world's tallest tower, Burj Khalifa in Dubai. The suspects were allegedly linked to Iranian operatives[viii]. While large-scale plots may still represent an underlying threat in the country, local and international public and private authorities assessed that December's killing and failed bombing are the mark of the most pressing security issue faced by foreigners and nationals alike in the UAE. In fact, this new wave of small-scale attacks is inspired by the call issued by Abu Mohammed al-Adnani^[viii], spokesperson of IS, rather than the bypassed theories linked to spectacular attacks delimited in al-Zawahari's *Knights under the Prophet's Banner*. In September 2014, al-Adnani did not call for massive terrorist attacks but exhorted IS followers and supporters to conduct numerous small-scale murders of Western personnel throughout the world as possible. This marked a clear understanding of the strategic environment in which IS is operating: a single murder can act as an exponential amplifier of the perceived reach of the Syria and Iraq based organization. For the UAE, this comes as a nerve-wracking development. In fact, the country has made some accommodations with respect to its political, financial and social environment without compromising Islamic values in making it attractive for foreign investment. As a consequence, the UAE is renowned as a regional and global commercial hub. This has led the cities of Dubai and Abu Dhabi to become areas in the Gulf with an unparalleled

amount of Western, Iranian and Asiatic interests placed side by side. In light of the most recent developments, the cultural and economic richness of the UAE may become the country's weakness in the current international effort against IS as it offers a plethora of potential targets both in Dubai and Abu Dhabi that may attract the attention of lone-wolf attackers. Given the fact that the country built its success on political stability and security for all its residents, even the smallest incidents are likely to exponentially affect the way global actors perceive the local operating environment. In addition, outside the financial and political hubs of Abu Dhabi and Dubai, areas in Sharjah, Ras al-Khaimah and in al-Ain have large Shiite minorities leading to the risk of future attacks staged by IS sympathizers against Shiite religious and social assets, such as leisure clubs and educational structures. Any sectarian motivated attack would be a potential trigger for further speculations over the political stability of the country.

The incidents in Abu Dhabi are part of a wider trend of lone-wolf terror attacks in the Gulf followed by the failed assassination attempt of a Danish national in Riyadh on November 22nd [ix] that was claimed by the IS. **Single Sunni extremist elements are assessed as one among the most imminent threats to foreign operations in the UAE and throughout the Gulf region.** The implications of this evolution are twofold. On the one hand, it highlights the need for local intelligence and security services to adapt their current posture. In fact, while foreign operatives should still be monitored as a potential threat to the UAE, internal security measures should be privileged in order to facilitate intelligence gathering targeting local extremists and to implement tighter prevention measures. On the other hand, there exists a dire need for the expatriate community to consistently revise its security measures in the country and remain apprised of the latest developments in regard to the terrorist threat. While the current threat level remains low, the risk of further attacks is present and warrants additional mitigation measures.

► References are available at source's URL.

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Boko Haram Attacks in Nigeria and Neighbouring Countries: A Chronology of Attacks

By Ioannis Mantzikos

Source: <http://www.terrorismanalysts.com/pt/index.php/pot/article/view/391/html>

“Boko Haram” is translated “Western education is sinful.”

Introduction [1]

Boko Haram's insurgency which pitted neighbour against neighbour, cost more than 4,000 lives, displaced close to half a million people, destroyed hundreds of schools and government buildings and devastated an already ravaged economy in the north-east of Nigeria, one of the country's poorest regions. Within less than five years (2010 – 2014) the Nigerian Islamist terrorists organization Boko Haram (BH) has evolved into the most lethal of all salafist jihadist organisations. Originally directing its attacks mainly at security forces and government officials, BH's campaign has expanded to include attacks on Christians, critical Muslim clerics, traditional leaders, suspected collaborators, UN offices, bars and girl schools. Its campaign of terrorism, ranges from targeting students at state (secular) schools to health workers involved in polio vaccination campaigns.

In the first half of 2014 BH even surpassed the Islamic State in Iraq in terms of lethality, according to statistics compiled by the Intel Center.[2] On Tuesday, April 15, 2014, Boko Haram attacked a girls' school in Chibok, Borno state, in northern Nigeria, abducting between 250-300 young girls. Boko Haram's leader, Abubakar Shekau, released a video on May 5, threatening to sell the girls as “wives” while also expressing his ideological opposition to the idea of educating girls. The abduction of girls and subsequent developments have prompted several nations to send logistical support teams while the Nigerian government offered a \$300,000 reward for information leading to the girls' rescue. On May 5 2014, Boko Haram took attacked the unprotected town of Gamboru Ngala, reportedly killing up to 300 civilians. These are just two incidents in a long row listed below.

The State Department's annual report on terrorism around the globe, issued in early 2014, estimated that the group's membership ranges from “the hundreds to a few thousand.” The report warned that “the number and sophistication of BH's attacks” are a source of concern. Increasingly attacking police and military targets, Boko Haram's campaign of terrorism has turned into an insurgency that has also spilled over into neighbouring Cameroon, Chad and Niger which serve as sanctuaries but have also become conflict zones.[3]

Table Political Violence in the first half of 2014: the ten most lethal groups

Rank	Terrorist/Rebel Group	Killed	Injured
1	Boko Haram	2,924	268
2	Islamic State (IS)	1,459	517
3	al-Shabaab	1,136	671

32



4	al-Huthi Rebels	584	163
5	al-Qaeda Arabian Peninsula (AQAP)	509	184
6	Taliban	384	278
7	Jabhat al-Nusrah	298	252
8	Donetsk People's Republic (DPR)	295	0
9	Islamic Front	247	68
10	Seleke	229	107

This sudden growth of Boko Haram is even more astounding, given the fact that between 2003 and 2009 only few incidents have been recorded. To chronicle this rapid rise, TRI has compiled a list of incidents, combining data from TRI's own records with those of a number of other databases and chronologies, such as incidents registered by the University of Maryland's Global Terrorism Database (START) and Emilie Ofetel's Timeline.[4] While our listing seeks to be comprehensive, it is likely that due to censorship and other factors a number of attacks have escaped our attention. This chronology is primarily meant as a Resource for researchers focusing on Nigeria.

2014 Chronology

January 26, 2014-Attacks. At least 78 people are killed in two separate attacks in north-east Nigeria — one on a busy market in Borno state and the other in neighbouring Adamawa, with suspicions falling on Boko Haram

February 11, 2014- Attacks. Suspected Boko Haram militants torch houses in the village of Konduga, killing at least 23 people, according to the governor of Borno state.

February 15, 2014-Attacks. Dozens of residents in northeastern Nigeria are killed in two separate attacks launched by Boko Haram, according to officials and residents.

February 26, 2014-Attacks. At least 29 students die in an attack on a federal college in Buni Yadi, near the capital of Yobe state, Nigeria's military says.

March 14, 2014-Attacks. Hundreds of militants were said to have taken part in the attack on the Giwa barracks in Maiduguri,

March 30, 2014-Failed Attack. Heavy gunfire that may have lasted some hours very close to Aso Rock, the presidential villa, starting at Sunday morning. The gunfire appears to have been centered at Yellow House, the headquarters of the State Security Services (SSS).

April 14, 2014- At the suburban Abuja bus station a suicide bomber blasts himself in an explosion that killed at least seventy-five people and probably many more.

April 17, 2014-Kidnapping. More than 200 girls and young women went missing from their school dormitories

April 20, 2014-Attack. Suspected gunmen set ablaze some houses in the staff quarters of Government Girls Secondary School, Yana, killing a five-year old girl

April 23, 2014-Assassinations. Two Borno State politicians have been killed by suspected members of the outlawed Boko Haram sect in an highway ambush[9]

April 26, 2014-Attacks. Boko Haram insurgents have attacked a military unit at Blabili, 29 April 2014. Relatives say they have been told of mass weddings involving insurgents and some of the girls abducted two weeks ago

May 5, 2014- Statement. Leader of Boko Haram that kidnapped the girls announced plans to sell them

May 20 2014-Attacks. At least 118 are killed and 56 injured in two car bomb attacks on a market in Jos, central Nigeria, which go off within 20 minutes of each other. The regional governor blames Boko Haram.

June 1, 2014-Attacks. At least 40 are killed when a bomb explodes at a football stadium in Mubi in the north-east of the country shortly after a match. The attack is blamed on Boko Haram.

June 14, 2014- Attacks. Hundreds are feared dead in a suspected Boko Haram attack on four villages in Borno state, with local leaders putting the death toll as high as 500.

June 17, 2014- Attacks. 21 football fans are killed when a bomb rips through the viewing centre where they are watching the World Cup in Damaturu, northern Nigeria.

33



June 24 2014- Attacks. Local officials report 30 killed and more than 60 women kidnapped in a series of attacks over several days in Borno state, although the Nigerian government denies the abductions.

June 25 2014-Attacks. At least 21 people are killed and 17 injured in a bombing at a crowded shopping centre in the centre of Abuja. The attack — the third on the city in three months — is blamed on Boko Haram.

July 3 2014-Failed Attack. suspected Boko Haram fighters killed 5 people in Konduga (Borno) when a bomb believed to have been planted in a pickup van loaded with firewood exploded.

July 4, 2014-Attack. 15 people, including motorists, were killed when suspected Boko Haram gunmen laid ambush along Maiduguri -Mafa- Dikwa Road.

July 6, 2014-Attacks. Suspected Boko Haram fighters, dressed in military uniforms, killed seven people in an attack at Krenuwa village in the Marte district, near the northeastern border with Cameroon.

July 8, 2014-JTF Operation Nigerian soldiers attempted to regain control over the Damboa military base that resulted in 15 soldiers killed when Boko Haram fighters counter attacked.

July 11, 2014-Attacks Suspected Boko Haram fighters destroyed the main bridge linking Maiduguri-Damboa-Madafuma- Biu Road.

July 14, 2014-Attacks. Dille village in Askira Uba Local government of Borno State was attacked by suspected Boko Haram gunmen and killed 26 people as well as torching houses and three churches.

July 14, 2014-Attacks. Suspected Boko Haram fighters attacked the Mandafuma village in Biu Local Government Area of the Borno state, injuring one person and destroying property.

July 15, 2014- Attacks. Suspected Boko Haram fighters attacked the Borno State village of Huyim village in Biu Local Government Areawith and killed about 9 people.

July 15, 2014-Attacks. Suspected Boko Haram fighters attacked the Sabon Gari village in Damboa Local Government Area of Borno State and killed approximately 27 people. Sabon Gari is located about 40 kilometres from Biu in southern Borno, and 145 kilometres away from Maiduguri.

July 16, 2014-Attacks. Suspected Boko Haram fighters kidnapped a German in Gombi town of Adamawa State. The man, who is said to be the principal of a technical skill acquisition centre in the town, was abducted on his way to work.

July 17, 2014-Attacks Suspected Boko Haram fighters destroyed a bridge in Gambou Ngala (Borno State), which linked Nigeria to Cameroon.

July 18, 2014-JTF Operation Boko Haram fighters killed approximately 80 villagers and set homes a blaze in Damboa (northeastern Nigerian town just 85 kilometers (53 miles) from Maiduguri).

July 23, 2014-Attack. Two suicide bombings in Kaduna (north central city in Nigeria) during which approximately 82 people were killed.

July 24, 2014-Attacks. Suspected Boko Haram fighters launched a crossborder raid into Cameroon during which 2 Cameroonian soldiers were killed.

July 25, 2014- Attack. Boko Haram fighters attacked a community in the south of Borno State, killing its district leader, Alhaji Ibrahim Dawi, and about 12 people. Residents of Garubula village in Biu local government area of the state confirmed that Dawi was shot dead.

27 July 2014-Kidnapping. Boko Haram fighters kidnapped the wife of Cameroon's vice prime minister and killed at least three people during an attack on the northern town of Kolofata, Cameroon.

July 29, 2014-Failed Attack. Boko Haram is accused of two suicide bombing in Potiskum (Yobe State) during which 55 people were killed. According to witnesses, the first explosions occurred near the palace of the Emir of Potiskum at the Shi'a Kalli Alkali Mosque. The second explosion was at a Majalisa, where Shi'ate Muslims were resting at one of the primary schools in Potiskum.

July 30, 2014- Boko Haram fighters set a light five churches in communities south of Borno, namely Kwajaffa, Tashan Alade and some communities in Hawul Local Government Area in the southern part of the state.

► Read the full article (along with 2003-2013 chronology and notes) at source's URL.

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EDITOR'S COMMENT: Revealing comparison table! Although the whole world is focused on IS, Boko Haram proved more deadly than spectacular IS and its alien *modus operandi*.

Counterterrorism Bookshelf: 22 Books on Terrorism & Counter-terrorism Related Subjects

By Joshua Sinai

Source: <http://www.terrorismanalysts.com/pt/index.php/pot/article/view/393/html>

This column consists of two parts: capsule reviews of books published by various publishers, and, continuing the series begun in previous columns, highlighting books by publishers with significant publishing programs in terrorism & counterterrorism-related studies (with the authors listed in alphabetical order). Please note that most of these books were recently published, with several published over the past several years but deserving renewed interest.

General

Sarah Miller Beebe and Randolph H. Pherson, *Cases in Intelligence Analysis: Structured Analytic Techniques in Action.* [Second Edition] Los Angeles, CA: CQ Press/SAGE, 2014. 395 pages, US \$ 60.00 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-1-4833-4016-6.

This comprehensive handbook applies more than 25 structured analytic techniques (SATs) that are employed in intelligence analysis to 17 case studies, in order to provide analysts with practice in using them against real world problems. This framework is outlined in a matrix of techniques in the book's opening pages, with the SATs broken down into eight categories of decomposition and visualization, idea generation, scenarios and indicators, hypothesis generation and testing, assessment of cause and effect, challenge analysis, and decision support. The 17 case studies include significant intelligence-and terrorism-related historical cases (some of a hypothetical nature) such as analyzing the identity of the fall 2001 anthrax killer, the assassination of Benazir Bhutto, the summer 1996 Atlantic Olympics bomber, the October 2002 DC sniper shootings, potential FARC attacks against the United States, the November 2008 terrorist attacks against Mumbai, India, and other cases of politically inspired violence. Each case study consists of a narrative, discussion questions, analytic exercises, and recommended readings. Originally published in 2011, this second edition features new cases and analytic techniques. Although primarily intended for intelligence analysts, this handbook's presentation of structured analytic techniques will also prove highly useful for students, educators and other practitioners in terrorism and counterterrorism studies. The authors, based in the Washington, DC region, are prominent private sector experts in training intelligence analysts in these techniques.

35

Artur Beifuss and Francesco Trivini Bellini, *Branding Terror: The Logotypes and Iconography of Insurgent Groups and Terrorist Organizations.* London and New York: Merrell Publishers, 2013. 336 pages, US \$ 34.95 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-1-8589-4601-6.

An original and innovative account of how terrorist groups employ visual elements in the form of distinct logos, flags and other imagery to market their 'brand identities,' and, as described by the authors, just like corporations and political organizations "to stand out in a highly competitive sector, or even to mark a claimed territory" (p. 11). Since visual identity is the book's focus, only terrorist groups that have a distinct logo or flag are discussed, with such imagery located in open sources, such as a group's website or video. For each of the 65 terrorist groups listed in the book (which are drawn from lists of designated terrorist groups established by major governments), the authors provide an overview of its ideology, geographical location, history, and an analysis of the imagery it employs. This handbook is a valuable contribution to the literature on terrorist groups, particularly in understanding how they go about using their distinct logos and flags to market themselves to their members, supporting constituencies, and even their targeted adversaries. Artur Beifuss is a journalist and former United Nations counterterrorism analyst, and Francesco Trivini Bellini is a creative director who has developed branding identities of companies and cultural institutions.



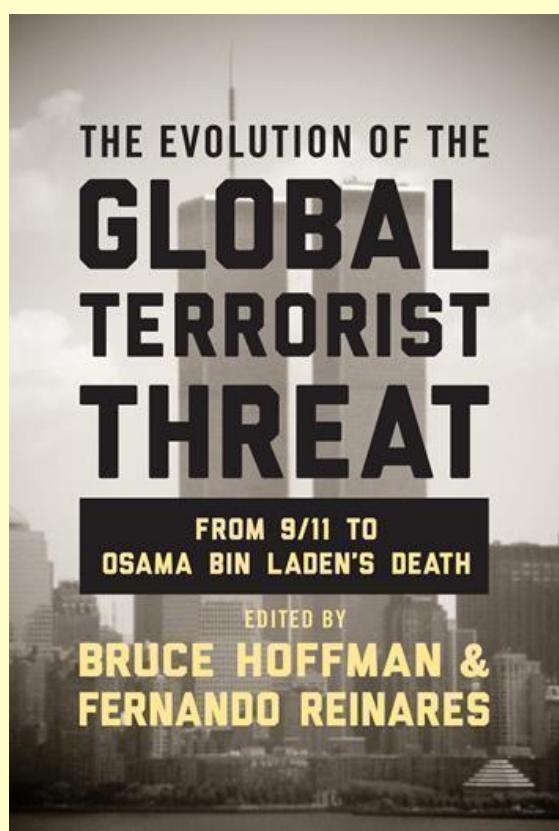
Gordon M. Hahn, *The Caucasus Emirate Mujahedin: Global Jihadism in Russia's North Caucasus and Beyond*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2014. 344 pages, US \$ 45.00 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-1-4766-1495-3.

A richly comprehensive and extensively footnoted account of the interaction between the global Jihadist/Islamist revolutionary movement's propagation of what the author terms the "jihadist method" as well as its material support to the nationalist and Islamic extremists in Chechnya and the Caucasus since the mid-1990s. To examine this interaction, the chapters cover topics such as Jihadization and the Caucasus Emirate (CE), the nature of the CE's leadership, organization and religious ideology, the CE's terrorist operations, and the CE's operational expansion into other regional conflicts—beyond its primary state adversary, Russia—such as Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Syria and Europe. The author's discussion (pages 232-246) of the CE's "direct inspiration" – and even operational cooperation – with Tamerlan Tsarnaev, the mastermind of the Boston Marathon bombing in April 2013, is especially interesting for its highly detailed information about their interaction. His conclusion is also pertinent, as he writes that "the attack on Boston was the first such plot to be successful." (p. 246). The concluding chapter places the CE in its comparative and theoretical context.

Bruce Hoffman and Fernando Reinares (Eds.), *The Evolution of the Global Terrorist Threat: From 9/11 To Osama Bin Laden's Death*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2014. 696 pages, US \$ 45.00 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-0-231-16898-4.

This book's objective, as described by the editors, is to provide answers to one of the primary disagreements in counterterrorism circles, whether in academia or government, "over the nature of the [terrorist] threat, al-Qaeda itself, bin Laden's authority over the movement after its expulsion from Afghanistan, and whether or not a leaderless process of terrorist radicalization and violence has superseded a leader-led one." (p. ix) Moreover, as the editors add, their objective was to examine the thesis (as famously expounded by Marc Sageman's "bunch of guys" theory of leaderless jihad) that "The main terrorist threat, [as] some claimed, no longer came from distinct jihadist groups and organizations but rather from independent, self-constituted local cells or from isolated, self-recruited individuals." (p. x) To accomplish these objectives – which is the first time that such an undertaking has been achieved in a book of such comprehensiveness and length – the two editors and 26 other contributors attempted to answer these questions in 24 cases where al Qaeda and its affiliates were implicated in those attacks. These cases include the November 2002 Mombasa attacks in Kenya, the March 2004 Madrid train bombings, the aborted March 2004 Operation Crevice plot in London, the 2006 plot by the "Toronto 18", the November 2008 Mumbai attacks, and the July 2010 attacks in Kampala, Uganda.

Based on these case studies, the editors conclude that while al-Qaeda "remained a clearly defined and active terrorist organization with an identifiable leadership and chain of command" and "embraced a goal-oriented strategy," global jihadism had become a "polymorphous phenomenon – not an amorphous one," and had become "transformed into a dynamically heterogeneous collection of both radicalized individuals and functioning terrorist organizations" (p. 618). Most importantly in terms of challenging the leaderless jihad thesis, the editors find that although "Command and control of these entities was uneven...the al-Qaeda senior leadership nonetheless



36

appeared to have had a direct hand in the most important and potentially high-payoff operations" (p. 618).

Finally, in terms of the evolving global terrorism threat by these "variegated jihadist actors," the editors find them "adhering to a shared ideology and a common mind-set serving and respecting the same preeminent leader – Osama bin Laden" (p. 619).

With current events in Syria and Iraq, particularly the emergence of the non-al Qaeda-affiliated Islamic State (IS) as the primary jihadi insurgent organization in that region, adding fuel to the debate over the role and influence of al Qaeda "Central" and its affiliates in spearheading al-Qaeda-type insurgencies around the world, this edited volume is an indispensable reference resource for understanding the issues that need to be examined in evaluating al Qaeda's current threat potential.

Richard Bach Jensen, *The Battle Against Anarchist Terrorism: An International History, 1878-1934*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2014. 424 pages, US \$ 99.00 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-1107034051.

This is a highly detailed and comprehensive account of how the governments of Europe (including Russia) and the United States countered anarchist terrorist groupings operating in their societies, during the formative early period of modern terrorism when such groups represented the primary type of terrorist threats against them. The book's chapters analyze the origins and activities of anarchist terrorism, as well as how the threatened governments cooperated in countering these threats. In the final chapter, "The Decline of Anarchist Terrorism, 1900-1930s," the author concludes that in addition to the success of Western security services in reducing the capability of the anarchist groups to continue their violent campaigns, another factor causing the decline of anarchist terrorism (citing the historian David C. Rapoport, who also wrote the book's Foreword) was that "after World War I a new, anti-imperialist and anti-colonialist era in the history of terrorism developed and increasingly displaced anarchist terrorism" (p. 358). The author is Professor of History at the Louisiana Scholars' College at Northwestern State University in Natchitoches, Louisiana.

Fred Kaplan, *The Insurgents: David Petraeus and the Plot to Change the American Way of War*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster Paperbacks, 2014. 432 pages, US \$ 16.00 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-1-4516-4265.

37

A fascinating journalistic account (first published in 2013) of how, beginning in 2004, a small group of soldier-scholars, led by General David Petraeus, Colonel John Nagl, and other national security academics, were instrumental in introducing a more comprehensive counterinsurgency strategy into the U.S. military's campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan, which was formalized in the publication of the FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency* field manual and published in December 2006. The book is also valuable for its overview of how the doctrine of counterinsurgency had evolved since the Second World War. With the current jihadi insurgencies in Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Somalia, and elsewhere still requiring countermeasures that draw on military and 'nation-building' components, the insights contained in this book are still highly pertinent.

Ian Morris, *War! What Is It Good For?: Conflict and the Progress of Civilization From Primates To Robots*. New York, NY: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2014. 512 pages, US \$ 30.00 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-0374286000.

A well-written and comprehensive account of more than fifteen thousand years of warfare around the world and its impact on the evolution of civilization. Of particular interest is the author's account of terrorist warfare, which he discusses in a brief section on the impact of the terrorist assassination of Austria's Archduke Franz Ferdinand, in Sarajevo, on June 28, 1914, in ushering in the First World War, a longer section on an evaluation of the impact of al-Qaeda's terrorist warfare in achieving its objectives, as well as an assessment of the effectiveness of the U.S. counterterrorism campaign against it, and the emerging role of robotic drones in counterterrorism. The author's conclusion, based on a famous Roman proverb, is worth reiterating : "If you want peace, prepare for war" (p. 393). The author is a Professor of Classics and History at Stanford University.

Gary Noesner, *Stalling For Time: My Life as an FBI Hostage Negotiator*. New York, NY: Random House, 2010. 240 pages, US \$ 26.00 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-1400067251.



A personal account by a retired head of the FBI's hostage Crisis Negotiation Unit, recalling famous hostage standoff crises his unit had attempted to defuse. These hostage crises, which are fully detailed, included the June 1985 hijacking of TWA Flight 847 out of Athens, Greece, by Lebanese terrorists; the October 1985 hijacking of the Italian cruise ship, the *Achille Lauro*, in the Mediterranean Sea; the February 1993 standoff by the religious cult led by David Koresh, near Waco, Texas; the June 1996 standoff with the Montana Freemen, a Christian Patriot movement, in Jordan, Montana, who opposed any government authority over them; the April 1997 standoff with far-right separatists in Texas; and the May 2001 hostage taking by the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) of American missionaries (and others) in the Philippines. The author was also involved as head of the Crisis Negotiation Unit within the FBI's Critical Incident Response Group in tracking what became known as the "DC Sniper" incidents in October 2002. Mr. Noesner's conclusions are highly relevant for the current era, with terrorist groups extensively employing the tactic of hostage taking in their warfare, as he notes that while he generally favors the primacy of the negotiation approach in resolving hostage standoff incidents, it is important to track the progress of such efforts because there are times when "when the risks increase" and "negotiation isn't enough." (pp. 215-216)

Anita Shapira, *Israel: A History*. Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2014. 528 pages, US \$ 29.95 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-1-61168-618-0.

A sweeping, comprehensive account of the origins of the state of Israel from its pre-state beginnings in 1881, its establishment as an independent state in 1948, and more recent political developments in the state. Although the author's discussion ends in 2000 (it was initially published in English in 2012), thus making the account dated, it nevertheless provides a valuable understanding of political trends that are playing out today, particularly the increasing religious militancy by right-wing Jewish elements in the 1980s and 1990s who advocated obeying rabbinical orders "on worldly matters such as the evacuation of territories – thus blurring the separation that had existed in religious Zionism since the 1920s between the sacred, which was the rabbis' domain, and the profane, the domain of secular leaders, i.e., politicians" (p. 402). It is such insights that make this book indispensable for understanding the historical trends that have converged to produce the turbulent state of modern-day Israel. The author, one of Israel's leading historians, is a professor emerita at Tel Aviv University.

38

Dan Smith, *The Penguin State of the World Atlas* [Completely Revised and Updated Ninth Edition]. New York, NY: Penguin Books, 2012. 144 pages, US \$ 22.00 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-0143122654.

This atlas is a comprehensive visual representation of significant key indicators and statistics that characterize modern societies, such as urbanization, wealth and poverty, food and water, goals for development, energy resources and consumption, global warming and biodiversity, literacy, gender equality, pandemics, wars and peacekeeping, and cyber warfare. Although all of these topics affect terrorism-driven conflicts to some extent, of particular interest is the atlas's section on war and peace, which discusses the nature of wars in the 21st century, the roles of warlords, gang-lords and militias, the new front line in cyber-warfare, data on casualties of wars (including terrorist conflicts), and the spread of refugees due to such conflicts. In one of the author's numerous insights he notes that "The effects of war are long lasting. An average of 30 years of economic growth is lost through a civil war, and the country's international trade takes on average 20 years to recover. People who might otherwise have grown up healthy are born into poverty, malnutrition, and ill health. And one effect of war is war itself; 90 percent of contemporary armed conflicts are old conflicts coming back." (p. 66)

Werner G.K. Stritzke, Stephan Lewandowsky, David Denemark, Joseph Clare, and Frank Morgan (Eds.), *Terrorism and Torture: An Interdisciplinary Perspective*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2009. 368 pages, US\$ 44.99 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-1107412514.

The contributors to this edited volume apply a multidisciplinary approach to comprehensively examine the motivations of those who become terrorists to resort to such warfare tactics, the nature of terrorist warfare vis-à-vis the prohibition against attacks on noncombatant civilians, the types of counterterrorism campaigns being waged by governments against their terrorist adversaries, the use of torture by governments to extract information from terrorist suspects, and techniques for effective counterterrorism measures, such as reducing the risk of terrorism by "integrating jurisdictional and opportunity approaches" (i.e.,



"simultaneously (1) taking a society-wide psychological/sociological approach to lowering general support for terrorism, and (2) implementing ongoing situational strategies to reduce terrorist opportunity" (p. 326) This book will undoubtedly be of renewed interest given the controversy surrounding the December 2014 U.S. Senate Intelligence Committee report on several of these topics.

Juan C. Zarate, *Treasury's War: The Unleashing of a New Era of Financial Warfare*. New York, NY: Public Affairs, 2013. 512 pages, US \$ 29.99 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-1610391153.

A personal account by a former high-level U.S. government official in the Treasury Department and the White House of how he and his colleagues succeeded in implementing new measures and tools to apply financial pressure against the country's terrorist adversaries (as well as state proliferators of weapons of mass destruction, such as North Korea and Iran). The insights provided by the author's account make this book valuable for those seeking to understand how the financial component of counter-terrorism plays such a crucial part in undermining the capability of terrorist groups to function.

The Worldwatch Institute, *State of the World 2014: Governing for Sustainability*. Washington, DC: Island Press, 2014. 320 pages, US\$ 23.00 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-1-61091-541-0.

This volume's primary objective is to analyze problems in political and economic systems around the world, and suggest opportunities to improve governance, locally and globally (with these volumes updated on an annual basis). What makes this handbook especially relevant for terrorism and counterterrorism studies – and particularly the analysis of root causes of terrorism – is its focus on how new grassroots movements are continuously emerging, which are part of "a broader phenomenon of spreading popular protests driven by a range of grievances and demands – irrespective of the political governance system in question" (p. 16). In fact, as the volume's editors point out, "A recent study analyzing 843 protests between January 2006 and July 2013 in 87 countries found a steady increase in protests from 59 in 2006 to 112 during just the first half of 2013. Many of the protests – ranging from marches and rallies to acts of civil disobedience – involve issues that are of relevance to a more sustainable and equitable society. The lack of 'real democracy' is a major motivating factor and is seen as an underlying reason for the lack of economic and environmental justice" (p. 16).

39

Publications from Oxford University Press

Charles Boix and Susan C. Stokes (Eds.) *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2009. 1021 pages, US \$ 55.00 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-0199566020.

A comprehensive overview of the discipline of comparative politics, covering the general categories of theory and methodology, states, state formation, and political consent, political regimes and transitions, political instability and political conflict, mass political mobilization, processing political demands, and governance in comparative perspective. Although some of the topics are esoteric, such as Chapter 2, "Multicausality, Context-Conditionality, and Endogeneity," Chapter 3, "Rethinking Revolution: a Neo-Tocquevillian Perspective," and Chapter 34, "Context-Conditional Political Budget Cycles," many chapters are highly pertinent to terrorism and counterterrorism studies. Of particular interest are Chapter 4, "The Case Study: What it is and What it Does," Chapter 5, "Field Research," Chapter 8, "Collective Action Theory," Chapter 11, "National Identity," Chapter 12, "Ethnicity and Ethnic Conflict," Chapter 16, "Dictatorship: Analytical Approaches," Chapter 18, "Civil Wars," Chapter 19, "Contentious Politics and Social Movements," Chapter 20, "Mechanisms of Globalized Protest Movements," and Chapter 37, "Accountability and the Survival of Governments."

Janet M. Box-Steffensmeier, Henry F. Brady, and David Collier (Eds.) *The Oxford Handbook of Political Methodology*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2010. 880 pages, US \$ 55.00 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-0199585564.

With the discipline of terrorism and counterterrorism studies increasingly drawing on computational social science methodologies in constructing terrorism incident databases, employing link analysis and social network analysis mapping of terrorist networks and associations, as well as mining databases to generate insight on terrorists' activities, this handbook's comprehensive overview of the discipline of political methodology will be of special interest to those who employ such qualitative and quantitative methodologies in their work. The



handbook is divided into nine parts: introduction, approaches to social science methodology, concepts and measurement, causality and explanation in social research, experiments, quasi-experiments and natural experiments, quantitative and qualitative tools, and organizations, institutions, and movements in the field of methodology. Of special interest are Chapter 4, "Agent-based Modeling," Chapter 5, "Concepts, Theories, and Numbers: A Checklist for Constructing, Evaluating , and Using Concepts or Quantitative Measures," Chapter 6, "Measurement," Chapter 7, "Typologies, Forming Concepts and Creating Categorical Variables," Chapter 10, "Causation and Explanation in Social Science," Chapter 16, "Survey Methodology," Chapter 19, "Time-series Analysis," Chapter 21, "Bayesian Analysis," Chapter 27, "Counterfactuals and Case Studies," Chapter 29, "Interviewing and Qualitative Field Methods: Pragmatism and Practicalities," "Integrating Qualitative and Quantitative Methods," and Chapter 36, "Forty years of Publishing in Quantitative Methodology."

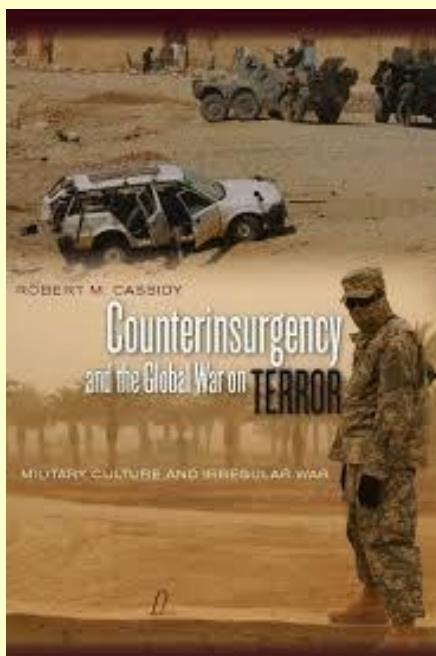
Robert E. Goodin (Ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Political Science*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2011. 1291 pages, US \$ 60.00 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-0199604456.

A comprehensive overview of the discipline of political science, covering the general categories of political theory, political institutions, law and politics, political behavior, contextual political analysis, comparative politics, international relations, political economy, public policy, and political methodology. Topics of special interest to terrorism and counterterrorism studies include Chapter 6, "Modernity and its Critics," Chapter 14, "Judicial Behavior," Chapter 15, "Law and Society," Chapter 17, "Overview of Political Behavior: Political Behavior and Citizen Politics," Chapter 18, "Political Psychology and Choice," Chapter 21, "Political Intolerance in the Context of Democratic Theory," Chapter 25, "Why and How Place Matters," Chapter 26, "Why and How History Matters," Chapter 29, "What Causes Democratization?," and Chapter 36, "Big Questions in the Study of World Politics."

Publications from Stanford University Press

Ariel I. Ahram, *Proxy Warriors: The Rise and Fall of State-Sponsored Militias*. Stanford, CA: Stanford Security Studies, An Imprint of Stanford University Press, 2011. 208 pages, US \$ 65.00 [Hardcover], US \$ 21.95 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-0804773570.

An original account of how paramilitary organizations are co-opted by states that have difficulty controlling their territories, transforming them in the process into state-sponsored militias. The author applies his conceptual framework to analyze how such militias interacted with state authorities in three case studies: the GOLKAR (*Partai Golongan Karya – Party of Functional Groups*) in Indonesia, the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) in Iran, and the Sunni-based tribal 'awakening' and numerous other Shi'ite militias in Iraq. Although the author's conclusion is correct that "Learning to accommodate those nonstate actors who are actually providing security to local communities is a better alternative than waiting in vain for strong states to replace them" (p. 140), the IRGC is considered a highly repressive and economically corrupt arm of the state and the Shi'ite militias in Iraq have greatly contributed to the country's instability and anarchy. The author is an Assistant Professor in the School of International and Area Studies and the Department of Political Science at the University of Oklahoma.



Robert M. Cassidy, *Counterinsurgency and the Global War on Terror*. Stanford, CA: Stanford Security Studies, An Imprint of Stanford University Press, 2008. 224 pages, US \$ 24.95 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-0804759663.

In this paperback edition of a volume originally published in 2006, the author, at the time a U.S. Army Officer, discusses the Russian, British, and American approaches to counterinsurgency in order to generate findings about best practices in countering guerrilla and terrorist insurgencies. His conclusions are especially germane to the current era's need for effective counterinsurgency campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq, as he writes that "there are no magic

40

and inherently quantifiable ‘metrics’ that we can slap on a Power Point matrix, with green and amber gumballs, one that might precisely measure our path to victory in counterinsurgency. This type of warfare is much more complex and qualitative because much of it deals with the population’s perception of both the guerrillas’ and the government’s legitimacy and credible capacity to coerce” (p. 163). An effective counterinsurgency campaign, he writes, must “employ force minimally but credibly and persuasively; ensure there is a unified and joint civil-military interagency approach; take all measures to enhance the perceived legitimacy of the government; co-opt and include the political opposition, to include the former insurgent infrastructure, into the legitimate political process; and maximize the employment of indigenous forces early, in both regular and irregular roles” (p. 163).

David Fitzgerald, *Learning to Forget: US Army Counterinsurgency Doctrine and Practice from Vietnam to Iraq*. Stanford, CA: Stanford Security Studies, An Imprint of Stanford University Press, 2013. 304 pages, US \$ 24.95 [Hardcover], US \$ 17.46 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-0804793377.

An account, based on extensive archival research, of the evolution of the U.S. Army’s counterinsurgency doctrine from the early 1960s to the current era as it was implemented in practice in the civil wars in Vietnam until Iraq and Afghanistan. The author concludes that, as demonstrated by the difficulties encountered by the American counterinsurgency experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan, there is a need to recognize the limits to military intervention and the strategic utility of the use of force, although, as he adds, “these lessons will be contested and reinterpreted anew as contemporary contingencies dictate” (p. 210).

Publications from the University of Chicago Press

Barak Mendelsohn, *Combating Jihadism: American Hegemony and Interstate Cooperation in the War on Terrorism*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2012. 304 pages, US \$ 50.00 [Hardcover], US \$ 27.50 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-226520124.

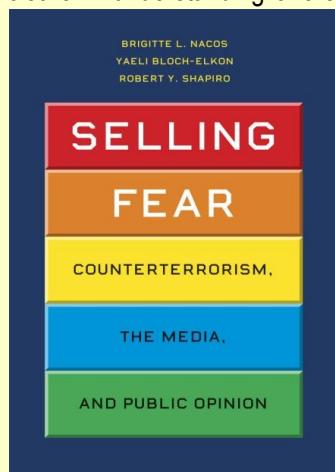
The author draws on what he terms the English School of International Relations studies which “views states as members of an international society tied together by shared norms, general goals, and common rules that facilitate order and mitigate the negative effects of anarchy” (p. 2) to discuss how its most “hegemonic” power (i.e., the United States) and the international community cooperated against the jihadi threat posed by al Qaeda. The book is divided into two parts: an analysis of the jihadi threat, which, in the author’s phrasing “introduces the general logic guiding the systemic response,” (p. 34) [in which the ‘systemic response’ in ordinary English would mean ‘counterterrorism’] and the second part, “which examines specific spheres of international response, showing in the process that although the level of interstate cooperation has been high, it has also varied across issue areas” (p. 35). With statements such as “The approach presented in this book complicates assessments of the hegemon’s pursuit of multilateralism and its willingness to ‘go it alone’” (p. 34), and “The suppression of terrorism financing and reinforcement of states’ control over their borders represent efforts to bolster the international this society and its members in ways that are conducive to international cooperation” (p. 35), the volume is clearly intended for academic audiences who appreciate the use of jargon to explain international relations. It will be of limited utility to those interested in gaining a more insightful – and clearer – understanding of the jihadi terrorist threat and the components of effective counterterrorism.

41

The author is assistant professor of political science at Haverford College and a senior fellow at the Foreign Policy Research Institute.

Brigitte L. Nacos, Yaeli Bloch-Elkon, and Robert Y. Shapiro. *Selling Fear: Counterterrorism, the Media, and Public Opinion*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2011. 264 pages, US \$ 77.00 [Hardcover], US \$ 28.00 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-0226567204.

This book’s aim is to examine the period in the aftermath of 9/11 “in which the American government used fear to control politics by manipulating the mass media and, through the media, public opinion. It describes how public relations strategies, the media’s presentation of news, pollsters’ decisions on what to ask about, and the public’s perceptions and opinions all interacted with each other



on terrorism-related issues for four years after the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001" (p. xii). The authors make the controversial claim that the U.S. government used fear and demagoguery to 'control the politics' of counterterrorism. Certainly, the Bush administration's counterterrorism policies were not 'flawless', but the authors appear so determined to demonstrate that 'selling fear' was the administration's paramount concern that the authors underestimate the magnitude of the terrorist threats against America and the West at the time in order to strengthen their 'thesis' that the U.S. vastly overreacted to these threats. While one may criticize the authors' selling fear thesis, this book stands on solid ground in its operationalization of public opinion data to generate its findings.

Joseba Zulaika, *Terrorism: The Self-Fulfilling Prophecy*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2009. 288 pages, US \$ 63.00 [Hardcover], US \$ 23.00 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-0226994161.

This book's thesis can be summed up as follows: "The terrorism expert is arguably the most ironic authority figure since the inquisitor of the European witch-craze of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The role of the inquisitorial expert was to supply the mythology that fueled the witch-craze – a grotesque demonology based on the dualism of God and the Devil, and which rested on the confessions of witches obtained under torture." (p. 24) Based on such assumptions that are sprinkled throughout the book, the author concludes that "The dialectical images of terrorism and counterterrorism unmask the traumatic core of current international politics – of a past that must be brought to an end once and for all." (p. 223) With the same reality interpreted differently by those adhering to different ideologies and dogmas, it is left to the reader to decide whether to accept this author's version of the reality of the nature of terrorism and counterterrorism.

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The Modus Operandi of Jihadi Terrorists in Europe

By Petter Nesser and Anne Stenersen

Source: <http://www.terrorismanalysts.com/pt/index.php/pot/article/view/388/html>

42

While we are starting to learn more about the "who" and "why" of jihadi terrorism in Europe, very few studies have dealt with the "how." [1] The modus operandi of jihadis in Europe ranges from simultaneous mass casualty bombings such as those in Madrid on 11 March 2004, to crude attacks such as the killing of a British soldier in Woolwich on 22 May 2013. Considering the continuous threat of jihadi terrorism in Europe and the sizeable contingent of European fighters in Syria, there is an urgent need for research-based knowledge about the modus operandi of European jihadis. This article makes three contributions. First, we offer the most thorough overview yet of how jihadis have plotted terrorist attacks in Western Europe. Secondly, we propose tentative explanations as to why the terrorists have altered their weapon types, attack types and target types over time. Thirdly, we discuss what modus operandi to expect three to five years from now. The study is explorative. We do not aim to formulate or test theory in a strict sense. Our main objective is to create an empirical basis for further theorizing on why terrorists alter their modus operandi.

Two overall trends have been identified. First, targeting is becoming more selective. In the 1990s and early 2000s, jihadi terrorism in Europe was dominated by random mass casualty attacks on transportation, exemplified by the Madrid bombings. In recent years it has become more common to target Jews, artists involved in the Prophet Mohammed cartoons affair, or soldiers in uniform. Secondly, weapons and tactics are becoming more diverse. In the 1990s and early 2000s, jihadis in Europe operated in groups and planned bomb attacks with certain types of explosives. In recent years, more terrorists have worked alone and they used a broader repertoire of weapons, including knives, axes and handguns. Our data suggest that a majority of jihadis in Europe still prefer to work in groups and carry out bomb attacks, but that an increasing number resort to single actor terrorism and crude weapons to avoid detection.

When discussing the data, we compare the period before and after 2008. The year 2008 was chosen for methodological reasons, as explained in the method and data section. However, when interpreting the results it is worth noting that the time around 2008 was characterized by certain developments in the jihadi field that were bound to influence



international terrorism. From 2008 onward, al-Qaida's central organization was weakened by a drastic increase in drone attacks in northwestern Pakistan.[2] At the same time, regional al-Qaida affiliates in the Middle East and Africa were on the rise, and some of them began to dabble in international terrorism on al-Qaida's behalf. In addition, since 2008 more independent sympathizers were drawn toward jihadism via new social media such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.[3]

We propose two overall explanations for the changes in modus operandi. We contend that the trend towards more discriminate targeting reflects al-Qaida's need for legitimacy and support in a situation when the organization is weakened by counter-terrorism and faces competition from other jihadi groups. By focusing on discriminate targets, the organization may have hoped to win broader sympathy and make up for some of the criticism it faced following mass-casualty attacks that killed Muslims. Such an approach resembles, to some extent, what Neumann and Smith refer to as 'strategic terrorism,' which implies that terrorist groups will eventually shift away from indiscriminate violence and move towards activities designed to boost the group's legitimacy.[4] However, al-Qaida's trajectory deviates from the framework because it has not abandoned mass-casualty terrorism altogether. Instead - probably to fulfill a dual need of upholding its reputation as the world's most dangerous terrorist organization on one hand, and to win sympathy on the other hand - the organization has widened its repertoire of tactics to include both discriminate and indiscriminate attacks. As for the trend towards diversity in weapons and tactics, we contend that it first and foremost reflects how jihadi networks have had to adapt their modus operandi in response to Western counter-terrorism measures. However, we also surmise that this diversity reflects a more heterogeneous landscape of actors.

Based on the trends we identify here, we expect bomb attacks and armed assaults to be the most likely terrorism scenarios three to five years from now. The most likely mass-casualty scenario is a bomb attack in a crowded area. The most likely tactical innovation is a combination of several crude methods such as arson, armed assaults and small bomb attacks. We expect that jihadis in Europe will prefer attacking sub-national entities, communities and individuals with symbolic value, rather than societies at large. However, certain elements within al-Qaida and like-minded groups will continue to plot indiscriminate mass killings.

Al-Qaida has so far been instrumental in shaping the threat from jihadi terrorism in Europe, but as of 2014, new and powerful actors are on the rise. The Islamic State (IS) and other jihadi outfits in Syria and Iraq may also affect the modus operandi of jihadi terrorism in Europe. We have been tracking terrorist incidents with alleged links to IS in 2013-2014, but at the time of writing, they do not constitute a solid basis for generalization. Looking ahead, blowback from the war in Syria and Iraq may influence jihadi terrorism in Europe in several ways. Returning foreign fighters may bring with them new technologies and tactics, or they may introduce a sectarian dimension to attacks, targeting Shias or Kurds. The most dangerous scenario is that IS or like-minded groups launch a top-down organized campaign of international terrorism as a response to Western military involvement in the conflict. But the most likely effect in the short to medium-term is contagion of attack methods broadcast widely in media, such as public beheadings and other revenge-driven executions.

43

Definitions and Scope

The article surveys jihadi terrorist plots in Western Europe. By "terrorist plot" we mean planned, prepared, and executed terrorist attacks. The criterion for including a terrorist plot in the dataset is that there are strong indications in open sources that an identifiable jihadi group or individual planned to attack one or several targets. We did not set as a criterion that the evidence should hold up in court and lead to convictions, as many terrorist plots were disrupted at an early stage. Although terrorism is a highly contested concept, we see no reason to problematize it here. The essence of terrorism is violent attacks to spread fear, ultimately with a view to sending a political message.[5] With this in mind we see little ambiguity concerning the cases addressed in this study, which mostly involve plans to conduct bombings or shootings against non-combatants inside peaceful European societies.

As for the adjective "jihadi", it refers here to militant individuals, groups, networks and ideologies emanating from the Arab-based foreign fighter movement of the Afghan jihad in the 1980s.[6] The "Afghan-Arab" movement represented an internationalization of post-colonial Islamist insurgencies against Arab dictators. It gave rise to the idea of global jihad, which meant that in order to defeat Arab dictators, jihadis had to target the U.S. and Israel first. Ideologically, Al-Qaida and like-minded movements are referred to as "salafi-jihadis." Put



simply, this means that they combine revolutionary Islam originating from Egypt with fundamentalist Islam as practiced in Saudi Arabia (Salafism or Wahhabism).[7]

The salafi dimension has implications for the modus operandi, in the sense that any act of violence by jihadis must find justification and precedent in the traditions of the Prophet (hadith). For example, a verdict by a recognized salafi scholar on the individual duty of Muslims to kill people who insult the Prophet Mohammed has had direct effects on the threat situation in Europe. It should also be underscored that jihadis' dependence on religious justification by no means contradicts strategic thinking. On the contrary, the movement has a strong tradition of producing strategic texts and evaluating the fruitfulness of its methods of struggle.[8] In jihadi thought, religious tenets and strategy go hand-in-hand as the militants consider it a religious duty to mimic the warfare strategies and tactics pursued by the first Muslims.

Geographically we limit our survey to Western Europe. We do not include Eastern Europe or Russia, and we refer to jihadi activity in other Western countries only for context. The main reason for these limitations is capacity. Gathering data for this kind of study is work intensive and we have not been able to monitor other regions closely enough to produce data suitable for systematic comparison at this point.

Existing Literature

The literature on terrorists' modus operandi is relatively small and scattered. Most studies of jihadi terrorism in Europe focus on radicalization and pay limited attention to operational aspects. The few studies that address the modus operandi of jihadis in Europe concentrate on certain dimensions, such as the scope and distribution of terrorist plots, the kind of explosives used, and the complexity of attacks, rather than broader trends in the use of weapons and choice of tactics.[9] Most standard works on terrorism address terrorists' modus operandi, but rarely as a separate topic or in real depth. They provide examples of attack methods, targets and weapons preferred by different terrorist organizations, but usually as part of a broader discussion of the origins and rationale for those particular organizations.[10] Other studies concentrate on macro-trends such as the impact of globalization and technological progress, the transition from "old" to "new" forms of terrorism (which includes the emergence and spread of suicide terrorism), and, last but not least, terrorists' interest in, and possible use of weapons of mass destruction (WMD).[11] While these studies are taken into account when we discuss possible determinants of European jihadis' modus operandi, they have a different objective than that of this article, either operating at a higher level of generalization (historical macro-trends), or focusing narrowly on certain attack modes or weapons (e.g., suicide terrorism or WMD).

There are only a handful of studies that specifically focus on the modus operandi. Some of them provide a general overview of trends based on open source databases.[12] However, most available databases in the terrorism research field (including those maintained by RAND, MIPT, or the START Center's Global Terrorism Database) do not systematically include failed or foiled terrorist plots. In studies of the modus operandi, this constitutes a problem, because we are not only interested in what types of attacks terrorists have pulled off, but also what they might want to do and try to do. Others have combined databases and case studies to examine "lone wolf" terrorism, terrorist innovation, weapons choice and target selection.[13] These studies produce relevant insights that will be taken into account in this study. For example, Adam Dolnik highlights how countermeasures influence terrorist innovation, and C.J.M. Drake theorizes how terrorists pragmatically narrow the scope of targets when they realize what is doable with the resources at hand.

Method and Data

Our trend analysis is based on a dataset containing 122 jihadi terrorist plots in Europe between 1994 and 2013.[14] The dataset starts in 1994 because this is when the first incident of jihadi terrorism in Europe took place. The complete dataset and definitions of the variables are published online at the website provided in the end note.[15] Due to space limitations, we do not provide details about individual plots in this discussion. Instead we refer to plot names (for example, "Crevice Fertilizer Plot"), which correspond to the entries in the dataset. Each entry in the dataset provides a reference to a newspaper article or other source containing an outline of the terrorist plot in question.

Due to the low number of plots each year (from zero to ten) it was meaningless to undertake a year-to-year analysis. Therefore, we divided the dataset into three time



intervals of approximately equal length: 1994–2000, 2001–2007, and 2008–2013. This allowed us to identify and visualize changes in the quantitative output.

There are methodological challenges associated with data reliability. When attacks have been foiled, there is often incomplete information regarding key variables such as weapons choice, target selection and attack method. In an attempt to reduce the problem of missing information we distinguish “well-documented plots” (n=93) from “vague plots” (n=29). The distinction is based on how well each plot fulfills the following criteria of documentation: 1) known jihadi perpetrator(s), 2) identified target(s) and 3) concrete evidence (such as bomb materials and suicide notes). The quantitative output we present is based on the 93 well-documented plots, unless otherwise specified.

Vague plots have been used in the qualitative analysis to cross-check the absence of certain attack modes. For example, there is only one example of a plot to hijack and crash an airplane into a target after 2001.[16] The absence of such plots, even when including vague cases, strengthens the observation that this particular modus operandi was rarely considered by jihadis in Europe.

Even when we focus on well-documented plots, there is considerable variation in their scope and nature. We do not distinguish plots that were disrupted at an early stage from launched attacks. We do not distinguish small and amateurish attacks that led to no casualties as different from the Madrid bombings, which killed 191 people. This creates certain challenges when coding variables.

First, how do we code cases in which the attack planners have discussed several modus operandi, but not yet reached a final decision regarding the weapon, attack type or target? For example, in the “London Xmas Plot” of December 2010, the terrorists discussed a number of targets including the London Stock Exchange, the U.S. Embassy, unspecified Rabbis, and Boris Johnson, the Mayor of London. In such cases, we decided to code all options discussed because there is not enough information for us to decide which target was most likely. The same logic has been applied in cases where the terrorists discussed several weapons or attack types. Consequently, some weapon types, attack types and target types may be over-represented in the quantitative output. As highlighted by Drake, terrorists tend to discuss ambitious targets in the early stages of their planning, before ending up with something less ambitious, but more realistic.[17] Nevertheless, we consider it useful to register all scenarios assessed by the terrorists so as to be able to detect changes in their interest in different weapons, attack types and targets over time.

Secondly, how do we code cases in which the planned modus operandi changed after the attack was set in motion? Incidents where attackers barricade themselves to fight the police are typical examples. This occurred with plots such as the “Madrid Bombings” (2004), “Hofstad 1, Bouyeri” (2004) and “Mohammed Merah” (2012). We decided to code such incidents based on the original attack plan, for two reasons. First, we want to achieve as much consistency in the coding as possible between disrupted and launched attacks. Secondly, it is unclear whether violent acts against first responders qualify as terrorism in a strict sense. This point is well illustrated in the case of the “Bourgass Ricin Plot” (2003), when the terrorist suspect attacked and killed a police officer with a knife during his arrest. The original terrorist plan, which had prompted the arrest, was to carry out random killings in the U.K. using poison left in public places. It would be misleading to code the police murder as part of the terrorist plot.

There are borderline cases, such as that of Mohammed Merah, who ended his 2012 shooting spree in Southern France with a 32-hour barricade of his apartment. The incident bore the hallmarks of a planned barricade incident – a modus operandi associated with so-called “Mumbai-style” attacks.[18] The goal is to prolong the attack as much as possible, in order to increase media coverage and exhaust local emergency response resources. Merah was well armed and motivated to fight until death. In addition, he was in contact with the mass media an hour before the barricade started.[19] Nevertheless, it would be misleading to categorize the attack as a ‘barricade incident’. Merah was trapped in a corner after an eleven-day-long manhunt. It is likely that the barricade was an action of last resort, rather than indicative of a trend towards more barricade-style terrorist plots in Europe.

Having addressed some key methodological issues, we now turn to the results from our quantitative analysis of 93 well-documented jihadi terrorist plots in Europe.

45

Results

Weapon Type

Improvised explosive devices (IEDs) are the preferred weapon type among jihadis in Europe. 78% of all plots in 2001–2007 involved the use of IEDs, as did 65% of all plots in



2008–2013. Although the percentage has dropped in the last period, it is noteworthy that 65% of jihadi plots in Europe after 2008 involved IEDs in some form. But a majority of these plots were disrupted at an early stage. Only six IED attacks have been launched after 2008. None of them resulted in any casualties.[20]

Home-Made Explosives (HMEs) have become more common after 2008, while military and commercial explosives have become less common. Jihadi terrorists have widened their arsenal of HMEs over the years. Prior to 2001, jihadi bomb plots in Europe were dominated by the Armed Islamic Group's (GIA) use of chlorate mixtures (a low-grade explosive) in closed containers such as gas canisters and pressure cookers. Peroxide-based mixtures (a high-grade explosive) came into use in 2001 and have occurred in plots regularly since then. Gas cylinders started appearing in plots in 2004, and were used in Germany in 2006 and in the U.K. in 2007. Fertilizer-based explosives started occurring in plots in 2004, and were used in Italy in 2009 and Sweden in 2010.

Two other weapons trends are worth mentioning. First, there has been an increase in plots involving knives and firearms. Knives and firearms were used in 7.3% of plots during 2001–2007, and in 33% of plots after 2008. Only one attack was launched using knives/firearms before 2008, compared to seven after 2008.

Secondly, there is a decrease in plots involving chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear (CBRN) materials. Use or attempted use of CBRN materials occurred in six plots in 2001–2007, but are absent from all plots after 2008, even when considering vague cases. Four of the six CBRN plots we registered in 2001–2007 involved poisonous chemicals or toxins. One plot involved a plan to create a “dirty bomb” from a radiological substance known as Americium-241. The last plot included a plan to bomb the Borssele nuclear power plant in Holland. While we use the abbreviation “CBRN” throughout this paper, it should be stressed that we have uncovered no plans to spread contagious diseases or to obtain crude nuclear weapons throughout the period studied.

On the one hand jihadis in Europe have diversified their arsenal of weapons over time. On the other hand, they have also stopped using certain types of weapons. Plots to use CBRN materials and rockets are virtually non-existent after 2008. Plots to hack computers to cause real-world damage are completely absent from the dataset, both before and after 2008. The general development is towards weapons that are technologically simpler. The exception is IEDs, where there is no clear trend. IEDs are becoming simpler in some cases and more advanced in other cases. We will come back to possible explanations for these developments.

46

Attack Type

Bombing is the dominant attack type, occurring in 65% of all plots after 2008. However, individual assassinations and armed assaults have become more common over the years. Plans to assassinate have increased from 4.9% of all plots in 2001–2007, to 25% of all plots after 2008.

The overwhelming majority of bomb plots are land-based. Out of 122 cases in the dataset there are only eight examples of air-based bomb plots and one example of a sea-based bomb plot. Seven out of the eight air-based bombings aim to explode planes in mid-air, while the last case is a plot to crash an airplane into Heathrow airport. The sea-based bomb plot is a vaguely documented plan to explode explosive-laden trucks onboard a passenger ferry.[21]

The scope of the bombing plots varies greatly, from involving bombs the size of hand grenades to plots to use large truck-size devices. Truck bombs have so far not been used successfully by jihadis in Europe, even though they have been employed by other terrorist groups and individuals in the region.[22] There have been several foiled plots to employ truck bombs by jihadis. The best documented is probably the “Fertilizer Plot” (Operation Crevice) in 2004, in which 600 kgs of Ammonium Nitrate and an unknown quantity of aluminum powder was seized. There are at least five other plots in the dataset in which perpetrators have considered using truck-size bombs, but only one of them appears to have moved from mere planning to actual weapons acquisition: Nizar Trabelsi's plot to attack the Kleine Brogel Airbase in Belgium in 2001, where 100 kgs of “sulphur” and unknown quantities of other precursors were seized by police.

Another observation is that few hostage situations have been created by jihadis in Europe. During the period 1994–2013, there were a total of three hostage incidents. All of them occurred after 2008 and involved “Mumbai-style” plots where hostages were supposed to be held by teams of mobile gunmen inside buildings. It is somewhat surprising that this

modus operandi has not become more widespread, especially with the media attention received by the Mumbai attacks in India, and the subsequent fear among European security services that such attacks would materialize in Europe. However, Mumbai-style attacks should not be discounted as a possible threat. Of the three plots mentioned, all were considered serious and potentially lethal cases. One of the cases, referred to as the "Europe Mumbai Plot" in the dataset, may have involved up to three separate attacks in different countries, according to intelligence leaks.[23]

Another dimension we looked at is the occurrence of single-actor vs. group plots. There is a significant increase in single-actor plots (from 12% to 38%) and a corresponding decrease in group plots in the period after 2008 (see Figure 1). However, groups of two or more terrorists remain the most common jihadi cell configuration, occurring in more than 60% of all plots after 2008.

A relatively high proportion of the single-actor plots are launched attacks. In the whole period, 14 out of 20 single-actor plots were launched. It is striking that single-actor terrorists go undetected in 70% of the registered cases while group plots go undetected in only 19% of the cases.

We caution that our break-down of single-actor vs. group plots may not accurately represent the typical size of a jihadi attack team. An attack may be planned and prepared by a network, or group, yet carried out by a single member. In some cases, there is concrete information that a group designated one of its members to carry out an attack. However, in many cases it is not entirely clear how many members of the group would participate in the attack.

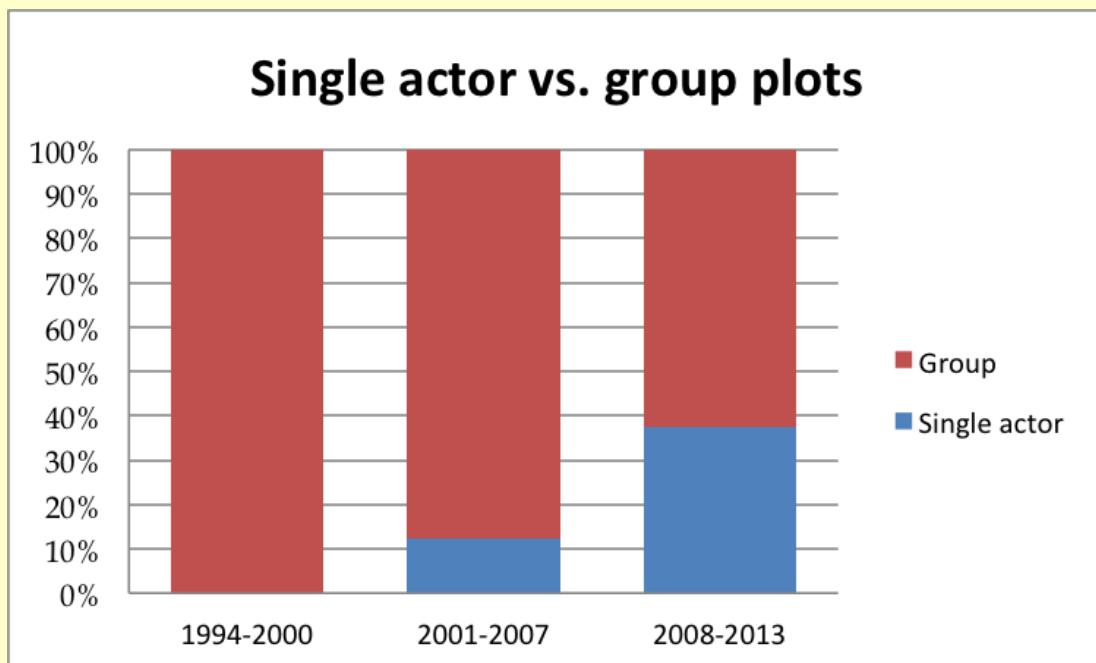


Figure 1: Single-actor vs. group plots

47

Target Type

Next, we looked at the types of targets that jihadis in Europe prefer. Three trends are worth highlighting. First, there is a slight increase in attacks on military targets after 2008. Before 2008 there were six plots to attack military targets, but none were launched. After 2008 there were seven plots of which five were launched. Four of the launched attacks targeted soldiers in public places, and a fifth was aimed at a military base in Italy.[24] The last two plots targeted military bases, but were disrupted at an early stage. According to Drake's theory of terrorist target selection, it is possible that the cells would have settled for a less ambitious target.[25] In any case, there has been an increased tendency to target military personnel after 2008. This is especially apparent when we also consider interview data indicating that there has been a considerable spike in threats and hoaxes against military personnel over the last few years.[26] Attacks in other parts of the West, such as the Fort Hood incident in Texas, U.S. in 2009 and the recent attacks on soldiers in Canada in October 2014 point in the same direction.[27]

Attacking military personnel in public places is a new modus operandi among jihadis in Europe: starting with the Kosovar Arid Uka's attack against a shuttle bus carrying U.S. soldiers at Frankfurt international airport in March 2011, and followed by Mohammed Merah's killing spree in France in March 2012, and the soldier stabbings in the U.K. and France in 2013. There was only one similar plot before 2008. In January 2007, a U.K.-based cell planned to abduct and behead a British Muslim soldier who had served in Iraq, and to videotape the ordeal. It should be stressed that this particular cell drew inspiration from the beheading videos issued by Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi's group in Iraq which were disseminated from 2004 onwards. There are concerns that the beheadings by the Islamic State in Syria and Iraq (IS) today could inspire out-of-theater terrorist attacks in a similar fashion.

A second targeting trend is that plots against aviation and public transportation have become less frequent. After 2008, there were only three plots targeting aviation and three plots targeting buses, trains or metro systems. However, there has been no similar decrease in the targeting of public places. Jihadis are still interested in targeting crowded areas, even if they do not seem to target public transportation and airplanes as often as before.

A third trend is that plots targeting public figures have increased. When we single out the victims of these plots we find that they are distributed as depicted in Table 1:

Target	No. of plots	Examples
Artists/publishers who insulted Islam	4	Kurt Westergaard, Lars Vilks, Martin Rynja
Politicians with anti-Islam views	2	Markus Beisicht, Lars Hedegaard
Politicians, general	2	Stephen Timms (British MP), Boris Johnson (Mayor of London)
Other/unspecified	3	Dalil Boubaker (Muslim cleric), "Public figures"

Table 1: Assassination targets mentioned in plots after 2008

The majority of the plots against public figures appear to have been motivated by revenge, especially against people who insulted the Prophet Mohammed or Islam in general. This attack mode was first employed among jihadis in Europe in November 2004, when **Mohammed Bouyeri** (right in photo



below) assassinated the Dutch filmmaker **Theo van Gogh** (left in photo). It saw an upsurge after the first publication of the cartoons of the Prophet Mohammed by *Jyllands-Posten* in 2005 and amid re-publication of the cartoons by European media in following years. Two other aspects of targeting we have looked at are target nationality and plot country. Target nationality is one of the most precise indicators of what enemy the terrorists want to harm,

whereas plot country may not necessarily reflect the terrorists' enemy perception fully. For example, although quite a few terrorist plots emerged in Germany, most were aimed at Jewish, U.S. or French targets rather than German ones. This could serve as one out of several indicators that Germany is considerably lower on the jihadis' enemy ranking than the U.K., where almost every plot was aimed at British targets. However, at the same time the fact that plot after plot occurred in Germany tells us something about the presence of jihadis with the will and capacity to resort to terrorism in that country. In addition to being a country in which jihadis planned to launch attacks, Germany has also been a staging ground for attacks in other countries, most famously the Hamburg Cell's preparation of the 9/11 attacks, but also other cases such as a cell in Frankfurt plotting to bomb the Christmas market in Strasbourg, France. As the variables tell us slightly different

things we find it interesting to explore the relationship between target nationality and plot country. Table 2 shows the top five regions in Europe to be exposed to jihadi terrorism. We decided to group some of the countries together in order to gain a more readable picture. Thus, we talk about Scandinavia as one region, even if most plots have occurred in Denmark. The U.K. and France have experienced the most plots over time, followed by Germany, Scandinavia and Italy. Plots in the U.K. have mainly targeted the U.K.; plots in France have been aimed at French, U.S., Jewish and Russian targets, whereas many plots in Italy and Germany have targeted U.S. or Jewish people and interests.

Plot country	No. of plots	Plot country was target	%
France	24	16	67 %
UK	23	19	83 %
Germany and Switzerland	12	3	25 %
Scandinavia	11	9	82 %
Italy	10	6	60 %

Table 2: Countries most exposed to jihadi terrorism 1994–2013

The most striking development in recent times is the threat in Scandinavia. This trend starts to show up in the statistics since 2005, and as many as 82% of the plots in Scandinavia were directed against Scandinavian targets. Nearly all of these plots were against people and institutions involved in the Prophet Mohammed cartoons affair. Still, there were a couple of incidents that were not immediately related to this incident, such as the 2010 Stockholm suicide bombings, or assassination plots against Swedish artist Lars Vilks and the Danish Islam-critic Lars Hedegaard.

We see an overall tendency towards fewer plots against U.S. targets compared to European targets.

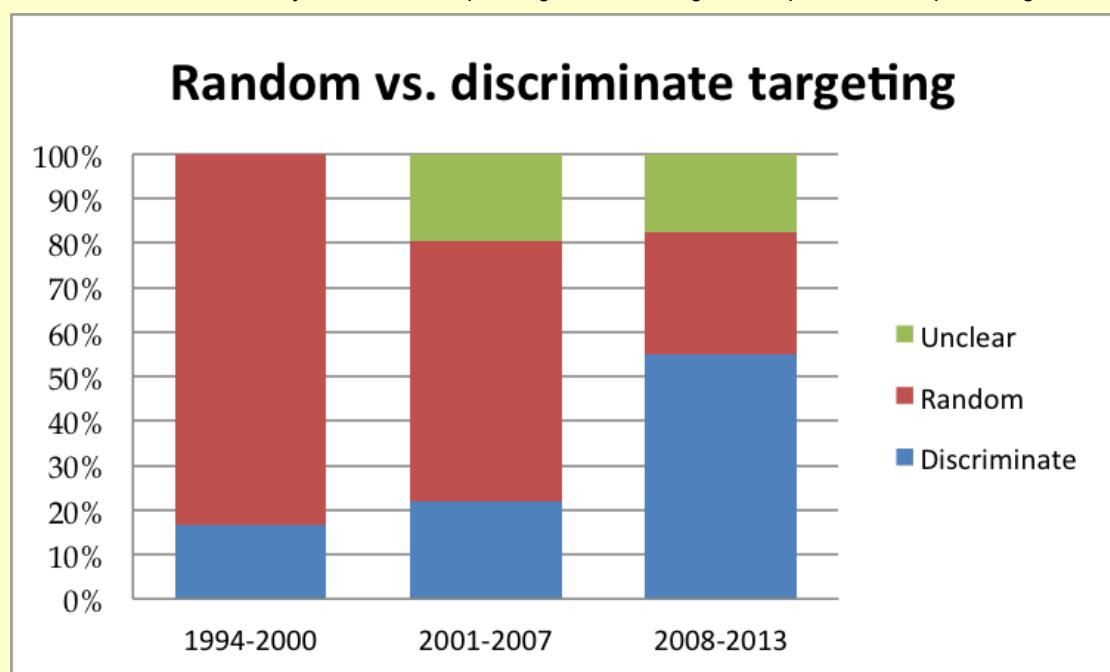


Figure 2: Random vs. discriminate targeting

After 2008, most plots targeted the U.K. (30%) followed by Scandinavia (20%) and France (13%). Scandinavian targets appears to have surpassed French and Italian targets, which have historically been more prominent.

In addition to looking at target types and nationalities, we have examined how selective jihadi terrorists are when they choose their targets. Do they aim to target European society at large, or do they prefer to target specific sub-national groups and individuals? The results are shown in Figure 2. We see a clear tendency towards more discriminate plots.[28] In 2001–2007, 22% of all plots were targeting a specific sub-national group, profession or individual. After

2008, the proportion has increased to 55%. This is coupled with a similar decrease in random attacks. Having briefly reviewed several important patterns in the data, we now turn to possible reasons why jihadis in Europe have changed the ways in which they operate.

Main Changes and Possible Explanations

More Variety in IED Manufacturing Techniques

After 2008 there is increased variation in the bomb-making techniques employed by European jihadis. There is no clear trend regarding the technical sophistication of the devices. IEDs are becoming simpler in some cases, and more advanced in other cases. It appears that the most advanced IEDs are connected to training and assistance from abroad, while simpler devices are often based on recipes from the Internet.

The clearest example of IED innovation coming from abroad is probably the 7/7 and the 21/7 attacks in London in 2005. Both attacks relied on a bomb-making technique which had never been employed by jihadis in Europe before. It involved a main charge made out of hydrogen peroxide and an organic substance.[29] Initially, the 21/7 bombers were portrayed as mere "copycats" who had been radicalized at home. It was later revealed that the ringleader of the cell had received training in Pakistan at the same time as the 7/7 bombers, which would explain why both plots employed a device which was novel at that time.[30]

There have been at least three other cases in Europe during the period 2006–2009 which involved a similar peroxide and organic substance mixture.[31] All of these plots were linked to training in Pakistan, and all but one (the "Sauerland Cell") have been linked to one of al-Qaida's operational planners, Rashid Raouf.[32] The Sauerland Cell received support from an Uzbek group named the Islamic Jihad Union (IJU) based in North Waziristan. This group is believed to be part of al-Qaida's network in the Afghanistan-Pakistan region, but direct links between the Sauerland Cell and al-Qaida's central organization were never established.[33]

There are other examples of cases where technical assistance from al-Qaida is linked to IED use in Europe. For example, bombs made of TATP in combination with the military high explosive PETN (Pentaerythritol Tetranitrate) have only been used in three jihadi plots – the "Richard Reid Shoe Bomb" in 2001, the "Sajid Badat Shoe Bomb" in 2003, and the case of the "Underwear Bomber" in 2009. Reid and Badat were originally part of the same plot and they both received the bomb devices from al-Qaida handlers in Afghanistan or Pakistan in late 2001. The Underwear Bomber received the PETN and TATP device from al-Qaida in the Arab Peninsula (AQAP), based in Yemen.[34] Yet another example is the "Transatlantic Airliners Plot" in 2006. The novel idea of smuggling liquid explosives onboard planes was masterminded by al-Qaida's operational planners in Pakistan.[35] This leads us to surmise that novel bomb-making techniques are usually introduced in Europe as a result of training and assistance from abroad.[36]

Another explanation for the increased variation in bomb-making techniques is that the Internet has made crude bomb recipes more accessible. This has so far produced a slight increase in crude and amateurish attacks, such as the "Nicky Reilly" plot in the U.K. in 2008, and the "London Xmas Plot" in 2010 which relied on making pipe bombs out of match heads. However, Internet resources can hardly explain why certain bomb-making techniques have been introduced in Europe at certain times. Peroxide and organic substance bombs were first used by jihadis in Europe in 2005, but instructions on how to manufacture such a device did not appear online until 2010.[37]

As jihadis continue to access conflict zones such as Syria, Iraq and Somalia, it is likely that the repertoire of bomb-making techniques will widen further. It is also likely that increasingly sophisticated and interactive Internet platforms will improve possibilities for online learning.[38] However, in the short to medium-term, the greatest and most dangerous innovations in bomb-making techniques in Europe will probably come as a result of training abroad, rather than online self-study.

Increase in the Use of Knives and Firearms

There has been a relative increase in plots involving knives and firearms in recent years. The first such attack was the assassination of an Imam by the GIA in France in 1995. The next example is the slaying of the Dutch filmmaker Theo van Gogh in Amsterdam in 2004. The assailant shot van Gogh numerous times with a semi-automatic pistol, and subsequently tried to decapitate him. After van Gogh's murder, there were no knife or



firearm attacks until 2010, when a Danish-Somali jihadi attempted to kill the cartoonist Kurt Westergaard with an axe (coded as knife in the dataset). In 2008–2013 there was a marked increase in plots to use knives and firearms among jihadis. 33% of the plots in this period involved a knife, firearms or both – sometimes in combination with explosives.

We first believed the increase in knives and firearms to be a direct consequence of the increase in individual assassination plots, because knives and firearms are more typical assassination weapons than bombs. However, when looking at the plots there is only a partial correlation. Only four out of the 13 knife and firearm plots in 2008–2013 could be defined as assassinations. While all knife plots involved attacking and killing a single person (either well-known individuals such as Kurt Westergaard, or representatives of religious or occupational groups, such as soldiers or Jews), the firearm plots covered the whole spectrum from assassinations to shooting sprees and complex, “Mumbai-style” attacks.

An alternative explanation is that the terrorists resort to knives and handguns simply because it has become more difficult to acquire precursors for explosives without alerting security services. There is some anecdotal evidence to support this. Consider the following statement by Mohammed Merah during a conversation with police negotiators while barricaded inside his apartment in Montauban, 2012. Regarding his weapons training in Waziristan he said:

“I was asked to make bombs. I did not want to, you see ... I told them that the ingredients, the ingredients needed to make bombs are, they are under surveillance in France. I might get arrested even before having [inaudible] something. Are you listening? After this, I told them, train me [in the use of guns.]”[39]

It is possible that there are other cases where jihadis have decided on knives or handguns as the weapons of choice, based on similar reasoning. However, if this was the only reason we would expect a marked decrease in the use of explosives after 2008, making up for the increase in the use of knives and handguns. This is not the case. The number of plots involving knives and handguns increased by 26% after 2008, while the number of bomb plots decreased by only 13% in the same period.

A more general explanation is the effect of contagion. Terrorism research has shown how terrorists tend to emulate each other, a phenomenon accelerating in the age of social media.[40] It is highly likely that inspiration from successful attacks outside Europe has contributed to the increase in plots involving knives and handguns in Europe. The Mumbai attacks in India in 2008 are thought to have inspired at least three plots in Europe in recent years. Another high profile incident which may have served as inspiration is the Fort Hood shooting massacre in the U.S. in 2009. This was the first time that a jihadi carried out a successful mass killing with firearms in a western country.

Adding to the contagion effect, al-Qaida’s strategic leadership has celebrated such attacks in their propaganda. In the al-Sahab video “You are only responsible for yourself,” issued in June 2011, Adam Gadahn specifically encouraged Muslims in the West to use handguns to carry out attacks:

“America is absolutely awash with easily obtainable firearms. You can go down to a gun show at the local convention center and come away with a fully automatic assault rifle, without a background check and most likely, without having to show an identification card. So what are you waiting for?”[41]

The ideas expressed in the al-Sahab video are far from new in al-Qaida circles. They are largely based on Abu Mus’ab al-Suri’s strategic writings, which were conveyed to al-Qaida recruits in Afghanistan in lectures and pamphlets throughout the 1990s.[42] Al-Suri and the al-Sahab video both point to several historical examples of jihadis who carried out individual attacks with simple weapons, starting with the gun attack on the Jewish politician, Meir Kahane, in New York in 1990 by an Egyptian Islamist.[43] Likewise, in 2004, Mohammed Bouyeri received massive media attention for shooting and killing Dutch filmmaker Theo van Gogh in Amsterdam. This illustrates the historical precedents for this attack mode long before the upsurge in 2008–2013, which lends credence to the contagion effect explanation.

In addition, we contend that the rise in knife and firearm plots is part of a more general trend towards diversification of attack types and choice of weapons among jihadis in Europe, a trend we partly ascribe to jihadis’ adaptation to counter-terrorism measures, and partly to a more heterogeneous actor landscape.

Increase in Single-Actor Plots

While group-based terrorist plots are still most common, there has been a steep increase in single-actor terrorism among jihadis in Europe since 2008. The increase is somewhat



connected to the rise in assassinations, but not fully. There are several examples of group plots to assassinate, such as "Davud" (2010) and "Public Figures France" (2013). Likewise, there are examples of single-actor plots to launch mass casualty bomb attacks in public, such as "Nicky Reilly" (2008) and "Andrew Ibrahim" (2008). The scope of individual plots by jihadis in recent times is surprising, as terrorists generally tend to operate in groups, and attacks by single actors have historically been quite rare.[44]

Single-actor terrorism is usually traced to 19th century anarchists and their strategy of leaderless resistance, but right-wing extremists have been behind most single-actor incidents since the 1980s. Jihadi strategic thinkers began to promote leaderless resistance during the early 1990s, but it was only in the mid-2000s that al-Qaida leaders began to call upon followers to stage attacks on their own.[45] Today, the call for individual terrorism is a main feature of jihadi propaganda aimed at followers in the West. The rise in single-actor plots in Europe is linked to this propaganda, but we need to consider the underlying causes.

The literature on single-actor terrorism distinguishes between "solo-terrorists" and "lone wolves".[46] The former operate alone, but are linked to and may receive support from an organized terrorist group. The latter act completely on their own and only draw inspiration from political movements.[47] A good example of solo-terrorism is Richard Reid who was trained and deployed by al-Qaida to bomb a transatlantic jet, whereas the Norwegian right-wing mass killer Anders Behring Breivik was a lone wolf without any organization behind him. Among solo-terrorists it is possible to distinguish between those who are tasked "from above" by a group and those who initiate something "from below", reaching out to organized groups for guidance and assistance. While the distinction between solo-terrorists and lone wolves can be blurred, it must be kept in mind when searching for explanations of why more jihadis work alone in Europe.

Research has yet to identify a common profile among individually operating terrorists. However, characteristics such as social problems, loneliness, and mental illness are more common among lone wolves than among other terrorists. The latter do not systematically differ, socially or psychologically, from non-terrorists.[48] Also, whereas solo-terrorism is supposed to fulfill some strategic aim for organized groups (for example upholding a certain level of a terrorist threat when a group is under pressure from counter-terrorism), lone wolves tend to be driven by more elusive motives, mixing political grievances with personal ones.

Most single-actor terrorists in our data may be defined as "bottom-up" solo-terrorists, but some (such as Richard Reid) received orders and directions from al-Qaida or affiliated groups. At least three of them (Roshonara Choudry, Andrew Ibrahim and Arid Uka) resembled lone wolves. The majority of single actor terrorists in our data interacted with organized extremist environments in Europe, and many spent time with jihadi groups abroad. All of them drew inspiration from al-Qaida and acted in accordance with the group's ideology although they rarely received direct operational support. Most of the terrorists seem to be relatively normal, but troubled young men. Several were known to have experienced psychological problems, but only one of them, Nicky Reilly (2008), had been diagnosed with a mental illness (Asperger syndrome), as far as we know.

Because extremist connections and ties to militant groups abroad have been commonplace among the perpetrators, we attribute the increase in single-actor plots in Europe mainly to strategic-tactical considerations by jihadis facing a difficult operating environment, and to ideological incentives.

Strategic texts by Abu Mus'ab al-Suri prescribing the use of independent cells and individual attackers in situations where jihadis are unable to establish territorial control have likely contributed to the rise in solo-terrorism. His ideas have been redistributed in AQAP's *Inspire* magazine, which has been downloaded and read by multiple terrorists operating in Europe since the late 2000s. Moreover, multiple leaders and spokespersons within al-Qaida's networks have called for individual attacks, including Osama bin Laden, Abu Yahya al-Libi and Anwar al-Awlaki. The latter has also guided two single actors in Europe aiming to down transatlantic airliners ("Underwear Bomber" and "Rajib Karim Heathrow Plot"), and was cited as a main inspiration by the Pakistani female student Roshonara Choudry who stabbed British MP Stephen Timms in 2010.

We further contend ideological-religious justifications for individual attacks have contributed to the rise in single-actor plots. Bin Laden's reference to a religious text by Taqi al-Din Ibn Taymiyyah on how one of the Prophet's men infiltrated a Jewish clan and assassinated a poet who once insulted the Prophet seems significant. Bin Laden's



reference to the text appeared in a speech that was published in 2006, but it was also cited a source of inspiration for Mohammed Bouyeri who murdered Theo Van Gogh in 2004. By using this reference, al-Qaida leaders ground a particular modus operandi in a verdict by an Islamic authority who is highly regarded among jihadis and non-jihadis alike. The effect of this should not be underestimated, especially when assessing triggers for solo-terrorists and lone wolves.[49]

In addition to strategy and ideology, the contagion effect of terrorism should be considered a factor.[50] The booming jihadi presence in social media may have contributed to the rise in single-actor plots. From around 2008, jihadis increasingly started to employ YouTube, Facebook and Twitter as propaganda platforms. In this way they managed to instantly reach out to new and far broader audiences than was the case with more exclusive and oftentimes password protected forums.

Operationally, single actors have certain advantages in that they are much harder to detect than groups. On the other hand, it is more challenging, both from a psychological and a logistical perspective, to operate alone. This may be a main reason why group plots are still more common than single-actor plots.

Decrease in the Targeting of Public Transportation

There has been a decrease in the targeting of both land-based and air-based public transportation after 2008. Initially, we thought that this was related to the increase in discriminate attacks, since attacks on public transportation must be considered random by definition. However, this line of reasoning is not supported fully by other patterns in the data. Notably, the occurrence of plots targeting public areas is constant - both before and after 2008. The majority of the plots were aimed at targets such as shopping centers, nightclubs, restaurants, crowded streets and even schools, and were bound to cause random mass deaths. Only a handful of plots against public areas were discriminate in nature (for example, "Tawhid Jewish Restaurant" in 2002 and "EDL plot" in 2012).

With regard to air-based targets, the terrorists may have been deterred by countermeasures, such as increased security at airports, and onboard the planes themselves. However, for land-based transportation this could hardly be the case. Buses and trains are not associated with the same strict security measures as airplanes. So why have there been so few plots to target land-based transportation after 2008, while plots to launch bombings in public remain quite common?

Failing to see any other reasonable explanations we suggest that contagion may have played a part. Plans to attack transportation may have been overrepresented in 2001–2007, due to inspiration from 9/11 and the bombings in Madrid and London.[51]

53

Decrease in the Targeting of U.S. Interests in Europe

In 2001–2003, there was a clear tendency among jihadis to target American interests across Europe.[52] This was in accordance with al-Qaida's notion of a global jihad against the "far enemy" (U.S.A.), rather than European countries. The pattern started changing in 2003–2005, when jihadi terrorists increasingly targeted European interests. This was mainly a result of the involvement of European countries in the Iraq intervention.[53].

Over time, other motivations to attack European countries became apparent as well, such as the publication of the cartoons of the Prophet Mohammed in Denmark in 2005, and their re-publication in several European newspapers in subsequent years. 15% of all plots after 2008 were directly targeting *Jyllands-Posten* or the cartoonists, while only 10% of the plots in the same period targeted the U.S..

The increase in the targeting of European interests illustrates how al-Qaida's global jihad came to involve America's allies to a greater extent in the mid-2000s. This development was mainly a reaction to Europe's contribution to the "War on Terror", but it was accentuated by justifications in jihadi ideology. Before the Iraq war, many jihadis in Europe claimed to stay in the region under a "Covenant of Security," a religiously defined security pact between Muslims living in non-Muslim countries and their "host states." According to this pact, Muslims are forbidden to put a non-Muslim host state and its citizens in harm's way, as long as they are free to practice their religion. [54]

However, in the mid-2000s jihadi ideologues annulled the pact on the grounds that European countries participated in the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, insulted the Prophet Mohammed (Danish cartoons), and persecuted Muslims (arrests of radical Islamists). It is symptomatic that many jihadis in Europe have since stressed wars, persecution and insults when threatening Western countries, and that captured terrorists have justified their

actions similarly. The Stockholm suicide bomber's reference to the Swedish contribution in Afghanistan and anti-Islam artwork by Lars Vilks is one out of numerous examples.

More Discriminate Targeting

Our most intriguing finding is a relative increase in discriminate attacks among jihadis in Europe since 2008. The majority of such plots are directed towards institutions, artists and politicians perceived to be anti-Islam. Another category of plots focus on military targets, in particular military personnel in public areas. A third category involves plots against Jewish interests.

In the first category we find plots related to the cartoons of the Prophet Mohammed, targeting either *Jyllands-Posten* in general, or individual cartoonists. A related type of attack is assassination plans against artists or other media figures perceived as being anti-Islam. Here we find personalities such as Swedish artist Lars Vilks and Danish author and Islam-critic Lars Hedegaard.

Assassination plots in Europe generally target individuals with little or no strategic value. The most high-ranking politician to be targeted by jihadis in Europe is Boris Johnson, the Mayor of London. If we consider vague plots we also find Prince Harry, the third heir to the British throne, but more likely targeted for symbolic reasons as he served in the British Army in Afghanistan. Overall, the assassination plots seem to be motivated by ideologically justified revenge, rather than strategic considerations.

Al-Qaida leaders and spokespersons have, on multiple occasions, encouraged attacks against specific types of targets. Anwar al-Awlaki has talked about the permissibility of attacking Western soldiers in their home countries, and a number of leaders (including Osama bin Laden himself) talked about the permissibility and duty of attacking individuals who have insulted the Prophet Mohammed.^[55] As for the targeting of Jews and Jewish interests, the struggle against Israel and its policies in Palestine has always been a core issue for al-Qaida and like-minded movements and among mainstream Muslims alike.

A trend towards discriminate attacks is somehow counter-intuitive. Randomness is a hallmark of terrorism which seeks to instill fear in larger populations. Discriminate attacks do not instill fear in larger populations the same way, but are easier to justify - politically and religiously - than random ones. Discriminate attacks speak to a larger segment of Muslims than the narrow and ultra-extreme folks that have traditionally been drawn to al-Qaida's networks. Facing pressure in multiple conflict zones (as a result of U.S. drone attacks in Northwestern Pakistan and jihadi infighting in Syria and Iraq), leaders and thinkers of al-Qaida and its affiliates may want to reinvent themselves to resonate with new generations of recruits. In order to attract sympathy and support from a far-flung recruitment base which can be addressed via social media, an increased focus on undisputed targets and attacks that may attract at least some sympathy makes sense.

We do not see the tendency towards more discriminate attacks as a major change though. Al-Qaida has continued to plan mass-casualty attacks in Europe, in addition to calling for discriminate attacks. An article in a 2012 issue of *Inspire* magazine illustrates the dual recruitment strategy of al-Qaida and likeminded groups. An assassin should not just target "military personnel and political leaders," but

"... anyone that the shari`ah allows him to eliminate. Thus, he is not afraid to study the movements of personalities that openly insult the religion, apostates that play a helping role for the enemy aggressors, and non-combatants in either selective hits – such as to obtain ghanimah [war booty] for further operations – or mass hits – to destroy an infrastructure of political and/or economic representation."^[56] In this quote, AQAP speaks to several audiences, both the most extreme (who justify random mass killings, and attacks for the sake of financing future operations), and those closer to the "mainstream" (who justify the use of violence against certain enemies of Islam, for which there are clearer justifications to be found in Islamic Law).

Overall, we see the trend towards more discriminate attacks as yet another sign that the threat to the region is becoming more heterogeneous. This is important to keep in mind as we turn now to offer some informed projections regarding future trends.

54

Future Trends

What will jihadi terrorism in Europe look like in three to five years from now? The question is challenging because the jihadi actor landscape in Europe is becoming increasingly diverse. Up until now, jihadi terrorism in Europe has been dominated by al-

Qaida and like-minded movements. While only a few terrorist attacks have been planned and directed by al-Qaida's central organization, a majority of the plots have nevertheless corresponded to a large extent with al-Qaida's guidelines. The rise of new and powerful actors in Iraq and Syria such as the Islamic State (IS) may change this pattern.

The IS does not take orders from al-Qaida, but presents itself as a rival organization. The Syrian conflict has so far attracted around 3,000 European foreign fighters, a number which is unprecedented in the history of jihadism. Many Europeans fight for IS and several of them have obtained high positions in the group. It is therefore likely that the rise of IS will affect jihadi terrorism in Europe, but the question remains how.

There are at least two possible scenarios. IS could launch a top-down organized terrorist campaign in Europe as a reaction to Western military involvement in Iraq and Syria. This is the most dangerous scenario. Alternatively, European veterans of the conflict in Syria will continue to plot scattered attacks on their own initiative following radicalization in the war theatre. This is the most likely scenario. In both cases, the modus operandi may, or may not, differ from the al-Qaida-inspired terrorism seen in the region so far.

Only a handful of plots in Europe have been traced back to Syria and Iraq since the beginning of the uprising in 2011. In March 2014, a Syria veteran was arrested in France with TATP explosives. In May, another Syria veteran shot and killed four people at the Jewish Museum in Brussels, Belgium. In July, Norway was put on a high terror alert due to information that a group of four individuals were on their way from Syria to Norway to carry out a terrorist attack. In October 2014, several men were arrested in the U.K., suspected of being in the early stages of preparing a terrorist attack in London.^[57]

Plots are too few and vague to say much about the "IS-effect" on jihadi terrorism in Europe at this point. However, we note that none of them represent a new modus operandi. The best documented incident, the Jewish Museum shooting, is consistent with a trend toward discriminate targeting and hand-held weapons.

IS differs from al-Qaida in at least two ways, which could affect its modus operandi. First, the group has an extreme sectarian agenda, and secondly, it glorifies and celebrates brutal acts of violence, including beheadings on camera. These were also characteristics of its forerunner al-Qaida in Iraq (AQI), especially under Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi in 2004–2006. Al-Zarqawi's beheading campaign probably inspired at least one beheading incident in Europe, the Theo van Gogh murder in Amsterdam in 2004. As far as we know, AQI's campaign did not translate into any sectarian attacks in Europe. The difference between then and now is that IS attracts a much larger contingent of Europeans than AQI ever did. Moreover, IS's clever use of new social media platforms ensures that violent acts are broadcast to a larger and more diverse audience than before.

In the short to medium-term, the most likely blowback effect from Syria and Iraq is scattered attacks by returning foreign fighters. We expect their modus operandi to roughly follow the trends outlined in this study. In addition we may see contagion of attack methods broadcast widely in media, such as public beheadings and other revenge-driven executions.

The blowback effect is taken into account when we suggest some concrete scenarios for future attacks below. We extrapolate the most likely scenarios from trends we have identified throughout the study.

55

Most Likely Modus Operandi

We believe bomb attacks and armed assaults to remain the most likely modus operandi for jihadi terrorists in Europe in the coming 3–5 years. Both suicide attacks, and attacks with remote-controlled or timed devices must be expected. As for plots involving knives and firearms, they are still less frequent than bomb plots. However, due to the relative increase in such plots in recent times we surmise that this modus operandi may soon match the frequency of bomb plots.

It could be argued that the trend towards more discriminate targeting would lead to a decreasing use of bombs, which imply random deaths.

However, this is not necessarily so. More discriminate targeting may also imply a move towards "harder" targets which would actually increase the need to use bombs (the heavily protected offices of **Jyllands-Posten** being one such example). And



there are still a considerable proportion of plots (28%) targeting randomly. Bombs in crowded places should therefore still be a concern for Western security services.

Most Likely Mass-Casualty Scenario

We suggest that the most likely mass-casualty (>10 deaths) scenario in the coming 3–5 years is a bomb attack against a crowded area. We regard this as more likely than “Mumbai-style” attacks, because it requires less coordination and may be carried out by individuals as well as groups.

The second most likely mass-casualty scenario is Mumbai-style attacks. Such attacks will probably involve teams of mobile gunmen who either take hostages and barricade themselves, or simply shoot and kill as many people as they can. They may combine shooting attacks with cruder forms of violence, such as arson or knife attacks, in order to disperse emergency response resources (the original Mumbai attackers used remote-controlled IEDs for this purpose).

Attacks using advanced weapons such as rockets or chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear (CBRN) materials are within the realm of possibility for jihadis in Europe. However, we consider them the least likely of the mass-casualty scenarios. CBRN terrorism in crude forms cannot be ruled out, but jihadis in Europe have probably never possessed a capability to cause mass destruction with CBRN, and are unlikely to do so for the next five years.

The Syrian civil war and rise of jihadi groups such as IS can, in theory, represent a CBRN threat. However, there is so far scant evidence that IS have obtained chemical agents from Syria, or that the organization has planned to employ such agents in international terrorism. Due to the logistical difficulties and high risk of detection associated with moving a chemical weapon or an advanced rocket system to Europe, jihadis will probably consider conventional terrorist weapons and attack methods sufficient.

Most Likely Tactical Innovations

There are anecdotal examples in the dataset of innovative terrorist plans. In some cases information about such plans may reflect the concerns of Western counterterrorism agencies, rather than what jihadis actually aim to do. Nevertheless, discussions among terrorists about novel attack methods may be indicative of scenarios we might expect in the future. Even if information on innovative plans does not represent actual attack plans, the very fact that they were discussed in the media could give ideas to future terrorists.

Attacks using miniature model cars and airplanes have been discussed on jihadi forums since at least 2006.[58] The first example of a jihadi plot to use model airplanes occurred in the U.S. in 2011. A U.S. citizen of Bangladeshi origin was arrested and later convicted of plotting attacks on the Pentagon and the Capitol with model airplanes filled with explosives.[59]

The most serious case in Europe was probably the “New Chechen Cell” case in Spain in 2012. Three individuals of Russian and Turkish origin were arrested and charged with planning a terrorist attack. **They had a video in their possession, showing them practicing with a model airplane, and 100 grams of an unknown explosive.**[60] A second, but more vague, plot occurred in Germany in June 2013. German police arrested two Tunisian suspects and confiscated model airplanes “powerful and big enough to carry explosives,” according to the media.[61] Finally, the perpetrators in the “Pak-Bengali Plot Luton” in 2012 discussed attacking a Territorial Army (TA) base by driving a model car carrying explosives under the gate.[62]

Another scenario contemplated by jihadis is the use of vehicles as weapons. The method was first described in an infamous *Inspire* magazine article from 2010 entitled “The ultimate mowing machine.”[63] It suggested welding steel blades on a pickup truck and then ramming it into a crowd of people, and following up with a handgun attack if possible. Reportedly, the perpetrators of the “Pak-Bengali Plot Luton” in 2012 discussed ramming cars into crowds of people, while making references to the idea presented in *Inspire* magazine.

56



There is one example in our material of a vehicle used as a weapon. The Woolwich assailants in 2013 first hit Drummer Lee Rigby with a car, before slaying him with a meat cleaver.[64] This attack method is generally not suitable for killing more than one or very few victims. The *Inspire* magazine article attempted to present a creative way of conducting “mass killing” by adding steel blades to the car, but it is surely hard to imagine such a vehicle driving in traffic without raising suspicion.

Based on our survey, we endorse Dolnik’s observation that “multiplication and synchronization of traditional tactics” is a more likely scenario than a move towards new tactics and weaponry.[65] We see arson in combination with other weapons as a possible future scenario which has potential to cause mass casualties. Our data encompasses only one well-documented case in which arson has been used as a weapon. Two individuals attacked the home of publisher Martin Rynja in London in 2008, attempting to set the house on fire.[66] Arson attacks have been promoted in several online texts offering strategic and operational advice to the jihadi movement. Abu Mus’ab al-Suri suggested using forest fires as a way to terrorize the enemy and causing economic damage, while *Inspire* magazine ran an article that suggested setting fire to cars in parking lots.[67] Neither al-Suri nor *Inspire* magazine have suggested using fire as a way of killing masses of people though.

However, **fire in combination with other weapons represents an innovative and potentially dangerous scenario in Europe.** Arson was used as a tactic in the Mumbai attacks in India in 2008. The purpose was apparently to kill hotel guests hiding in the upper floors of the Taj Hotel, after the attackers had barricaded themselves on the lower floors.[68] Needless to say, the fire created spectacular television images and the burning Taj became a signature image of the Mumbai attacks.

The last innovation we would like to draw attention to is the praxis of video filming crude attacks with action cameras so as to post them online. Both Mohammed Merah’s 2012 attacks in France and the 2014 Jewish Museum shooting by Mehdi Nemmouche exemplify this modus. The grizzly movies of beheadings by IS in Syria might inspire followers to carry out similar atrocities in front of the camera in Europe.[69] If scattered, crude attacks are filmed they could imply massive psychological impact even if the number of casualties is small.

Conclusion

Our main finding is that jihadi terrorism in Europe is becoming more discriminate in its targeting while attack methods are becoming more diverse. Overall, we surmise this reflects broader changes within the jihadi movement. Some of these changes have been initiated from above and some are pushed from below.

Jihadi terrorist plots in Europe involve cells controlled by al-Qaida, cells controlled by other jihadi groups, as well as independent cells, or individuals. Overall, it seems that even self-radicalized individuals who plot attacks on their own are sensitive to broad ideological and strategic guidelines emanating from al-Qaida’s central leadership.

We contend that the trend towards more discriminate attacks is partly a result of changed tactical guidelines from al-Qaida and its branches. Messages encouraging revenge attacks on individuals who insulted the Prophet Mohammed started appearing in 2006, after the crisis sparked by the cartoons of the Prophet Mohammed in Denmark. The new strategy was most clearly expressed in the 2011 al-Sahab video described earlier, which encouraged Muslims in the West to carry out individual acts of terrorism, rather than going to a conflict area and fighting, and eulogized the Fort Hood shooter as a role model. The video reflects deeper changes in al-Qaida’s approach to jihad in the West. By 2011, the U.S. drone campaign in northwestern Pakistan had killed a number of al-Qaida members including several leaders of al-Qaida’s External Operations branch. This reduced al-Qaida’s ability to stage top-down terrorist attacks in the West, and pressed the organization to rely more on individual sympathizers to carry out attacks on its behalf.

Individuals are more easily mobilized by emotional causes (such as insults against the Prophet Mohammed), than the lofty political strategies of global jihad. The shift towards more discriminate attacks therefore resonates with individual sympathizers while at the same time serving a strategic purpose. The crisis sparked by the cartoons of the Prophet Mohammed came at a convenient time for al-Qaida because it was exactly the kind of mobilizing cause that could speak to a larger segment of Muslims than the ultra-extreme group traditionally attracted to al-Qaida.



As for the diversification of attack types and weapons, we contend that it reflects a tactical adaptation to more effective counter-terrorism efforts by European security services. However, we also argue that this diversification has to do with new jihadi actors plotting attacks in the region. This diversification is likely to increase in the years ahead. While in the time period surveyed (1994–2013), terrorists linked to—or inspired by—al-Qaida have been most important in shaping the threat to Europe, new groups and individual terrorists are becoming a more important part of the threat picture.

The ongoing conflict in Iraq and Syria is going to affect the jihadi threat to Europe in coming years. Returning foreign fighters from Syria have already staged plots in Europe and more will come. We expect that a majority of plots will follow the trend toward more discriminate targeting and more diverse attack methods. However, we will also see plots targeting European society at large, especially when European nations contribute more to the U.S.-led coalition in Syria or Iraq.

► References are available at source's URL.

Petter Nesser (Dr. phil., University of Oslo) and Anne Stenersen (Dr. phil., University of Oslo) are researchers at FFI's Terrorism Research Group. The authors have contributed equally to the article.

EDITOR'S COMMENT: This is a very thorough paper on jihadi modus operandi! A small addition though (mainly because papers are always half step behind daily terrorist activities): inclusion of knives as killing instruments of terror and "car hit-and-run" methododology". Impossible to detect and everybody has one!



Reading this article memory of airplane hijacking came to my mind. Of course strict airport/airplane security measures are responsible for neutering this threat of the past but what if a new version of an old plan is employed? What if the plane is hijacked not from the inside (passenger) but from the outside (airfield) by a storming operation through the perimeter of the airport (few SUVs with armed jihadis) taken advantage of the element of surprise and existing gaps in premises security? It happened in the past by isolated individuals (i.e. JFK International Airport, NY) not necessary aiming to harm; it can happen again mainly because the unexpected always happens to organizations that think "it will not happen to them!"

58

U.S. general, John Kerry begin to refer to ISIL as DAESH after regional allies' request

Source: <http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20141222-u-s-general-john-kerry-begin-to-refer-to-isil-as-daesh-after-regional-allies-request>

Dec 22, 2014 – Lieutenant General James Terry, the general who leads U.S. operations



against Islamic State (ISIS) in Iraq, appears to have informally rebranded the jihadists group

with the name "**DAESH**." It is not truly a rebranding, since DAESH is the acronym for the group's name in Arabic (*al-Dawla al-Islamiya fil Iraq wa'al Sham*), and the group is called DAESH throughout the Middle East (including Israel) and North Africa.

The *Guardian* reports that U.S. allies in the war against ISIS had asked Terry not use the group's other monikers because they worried this would legitimize the group's ambitions.

In a press conference last Thursday General Terry used DAESH almost exclusively to refer to the group, although the Pentagon and the U.S. intelligence community primarily use "ISIL"—which stands "the Islamic State of

Iraq and the Levant" – and will continue to do so.

The acronym "ISIS" is erroneous, the result of a misunderstanding. When the group's exploits began to capture the headlines in early spring, a few journalists thought the last "S" in the group's name stood for "Syria," as in "Islamic State in Iraq and Syria."

That last "S," however, stands for "Sham": "Sham" in traditional Arabic and Islamic literature is usually defined as an area to the East of the Mediterranean Sea, West of the Euphrates River, North of the Arabian Desert, and South of the Taurus Mountains.

recent weeks, using DAESH sixteen times and ISIL only twice during remarks to NATO officials in Belgium. Retired general John Allen, the U.S. envoy who coordinates the coalition against ISIS, also prefers DAESH. French president Francois Hollande has used DAESH interchangeably with the group's other names. People in the Middle East, North Africa, and many Muslims around the world use DAESH, and many do so to indicate that they oppose the group and its interpretation of Islam. This is especially the case, according to the AP, since the group, when it changed its name in September to "the Islamic State," "threatened to cut the tongue of anyone who publicly used



59

The classical Arabic name for Syria is Sham – but the reference is not to the current political unit called Syria, but to "**Greater Syria**" (map below according to Syrian Social Nationalist Party [SSNP]) – or rather, to the idea of a greater Syria, because such greater Syria never existed — which includes the current-day Syria and Lebanon, Jordan, the Palestinian territories, and Israel, an area scholars refer to as the Levant.

This is why, in late Spring, the Pentagon and the U.S. intelligence community began to refer to the groups as "ISIL" – and this is why U.S. officials refer to the group as ISIL.

Terry said Arab partners in the region had asked him not to use the terms Islamic State, ISIL, or ISIS.

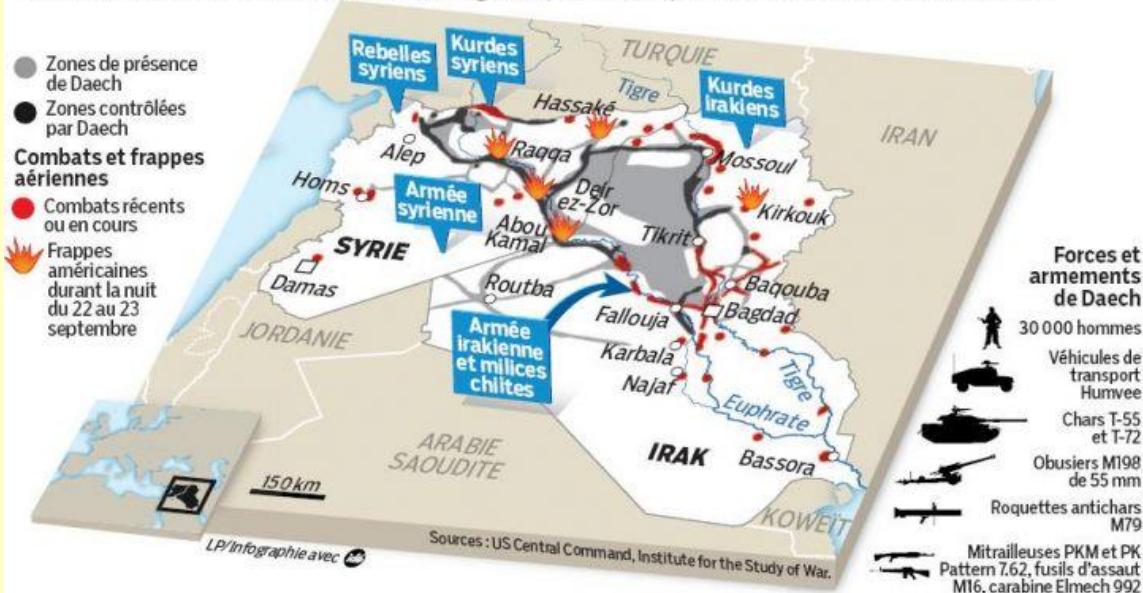
The *Guardian* notes that Secretary of state John Kerry has also modified his terminology in

the acronym DAESH ... saying it shows defiance and disrespect."

Ian Black, the *Guardian*'s middle east editor, discussed the history of the word DAESH in a September article, noting that the group's violent practices have given rise to a new word: "in the plural form — 'daw'aish' — it means bigots who impose their views on others."

The group has changed its name several times. It was founded in 1999 as Jamaat al-Tawhid wal-Jihad, became al-Qaeda in Iraq, then the Islamic State in Iraq under Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, then the Islamic State in Iraq and al-Sham (English acronym: ISIL; Arabic acronym: DAESH), and finally, in September, the Islamic State.

LE GROUPE DE L'ÉTAT ISLAMIQUE (DAECH) SUR TOUS LES FRONTS



EDITOR'S COMMENT: OK! Now that we solved the IMPORTANT ISSUE of how to address IS can we also solve the problem with IS itself?

Could the Sydney siege have been predicted and prevented?

By Carolyn Semmler

Source: <http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20141222-could-the-sydney-siege-have-been-predicted-and-prevented>

60

It's the question everyone is asking — could the Sydney siege have been predicted and therefore prevented based on the past behavior of gunman Man Haron Monis?

Monis's troubled history was well known to media and the police. He was on bail for being an accessory to the murder of his ex-wife, faced more than fifty sexual and indecent assault charges and had a conviction for sending abusive letters to families of deceased Australian soldiers.

The self-proclaimed Iranian cleric died last Tuesday following the police break-up of the sixteen hour siege in a Sydney cafe. Cafe manager Tori Johnson and barrister Katrina Dawson also died following the gun battle.

What happened in this case will be the subject of much investigation but Prime Minister Tony Abbott says Australians have a right to ask why Monis was "entirely at large in the community," with New South Wales Premier Mike Baird adding: "We are all outraged that this guy was on the street."

Similar questions are asked following other cases where crimes are committed by someone known to police with a history of bad behavior, violence or abuse.

But can we predict if and when such a person is likely to commit any further crimes?

Experts and predictions

In many areas of life we rely upon experts to make predictions and decisions based on those predictions — which is often referred to as clinical prediction.

A psychiatrist might be asked to predict the chances that an offender will re-offend if released into the community. This information might be used at a parole hearing.

But for a very long time, there have been attempts to supplement and indeed replace this process with actuarial prediction, based purely on data and statistical analysis.

An example comes from the early work of U.S. sociologist Ernest Burgess who in 1928 proposed twelve factors to be

used in predicting parole violations, including type of offence, parental and marital status, criminal type, social type, community factors, statement of trial judge and prosecuting attorney, previous criminal record among other factors. This was one of the first efforts to use data to predict parole violations.

The trouble with experts

There are good reasons for not relying solely on experts and instead relying on formal (actuarial) models that combine data to make predictions for us.

First, people are prone to bias in their judgments, and one of the best known and aptly illustrated biases is the hindsight bias.

This is the tendency to overestimate the probability that you would have correctly predicted an event after that event has occurred.

This bias can lead us to become overconfident in our ability to predict the outcome of events. It stops us from learning what the useful indicators are that we should pay attention to that might lead to accurately predicting an outcome.

Second, expertise is no guarantee of prediction accuracy. U.S. psychologist Paul E. Meehl reviewed twenty studies that compared clinical judgments of psychiatrists and psychologists with a regression model (a statistical model that combines predictor variables to find the best combination for predicting an outcome variable).

There was not a single study in which the clinician outperformed the statistical model in making predictions.

Further studies of psychiatrists and psychologists in a psychiatric facility trying to predict the dangerousness of forty newly admitted male patients showed similarly poor results.

Clinicians had a predictive ability accounting of 12 percent of the data, compared with a predictive ability of 82 percent for a linear regression model using the same information.

So can statistics predict a crime?

Results like these have led to large efforts to develop and validate actuarial (statistical) methods for predicting violence.

One of the most comprehensive and well regarded approaches is the Classification of Violence Risk (COVR). This uses statistical methods to classify people into five risk groups (ranging from very low risk to very high risk).

This approach was developed for use in clinical populations and so may well be of little value for predicting violence in the general population. It does at least provide a set of criteria for assessment and a formal model.

But is it accurate? The proponents of the approach state that it is, but others have pointed to a need to understand the margins of error. Further, there is a debate about the procedures used to compare the accuracy of these methods.

But prediction is hard, especially when there is a very low incidence of the event that we are trying to predict.

In 1955, Meehl and colleague Albert Rosen stated a condition under which a diagnostic test would be efficient can be defined as a situation where prediction by the diagnostic test was better than prediction using only the raw base rates.

By raw base rates we mean the rate at which the thing we are trying to predict occurs in the population. For violent gun deaths in Australia this is thankfully rare; about 0.2 per 100,000 residents. The rate may be even less if we account for events involving people with mental illness.

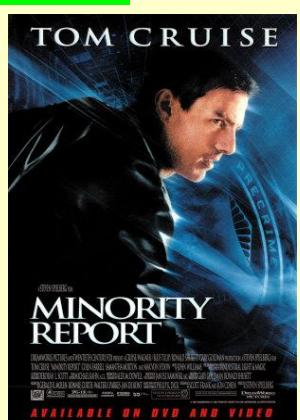
At present there are no psychometric instruments that consistently pass the criterion of efficiency with a base rate as low as this.

Further, we need to be very careful about stereotyping the mentally ill as potentially "dangerous." It is simply not the case that all people with serious mental illnesses are prone to violence.

There are very specific factors that govern the complex relationship between mental illness and violence. We need to understand and prevent people from experiencing them.

Predictive policing

The consequences of using prediction to prevent crime are explored in the 2002 movie **Minority Report**.



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► Read also this interesting article (1944):

<http://scholarlycommons.law.northwestern.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3286&context=jclc>

and this one on COVR (pp.27-28):

<http://www.rmascotland.gov.uk/files/5512/7306/6150/riskAssessmentToolsEvaluationDirectory.pdf>

EDITOR'S COMMENT: Interesting article but it does not provide a clear cut answer to the question posed at the beginning – and surely the Minority Report movie is not an answer. Most of the methodologies mentioned herein are old and are connected with criminality not terrorism. There is a lot of research to be done in this field and new parameters to be included connecting mental status with extreme social activity.

Intelligence agencies of three nations missed big clues in 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks

Source: <http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/intelligence-agencies-of-three-nations-missed-big-clues-in-26/11-mumbai-terror-attacks/articleshow/45602943.cms?prtpage=1>



62

In the fall of 2008, a 30-year-old computer expert named Zarrar Shah roamed from outposts in the northern mountains of Pakistan to safe houses near the Arabian Sea, plotting mayhem in Mumbai, India's commercial gem.

Shah, the technology chief of Lashkar-e-Taiba, the Pakistani terror group, and fellow conspirators used Google Earth to show militants the routes to their targets in the city. He set up an Internet phone system to disguise his location by routing his calls through New Jersey. Shortly before an assault that would kill 166 people, including six Americans, Shah searched online for a Jewish hostel and two luxury hotels, all sites of the eventual carnage.

But he did not know that by September, the British were spying on many of his online activities, tracking his Internet searches and messages, according to former US and Indian officials and classified documents disclosed by Edward J. Snowden, the former National Security Agency contractor.

They were not the only spies watching. Shah drew similar scrutiny from an Indian intelligence agency, according to a former official briefed on the operation. The United States was unaware of the two agencies' efforts, US officials say, but had picked up signs of a plot through other electronic and human sources, and warned Indian security officials several times in the months before the attack.



What happened next may rank among the most devastating near-misses in the history of spycraft. The intelligence agencies of the three nations did not pull together all the strands gathered by their high-tech surveillance and other tools, which might have allowed them to disrupt a terror strike so scarring that it is often called India's 9/11.

"No one put together the whole picture," said Shivshankar Menon, who was India's foreign minister at the time of the attacks and later became the national security adviser. "Not the Americans, not the Brits, not the Indians." Menon, now retired, recalled that "only once the shooting started did everyone share" what they had, largely in meetings between British and Indian officials, and then "the picture instantly came into focus."

The British had access to a trove of data from Shah's communications, but contend that the information was not specific enough to detect the threat. The Indians did not home in on the plot even with the alerts from the United States.

Clues slipped by the Americans as well. David Coleman Headley, a Pakistani-American who scouted targets in Mumbai, exchanged incriminating emails with plotters that went unnoticed until shortly before his arrest in Chicago in late 2009. US counterterrorism agencies did not pursue reports from his unhappy wife, who told US officials long before the killings began that he was a Pakistani terrorist conducting mysterious missions in Mumbai.

That hidden history of the Mumbai attacks reveals the vulnerability as well as the strengths of computer surveillance and intercepts as a counterterrorism weapon, an investigation by The New York Times, ProPublica and the PBS series "Frontline" has found.

Although electronic eavesdropping often yields valuable data, even tantalizing clues can be missed if the technology is not closely monitored, the intelligence gleaned from it is not linked with other information, or analysis does not sift incriminating activity from the ocean of digital data. This account has been pieced together from classified documents, court files and dozens of interviews with current and former Indian, British and US officials. While telephone intercepts of the assault team's phone calls and other intelligence work during the three-day siege have been reported, the extensive espionage that took place before the attacks has not previously been disclosed. Some details of the operations were withheld at the request of the intelligence agencies, citing national security concerns. "We didn't see it coming," a former senior US intelligence official said. "We were focused on many other things - al-Qaida, the Taliban, Pakistan's nuclear weapons, the Iranians. It's not that things were missed - they were never put together."

After the assault began, the countries quickly disclosed their intelligence to one another. They monitored a Lashkar control room in Pakistan where the terror chiefs directed their men, hunkered down in the Taj and Oberoi hotels and the Jewish hostel, according to current and former US, British and Indian officials.

That cooperation among the spy agencies helped analysts retrospectively piece together "a complete operations plan for the attacks," a top-secret NSA document said.

The Indian government did not respond to several requests for official comment, but a former Indian intelligence official acknowledged that Indian spies had tracked Shah's laptop communications. It is unclear what data the Indians gleaned from their monitoring.

Asked if Government Communications Headquarters, or GCHQ, Britain's eavesdropping agency, should have had strong suspicions of a looming attack, a government official responded in a statement: "We do not comment on intelligence matters. But if we had had critical information about an imminent act of terrorism in a situation like this we would have shared it with the Indian government. So the central allegation of this story is completely untrue."

The attacks still resonate in India, and are a continuing source of tension with Pakistan. Last week, a Pakistani court granted bail to a militant commander, Zaki-ur-Rehman Lakhvi, accused of being an orchestrator of the attacks. He has not been freed, pending an appeal. India protested his release, arguing it was part of a Pakistani effort to avoid prosecution of terror suspects.

The story of the Mumbai killings has urgent implications for the West's duel with the Islamic State and other groups. Like Lashkar, the Islamic State's stealthy communications and slick propaganda make it one of the world's most technologically sophisticated terror organizations. Al-Qaida, which recently announced the creation of an affiliate in India, uses similar tools.



Although the US computer arsenal plays a vital role against targets ranging from North Korea's suspected assault on Sony to Russian cyberthieves and Chinese military hacking units, counterterrorism requires a complex mix of human and technical resources. Some former counterterrorism officials warn against promoting billion-dollar surveillance programs with the narrow argument that they stop attacks.

That monitoring collects valuable information, but large amounts of it are "never meaningfully reviewed or analyzed," said Charles (Sam) Faddis, a retired CIA counterterrorism chief. "I cannot remember a single instance in my career when we ever stopped a plot based purely on signals intelligence."

The targeting of Shah's communications also failed to detect Headley's role in the Mumbai attacks, and National Security Agency officials did not see for months that he was pursuing a new attack in Denmark. "There are small successes in all of this that don't make up for all the deaths," said Tricia Bacon, a former State Department intelligence analyst, referring to intelligence and broader efforts to counter Lashkar. "It's a massive failure and some small successes."

Lashkar's Computer Chief

Zarrar Shah was a digitally savvy operative, a man with a bushy beard, a pronounced limp, strong ties to Pakistani intelligence and an intense hatred for India, according to Western and Indian officials and court files. The spy agencies of Britain, the United States and India considered him the technology and communications chief for Lashkar, a group dedicated to attacking India. His fascination with jihad established him as something of a pioneer for a generation of Islamic extremists who use the Internet as a weapon.

According to Indian court records and interviews with intelligence officials, Shah was in his late 20s when he became the "emir," or chief, of the Lashkar media unit. Because of his role, Shah, together with another young Lashkar chief named Sajid Mir, became an intelligence target for the British, Indians and Americans.

Lashkar-e-Taiba, which translates as "the Army of the Pure," grew rapidly in the 1990s thanks to a powerful patron: the Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate (ISI), the Pakistani spy agency that the CIA has worked with uneasily for years. Lashkar conducted a proxy war for Pakistan in return for arms, funds, intelligence, and training in combat tactics and communications technology. Initially, Lashkar's focus was India and Kashmir, the mountainous region claimed by both India and Pakistan.

But Lashkar became increasingly interested in the West. An al-Qaida figure involved in the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks on the World Trade Center was arrested in a Lashkar safe house in 2002. Investigators dismantled a Lashkar network as it plotted a bombing in Australia in 2003 while recruiting, buying equipment and raising funds in North America and Europe. In 2007, a French court convicted in absentia the ringleader, Mir. He remained at large in Pakistan under ISI protection, investigators say.

Lashkar's alliance with the ISI came under strain as some of the militants pushed for an al-Qaida-style war on the West.

As a result, some ISI officers and terror chiefs decided that a spectacular strike was needed to restore Lashkar's cohesion and burnish its image, according to interviews and court files. The plan called for a commando-style assault in India that could also hit Americans, Britons and Jews there.

The target was the centerpiece of Indian prosperity: Mumbai.

64

Hatching a Plot

Lashkar's chiefs developed a plot that would dwarf previous operations.

The lead conspirators were alleged to be Mir and Lakhvi, according to interviews and Indian court files, with Shah acting as a technical wingman, running the communications and setting up the hardware.

In early 2008, Indian and Western counterterrorism agencies began to pick up chatter about a potential attack on Mumbai. Indian spy agencies and police forces gathered periodic leads from their own sources about a Lashkar threat to the city.

Starting in the spring, CIA warnings singled out the iconic Taj Mahal Palace Hotel and other sites frequented by Westerners, according to US and Indian officials. Those warnings came from electronic and human sources, not from tracking Shah, other officials said.

"The US intelligence community - on multiple occasions between June and November 2008 - warned the Indian government about Lashkar threats in Mumbai," said Brian Hale, a spokesman for the director of the Office of National Intelligence. "The information

identified several potential targets in the city, but we did not have specific information about the timing or the method of attack."

US spy agencies also alerted their British counterparts, according to a senior US intelligence official. It is unclear if the warnings led to the targeting of Shah's communications, but by the fall of 2008, the British had found a way to monitor Lashkar's digital networks.

So had the Indians. But until the attacks, one Indian official said, there was no communication between the two countries on the matter.

Western spy agencies routinely share significant or "actionable" intelligence involving threats with allies, but sometimes do not pass on less important information. Even friendly agencies are typically reluctant to disclose their sources of intelligence.

Britain and India, while cooperative, were not nearly as close as the United States and Britain. And India is not included in the tightest intelligence-sharing circles of international, eavesdropping agencies that the two countries anchor.

Intelligence officials say that terror plots are often discernible only in hindsight, when a pattern suddenly emerges from what had been just bits of information. Whatever the reason, no one fully grasped the developing Mumbai conspiracy.

"They either weren't looking or didn't understand what it all meant," said one former US official who had access to the intelligence and would speak only on the condition of anonymity. "There was a lot more noise than signal. There usually is."

Leaving a Trail

Not long after the British gained access to his communications, Shah contacted a New Jersey company posing online as an Indian reseller of telephone services named Kharak Singh, purporting to be based in Mumbai. His Indian persona started haggling over the price of a voice-over-Internet phone service - also known as VoIP - that had been chosen because it would make calls between Pakistan and the terrorists in Mumbai appear as if they were originating in Austria and New Jersey.

"its not first time in my life i am perchasing in this VOIP business," Shah wrote in shaky English, to an official with the New Jersey-based company when he thought the asking price was too high, the GCHQ documents show. "i am using these services from 2 years."

Shah had begun researching the VoIP systems, online security, and ways to hide his communications as early as mid-September, according to the documents. As he made his plan, he searched on his laptop for weak communication security in Europe, spent time on a site designed to conceal browsing history, and searched Google News for "indian american naval exercises" - presumably so the seagoing attackers would not blunder into an overwhelming force.

Ajmal Kasab, the only terrorist who would survive the Mumbai attacks, watched Shah display some of his technical prowess. In mid-September, Shah and fellow plotters used Google Earth and other material to show Kasab and nine other young Pakistani terrorists their targets in Mumbai, according to court testimony.

The session, which took place in a huge "media room" in a remote camp on the border with Kashmir, was part of an effort to chart the terrorists' route across the Arabian Sea, to a water landing on the edge of Mumbai, then through the chaotic streets. Videos, maps and reconnaissance reports had been supplied to Mir by Headley, the Pakistani-American who scouted targets. "The gunmen were shown all this data from the reconnaissance," said Deven Bharti, a top Mumbai police official who investigated the attacks, adding that the terrorists were trained to use Google Earth and global positioning equipment on their own. "Kasab was trained to locate everything in Mumbai before he went."

If Shah made any attempt to hide his malevolent intentions, he did not have much success at it. Although his frenetic computer activity was often sprawling, he repeatedly displayed some key interests: small-scale warfare, secret communications, tourist and military locations in India, extremist ideology and Mumbai.

He searched for Sun Tzu's "Art of War," previous terror strikes in India and weather forecasts in the Arabian Sea, typed "4 star hotel in delhi" and "taj hotel," and visited mapsofindia.com to pore over sites in and around Mumbai, the documents show.

Still, the sheer scale of his ambition might have served as a smokescreen for his focus on the city. For example, he also showed interest in Kashmir, the Indian Punjab, New Delhi, Afghanistan and the US Army in Germany and Canada. He constantly flipped back and



forth among Internet porn and entertainment sites while he was carrying out his work. He appeared to be fascinated with the actor Robert De Niro, called up at least one article on the singer Taylor Swift, and looked at funny cat videos. He visited unexplainable.net, a conspiracy theory website, and conducted a search on "barak obama family + muslim."

In late September and again in October, Lashkar botched attempts to send the attackers to Mumbai by sea. During that period, at least two of the CIA warnings were delivered, according to US and Indian officials. An alert in mid-September mentioned the Taj hotel among a half-dozen potential targets, causing the facility to temporarily beef up security. Another on Nov. 18 reported the location of a Pakistani vessel linked to a Lashkar threat against the southern coastal area of Mumbai, where the attack would occur.

Eventually Shah did set up the VoIP service through the New Jersey company, ensuring that many of his calls to the terrorists would bear the area code 201, concealing their actual origin. But in November, the company's owner wrote to the fictitious Indian reseller, Singh, complaining that no traffic was running on the digital phone network. Shah's reply was ominous, according to Indian law enforcement officials, who obtained evidence from the company's communications records with FBI assistance after the attack. "Dear Sir," Shah replied, "i will send trafic by the end of this month."

By Nov. 24, Shah had moved to the Karachi suburbs, where he set up an electronic "control room" with the help of an Indian militant named Abu Jundal, according to his later confession to the Indian authorities. It was from this room that Mir, Shah and others would issue minute-by-minute instructions to the assault team once the attacks began. On Nov. 25, Abu Jundal tested the VoIP software on four laptops spread out on four small tables facing a pair of televisions as the plotters, including Mir, Shah and Lakhvi, waited for the killings to begin.

In a plan to pin the blame on Indians, Shah typed a statement of responsibility for the attack from the Hyderabad Deccan Mujahadeen - a fake Indian organization. Early on Nov. 26, Shah showed more of his hand: He emailed a draft of the phony claim to an underling with orders to send it to the news media later, according to US and Indian counterterrorism officials.

Before the attacks started that evening, the documents show, Shah pulled up Google images of the Oberoi Hotel and conducted Wikimapia searches for the Taj and the Chabad House, the Jewish hostel run by an American rabbi from Brooklyn who would die in the strike along with his pregnant wife. Shah opened the hostel's website. He began Googling news coverage of Mumbai just before the attacks began.

An intercept shows what Shah was reading, on the news website NDTV, as the killings proceeded.

"Mumbai, the city which never sleeps, was brought to its knees on Wednesday night as it came under an unprecedented multiple terror attack," the article said. "Even as heavily armed police stormed into Taj Hotel, just opposite the Gateway of India where suspected terrorists were still holed up, blood-soaked guests could be seen carried out into the waiting ambulances."

66

A Trove of Data

In the United States, Nov. 26 was the Wednesday before Thanksgiving. A long presidential election fight was over, and many officials in Washington had already drifted away for their long weekend. Anish Goel, director for South Asia at the National Security Council in the White House, left around 6 a.m. for the 8-hour drive to his parents' house in Ohio. By the time he arrived, his BlackBerry was filled with emails about the attacks.

The Pakistani terrorists had come ashore in an inflatable speedboat in a fishermen's slum in south Mumbai about 9 p.m. local time. They fanned out in pairs and struck five targets with bombs and AK-47s: the Taj, the Oberoi Hotel, the Leopold Cafe, Chabad House, and the city's largest train station.

The killing was indiscriminate, merciless, and seemingly unstoppable over three horrific days. In raw, contemporaneous notes by analysts, the eavesdroppers seem to be making a hasty effort to understand the clues from the days and weeks before.

"Analysis of Zarrar Shah's viewing habits" and other data "yielded several locations in Mumbai well before the attacks occurred and showed operations planning for initial entry points into the Taj Hotel," the NSA document said.

That viewing history also revealed a longer list of what might have been future targets. M.K. Narayanan, India's national security adviser at the time, appeared to be concerned

with that data from Shah in discussions with US officials shortly after the attacks, according to the WikiLeaks archive of US diplomatic cables.

A top secret GCHQ document described the capture of information on targets that Shah had identified using Google Earth. The analysts seemed impressed by the intelligence haul - "unprecedented real-time active access in place!" - one GCHQ document noted. Another agency document said the work to piece the data together was "briefed at highest levels nationally and internationally, including the US National Security Adviser."

As early reports of many casualties came in, Goel said the focus in Washington shifted to a question already preoccupying the White House: "Is this going to lead to a war between Pakistan and India?" US officials who conducted periodic simulations of how a nuclear conflict could be triggered often began with a terror attack like this one.

On Nov. 30, Goel was back at his office, reading a stack of intelligence reports that had accumulated on his desk and reviewing classified electronic messages on a secure terminal.

Amid the crisis, Goel, now a senior South Asia Fellow at the New America Foundation, paid little attention to the sources of the intelligence and said that he still knew little about specific operations. But two things stood out, he said: The main conspirators in Pakistan had already been identified. And the quality and rapid pacing of the intelligence reports made it clear that electronic espionage was primarily responsible for the information. "During the attacks, it was extraordinarily helpful," Goel said of the surveillance.

But until then, the United States did not know of the British and Indian spying on Shah's communications. "While I cannot comment on the authenticity of any alleged classified documents, NSA had no knowledge of any access to a lead plotter's computer before the attacks in Mumbai in November 2008," said Brian Hale, the spokesman for the Office of the director of National Intelligence. As NSA and GCHQ analysts worked around the clock after the attacks, the flow of intelligence enabled Washington, London and New Delhi to exert pressure on Pakistan to round up suspects and crack down on Lashkar, despite its alliance with the ISI, according to officials involved.

In the stacks of intelligence reports, one name did not appear, Goel clearly recalls: David Coleman Headley. None of the intelligence streams from the United States, Britain or India had yet identified him as a conspirator.

67

The Missing American

Headley's many-sided life - three wives, drug-smuggling convictions and a past as an informant for the US Drug Enforcement Administration - would eventually collapse. But for now, he was a free man, watching the slaughter on television in Lahore, Pakistan, according to his later court testimony. At the time, he was with Faiza Oualha, his Moroccan wife, having reconciled with her after moving his Pakistani wife and four children to Chicago.

Headley's unguarded emails reflected euphoria about Lashkar's success. An exchange with his wife in Chicago continued a long string of incriminating electronic communications by Headley written in a transparent code, according to investigators and case files. "I watched the movie the whole day," she wrote, congratulating him on his "graduation."

About a week later, Headley hinted at his inside information in an email to fellow alumni of a Pakistani military school. Writing about the young terrorists who carried out the mayhem in Mumbai, he said: "Yes they were only 10 kids, guaranteed. I hear 2 were married with a daughter each under 3 years old." His subsequent emails contained several dozen news media photos of the Mumbai siege.

Almost immediately, Headley began pursuing a new plot with Lashkar against a Danish newspaper that had published cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad. He went to Denmark in January and cased the newspaper, meeting and exchanging emails with its advertising staff, according to his later testimony and court records. He sent messages to his fellow conspirators and emailed himself a reconnaissance checklist of sorts, with terms like "Counter-Surveillance," "Security (Armed?)" and "King's Square" - the site of the newspaper.

Those emails capped a series of missed signals involving Headley. The FBI conducted at least four inquiries into allegations about his extremist activity between 2001 and 2008. Oualha had visited the US Embassy in Islamabad three times between December 2007 and April 2008, according to interviews and court documents, claiming that he was a terrorist carrying out missions in India.

Headley also exchanged highly suspicious emails with his Lashkar and ISI handlers before and after the Mumbai attacks, according to court records and US counterterrorism officials. The NSA collected some of his emails, but did not realize he was involved in terrorist plotting until he became the target of an FBI investigation, officials said.

That inquiry began in July 2009 when a British tip landed on the desk of a rookie FBI counterterrorism agent in Chicago. Someone named "David" at a Chicago pay phone had called two suspects under surveillance in Britain, planning to visit. He had contacted the Britons for help with the plot, according to testimony. Customs and Border Protection used his flight itinerary to identify him while en route, and after further investigation, the FBI arrested him at Chicago O'Hare Airport that October, as he was preparing to fly to Pakistan. For his role in the Mumbai attacks, he pleaded guilty to 12 counts and was sentenced to 35 years in prison.

After disclosures last year of widespread NSA surveillance, US officials claimed that bulk collection of electronic communications led to Headley's eventual arrest. But a government oversight panel rejected claims giving credit to the NSA's program to collect Americans' domestic phone call records. Case files and interviews with law enforcement officials show that the NSA played only a support role in the FBI investigation that finally identified Headley as a terrorist and disrupted the Danish plot.

The sole surviving attacker of the Mumbai attack, Kasab, was executed in India after a trial. Although Pakistan denies any role in the attacks, it has failed to charge an ISI officer and Mir, who were indicted by US prosecutors. Though Shah and other Lashkar chiefs had been arrested, their trial remains stalled six years after the attack. Menon, the former Indian foreign minister, said that a lesson that emerged from the tragedy in Mumbai was that "computer traffic only tells you so much. It's only a thin slice." The key is the analysis, he said, and "we didn't have it."

2015 Predictions for Islamist Terrorism Worldwide

By Dr Maha Hosain Aziz

Source: <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/maha-hosain-aziz/>



68

In 2014, we saw the threat of al Qaeda continue to spread via affiliate groups in the Middle East, Asia and Africa. We also witnessed the unexpected resurgence of ISIS in Syria and Iraq. According to global risk firm Verisk Maplecroft, terrorism-related deaths worldwide increased by almost 25% between Nov 1, 2013, and Oct 31, 2014. What's in store for 2015? Here's what we can expect of Islamist terrorism in the coming year:

1) A Major Attack By An Islamist Terrorist Group Is Unlikely On Western Soil. The core organization of al Qaeda may still be a threat, but has been weakened such that it won't be a significant danger to the West. But what about ISIS? It's perhaps too soon to say if ISIS' global aspirations can be realized. Yes, it has publicized its ambitious five-year plan to expand beyond the Middle East into Europe (as well as deeper into South Asia and Africa). But this plan won't have an opportunity to materialize until ISIS' role in Syria and Iraq is resolved, which won't happen in the coming year. So, a major attack by al Qaeda or ISIS in 2015 on Western soil seems unlikely.

2) Lone Wolf Terrorist Attacks on Western Soil Will Increase. There will be more individuals who are inspired in some way by al

Qaeda or ISIS to carry out small-scale attacks with maximum publicity. We just saw this happen on Dec. 15 with the gunman taking hostages in a Lindt café in Sydney, Australia, and on Oct. 22 with the Parliament shootings in Ottawa, Canada. This will necessitate closer monitoring of terrorist-linked social media and websites that may inspire such attacks. But it also reminds us that it is impossible to monitor everyone who might have access to such information, or to determine if such exposure might trigger some kind terrorist act. This will be the most significant terrorist threat for countries in the EU and North America to deal with - and the most difficult to prevent.

3) Al Qaeda Affiliates Will Continue to Thrive in the

Middle East, Africa and South Asia, expanding their power base, targeting Western interests and recruiting more members. Recent examples include the al Qaeda affiliate in Syria that has taken control of the northern province of Idlib, and in Yemen where it killed an American hostage after a failed US rescue operation. These al Qaeda affiliates will also continue to recruit more members among the disenfranchised. As expected, ISIS' members will multiply too, recruiting more men, women and teenagers from places like Turkey, Indonesia, the [US](#) and beyond, just as its network of affiliates in 11 countries will continue to grow.

4) Battle Between Islamist Extremists: ISIS vs Al Qaeda? They are not formerly aligned. In fact, al Qaeda has publicly said ISIS is too extreme; and al Qaeda affiliates like the Nusra Front have clashed with ISIS on the Syria-Lebanon border. Expect more tensions to flare up between the two groups. Also, ISIS is becoming the new brand of global terrorism, in some ways making al Qaeda look out-dated. With its distinct strategies (e.g. widely distributed videos of beheadings, aggressive social media, a five year expansion plan, its own currency), we all know what to expect of ISIS and its vision. This could lead to the following:

Dr Maha Hosain Aziz specialises in political risk, prediction and strategy across varied industries and disciplines. She is a part-time professor teaching and researching political risk & prediction at New York University's Graduate School of Arts & Sciences. She is a lead analyst at Wikistrat, the world's first crowdsourced consultancy, where she developed a new analytical product focused on political risk and futures. She is a former Businessweek global politics columnist who now writes on political risk, prediction and strategy for CNN World's Global Public Square and the Huffington Post's WorldPost. She is a cartoonist creating The Global Kid, the world's first comic book on global political risk, futures and policy for young adult and adult readers (100% of sales from the Indiegogo-crowdfunded comic book will go to two global education non-profits that help youth reach their potential). And she is chairwoman of a small team that co-launched the New Silk Road Generation, the first e-mentoring program for university students in Afghanistan. Previously, Dr. Aziz was a Senior Teaching Fellow in the Politics and International Studies Department at SOAS, co-convening an undergraduate course on democracy, development and militant groups in South Asia. She also taught an undergraduate course on British politics and democratic institutions at the London School of Economics (LSE), winning three teaching awards. At the LSE, she was the C&J Modi/Narayanan Fellow while pursuing her doctoral research on the moral economy. Before her PhD, she worked in investment banking and media, and earned a Bachelor's at Brown University, a Master's at Columbia University and a Master's at the LSE.

EDITOR'S COMMENT: #5 predictions is quite interesting since the struggle in that part of the world is not making front-line pages in the mass media but produce enough blood and collateral damages...

- a) We may see al Qaeda step up its game, perhaps even emulating ISIS' approach with more strategic use of social media, funding strategies (e.g. ISIS generates \$1 million a day through oil sales in the black market, according to one estimate), etc. Or...
- b) If al Qaeda doesn't change its ways, perhaps more recruits will defect to ISIS as has already begun. Or...
- c) al Qaeda may experience its own internal power struggle, with a new leader emerging to counter Ayman al-Zawahiri's vision and better compete with ISIS' brand.

5) Battle Between Religious Extremists: Islamists vs Buddhists?

Buddhist extremists in Sri Lanka and Myanmar have publicly formed a global anti-Islamist pact. It's still unclear how this global pact will play out, but Islamist extremists like the Pakistani Taliban have publicly vowed jihad against Buddhist monks in Myanmar. Also, let's not forget ISIS' five year plan to form an Islamic Caliphate does include Sri Lanka, but not Myanmar. It may not happen in 2015, but the arrival of the Pakistani Taliban in Myanmar and ISIS in Sri Lanka to battle Buddhist extremists is not inconceivable at some point in the future.

69

Stay tuned!



How Western media enable Islamic terrorism

Source: <http://humanevents.com/2014/12/22/how-western-media-enable-islamic-terrorism/>

As the West experiences a rise in the sort of terror attacks that are endemic to the Islamic world—church attacks, sex-slavery and beheadings—it is only natural that the same mainstream media that habitually conceals such atrocities “over there,” especially against Christians and other minorities under Islam, would also conceal the reality of jihadi aspirations “over here.”

As the *Commentator* reports:

[T]he level of the [media] grovelling after the tragic and deadly saga in Sydney Australia over the last 24 hours has been astounding. At the time of writing, the lead story on the BBC website is of course about that very tragedy, in which an Islamist fanatic took a random group hostage in a cafe, ultimately killing two of them. He did this in the name of Islam. But you wouldn't get that impression if you started to read the BBC's lead story, which astoundingly managed to avoid mentioning the words Islam, Islamic, Islamist, Muslim, or any derivations thereof for a full 16 paragraphs. The *New York Times*, which led by calling the terrorist, Man Haron Monis an “armed man”, waited until paragraph 11.

In the *Guardian*'s main story – whose lead paragraph simply referred to a “gunman” — you had to wait until paragraph 24.

If you'd have blinked, you'd have missed it.

....

In the wider media, reports about Muslim fears of a “backlash” have been all but ubiquitous.

If these are the lengths that Western mainstream media go to dissemble about the Islamic-inspired slaughter of Western peoples, it should now be clear why the ubiquitous Muslim persecution of those unfashionable Christian minorities is also practically unknown by those who follow Western mainstream media.

As with the Sydney attack, media headlines say it all. The 2011 New Year's Eve Coptic church attack that left 28 dead appeared under vague headlines: “Clashes grow as Egyptians remain angry after attack,” was the *New York Times*' headline; and “Christians clash with police in Egypt after attack on churchgoers kills 21” was the *Washington Post*'s—as if frustrated and harried Christians lashing out against their oppressors is the “big news,” not

the unprovoked atrocity itself; as if their angry reaction “evens” everything up.

Similarly, the *Los Angeles Times* partially told the story of an Egyptian off-duty police officer who, after identifying Copts by their crosses on a train, opened fire on them, killing one, while screaming “Allahu Akbar”—but to exonerate the persecution, as caught by the report's headline: “Eyewitness claims train attacker did not target Copts, state media say.”

A February 2012 NPR report titled “In Egypt, Christian-Muslim Tension is on the Rise,” while meant to familiarize readers with the situation of Egypt's Christians, prompts more questions than answers them: “In Egypt, growing tensions between Muslims and Christians have led to sporadic violence [initiated by whom?]. Many Egyptians blame the interreligious strife on hooligans [who?] taking advantage of absent or weak security forces. Others believe it's because of a deep-seated mistrust between Muslims and the minority Christian community [what are the sources of this “mistrust”?].”

The photo accompanying the story is of angry Christians holding a cross aloft—not Muslims destroying crosses, which is what prompted the former to this display of Christian solidarity.

Blurring the line between victim and oppressor—recall the fear of “anti-Muslim backlash” whenever a Muslim terrorizes “infidels” in the West—also applies to the media's reporting on Muslim persecution of Christians.

A February 2012 BBC report on a church attack in Nigeria that left three Christians dead, including a toddler, objectively states the bare bone facts in one sentence. Then it jumps to apparently the really big news: that “the bombing sparked a riot by Christian youths, with reports that at least two Muslims were killed in the violence. The two men were dragged off their bikes after being stopped at a roadblock set up by the rioters, police said. A row of Muslim-owned shops was also burned...”

The report goes on and on, with an entire section about “very angry” Christians till one confuses victims with persecutors, forgetting what the Christians are “very angry” about in the first place: nonstop terror attacks on

70



their churches and the slaughter of their women and children.

A *New York Times* report that appeared on December 25, 2011—the day after Boko Haram bombed several churches during Christmas Eve services, leaving some 40 dead—said that such church bombings threaten “to exploit the already frayed relations between Nigeria’s nearly evenly split populations of Christians and Muslims...” Such an assertion suggests that both Christians and Muslims are equally motivated by religious hostility—even as one seeks in vain for Christian terror organizations that bomb mosques in Nigeria to screams of “Christ is Great!”

Meanwhile, Boko Haram has torched 185 churches—to say nothing of the countless Christians beheaded—in just the last few months alone.

Continuing to grasp for straws, the same NYT report suggests that the Nigerian government’s

“heavy-handed” response to Boko Haram is responsible for its terror, and even manages to invoke another mainstream media favorite: the poverty-causes-terrorism myth.

Whether Muslim mayhem is taking place in the Islamic or Western worlds, the mainstream media shows remarkable consistency in employing an arsenal of semantic games, key phrases, convenient omissions, and moral relativism to portray such violence as a product of anything and everything—political and historical grievances, “Islamophobia,” individual insanity, poverty and ignorance, territorial disputes—not Islam.

As such, Western media keep Western majorities in the dark about the Islamic threat, here and abroad. In short, the “MSM” protects and enables the Islamic agenda—irrespective of whether its distortions are a product of intent, political correctness, or sheer stupidity.

First western journalist given full access to ISIS

Source: <http://m.timesofindia.com/world/middle-east/First-western-journalist-given-full-access-to-ISIS-warns-its-much-more-dangerous-than-we-think/articleshow/45602681.cms>

71

ISIS is “much stronger and much more dangerous” than anyone in the west realises, the journalist said.

The first western journalist in the world to be allowed extensive access to Isis territories in

and much more dangerous” than anyone in the west realises.



Charlie Winter
@charliewinter



Jurgen Todenhöfer, the German journo who returned from #IS last week, is publishing summary of his trip on Monday.

1:53 AM - 21 Dec 2014

28 RETWEETS 9 FAVORITES



Syria and Iraq has returned from the region with a warning: the group is “much stronger

to the website Der tz, Todenhöfer revealed that he actually stayed in

Jurgen Todenhöfer, 74, is a renowned German journalist and publicist who travelled through Turkey to Mosul, the largest city occupied by Isis, after months of negotiations with the group's leaders. He plans to publish a summary of his "10 days in the Islamic State" on Monday, but in interviews with German-language media outlets has revealed his first impressions of what life is like under Isis.

Speaking



the same hotel in Benghazi as James Foley, the US journalist who was beheaded on camera by Isis in August.

Of course, I've seen the terrible, brutal video and it was one of my main concerns during the negotiations as to how I can avoid (the same fate)," he said.

Once within Isis territory, Todenhöfer said his strongest impression was "that Isis is much stronger than we think here". He said it now has "dimensions larger than the UK", and is supported by "an almost ecstatic enthusiasm that I have never encountered in any other warzone".



 Charlie Winter
@charliewinter

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Another photo of Jurgen Todenhöfer, the journalist from #Germany who just got back from 10 day trip to #IS in #Syria.

7:28 PM - 19 Dec 2014

42 RETWEETS 7 FAVORITES

"Each day, hundreds of willing fighters arrive from all over the world," he told tz. "For me it is incomprehensible."

Todenhöfer claims to have been able to move among Isis fighters, observing their living conditions and equipment. On his Facebook page, he has posted images which he said show German Heckler & Koch MG3 machine guns in the hands of Isis. "Someday this German MG could be directed to us," he said. Isis's fighters themselves sleep, he said, in barracks formed from "the shells of bombed-out houses". They number around 5,000 in Mosul, and are spread so widely that were the US to bomb them all "they would have to reduce the whole of Mosul to ruins", he said.

Todenhöfer says that this ultimately means Isis cannot be beaten by Western intervention or air strikes - despite US claims last week that they have proven effective. "With every bomb

that is dropped and hits a civilian, the number of terrorists' increases," he said.

Speaking in a TV interview with RTL's Nachtjournal programme two days after his return to Germany last week, Todenhöfer said Isis has worked hard to establish itself as a functioning state. He said it has "social welfare", a "school system", and that he was even surprised to see it has plans to provide education to girls.

Most concerning of all, he said, was Isis fighters' belief that "all religions who agree with democracy have to die".

He said the view that kept being repeated was that Isis want to "conquer the world" and all who do not believe in the group's interpretation of the Quran will be killed. The only other religions to be spared, Todenhöfer said, were the "people of the book" — Jews and Christians.

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Charlie Winter, a researcher for the anti-extremism thinktank Quilliam, said such comments about Isis being "a group that is formidable militarily and politically" were quoted by pro-Isis accounts because it is "a bitter pill for policymakers to swallow".

"That said, Todenhöfer's comments on the massacre of the Yazidis and displacement of hundreds of thousands in Mosul have been routinely ignored by

72

Isis supporters," Mr Winter said. "The facts are being cherry-picked to give a very narrow view of the situation that Todenofer was met with in Syria and Iraq."

Todenofer plans to use his first-hand experience of Isis in a book he is writing about the group. He says on Facebook that he has always "spoken to both sides" in his 50 years reporting from war zones, including interviews

with Syria's President Bashar al-Assad and al-Qaida, with Afghanistan's President Hamid Karzai and with leaders of the Taliban.

In his view, Isis will soon come to the west to negotiate a level of co-existence. "The only ones who could stop this now are the moderate Iraqi Sunnis," he said, adding: "If you want to defeat an opponent, you must know him."

JFK Airport Perimeter Breached by Kayakers

Source: security-today.com/articles/2014/07/28/jfk-airport-perimeter-breached-by-kayakers.aspx?admgarea=ht.airport

July 2014 – After spending millions of dollars on perimeter security, I'm fairly positive most people would feel that it would be extremely difficult to breach that perimeter. However, over the weekend, two

kayakers were cited for trespassing after they breached the \$100 million perimeter intrusion detection system, consisting of surveillance cameras and motion detectors, at New York's JFK Airport. **In fact, it was the same area where a man scaled an 8-foot fence and walked into the airport after his jet ski ran out of gas in August 2012.**

Apparently, 21-year-olds Jordan Crooms and Anthony Giglio had set out in their kayak from a park across the bay, when waters got a bit shaky. Their kayak flipped and the men lost two of their paddles in the confusion. With just one paddle left,



Crooms told media that they were aiming for the closest spot to shore.

Washing up around 1:30 on Saturday morning, just past the end of Kennedy's Runway 4L, they were undetected by security and the airport's detection system sounded no warnings.

Airport workers found the two at the end of the runway and Port Authority Police issued Crooms and Giglio summonses.

73



Sabotage or Terrorism in TAV Train, Bologna?

(Translated from Italian)

Source:http://www.unionesarda.it/articolo/cronaca_italiana/2014/12/23/treni_fermi_a_bologna_per_un_incendio_doloso-5-401721.html



74

Heavy impacts on the high-speed trains (TAV) but also on conventional lines after the four fires hanged at dawn today, along the railroad Bologna Santa Viola. On site "No TAV" messages were found and investigators suspect that those responsible are to be found in the environment of the protesters of high speed trains. According to what has been learned, the first report of fire came at the Railway Police at 4:25. The four wells on fire - where electrical cables and other connections are crammed - are not far apart and are located in a stretch of track via Triumviato, between two railway overpasses, easily accessible by road. The "No



TAV" written on the spot set under investigation by firefighters, police and forensic service. The chief prosecutor of Bologna, Roberto Alfonso, is personally following the first phase of the investigation. The transport chaos affected not only the Emilia Romagna region, but was visible throughout Italy, with serious delays and changes that have created inconvenience to thousands of travelers.

Interior Minister Angelino Alfano commented on the incident: "Those who oppose the TAV know that you do not intimidate the State" and added: "The government and the country are not afraid." On the same wavelength Transport Minister Maurizio Lupi stated: "This is a



new terrorist act against TAV, but these people will not stop us in our efforts to innovate and change Italy." Prime Minister Matteo Renzi commented that this action is not indicative of terrorism, but of sabotage: "I want to reassure all Italians that this is a sabotage operation and we will verify what happened."

Dreaded terrorist Malik Ishaq released by Pakistan government

Source: <http://www.terrorismwatch.org/2014/12/dreaded-terrorist-malik-ishaq-released.html>

Malik Ishaq, dreaded chief of banned LeJ that has carried out attacks on minority Shias and the mastermind of the assault on the Sri Lankan cricket team in 2009, has been released after three years in jail with the Pakistan government not seeking an extension of his detention.



Ishaq has been under detention for the last three years under a public security order for making "provocative" speeches. The government had detained Ishaq under Maintenance of Public Order (16 MPO), the same law under which key planner of 2008 Mumbai attacks Zakir Rehman Lakhvi is being



held after being granted bail by an anti-terrorism court.

The Supreme Court had granted Ishaq bail in July 2011 after which he was held under 16 MPO. Ishaq's release comes even as the government considers "radical changes" to tackle militancy after the Taliban school massacre in which 148 people, mostly children,

were killed in Peshawar. Ishaq's release comes despite Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's pledge to eradicate the "cancer" of sectarianism. The Punjab government yesterday produced Ishaq before a provincial review board comprising



three judges of the Lahore High Court headed by Justice Manzoor in a high security here. The officials of the home department, however, did not seek extension in his detention. "Appeal for further extension in detention of Malik Ishaq is dismissed as withdrawn," the review board said. "Malik Ishaq is a free man now," an official said.

LeJ has claimed responsibility for a series of bloody attacks, including two bombings targeting Shiites in Quetta in 2013 that killed about 200 people. Ishaq was also named as a "Specially Designated Global Terrorist" by the US earlier this year.

The Shia community has strongly criticised the government for not seeking extension in the detention of Ishaq. Ishaq, the influential co-founder of a Sipah-e-Sahaba, a breakaway group that is also linked with al-Qaeda and the Taliban, had told an Urdu daily in 1997 that he was involved in the killing of 102 Shias.

He was arrested the same year, and eventually charged in connection with 44 different cases, including the attack on the Sri Lankan cricket team in March 2009. The Sri Lankan cricket team attack took place on March 3, 2009, when a bus carrying Sri Lankan

75

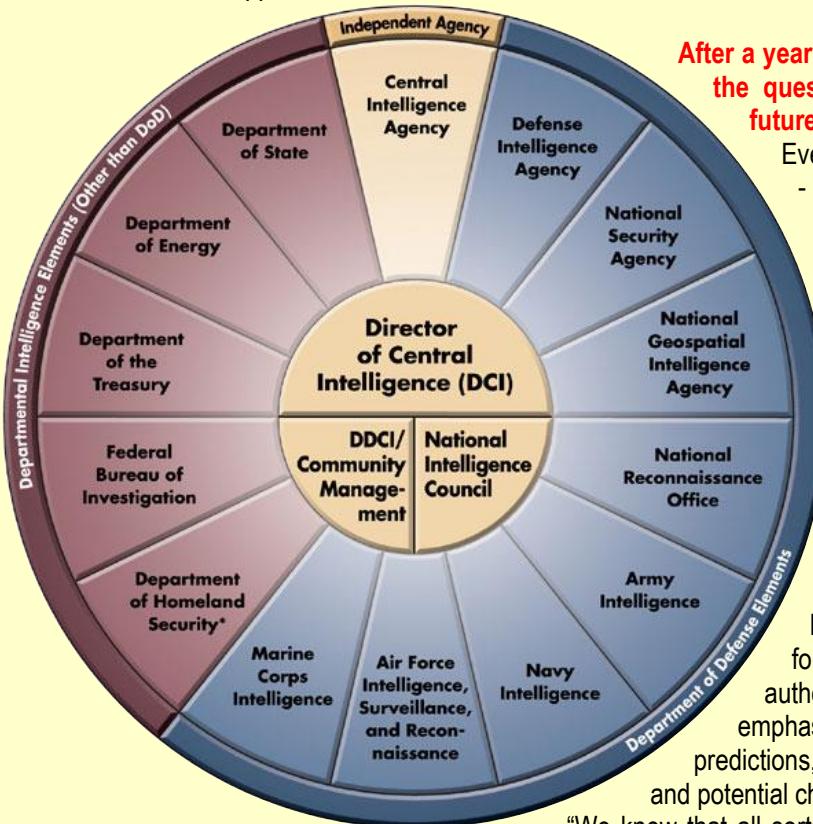
cricketers, part of a larger convoy, was fired upon by 12 gunmen, near the Gaddafi Stadium in Lahore. Six members of the Sri Lankan

cricket team were injured. Six Pakistani policemen and two civilians were also killed in the attack.

What the Intelligence Community Thought Would Happen in 2015 - in 2000

By Kedar Pavgi

Source: <http://www.defenseone.com/threats/2014/12/what-intelligence-community-thought-would-happen-2015-2000/101853/>



After a year filled with non-stop national security crises, the question is: Can anyone predict chaos in the future? The answer is, sort of.

Every four years, the National Intelligence Council - the arm of the Intelligence Community tasked with developing long-term outlooks - releases its Global Trends report. It's an unclassified publication that uses open source information gathering techniques to plot out the world 15 to 20 years out.

In 2000, the NIC released the Global Trends 2015 report to figure out how major technological, geopolitical and demographic trends at the turn of the millennium would shape the years to come. The next one is expected to come out in 2016 and will predict the world of 2035.

David Gordon, former policy planning director for the State Department and one of the main authors of the Global Trends 2015 report, emphasized that it wasn't meant to be a set of predictions, or even a model, but rather "explorations, likely and potential changes" in the world of the future.

"We knew that all sorts of stuff was going to happen, and then what you were trying to do is, understand beneath all of that, what are some of the big things going on. Obviously, once something very big like [like the wars in Iraq or Afghanistan] happens, the world changes," Gordon told Defense One.

Of course, the world circa-2000 was a very different place. This was before the 9/11 attacks and the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. While cyber-security is now a major threat, many people were just getting over the preparations for the Y2K computer bug.

The whole Global Trends 2015 [report](#) is worth reading, but Defense One decided to look at some of the things that the report got right – and wrong – about conflict in 2015.

China

"The fundamental thing that we got right was the notion that China was going to become a 'big Kahuna' in terms of global change," Gordon said. "That is something that everybody now takes for granted, but in 2000, that was not what was out there."

Global Trends 2015 suggested that the rise of China's military would start disrupting U.S. military power in the Asia-Pacific and warned of a potential for a war over Taiwan and territories

in the South China Sea. But it also made many other calls:

"China will be exploiting advanced weapons and production technologies acquired from abroad—Russia, Israel, Europe, Japan and the United States—that will enable it to integrate naval and air capabilities against Taiwan and potential adversaries in the South China Sea."

Indeed, that has been the case. A [2010 report](#) published by the

Defense Threat Reduction Agency detailed the ways in which China has been acquiring those types of weapons technologies. There's also this:

"In the event of a peaceful resolution of the Taiwan issue, some of China's military objectives—such as protecting the sea lanes for Persian Gulf oil—could become more congruent with those of the United States. Nevertheless, as an emerging regional power, China would continue to expand its influence without regard to U.S. interests."

Though there hasn't been a full resolution on the issue of Taiwan yet, China docked two ships at a port in Iran as a sign of interest in the strategically important Strait of Hormuz, *Reuters* reported in September.

Another scenario involving China deploying nuclear tipped missiles:

"China by 2015 will have deployed tens to several tens of missiles with nuclear warheads targeted against the United States, mostly more survivable land- and sea-based mobile missiles. It also will have hundreds of shorter-range ballistic and cruise missiles for use in regional conflicts. Some of these shorter-range missiles will have nuclear warheads; most will be armed with conventional warheads."

In early December, *Bloomberg* reported that China was preparing to deploy nuclear missiles aboard its submarines. There's also the ongoing development of Beijing's missile programs and hypersonic weapons.

Russia

After the invasion of Crimea in March and the instability in eastern Ukraine, there were fears that Russia was becoming a resurgent power that would counter U.S. interests around the world. However the past few weeks have seen Russia's economy face severe difficulties, including a slip into recession and a plunging Ruble. Global Trends 2015 noted Moscow's potentially disruptive influence in former Soviet states like Ukraine predicted it would face internal troubles by 2015:

"By 2015, Russia will be challenged even more than today to adjust its expectations for world leadership to the dramatically reduced resources it will have to play that role. The quality of Russian governance is an open question as is whether the country will be able to make the transition in a manner that preserves rather than upsets regional stability."

Throughout the 2000s, Russia's government has been buoyed by high gas prices. Still, Gordon said that the fundamentals behind Russia's power haven't changed dramatically over the past 15 years.

"I think Russia has had a lot of ups and downs...but I think Russia's threat for a while has been a great power in decline, and it continues to be, and that's what we suggested in the report."

Terrorism

After the U.S. embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998 and the attack on the USS Cole in Yemen in 2000, combating terrorism became a growing concern for the intelligence community. The report suggested that terrorists based out of the Middle East would target U.S. diplomatic and military facilities. Of course, 9/11 changed the course of U.S. foreign policy for the coming decade. Even then, Global Trends 2015 didn't just forecast the spread of terrorism, but how these groups would proliferate:

"States with poor governance; ethnic, cultural, or religious tensions; weak economies and porous borders will be prime breeding grounds for terrorism. In such states, domestic groups will challenge the entrenched government, and transnational networking seeking safe havens. At the same time, the trend away from state supported political terrorism and toward more diverse, free-wheeling, transnational networks – enabled by information technology – will continue. Some of the states that actively sponsor terrorism or terrorist groups today may decrease or even cease their support by 2015 as a result of regime changes, rapprochement with neighbors or the conclusion that terrorism has become counterproductive. But weak states also could drift toward cooperation with terrorists, creating de-facto new state supporters."

While al-Qaeda was the main threat after 9/11, the world was shocked this year by how effectively the Islamic State (also known as ISIS or ISIL) took control of large parts of Iraq and Syria. Gordon said "there was a strong view [within the Intelligence Community] that the impact of the Internet was going to be enabling for these [types of] organizations."

"ISIS has just taken it to a whole new level, there's no question about that," he said.



Iraq

In 1998, the Clinton administration launched Operation Desert Fox, the mission to take out Iraqi military targets after President Saddam Hussein cut his cooperation with U.N. weapons inspectors. But in 2000, the report suggested that Iraq might be able to do much more by 2015:

"Iraq's ability to obtain WMD will be influenced, in part, by the degree to which the UN Security Council can impede development or procurement over the next 15 years. Under some scenarios, Iraq could test an ICBM capable of delivering nuclear-sized payloads to the United States before 2015; foreign assistance would affect the capabilities of the missile and the time it became available. Iraq could also develop a nuclear weapon during this period."

The later invasion of Iraq in 2003 would find that an active WMD program did not exist.

Iran

"Iran sees its short- and medium-range missiles as deterrents, as force-multiplying weapons of war, primarily with conventional warheads, and as options for delivering biological, chemical, and eventually nuclear weapons. Iran could test an IRBM or land attack cruise missile by 2004 and perhaps even an ICBM or space launch vehicle as early as 2001."

Even with heavy international sanctions, Iran has been testing a variety of missiles for the better part of the decade. Setting aside the recent diplomatic breakthrough on Iran's nuclear weapons program, the International Institute for Strategic Studies said in November 2013 that the development of the country's ICBMs were becoming a "distant prospect."

North Korea

Though North Korea's recent hack of Sony's servers is dominating the headlines, a bigger worry has long been the reclusive country's ongoing nuclear weapons program.

"A unified Korea with a significant US military presence may become a regional military power. For the next 10 to 15 years, however, knowledgeable observers suggest that the process of unification will consume South Korea's energies and resources. Absent unification, North Korea's WMD capabilities will continue to cloud regional stability. P'yongyang

probably has one, possibly two, nuclear weapons. It has developed medium range missiles for years and has tested a three stage space launch vehicle. P'yongyang may improve the accuracy, range, and payload capabilities of its Taepo Dong-2 ICBM, deploy variants, or develop more capable systems. North Korea could have a few to several Taepo Dong-2 type missiles deployed by 2005."

The Koreas haven't unified, and the North has tested the Taepodong-2 missile. Still, Pyongyang has yet to deploy the system, according to the Arms Control Association.

Cyber

"One of the hardest things to do in these reports is to merge technological change and geopolitical trends," Gordon said. It's no surprise that U.S. computer networks are becoming a bigger target for states and non-state actors alike. In 2000, the question wasn't if an attack would happen, but when:

"Increasing reliance on computer networks is making critical US infrastructures more attractive as targets. Computer network operations today offer new options for attacking the United States within its traditional continental sanctuary—potentially anonymously and with selective effects. Nevertheless, we do not know how quickly or effectively such adversaries as terrorists or disaffected states will develop the tradecraft to use cyber warfare tools and technology, or, in fact, whether cyber warfare will ever evolve into a decisive combat arm."

There were also concerns that adversaries would use high-tech weapons against U.S. forces abroad:

"In addition to threatening the U.S. national infrastructure, adversaries will seek to attack U.S. military capabilities through electronic warfare, psychological operations, denial and deception and the use of new technologies such as directed energy weapons or electromagnetic pulse weapons. The primary purpose would be to deny U.S. forces information superiority, to prevent U.S. weapons from working and to undermine U.S. domestic support for U.S. actions."

No adversary has used directed energy weapons yet against the U.S. military, but that doesn't mean development in this area has stopped.



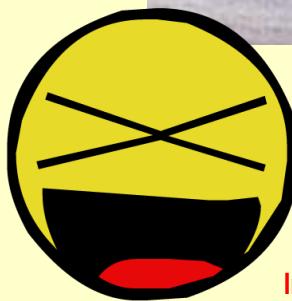
Kedar Pavgi is a digital producer/reporter at Defense One. He joined Government Executive Media Group summer 2012 as an editorial fellow. He previously worked at Foreign Policy magazine, and has written for The Diplomat, The World Politics Review and the Foreign Policy Association. He received his bachelor's degree from the College of William and Mary, where he studied economics and international relations.

Lack of Evidence Frees Three Somali Pirates

Source: <http://www.maritime-executive.com/article/Lack-of-Evidence-Frees-Three-Somali-Pirates>



79



Dec 18, 2014 – The Seychelles Court of Appeal has acquitted three suspected Somali pirates involved in an attack on a Danish naval vessel. Insufficient evidence to prove that they were pirates was the reason behind the ruling.

According to a Seychelles newspaper, the Court of Appeal judges "severely warned" the prosecution when delivering their ruling to make sure they have concrete evidence before prosecuting suspects.

The three men were arrested alongside 23 more alleged pirates off the Horn of Africa in January 2012. The Danish navy freed 14 Iranian and Pakistan hostages who were being held hostage on the ship on which the 25 Somali men were captured.

4 of the captured pirates were brought to Seychelles; another 4 were brought to Kenya to be prosecuted, while the 17 others were released.

Two of the three acquitted men were appealing against their 21-year sentence and the third, a 16-year-old, had received a sentence of 14 years. The fourth suspected Somali pirate who was brought to Seychelles together with them abandoned his appeal and had already been repatriated to Puntland where he is serving the 21 year sentence that was imposed on him.

The Seychelles News Agency reports that the suspected pirates' lawyer stated that the fact that they were caught in international waters made it hard to gather evidence to prosecute them. The prosecution has to rely on coast guards to give evidence, or the crew of the international naval forces.

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), that finances the trials and prosecution of Somali pirates in Seychelles, is expected to arrange for the repatriation of the 3 men back to Somalia.

A total of 41 Somali pirates were still being held in a Seychelles prison as of October. Out of this number, 25 Somali pirates have already been sentenced and are



awaiting transfer to either of the two prisons in Puntland and Somaliland. The

remaining 16 are still on remand awaiting trial.



EDITOR'S COMMENT: Most probably the funniest article for 2014! International waters and lack of evidence let pirates go home! If HDMS Absalon's crew is not reliable enough to verify the crime send them back home! In fact withdraw the whole international fleet off shore Somalia and let innocent fishermen fishing others' ships at their convenient! Not to mention the role of UNs in the whole story! Perhaps dumbing evidence at the bottom of the ocean is the most appropriate choice to save expences and protect rediculation of justice...

Making Balkan Caliphate: The Wahhabies

By Vladislav B. Sotirović

Source: <http://inserbia.info/today/2014/12/making-balkan-caliphate-the-wahhabies/>

"God is our objective, the Quran is our Constitution, the Prophet is our leader, struggle is our way, and death for sake of God is the highest of our aspirations"

Jihadi credo

On Tuesday, December 23rd, Germany's security service warn of highest terrorist threat in decades as the German participation in the anti-ISIS struggle became the reason for potential terrorism. However, it turned that the Balkans became a center of their activities and recruitment either for the radicalization of Islam in Europe or for the Jihad war at the Middle East. For the reason of high concentration and not properly control activities by the Islamic radicals, the Balkan Keg can explode once again.

In the mid-December 2014 a Prosecutor's Office in Bosnia-Hercegovina ended the investigation against Bilal Bosnic, informal leader of the Wahabbi community in this country, and several tens of his followers who have been arrested three months ago within a police action „Damask“ under the accusation of urging young men to join Islamic State and recruiting local Muslims for the holy war in the

in which he is praising the ISIS (the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria) that is as organization close to the Al-Qaeda. It is expected that a court procedure against this Wahabbi group will start soon in the next 2015.

The issue became in fact quite serious as it is already only one step towards committing a bloody terror act with a mass death-toll by such radical Islamic groups operating at the Balkan regions under supervision of the western countries or their marionette governments – Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, Serbia, Montenegro and the FYROM. We have to remember two cases from the recent years as a warning that the things can go soon out of control.

80

The 2011 Terror Act in Sarajevo

At about 4 p.m., October 28th, 2011, a young man Mevlid Jasharevic (23) from the city of Novi Pazar (a city and municipality located in the South-West Serbia, in the Rasika District), armed with an assault rifle ("Kalashnikov") with three spare rounds opened fire near the U.S. embassy in Sarajevo, a capital of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Image grabbed from a video circulated in ISIL-affiliated websites, showing armed children recruited by radical ISIL militants.



Middle East. Police has a video record of one of his public lectures in the region of Cazinska Krajina in the North-West Bosnia-Herzegovina

He fired shots at the building with five boxes of ammunition (each containing thirty 7.2 mm caliber bullets), but finally was wounded

in the leg and arrested. During the shooting the attacker shouted "Allahu Akbar!" ("God is Greatest!"), as did the same on December 21st, 2014 in Dijon (France) a car driver (born in 1974) who ploughed into a group of people (a city pedestrians) with a clear intention to kill as much as of them. In the 2011 Sarajevo case, at least one police officer was injured in the shooting spree before the gunman was taken down.

A young attacker Mevlid Jasharevic was related to the terrorist group, which was trained in the village of Gornja Maocha in the Muslim-Croat part of Bosnia-Herzegovina (the Croatian-Bosniak Federation accounting for 51% of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina; 49% belongs to the Republic of Srpska,

The terrorist attack in Sarajevo once again demonstrated at that time that the Wahhabi movement was a serious issue in Bosnia-Herzegovina regarding the radical Islamist threat, and that it was necessary to consolidate police and security forces in the region against the organized Islamic terrorism. However, this terror act in Sarajevo organized and committed by the Balkan Wahhabi group was not the first and probably not the last. On January 15th, 2008, for instance, the court procedure against a group of militant Muslims from Rashka commenced in Belgrade, in the Supreme Court of Serbia. The Court convicted the group of planning terror acts in Belgrade in an Al-Qaeda style.

The 2007 Planned Terror Act in Belgrade

On December 5th, 2007 a Serbian security forces arrested 15 members of an Islamic Wahhabi terror group in Rashka (a district populated by mixed Serb-Orthodox and Bosnian Muslim inhabitants). This group originated in Saudi Arabia fighting for transformation of the Balkans into an Islamic Caliphate or even into Talibanistan. The above people have been charged by the Serbian authorities for planning terror attacks in various locations of Belgrade, including the bombings of the US Embassy too. According to the

Prosecutor's Office in Belgrade, the Wahhabies established a close network with their peers, commanders, ideologues and mentors abroad, namely in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Austria and Saudi Arabia. They communicated by phone, e-mail and the CD-recorded commands.

These 15 Muslims were led by a Muslim Bosniak Senad Ramovic from the city of Novi Pazar where rival Muslim groups have been for many years engaged in a mutual violence. The authorities in Serbia at that time accused Senad Ramovic of conspiring to kill the Muslim leader Mufti Muamar Zukorlic. One of the accused, Senad Vjeselovic, also from Rashka, recognized that the group was in close contact with various radicals in Mecca and Medina (in Saudi Arabia), who

81



according to the Dayton Accords signed on November 21st, 1995). This terrorist group was led by a Muslim Nusret Imamovic from Kalesija, a town in the North-East Bosnia-Herzegovina, before the group was destroyed in February 2010 when the Bosnian-Herzegovinian security forces took action and detained Imamovic and six others suspected of subversive activities.

According to the police, Jasharevic had two hand grenades. It turned out that Jasarevic is a member of the Wahhabi movement in Novi Pazar. He was detained (together with Fatmir Muratovic), by Serbia's police in December 2010 for possession of a large knife outside a meeting of the foreign ambassadors in the city. The US Ambassador to Serbia Mary Warlick was present at that meeting as well.

were passing the orders from Sheiks on whether Mufti Zukorlic should be assassinated or not. The Serbian authorities have also found maps in the confiscated computer owned by Mehmed Koljshija, a member of this terrorist group. The maps identified locations inside the city of Belgrade such as the National Theatre, Beogradjanka building, Hotel Park (all buildings in the down town) and the US Embassy (in Knez Milos Street). Serbian state security forces have also seized various weapons that can fully arm from 30 to 40 individuals.

The Wahhabies at the Balkans

The Wahhabi movement first emerged in the Balkans during the 1992–1995 civil war in Bosnia-Herzegovina, when around 5.000–8.000 of the Mujaheddin fighters from the Islamic countries came to fight on the side of local Muslims (Slavic Bosniaks) against the Christian Orthodox Serbs and Roman-Catholic Croats, for the spreading of Islam by sword following the Prophet and the holy book of Quran, taking into consideration a basic political principle of Islam that all Muslims in the world are the members of a single (Islamic) nation.

bih-army Many of those Wahhabis and other Jihad fighters have remained in the country since the very beginning of the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina (April 1992), taking active part in the holy war against infidels as members of the Mujaheddin groupings under the command of the Muslim government of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Many of those Arab Mujaheddin received after the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina a citizenship and passports of this country as a grant for their active participation in the war on the Allah's side including Wahhabies from Saudi Arabia. The most infamous and cruel Muhajedeen military unit in Bosnia-Herzegovina was the "El Mujahedeen". However, after the pressure by the US and British governments passports issuing policy in

Bosnia-Herzegovina is radically restricted for the former Mujahedeens and today Wahabbies. After the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina they have been active in Kosovo, the South-East Serbia's district of Rashka (Novi Pazar) and the West Macedonia and now the Wahabbies are running, for instance, about 30 Quran's schools in the US created quasi-state of the "Republic of Kosovo" taking an active part together with the local Muslim Albanians in a systematic policy of destruction of the Christian (Serbian) cultural inheritance, transforming Kosovo into a new Islamic State.

An Albanian language media in Kosovo several times reported that due to its unimpeded activity, after the Kosovo War of 1998–1999, the nature of Muslim Albanian community in



82

Kosovo experienced serious trials influenced crucially by the Wahhabies as they are against any foreign cultural influence and impose their „exclusive teachings“ at funerals, circumcision rites and religious gatherings, contest the theory of natural or social occurrences and offer in return their interpretation of the Sharia or the Quran. According to the Prishtina media, for instance, a young man from Pec (Pejë in Albanian) Elvis Goga is referred to as the chief Mujahedeen in Kosovo, and that the NGO's are still active under the umbrella of the Joint Saudi Committee for the Relief of Kosovo and Chechnya – an organization that contributed very much to the expansion of the Wahhabism in Kosovo. The situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Rashka or the West Macedonia is quite similar to the Kosovo case. From all of these regions the local

Muslims are recruited for the "holy war" in the Middle East, including females.

A fact is that many Islamic NGO's emerged in Kosovo after the war in 1999 and tackled poverty issues in Kosovo's suburbs and surrounding villages. They must respect the Saudi government's stand to stay active on the ground „as long as there is a need for that". According to recent statements of Serbian political and security analysts, Kosovo Albanians and international Mujahedeens, including the ones who are members of the Al Qaeda's network and the Wahhabi movement, are getting prepared for a possible „Kosovo Spring" given that international/western KFOR and EULEX institutions in Kosovo are not able to bring the northern part of Kosovo under full political control and governance of the central authority in Prishtina (with expected cleansing of the local Serbs as it was already done in the rest of Kosovo).

How much the situation with the Wahhabi movement at the Balkans is serious today can illustrate a real fact that in November 2014 an arrested in Vienna a chief organizer of the transfer of Jihad soldiers from the region of the Balkans to Syria and Iraq was a native Slav Bosniak, a member of the Wahhabi movement. According to September 2014 report, Bosnian children attended the ISIS summer camp in Syria – a report covered by an ISIS video footage on Bosnia-Herzegovina's kids with the guns in one of the ISIS training camps.

Kosovo after mid-June 1999, when the NATO occupied this South Serbia's province, became mostly exposed to the Wahabbi influence, but

not Bosnia-Herzegovina. According to some western sources, only in Kosovo there are today around 50.000 adult male radical Muslims in the age of fighting who are in fact led by the Saudi Wahabbies. These Islamic radicals are extremely anti-Christian, destroying the Christian shrines and attacking even the Christian Albanians for whom the Albandom is not providing any umbrella of protection. Even the Roman-Catholic nun, saint, Nobel peace prize winner, Mother Theresa (1910–1997), who was of the Albanian ethnic origin, is not exception from the Wahabbi and other radical Muslims' persecution.

But what is of the most important concern is the fact that the Wahabbies are destroying at the Balkans and old Ottoman-time Islamic monuments including and the mosques announcing them as a non-Islamic in essence. However, the local Muslim authorities, either in Kosovo or in Bosnia-Herzegovina, are usually presenting to the global (western) mainstream mass-media such cases as a consequence of the 1990's wars in ex-Yugoslavia, i.e., as a Serb-Christian cultural genocide against the Yugoslav Muslim population.

A crucial question is why the West (the USA) is closing the eyes to the process of Islamization of the Balkans and extermination of the Christian population in the regions administered by the Muslim majority or better to say, by the Islamic regimes installed exactly by the western „democracies" on the rubles of ex-Yugoslavia?

83

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More jihadist training camps identified in Iraq and Syria

Source: http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2014/11/more_jihadist_traini.php

Nov 23, 2014 – Four new terrorist training camps in Iraq and Syria, three of them operated by the Islamic State, have been identified by *The Long War Journal*. The identification of these camps, three in Syria and one in Iraq, brings the total number of jihadist-run camps identified in the two countries to 46. On Nov. 14, US Central Command issued a statement noting that US or coalition airstrikes

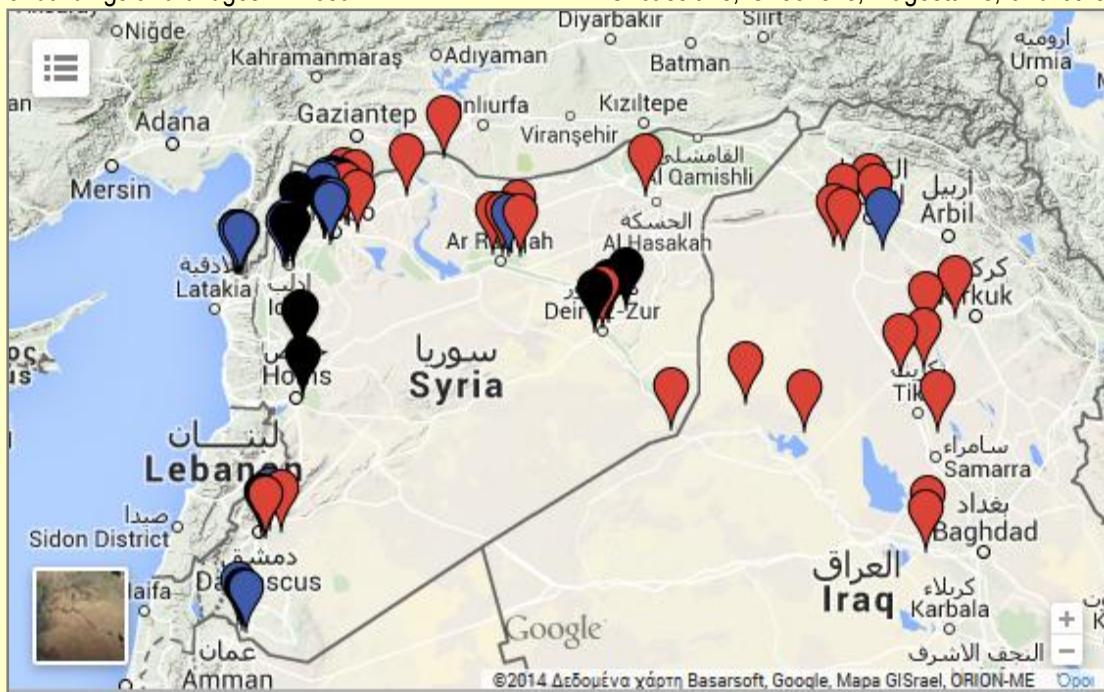
targeted an Islamic State training camp "east of Raqqah." That brought the total number of airstrikes against Islamic State training camps near Raqqah to five. Camps near Raqqah were previously struck on Sept. 22, on Sept. 27, on Oct. 3, and again on Oct. 8.



Photographs released on Twitter also purport to show the Islamic State utilizing locations in the city of Mosul, the capital of Iraq's Ninewa province, for the training of a "special forces unit." The unit, dubbed Qawat al Muhaam al Khaasa (Special Task Force), has been seen in photographs showing trainees rappelling off of buildings and bridges in Mosul.

for the camera, saying, "We're going to kill you, O kuffar [unbelievers]. Insha'allah [God-willing], we will slaughter you."

Most recently, another jihadist training camp has been identified in Syria, in the province of Latakia. It is operated by Jamaat Jund al Qawkaz (Caucasus), a group composed of Circassians, Chechens, Dagestanis, and other



Map of known provincial locations of training camps run by the Islamic State, the Al Nusrah Front, and allied jihadist groups since 2012. Map created by Caleb Weiss and Bill Roggio.

► NOTE: The map is interactive

Some photos also purport to show the graduation of fighters in the unit. In other photographs, American-made weapons such as the M16 are clearly visible. Videos have also been uploaded to YouTube that show the Qawat al Muhaam al Khaasa unit in training. And in a propaganda video entitled "Race Towards Good," the Islamic State showcased a training camp that is used exclusively by Kazakh fighters. The exact location of the camp is unclear, but it appears to be near Raqqah. The video showed the fighters receiving physical training and schooling in firearms such as American, Russian, and Austrian-made sniper rifles. The second half of the video showed Kazakh children being taught Arabic, as well as physical and military training. In one scene, a Kazakh child is shown assembling an AK-47 assault rifle. At the end of the video, a Kazakh child recites a speech

Caucasian ethnic groups. The group is independent and probably small, but is more than likely affiliated with the Al Nusrah Front, which is al Qaeda's Syrian branch, and the Caucasus Emirate. It might also be affiliated to Junud al Sham, a predominantly Chechen group led by Muslim Shishani, a specially designated global terrorist. While Jamaat Jund al Qawkaz has officially taken an anti-fitna stance, the group has promoted Al Nusrah propaganda, according to Aymenn al Tamimi. Video has also been uploaded to YouTube showing the Jamaat Jund al Qawkaz unit in training.

In addition to the four camps identified above, more evidence has emerged about another training camp identified by *The Long War Journal* two months ago. Photos were recently disseminated on Twitter showing a training camp that was run by Abu Yusuf al Turki. As *The Long War Journal* reported on Sept. 23, online jihadists described al Turki as a commander in the Al Nusrah Front who trained fighters how to become snipers. Al Turki was killed in initial US airstrikes in

Syria against the so-called Khorasan Group, a name used by the US government to describe al Qaeda veterans embedded within Al Nusrah. After al Turki was confirmed killed, supporters released a video of his training camp, which is located in or near Aleppo.

Jihadist camps in Iraq and Syria

Since the beginning of 2012, a total of 46 camps have been identified as being operational at some point in time, according to data compiled by *The Long War Journal*. Information on the camps has been obtained from jihadist videos, news accounts, and US military press releases that note airstrikes against the training facilities. It is unclear if all of the training camps are currently operational. In addition, this analysis is compiled using publicly-available evidence. It is likely that some training camps are not advertised.

Of those camps, 34 are located in Syria and 12 in Iraq.

The Islamic State has operated 25 camps (14 in Syria and 11 in Iraq). Al Qaeda's Al Nusrah Front has operated nine camps in Syria. Various allied jihadist groups, including Ansar al Islam, Jaish al Muhajireen wal Ansar, and Junud al Sham, have operated 12 camps (11 in Syria and one in Iraq).

Historically, al Qaeda has used its training facilities to fuel local insurgencies while selecting individuals from the pool of trainees to conduct attacks against the West. [See *LWJ* report, *Jihadist training camps proliferate in Iraq and Syria*, for more information on the camps; and *Islamist foreign fighters returning home and the threat to Europe*, on the threat that jihadists training at camps in Iraq and Syria pose to the West.]



EDITOR'S COMMENT: An interesting report from Turkish newspaper Sabah (Nov 26, 2007) reveals that there is a mystery jihadist training camp (near a forest) in a village (Teşvikiye) near the city Yalova (close to Istanbul) providing training in four levels (ideological, religious and two practical) to extremists from Arab countries, Chechnya, Turkey, Georgia etc.

85

Experts: strong terrorist infrastructure in France

Source: <http://i-hls.com/2014/12/experts-strong-terrorist-infrastructure-france/>

France is a hub of diverse terrorist activity, just waiting for a chance to perpetrate terrorist

attacks. This, according to Israeli counterterrorism experts.

These experts cite French authorities' long active ignorance of clear signs of organized terrorist efforts in several cities within France. "It is already too late to deal with the problem. What remains to be done, is to handle the outcome," says one counterterrorism expert, and adds "there were demonstrations with a clear message, but the French authorities turned a blind eye and a deaf ear towards them."

Major terror alert



was called in France ahead of Noël (Christmas).

Yesterday evening, French Prime Minister Manuel Valls announced security forces shall be stepped up, and added another 300 armed combat soldiers, to be deployed in shopping centers, city centers and public transport.

The local newspapers are also expressing the tense atmosphere. "Anxiety ahead of the Christmas Holiday" ran one headline in Le Parisien, whereas the national newspaper Le Figaro published an op-ed entitled "Enemies from Within".

The wave of violence began last Saturday, when a man shouted "Allah Akbar" as he walked into a police station in the center of Joué lès Tours, attacked three officers with a knife and was shot dead. Two of the police officers he stabbed suffered severe injuries.

The following day, a driver stormed into pedestrians making their way in Dijon, wounding 13 people while shouting similar Islamic chants.

Two days ago, another person ran his car into a Christmas market in Nantes, wounding 10 people. The perpetrator then stabbed himself several times before he was arrested. One of the people he had injured died in hospital yesterday.

The French police is investigating a shooting at a synagogue in Paris's 19th arrondissement.

The attacks are very different from one another, but they are also troublingly similar. Whereas French Prime Minister Valls already announced the three incidents are unrelated, the persistent threat of ISIS-inspired terrorist attacks is a source of grave concern among the authorities.

EDITOR'S COMMENT (on photo): Why when things are progressing badly many countries deploy their military in their capitals? Why don't they train their police forces and provide them with heavy weaponry? Policemen know the streets much better than soldiers and have a better experience on street violence than most of the troops involved (unless specifically trained for urban warfare). Is it only semantic or just a proof of inability to do the job?

Pirates Hijack Military Gunboat in Nigeria's Oil Delta

Source: <http://i-hls.com/2014/12/pirates-hijack-military-gunboat-nigerias-oil-delta/>

86

Dec 25, 2014 – Nigeria's military says pirates hijacked a military gunboat and three soldiers are missing



after the ambush in the southern oil-rich state of Bayelsa.

Spokesman Col. Mustapha Anka says **a team on patrol was ambushed Sunday on the Santa Barbara River, an area rife with pirates.**

Anka said a search-and-rescue operation is continuing Tuesday to locate the missing soldiers.



According to ABC News last October, pirates on the same river attacked a military escort for a barge carrying oil. They killed three soldiers and took off with a military gunboat.

Pirates in Nigeria steal oil and also kidnap for ransom.

Gentler, kinder security checks at U.S airports

Source: <http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20141229-gentler-kinder-security-checks-at-u-s-airports>

Thirteen years after the 9/11 attacks, Americans are beginning to adjust to less oppressive security checks at airports. The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) has moved from a “one-size-fits-all” to a more efficient risk-based approach when it comes to airport security. Within a year, the agency enrolled more than 740,000 travelers in its **Precheck program, which, for an \$85 fee, allows travelers who have passed a background check to use quicker screening**



Ilanes at more than 120 U.S airports. About 50 percent of more than 12.5 million passengers were screened at U.S. airports between 26 November and 2 December. Fifty percent of these passengers experienced expedited screening, according to the TSA. Nationwide, 99.6 percent of passengers waited in line for less than twenty minutes.

Government Executive notes that the shift in TSA screening guidelines coincides with Americans' view on terrorism. Right after 9/11, **46 percent of Americans believed terrorism was the most important problem facing the country. The figure had been less than .5 percent pre-9/11, and today, only 4 percent, according to a recent Gallup poll.**

Outgoing TSA administrator John S. Pistole, who is leaving his post with the TSA on 31 December, recently highlighted improvements

made in 2014 and areas to focus on in the coming years. TSA agents are confiscating more guns year after year, yet it is uncertain whether more people are trying to sneak weapons through security checkpoints or if the TSA is becoming more aggressive and alert. Between January and May 2014, roughly 892 guns were found by TSA agents in passengers' carry-on bags. That was a 19 percent increase from the comparable period of 2013, notes the New York Times.

About 80 percent of all guns found were loaded.

As of mid-November, more than 1,900 guns had been discovered at checkpoints. “We do not speculate on why travelers bring firearms, loaded or unloaded, to airport security checkpoints,” said David A. Castelveter, a TSA spokesman. He added, “The fact that more firearms are being detected at the security checkpoints affirms

vigilance in intercepting prohibited items.”



Regarding the ban on carrying liquids through airport security, Pistole said eventually the TSA will relax the rules as a more efficient technology is developed quickly to identify the chemical nature of substances in containers. In November 2013, London's Heathrow adopted the

LS10, a screening device built by Ohio-based Battelle to test liquids carried by passengers. Since January 2014 the European Union has allowed some liquids, aerosols, and gels onto planes. The TSA is exploring similar technologies but the agency has yet to announce when the ban will be lifted. Further to streamline airport screening operations, Congress has urged the TSA to develop more partnerships with private companies who can handle airport screenings. In addition to PreCheck, fast screening service is available for returning international travelers at U.S. airports and borders through Global Entry, Sentri, and Nexus. "I'm hopeful that we will have some

more people being enrolled through the third-party private sector, which could expand perhaps next year significantly the numbers. Instead of hundreds of thousands it may literally be in the millions — which we would then need to accommodate by increasing even more the number of T.S.A. PreCheck lanes," said Pistole.

Third-party partnerships may allow the TSA to expand its fast screening service to more airports while the agency deals with budget cuts, Pistole said. He added that increased efficiencies have allowed the agency to eliminate roughly 5,000 screeners from the TSA's payroll and return \$100 million to the Treasury.

The radicalizing of the woman who became 'Lady Al Qaeda': How Aafia Siddiqui arrived in Boston as a biology major at MIT and left as an active jihadi

Source: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2889157/The-radicalizing-woman-Lady-Al-Qaeda-Aafia-Siddiqui-arrived-Boston-biology-major-MIT-left-active-jihadi.html>

The Al Qaeda operative dubbed 'Lady Al Qaeda' bragged to her student friends at the age of just 21 that she would be proud to be on the FBI's Most Wanted list.

Aafia Siddiqui, who was a biology major at MIT, said in 1993 that she wanted to do 'something



to help our Muslim brothers and sisters' even if it meant breaking the law.

She jumped to her feet and 'raised her skinny little wrists in the air' in a display of defiance that shocked her friends.

An in-depth account of her journey to infamy also reveals that she took a National Rifle Association shooting class and persuaded other Muslims to learn how to fire a gun.

Siddiqui lied to her husband and after they wed over the phone he was stunned to discover she was just marrying him for his family's connections to better enable her to wage jihad. Siddiqui, 42, a mother-of-three, eventually got her twisted wish and became the most wanted woman in the world by the FBI.

She was arrested in Afghanistan in 2008 by local forces who found her with two kilos of poison sodium cyanide and plans for chemical attacks on New York's Brooklyn Bridge and the Empire State Building.

She was handed to the Americans and convicted of attempted murder two years later in a U.S. court.

But her hatred for the U.S. was so strong that during her interrogation she grabbed a rifle from one of her guards and shot at them shouting: 'Death to Americans'.

The Boston Globe profile of Siddiqui's time in Boston seeks to

answer what happened during her 11 years as a student in the U.S.

Something happened to radicalize an intelligent and devout woman who not only graduated from MIT but also got a doctorate in neuroscience from Brandeis University.

Siddiqui was sent by her neurosurgeon father from Pakistan to study in the U.S. on her own



and won a partial scholarship to study at MIT in Cambridge, MA.

She arrived there in 1991 having been living with her brother in Texas, for a year where she studied at the University of Houston and gave regular speeches on Islam.

During one she told the crowd: 'The hijab is not a restriction. It allows a woman to be judged by her content, not by her packaging, by what is written on the pages, not the pretty artwork on the cover'

At MIT she made few friends and was remembered as intelligent, driven and a regular at the Prospect Street mosque, which would later be attended by alleged Boston Marathon bomber Tamerlan Tsarnaev.

She wore long sleeves and the hijab and was seen as 'very sweet' for a former roommate at her all-female dorm.

The focus of her life was the Muslim Student Association but things appear to have changed with the start of the Bosnian War, which seems to have been the beginning of her radicalization.

Siddiqui became involved with the Al-Kifah Refugee Centre, a Brooklyn-based organisation which is thought to have been Al Qaeda's focus of operations in the US.

Terrorism expert Evan Kohlmann said: 'Aafia was from a prominent family with connections and a sympathy for jihad. She was just what they needed.'

In 1993 as she and some friends debated how to raise money for Muslims being killed during the Bosnian War, one of them joked that they didn't want to go on the FBI's Most Wanted List.

Waqas Jilani, then a graduate student at Clark University, said: 'She raised her skinny little wrists in the air and said: 'I'd be proud to be on the Most Wanted list because it would mean I'm doing something to help our Muslim brothers and sisters'

'She said we should all be proud to be on that list'.

She was arrested in Afghanistan in 2008 by local forces who found her with two kilos of poison sodium cyanide and plans for chemical attacks on New York's Brooklyn Bridge and the Empire State Building

That same year Siddiqui did a 10-hour NRA shooting course at Braintree Rifle & Pistol Club on her own and urged other Muslims to join her.

Jilani added that Siddiqui said in her speeches that Muslims should 'get training and go overseas and fight'.

He said: 'We were all laughing like, 'Uh-oh, Aafia's got a gun!'

'Part of it was because she was such a bad shot, but also because she was always mouthing off about the U.S. and the FBI being so bad and all.'

Siddiqui married Mohammed Amjad Khan, the son of a wealthy Pakistani family, in a ceremony carried out over the phone before he flew to Boston.

But upon arrival he discovered that far from being the quiet religious woman he had been promised, her life was very different.

He said: 'I discovered that the well-being of our nascent family unit was not her prime goal in life. Instead, it was to gain prominence in Muslim circles.'

Khan described to the Boston Globe how she regularly watched videos of Osama bin Laden, spent weekends at terror training camps in New Hampshire with activists from Al-Kifah and begged him to quit his medical job so he could join her.

In the end he stopped bringing work colleagues home because she would 'only talk about them converting to Islam'.

Khan said: 'Invariably this would lead to unpleasantness, so I decided to keep my work separate....'

'...By now, all her focus had shifted to jihad against America, instead of preaching to Americans so that they all become Muslims and America becomes a Muslim land'.

The breaking point was the September 11 2001 attacks after which Siddiqui, who was by now dressing in all black, insisted they return to Pakistan and got a divorce.

American officials suspect she remarried Ammar Al-Baluchi, the nephew of 9/11 architect Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, though her family deny this.

Siddiqui and her children disappeared in Karachi, Pakistan in 2003 shortly after Mohammed was arrested.

The following year she was named by FBI director Robert Mueller as one of the seven most wanted Al Qaeda operatives, and the only woman.

What happened in Pakistan before her arrest is unclear and even during her U.S. trial judge Richard Berman said he did not know what she was doing.

But even now such is her importance as a symbol of defiance to the West that Islamic State fighters publicly stated they wanted to swap her for James Foley, the American photojournalist they executed earlier this year.

Siddiqui declined to be interviewed when approached by the Boston Globe at the Federal Prison in Fort Worth, Texas, where she is being held.

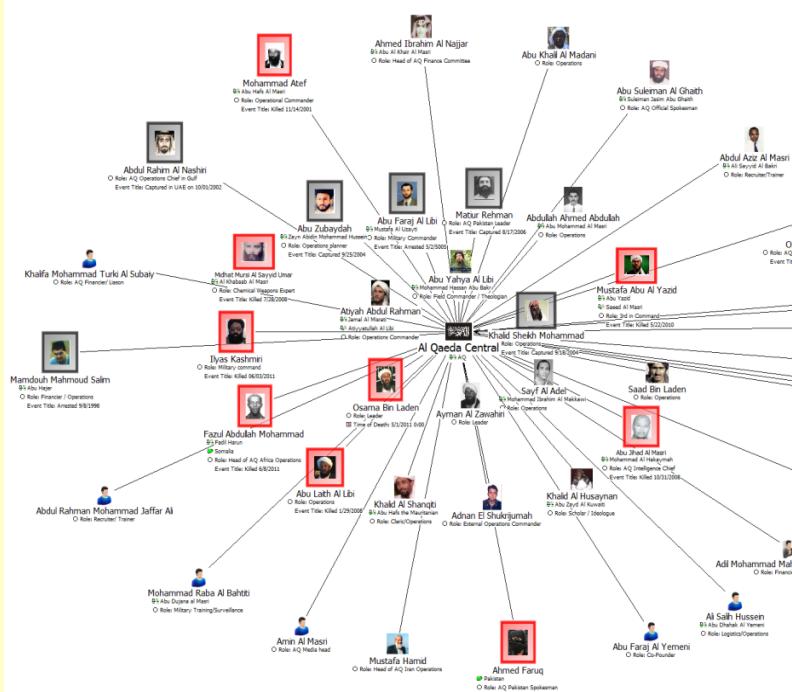
Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP)

Source: <http://www.cfr.org/yemen/al-qaeda-arabian-peninsula-aqap/p9369>

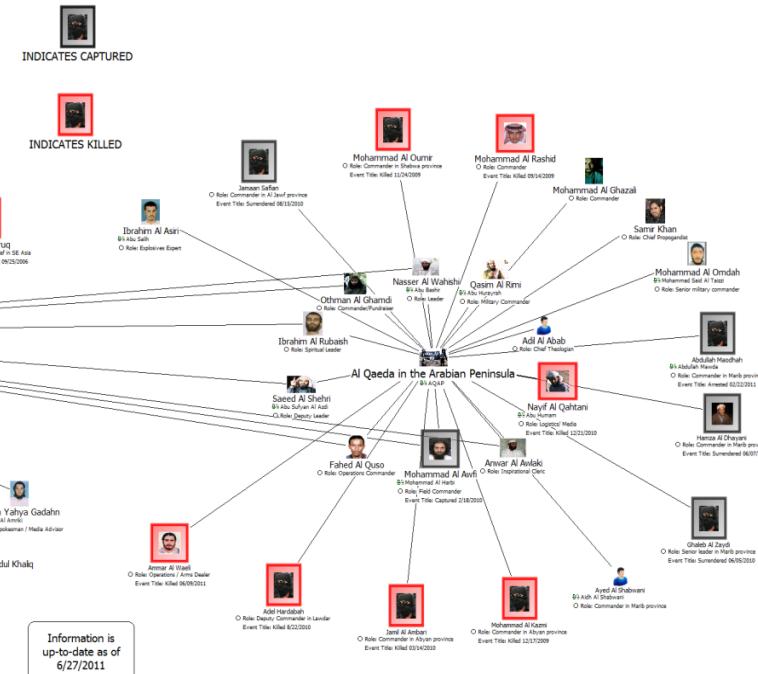
The militant Islamist group al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) was formed in January 2009 through a union of the Saudi and Yemeni branches of al-Qaeda. Jihadist antecedents in the region date to the early 1990s, when thousands of mujahedeen returned to Yemen after fighting the Soviet occupation in Afghanistan. Analysts rate the

while maintaining its sights on striking Western targets. As the ranks of so-called "al-Qaeda central" in Pakistan have thinned, the umbrella organization's core may shift to Yemen. In August 2013, indications of an AQAP-sponsored plot led to the closure of more than two dozen U.S. diplomatic facilities across the Middle East, Africa, and South Asia.

90



Yemen-based group as the most lethal Qaeda franchise, carrying out a domestic insurgency



Yemen, long a fractured and fragile country, is increasingly so

since the ouster of President Ali Abdullah Saleh in February 2012. AQAP has exploited the instability, establishing a domestic insurgency based in the south. Meanwhile, the United States has expanded counterterrorism operations—particularly drone strikes—in the area. Experts question whether President Abd Rabbu Mansour Hadi's transitional government can pull back the impoverished country from the brink of failure.

A Legacy of Jihad

In the late 1980s, the Saleh regime fostered jihad in what was then North Yemen by repatriating thousands of Yemeni nationals who had fought the Soviets in Afghanistan. Saleh dispatched these mujahadeen to fight the Soviet-backed Marxist government of South Yemen in a successful bid for unification, and subsequently, to crush southern secessionists.

The returning Yemenis were joined by other Arab veterans of the Afghan war, foremost among them Osama bin Laden, who advocated a central role for Yemen in global jihad. A corps of jihadists who had trained under bin Laden in Afghanistan formed the militant group Islamic Jihad in Yemen (1990-1994), one of several AQAP predecessors. Other such groups include the Army of Aden Abyan (1994-1998) and al-Qaeda in Yemen, or AQY (1998-2003).

In October 2000, a skiff piloted by two members of AQY detonated several hundred pounds of explosives into the hull of the USS *Cole*, which was moored in the port of Aden. Seventeen U.S. servicemen were killed. Two years later, another suicide bombing orchestrated by AQY, on the French oil tanker M/V *Limburg*, killed one crew member and further highlighted the threat to Western interests in the region. Several militants involved in the *Limburg* plot would eventually hold top leadership positions in AQAP.

Many analysts believe Saleh may have stoked the jihadist threat—perhaps facilitating prison escapes of convicted terrorists—to ensure Western backing for his embattled regime.

Following the *Cole* bombing and the al-Qaeda-led attacks on September 11, 2001, the Bush administration pressed the Saleh government

counterterrorism campaign. A U.S. drone strike in 2002, the first such operation in the region, killed AQY's leader, Abu Ali al-Harithi. By the



to begin aggressive counterterrorism operations against AQY. Many analysts believe Saleh may have stoked the jihadist threat—perhaps facilitating prison escapes of convicted terrorists—to ensure Western backing for his embattled regime, which viewed northern insurgents and southern secessionists as a greater threat than al-Qaeda.

Washington dispatched Special Forces and intelligence personnel to Yemen to aid the

end of 2003, AQY faced a precipitous membership decline.

Resiliency

In February 2006, twenty-three convicted terrorists escaped from a high-security prison in the capital of Sana'a, a turning point for al-Qaeda in the region. Many of the escapees worked to "resurrect al-

91

Qaeda from the ashes" (PDF) and launch a fresh campaign of attacks. Among them was Nasser al-Wuhayshi, who today leads AQAP. In late 2008, a crackdown by the Saudi government led remnants of the local al-Qaeda franchise there to flee across the border and unite with the resurgent jihad in Yemen. The two branches merged in 2009.

The U.S. State Department estimates the organization has "close to a thousand members." This represents dramatic growth from some two-to-three-hundred members in 2009, Yemen expert Gregory Johnsen notes, even as so-called al-Qaeda central, based in Pakistan, has declined.

AQAP has claimed responsibility for numerous attacks in the region since 2006. These have included the failed August 2009 assassination attempt on Saudi prince Mohammed bin Nayef; an attack on the U.S. embassy in Sana'a in 2008; attacks on Italian and British embassies; suicide bombings targeting Belgian tourists in January 2008 and Korean tourists in March 2009; bombings of oil pipelines and production facilities; and the bombing of a Japanese oil tanker in April 2008. In May 2012, a suicide bomber killed more than ninety Yemeni soldiers rehearsing for a military parade in the capital of Sana'a, the largest attack since Hadi assumed power in early 2012.

AQAP has also attempted, unsuccessfully, to strike the U.S. homeland: Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab attempted to bomb a Detroit-bound jet on Christmas Day, 2009, but failed due to a technical malfunction; two attempts to down Chicago-bound cargo planes with bombs disguised as printer cartridges were intercepted in October 2010 based on Saudi intelligence; and a May 2012 attempted bombing of a U.S.-bound airliner was foiled by a double agent.* More than half of the 166 prisoners held in the U.S. military prison at Guantanamo Bay are Yemenis, and President Barack Obama's long-standing pledge to shut down the facility is contingent on repatriating them. But some U.S. lawmakers have objected, raising concern about the prisoners' return to the battlefield through detention and reintegration programs.

An Effective Propaganda

The primary goals of AQAP are consistent with the principles of militant jihad, which aims to

purge Muslim countries of Western influence and replace secular "apostate" governments with fundamentalist Islamic regimes observant of sharia law. Associated AQAP objectives include overthrowing the regime in Sana'a; assassinating Western nationals and their allies, including members of the Saudi royal family; striking at related interests in the region, such as embassies and energy concerns; and attacking the U.S. homeland.

The group has also mastered recruitment through propaganda and media campaigns. A bimonthly AQAP magazine in Arabic, *Sada al-Malahim* ("The Echo of Battles"), is tailored to a Yemeni audience and offers theological support and praise for jihadists. The U.S.-born Anwar al-Awlaki and Pakistani-American Samir Khan were central figures in AQAP's production of propaganda aimed at Western audiences. Though they were killed in an October 2011 U.S. drone strike, their English-language propaganda magazine *Inspire* continues to be published. U.S. Major Nidal Hasan exchanged emails with Awlaki prior to his shooting rampage at the U.S. Army's Fort Hood in 2009.

Analysts say that AQAP's messaging attracts recruits by "minimiz[ing] global jihad while emphasizing national struggle," focusing on jihad as an answer to local grievances while remaining focused on what jihadists call the "far enemy"—the United States, particularly for its unholy alliance with Saudi Arabia.

Leadership and Funding

AQAP is hierarchical [PDF], compartmentalized, and decentralized, analysts say, which allows it to withstand attacks and arrests.

Wuhayshi, AQAP's leader, served as bin Laden's aide-de-camp in Afghanistan for some four years. He was reportedly appointed "general manager" of al-Qaeda by Ayman al-Zawahiri, bin Laden's successor, in July 2013. In this capacity, *Long War Journal's* Thomas Joscelyn and Bill Roggio report, he is "positioned to coordinate the activities of al-Qaeda's robust affiliates in the heart of the Middle East and Africa," and "make sure that the regional affiliates continue to devote some of their assets to targeting the West."



**Despite tactical successes, critics challenge the strategic wisdom
of drone strikes.**

Ibrahim Hassan al-Asiri, the organization's chief bomb maker, made explosives for the failed Christmas Day bombing, demonstrating the technical capacity to avoid typical airport detection and strike at the United States.

Financing for the al-Qaeda network, according to U.S. officials, comes from sources such as bank robberies, kidnappings, drug proceeds, and phony charities. A December 2009 classified memo from Secretary of State Hillary Clinton indicated donors in Saudi Arabia were "the most significant source" of funding to Sunni terrorist groups, including al-Qaeda.

Yemen's Troubled Landscape

Yemen faces ongoing political and economic challenges that will shape the threat posed by AQAP in the coming years. One of the poorest Arab countries, Yemen had a poverty rate of 54.5 percent in 2012, the World Bank estimates. Rapid population growth has heightened pressure on natural resources—especially water—and public services. Unemployment is rampant.

As the Arab Spring protests spread to Yemen in 2011, Saleh moved troops deployed throughout the country to Sana'a in a last-minute bid for survival. Amid the ensuing security vacuum in the south, Islamist militias seized territory in the southern province of Abyan. Ansar al-Sharia, an Islamist insurgent group that analysts say is either a rebranding of AQAP or a nationalist-Islamist insurgency more loosely affiliated with AQAP, declared Abyan an Islamic emirate. The "Taliban-like insurgent movement" [PDF] has restored social services, repaired infrastructure, and established sharia courts.

The transitional government of President Hadi is weak outside Sana'a and faces an entrenched opposition, including members of the former regime, as well as an insurgency in the north and secession movement in the south. The Hadi administration faces a delicate balancing act as it fulfills the requirements of

the Gulf Cooperation Council-sponsored (and U.S.-backed) transition plan. These include restructuring the military, redrafting the constitution, and holding parliamentary and presidential elections. The National Dialogue, mandated by the GCC to hammer out a power-sharing agreement between Sana'a and the province, is set to present a list of grievances, reforms, and recommendations for a new constitutional system in the fall of 2013. Hadi says that if the dialogue fails, civil war may ensue—creating further instability for AQAP and Ansar al-Sharia to exploit.

U.S. Policy in Yemen

In the wake of the failed 2009 Christmas Day plot, the Obama administration ordered a major review of U.S. policy toward Yemen that led to a three-fold strategy: combating AQAP in the short term, increasing development assistance in the long term, and organizing international support for stabilization efforts.

In January 2010, the Obama administration designated AQAP a foreign terrorist organization, and amended the order to include Ansar al-Sharia after a May 2012 suicide bombing killed ninety-six in Sana'a. The United Nations has maintained sanctions on AQAP's leadership since 2010.

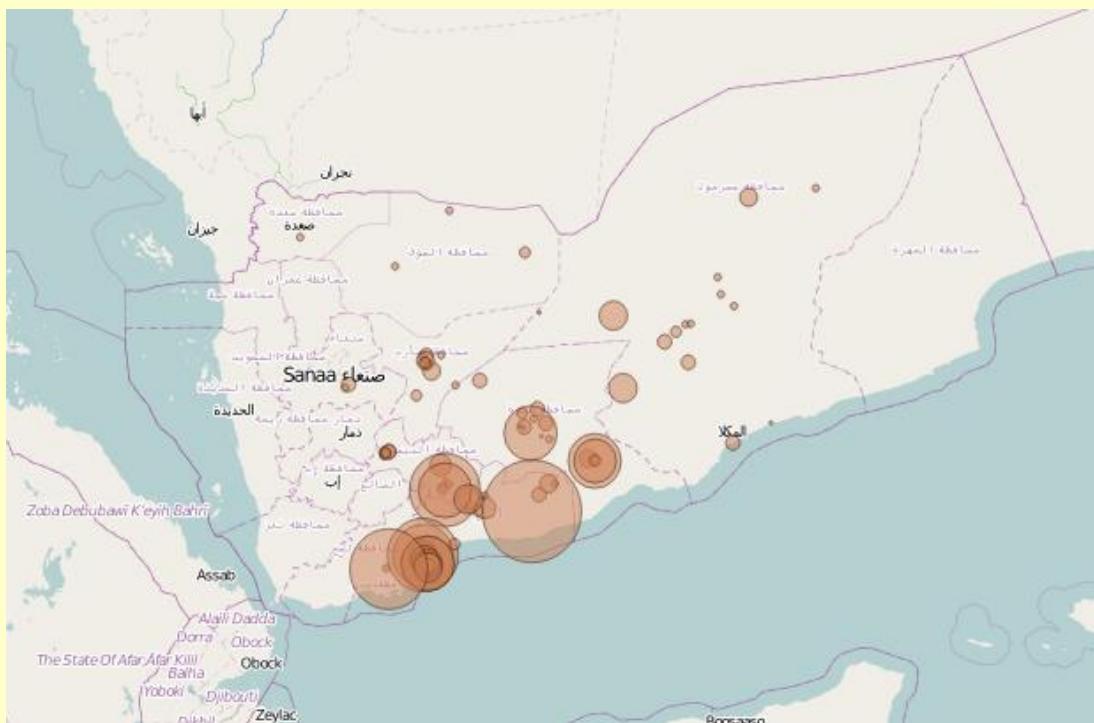
The United States collaborated with Yemen on counterterrorism since the Cole bombing and 9/11 attacks, but the Saleh regime's violent crackdown on protestors in 2011 strained the relationship. Events culminated in May 2011 with the U.S. backing of the GCC transition initiative that removed Saleh from power. In May 2012, the Obama administration issued an executive order threatening sanctions on individuals who disrupted the political transition under President Hadi. Hadi maintains strong relations with the United States, analysts say, because his domestic base is not particularly strong.

93



The U.S. campaign of targeted killings expanded with the construction of secret bases in the Arabian Peninsula and the Horn of Africa. As intercepted communications in the summer of 2013 led the United States to believe AQAP was spearheading an al-Qaeda plot, the United States closed over two dozen

diplomatic facilities, accompanying the precautionary measure with a significant escalation of the drone campaign. The United States expanded its target list to include lower-level militants (as opposed to operational leaders), carrying out nine strikes.



94

Known drone and air strikes in Yemen targeting al-Qaeda and other militants. Size of circle relative to average estimate of those killed (Courtesy New America Foundation).

In all, the CIA and Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC) have carried out seventy-nine drone strikes in Yemen under the Obama administration (the Bush administration carried out one, in 2002). Conservative estimates suggest 386 enemy and 84 civilian casualties, while the New America Foundation, compiling local and international news reports, puts the total killed between 630 and 876 as of August 13, 2013.

Despite tactical successes, including the killing of Awlaki, Khan, and possibly Said al-Shihri,

who, after his release from Guantanamo Bay, rose to AQAP's number-two position, critics challenge the strategic wisdom of drone strikes. Some analysts argue that they engender anti-Americanism, alienate populations from the Yemeni government, and make aggrieved kinsmen of victims sympathetic to AQAP, perversely swelling AQAP's ranks. Signature strikes, in which targets are chosen based on behavioral profiles, remain particularly contentious.

Russia adds Islamic State, Jabhat al-Nusra to terrorism list

Source: http://rapsinews.com/judicial_news/20141229/272886285.html

Dec 29, 2014 – **Russia's Supreme Court has ruled on Monday behind closed doors to put the Islamic State and Jabhat al-Nusra on a terrorism blacklist**, RAPSI learnt in the court.

From now on, the activity of these organizations is officially outlawed on the territory of Russia.

The claim was filed with the court by the Prosecutor General's Office.

Expansion of the Islamic State that has spread across a significant part of Iraq and Syria has become a major threat. According to the CIA, the group consists of some 30,000 militants. It has declared caliphate in the seized territories and intends to continue expanding its area of influence.



There is no single front to fight the Islamic State. The group is opposing the government forces of Syria and Iraq, the international coalition led by the US – so far limited to air strikes – as well as Iraqi and Syrian Kurds. The ongoing military action has killed

thousands of civilians and displaced hundreds of thousands. Several thousands have been taken hostage by the Islamic State.

Experts on Oriental studies questioned by RIA Novosti foresee that in 2015, the situation will remain unstable and the international coalition will not achieve much success. Several experts believe that the US is not exactly striving for complete elimination of the IS as the threat is pushing countries in the region to cooperate more closely with the US.

Queen's Royal Guards Moved Behind Palace Gates For Fear Of Islamist Terror Attack

Source: <http://www.inquisitr.com/1714098/queens-royal-guards-moved-behind-palace-gates-for-fear-of-islamist-terror-attack/>

Unprecedented action has been taken by the royal family in Britain, as the decision was made to withdraw the Queen's Royal Guards, who stand outside Buckingham Palace's gates in their furry hats, symbolically guarding the royal family, to the safety of the Palace courtyard.

Security chiefs made the decision to take the action, following mounting fears of "lone wolf" terrorist attacks by Muslim extremists, affiliated with ISIS and other militant groups.

As reported by Reuters for the first time since the height of the IRA's terror campaign, the Royal Guards are also no longer allowed on sentry duty alone, and are now accompanied by armed police.

A retired officer, Major Iain Dalzel-Job of the Scots Guards told the *Mail on Sunday*, "I think this is a big shame. The reason people know we're around is because they can see us. But I suppose the changes are necessary as there is a significant threat."



In other security measures, in the face of Islamist threats at Clarence House, the official residence of Prince Charles, the guardsmen who used to stand in front of the gates on The Mall, a public road, have now been relocated, along with their sentry boxes, behind metal gates.

One of the most popular tourist attractions, involving pictures with the curious looking, furry-hatted guards, as well as trying to make them smile, laugh and move, as they are trained to stand perfectly still and not react to onlookers and visitors, is no non-existent, as the Royal Guards are now barely visible.

The Standard reported that former guards welcomed the changes, saying they felt increasingly threatened while on duty.

One guard told reporters, "We're fully in favour as if an attack on a sentry can happen in Canada it can happen here. By moving behind the railings we've got a chance to respond, most likely saving lives. The changes were introduced in

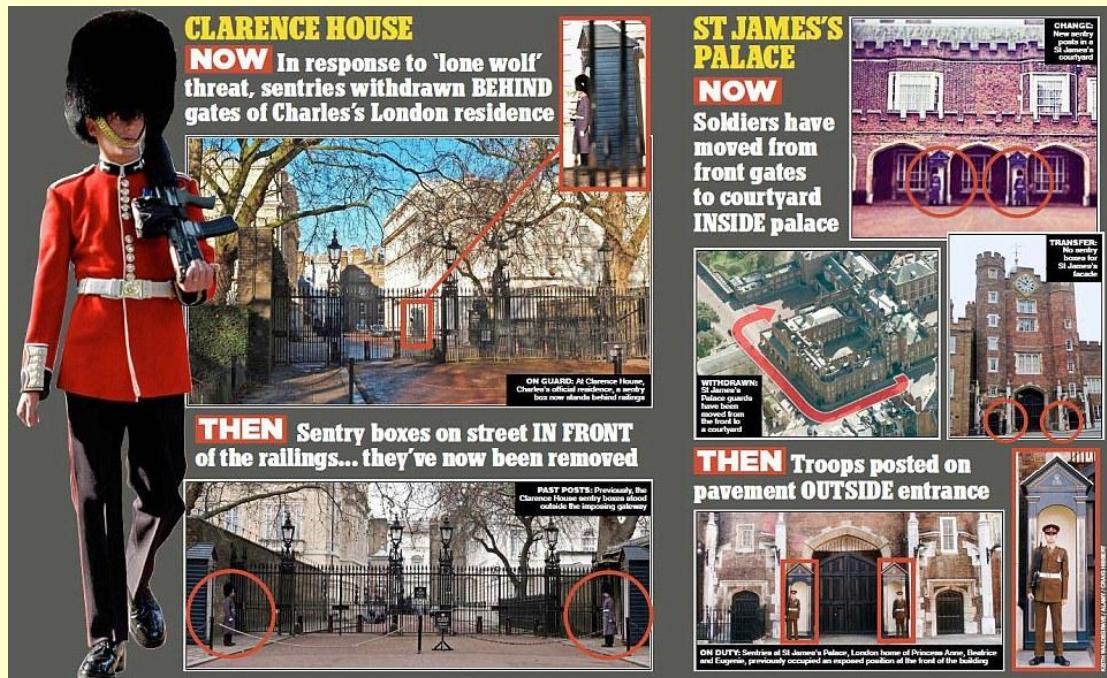
95



response to the Canadian attack and because there's been a sharp rise in people armed with mobile phones trying to wind up the sentries and make them lose their temper."

by the terrorists. We have got to strike a balance between not compromising our traditions and protecting our soldiers."

When called upon for comment, Buckingham



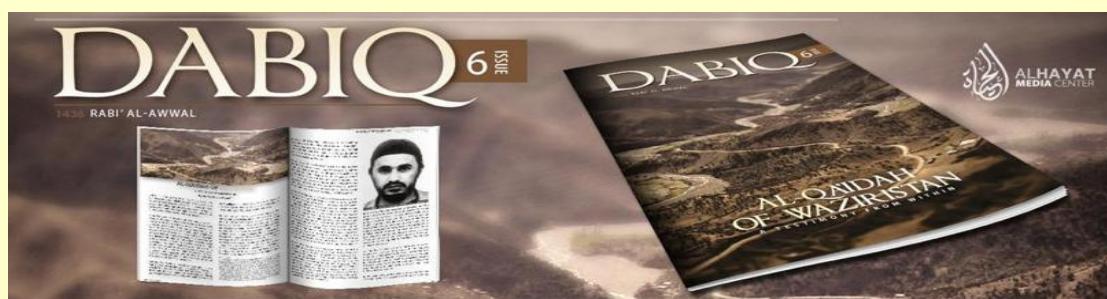
To backup those sentiments, former Welsh guardsman Terry O'Shea said, "Moving the Guardsmen back to a more secure area seems an honourable retreat given the danger posed

Palace and the Met Police would not reveal anything regarding security matters, while the Ministry of Defence simply assured, "We routinely review security arrangements."

96

Chilling first picture of Jordanian pilot in orange jumpsuit: ISIS publishes interview with Jordanian pilot in propaganda magazine as he warns 'they WILL kill me'

Source: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2890887/Islamic-State-publishes-interview-Jordanian-pilot-explains-shot-magazine-praises-hostage-attack-Sydney-caf.html>



The so-called Islamic State has published an interview with a Jordanian pilot captured by militants last week after he was forced to eject over northern Syria.

First Lieutenant Mu'ath al-Kaseasbeh bailed out near the insurgent group's de facto capital of Raqqa on Wednesday after his F-16 warplane was damaged during an airstrike.

The 26-year-old is the first foreign military pilot to fall into the extremists' hands since an international coalition began its aerial campaign against IS in September.

His interview appears as a short question-and-answer segment in the latest issue of Dabiq, Islamic

State's English-language magazine. The full-colour monthly magazine, which is



© AFP/Getty Images

distributed online as a pdf document, also contains a lengthy article apparently by captive British journalist John Cantlie, as well as praise for Sydney hostage taker Man Haron Monis. Lt Kaseasbeh, who is pictured wearing an orange jumpsuit, describes how his jet was hit by anti-aircraft fire near Raqqa, which is located on the banks of the Euphrates River in northern Syria.

'We entered the region of ar-Raqqa to sweep the area, then the striker jets entered to begin their attack,' he was quoted as saying. 'My plane was struck by a heat-seeking missile. I heard and felt its hit.'

'The other Jordanian pilot in the mission – the first lieutenant pilot Saddām Mardīnī – contacted me from a participating jet and told me that I was struck and that fire was coming

'I landed in the Furāt River by parachute and the seat caught on some ground, keeping me fixed, until I was captured by soldiers of the Islamic State.'

Elsewhere in the interview, Lt Kaseasbeh answers questions about himself and the coalition involved in airstrikes against Islamic State targets.

He said his role in the mission was to destroy anti-aircraft positions and guard against any enemy jets. At the end of the short piece he is asked if knows what his fate will be at the hands of Islamic State.

'Yes,' he answers. 'They will kill me.'

Praise: Sydney hostage taker Man Haron Monis was hailed for his actions in an editorial in Dabiq

Jordan's government spokesman Mohammad al-Momani said he had seen the comments but declined to comment.

The U.S. has denied that IS shot down the Jordanian aircraft. The head of the U.S. military's Central Command, General Lloyd Austin, said the US will not tolerate IS's 'attempts to misrepresent or exploit this



97

 <p>THE CAPTURE OF A CRUSADER PILOT</p> <p>On Wednesday 2 Rabi' al-Awwal 1434H, an aerospace pilot flying for the crusader alliance was captured alive after his F/A-18 Hornet fighter jet was shot down with a heat-seeking anti-aircraft missile. The successful hitting of the target and subsequent crash was by Alqaṣ's personnel. All praise and thanks are due to Allah. The Jordanian regime admitted to the shooting down of their plane, only to be contradicted by the Americans who claimed that it was shot down by the Syrians in the skies, as their allies would fear the embarrassment they would face if their soldiers were seen as responsible for the downing of their son. His father and brother then pleaded for his release, claiming he was a "honest Muslim," not realising he was a member of the crusader alliance. His family sources for the Jordanian regime and his perfect participation in the crusade that killed many Muslims.</p> <p>The following is an interview with the mutsaddiq.</p> <p>DĀBIQ: Tell us about yourself. What is your name? Where are you from? How old are you?</p> <p>MUTSADDIQ: My name is Mu'ādh Sharūf al-Kaṣabī. I'm Jordanian, from al-Karak. I was born in 1988. I'm 26 years old.</p> <p>DĀBIQ: What was your position in the crusader airforce? When did you start upon flight duty?</p> <p>MUTSADDIQ: I was a first lieutenant pilot. I graduated from King Hussein Air College in 2009. I followed up my training until I became an operational pilot in 2012 with the first squadron at Muwaffaq al-Salt Air Base.</p> <p>DĀBIQ: Tell us about the fight that led to your disgraceful capture on Wednesday.</p> <p>MUTSADDIQ: We were informed of the mission: the day before at 1 PM. Our task in mission was to sweep the area close to the border jets. We sweep the area to destroy any anti-aircraft weaponry on the ground and provide cover in the case enemy jets appear. Then the strike</p> <p>MUTSADDIQ: We were informed of the mission: the day before at 1 PM. Our task in mission was to sweep the area close to the border jets. We sweep the area to destroy any anti-aircraft weaponry on the ground and provide cover in the case enemy jets appear. Then the strike</p> <p>DĀBIQ: What airborne assets are used by the crusaders in this crusade?</p> <p>MUTSADDIQ: The crusader jets take off from Jordan. The Gulf jets in general take off from Kuwait, Saudi, and Bahrain. There are also off airports designated for emergency landing. As far as I know, there are three off airports: Bagdad International Airport, Kuwait International Airport, and an airport in a Turkish city - whose name I forgot - about 300 kilometers from the Syrian border.</p> <p>DĀBIQ: And the crusaders, what bases do they have in the crusade?</p> <p>MUTSADDIQ: Some of the American and French jets take off from Prince Hamzah Air Base and Muwaffaq al-Salt Air Base. Some of the American jets also take off from Turkey.</p> <p>DĀBIQ: How are the eight flights coordinated?</p> <p>MUTSADDIQ: There are American bases in Qatar where the missions are planned, targets are decided, and assignments are distributed. They are informed of the mission and the participating country a day before. The participating parties are informed of their assignments by 4 o'clock the next day. The Americans use several objectives, spins, and planes taking off from Gulf</p> <p>DĀBIQ: Have any of the US pilots been killed or missing?</p> <p>MUTSADDIQ: In early December, one of them took off from Muwaffaq al-Salt Air Base in the direction of Iraq where many of the coalition jets assemble in order to form an squadron. The coalition bombed the base and took off in the same direction. The second jet's landing gear failed to retract after take-off. The pilot failed to land and crashed. He died in the accident. The problem: The first pilot confirmed there was a problem with the landing gear. There was no tail fin and the two jets crashed in Jordan. The pilot died from the accident.</p> <p>DĀBIQ: Have you seen videos produced by the Islamic State?</p> <p>MUTSADDIQ: No, I haven't.</p> <p>DĀBIQ: We will make sure the jihādīs provide you with the opportunity to see 'Although the Crusaders Did It.' Do you know what the Islamic State will do?</p> <p>MUTSADDIQ: Yes... They will kill me...</p>	<p>THE CAPTURE OF A CRUSADER PILOT</p> <p>countries to determine and study targets. We are given aerial map and pictures of the targets.</p> <p>DĀBIQ: Have you met the American crusaders?</p> <p>MUTSADDIQ: Of course. There are around 200 Americans in Muwaffaq al-Salt Air Base. Among them, there are around 100 US pilots, 20 of whom are female, with the rest serving in the 200 serving as technicians, engineers, and in other support roles. The Americans sometimes have a hard time understanding what they like a lot. Their talk does not include details about operations because of matters of security and security.</p> <p>DĀBIQ: Any of the US pilots been killed or missing?</p> <p>MUTSADDIQ: In early December, one of them took off from Muwaffaq al-Salt Air Base in the direction of Iraq where many of the coalition jets assemble in order to form an squadron. The coalition bombed the base and took off in the same direction. 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out of the rear nozzle of my engine. I checked the system display and it indicated that the engine was damaged and burning. The plane began to deviate from its normal flight path, so I ejected. I landed in the Furāt River by parachute and the seat caught on some ground, keeping me fixed, until I was captured by soldiers of the Islamic State.'

unfortunate aircraft crash for their own purposes'.

The new issue of Islamic State's magazine also included a long article on global economics which

goes under the byline of John Cantlie, the British journalist held hostage in Syria since



November 2012.

Like previous articles in Dabiq attributed to Mr Cantlie, the latest piece - headlined 'Meltdown' - appears right at the end of the magazine as its final article.

It is not clear if the 43-year-old wrote the article himself or if his name was simply added to another's work, but it does appear to be written in a less-formal, more journalistic tone than others in the magazine.

The article predicts the collapse of the U.S. dollar as the global reserve currency and this rise of a gold-backed economic system -

something Islamic State has backed by minting its own gold and silver coins.

'Nobody has discovered a better way for people to stay warm than wearing clothes. And nobody has found a more stable money than gold,' Mr Cantlie apparently wrote.

Islamic State also praised the attack on a cafe and ensuing hostage crisis in Sydney, Australia, this month. Two hostages and the gunman, Man Haron Monis, were killed.

Monis was a 50-year-old Iranian-born self-styled cleric with a lengthy criminal history.

While holding the hostages, Monis made two demands - to be delivered an IS flag and to speak directly with Australian prime minister Tony Abbott.

Islamic State's editorial sidesteps the issue of Monis's dubious morality, which included outstanding charges for more than 50 sexual offences, saying: 'The fact is ... that any allegations leveled against a person concerning their past are irrelevant as long as they hope for Allah's mercy and sincerely repent from any previous misguidance.'

IS had called on Muslims to kill disbelievers in the West, including Australia.

98



and painting a romantic image of the restoration of an Islamic golden age and the heralding of a "glorious" new caliphate based on holy war.

The Islamic State's (ISIS, ISIL) Magazine

Source: <http://www.clarionproject.org/news/islamic-state-isis-isil-propaganda-magazine-dabiq>

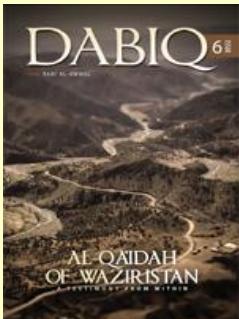
The Islamic State (ISIS) regularly puts out a glossy propaganda magazine aimed at recruiting jihadists from the West. It is sophisticated, slick, beautifully produced and printed in several languages including English.

'**Dabiq**' as it is called, bills itself as "a periodical magazine focusing on the issues of *tawhid* (unity), *manhaj* (truth-seeking), *hijrah* (migration), *jihad* (holy war) and *jama'ah* (community). It will also contain photo reports, current events, and informative articles on matters relating to the Islamic State."

It portrays the Islamic State as they see themselves: boasting of their victories

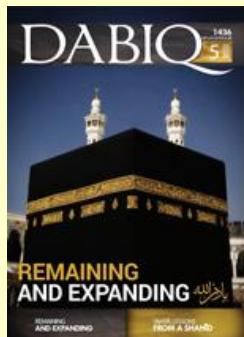
Dabiq is a place in Syria that is supposed to be the location for one of the final battles according to certain Muslim myths about a final apocalypse. Choosing such a name for the magazine highlights the caliphate's goals.

Issues of Dabiq released so far:



The sixth issue of *Dabiq* is called "*Al-Qa'idah of Waziristan: A Testimony From Within*." This issue begins by taking responsibility for the terrorist attack in Sydney that killed two at St. Martin's place and again calls on the Islamic State's supporters worldwide to carry out killings of Westerners whenever and wherever they can without revealing their intentions by discussing them. Most of the rest of the magazine focuses on internal jihadi disputes, criticizing the Islamic State's detractors from within the jihadi movement.

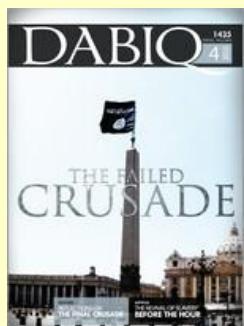
[Islamic State \(ISIS\) Magazine: Dabiq - Issue 6](#)



The fifth issue of *Dabiq* is named after the Islamic State slogan, 'Remaining and Expanding.' In this theme, it announces the expansion of the Islamic State into Sinai, Libya, Yemen, Algeria and the Arabian Peninsula after accepting pledges of loyalty (bay'ah) from terrorist groups there. It also announces the minting of gold dinars and silver dirhams in order to separate it from the international fiat currency markets and build the economy of the Islamist state.

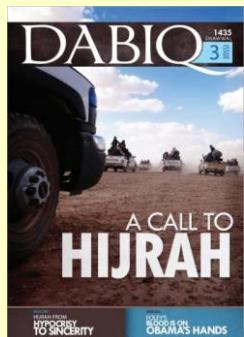
[Islamic State \(ISIS\) Magazine: Dabiq - Issue 5](#)

99



The fourth issue of *Dabiq* is entitled "The Failed Crusade." It focuses on the attempts by the U.S.-led coalition to counter the Islamic State and mocks what the Islamists regard as a campaign doomed to fail. They express their certainty saying "This religion is the one promised with victory." The picture on the cover is of the iconic St. Peter's Square in Rome, displaying the group's ambitions of world conquest.

[Islamic State \(ISIS\) Magazine: Dabiq - Issue 4](#)



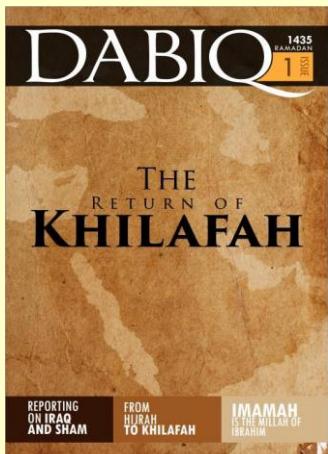
The third issue of *Dabiq*, "The Call to Hijrah" focuses on the jihadists' call to Muslims worldwide to move to Iraq and Syria to join the caliphate as soon as possible. *Hijrah* is Arabic for 'migration' and refers to the journey of the founder of Islam, Mohammed, and his companions from Mecca to Medinah in 622 C.E. The comparison is very deliberate and intended to invoke religious nostalgia.

[Islamic State \(ISIS\) Magazine: Dabiq - Issue 3](#)



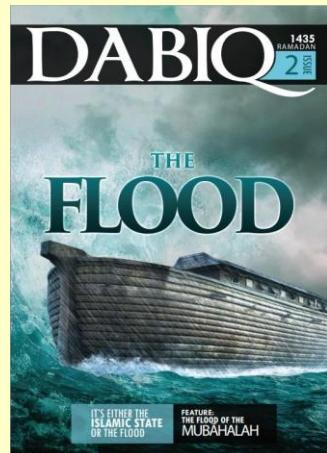
The second issue of *Dabiq*, "The Flood," uses the metaphor of the story of Noah to put across a stark message: you are either with the Islamic State, or against them and doomed to be destroyed. It calls on all Muslims around the world to pledge loyalty to the Islamic State and to move there immediately. There is also a section on the attempts to resolve the disputes between the Islamic State and other Jihadi factions such as Jabhat al-Nusra by means of *mubahalah*, an Islamic religious arbitration process.

[Islamic State \(ISIS\) Magazine: Dabiq - Issue 2](#)



The first issue of *Dabiq*, "The Return of Khilafah" is focused on the declaration of the caliphate and what that means. Some of the ideology behind the group is explained in an attempt to persuade more Muslims to join. It also explains the name of the magazine, and boasts of ISIS' victories. It also talks about efforts made to build support among local tribal groups, reporting their pledges of loyalty to Abu Bakr al-Baghadi, the self-appointed caliph of the Islamic State.

[Islamic State \(ISIS\) Magazine: Dabiq - Issue 1](#)



In order to combat extremist groups, it is important to understand their underlying ideology. Therefore, Clarion Project will continue to post the issues of *Dabiq* here as they are released.

Isis use torture device dubbed 'The Biter' to impale women who breastfeed in public

100

Source: <http://metro.co.uk/2014/12/30/isis-use-torture-device-dubbed-the-biter-to-impale-women-who-breastfeed-in-public-5003605/>



The female arm of Isis tortured a woman by impaling her breast with a spiked clamp dubbed 'The Biter' after they caught her nursing her child in public.

'The Biter', which descriptions suggest is similar to a Medieval torture tool called the 'Breast Ripper' or 'Spider', is a claw-like device with spikes or 'teeth' on the end which was used in the Middle Ages to rip off or shred the breasts of women accused of adultery, abortion or other perceived crimes.

And the Al-Khansa brigade, which is said to include British nationals, has adopted the instrument in their quest to impose strict Sharia law on women in the proclaimed Isis capital of Raqqa, Syria.

Residents in the city say that a woman discovered nursing her child at the city's bus station screamed in pain as Al-Khansa militants used the device on her, while a second woman, aged 24, said she was tortured for wearing a partially see-through Niqab.



Descriptions suggest 'The Biter' is similar to the Medieval torture tool 'The Spider' – pictured here – used to rip off or shred the breasts of women (Picture: File)

'They arrested me and escorted me to the torture chamber,' she said.

'Then they asked me to choose between a whip and a biter. I did not know what a biter was and I thought it is a reduced sentence, I was afraid of whipping, so I choose the biter.'

'Then they brought a sharp object that had a lot of teeth and held me, placing it on my chest and pressing it strongly. I screamed from the pain. They later took me to hospital.'

'I felt then that my femininity had been destroyed completely.'



Assessing U.K. government's 10-year effort to tackle online extremism

Source: <http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20141230-assessing-u-k-government-s-10year-effort-to-tackle-online-extremism>



QUILLIAM
FOUNDATION

Dec 30, 2014 – Following increased scrutiny of Prevent, the U.K. government's counter-extremism strategy, Quilliam, a London-based counter-extremism think tank, released a White Paper which assesses the successes and failures of Prevent in its 10-year history, and makes recommendations for its improvement to deal with the current nature of the threat.

Quilliam says that the paper responds to the report from the Parliament's Intelligence and Security Committee and adds to the debate surrounding the 2014 Counter-Terrorism and Security Bill.

Currently, the two biggest challenges for U.K. counterterrorism are the radicalization and recruitment of individuals by the jihadist organization Islamic State (IS) and the use of the Internet by IS and other extremist organizations to spread unwanted and potentially dangerous ideologies and narratives internationally.

In particular, the White Paper analyzes existing policy on tackling online extremism and makes a series of recommendations to improve the effectiveness of this policy. Quilliam's findings and recommendations include:

- Counter-extremism and counterterrorism should be separated at a strategic and delivery level. The U.K. government must consider the central co-ordination of Prevent, separate from the Office of Security and Counter-Terrorism, with Select Committee oversight, and an in-house due diligence unit and training body.
- The government must recognize that initial processes of radicalization predominantly occurs offline. While the Internet is an important secondary socializer and potential catalyst for radicalization, offline processes must be better addressed in preventative measures, particularly within schools, universities, and prisons. Prevent

must develop an online sphere of operations, and its online counter-extremism work must learn from the successes and failures of offline counter-extremism, and be coordinated accordingly.

- The government must accept that negative measures, including censorship and filtering initiatives alone, are ineffective in tackling online extremism. They tackle the symptoms rather than the causes of radicalization. Motivated extremists and terrorist affiliates can evade such measures easily through the dark net and virtual private networks. Blocked materials consistently reappear online and there is no effective way for Internet Service Providers or social media companies to filter extremist content.
- The continuation of communication and working channels between government, social media companies, and ISPs is key to continuing the current efforts being made to remove content which is deemed illegal under UK terrorist legislation and more broad regulations against Hate Speech and Incitement to Violence.
- Counter-speech and positive measures are critical in challenging the sources of extremism and terrorism-related material online. Community engagement and civil society action are essential components of such positive measures and, as such, counter-speech initiatives should be civil society-led and, only they if fulfill the necessary criteria, should be supported by government through Prevent.

Quilliam's political liaison officer, Jonathan Russell, said: "Recognizing that censorship alone is ineffective and counter-productive in efforts to counter online extremism, the government should consider building an online dimension into Prevent. This would enable positive counter-speech to come from civil society to challenge the ideologies and narratives that underpin extremism of all kinds."

102

— Read more in *Erin Marie Saltman and Jonathan Russell, The Role of Prevent in Countering Online Extremism* (Quilliam, 2 December 2014)

► **Read the White Paper at:**

<http://www.quilliamfoundation.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/publications/free/white-paper-the-role-of-prevent-in-countering-online-extremism.pdf>

America's Domestic Terrorists?

By Ashahed M. Muhammad and Nisa Islam Muhammad (Final Call Staffers)

Source: http://www.finalcall.com/artman/publish/National_News_2/article_102034.shtml

The primary threat to law enforcement officers in America, is not coming from where you may think, say analysts. Angry White males at home are a far greater threat than foreigners abroad, they warn.

There is a very real threat to law enforcement officers in America, however, the primary threat

have to answer to any government authority, including courts, taxing entities, motor vehicle departments, or law enforcement.

In 2009, the United States Department of Homeland Security under the direction of then Secretary Janet Napolitano released a report titled "Rightwing Extremism: Current Economic and Political Climate Fueling Resurgence in Radicalization and Recruitment."

The report warned White supremacist, right wing militias and sovereign citizen groups were gaining strength, becoming more dissatisfied, and that could quite possibly lead to violent incidents. The election of the nation's first Black president, the country's significant economic downturn and fears of more stringent gun laws were largely cited as reasons for concern. The report

specifically mentioned terrorism, "White supremacists and violent anti-government groups," and the response from Republican Party leaders was swift and vocal. They immediately objected to the use of the word "terrorism."

Rep. John Boehner criticized Secy. Napolitano saying the word "terrorist" should not be used "to describe American citizens who disagree with the direction Washington Democrats are taking our nation." The Republican Party, seemingly always eager to maintain a cozy relationship with racism and bigotry, has continued acerbic and racially charged rhetoric, contributing to the toxic racial climate that exists in the country today.

"I don't see things getting better in the short term, in fact I think they will be getting worse," said Dawud



is not coming from ISIS, Al-Qaeda or any radicalized Muslims in the United States as the controlled media would have you believe.

A direct threat has emerged from within the sovereign citizens movement, an ideologically committed group of people with documented views against the U.S. government, who advocate violent overthrow of existing government structures, laws and call for citizen arrests of high-ranking political officials. It is also referred to in some circles as the "Patriot" movement.

According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, sovereign citizens are anti-government extremists who subscribe to a wide range of beliefs. A central theme, however, is that although they physically reside in this country, they are separate or "sovereign" from the United States. They don't believe they

103

Walid, executive director of the Michigan chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR-MI). Mr. Walid also served in the U.S. Navy. The controlled media's tendency to ignore militia members and members of the sovereign movement is part of a broader narrative of how White privilege dominates every part of American society, he noted.

"America still cannot have a frank discussion about racism and White supremacy in every part of our lives," said Mr. Walid. "White privilege shields White male Christians from being called terrorists, and we cannot deal with the mislabeling of Muslims as terrorists until we have the discussion."

Another more recent report suggests Mr. Walid is correct and that this domestic threat has continued to grow.

The National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START) ranked the "perceived threat" posed

by 17 groups they categorized as "extremist." Fifty-two percent of law enforcement officials in the study "agreed" and 34 percent "strongly agreed" that sovereign citizens "were a serious terrorist threat" topping the list. Sovereign citizens were ranked as the eighth highest group of concern when this study was conducted in 2006-2007.

"Although Islamic extremists remain a major concern for law enforcement, they are no longer their top concern," said researchers. "Such changing perceptions about what is a serious terrorist threat is an important finding because identifying and prioritizing a threat is akin to hitting a moving target and evolves as new intelligence, data, and events develop. Law enforcement must be steadfast in identifying major concerns, substantiating the concerns, providing products and resources to better understand the nature of the threat, and supporting efforts to respond to such concerns," the report concluded.

A definition of terrorism

Domestic terrorism is described by the Federal Bureau of Investigation includes activities that:

- Involve acts dangerous to human life that violate federal or state law;
- Appear intended (i) to intimidate or coerce a civilian population; (ii) to influence the policy of a government by intimidation or coercion; or (iii) to affect the conduct of a government by mass destruction, assassination, or kidnapping; and
- Occur primarily within the territorial jurisdiction of the U.S.

Despite sensationalist news stories about foiled terrorist plots and seemingly non-stop fear mongering from right wing political officials, the real threat to the country's economic interests and lives of the American people comes in the form of homegrown terrorism. That homegrown terrorism is a threat in and of itself is not surprising. What may be surprising is that the most threatening of these "homegrown terrorists" are not the "radicalized Muslims" often described by Islamophobic Republican Congressman Peter King. Rep. King, a member of the Homeland Security Committee and chairman of the Sub-Committee on Counterterrorism and Intelligence held hearings in 2011 and 2012 while chair of the House Homeland Security Committee.

Many saw the hearings as thinly veiled bigotry targeting Muslims while using politics and patriotism as a shield.

"It is more likely for a suburban White child to join a street gang than it is for an American Muslim child to go and join ISIS," said Mr. Walid. "Those hearings and even in some of the discourse right now, American Muslims, despite there being no real issues are pressured that we have to wave the American flag and preempt and, or stop a problem that really isn't an issue in our community."

Although his views on Islam are questionable, even author and CNN terrorism analyst Peter Bergen in a 2014 article wrote, "In fact, since 9/11 extremists affiliated with a variety of far-right wing ideologies, including white supremacists, anti-abortion extremists and anti-government militants, have killed more people in the United States than have extremists motivated by al Qaeda's ideology."

Focusing on Muslims not Sovereign Citizens

On Oct. 30, Eric B. Frein, a 31-year-old American White man born in New Jersey and living in an unincorporated community in Pennsylvania was captured after being on the

run from law enforcement for weeks after allegedly killing a police officer and wounding another a month prior. According to court records, the anti-government survivalist told law enforcement after the

104



manhunt: "He wanted to make a change (in government) and that voting was insufficient to do so, because there was no one worth voting for. He also acknowledged that he shot Troopers because he wanted to make a change (in government) and that the murder of the Trooper was an assassination. The DEFENDANT further acknowledged taking action (shooting the Troopers) to wake people up, because it was all he could do."

In a letter that appeared to be written to his mother and father, recovered from one of Mr. Frein's disk drives, he wrote: "Our nation is far from what it was and what it should be. I have seen so many depressing changes made in my time that I cannot imagine what it must be like for you. There is so much wrong and on so many levels only passing through the crucible of another revolution can get us back to the liberties we once had."

This is only one of the latest incidents of violence by one espousing White supremacists and, or anti-government beliefs. Here are a few others:

February 2010, Joseph Andrew Stack, who reportedly attended meetings of radical anti-tax groups in California, flew a single-engine plane into an Austin, Texas, building housing IRS offices. He and an IRS employee died and 13 others were injured.

April 2010 Darren Huff, a Georgia member of the Oath Keepers, a group that advocates its members, many of whom are current and former members U.S. military and law enforcement, disobey any orders they receive if they believe them to be in contradiction to the Constitution of the United States was arrested and charged with plotting the armed takeover of a Madisonville, Tenn., courthouse with plans to arrest the local, state and federal officials.

November 2011, members of a Georgia militia planned to bomb a federal building and to release ricin in Atlanta.

March 2011, Kevin Harpham, a White Supremacist with a military ordnance background planned to set a bomb off during a Martin Luther King Day parade in Seattle, Washington.

In **August of 2012**, Wade Michael Page killed six and wounded four others at a Sikh temple in Oak Creek, Wisconsin. Mr. Page was a documented White Supremacist and U.S. Army Veteran.

In **April 2014** there was the Bundy Ranch standoff, when Cliven Bundy and many of his

armed followers refused to vacate federally-owned land. They actually successfully forced the Bureau of Land Management to back down in a dispute that has lasted over two decades. According to a New York Times article, Mr. Bundy was honored at a celebratory party in which many of his supporters wore "domestic terrorist" name tags.

In **June 2014**, Jerad and Amanda Miller, went on a shooting spree in Las Vegas killing two officers. After killing them, they reportedly covered the bodies with the Gadsen flag, which is now popularly recognized as the Tea Party movement's symbol. Not only had the couple previously espoused anti-government views, but Jerad Miller was present during the Bundy Ranch standoff.

In **April 2014**, Frazier Glenn Miller, Jr (a.k.a Frazier Glenn Cross) a 73-year-old Missouri man, U.S. Army Veteran and former leader of the Carolina Knights of the Ku Klux Klan (later known as the White Patriot Party militia) shot and killed three people near a Jewish community center in Kansas.

Many White supremacists, militias and sovereign citizen groups are located in conservative so-called "Red States," and their existence is well known, however, it would appear that the government is spending more time and resources infiltrating mosques and attempting to enlist high-level informants within the Muslim community in America.

A wide net is cast in the Islamic community and Muslims continue to be under heavy surveillance by the FBI. Around the country mosque officials are asked to meet with FBI agents and then pressed to become informants. It has been documented that informants are being placed in mosques and entrapment has occurred in several sting operations conducted by government agents.

"American Muslim leaders and institutions should maintain positive relations with local and federal law enforcement authorities, but those relations must be built on respect for constitutionally-protected civil rights," said CAIR Litigation Director Jenifer Wicks. She said all Americans are invested in protecting the nation; but the FBI's overbroad and coercive use of informants in mosques, reports of outreach meetings for intelligence gathering and other acts of abuse show community leaders should engage legal professionals to ensure the

105

protection of their rights and those of their congregations.

FBI visits to Muslims goes all the way back to the 1930s and 1940s when members of the Nation of Islam received visits.

"You are under no legal obligation to talk to the FBI," said Abdul Arif Muhammad, general counsel for the Nation of Islam. "Never talk to the FBI because you don't know if you are a witness against someone or are self-incriminating yourself. Be civil and cordial, ask for their card and tell them someone will get back to them. Let the lawyer engage with the FBI and not you."

"The FBI are federal police. The minute you start talking to them you waive your Fifth Amendment rights. You don't know why they are there," he said.

FBI questioning is just the beginning of the discrimination and bigotry targeting many Muslims today. A report titled "**Inventing Terrorists: The Lawfare of Preemptive Prosecution**," by Project SALAM (Support and Legal Advocacy for Muslims) found that "the war on terror has been largely a charade designed to make the American public believe that a terrorist army is loose in the U.S., when the truth is that most of the people convicted

of terrorism-related crimes posed no danger to the U.S. and were entrapped by a preventive strategy known as preemptive prosecution."

The 175-page study defines preemptive prosecution as "a law enforcement strategy ... to target and prosecute individuals or organizations whose beliefs, ideology, or

religious affiliations raise security concerns for the government."

Inventing Terrorists draws on the metaphor of "lawfare"—the use of the law as a weapon of war—to detail the government's deliberate use of preemptive prosecution and associated legal tactics.

The study argues the government "has used preemptive prosecution to exaggerate the threat of Muslim extremism to the security of the country," and compares a list of 399 "official" terrorism cases published by the U.S. Department of Justice in 2010 to a unique database of terrorism cases from 2001 to the present compiled by Project SALAM.

An analysis of the 399 cases found that 94 percent were either preemptive prosecution cases or cases that contained significant elements of preemptive prosecution. The study makes a firm distinction between individuals who represented real security threats to the nation and those who were preemptively prosecuted and never represented any threat. Examples of preemptively prosecuted cases and individuals include the Newburgh 4 (2009) in Newburgh, New York; José Padilla (2002) in Chicago and Florida; the Aref-Hossain case (2004–2006) in Albany; Tarek Mehanna (2012) in Boston; Professor Sami Al-Arian (2003–present) in Florida; and the Holy Land Five (2007–2012), officials of a large Muslim charity in Texas.

"It is almost impossible for a Muslim to get a fair trial in America. The juror is thinking about 9/11, Boko Haram, ISIS, and the Boston Marathon shooter when they hear the case. We're human beings. Every day we're reading something negative about Muslims," said Imam Siraj Wahhaj, during a recent benefit program for the National Coalition to Protect Civil Freedoms.

► Read the "Inventing Terrorists" report at: <http://www.projectsalam.org/Inventing-Terrorists-study.pdf>



Syria's war killed 76,021 in 2014

Source: <http://www.terrorismwatch.org/2015/01/syria-war-killed-76021-in-2014-monitor.html>

The conflict in Syria **killed 76,021 people in 2014**, just under half of them civilians, a group monitoring the war said on Thursday.

The Britain-based **Syrian Observatory for Human Rights** said 33,278 civilians were killed last year in the conflict, which started with protests in 2011 and

106

has spiraled into a civil war.

The United Nations in August estimated the total number of people killed since the start of the conflict at 191,000 but activists say the actual figure is likely much higher.

One Hundred Years of Jihad in Australia

By Mark Durie

Source: <http://www.meforum.org/4947/one-hundred-years-of-jihad-in-australia>



107

Jihadist gunman Man Haron Monis, seen through a window holding a hostage during the December 15 siege at Martin Place, Sydney.

Jan 01 – One hundred years ago today, a lethal jihad attack was staged against New Year's Day picnickers in Broken Hill, Australia. This attack and the recent Martin Place siege, events separated by almost exactly a century, show striking similarities.

For Australians, the anxious question about the Martin Place attack, which has grabbed the attention of everyone, is whether this atrocity is but a harbinger of a further series of deadly attacks on Australian soil, or whether it will pass into memory as an exceptional one-off event, much as the 1915 New Year's Day massacre in Broken Hill did.



The Broken Hill Massacre

On New Year's Day, 1915, two Muslim men, Bashda Mahomed Gool and Mullah Abdullah, shot and killed four people and wounded several others before finally being killed by police. They had both come to Australia more than a decade previously.

From *The Barrier Miner*, January 1, 1915, p. 2.

Beginning in 1860, many Muslim cameleers came to Australia to help open up the arid outback. Today a famous train from Adelaide to Darwin is known as "The Ghan" to commemorate the contribution of the "Afghans" – as they were known (although they came from many different places across the Middle East and South Asia) – to the development of Australia.

The jihad attack was staged against a picnic train which was taking 1200 picnickers out on a New Year's Day in open ore trucks. Bashda Mahomed Gool and Mullah Abdullah first made enquiries at the station beforehand to make sure they would be in the right place at the right time to attack this particular train. They then positioned themselves on the side of a hill around 30 meters from the tracks,

and opened fire as the trucks passed. Among the victims was Alma Cowie, aged 17, shot dead.



to jihad issued by the Ottoman Caliphate (on 11 November 1914).

Mullah Abdullah said that his intention was to die for his faith in obedience to the Sultan's order, and Mahomed Gool wrote "I must kill you and give my life for my faith, *Allahu Akbar*," apparently in reference to Quran Sura 9:11:

Allah has purchased of their faithful lives and worldly goods, and in return has promised them the Garden. They will fight for His cause, *kill and be killed*.

The Ottoman fatwa declared that it was a religious duty "for all the Muslims in all countries, whether young or old, infantry or cavalry, to resort to jihad with all their properties and lives, as required by the Quranic verse of *enfiru*." The verse of *enfiru* (Arabic "go forth") is a reference to Sura 9:38:

You who believe! What is the matter with you, that, when ye are asked to go forth in the path of Allah, you cling heavily to the earth? Do you prefer the life of this world to the Hereafter? But little is the comfort of this life, as compared with the Hereafter. Unless you go forth, He will punish you with a grievous penalty, and put others in your place...

The *enfiru* verse calls upon Muslims to "go forth" for jihad, or else face a painful doom under the judgement of Allah; better to fight as a martyr and go to paradise than burn in hell for hanging back.

A more detailed fatwa, "A Universal Proclamation to all the people of Islam" was published by the 'National Society of Defense of the Seat of the Caliphate' (reproduced in Andrew Bostom's *Legacy of Jihad*, p.216 ff). This Universal Proclamation declared that 'every Muslim without exception must be considered as a soldier' and the duty of jihad 'is enjoined upon all the peoples of Islam who are spread abroad upon the face of the whole earth':

They must know that the killing of infidels who rule over the Islamic lands has become a sacred duty, whether it be secretly or openly, as the great Koran declares in its words: "Take them and kill them whenever you come across them, and we have given you a manifest power over them by revelation. [Sura 4:91].

This fatwa goes on to define three different forms of jihad, including "individual jihad," in which an individual Muslim attacks an infidel in a solo act. It names contemporary examples of attacks on Westerners in colonial contexts which were familiar to Muslims at the time, including the killing of an English governor, Peter Galy,[1] as well as the

108

The **jihadi cameleers left notes to explain that they were responding to a call to jihad issued by the Ottoman Caliphate.**

assassination of an English chief of police in India. The fatwa suggests the use of "cutting, killing instruments". It also cites as a precedent the assassination of certain Jews by Muhammad's companions.

The fatwa urges faithful Muslims to rise up, "go out ... and kill one of those who belong to the Triple Entente (Russia, France and Great Britain) of the infidels":

[L]et every individual of the Muslims in whatever place they may be, take upon him an oath to kill at least three or four of the ruling infidels, enemies of Allah, and enemies of the religion. He must take upon him this oath before Allah Most High, expecting his reward from Allah alone, and let the Muslim be confident, if there be to him no other good deed than this, nevertheless he will prosper in the day of judgment.

The two "Afghan" jihadis of Broken Hill, according to their own testimony, acted in accordance with such instructions: they went out to kill infidels as an act of individual jihad.

Another mode of jihad recommended by the 'Universal Proclamation' is 'jihad by bands', which it claims to be particularly effective when Islam is weak. The "Universal Proclamation" states:

[T]he most profitable of them is that which makes use of secret formations, and it is hoped that the Islamic world of today will profit very greatly from secret bands, and therefore it is in the degree of duty to him who wishes to participate in the Jihad that he should take council with people of experience in the formation of secret bands and gain profitable information of this kind.

"Jihad by bands" is the mode of Al-Qa'ida.

The third recommended form of jihad is "jihad by campaigns", which is warfare using armies directed by the Caliph. This is the mode the self-declared caliphate known as the Islamic State is following today.

Individual Jihad



[Alma Cowie, killed in Broken Hill 1915, and Katrina Dawson, killed in Sydney 2014](#)

109

The phenomenon of individuals launching a personal jihad against non-Muslim infidels is nothing new. The precedents in the life of Muhammad are well-known and some of these

were cited in the Ottoman Universal Proclamation. As the Ottoman fatwa indicated, the phenomenon was already a thorn in the side of colonial authorities a century ago.

In the Dutch occupation of Aceh, the phenomenon of individual Muslims killing Dutch people was frequent enough to be given a name, *Atjeh-moorden* "Acehnese murders". The Dutch authorities conducted investigations into the mental state of perpetrators of such attacks. This was not always easy: because the attacks were mounted with the intention of "killing and being killed" to attain martyrdom, only a minority of attackers survived in a fit state to be investigated.

The Dutch wrestled for decades to understand the phenomenon. The psychiatrist R.A. Kern conducted a study of *Atjeh-moorden* and concluded that while Islamic theology accounted for the common pattern of the murders, this was not enough to determine which particular individuals might be triggered to mount such attacks: for that one needed to look to the personal circumstances of the individuals.

Nevertheless, repeated psychiatric studies of perpetrators showed that they were not mad. David Kloos summarized their findings: "Over the years, a consensus had formed among the Dutch that the *Atjeh-moorden* were committed deliberately, in 'cold blood' and thus 'rationally'."^[2] Going for individual jihad was not normally a symptom of mental instability.

There are striking parallels between the Broken Hill massacre a century ago, and the recent Martin Place siege.

- In both cases the media puzzled over the motivation of the attackers. The Barrier Miner wrote in 1915 "The question has been asked over and over again, and by many people

since yesterday morning's tragic occurrence, as to the motive of the men in attacking the picnic train with its load of women and children..."

- The attackers in both cases had resided for many years in Australia and were well-known in their communities.
- Both attacks were individual acts; although the 1915 attack by two individuals working together, they were not part of a larger network of jihadis, but were merely combining their individual efforts.
- In both cases the attackers subscribed to the dogmas of jihad in the path of Allah, and martyrdom in Holy War.
- In both cases, attackers were mobilized in response to a global call to jihad: in 1915 issued by the Ottoman Caliphate; in 2014 issued by Islamic State.
- Both global calls to jihad had specifically invited Muslims around the world to commit individual acts of jihad by killing infidels (see [here](#) on the Islamic State's call to Muslims to run over infidels with their cars).
- In both cases the perpetrators had been experiencing difficulties with the law: in the 1915 massacre, Mullah Abdullah had been convicted days before for slaughtering sheep on an unlicensed premises. In the Martin Place siege, Hojat al-Islam Muhammad Hassan Manteqi (AKA 'Sheikh' Man Haron Monis) was facing criminal charges as an accessory to the murder of his ex-wife and had a history of convictions for serious offenses.

There were also similarities in the way the wider community and the media responded:

- In both cases the media took pains to point out that the majority of people in the Muslim community abhorred the killings, and reported that no-one from the Muslim community wished to claim the bodies (see [here](#) and [here](#)).
- In both cases there were no reprisals against Muslims. However the Broken Hill German Club was burned down in 1915; the killings were considered to be linked to the World War I conflict as a whole, rather than as manifestations of individual jihadism.

Michael Wesley, professor of International Relations and director of the School of International, Political and Strategic Studies at the Australian National University confidently wrote in *The Australian* that "this is a new and more dangerous form of terrorism," which he called "third-generation" terrorism.

According to Wesley, "first-generation" terrorism only appeared in the world in the 1960's, "second-generation" terrorism in the 1990's, and this, in its turn, "morphed" into "third generation" terrorism, which we are experiencing today.

Individual jihad ... [is] an old, old form of warfare, as old as the origins of Islam itself. The Ottoman fatwa writers knew their Koran and were qualified to draw conclusions from it.

Is individual jihad really a new phenomenon? Nothing could be further from the truth. It is, on the contrary, an old, old form of warfare, as old as the origins of Islam itself. The Ottoman fatwa writers knew their Koran and were qualified to draw conclusions from it, which did not differ from the long-established mainstream of Islamic teachings about jihad.

To discuss such things the term *terrorism* is inadequate and even misleading. It confuses experts like Professor Wesley, who attempt to lump the Martin Place siege into a conceptual grid which includes the IRA, in apparent ignorance of the well-documented history of jihadism.

Also misleading is the widely used term *lone wolf*, which implies social disengagement and dysfunction, including disconnection with the broader jihadi movement. This very Western secular construct overlooks the considerable attention in Islamic jurisprudence to the idea of warfare as an "individual obligation" (*fardh al-'ayn*), which is incumbent upon Muslims as individuals, even if they are not enlisted in a jihad army.

The West puzzles and puzzles over jihad. The Martin Place hostage taker "Sheikh" Monis certainly seems to have been a very unpleasant individual, and many have been tempted to write him off as crazy. However what fascinates and terrifies most is the utter ordinariness of so many jihadis. Here in Australia article after article has been published in the media pointing out how normal the young men are who have joined Islamic State. We have read how they enjoy social media, made YouTube videos, do well at school, are liked by their friends, go partying, have girlfriends, support local football teams etc. And all this is related to us as if it was the most amazing news.

110

Given the terrifying ordinariness of the jihadis, it is tempting to apply pejorative labels to them, to write them off as deranged misfits. This is an attempt to marginalize the problem. Australian foreign minister Julie Bishop called it 'idiotic' to refer to those who die in jihad as martyrs.

However such attempts to push the jihad phenomenon to the edges of our rational world are doomed to fail. Instead the same question keeps arising, like a persistent itch, that the *Barrier Miner* put on January 2, 1915: "The question has been asked over and over again, and by many people since yesterday morning's tragic occurrence, as to the motive of the men in attacking the picnic train with its load of women and children."

This question will simply not go away. In reality, the will to 'go forth' for jihad is not a manifestation of craziness – many of its actors are entirely sane. It is not a manifestation of stupidity – many of its actors are quite intelligent. It is not a manifestation of social dysfunction or poverty – many of its actors come from stable and wealthy homes. It is not a manifestation of weirdness – many of its actors are quite ordinary. Nor is it a manifestation of "morphing" trends in international relations – jihadism is as old as the hills.

Jihadi terror is a manifestation of Islamic theology. Despite the fact that so many Muslims reject jihadism, and millions of Muslims can be counted among its victims, this remains as true today as ever it has been. Yet this is something the West remains disturbingly ill-prepared to accept, engage with, or address appropriately. We stubbornly continue to seek worldview solace in misplaced explanations.

Australians are right to be deeply concerned about the Martin Place incident. History will show that this was not a one-off blip in the peaceful lives of Australians. It will certainly not take another hundred years before more Australians die at the hands of Australian jihadis on Australian soil. Such future tragedies may eventually compel us to revise and reject our inadequate worldviews. Until then it seems we must continue to wear our self-imposed blindfolds, all the while trying to defend ourselves against an enemy we cannot see and stubbornly refuse to understand.

Mark Durie is the pastor of an Anglican church, a Shillman-Ginsburg Writing Fellow at the Middle East Forum, and Founder of the Institute for Spiritual Awareness. His book The Third Choice explains the implications for Christians of living under Islamic rule.

111

2015: What Jihadists Will Try to Achieve in the Upcoming Year

By Ryan Mauro

Source: <http://www.clarionproject.org/analysis/2015-what-jihadists-will-try-achieve-upcoming-year>

5

The Bergdahl-Sony Effect

The West will have to contend with two lessons it taught adversaries in 2014: The U.S. negotiates with terrorists and the U.S. government and private sector will cave to threats.

The U.S. negotiated a prisoner release with the Taliban where five high-level Taliban terrorists were released in exchange for a kidnapped U.S. soldier named Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl who deserted and may have even tried to join the enemy side. Taliban chief Mullah Omar hailed the deal as a "huge accomplishment" that "reassures us that our aspirations are on the verge of fulfillment." Hollywood reinforced the dangerous appeasement when movie theaters caved to threats from hackers linked to North Korea and



refused to show *The Interview*, a comedy about a plot to assassinate North Korean dictator Kim Jong-Un. Sony then cancelled the film's release.

In addition, showings of *Team America*, another comedy that pokes fun at North Korea, were shut down. A planned thriller film with a storyline related to North Korea was cancelled, even though the hackers never

threatened a response to it or even mentioned it.

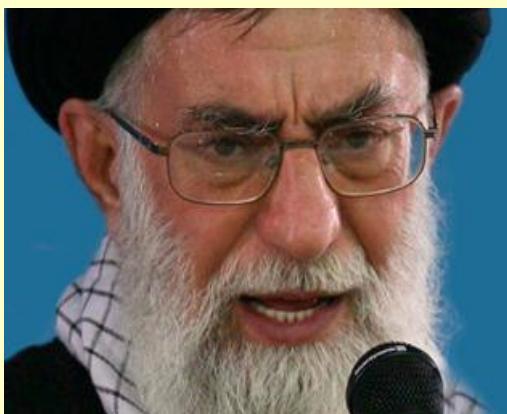
After public outrage reached a fever pitch and President Obama said Sony made a mistake, the decision was reversed. *The Interview* was released in limited theaters and online on Christmas as planned, but the damage was done.

In 2015, the West's enemies will be implementing these lessons.

4

Iran Outmaneuvers America

The International Atomic Energy Agency confirms that Iran is *still* not fully disclosing its nuclear program, yet the negotiations and sanctions relief has been extended for another six months. The U.S. even admits privately that Iran is breaking the interim nuclear deal, while the Secretary of State publicly praises Iran's



so-called "compliance."

The Iranian regime is using negotiations as part of a long-term strategy to develop nuclear weapons capabilities, with the most incriminating work probably being outsourced to North Korea. A senior adviser to Ayatollah Ali Hosseini Khamenei, Iran's Supreme Leader Supreme Leader Khamenei even said the regime's strategy is "elongation" and it doesn't actually want a finalized deal.

In 2015, Iran will continue this strategy to advance its nuclear program and lead the West into missing an extremely important opportunity to pressure the regime financially. At the same time, Iran will win investments from European companies to assist the economy and shield Iran from effective sanctions in the future.

Iran will continue to sponsor terrorism, including Al-Qaeda and the Taliban and try to heal rifts with Turkey and the Muslim Brotherhood.

3

Oil Crisis

The decline of oil prices is boosting the American economy and technological advances will reduce U.S. energy dependence. These oil prices are very dangerous for Iran, the Syrian regime, Venezuela, Russia and other hostile regimes. These governments need the price of oil to spike up to sustain their budgets. The Iranian regime is undoubtedly infuriated with the Saudis for refusing to decrease oil production and has threatened an oil price war previously. Iran's proxies have successfully captured the capital of Yemen, defeating Saudi Arabia's allies. In 2012, Iran launched a major cyber attack on Saudi Aramco and a natural gas



112

company in Qatar. The Saudis claim the hackers tried to halt oil and natural gas production. The Iranian hackers continue to attack U.S. businesses, energy firms, defense contractors and universities.

In 2015, the low price of oil will maximize the incentives for Iran and other hostile governments to instigate conflict or to even attack Middle Eastern and American energy infrastructure.

2

The Expansion of Terror Safe Havens

Next year, Islamist terrorists will have growing opportunities to regain the safe havens they lost since 2001 and to expand their current bases.

The Islamic State announced in November that it had expanded from Iraq and Syria into Libya, Algeria, Egypt, Yemen and Saudi



Arabia. It killed eight Shiites in Saudi Arabia and shot a citizen of Denmark in Riyadh. At least 60 jihadist groups in 30 countries have expressed solidarity with the Islamic State.

Syria is the brightest prospect for the *jihadists*. The Iran-backed Assad regime is winning on



the battlefield but has severe weaknesses that will only get worse next year like the regime's bankruptcy, collapsing infrastructure and lack of manpower. The regime cut subsidies that are essential for maintaining support from its constituencies.

The low oil price will drastically undermine support from Iran and Russia, as well. A Syrian trade official recently admitted that the regime would have fallen without Iranian financial aid. The U.S.-backed rebels have been ripped to shreds by the Islamic State and Jabhat al-Nusra, Al-Qaeda's affiliate in Syria. The country is being described as "a patchwork of warring fiefdoms" and "total chaos" is being predicted for 2015. The chances are high that the civil war will spread to Lebanon in a major way.

The often-overlooked civil war continues to rage in Libya where Islamist militias are making gains in eastern Libya against secular forces. The Islamic State conquered the city of Derna and has erected training camps with an estimated 200 terrorists.

The Libyan civil war could spread into neighboring Tunisia and Algeria. The Libyan secularists are scoring some victories in western Libya and Tunisia is sealing border crossings. The new anti-Islamist government of Tunisia is destined for a showdown with Islamist militias like Ansar al-Sharia.

Yemen is also a grand opportunity for *jihadists*. The Iranian-backed Houthis have captured the capital of Sanaa and is advancing in the central

and southern parts of the country, battling Al-Qaeda and other Sunni fighters along the way. This could become a repeat of Syria very shortly.

In Egypt, the military is battling an Islamist insurgency in the Sinai Peninsula. The Islamic

State is expanding there and Al-Qaeda's affiliate there could potentially bounce back from major losses. Members of the Muslim Brotherhood and Hamas could join the fight as the Egyptian government tries to dismantle political Islam.

In Afghanistan, the U.S. has pledged to end the official combat mission at the end of this year and reduce U.S. troop levels down to 9,800. The remaining forces will leave by 2016. The Afghan Taliban is making gains in Helmand Province since the U.S. handed security over to the Afghan security forces, but the Afghan forces deserve credit for stopping the Taliban from seizing a single district there.

A secret group of dozens of students backing the Islamic State has arisen in Afghanistan and expressions of support for the Islamic State are being seen in neighboring Pakistan. The Islamic State could also win over hardline elements of the Afghan Taliban opposed to negotiated settlements with the elected government.

The *Clarion Project* has seen numerous online statements by Islamic State members and supporters enthusiastically talking about replicating in Afghanistan the success they have enjoyed in Iraq once U.S. forces depart Afghanistan.

Islamist terrorists could also become stronger in Central Asia due to *jihadists* returning from Syria, the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan and an apparent rise in support for Islamism, as evidenced by the rise of Hizb ut-Tahrir in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. Kyrgyzstan has thwarted attacks by terrorists who returned from Syria and sought to spark an insurgency there.

In December, a terrorist group called the Caucasus Emirate attacked the city of Grozny in Chechnya and killed 14 police officers. The Emirate's Dagestan section then released a videotape declaring allegiance to the Islamic State, even though the emir of the

overall group endorsed Al-Qaeda chief Ayman al-Zawahiri.

1

Homegrown Terror

The unfortunate reality is that a homegrown terrorist attack on U.S. soil is all but certain in 2015.

There were at least six Islamism-inspired acts of terrorism on U.S. soil in 2014, with the murder of two New York Police Department officers being the latest. At least 14 Americans have been intercepted on their way to join the Islamic State, with the most recent cases being a mother in Virginia and a Chicago man with his two teenage siblings.

It is believed that over 100 Americans have joined *jihadist* groups in Syria with other estimates as high as 300. The FBI is monitoring about 150 Americans who have returned from Syria for possible terrorist links.



found that the number of Salafist jihadists has doubled since 2010. The number of individual Salafist *jihadist* groups has doubled since 2001 and the number of attacks has tripled since 2010. The State Department likewise calculated a 40% rise in attacks in 2013 and a 60% rise in fatalities from terrorism.

Based on these trends, it is safe to say that Islamist terrorism will dominate the headlines throughout 2015 as it did for most of 2014.

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.

Oops! U.S. Offers \$5 Mil Reward for Al Qaeda Terrorist it Released From Gitmo

114

Source: <http://www.judicialwatch.org/blog/2014/12/oops-u-s-offers-5-mil-reward-al-qaeda-terrorist-released-gitmo/>

Dec 22, 2014 – Years after liberating an Al Qaeda operative from the military prison at Guantanamo, the United States government has put him on a global terrorist list and offered a \$5 million reward for information on his whereabouts.

The unbelievable story comes as President Obama frees more and more terrorists—including four to Afghanistan over the weekend—long held in the military compound at the U.S. Naval base in southeastern Cuba. The president's goal is to close the prison, a campaign promise that dates back to 2008, by relocating the last of the world's most dangerous terrorists. Still left at the facility are 9/11 masterminds Khalid Sheikh Mohammed (KSM), Ramzi Binalshibh, Ali Abdul Aziz Ali, and Mustafa Ahmed Adam al Hawsawi as well as USS Cole bomber Abd al-Rahim al-Nashiri. Hundreds of Gitmo terrorists have been discharged over the years under a program that started with President George W. Bush



and continued full-throttle with this administration. Intelligence report after intelligence report has revealed that many rejoin terrorist missions after leaving the military prison. In fact, Judicial Watch has been reporting this for years. Back in 2010 JW wrote about a report that the Director of National Intelligence gave Congress documenting that 150 former

Gitmo detainees were confirmed or suspected of "reengaging in terrorist or insurgent activities after transfer." At least 83 remained at large, according to the document.

Now we learn that the U.S. government is secretly admitting that it erred in at least one case, the release of a **Saudi national named Ibrahim al-Rubaysh**.

In late 2006 the Bush administration repatriated him back home under a Saudi Arabian "rehabilitation" program that supposedly reformed Guantanamo Bay jihadists but instead has served as a training camp for future terrorists. In fact, in 2008 counterterrorism officials confirmed that many of the terrorists who return to "the fight" after being released from U.S. custody actually graduated from the laughable Saudi rehab program, which started under Bush and continued under Obama.

It turns out that al-Rubaysh is the poster child for the Saudi rehab's failures. He's a dangerous Al Qaeda operative based in Yemen and now, years after freeing him, the United States wants him captured. This month the State Department coined the "senior leader" of Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) a Specially Designated Global Terrorist. "He serves as a senior advisor for AQAP operational planning and is involved in the planning of attacks," a State Department

announcement says. "He has served as a senior AQAP sharia official since 2013, and as a senior AQAP sharia official, al-Rubaysh provides the justification for attacks conducted by AQAP. In addition, he has made public statements, including one in August 2014 where he called on Muslims to wage war against the United States."

The U.S. government has also offered a \$5 million reward for information that could lead to al-Rubaysh's capture. The prize is part of a \$45 million pot offered by the State Department's

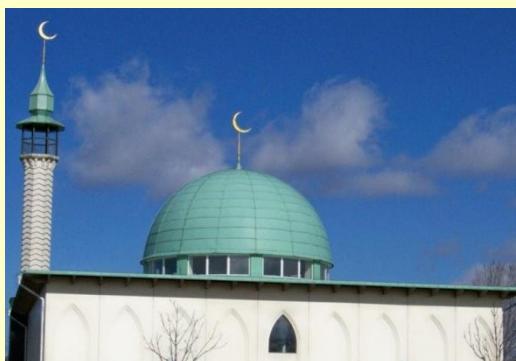
Rewards for Justice Program involving eight key AQAP leaders, among them al-Rubaysh. Information on some of al-Rubaysh's buddies could net informants \$10 million, but he's only worth half that, according to the U.S. government. The bottom line remains; The U.S. had him and let him go. Now it's offering a chunk of change for his capture. Uncle Sam has paid out over \$125 million to more than 80 people who provided actionable information that put terrorists behind bars or prevented acts of international terrorism worldwide. The reward program appears to be the government's best hope of capturing this terrorist it once held.

115

Stupidity: Doing the same thing over and over and expecting a different result

Tensions simmer in Sweden with third mosque arson attack in past eight days

Source: <http://www.jpost.com/International/Tensions-simmer-in-Sweden-with-third-mosque-arson-attack-in-past-eight-days-386463>



In most recent attack, police say a Molotov cocktail was thrown at mosque in Uppsala.

In a country caught up in a fierce debate on immigration, a third suspected arson attack on a mosque in a week took place in the Swedish city of Uppsala on Thursday.

"People saw a man throwing something burning at the building," police in Uppsala said, adding that the mosque did not catch fire, AFP reported. The suspect had left behind "a text on the

door expressing contempt for religion," the police said.



Polls have shown the anti-immigration Sweden Democrats winning over voters from the center right and center left.

The party, Sweden's third biggest, wants to cut the number of asylum seekers getting in by 90 percent. Other more mainstream parties have promised to preserve the Nordic state's traditionally liberal stance.

A police spokesman told Swedish news agency TT that the burning object was a Molotov cocktail and that no one was in the building at the time, AFP reported.

Sweden's Islamic Association posted a photograph online of the main door of the mosque, which was emblazoned with the slogan "Go home Muslim shit," according to the report.

The attack in Uppsala comes just three days after a fire ripped through a Swedish mosque in the southern town of Eslov (south).

Last week, five people were injured when fire broke out in another mosque in the Swedish town of Eskilstuna (near Uppsala).

India – Coast Guard foils 26/11-type attack, intruder boat blows itself up

116

Source: <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Coast-Guard-foils-26/11-type-attack-intruder-boat-blows-itself-up/articleshow/45737506.cms>

GUJ TARGET?

► Coast Guard ships and aircraft intercept a suspicious fishing boat in Arabian Sea near Indo-Pak maritime boundary, 365km from Porbandar, on midnight of Dec 31

► Intelligence inputs said the boat from **Keti Bunder, Karachi**, planned 'illicit transaction' in the sea

► Coast Guard issues warning to the fishing boat to stop but boat accelerates

► After 1-hour pursuit, boat stopped with warning shots

► Four men on the boat hide in lower deck, set the boat on fire (in pic); explosion follows. Due to bad weather, boat and bodies untraced. Boat sinks in early hours of January 1

► Timing seen linked to Pravasi Bharatiya Divas and Vibrant Gujarat meets

A circular inset map shows the coastlines of India and Pakistan, specifically highlighting the Keti Bunder area between Karachi and Porbandar.

Jan 03 – Coast Guard patrol vessels intercepted a "suspicious" Pakistani fishing boat in the Arabian Sea in the early hours of January 1, thwarting what some in the Indian security establishment contended could have been another attempt to unleash mayhem like the 26/11 strikes in Mumbai.



Defence ministry officials said the four people on the largish fishing trawler set it ablaze after an "hour-long hot pursuit", which ended with "warning shots" being fired to stop the vessel around 365km from Porbandar. The ship, with those on board, finally sank to the seabed amid loud explosions around 6.30am on Thursday. The defence ministry was quite emphatic that the fishing boat — which was being quietly tracked after it began its journey from Keti Bandar near Karachi based on specific intelligence inputs and wireless intercepts — was carrying explosives.

"The nature of the fire clearly indicated it had explosives on board. The boat was repeatedly challenged but it increased speed and tried to escape from the Indian side of maritime boundary (India's exclusive economic zone stretches to 200 nautical miles from coast)," said an official.

While other sources did not rule out the possibility of the boat could carrying some other highly inflammable cargo like high-sulphur diesel, which caught fire after being hit by gunfire from Coast Guard patrol vessel ICGS Rajratan, the vessel clearly seemed "to be on a mission" since it was far beyond the Sir Creek area where Pakistani fishing vessels normally operate. "No fishing nets were detected on the boat, which also undertook evasive manoeuvres and switched off its lights on being asked to stop," said another official.

Intelligence agencies also cited intercepts — one purportedly talking about payments to families of those on the "terror boat" — to say that the it had entered India on a terrorist

mission.

The location of the ship off Gujarat coast is considered significant because of the high-profile events — Prabasi Bharatiya Divas and Vibrant Gujarat — which will be attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and others. It also coincided with a fresh effort to sneak terrorists into J&K.

Two Coast Guard vessels are still searching the area for any "tell-tale signs" of the conspiracy that was afoot. Defence minister Manohar Parrikar, on his part, was quick to laud the Coast Guard for doing "a good job" by "intercepting the rogue vessel" in a "timely and precise manner" to avert a serious situation. The 2008 Mumbai carnage, after all, had exposed the lack of "critical connectivity" between intelligence agencies and security agencies. There were then some intelligence inputs about fishing vessel Kuber trying to infiltrate through the sea route but it slipped through the cracks, allowing Ajmal Kasab and nine other terrorists to reach Mumbai and unleash the 26/11 strikes.

Since then, the Navy and Coast Guard have dramatically stepped up their maritime security vigil. The failed attempt by al-Qaida's Indian subcontinent wing to hijack Pakistani frigates PNS Aslat and PNS Zulfikar at Karachi last September with the ostensible purpose to use them against Indian and US ships has only reinforced the need for it. "There have been several inputs on threat from the sea in the last couple of months," said the official.

The "successful operation" this time began after intelligence inputs on December 31 that a fishing boat from Keti Bandar was planning "some illicit transaction" in the Arabian Sea, which led the technical intelligence agency NTRO to alert the Coast Guard.

Sorties by Coast Guard Dornier aircraft first located and then continuously tracked the fishing boat, with ICGS Rajratan was also diverted to intercept the boat 365 km west-south west of Porbander around midnight on December 31.

"The four people on the boat disregarded all warnings to cooperate and stopped it only after the warning shots were fired. Soon thereafter, they hid themselves in the compartment below the deck and set the boat on fire.

The boat or its crew could not be saved due to the darkness, bad weather and strong winds," he said.

The gaping holes in India's coastal security apparatus exposed by the jihadis during 26/11, however, are yet to be fully plugged. But a major step towards the overall endeavour to keep track of both conventional and unconventional threats in India's primary area

of geopolitical interest across the Indian Ocean Region, and "neutralize" them if required, was the recent inauguration of the central hub of National Command Control Communication Intelligence (NC3I) network at Gurgaon.

Pakistan 'terror' boat: Did the Coast Guard get it horribly wrong?

Source: <http://www.firstpost.com/india/pakistan-terror-boat-coast-guard-get-horribly-wrong-2028601.html>

Jan 03 – Amid the storm of back patting and loud media congratulatory messages regarding the Coast Guards claims that it intercepted a Pakistani fishing vessel filled with explosives that blew itself up off the Gujarat coast, reports are now emerging that the boat in question may not have posed a terror threat to India after all.

An official statement by the Ministry of Defence on the incident, reads as follows:

As per intelligence inputs received on December 31, a fishing boat from Keti Bunder near Karachi was planning some "illicit transaction" in the Arabian Sea. A Coast Guard ship warned the fishing boat to stop for further investigation. However, the boat increased speed and tried to escape from the Indian side. "The hot pursuit continued for nearly one hour and the Coast Guard ship managed to stop the fishing boat after firing warning shots. Four persons were seen aboard the boat and they disregarded all warnings by the Coast Guard. Soon thereafter, the crew hid themselves in the deck below and set the boat afire, which resulted in an explosion and a major fire on the boat."

Due to darkness, bad weather and strong winds, the boat and persons on board could not be saved or recovered.

However new reports indicate that there was little to suggest that the vessel in question really posed a threat, and says that the Coast Guard may have used disproportionate force in the incident. Doubts are also being raised on the MoD's version of events, such as the location in which the incident is said to have taken place, the way intelligence reports about the vessel were interpreted, as well as details of the pursuit.

Writing for the *Indian Express*, Praveen Swami claims that "Highly-placed government sources, said the intelligence had no link to terrorism, and made no reference to any threat to India. Instead, the sources said, the National



Technical Research Organisation had intercepted mobile phone traffic involving small-time smugglers operating out of the fishing port of Keti Bandar, near Karachi.

The report adds that the Maharashtra unit of the Coast Guard never got a message on 31 December that a maritime operation of this nature was underway, which was surprising, given that the "the state has several landing points and jetties that could be used by a boat carrying explosives to India's western seaboard."

Then there is the question of where the boat was when the Coast Guard sought to chase it down.

According to this DNA report, "Even senior intelligence agencies are wondering why the Coast Guard chased the boat when it was on the fringe of India's exclusive economic zone (EEZ). The EEZ extends up to 200 nautical miles or 370 km. According to UN convention, a nation can chase or intercept suspicious vessels if they prohibit the host nation's passage or if they (suspicious vessels) loiter above or under the surface of the sea. That was not the case here" There is also the matter that Indian fishermen are claiming that they never saw a fire.

The *Indian Express* report points to several other potentially damning factors: Apparently the

118

weather on 31 December was not 'bad', as claimed by the media release, and there is little clarity on as to why such excessive force was used.

The Ministry of Defence has however stood by its version of events, with some sources telling *Times Now*, that they had 'definitely' foiled a terror attack on Indian soil.

What US intelligence predicted the world would look like in 2015

Source: <http://qz.com/320509/what-us-intelligence-predicted-the-world-would-look-like-in-2015/>



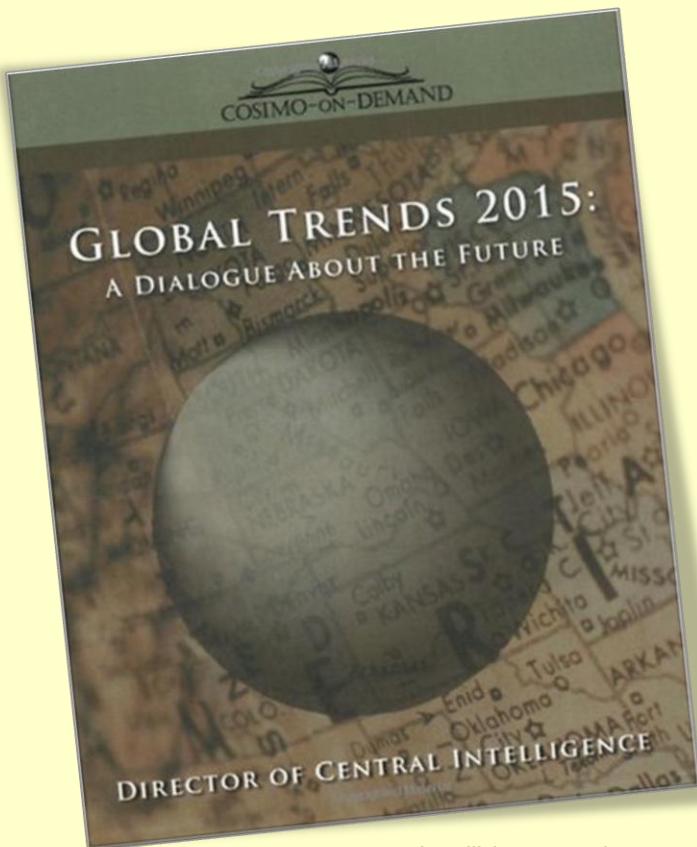
119

Jan 02 – Nine months before the September 11 attacks—and just days after the Supreme Court halted the Florida recount, handing the presidency to George W Bush—US intelligence officials published an 85-page prediction for what the world would look like in 2015. It's a world that seems familiar in some ways, and utterly foreign in others. And it's a world in which power is diffusing and decaying—reflecting one of the most significant trends of 2014 and perhaps the coming year as well.

The future depicted in the National Intelligence Council's "**Global Trends 2015**" report, published in December 2000, contains numerous contemporary echoes, as my colleagues at Defense One have pointed out. There's financial volatility; anonymous cyberattacks; widening economic divisions; an increasingly assertive China; a WMD-wielding North Korea; growing illegal migration to the US from Central America; a mercurial, authoritarian Russia that "remains internally weak and institutionally linked to the international system primarily through its permanent seat on the UN Security Council"; a Middle East tormented by "demographic

pressures, social unrest, religious and ideological extremism, and terrorism," and shaped by the destabilizing impact of new technology and the allure of political Islam.

But there are also developments that are difficult to imagine in 2015: a new state of Palestine; Iraq acquiring nuclear weapons; Japan losing its position as the world's third-largest economy. Instead of a country reeling from 13 years of war, the study envisioned an "internationally isolated" Afghanistan offering "a haven for Islamic radicals and terrorist groups" (Osama bin Laden was holed up there at the time). Instead of forecasting grinding conflict between pro-Russian and pro-Western forces in Ukraine, US officials wrote that "Ukrainians of all political stripes [are] likely to opt for independence rather than reintegration into Russia's sphere of influence." They prophesied that "most technological advances in the next 15 years ... will not have substantial positive impact on the African economies," missing the role that, say, cell phones have played in stoking economic dynamism in sub-Saharan Africa. In 2015, they noted, "Europe's



agenda will be to put in place the final components of EU integration”—integration that is now threatened by the region’s ongoing economic crisis. The report also posited bolder, alternative scenarios that it admitted were unlikely: Korean unification; the emergence of an “international terrorist coalition with diverse anti-Western objectives and access to WMD;” China demanding that Japan dismantle its nuclear program, prompting the US to come to Tokyo’s aid as the world powers hurtle toward “a major war.” The study’s overarching theme was “globalization,” that contentious catchphrase of the late 1990s. The globalized economy would, on balance, make the world a more politically stable place in 2015, according to the report, which relied on the intelligence community’s consultations with outside experts. But globalization, and attendant technological advances, would also shatter the very nature of power.

“The world is on the brink of a new era that may resemble the script of a James Bond film,” The Telegraph observed in 2000.

“States will continue to be the dominant players on the world stage, but governments will have less and less control over flows of information, technology, diseases, migrants, arms, and financial transactions, whether licit or illicit, across their borders,” US officials predicted.

So-called “non-state actors”—ranging from companies to nonprofits to narcotraffickers to “free-wheeling, transnational” terrorist networks—would “play increasingly larger roles in both national and international affairs.” The “quality of governance, both nationally and internationally, will substantially determine how well states and societies cope with these global forces,” they added.

This vision of the fragmented future of power was still blurry; the report, for example, did not mention al-Qaeda or bin Laden. But media coverage of the study at the time nevertheless picked up on the insight. “The world is on the brink of a new era that may resemble the script of a James Bond film in which international affairs are increasingly determined by large and powerful organisations rather than governments,” The Telegraph observed.

Tony Karon elaborated on the report’s findings for Time:

[T]he problem of managing global affairs is made much more difficult by the diminishing power of the state. The Cold War, artificially, managed to organize almost every regional conflict in the world into a global system of conflict, which was managed at the top by two states that had an overarching interest in avoiding instability that could drag them into a very dangerous confrontation. After it ended, many of the states of the old Soviet empire began to collapse, accelerating crime, lawlessness, tribal violence and terrorism. And the problem acknowledged in “Global Trends 2015” is that governments don’t have very sophisticated mechanisms for dealing with “non-state actors.”

“Global Trends 2015” did not predict many of the international storylines that will likely spill over into the new year: the rise of the Islamic State, the faceoff between Ukrainian forces and Russian-backed militias; the cyberattack of possibly North Korean origin against Sony. But it did predict the volatile dynamic between weak and powerful states on the one hand, and non- and semi-state actors on the other, that all these developments have in common.

As Moisés Naím wrote in The Atlantic this summer, “disguising soldiers as civilians and recruiting civilian insurgents are old

120

practices. But in the twenty-first century, they've acquired unprecedented potential as tools of war." Back in 2000, US intelligence

officials glimpsed this phenomenon. Heading into 2015, it's right before our eyes.

► Read the full report at: http://www.dni.gov/files/documents/Global%20Trends_2015%20Report.pdf

Greek fugitive terrorist Christodoulos Xeros arrested after 12 months on the run

Source: <http://www.euronews.com/2015/01/03/greek-fugitive-terrorist-christodoulos-xeros-arrested-after-12-months-on-the-run/>



121

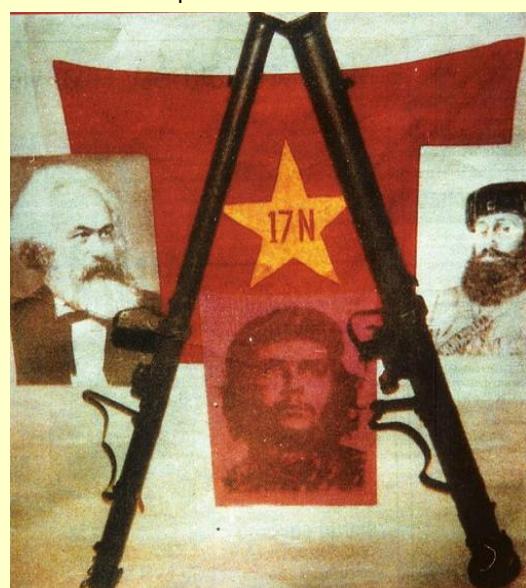


captured him in the town of Anavyssos, southeast of Athens. At the moment of his arrest he was carrying a pistol but was not given the chance to use it due to the fast arrest made by Greek SWATs.

He had been on the run since when he failed to return to Korydallos Prison after being released on temporary leave.

Xeros had been serving six life sentences for killing British and American intelligence operatives as part of the disbanded November 17 group.

Convicted terrorist from the disbanded November 17 group, Christodoulos Xeros has been arrested 12 months after he disappeared. Local media report that the anti-terrorism unit





122

Islamic State's Activity spreads into the Far East

Source: http://defense-update.com/20150102_isis_in_the_far-east.html#.VKjfrXuTLz4

Jan 02 – As the Islamic State continues its armed campaign in Iraq and Syria, its ideology is drawing fans and fighters from as far as Southern Asia and China. While the attack in Australia drew the world attention to

the threat from 'lone wolf' attacks by ISIS volunteers returning home, elsewhere in Asia insurgency is more organized - four new terrorist organizations are already

aiming to establish an Islamic Caliphate in the Far East region called Daulah Islamiah Nusantara that is to comprise Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, southern Thailand and southern Philippines.

As the Islamic State continues its armed campaign in Iraq and Syria, its ideology is drawing fans and fighters from as far as Southern Asia and China. Importantly, four new terrorist organizations are already aiming to establish an Islamic Caliphate in the Far East region called Daulah Islamiyah Nusantara that is to comprise Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, southern Thailand and southern Philippines.

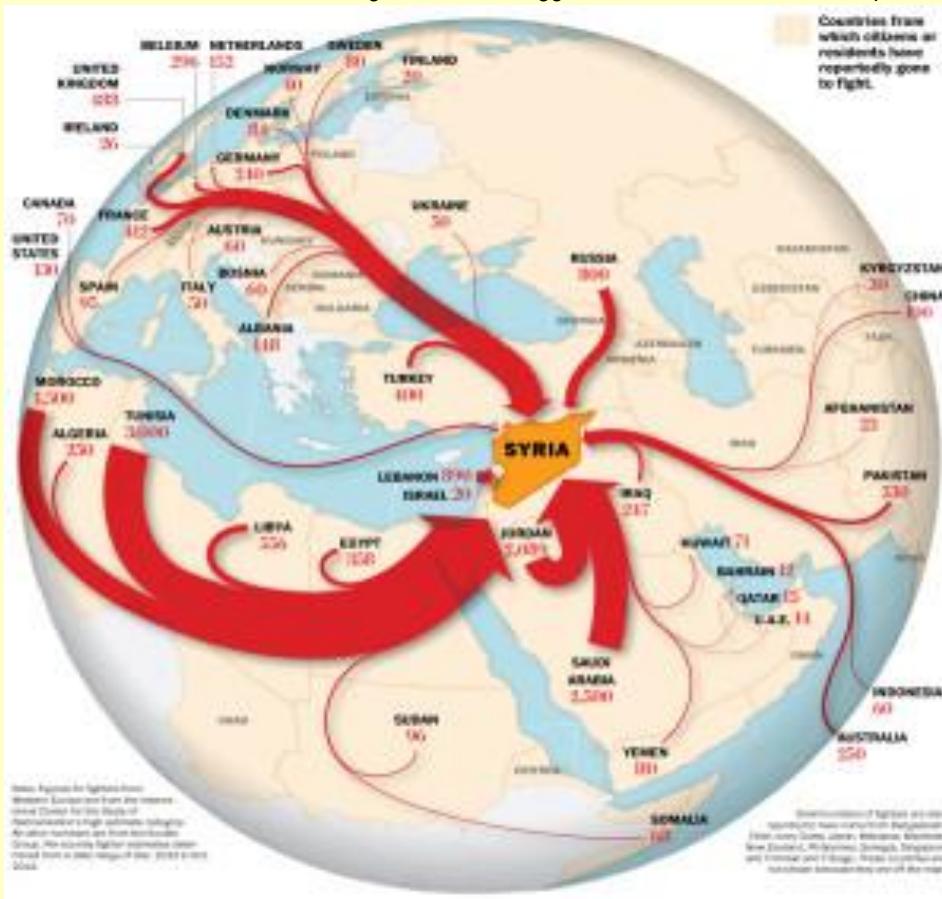
In these countries, Muslim cells have emerged and are embarking on an aggressive

strict security measures on all information, recent photos are nevertheless circulating online in China of what is suspected to be Chinese citizens fighting for the Islamic State militant group (ISIS). Though the photos initially surfaced some time ago, there still has been no official confirmation on the identity or nationality of the suspects.

However, Iraqi military sources claim to have caught a Chinese citizen fighting for the Islamic State militant group. China's Muslim population is known predominantly in the western regions of the country, which is often marginalized by the officially atheist Chinese government. Yin Gang, a West Asian and African Studies scholar at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, reported in a western news media

that hundreds of Chinese nationals are currently fighting for the Islamic State, citing previous examples of Chinese citizens joining al-Qaeda in Afghanistan.

ISIS's growing influence across Southeast Asia indicates trouble for the region. Malaysia will remain under threat, and IS-inspired fighters will worsen the low-intensity conflicts in Indonesia and the Philippines. By default, this puts ever-vigilant Singapore at risk, which is always in the crosshairs of Islamist jihadists. IS might also inspire Thailand's otherwise local Islamist-Pattani nationalist insurgency that has



recruitment drive to join the Islamic State (IS). Its desire to form an Islamic Caliphate in the Far East will become more and more feasible, as extremist Islamic elements grow in strength, deeply encouraged by the dramatic fighting in Iraq and Syria and the European Muslims already joining the Jihad in greater numbers. The latest development in the creation of the revived Islamic Caliphate comes out of China. Although the Beijing government and keeps

increased violence in the face of failing negotiations with the government. According to the rebel manual, 'Fight for the Liberation of Pattani', they want a local caliphate, too. Burma's small Muslim vs. Buddhist conflict has already spilled over into Indonesia and Malaysia with a few bombings and assassinations. Therefore, it is candidate for IS provocation as well.

123



[Abu Muhammad al-Indonesi appeared in a recent ISIS video.](#)

On July 22, the IS media company Al-Hayat released a video in which a group of eight jihadist fighters from Indonesia were shown to have arrived in Iraq and were part of the Islamic State. In the video, Abu Muhammad Al-Indonesi, one of the fighters, delivered a message urging Indonesians to join the Islamic State and swear fealty to Al-Baghdadi.

In May 2014, a group of jihadists from the Philippines declared support for the ISIS. In August, it released a video in which the jihadists, who belonged to Jama'at Ansar Al-Khilafa (JAK), formally swore fealty to Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi. The video, in which the faces of the jihadists were blurred, was produced by the jihadi media outlet Al-Battar.

In August 2014, it emerged that scores of Filipino jihadists have joined the Islamic State in Iraq. Fidel Ramos, the former president of the Philippines, told a newspaper: "At least a hundred of our young Filipino-Muslims have infiltrated Iraq where they get training and they can launch jihad when they come back to the Philippines."

Malaysian authorities recently stopped a major ISIS-influenced attack, and Indonesian and Philippine officials are scrambling to prevent their own growing flocks of Islamic inspired terrorists from going on the rampage. The Philippines' Foreign Ministry says that 200 of its citizens have gone to war under ISIS's flag in the Middle East. Most of these are orphans of dead fighters from domestic Islamist insurgent groups such as the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) and Moro National Liberation Front.

Indonesia, long troubled by radicals that have fought for a caliphate for decades, recently banned its citizens from joining ISIS. Jailed terrorist kingpin Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, the radical Indonesian cleric who heads Jemah Anshorut

Tauhid (JAT) was already causing the authorities considerable headache. His activities are gaining power with ISIS cells encouraging young Muslim recruits to join its ranks. Last August, Indonesia's police counter terror unit, Detachment 88, arrested JAT official Afif Abdul Majid and two others for joining ISIS. Malaysian Special Branch (SB) arrested several ISIS suspects, planning to carry out terrorist attacks in the country. Security sources claimed that at least 20 of its citizens — and probably more — have joined ISIS fighting in the Middle East, and at least three have been killed.

The plan for a regional Islamic caliphate – Daulah Islamiah Nusantara – was also confirmed in August by Ayob Khan Mydin Pitchay, the Malaysian counter-terrorism official whose investigations led to the arrest of the 19 jihadists in Malaysia. Ayob Khan confirmed that the militants "had visions of establishing a hardline Southeast Asian caliphate spanning Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, the Philippines and Singapore, and planned to travel to Syria" to learn from the Islamic State.

ISIS is currently the greatest actual security threat China faces in the world. Chinese Muslim Uighur separatists who have been have been joining ISIS in Iraq and Syria. Eventually (if not already) these battle-hardened Uighur separatists will begin to make their way back into China and begin a campaign of terrorism on a scale previously unimaginable in China.

The Muslim Uighurs are part of the population of the Xinjiang region in Western China. Many Uighurs have joined ISIS in Iraq and Syria, where they are trained in terrorism and combat. These terrorists are building a valuable network of different Muslim extremist groups who can supply them with weapons, as well as logistical and ideological support.

So far the effectiveness of Uighur attacks in China have been limited because the separatist groups are largely unorganized and fractured. But as ISIS-trained Uighur extremists begin to trickle back into China, the Chinese government will find itself battling an entirely different.

Once this happens, the world can expect to see a China that is much more willing to involve itself in military intervention creating a historic precedent for China in international disputes. This willingness to use force will have

124

profound implications on China's ongoing territorial disputes with surrounding Asian nations, in which Pyongyang has already been flexing its military might in this context. Should

the influence of ISIS escalate into an organized terror threat inside China, one can expect a new military superpower, as China expands its military capabilities.

CIA to its agents – this is how to trick airport security

Source: <http://i-hls.com/2014/12/cia-agents-trick-airport-security/>

WikiLeaks has published not one, but two internal CIA documents that teach agents how to act and what to do in order to make sure they're able to fool airport security while traveling from country to country using fake passports, and how to keep their cover intact in the process.

According to BGR, one document details tricks needed for preventing secondary security checks that might occur from time to time, and surviving them if it happens. The document is filled with examples from actual CIA field work meant to help agents better prepare for future trips, as well as various examples on a per country basis.



Interestingly, the document highlights personal smart devices as well, including smartphones, iPods and other gadgets as a security risk for undercover agents. **"Smart phones, iPods, and MP3 players,** can pose a vulnerability to alias travel because of their requirement for subscriptions. If border control officials can establish a link between the device and the traveler's true name, this could present a difficulty for someone traveling in alias," the agency writes.

Basically, the document instructs agents to put up a complete show for airport authorities, from maintaining cover stories at all times by dressing, packing and acting according to the roles they're supposed to play.

The second document specifically targets the EU Schengen space, which CIA agents also have to infiltrate undercover. It explains how airport checks work in the region.

125

Homeland Security panel recommends taller fence for White House

Source: <http://i-hls.com/2015/01/homeland-security-panel-recommends-taller-fence-white-house/>

Israeli security experts have said before that the fence around the White House does not stop intruders.



Now, a homeland security panel says that a taller fence for the White House is the most important immediate step in ramping up protection for the president.

According to the *Telegraph*, the report was submitted to Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson. The United States Secret

Service Protective Mission Panel began examining presidential security and the role of the Secret Service after a number of incidents, including one in which a man jumped the White House fence and got into the building before he was apprehended.

"A better fence can provide time, and time is crucial to the protective mission," the report said. "Every additional second of response time provided by a fence that is more difficult to climb makes a material difference in ensuring the President's safety and protecting the symbol that is the White House."



The fence could be as much as 4 to 5 feet taller than the existing one and designed so that it does not have horizontal bars providing foot and hand holds, the report said.

The panel said it should be possible to provide a secure fence that also meets the aesthetic and historic considerations of the White House.

EDITOR'S COMMENT: I have already commented in 2014 about the WH security plan following infiltration attempts and I still believe that the fence is not good enough if there is no an invisible "specifically trained" human fence surrounding this very critical infrastructure. I would not be surprised if next proposal speaks about a transparent dome covering the WH! HLS loves to spend money on



126

fences, but does not love to invest on people – that is less expensive but most efficient!

Boko Harem storms multilateral military base in northeast Nigeria

Source: <http://www.terrorismwatch.org/2015/01/boko-harem-storms-multilateral-military.html>

In another setback for Nigeria's counter-insurgency strategy, Boko Harem militants have overrun a key military base in the country's northeast. Witnesses said the militants had taken control on Saturday of Baga, a town near Nigeria's border with Chad, after troops fled the town leaving residents at the mercy of the attackers.

Baga is a garrison town for the Multi-National Joint Task Force that comprises troops from Nigeria, Chad, Niger, and Cameron. The troops are supposed to patrol the border area and go after Boko



Harem, a violent Islamist movement that has paralyzed governance in much of Nigeria's Muslim-dominated northeast.

Nigerians living in the northeast, much of which is under a state of emergency, have long complained of government negligence and charged the military with neglecting its duties. The rout of a multilateral military base underscores the challenge to Nigeria's government ahead of a presidential election next month.

A local senator, Maina Maaji Lawan, told the BBC that militants stormed Baga from several directions early Saturday and that, far from defending the town on Lake Chad, the multilateral troops had run away. Residents escaped into the forest, he said.

Communications with the town were cut off and exact information about casualty numbers could not be confirmed, he said. "We are very dispirited," the senator added.

Confirming that the military had abandoned the base, he said people's frustration knew "no bounds" over the apparent fact that the military had not fought back.

"There is definitely something wrong that makes our military abandon their posts each time there is an attack from Boko Haram," the senator said.

Earlier in the week, Boko Harem abducted around 40 young men from a village in the surrounding province, Agence France-Presse reports. A resident told reporters that armed militants driving pickup trucks had ordered villages to attend a sermon, then began picking out men aged between 10 and 23. The village lies close to a forest where the group is believed to operate bases.

Reports of the abductions emerged on Friday when residents who escaped from the village reached Maiduguri, the provincial capital. They said the gunmen arrived on the evening of Dec. 31. The capture of young men during raids on villages is consistent with Boko Harem's tactics, though much is still unknown about the

group's strategy beyond its oft-repeated claim that it seeks to establish an Islamic state in northern Nigeria.

Boko Haram is still holding in captivity more than 200 schoolgirls it abducted from their school in Chibok in Borno state last April. The abduction drew worldwide condemnation, after which President Goodluck Jonathan vowed to secure the area, including by deploying more troops. But the promised troop numbers have failed to materialize, often leaving residents to rely entirely on vigilantes for protection.

The Islamists are believed to control large swathes of territory in Borno as well as several towns and villages in two other northeastern states, Adamawa and Yobe.

Boko Haram's five-year uprising in Nigeria has claimed more than 13,000 lives and has seen dozens of people, including women and children, kidnapped by the Islamists.

Baga, the garrison town for the multilateral force, was the scene of an alleged military massacre in April 2013. Human rights groups and media reports said that Nigerian troops had stormed the town after militants mounted a deadly attack on an Army patrol. Thousands of houses were burned and over 100 bodies were recovered in the aftermath, according to community leaders who spoke to Human Rights Watch. Nigerian military officials said that only armed militants were killed.

The incident cast a shadow over Western cooperation with Nigeria's military. The US has supplied arms and training to Nigeria, as well as intelligence support, primarily in pursuit of Boko Harem. Britain and France have also assisted Nigeria since the high-profile capture of the schoolgirls from Chibok. Dozens of those captured have since escaped, but 219 are still believed to be in captivity.

127

Denmark police say Islamic extremists recruiting gang members

Source: <http://www.terrorismwatch.org/2015/01/denmark-police-say-islamic-extremists.html>

In Denmark, police are concerned about Islamic extremists recruiting gang members. Denmark police say the radicalization of young criminals is a dangerous cocktail. Human rights activists say the new recruits are now pushing Sharia into immigrant communities. CCTV

News' Malcolm Brabant reported this story from Denmark.

Jomana, a young Lebanese immigrant, wears her burkha ironically to demonstrate to fellow anti-Islamist protestors that she won't give in to

extremists trying to enforce Sharia law. Jomana was verbally threatened by members of a



group called Hizb ut Tahrir during a rally in a district of Copenhagen.

Hizb ut Tahrir believes that Sharia is more important than Western democracy.

Protesters and members of Hizb ut Tahrir confronted one another at the rally, the confrontation is viewed as a rare public



manifestation of the disquiet felt in Denmark about the rising influence of Islamic extremists.

"We see more and more of a mixture of gang members and people from the radical extremist groups," Michael Ask,

Detective Chief Superintendent and head of National Investigation Center said. "It could be a dangerous cocktail because we fear that radical extremist groups will try and abuse I would say, these vulnerable young men from the gang members because they are quite easy to direct, in the direction you want them to go."

Police say gang members took part in this Hizb ut Tahrir rally against Israel in the summer. Mohammed Rafiq, International Institute for Human Rights says the members want everyone to obey and enforce Sharia.



"The gang members are pushing Muslims in different Danish cities, in ghettos, to act like real Muslim people do after Sharia law," Rafiq said.

The police acknowledge that there have been individual cases of intimidation but claim it's not organized.

Hizb ut Tahrir declined to interview with CCTV News but released a statement. The statement said, it was nonsense that Hizb ut Tahrir would use gangsters to enforce Sharia. They insisted they want to steer young people away from crime and are only interested in promoting Islam.

Eighteen months ago, the organization held a rally here to encourage young Muslims to abandon gangs. At the time, politicians expressed concern that it was a cynical attempt to recruit new members.

"If I can get some gang members and turn them into good Muslims that behave in accordance with Islamic beliefs, which means they will be talking against gangs and being involved in criminal activities that is something we should celebrate, not warn against," Hizb ut Tahrir spokesman Chadi Freijeh said.

According to intelligence sources, 20 of the 100 Danes, those of Danish ethnicity, who have been sent to fight in Syria are gang members. Some have returned to Denmark and have not been prosecuted. Some believe their reputations have been enhanced by their participation in the war. Officials say as a result they are more intimidating than before.

128

Read My Lips Again

By Nancy Hartvelt Kobrin, PhD

Source: <http://www.familysecuritymatters.org/publications/detail/read-my-lips-again>

The Islamic State has produced a book called *Sister's Role in Jihad* instructing how to destroy the minds of their child and turn them into killing machines. The contents of this book should be understood as NOTHING NEW in Islamic culture. What this terrorist handbook has done is to have inscribed practices that have been embraced for centuries behind closed doors. In the West we have been reluctant to take note of this and to see what has been going in these societies. We do not

discuss the ramifications of growing up in shame honor cultures, all of which have spawned Islamic suicide bombing.

I have been arguing since before 9/11 that we must look to the mother-infant relationship in order to understand from where all of this violence is coming. This is NOT to blame the female but to understand how terrified she is, that she herself has been beaten into submission but could never admit it because it

would be too shaming. The devalued female "out Frenches the French" in externalizing her own murderous rage because she has been the chronic target of brutal male abuse. She has internalized male rage of the female as self-hatred. Hence the sisters of jihad, the female suicide bomber etc.

"the erotic exotic brutalization of the other." This is the draw too for the Western converts to Islam. We fail to talk about the sexualized component of jihad as a snuff film.

In the specific case of Muslim kids raised in the West, their mothers were often child brides who retained these traditional Islamic



Counter terrorist experts have failed miserably in understanding the root problem, i.e. the **radical** of radicalization -- early childrearing practices. Ironically in my opinion, our experts are terrified of this particular subject matter. Yet the elephant in our room remains the significance of the mother building the brain of the baby and the delicate nature of early childhood under such brutal circumstances. Violence, the need to hate and the need to have an enemy are learned behaviors in the home by age three. **Arab Muslim and also Iranian Shiite are cultures out of control.** Moderate Muslims, be they Sunni or Shia, have failed to reign in their violent children whom they have raised to be murderous. How has this happen? It is too shaming for them to admit to themselves that they are in conflict. They may mouth words rejecting violence by hiding behind the mantra that Islam is the religion of peace but they remain *passive aggressive* - allowing the jihadis to be the carriers of their own rage stemming from their own shamed childhood. The cycle goes on across generations. They let the jihadis do the dirty work of Islam. Passive aggressive behavior is exceedingly manipulative. This violent dynamic is enhanced by the unspoken draw of jihad's sado-masochism -- what I call

childrearing practices. As for the Caucasian (and others) Muslim converts to Islam, if you investigate their childhood histories, they too grew up in similar, rigid abusive households - shaming, often with absent and/or violent fathers.

I was in Ukraine over a month ago researching the Chechens and their violent brand of jihad. Chechens are the tip of the spear like the Somalis. I taught Ukrainian military, law enforcement and mental health professionals on the interlocking links of violence beginning in the home extending outward to political violence. I talked about the maternal relationship and brain development. They were mesmerized. They also admitted that they have their own cultural problems with shame and domestic violence. Add to this, the trauma of the current war and Ukraine is a tinderbox. One per cent of its population is now Muslim and growing. The average Ukrainian law enforcement person is paralyzed about dealing with this new reality. I told them they must go into these immigrant Muslim communities and get to know them. They must know who lives where, etc. They must learn what is going on. Law enforcement has to be proactive. If not, sticking one's head in the

sand will merely foster parallel isolated Muslim communities as we have seen in France, Germany and England etc. Many of the Muslims are from Central Asia. I was told that the Islamic State is sending its women and children into western Ukraine. This fits with the Islamic State's playbook.

Denouncing the Islamic State's book must be met head on. Memri is right that we will now be dealing with this issue for generations to come. We must "put boots on the ground" in response to this book. We must start with the Saudis and the Iranians. Their childrearing practices have institutionalized the abuse of the female who makes the brain of the baby. We must demand that Saudi Arabia stops beheading right now. This feeds the veneration of the archaic Islamic tradition institutionalized by the Prophet Muhammad at Khaybar. We must call for them to free their own women and children. We must demand an end to the Iranian practice of *Tatbir*, cutting the child's forehead with a knife during the Ashura. We must name this bloody practice for what it is - child abuse. This causes the child to grow up paranoid, projecting his rage at the feminized other, most especially the Jew and the Christian.

To give another example, I relate the following intuitive moment I had after being interviewed by Eran Singer one of Israel's leading journalists on Arab Affairs (which Family Security Matters so kindly posted the link). I had the thought: why not demand that childrearing practices be required reading, included on every syllabus for those studying Islam, Arabic, Iranian cultures and especially counterterrorism? We can no longer afford to ignore the subject because of political correctness.

Dr. Nancy Kobrin, a Fellow at the American Center For Democracy and a psychoanalyst with a Ph.D. in romance and semitic languages, specializes in Aljamía and Old Spanish in Arabic script. She is an expert on the Minnesota Somali diaspora and a graduate of the Human Terrain System program at Leavenworth Kansas. Her new book is The Banality of Suicide Terrorism: The Naked Truth About the Psychology of Islamic Suicide Bombing.

Though a hoax, Madrid train bomb threat deepens jitters about 'lone wolf' attacks

Source: <http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Security-Watch/terrorism-security/2015/0102/Though-a-hoax-Madrid-train-bomb-threat-deepens-jitters-about-lone-wolf-attacks-video>

Spanish officials say a suicide bomb threat at Madrid's Atocha train station, site of the March 2004 bombing that left almost 200 people

Finally we need to broaden the discussion from childrearing practices to issues concerning developmental problems, such as lack of empathy as a sign of a cognitive deficit. We must hold public forums. We must not be shy to establish an academic interdisciplinary field/think tank which includes trauma specialists, psychoanalysts, neuroscientists, geneticists and epigeneticists in conjunction with counterterrorist experts, policy makers, historians etc. to examine the lethal mix of childrearing practices and jihadi violence for the sake of our citizenry. *We need to bring the discussion out into the open.*

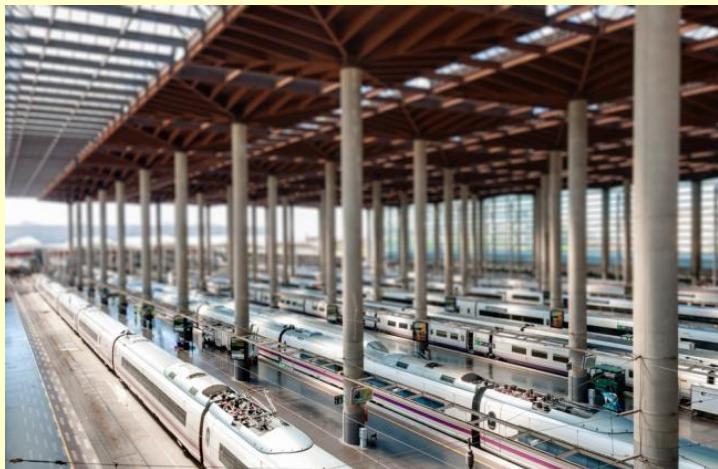
We must even contemplate the real possibility of the unpleasant devastating fact that these cultures have been unconsciously destroying their own genetic material because they are so enraged. In turn they have been putting our cultures at risk, destroying them. Left unchecked aggression breeds aggression, spreading like wildfire. It is a matter of self preservation. A democracy is only as strong as its nuclear family. By taking a measured look at our ancestral landscape, where we have come from with regard to childrearing practices and where we are heading, we counter the obscene message of *Sister's Role in Jihad*. The Islamic State will be held accountable for crimes against humanity, crimes against their own children. It is obvious that they do not want their children to develop empathy but we do care about ours. I wish for my grandchildren and all other children that they will be upstanding citizens who do not hate others and live in a safe democracy. Read my lips: "The mother builds the brain of the jihadi baby." We must act now.

130

dead, is false, and that a suspect has been taken into custody.



The suspect, identified by newspaper El País (in Spanish) as Jamal H, a man of North



African and Spanish origin, reportedly threatened to blow himself up on a commuter rail train approaching the Atocha station. The suspect had left a backpack on the train and warned passengers that an explosion was imminent. Spanish police said that the warnings prompted a passenger to pull the

saw three instances in late December of attacks by individuals that injured members of the public. And in Australia, a man with a history of criminal activity held more than a dozen people hostage in a Sydney cafe before police stormed the site. The man and two of his hostages were killed.

Europe is also highly concerned about the possibility of its citizens traveling to fight in Syria, becoming radicalized, and then returning home and pursuing similar tactics. As of late last year, some 95 Spaniards were estimated to be involved in the fighting in Syria, The Washington Post reports. Although there is no immediately apparent tie between today's incident and Islamic terrorism, the site itself, **Atocha station** (photo top), has particular resonance for Spaniards that evokes such a connection. **The station was the site of Spain's deadliest terrorist attack in the**



emergency brake before it reached the station, and the train was evacuated.

No explosives were found in the suspect's possession, and police told El País that he has no known ties to terrorist groups. He is currently being held for psychiatric observation. But the threat comes amid heightened tensions in the West amid a spate of attacks of "lone-wolf terrorism," launched by unbalanced individuals claiming to be inspired by tensions in the Middle East and fighting in Syria. France

modern era, when, on Mar. 11, 2004, a series of 10 backpack bombs was detonated, killing nearly 200 people and injuring scores more. Although initial suspicion fell upon the Basque separatist group ETA, investigations revealed the perpetrators to be Islamic militants.

The 2004 bombings had a dramatic effect on the country, coming just days before Spain's general election. The

131

conservative – and hard-on-terrorism – Popular Party had been expected to win the elections handily. But the attack galvanized support for the Socialists, who scored an upset win on the back of their campaign against Spanish involvement in the Iraq war, which many saw

as a reason Spain was targeted by terrorists. The new Socialist government quickly affirmed its intent to withdraw from the conflict, depriving the US of one of its staunchest allies in the war.

Scandal: Dutch police paid Salafis to help patrol The Hague during New Year's Eve

Source: <http://10news.dk/scandal-dutch-police-paid-salafi-sharia-patrols-to-help-patrol-the-haag-during-new-years-eve/>



132



Jan 04 – **Dutch Police have capitulated:** they can no longer uphold law and order in Muslim dominated areas, and is now hiring Salafi sharia-patrols from the local mosque to patrol the streets. This is not only in complete conflict with secular principles, it also lends authority to people who follow a doctrine that preaches destruction of democracy and death upon the very people that the Police are supposed to protect.

Translated by Thomas from DenHaagfm:

The Dutch member of parliament Joram van Klaveren and Louis Bontes of the Party for the Netherlands (VNL) are upset about the cooperation during New Year's

Eve between The Hague Police Department and the Salafist As-Sunnah mosque. **Volunteers of the As-Sunnah mosque (photo below) were patrolling the Transvaal and Schilderswijk districts of The Hague on New Year's Eve in order to prevent young people from causing trouble.** The mosque also organized some activities for young people in the old school building "Het Startpunt".



The volunteers of the mosque were rewarded with tourist vouchers.

The Party for the Netherlands finds it inappropriate that the Dutch government "should be represented on the streets by a Salafist mosque." The former Freedom Party MPs said that "it is a misguided development" because "a fundamentalist Islamic institution,

whose spokesperson said that it does not believe in universal human rights and that Dutch society is built on a godless foundation, should not be a partner for our secular government."

Leon de Jong, the leader of the Freedom Party in The Hague's city council has asked the city council written questions about what he calls the "sharia police" of the As-Sunnah mosque. "This kind of Islamization undermines the authority of the police," he says. "The police should control the streets. For that reason, there should be no room in The Hague for any kind of Islamic law enforcement whatsoever."

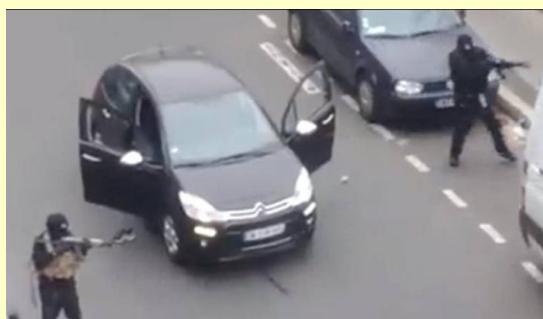
The **Schilderswijk** is still one of the poorest neighbourhoods of the Netherlands. Unemployment is significant, and many people are dependent of governmental support. In 2006 (the latest available figures), 70% of the inhabitants of the Schilderswijk had a low income, 25% a middle income, and 5% a high income.

Transvaal is a multi-ethnic area with 15.472 inhabitants as of 1 January 2013. Starting in the 1990s, many poor houses were demolished to make room for new buildings. This significantly changed the character of the neighbourhood. Transvaal changed from a popular to a multicultural neighbourhood. As of 2013, immigrants make up over 90% of the neighbourhood's population, primarily Moroccan, Turkish, and Surinamese people

133

Gunmen kill 12 at the office of French satirical magazine critical of Islam

Source: <http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/bull20150107-gunned-killed-12-at-the-office-of-french-satirical-magazine-critical-of-islam>



The terrorists



Murdering a policeman in cold blood

Jan 07 – Two hooded Islamist gunmen have attacked the Paris office of French satirical magazine *Charlie Hebdo*, killing ten journalists and editors and two policemen and injuring seven, several of them in critical condition.

The assailants entered the editorial offices of the magazine and opened fire with assault rifles, before escaping the building and engaging the police on the street outside in a heavy fire exchange, killing two of the police officers.



They managed to get into their car and flees with police in the street outside before escaping by car.

Le Monde reports that the two masked assailants shouted "Allah Akbar""Nous avons vengé le prophète."

President Francois Hollande described the event as a terrorist attack "of exceptional barbarity." Hundreds of police officers and members of the security services are now searching for the two gunmen, concentrating on neighborhoods and *banlieues* with large Muslim populations.

Charlie Hebdo, a no-holds-barred satirical weekly, has made a name for itself for its irreverence when reporting – and mocking – the news. The offices of the magazine were fire-bombed in November 2011 a day after it carried a caricature of the Prophet

Muhammad which Muslims found offensive.

The BBC reports that the latest tweet on *Charlie Hebdo*'s account was a cartoon of the Islamic State militant leader, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi.

President Hollande, while visiting the scene of the attack, told reporters that people had been "murdered in a cowardly manner," adding that "We are threatened because we are a country of liberty."

Prime Minister David Cameron said in a tweet: "The murders in Paris are sickening. We stand with the French people in the fight against terror and defending the freedom of the press."

Le Monde notes that among those killed are four cartoonists, including the magazine's editor-in-chief Stephane Charbonnier. Charbonnier, 47, had received death threats in the past and was living under police protection.

Footage shot by an eyewitness and posted on social networks shows two armed men dressed in black approach a wounded police officer lying on a pavement. One of the men shot the officer in the head, before both men were seen running back toward a black vehicle and driving away.

The French police issued an alert to French media outlets to pay extra attention to security.

EDITOR'S COMMENT: It is of interest the words chosen for the title in the US site: "Gunmen" and "Islamist gunmen" (in the text). Same for French *Le Monde*: "masked assailants". Is the word "terrorist" forbidden in main stream mass media?

134

French satirical magazine today publishes unflattering caricatures of Prophet Mohammed

Source: <http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20120919-french-satirical-magazine-today-publishes-unflattering-caricatures-of-prophet-mohammed>

Sept 19, 2012 – The French satirical magazine *Charlie Hebdo* announced yesterday (Tuesday) that today (Wednesday), it would publish satirical cartoons of the Prophet Mohammed as a protest against the violent wave of anti-American



demonstrations in several Muslim countries, demonstrations triggered by the posting on YouTube of a trailer of a crude anti-Muslim movie produced by an Egyptian Copt living in California. The producer, a petty criminal and convicted fraudster, initially presented himself as an Israeli, and said the movie was funded by donations from American Jews (in fact, it was funded with money donated by other Copts, living in Alexandria, Egypt).

Le Monde reports that French politicians from across the political spectrum called on the magazine's editors not to publish the cartoon, but the French government said it had no plans to intervene. Although it did call for restraint. Prime Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault issued a statement saying: "In the current climate, the prime minister wishes to stress his disapproval of all excess and calls on everyone to behave responsibly."

The magazine's offices were firebombed last November, after it published a few cartoons mocking Islam.

The magazine refused to back down. Msnbc quotes the editor, Stephane Charbonnier, to say: "We do caricatures of everyone, and above all every week, and when we do it with the Prophet, it's called provocation." He added that if *Charlie Hebdo* stopped printing satirical work because of pressure or fear of offence, it would be reduced to selling sixteen blank pages every week.

The central body representing Muslims in France, the Conseil français du culte musulman (CFCM), accused *Charlie Hebdo* of inciting anti-Muslim sentiment at a sensitive time. "The CFCM is deeply attached to freedom of speech but considers that nothing can justify insult and inciting hatred," the organization said in a statement.

"The CFCM calls on the Muslims of France not to give in to such provocation and urges them to express their indignation calmly and in lawful manner."

EDITOR'S OVERALL COMMENT: Once more protection of a high risk target failed! I think it is time to change the methodology of protection provided. Fortifying the building (usually the entrance) does not provide defense against the important element of surprise. Using just a few policemen (or security personnel) is not the solution. Not using code locked entrances (e.g. as in banks) makes intrusion easy – you might say that they can explode the entrance with a suicide bomber. Yes! But this will notify occupants in a building to take actions. If there was a second perimeter invisible security web then they should have spotted the black car with the masked terrorists and sound an alarm. I am not sure about the level of rules of engagement security people had. I am not sure if they have trained in such an attack scenario. After a terrorist event we always read that it was performed by well trained assailants. Yes they were but what if their counterparts were equally or better trained? In conclusion: Terrorists are well trained, dedicated and take advantage of the surprise factor. **What about us?** Until next time! Perhaps at Jyllands-Posten (Denmark)?

135

Global school terror attacks rising

By Sean Coughlan

Source: <http://www.bbc.com/news/education-30684463>

Terror attacks on schools and colleges around the world have risen to higher levels than at any point in more than 40 years, according to a long-term analysis of global terrorism.

Researchers at the University of Maryland have recorded attacks on education between 1970 and 2013.

The Global Terrorism Database shows a sharp increase in attacks since 2004.

Pakistan had the highest number, but the figures do not include last month's massacre of school pupils in Peshawar.

The report, Terrorist Attacks on Educational Institutions, examines the long-term incidence

of deliberate aggression against places of learning.

But researchers say that fatal assaults on schools such as in Peshawar in north-west Pakistan, where more than 140 students and staff were killed, mark a deadly and unusual departure from the typical pattern.

Fewer casualties

Attacks on education, recorded since 1970, were much more likely to be without deaths, says the report.



Many attacks were on unoccupied school and university buildings, intended to disrupt and destroy classes and to intimidate communities rather than to kill or injure.

"This produced a considerably lower likelihood that the attack caused any casualties," says the analysis from researchers in the Study of The Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism project.

Between 1970 and 2013, more than two-thirds of terrorist attacks on education targets did not cause any deaths, a much lower casualty rate than other types of terrorist assaults, such as against the military or police.

Among all terrorist attacks during this era, education has represented about 3% of targets.

Pakistan, across the past four decades, has

particularly at girls' schools, rather than loss of life," says the analysis from researchers.

Abducted schoolgirls

The rising number of global attacks on education includes the threat in Nigeria from the Boko Haram radical group, which the study says has been deliberately attacking education institutions since 2008.

Attacks by this group were more likely to be armed assaults and bombings, with high-profile kidnappings such as the abduction of schoolgirls in Chibok.

The researchers say there is a "distinct pattern" to attacks in Nigeria, with a greater prevalence of co-ordinated, multiple assaults. As an example, in October 2012 there were eight separate schools burned down in one night.

The study, examining the long-term patterns, also shows that attacks on education are not a new phenomenon - and not restricted to the developing world.

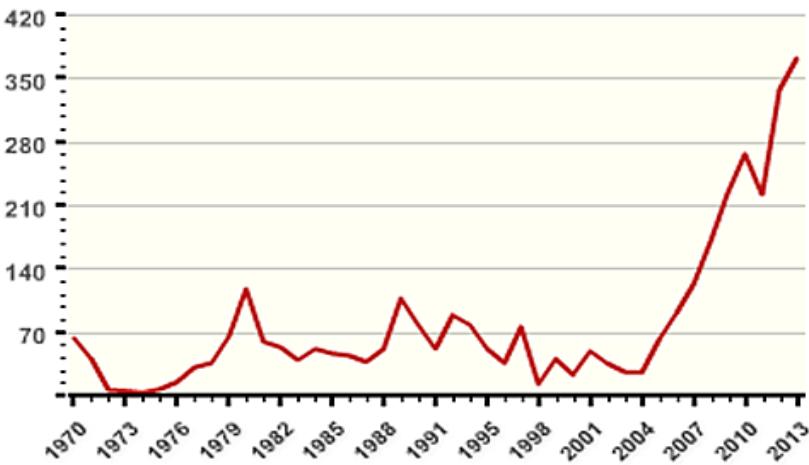
At the beginning of the 1970s, there were attacks on educational buildings in the United States by a range of groups, including radical students, opponents of the Vietnam War and white supremacists opposed to desegregating schools.

A coalition of United Nations agencies, human rights groups and aid organisations has also been

monitoring the phenomenon of attacks on schools, colleges and universities.

Last year it published a report cataloguing a range of attacks and intimidations on staff, pupils and buildings, from individuals, criminal gangs and government forces as well as terror groups. This recorded almost 10,000 incidents since 2009.

136



experienced more terror attacks on education than any other country. Most of these have been non-lethal attacks on school and university buildings, with arson or incendiary devices the most common tactics.

"The primary goal of these attacks appears to be disruption of the educational process,

monitoring the phenomenon of attacks on schools, colleges and universities.

Last year it published a report cataloguing a range of attacks and intimidations on staff, pupils and buildings, from individuals, criminal gangs and government forces as well as terror groups. This recorded almost 10,000 incidents since 2009.

Sean Coughlan is Education correspondent @ BBC News

10 Wars to Watch in 2015

By Jean-Marie Guéhenno

Source: <http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/01/02/10-wars-to-watch-in-2015/>

Jan 02 – The last year was a bad one for international peace and security. Sure, there were bright spots in 2014. Colombia's peace process looks hopeful. The last round of Iran's nuclear talks was more successful than many think. Tunisia, though not yet out of the woods, showed the power of dialogue over violence. Afghanistan bucked its history and has,

notwithstanding many challenges, a government of national unity. President Barack Obama's restoration of diplomatic relations with Cuba can only be positive.

But for the most part, it has been a dispiriting year. Conflict is again on the rise after a major decrease following the end of the Cold War. Today's wars kill and displace more people, and are harder to end than in years past.

The Arab world's turmoil deepened: The Islamic State captured large swathes of Iraq and Syria, much of Gaza was destroyed again, Egypt turned toward authoritarianism and repression, and Libya and Yemen drifted toward civil war. In Africa, the world watched South Sudan's leaders drive their new country into the ground. The optimism of 2013 faded in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Ebola ravaged parts of West Africa, and Boko Haram insurgents stepped up terrorist attacks in northern Nigeria. The international legal order was challenged with the annexation of Crimea by Russia, and war is back in Europe as fighting continues in eastern Ukraine.

So what do the last 12 months tell us is going wrong?

On a global level, increasing geopolitical competition appears, for the moment at least, to be leading to a less controlled, less predictable world. This is most obvious, of course, with regard to the relationship between Russia and the West. It's not yet zero-sum: The two nations still work together on the Iran nuclear file, the threat of foreign terrorist fighters, and, for the most part, on African peacekeeping. But Russia's policy in its neighborhood presents a real challenge, and its relationship with the United States and Europe has grown antagonistic.

China's relations with its neighbors also remain tense and could lead to a crisis in the East or South China Seas. The struggle between Iran and Saudi Arabia shapes the contours of violence between Sunnis and Shiites across the Middle East. Major Sunni powers are themselves divided: The contest between the Saudis, Emiratis, and Egypt on the one hand, and Qatar and Turkey on the other, plays out across North Africa. Elsewhere on the African continent, powers jostle in Somalia and in South Sudan's increasingly regionalized war; and the DRC has long been a venue for its neighbors' competition over influence and resources.

Rivalry between major and regional powers is nothing new, of course. But hostility between big powers has stymied the U.N. Security Council on Ukraine and Syria — and leaves its most powerful members less time and political capital to invest on other crises. As power gets more diffuse, antagonism between regional powers matters more. Competition between powerful states increasingly lends a regional or international color to civil wars, rendering their resolution more complex.

Wars and instability also are becoming more geographically concentrated, spreading from parts of Libya, the Sahel, and northern Nigeria across the African Great Lakes and Horn, through Syria, Iraq, and Yemen, and over to Afghanistan and Pakistan.

This is compounded by a worrying tendency toward violence in countries attempting to transition to democracy. Some of the world's most troubled places are those that are trying to move away from authoritarian rule, such as Libya, Yemen, Afghanistan, the DRC, and Ukraine. Forging a new consensus on a division of power and resources is a huge challenge — and failure tends to lead to renewed strife.

This poses dilemmas for both domestic elites and foreign powers. On the one hand, we know the behavior of many authoritarian rulers simply stores up problems for later. They hollow out institutions, repress their opponents, neglect much of the population, and often leave succession mechanisms vague. On the other hand, getting rid of them often, in the short term, makes things worse — precisely because their rule has left no system in place to manage change.

Last year also shows clearly that jihadi groups remain a persistent, growing threat. The Islamic State and its new affiliates in Sinai and North Africa, Boko Haram in Nigeria, al-Shabab in Somalia and Kenya, and al Qaeda franchises in South Asia, Central Asia, the Caucasus, Yemen, and the Sahel are destabilizing governments, killing civilians, and radicalizing local populations. But grouping these movements is often pointless: While they say their ambitions are global, diverse radical enterprises feed off local grievances.

Although these jihadist groups use horrific terrorist tactics, they are more than just terrorists. They seek to control territory. They often blend brutal tactics with astute political or social outreach.

Some present themselves as alternatives to a corrupt and unjust state, providing basic public goods — particularly security and justice, albeit often cruel variants thereof — when a government has failed to do so. Few of the wars they fight in are initially driven by international jihad. Extremist ideology often comes late to the party, and always amid other



sources of violence. But once there, it makes finding a mediated end to wars much more challenging. Clearly such diverse problems don't lend themselves to generic prescription. Solutions require a granular understanding of each conflict, its drivers, its protagonists, their motives and interests. Any response needs to be tailored to context. But we can offer a few general ideas based on the past year.

First, too often this year, policy has lacked a political strategy. This applies as much to the U.S. campaign against the Islamic State as it does to the Nigerians' against Boko Haram. Military action won't work alone; in fact, it often perpetuates underlying drivers of conflict — power inequalities, underdevelopment, state predation, identity politics and so forth. What keeps countries together are political settlements. Ending wars or avoiding crises requires a process that steers toward that.

Second, talking makes sense more often than not. The bright spots of this year — the Iranian nuclear file, Colombia's peace talks, Tunisia's transition, U.S.-Cuba relations — all show the value of dialogue, even when awkward or unpopular. Of course there are risks, particularly in talking to groups with exclusionary agendas or where criminal motives outweigh political ones. But at the moment the balance is dangerously weighted against dialogue: Policymakers need to be more flexible, eschew dogmatic declarations about who they can or cannot speak to, and where force is necessary, wed it with engagement, even if only to isolate those who are genuinely beyond the pale.

Third, political inclusion should more frequently be a guiding principle of today's leaders. Over time, that means building institutions that are representative, effective, and protect all citizens — long, arduous, and intensely political work. In fragile countries, the rush to elections that empower the winner at the detriment of the loser, or to ratify constitutions that concentrate power in one person, are dangerous.

Fourth, it is much better to prevent crises than to try to contain them later. This means engaging before local conflicts gain a jihadi dimension, for example. It means addressing communities' grievances before they take up arms. It means trying to end wars before factions fragment, making peace efforts more difficult.

Particularly important is to shore up those states in troubled regions that are reasonably stable, or at least have not yet collapsed. This means making sure military aid does not entrench rulers and perpetuate bad habits. But it also means greater caution in advocating regime change, instead nudging leaders toward more inclusive politics, better provision of basic public goods and services, tackling corruption, and improving relations with neighbors. None of this is easy, particularly given the many crises occupying world leaders. But it is clearly better than picking up the pieces afterwards. In fact, given that the world's crisis management capacity is already at breaking point, a collapse in another region — like Central Asia, for example, or the Gulf — would be disastrous.

Last, a word about the list. Like any, it is to some degree arbitrary. With so many crises raging, narrowing it down to the 10 most dangerous is hard. We omit Sudan, for example, which is still wracked by wars in its peripheries that look set to escalate, given the continued lack of reform in Khartoum. Nor do we include the extraordinary levels of violence related to drug trafficking in Mexico and parts of Central America. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict also doesn't appear here — but it could clearly heat up in Gaza, the West Bank, Jerusalem, or even Israel itself. Pakistan is off this year's list too but, as December's horrific attack in Peshawar shows, still faces multiple interlinked threats, whether from jihadists, sectarian urban violence, or its restless military.

With that qualification in mind, here are 10 wars to watch next year:

1. Syria, Iraq, and the Islamic State

Since the Islamic State swept across a wide swath of northern Iraq in June, the jihadist group has become a primary focus of regional politics. But its success is a symptom of deeper problems that are not amenable to military solutions, including sectarian governments in Syria and Iraq, military strategies dependent on militias that radicalize local populations, and the waning of mainstream Sunni forces.

In the run-up to the Iraqi elections in April, then Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki took a page from the playbook of Syrian President Bashar al-

Assad, using the jihadist threat to rally his Shiite base and win international support by presenting himself as a bulwark against terrorism. His tactics were as successful as they were damaging: He won the election, but only at the price of estranging most of the country's Sunnis.

While many Iraqis and U.S. policymakers hoped that Maliki's ouster in favor of Haider al-Abadi would pave the way for more inclusive governance, they have so far been disappointed. Iran-affiliated



Shiite forces still hold sway over decision-making in Baghdad. Meanwhile, though the war against the Islamic State has spurred a nascent rapprochement between the Kurdistan Regional Government and Baghdad, Western support to Kurdish factions is feeding intra-Iraqi tensions and intra-Kurdish rivalries.



The U.S. air campaign against the Islamic State has somewhat slowed the jihadist group. However, the conflict's broader dynamics on both sides of the Syria-Iraq border continue to shift in the Islamic State's favor, as it claims it is both the only serious opponent of the Assad regime — which is seen as benefiting from the U.S.-led air strikes — and the only serious defender of Sunni interests in either country. The fighting capacity and morale of the Western-backed Syrian armed opposition continues to weaken. The al Qaeda-affiliated Jabhat al-Nusra has already evicted most moderate factions from rebel-held Idlib province, and the Assad regime is undeterred in its effort to crush them militarily. Western-backed groups remain major players in Aleppo, the most valuable remaining opposition territory, but rebels there are struggling to prevent regime encirclement while also holding the Islamic State at bay in the adjacent countryside. Defeat there would threaten the viability of non-jihadist forces in the north as a whole, probably ruling out a mediated end to the conflict. Maintaining the possibility of a future peace process is essential.

2. Ukraine

Ukraine may not be the world's deadliest crisis, but it has transformed relations between Russia and the West for the worse. More than 5,000 people have been killed in eastern Ukraine since open conflict began in March

2014, including about 1,000 after a cease-fire was declared on Sept. 5. The onset of winter could add a new dimension to the crisis: The population in the separatist-held eastern regions of Donetsk and Luhansk will have to make ends meet with little in the way of heating, medicine, food, or money, which are all in short supply due to the collapse of the local economy and a tightening of financial screws by Kiev. The separatist leadership has created few functioning government institutions, has almost no trained officials, and will not be able to respond to any humanitarian emergency on its own.

There are glimmers of hope. Though Moscow continues to support the tiny breakaway "republics" created in parts of Donetsk and Luhansk, its enthusiasm for the separatists is waning. It has not recognized them, and now stresses openly that their future lies within the boundaries of Ukraine.



However, the situation remains unpredictable. The beginning of 2015 is unlikely to see either side impose its will militarily — but as both have influential pro-war lobbies, they might be tempted to try. Other parts of Ukraine's southeast — areas like Kharkiv and Zaporizhia, relatively quiet until now — could grow restive if Moscow stirs things up, perhaps to open a land route to Crimea through Ukraine's southeast. More radical separatists are certainly hoping this will happen.

Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko recognizes that urgent economic and political reforms are crucial to Ukraine's long-term stability. However, he is moving slowly to implement them. The West needs to maintain political pressure on him to follow through.

In the short term, the international community's main tasks are to separate the warring parties, encourage Kiev to reach out to its compatriots in the east, place the Ukrainian-Russia border fully under the control of international monitors, and gradually shift the

conflict from armed confrontation to political negotiations. The emergence of another frozen conflict on Europe's periphery can still be avoided — with a bit of luck, a lot of energy, and a policy toward Moscow that combines sustained pressure with potential incentives for de-escalation.

3. South Sudan

South Sudan is entering its second year of a brutal civil war that, for the moment, looks set to grind on.

Last December, long-simmering disputes within the ruling party and army exploded into a war between forces loyal to President Salva Kiir and those loyal to his former vice president, Riek Machar. Military garrisons split, often violently, along ethnic lines. Clashes quickly



spread from the capital as fighting destroyed major cities and oil infrastructure. With Ugandan troops and Sudanese rebels fighting alongside government forces — and with Sudan reportedly arming both government and opposition — the war has drawn in neighbors and risks further destabilizing an already troubled region. The government is leveraging its financial future to pay for the war, leaving the country on the brink of bankruptcy.

Some estimates suggest the war has already left as many as 50,000 dead and almost 2 million displaced. Humanitarian organizations have, for the moment, averted famine, but they face considerable hostility. The end of the rainy season in December is likely to bring an escalation of violence.

Efforts to end the war have not succeeded. The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), a sub-regional group of which both Uganda and Sudan are members, has taken the lead on mediation efforts, but talks have had little impact and are not inclusive. Ceasefires are repeatedly violated. Nor have the United States and China put their full

weight behind the peace process. Armed groups are fragmenting, and many are now beyond Kiir and Machar's control, fueling secondary conflicts that are evolving in the civil war's shadow.

How can the world stop the bleeding? The U.N. Security Council — particularly the United States and China, which maintain close ties to regional powers — need to engage more actively. An arms embargo, if closely monitored, should increase leverage over all sides. U.S. pressure on Uganda, coupled with Chinese pressure on Sudan and combined pressure from the region and major powers on Kiir and Machar, might break the deadlock. A mechanism to ensure that oil revenue is not fueling the conflict should be considered, in conjunction with pressure on opposition supply lines. Mediators should also expand dialogue with armed groups and hardliners across the country.

South Sudan is among the world's gravest crises. Unlike in Syria and Ukraine, however, there is greater hope for coordinated international action, as the issue doesn't split the U.N. Security Council. With the region divided, it is time for major powers to weigh in more forcefully.

140

4. Nigeria

Nigeria faces a perfect storm in 2015. First, a brutal insurgency by the Islamist group Boko Haram continues to wrack parts of the north, especially the impoverished northeast. The group seized more territory this summer, and its attacks have since spread to neighboring Cameroon and could spill over into Niger and Chad. Now in its fifth year and showing no sign of abating, the conflict has left over 13,000 dead and displaced some 800,000 people.

President Goodluck Jonathan's response has relied largely on military measures. While his government's campaigns have scored some victories, they have not succeeded in rolling back the insurgency. At times, they have created more enemies for the government: Operations have been heavy-handed and indiscriminate, with security forces and allied local militias engaging in extrajudicial killings and torture. Significant casualties in some battles have led to soldiers refusing to fight or deserting their units. The more than 200 Chibok schoolgirls, kidnapped by militants last April in an attack that made

international headlines, are still missing, reinforcing the perception of a government out of its depth.



Second, the worldwide drop in oil prices has weakened the government, which depends on sales of crude for roughly 70 percent of its income. In the last two months of 2014, Nigeria twice lowered the oil price it uses to plan its budget (reaching 65 dollars a barrel) while vowing not to resort to inflationary measures. Nigeria's currency, the naira, was also devalued for the first time in three years.

Third, elections scheduled for February 2015 could also destabilize the country. Nigerian polls are always fiercely contested, but the chances for violence this time around are exceptionally high. For the first time since the return to civilian rule in 1999, the ruling People's Democratic Party (PDP) faces a real challenge. An opposition coalition, the All Progressives Congress (APC), has united behind a single presidential candidate, retired Gen. Muhammadu Buhari, who will take on President Jonathan.

As with previous elections, campaigning and voting will almost certainly see violence at the state level. A disputed presidential result would be more worrying still: If Buhari loses, mobs could take to the streets in northern cities, as they did when he lost the 2011 vote — but this time with Boko Haram poised to add to the bloodshed. If Jonathan loses, his supporters in the Delta have already threatened to reignite violence there.

5. Somalia

While combined offensives by African Union forces and the Somali army have resulted in

impressive gains against al-Shabab, the Somali Federal Government is still struggling to actually govern. Despite a provisional federal constitution, tensions between the president and prime minister escalated into a nasty tussle in late 2014 that resulted in the latter's ousting. Political discord at both the federal and regional levels now threatens the government's stated ambition of holding elections and a constitutional referendum by 2016.

Although more territory is under the notional control of the central government than at any time since the early 1990s, the reality is that a patchwork of local armed clans hold sway. The twin goals of federal state-formation and national elections — both still largely viewed, locally, as a zero-sum game of clan dominance — are likely to generate further conflict. In this environment, the African Union mission, AMISOM, will struggle to maintain its neutrality,



not least since the majority of its troops come from neighboring states. And despite territorial losses and the targeted killing of its leader by a U.S. drone strike in September, al-Shabab retains its ability to strike at home and farther afield — most notably in Kenya, where it claims to champion the cause of the marginalized Muslim minority.

Somalia's stakeholders — both domestic and foreign — need to shift priorities to match the country's challenges. They should focus on local stabilization, including through district councils and municipalities, and the establishment of grass-roots political institutions. Local elections need to take precedence over national polls. The current top-down trajectory

risks increasing donor frustration with a central government that cannot deliver, and strengthening the power of clans to capture the presidency.

6. Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

The past year has dashed many of the hopes raised by progress in the DRC in 2013. Reforms promised by President Joseph Kabilas, particularly with regard to the security sector, have stalled. While 2013 saw Congolese troops and a special U.N. contingent, the Force Intervention Brigade (FIB), defeat the M23, a Rwanda-backed militia, efforts to demobilize



other militias have foundered. Congolese forces launched operations against the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), but its leadership remains at large and unidentified fighters continue to massacre villagers in its area of operations.

More challenging are the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR), a remnant of the Hutu paramilitaries behind Rwanda's genocide in 1994. The Congolese government and FIB troop contributors, particularly South Africa and Tanzania, are reluctant to take on Rwanda's enemies, the FDLR, in the way they took on its allies, the M23. A strategy against the FDLR cannot be based on military action alone. Softer measures — third-country resettlement, a disarmament plan that looks after both fighters and communities, police action against the illicit networks supporting the FDLR, and an agreement about the judicial process for its leaders — need to be combined with a credible threat of force.

For now, however, that threat is missing. The tiny numbers of FDLR fighters handing themselves in suggests the group won't disarm voluntarily; the six-month deadline for this process, imposed by regional powers, was clearly a tactic to gain time. As the disarmament of militias stalls, another escalation of violence in the eastern provinces is possible, especially if Rwanda pulls out of the political process managed by the United Nations.

As in Nigeria, upcoming polls in the DRC are the most formidable challenge in an already fragile political environment. Kabilas, whose legitimacy is already very weak and who is constitutionally barred from running for a third term, may try to change rules or delay the vote to prolong his tenure. Either step will spark opposition protests. Given that violence in the DRC's east is largely a symptom of Kinshasa's bad governance and state dysfunction, the forthcoming vote will be as pivotal to the country's stability as militias and meddling neighbors.

7. Afghanistan

Afghanistan, for the first time in its history, saw a largely peaceful transfer of power last year. President Hamid Karzai left office, Ashraf Ghani was sworn in as his successor, and the runner-up in the elections, Abdullah Abdullah, became Afghanistan's "chief executive" in a power-sharing arrangement.

But the protracted crisis over election results suggests Ghani's unity government could present challenges as well as opportunities. Relations between the two camps are still bitter, they have yet to agree on key cabinet appointments, and the power-sharing deal lacks mechanisms for resolving disputes. Factionalism could stymie the urgently needed reforms that Ghani has promised: to strengthen institutions, check corruption, balance executive power, and move toward a less centralized system of governance.

The new government also faces a growing Taliban insurgency. Ghani signed an agreement with Washington that paved the way for 12,000 soldiers, overwhelmingly Americans, to remain in Afghanistan in 2015 to conduct counterterrorism operations and to advise, train, and assist local forces, who are fighting hard against the Taliban.

But violence is increasing, and insurgents are making gains in outlying regions. In late October, the Afghan Defense Ministry said that



2014 had already become the deadliest year for Afghan forces since the 2001 U.S.-led invasion, and an earlier U.N. report warned that the year had seen a rising number of civilian deaths and injuries. As foreign troops withdraw, Kabul's reach into the provinces has weakened, and it will struggle to maintain army rosters at current levels without billions of extra donor dollars.

During visits to China, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia in the initial weeks of his presidency, Ghani has wisely signaled his interest in ending the conflict through mediation. The risk, however, is that this will increase the leverage of Pakistan, with which Kabul's relationship remains strained — and where Afghan insurgents still shelter along the border. Meanwhile, the number of Taliban attacks suggests that, at least for now, the insurgents will continue to test their strength against that of the Afghan army. Fighting will remain an essential component of bargaining, and 2015 promises to be another violent year for Afghans.

8. Yemen

Yemen's transition has broken down. The political process has fallen victim to elite competition, a shift of the balance of power in favor of the Houthis — a Zaydi Shi'ite movement that has swept across much of the country from its northwestern stronghold — and a resurgent separatist movement in the south. As economic and security conditions

have deteriorated, the state's credibility — and trust in President Abed-Rabbo Mansour Hadi as an honest broker between factions — has suffered.

The Houthis, backed by a broad political front frustrated with political stagnation, took over the capital, Sanaa, in September 2014. They agreed to a plan to appoint a new government, the Peace and National Partnership Agreement, but rapidly violated its spirit by tightening their grip on the capital and extending their territorial control southward and westward into the country's Sunni heartland and the oil-producing region of Marib.

While Yemen doesn't have a history of sectarian violence, it is starting to acquire one. The Houthi power grab has brought it into greater conflict with Islah, a political party that includes the Yemeni branch of the Muslim Brotherhood, as well as with al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, formed in 2009 by Saudi and Yemeni Sunni militants. The Houthi advance has also stoked fears in the south that federal autonomy, as envisioned by the transitional dialogue that followed former President Ali Abdullah Saleh's ouster, is unlikely to succeed.



Regional and major powers have a mixed record in Yemen. Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Cooperation Council were critical to bringing factions together during the turmoil in 2011. The Saudis also have poured in billions of dollars to prop up the state budget. But after the Houthis entered Sanaa, Riyadh expressed doubts about funding a government dominated by a group it considers Iranian proxies. Were the Saudis to

discourage investment and pull financial support, the Yemeni state could completely collapse. Iran and Saudi Arabia, who have a common enemy in al Qaeda, should cooperate rather than let Yemen slip into another proxy war.

The U.N. Security Council's role has also been mixed. In February 2014, it mandated sanctions for any group deemed to be disrupting the transition. After the Houthi takeover of Sanaa, it sanctioned two Houthi commanders and former President Saleh, at the urging of President Hadi and the Saudis. This backfired, handing a temporary boost to those it sought to weaken. Saleh's General People's Congress Party promptly withdrew support from the government and expelled Hadi from its leadership, while the Houthis welcomed the sanctions as a badge of honor. None of these parties seem likely to embrace compromise any time soon.

9. Libya and the Sahel

Libya's transition has also derailed, and the ensuing chaos is spilling across its borders. Political deadlock has produced two rival legislatures — an internationally recognized parliament in Tobruk and an Islamist-dominated General National Congress in Tripoli. The Libyan government no longer enjoys real authority; confidence in state institutions, today little more than a façade, has

144



crumbled. Assassinations of officials and a coup attempt led by an anti-Islamist general have split the country, reflecting regional polarization. Divisions, however, are more complex than Islamists vs. anti-Islamists. Struggles over oil and gas wealth, rivalries between militias and tribes, foreign powers' competing interests, and disagreements on how to structure the post-Qaddafi state all threaten to tear the country apart.

This is a problem not only for Libya, but also for its neighbors. The influx of arms and mercenaries partly explains Mali's collapse in 2012, as Tuareg rebels and al Qaeda-linked groups seized the north and a military coup toppled the Bamako government. A French operation drove back the jihadists — but many still shelter in the desert or within remote communities. Meanwhile, terrorist activity has also increased in Niger: As in Mali, authorities are struggling to exert control over the vast desert, with their efforts complicated by regional rivalries, in particular between Algeria and Morocco. Extremists and criminals with transnational connections increasingly exploit the Sahel to escape French operations and gain a foothold in northern Africa, and porous borders, weak state authority, and the ready availability of weapons all work to their advantage.

All this regional insecurity, meanwhile, reverberates in Libya's vast ungoverned south. The neglected southwestern Fazzan province has experienced an influx of Tuareg fighters, including radical Islamists, and is becoming a haven for radical groups.

Libya's leaders appear incapable of stemming the country's disintegration. Interventions by France and, to a lesser degree, the United States have checked the jihadist advance in the Sahel. But whether military efforts are accompanied by the inclusive politics and socio-economic development necessary to achieve real stability remains to be seen. Thus far, political strategies badly lag behind military operations.

10. Venezuela

Compared with many of the others listed, Venezuela is no war zone. Calm has returned to the streets of Caracas after clashes between protesters, security forces, and pro-government militias claimed several dozen lives, mostly those of protesters, in early 2014. But the underlying causes of the crisis remain, and Venezuela could suffer another bout of instability this year.

President Nicolás Maduro's government faces an economic crisis that has been worsened by the dramatic fall in the price of oil, on which Venezuela depends for around 96 percent of its revenue. The situation was dire even before the decline in oil prices: The country already suffered high inflation

(upwards of 60 percent); scarcities of food, medicine, and other basic goods; collapsing public services; and one of the world's highest violent-crime rates.



The government's popularity has fallen steadily since Maduro took office upon the death of Hugo Chávez in March 2013. Maduro's approval rating is below 25 percent, unusually low for Venezuela and reflecting discontent even within the chavista rank and file that make up his base.

None of this would be insurmountable were it not for the failure of the present regime, since it

came to power in 1999, to strengthen the country's institutions. The Supreme Court (TSJ), electoral authorities (CNE), and three components of what Venezuelans call the "moral power" (the attorney general, ombudsman, and comptroller general) are packed with government loyalists. The legislature, which should serve as a forum for peaceful debate, is a rubber stamp for the presidency. As a result, Venezuela has been left without safety valves that could help ease tension.

Amid last year's clashes, a tentative dialogue began between the government and the opposition Democratic Unity (MUD) alliance. One of few points of accord was the need to fill long-standing vacancies on the TSJ and the CNE, and replace the three members of the "moral power" whose terms were due to expire at the end of the year. Unfortunately, the government did not take a consensual approach and an opportunity to de-escalate tensions with the opposition has been lost. Unless regional actors are prepared to weigh in more decisively, legislative elections due in 2015 are more likely to trigger another bout of violence than they are to usher in a widely accepted parliament.

145

The picture that emerges from this survey of conflicts is grim. There is, however, one glimmer of hope — the increasing fragmentation of the world also means that there is no overarching divide. Even if the deepening crisis between Russia and the West is unsettling Europe, the last remnants of the Cold War are disappearing as Cuba and the United States normalize their relations. Many conflicts can now be dealt with on their own merits, and the growing role of regional powers — **while adding complexity and, in some cases, new antagonisms — also creates opportunities for more creative diplomacy.** This is no time for the "old powers" to retrench, but they do have to acknowledge that successful peacemaking in 2015 will depend on working with a much broader array of countries than they have in the past.

Jean-Marie Géhenno is president and CEO of the Brussels-based International Crisis Group.



Agroterrorism is a major threat to America

Source: <http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20150107-agroterrorism-is-a-major-threat-to-america-experts>

Jan 07 – Ever since the 9/11 attacks, farmers across the United States have been on high alert because the U.S. food supply remains **vulnerable to terrorists seeking to harm Americans and damage the economy**

through non-violent means. "Agriculture is vulnerable to terrorists because we can't put a 12-foot chain link fence around every farm in Alabama and the rest of America," said Brad Fields, a veterinarian who is director of

Emergency Programs with the Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries. Farmers and livestock producers have been urged actively to monitor their facilities with security in mind. An analysis of agroterrorism by the College of Agricultural Sciences at Pennsylvania State University notes that most cattle diseases are introduced through the purchase of infected animals. Some farms now isolate new animals from the rest of the herd for several days to watch for any symptoms of disease. The economic effects of a successful attack on the U.S. food supply would be devastating, as agriculture accounts for roughly 13 percent of the country's gross annual domestic product. An introduction of deadly pathogens into U.S. livestock, poultry, or crops would not only result in a disease outbreak, but would disrupt the global food industry and drive up food prices. Agroterrorism is not limited to the intentional introduction of harmful pathogens into U.S. farms and livestock. Terrorists can also cyberattack industrial agriculture systems responsible for operating feeding machines, maintaining milk temperatures, and processing foods.

The ease of a **cyberattack**, and its anonymous nature, have some terrorism analysts questioning the likelihood of a physical bioattack on the U.S. food supply. Robert A. Norton, a veterinary microbiologist with research interests in cybersecurity and public health, insists that terrorists are not likely to plan an attack for which the government has prepared a response. They often seek the path of least resistance. Industrial agriculture systems are vulnerable to cyberattacks and terrorists have the expertise to exploit those vulnerabilities.

"Rather than using biological weapons to kill cattle or poisons to contaminate milk, why not just turn off the electricity? Doing that can kill the animals (e.g., chickens in commercial operations), [it] spoils the milk and makes the ground beef inedible, with the extra special bonus that it also causes everyone to plunge into darkness (widespread panic), shutters access to bank ATMs and fuel, causes breathtaking gridlock and makes the government look totally helpless and inept," Norton writes.



146

Canada: Police fears terrorists could use drones to attack VIPs

Source: <http://i-hls.com/2015/01/canada-police-fears-terrorists-use-drones-attack-vips/>

An intelligence assessment titled Extremist Exploitation of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles says



there have been more than a dozen alleged plots around the world to use remote-piloted aircraft to carry explosives or chemical and biological agents. None of the plots succeeded. There is no indication in the assessment about specific threats to Canada, but a separate document shows that Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) which is both a federal and a national police force of Canada has been

developing guidelines for intercepting weaponized drones or unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), including whether it's OK to shoot them down.

In a statement, RCMP spokesman Sgt. Greg Cox said: "The RCMP is always concerned about the use of new technology for potential terrorist purposes, including UAVs. However, we take the appropriate steps to address these potential threats and to ensure the safety and security of Canadians is protected."

According to the *National Post*, one of the documents, an intelligence assessment dated March of this year, acknowledges that experts are divided about how much of a threat UAVs pose given that alleged plots around the world have been successfully thwarted.

It notes that there have been at least 13 cases from 1995 to 2013 in which extremists planned or attempted to modify remote-controlled aircraft to launch attacks against targets,



including the Capitol building in Washington, D.C., the Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia, the House of Commons in Britain, and the military headquarters in Pakistan.

Most of the alleged plots were disrupted in the planning phase, while others were foiled during the testing phase.

Still, there was an embarrassing incident in 2013 in which activists with the German Pirate Party crashed a mini-drone at the feet of German Chancellor Angela Merkel and other

dignitaries during a campaign event. "While the UAV did not contain weapons, some experts concluded that the incident demonstrates the threat posed by UAVs that could be modified by extremists," the RCMP document stated.

It also noted that organized criminals have flown remote-controlled helicopters over the walls of prisons to drop drugs and cellphones to inmates. The use of drones for this purpose has reportedly happened at jails across Quebec.

Efforts to identify the source of ISIS recent weapons shipments

Source: <http://i-hls.com/2015/01/efforts-identify-source-isis-recent-weapons-shipments/>



147

An unidentified aircraft dropped weapons and equipment for ISIS southeast of Tikrit over the weekend. Western intelligence sources say that there is a concentrated effort to identify the source.

According to a new report in the Iraqi media, Iraqi sources said that this is not the first time; an unknown aircraft dropped weapons and munitions to ISIS in Yathrib area south of Tikrit, several areas in Salahuddin, and in Mosul.

A new report prepared for the United Nations Security Council warns that the militant group known as the Islamic State (ISIS) possesses sufficient reserves of small arms, ammunition and vehicles to wage its war for Syria and Iraq for up to two years.

Experts say that the size of the ISIS arsenal provides the group with durable mobility, range and a limited defense against low-flying aircraft.

Even if the US-led bombing campaign continues to destroy the group's vehicles and heavier weapons, the UN report states, it "cannot mitigate the effect of the significant volume of light weapons" Isis possesses.

Those weapons "are sufficient to allow ISIS to continue fighting at current levels for six months to two years", the UN report finds, making ISIS not only the world's best-funded terrorist group but among its best armed.

ISIS, along with its former rival turned occasional tactical ally the Nusra Front, are sufficiently armed to threaten the region "even without territory", the report concludes.

The report, months in the making, recommends the UN implement new steps to cut off ISIS's access to money and guns.



The ISIS arsenal, according to the UN assessment, includes T-55 and T-72 tanks; US-manufactured Humvees; machine guns; short-range anti-aircraft artillery, including shoulder-mounted rockets captured from Iraqi and Syrian military stocks; and "extensive supplies of ammunition".

UPDATE

Charlie Hebdo: Suspect surrenders to police in France

Source: <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/12a0ac48-965e-11e4-a40b-00144feabdc0.html#slide0>



Jan 08 – The youngest of three French nationals being sought by police over the fatal shootings in an attack on a satirical magazine in Paris on Wednesday has turned himself into authorities, an official at the Paris prosecutor's office said.

Police on Thursday morning also published pictures of the other two suspected hooded attackers (photo), who remain at large, calling for witnesses and describing the two men as "armed and dangerous".

The apparently well-planned attack on the offices of Charlie Hebdo, under police protection for years because of its repeated mocking of Islam, is one of the deadliest terrorist assaults on European soil in recent years and left 12 people dead.



148

Vigipirate

Vigipirate (French: *Plan Vigipirate*) is France's national security alert system. Created in 1978 by President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, it has since been updated three times: in 1995 (following a terror bombing campaign), 2000 and 2004.

Until 2014 the system defined four levels of threats represented by five colors: white, yellow, orange, red, scarlet. The levels called for specific security measures, including increased police or police/military mixed patrols in subways, train stations and other vulnerable locations.

In February 2014 the levels were simplified to 'vigilance' and 'attack alert'.

"Vigipirate" is a portmanteau of "vigilance" (vigilance) or "vigue" (watchtower) and "pirate" (pirate).



Levels of alert (from 2014)

- Vigilance
- Attack alert

Alert level	Color	Significance	Measures taken
0	White	No danger	No danger
1	Yellow	Vague threat / raise vigilance	Raise security levels to face real yet still uncertain dangers, through measures that are local and minimally disruptive of normal activity, while preparing to switch to "orange" or "red" within a few days.
2	Orange	Possible threat / prevent terrorist action	Take measures against plausible risks of terrorist action, including the use of means that are moderately disruptive to normal public activities, while preparing to switch to "red" or "scarlet" on short notice where possible.
3	Red	High chance of threat / prevent serious attack	Take measures against a proven risk of one or more terrorist actions, including measures to protect public institutions and putting in place appropriate means for rescue and response, authorizing a significant level of disruption to social and economic activity.
4	Scarlet	Definite threat / prevent major attack	Notification of a risk of major attacks, simultaneous or otherwise, using non-conventional means and causing major devastation; preparing appropriate means of rescue and response, measures that are highly disruptive to public life are authorized.

In the Mideast, as in France, satire is a weapon against extremists

By Nahrain Al-Mousawi

Source: <http://www.terrorismwatch.org/2015/01/in-mideast-as-in-france-satire-is.html>**149**

In the wake of the deadly attacks on the Paris satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo, some are portraying the current showdown as one between Western free speech versus an angry and intolerant Islamic world. In fact, it is the Islamic countries of the Middle East that have led the way in attacking the extremists of groups such as Islamic State using the instruments of satire. The use of mockery and caricature as a way of mocking Islamic extremism is, in fact, in some ways far more pronounced in the Middle Eastern media than it is in Europe.

Islamic State (also known as ISIS and ISIL) has slaughtered hundreds of Iraqi civilians and soldiers, raped and enslaved hundreds of women, held public crucifixions and stonings in Syria, and staged the executions of U.S. journalists and British aid workers. The group is revolting, abhorrent, and terrifying. But the region on which Islamic State has unleashed its sadistic campaign has responded producing a surprising volume of satire.

On Iraqi state TV, a satirical soap opera dedicated to mocking Islamic State, State of

Myth, depicts the gruesome yet absurd "contributions" ISIS fighters and ideology unleash on a fictional town in Iraq, such as a green-energy car-bombing factory—cost-effective, reasonably priced, environment-friendly, and export-ready! All this information is provided by an IS engineer in a TV interview, where the female news announcer has resorted to wearing a sheet while asking questions.

While some claim humor is a way of taking back power – the power to name, to shame – on an uneven playing field, the show appears to be making fun of not only IS's crude, fumbling, and sadistic methods to gain power, but also the strategic powerlessness of Iraqis trying to play along with, manipulate, and knowingly skirt the cruelty of that blundering power.

On another episode, the host of an Iraqi game show titled "Who Wants To Butcher a Million" asks an IS jihadi contestant what country will be the site of all this destruction and placatingly provides random, unrelated words



in rhyme: "Daesh [Islamic State's name for itself], Baesh, Maesh, Jaesh. The show offers not just an ironic treatment of IS, and thus the subversion of its authority; it also communicates to other Iraqis the recurring predicament in which they are yet again facing another form of tyranny (Saddam, foreign occupation, IS) and attempting to thwart its weightiness with humor.

Less astute in social criticism, but still aimed at the absurdity of ISIS fighters, is a musical parody videobroadcast in October by Iraqi Kurdish KurdSat TV, featuring a group of goofy bearded men jerkily playing air guitar on rifles, pretending to sword-fight and fumbling with skulls, while belting out lyrics like: "We are ISIS. We are ISIS. / We milk the goat even if it is male. / Our music is without rhythm. And our leader is called Qaqa. / Our pockets are full of Qatari money. Our language is bullets and cutting."

TV shows across the Middle East have dedicated a sketch or two to the group's hypocrisies in adopting modern methods, such as Twitter and Facebook campaigns, to demand the return of medieval Islam. The popular Lebanese show *Ktir Salbe* showed a skit where a taxi driver picks up an Islamic State fighter who asks that the radio be turned off because this technology did not exist in the early days of Islam. When the driver suggests turning off the air conditioning because it did not exist in the early days of Islam, the fighter refuses and then starts talking on his cell phone, at which point the driver kicks him out and tells him to wait for a camel instead.

Even IS's practice of gunning down innocents is apparently not off limits for comedic fodder: Palestine's Al-Falastiniya TV broadcast a skit featuring three Islamic State fighters who reminisce about partying with Beirut's beautiful women before shooting a Lebanese driver for not answering correctly a trick question about the number of times to kneel during prayers and upon entering a mosque.

Since then, a Jordanian play satirizing IS has been successfully touring theaters, while an Iranian animation mocking the foibles of IS is soon set to be released. Using satire to neutralize the threat of IS is not only the realm

of network television, but social media, where the Twitter hashtag #ISISMovies played with popular film titles to mock the militants. Lebanese satirist Karl Sharro tweeted his own take on a news report claiming to outline the "anatomy of ISIS" – a haphazard napkin sketch of a chart mocking the group's leadership and hierarchy: "the committee for oppressing women," "the video guy," "the Twitter fanboys body," etc.

Although there is a tendency to dismiss the impact of social media, not to mention the role of humor, it is worth noting that this is where the networked Muslim majority might do the most damage in discrediting Islamic State – considering the Internet appears to be one of IS's main battlegrounds (the group uses social media and YouTube for propaganda and recruitment efforts).

While the efforts highlighted above are organic, based on a shared community, other efforts appear to be more technocratically orchestrated. A recent article noted that Mr. Sharro's satirical chart was widely shared, including by the U.S. State Department's Center for Strategic Counterterrorism Communications. The CSCC has exhibited its own type of muted mockery in a video countering IS recruitment efforts. The integration of humor in U.S. counter-terrorism strategies has been ramped up since the development of social media and its snarky style of communication. A State Department program calling itself Viral Peace confronts and undermines online currents of extremism with "logic, humor, satire," in its creator's words.

But a government-backed effort does not necessarily make for an effective means of striking back (and can often be perceived as intrusive, stilted or awkward). After all, satire's subversiveness can be an ill-fitting mask worn by government institutions, distinct from more organic efforts, produced in times of crisis by a shared, discursive community – at least, when that community itself is threatened. Still, if laughing in the face of the absurd reveals an ability to "dwell with the incomprehensible without dying from fear or going mad," then that may be the first step in striking back – by having the last laugh.

Nahrain Al-Mousawi is a writer and academic based in Rabat, Morocco.

150

A Timeline: Where did the Paris Shooters Get Their Weapons?

By Tony Cartalucci

Source: <http://www.globalresearch.ca/a-timeline-where-did-the-paris-shooters-get-their-weapons/5423445>

Jan 08 – Heavily armed, well-trained gunmen executed what appears to be a well-planned attack in



Paris, France, killing 12, including 2 police officers. Where did these terrorists get their weapons, training, political backing, funds, and inspiration? A short timeline featuring news stories from 2011 to 2014 helps explain how France's recent national tragedy could have been the direct result of its own insidious, callous, terroristic foreign policy that has visited this very same carnage seen in Paris, upon the people of Libya and Syria, a thousand fold.

2011 - [France supplying weapons to Libyan rebels](#), London Telegraph:

A French military spokesman, Colonel Thierry Burkhard, said it had provided "light arms such as assault rifles" for civilian communities to "protect themselves against Col Gaddafi". But the decision to arm the rebels is a further move towards direct involvement in the land war on top of the air war against Col Muammar Gaddafi. The Nafusa rebels have come closest to breaking through to Tripoli itself of any of the front lines of the conflict, while three months of Nato bombing have failed to dislodge Col Gaddafi from power.

Le Figaro, the French newspaper which first reported the air drops, said the shipment included rifles, machine guns and rocket-propelled grenades, along with Milan anti-tank missiles.

2011 - [Libyan rebel commander admits his fighters have al-Qaeda links](#), London Telegraph:

Abdel-Hakim al-Hasidi, the Libyan rebel leader, has said jihadists who fought against allied troops in Iraq are on the front lines of the battle against Muammar Gaddafi's regime.

2012 - [France to push for arming Syria's opposition coalition](#), the BBC:

France's foreign minister has said he will discuss supplying arms to the Syrian opposition coalition with European partners. The government plans to push for a relaxation of the EU arms embargo to Syria to enable "defensive arms" to reach opposition fighters.

2013 - [Syria crisis: France and Britain move a step closer to arming rebels](#), the London Guardian:

France and Britain have moved a step closer to arming the opposition to the Assad regime in a radical move aimed at tipping the balance in the two-year civil war while also ignoring European policy on Syria.

The French president, François Hollande, went into an EU summit in Brussels with a dramatic appeal for Europe to join Paris and London in lifting a European arms embargo, but the sudden policy shift was certain to run into stiff German opposition.

2013 - [Syrian rebels pledge loyalty to al-Qaeda](#), USA Today:

A Syrian rebel group's April pledge of allegiance to al-Qaeda's replacement for Osama bin Laden suggests that the terrorist group's influence is not waning and that it may take a greater role in the Western-backed fight to topple Syrian President Bashar Assad.

The pledge of allegiance by Syrian Jabhat al-Nusra Front chief Abou Mohamad al-Joulani to al-Qaeda leader Sheik Ayman al-Zawahri was coupled with an announcement by the al-Qaeda affiliate in Iraq, the Islamic State of Iraq, that it would work with al-Nusra as well.

2014 - [France delivered arms to Syrian rebels](#), Hollande confirms, France 24:

President Francois Hollande said on Thursday that France had delivered weapons to rebels battling the Syrian regime of Bashar al-Assad "a few months ago."

151

France Isn't the Only One

The cartoonish nature of France first being reported to give weapons to “rebels” before these “rebels” are reported to be, in fact, Al Qaeda is not simply France’s bad luck. It is part of NATO’s very intentional, vast network of global state-sponsored terrorism. It would be reported that terrorists armed by the US in Syria with antitank missiles sided with Al Qaeda franchise and US State Department listed foreign terrorist organization, Al Nusra.

The Daily Beast would report in its September 2014 article, “Al Qaeda Plotters in Syria ‘Went Dark,’ U.S. Spies Say,” that:

One Syrian rebel group supported in the past by the United States condemned the air strikes on Tuesday. Harakat Hazm, a rebel group that received a shipment of U.S. anti-tank weapons in the spring, called the airstrikes “an attack on national sovereignty” and charged that foreign led attacks only strengthen the Assad regime. The statement comes from a document, purportedly from the group, that has circulated online and was posted in English translation from a Twitter account called Syria Conflict Monitor. Several Syria experts, including the Brookings Doha Center’s Charles Lister, believe the document to be authentic.

Before the official statement, there were signs that Harakat Hazm was making alliances in Syria that could conflict with its role as a U.S. partner. In early September a Harakat Hazm official told a reporter for the L.A. Times: “Inside Syria, we became labeled as secularists and feared Nusra Front was going to battle us...But Nusra doesn’t fight us, we actually fight alongside them. We like Nusra.”

This group would later be reported by the Western press as having “surrendered” to Al Qaeda. The International Business Times would claim in its article, “Syria: Al-Nusra Jihadists ‘Capture US TOW Anti-Tank Missiles’ from Moderate Rebels,” that:

Weaponry supplied by the US to moderate Syrian rebels was feared to have fallen into the hands of jihadist militants affiliated to al-Qaida after clashes between rival groups.

Islamist fighters with Jabhat al-Nusra seized control of large swathes of land in Jabal al-Zawiya, Idlib province, at the weekend, routing the US-backed groups the Syrian

Revolutionaries Front (SFR) and Harakat Hazm, activists said.

Washington relied on SFR and Harakat Hazm to counter Isis (Islamic State) militants on the ground in Syria, complementing its air strikes. Clearly, Harakat Hazm willingly pledged allegiance to Al Qaeda, bringing with them Western armament. Much of Al Qaeda’s weapons, cash, training, and backing has been supplied by the West through similar “laundering” arrangements – intentionally – with plans to arm Al Qaeda and use it as a mercenary force against Western enemies in the Middle East laid as early as 2007.

Al Qaeda was intentionally organized and directed by the US, Saudi Arabia, and Israel to engage in a regional confrontation aimed at Iran and its powerful arc of influence including Syria, Hezbollah in Lebanon, and now apparently Iraq. A similar gambit played out in North Africa during NATO’s war with Libya. Before that, in the 1980’s, the US CIA notoriously created Al Qaeda in the first place to fight a proxy war against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan.

This most recent use of Al Qaeda was exposed by Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Seymour Hersh in his 2007 article, “The Redirection: Is the Administration’s new policy benefiting our enemies in the war on terrorism?” in which it was stated explicitly that (emphasis added):

To undermine Iran, which is predominantly Shiite, the Bush Administration has decided, in effect, to reconfigure its priorities in the Middle East. In Lebanon, the Administration has coöperated with Saudi Arabia’s government, which is Sunni, in clandestine operations that are intended to weaken Hezbollah, the Shiite organization that is backed by Iran. The U.S. has also taken part in clandestine operations aimed at Iran and its ally Syria. A by-product of these activities has been the bolstering of Sunni extremist groups that espouse a militant vision of Islam and are hostile to America and sympathetic to Al Qaeda.

Now these “extremist groups that espouse a militant vision of Islam” and who are “sympathetic to Al Qaeda” are running loose in France spilling French blood, with an inexhaustible supply of weapons and cash courtesy in part of the French government itself, and with years of combat

experience fighting Paris and the rest of NATO's proxy wars for them everywhere from

Libya to Syria.

Tony Cartalucci is a geopolitical researcher and writer based in Bangkok, Thailand. His work aims at covering world events from a Southeast Asian perspective as well as promoting self-sufficiency as one of the keys to true freedom.



153

What we know about the attack on Charlie Hebdo

Source: <http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20150108-what-we-know-about-the-attack-on-charlie-hebdo>

Jan 08 – The two gunmen who attacked the offices of the French satirical weekly Charlie Hebdo — Cherif Kouachi, 32, and his brother Said, 34 — are French citizens of Algerian origin. Cherif Kouachi has been involved in radical Islamic activities in France for over a decade, and served time in jail for his 2005 attempt to go to Iraq to join the Iraqi branch of al-Qaeda. In the last three years he was active in facilitating the travel of French Muslims to Syria to fight the Assad regime. The third man believed to have been involved in the attack, 18-year old high school student Hamyd Mourad, was allegedly the driver of the car in which the attacker arrived at the magazine's office and then escaped. He turned himself in to the police, and is now being interrogated. Thousands of police officers and security services personnel have been conducting a massive manhunt for the two brothers, focusing on the city of Reims — a city of about 200,000 located eighty miles northeast of Paris, in the Champagne-Ardenne region.

- Two gunmen clad in black — Cherif Kouachi, 32, and his brother Said, 34, who are French citizens of Algerian origin - approached the building where the *Charlie Hebdo*'s editorial offices are located. They arrived in a stolen car. A third accomplice, an 18-year old — identified as high school student Hamyd Mourad — remained behind the wheel at the car and served as a look-out. The French police suspect that there was another accomplice, perhaps

more than one, who remained half-a-block away, probably ready to intervene in case the two gunmen encountered resistance.

- Sources told AFP that Hamyd Mourad surrendered to police at 23:00 local time on Wednesday "after seeing his name circulating on social media." "He has been arrested and taken into custody," another source told the agency. He is being held at the Police Commissariat Central at Charleville-Mézières.
- Cherif Kouachi has been known to the police for over a decade now. He is a member of an organization called "La Filière des Buttes-Chaumont" which helps French Muslims find their way to Iraq to join the Iraqi branch of al-Qaeda. In 2008 he was sentenced to three years in jail for his attempt, in 2005, to go to Iraq to join al-Qaeda there. In 2010 his name was also mentioned in connection with the prison escape attempt of Islamist Ait Ali Belkacem Smaïn, former member of the Algerian Armed Islamic Group (GIA) who was sentenced in 2002 to life in prison for perpetrating the attack on the Orsay Museum in October 1995, in which thirty people were injured. Kouachi was particularly close to Djamel Beghal, another figure in French radical Islamic circles, who served ten years in prison for planning terrorist attacks. Kouachi is suspected of having participated in training with him. He was indicted in the case of the escape attempt of Belkacem Smaïn, but the case was dismissed.
- The French interior minister, Bernard Cazeneuve, said all measures were being taken "to neutralize these three criminals." A French prosecutor said all security agencies were participating, but authorities gave no details of the manhunt. Knowledgeable sources said the initial phase of the manhunt involves about 7,000 police officers and members of the security and intelligence services.
- The search for the two gunmen focuses on the city of Reims – a city of about 200,000 located eighty miles northeast of Paris, in the Champagne-Ardenne region.
- The two gunmen forced a *Charlie Hebdo* woman employee, who was smoking a cigarette on the sidewalk outside the building, to punch in the security code for the building's door, allowing them to get into the building.
- So far, twelve people have been confirmed dead, including eight journalists, two police officers, and two private security guards. Eleven were wounded, and four remain in critical condition. One of the officers was shot at close range as he lay injured on the street. Witnesses heard him tell the gunman that he – the police officer – was a Muslim and begging to be spared, but the gunman shot him nonetheless.
- The attackers abandoned the car in the 19th arrondissement, near the Porte de Pantin metro station, where they hijacked another car, ordering the elderly motorist out. The motorist said they were insistent but polite, and that when he told them his dog was on the back seat of the car, they allowed him to open the backdoor and retrieve his dog.
- French president François Hollande declared Thursday a day of national mourning. Flags would fly at half-mast for three days. School throughout France will devote two hours to discussing tolerance, national unity, and core values such as freedom of speech and expression.
- Hundreds of thousands of people took part in spontaneous gatherings in public squares across France Wednesday evening to condemn the attacks and pay tribute to the victims. The gatherings in Paris, Marseilles, Strasbourg, and Lyon were especially large.
- The terror alert in Paris was raised to its highest level. Children were taken from schools in 11th arrondissement, where the attack occurred. Police were deployed to guard newspaper offices, shopping centers, museums, and railway stations.

154

EDITOR'S COMMENT: Latest incident in Paris highlighted the huge difference between the two major pylons of terrorists' modus operandi: bombings and raids. Although both methods mobilize vast response forces, a bombing no matter how deadly it is, is a "bloody moment" compared with a deadly terrorist cell moving around the city or the country continuously spreading terror until the final confrontation with security forces. More than 88,000 police and army forces were deployed in France pursuing the assailants. And when we read about "heavily armed" troops what does this really mean? Terrorists have also RPGs – are troops also equipped with short range similar equipment? (**UPDATE:** Yes – armored vehicles were deployed). And if they do: have they been trained on how to use it within urban environment? Had Vigipirate a similar scenario included among the many others? Was the response plan tailor made based on how terrorists think and act or it was the usual response of

hundreds of police officers (and others) rushing at the Hot Zone (we usually see many of them just wondering around the scene with no apparent duties – just been there). If planners continue not to think like terrorist then let us prepare ourselves for the next 7/1. (**UPDATE:** Why don't they isolate the car in the highway during the chase and evaporate it with an attack helicopter or drone?)



Lone Terrorist Attacks

Source: <http://chameleonassociates.com/uncategorized/lone-terrorist-attacks/>

The terrorist attack on the French newspaper Charlie Hebdo is the fourth Islamist terrorist attack to take place in France in only eighteen days. Attacks were perpetrated in Dijon and Nantes only two weeks ago by

allegedly disturbed individuals who shouted "Allah HuAkbar" as they rammed their vehicles into crowds of Christmas shoppers. And in Tours, a Muslim terrorist entered a local police station and slashed three police officers with a large knife before being shot dead. The brutal attack in Paris today is too clear to be portrayed as a "criminal act by disturbed individuals." This attack was conducted by three masked men who were well armed and coordinated and who had planned their approach and getaway very carefully.

Although it has yet to be determined if these attackers were attacking as lone wolves, these incidents in France depict a growing trend around the world of attacks by "lone terrorists." These kinds of terrorists are not directed by a terrorist organization with a clear command structure but rather are self-motivated and self-taught individuals who pick their target and method of attack based on their own understanding of Jihad. The Paris attackers were obviously well trained and their skills might well have been gained in a war zone. Lone wolf attackers mostly use readily available weapons such axes, knives and vehicles. On occasion, they use firearms and assault rifles which they obtain through criminal networks. These characteristics are apparent in many of the attacks we saw in 2013-14 in

Quebec, London, Sydney, New York and Israel.

The attackers in these cases share some common attributes:

- All were religiously inspired and indoctrinated through brutal Al Qaeda and ISIS online videos.
- Many of them had shown mental disturbance not sufficient to require psychiatric hospitalization.
- Some of them had a minor criminal background.

These "lone terrorists" present the greatest challenge for intelligence agencies seeking to find assailants by infiltrating terrorist networks through HUMINT and SIGINT operations. **A terrorist with no network is a hard terrorist to track. Governments and private organizations should therefore rely more on proactive security systems and localized tactical response capability that can minimize the damage by immediately putting the attacker on the defensive and/or by making it harder for the terrorist to plan an attack against a target.**

The main difference between such terrorist attacks that take place in Israel versus the rest of the world is not the attacker's modus operandi or even target selection. **The difference often is how quickly (usually in a matter of seconds) that attackers become defenders and are forced to change their plans. It is the off duty policeman or the security officer who has been drilled ad nauseum to act instinctively and decisively to intervene in an assertive, attack mode.**

155

How Fear of Terrorism May Put You at Risk of Long-Term Disease

Source: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/01/07/terrorism-cardiovascular-disease_n_6396832.html

Jan 07 – Terrorist attacks like the one in Paris this Wednesday can create a climate of national anxiety -- and such a climate may come with health risks that we're not considering, according to recent research from

a team at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. **The everyday fear and stress of living with the threat of terrorism has been shown to elevate one's resting**

heart rate, which can lead to a greater risk of cardiovascular disease and even death. In the largest statistical analysis of its kind, Hermona Soreq, a professor of molecular neuroscience, examined a group of 17,380 healthy adult Israelis and found that she was able to predict which participants would exhibit an unusual increase in resting heart rate, based on how fearful they were of potential terrorist attacks.

And the findings don't apply only to Israelis or mass attacks from insurgent groups, Soreq

Soreq's team -- C-reactive protein, which increases when levels of inflammation rise in the body; a brain chemical called acetylcholine; and fear of terrorism, or FOT, which was assessed based on participants' responses to the following statements:

- 1) Nowadays, I worry about my personal safety.
- 2) Nowadays, I feel heightened tension when I am in crowded places.
- 3) I am afraid of a terror strike harming me or my family.



156

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"We believe that the definition [of] 'fear of terror' represents general anxiety, and therefore it is reasonable to extend the implications of our results also for other countries and other types of anxiety," she told The Huffington Post in an email. "However, this must be tested in separate populations and proven in independent studies."

The long-term psychological effects of fear of terrorism, such as anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder, are well-known, but Soreq hopes her finding will lead to more research about the long-term physical effects. She said that people who are under constant threat of terrorist attacks should be just as vigilant about their long-term health as they are about their safety, and that they should seek help if they notice changes in their resting heart rate.

Soreq and her team analyzed the data of apparently healthy study participants (10,972 men and 6,408 women) who had visited the Tel Aviv Medical Center for routine health exams between 2002 and 2013. In all, the researchers analyzed 325 different metrics, but three were of particular interest to

The participants noted, on a scale of one to five, how much they agreed with those statements, and Soreq used those responses to come up with FOT scores for each participant. She found that the 4.1 percent of participants who had high FOT scores also had elevated resting heart rates over time -- which is unusual, because as most people age, their resting heart rate tends to go down. These people also tended to have higher levels of C-reactive protein, which means they had more inflammation in their bodies, and had lower levels of acetylcholine, a neurotransmitter that the body releases when it is trying to tame stress. Soreq linked all of these factors in a statement about the study.

"We found that fear of terrorism and existential anxiety may disrupt the control processes using acetylcholine, causing a chronic accelerated heart rate," Soreq wrote in the press release. "Together with inflammation, these changes are associated with increased risk of heart attack and stroke."

However, this study only demonstrates a link between FOT and elevated pulse and the other biomarkers, meaning that researchers can't assume FOT caused people's resting heart rates or levels of inflammation to increase over time. But these are questions Soreq wants to examine in future research, she told HuffPost. She also noted that she'd like to be able to better identify which particular diseases might be exacerbated due to FOT. For now, her study simply suggests that people living under the continuous threat of terrorism should monitor their resting heart rate as part of a regular health assessment.

"The main therapeutic implication is that psychological stress (expressed as fear of terror) can cause long term risk for cardiovascular diseases, so that [individuals] under continuous threat should be aware of such risks and seek medical advice if their pulse gets faster with time," Soreq wrote to HuffPost. "This study shows the importance of going through routine health tests, because those can show you risks that you never anticipated."

Professor Daphna Canetti of the University of Haifa in Israel has studied the health impacts of terrorism and traumatic events for about a decade, and has also analyzed levels of C-reactive protein and elevated pulse on a large scale. Canetti wasn't involved in Soreq's analysis, but she said it raised important issues and agreed with Soreq's assertion that more screening for trauma and PTSD is needed for civilian populations that are constantly under threat -- not just among veterans or soldiers.

"The medical system worldwide has begun to screen for depression, but there is nearly no screening for trauma and PTSD," Canetti told HuffPost in an email. "Those with clinical or near clinical levels of PTSD need treatment, as all the evidence [suggests] that PTSD is both highly painful and adversive in its own right, and related to health deterioration."

Canetti also said that the emerging body of evidence about how terrorism and conflict affect civilian populations could help steer public policy one day.

"To the extent the population understands that their own soldiers will return with lifelong burdens of disease and that if under attack, they themselves will have these additional health costs, it may influence the balance of public opinion"

about how governments wage war, she concluded.

Professor E. Alison Holman of the University of California, Irvine, has published surveys (which do not contain physiologic data) showing that in the wake of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, there was a significant correlation in Americans between high acute stress, the fear of potential terror attacks and the beginning of new cardiovascular symptoms. Holman wasn't involved in Soreq's analysis, but said the study's large sample size, as well as the the hundreds of biomarkers the researchers assessed, offered "fascinating" new insight into how deeply fear affects physical health.

"The authors did a thoughtful approach and analysis for linking the psychological and physiologic correlates potentially related to terrorism," Holman wrote to HuffPost. "By analyzing measures of physiologic parameters in relation to these psychological (fear of terror, perceived control) and cardiovascular risk factors (inflammation, BMI, etc) they have provided some fascinating new data that I believe are quite telling about how profoundly fear contributes to both mental and physical disease."

However, **Holman noted that it would be interesting to map the participants' levels of fear, and their changes in body chemistry over time, in relation to how many terror attacks each person actually experiences during that time**. She said this could help to make sure other kinds of life traumas aren't affecting the results.

"It is important in these kinds of studies to examine ongoing stress/trauma using an assessment that differentiates between terrorism and other types of stressful events, and control for this in the analyses," Holman explained. "What if there are other things going on in people's lives that are the more immediate explanation for their higher heart rates?"

Soreq's analysis excluded people in therapy for anxiety and depression, but she acknowledged that some participants with pre-existing mental health issues who were not receiving treatment could have flown under the radar and been included in the study. She did try to account for differences in the way individuals manage stress, with questionnaires about perceived control over one's work



environment, but she admitted that more work is needed to assess how personal stress

management can affect things like the fear of terror.

Islam, blasphemy and free speech: a surprisingly modern conflict

By Ali Mamouri

Source: <http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20150109-islam-blasphemy-and-free-speech-a-surprisingly-modern-conflict>

Jan 09 – From the fatwa on author Salman Rushdie to the attack on the offices of French magazine *Charlie Hebdo*, the phenomenon of anti-blasphemy actions continues to be prominent in the Muslim world.

At first glance, the problem appears to be quite simple. For many years, there has been much talk about the conflicts between blasphemy and free speech within Islam. Some go further and argue about the “intrinsic hostility between two civilizations: Islam and Europe,” as the philosopher Talal Asad puts it.

It is quite easy to say that Islam suffers from a lack of tolerance and that Muslims are anti-freedom, anti-democracy, pro-despotism, and pro-fanaticism. However, this generalization ignores not only the number of branches of Islam and diversity of views among Muslims, but also the sociopolitical foundation of the problem.

Blasphemy in the history of Islam

Asad highlighted the big difference between the notion of talking against the religion in Christianity and Islam. It is difficult to find a specific idea rooted in the Christian historical background of blasphemy in the history of Islam.

However, there are a variety of equivalents that each overlaps a part of blasphemy. The most commonly used phrase by Muslims today is “*isā’ah*,” which has a range of meanings, including “insult, harm, and offence.” But this term is not associated with a certain jurisprudential punishment in a way that makes all Muslims feel obliged to attack the actors.

Therefore, many writers throughout different parts of Islamic history have criticized Islamic belief, including the prophet Muhammad and the Quran, without facing persecution. A quick look at the books about sects and creeds in Islam shows a great variety of discussions and debates between Muslims and non-Muslims about the essential parts of Islam. Many include sarcastic language.

For instance, when defending his non-belief in religions, renowned Arab philosopher Abul al-Ala al-Ma’ari said: “If you ask my religion I would say I am not dumb.”

Ibn al-Rawandi also dedicated sections of his books to countering the Quran in Baghdad. Furthermore, in the contemporary era, Iraqi writer and poet Maarouf al-Rasafi disputed the religious aspect of the prophet Muhammad’s life in his book *The Muhamadiyan Personality*. The reality is that the persecution of blasphemers as it is done currently is a very recent phenomenon. Generally, one could say that the Rushdie fatwa was the beginning of this trend.

The founders of Political Islam are known as the innovators of this trend. That is why we can see many secular scholars, writers, and poets at the start of the twentieth century writing against Islam in many different dimensions, such as Zaki Naguib Mahmoud, who is known for advocating positivist philosophy in the Arab world, and Najib Mahfouz, who won the 1988 Nobel Prize for Literature.

The sociopolitical background

The notion of religious actions is more problematic than is popularly supposed. It is not merely a divine spiritual matter which is separated from social political actors. Rather, it is nested within and shaped by other human dimensions.

As a result, the sociopolitical background can change any religion — to be more tolerant or more fanatical, for example. Sociologist Bryan S. Turner describes this situation in Christian society:

Given the growth of parliamentary institutions, welfare legislation and commitment to egalitarian ideology, it is small wonder that contemporary Christians cannot accept a description of God as an autocrat. Jesus, once our

158



lord and master, has become Superstar.

This process took a long time in Western societies to become today's accepted nature of great tolerance and co-existence. The West paid the price through centuries of religious, sectarian, and political wars.

Meanwhile, the status of the Muslim world has declined continuously in the contemporary period. This is due to various reasons, including ongoing political instability, the failure to build a state of institutions and a real civil society, and destructive imperialist interventions.

Western colonial powers handed the Middle East to a series of tyrannical governments. Failed attempts at building a nation-state have led to the rise of Chauvinism and military regimes which mostly have been supported by the great western powers.

The recent popular revolutions have resulted in the rise of criminal Salafi gangs. Many were supported by the West for different reasons, such as confronting the Soviet Union in al-Qaeda's case, or anti-Israel regimes in Islamic State's case.

From al-Rumi to al-Baghdadi

It might be shocking for many to look back at the words of thirteenth-century Muslim scholar Jalal ad-Din al-Rumi, who had a strong theological and jurisprudential background. He said: "Go on! Drink the wine of the Beloved! In that faith, Muslims and pagans are one."

One can see pluralistic thoughts, such as the aforementioned works of many Muslim scholars in the past, which have been influencing Muslim societies widely.

A long distance has passed to see Islamic State's Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi in place of al-Rumi, but this underscores the argument that mainstream Muslims remain against the barbaric actions of fundamentalists. It must not be forgotten that many Muslims are suppressed in their countries for the same reasons that *Charlie Hebdo* was attacked.

Let's help Muslims to represent "a more authentic image of Islam, as so many of them desire, reiterating that Islam is a religion of peace, compatible with respect for human rights and peaceful co-existence," as Pope Francis said in a recent phone call with Iraqi Christians.

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159

Address by the Director General of the Security Service, Andrew Parker, to the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) at Thames House, 8 January 2015.

Source: <https://www.mi5.gov.uk/home/about-us/who-we-are/staff-and-management/director-general/speeches-by-the-director-general/director-generals-speech-on-terrorism-technology-and-accountability.html>



Andrew Parker, Director General of the Security Service

Introduction

1. It's good to welcome you here to Thames House for my second public speech.
2. I want tonight to do two things – to look back at the year that has passed since I last spoke publicly and to look ahead to the challenges that MI5 faces in 2015 and beyond.
3. And in so doing, I'd like to offer my reflections on some of the significant events that have shaped and will shape the UK's national security.
4. I have three key themes tonight, which together account for large parts of my working life:
 - a. the long haul we face in combatting the threat from Islamist inspired terrorism, particularly – but certainly not only – in relation to Syria;
 - b. the chronic yet critical challenge we face from technological change and the steps taken to respond to that; and
 - c. the increased public visibility of the oversight and accountability that is so important to MI5's work.



The Threat

5. So first to the threat. But before I lay out the overall picture, I wanted to say something about the dreadful events of yesterday in Paris, when twelve people were killed in a terrorist attack. It is too early for us to come to judgements about the precise details or origin of the attack but it is a terrible reminder of the intentions of those who wish us harm. As you would expect, we are offering our French colleagues our full support as they respond.

6. I'm going to talk tonight about the full range of terrorist threats that the UK faces. In describing the overall threat, it would be surprising if I didn't focus first on the ongoing and increasing challenge from Syria. I spoke a year ago of MI5's increasing focus on this growing threat. It has continued to expand and to morph, not least with ISIL coming to the fore.

7. Around 600 extremists are among the many Britons who have travelled there. A significant proportion has joined ISIL.

8. I won't dignify the group with its self-adopted propaganda label 'Islamic State'. Scholars have rightly pointed out that it is neither 'Islamic', nor is it a state. Its true nature is visible to all from its visceral brutality – including the murder of hostages – and its indulgence of the very worst imaginable forms of treatment of other human beings. Its hatred is directed against all who do not adhere to its own twisted ideology. The vast majority of its victims are Muslims. It is rightly condemned by Muslim leaders and scholars.

9. ISIL has large numbers of fighters and substantial resources in parts of Syria and Iraq. Its propaganda repeatedly names Britain as an enemy, but how is it a threat to the UK?

10. Well, there are three ways, all of which we have already seen in practice:

- a. I've already mentioned the first, which is the senseless and brutal murder of innocent Britons in the region. None of us need any reminder of that.
- b. The second is that they are trying to direct terrorist attacks in the UK and elsewhere from Syria, using violent extremists here as their instruments.
- c. And, third, they are seeking through propaganda to provoke individuals in the UK to carry out violent attacks here.

11. Despite its medieval tactics, ISIL is a terrorist phenomenon of the modern age. It makes full use of the modern social media and communications methods through which many of us now live our lives. By these means it spreads its message of hate directly into homes across the United Kingdom – both to those seeking it and those who may be susceptible to its distortion and glamorisation of horrific acts.

12. Not all British extremists who have travelled to Syria will want to mount attacks in the UK when they return. But some do have that intent. Some have already tried to carry out acts of terrorism here and elsewhere. Outside Iraq and Syria, we believe that since October 2013 there have been more than 20 terrorist plots either directed or provoked by extremist groups in Syria. Let me remind you of a few:

- four people were shot dead in Brussels last May by a French returnee from Syria;
- in Canada, a soldier was killed in a hit and run attack and another shot dead outside the parliament building;
- in Australia, the hostage-taking at a cafe in Sydney led to the deaths of two hostages;
- in France, a knife attack on police;
- and other attacks have been foiled – for example, early in 2014 police in France seized improvised explosive devices from a flat linked to another Syria returnee.

13. We know that terrorists based in Syria harbour the same ambitions towards the UK – trying to direct attacks against our country, and exhorting extremists here to act independently.

14. So we in MI5 will continue to work tirelessly with the police, GCHQ and SIS to uncover violent intent directed against Britain, both within the UK and in Syria. An important part of this work is identifying extremists travelling to and from Syria, and taking whatever steps we can to prevent them from getting to the conflict zones.

15. Strikingly, working with our partners, we have stopped three UK terrorist plots in recent months alone. Deaths would certainly have resulted otherwise. But we cannot be complacent.

Although we and our partners try our utmost we know that we cannot hope to stop everything.

160

16. The intelligence task we face is challenging. There are no in-country partner agencies we can work with in Syria. Collecting intelligence about a war zone is difficult, gathering evidence even more so.
17. Nevertheless, when it comes to the UK, as the near-daily media reports show, such extremists must expect to be arrested and prosecuted. In England and Wales, terrorist-related arrests are up 35% compared with four years ago. Since 2010, more than 140 individuals have been convicted for terrorism related offences.
18. We and the police are necessarily focused on preventing the terrorist threat associated with these extremists. But it's an even greater success when individuals faced with ISIL's propaganda turn away from its twisted message. We have seen the human misery that results from the opposite choice: bereaved and broken families, ruined lives, suffering and heartbreak.
19. Meanwhile, other Islamist terrorist threats persist. Al Qaeda continues to provide a focus for Islamist inspired violence and a significant driving force for extremists to plot terrorist attacks against the West. British Islamist extremists still travel out to South Asia, the Arabian Peninsula and other theatres to try to obtain terrorist training. And terrorist groups in parts of Africa also pose persistent threats.
20. In Afghanistan in November a terrorist attack on a British convoy in Kabul killed five people, including two members of British Embassy staff. This tragically reminded us again of the risks run and the sacrifices made by all of those who have worked so hard in Afghanistan to safeguard our national security. And in Pakistan, the attack last month on a school in Peshawar, in which over 100 children and teachers were killed, underlines the brutality of the Islamist terrorist threat we face, and the terrible cost that it seeks to inflict on innocent people around the world.
21. **So, in summary, we face a very serious level of threat that is complex to combat and unlikely to abate significantly for some time.** From the totality of this picture, two aspects are worth noting.
22. First, the number of crude but potentially deadly plots has gone up. Last year's attacks in Canada and Australia were examples. Such attacks are inherently harder for intelligence agencies to detect. They are often the work of volatile individuals, motivated by terrorist propaganda rather than working as part of sophisticated networks. They often act spontaneously or after very short periods of prior planning.
23. Such people often act alone. But even when violent intent is solely the work of one individual and they share their specific plans with no one else, it is almost always the case that someone, a member of the public or a friend, has had some prior insight into the dangerous direction they are moving in and the violent destination they are hoping to reach. So, as we go forward into 2015, **we will need more help from the public** in these sorts of situations. Such assistance will be invaluable when it comes to enabling MI5 and the police to save lives.
24. The second aspect worth nothing is that, alongside this greater volume, **we still face more complex and ambitious plots that follow the now sadly well established approach of Al Qaeda and its imitators: attempts to cause large scale loss of life, often by attacking transport systems or iconic targets.** We know, for example, that a group of core Al Qaeda terrorists in Syria is planning mass casualty attacks against the West.
25. It was primarily the rising threat from Syria – not just ISIL – that led the Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre to raise the threat level for international terrorism from 'substantial' to 'severe' last summer. 'Severe' is an evidence-based judgement meaning that an attack on the UK is highly likely.
26. Overall, that worsened and more complex threat picture is the first trend I want to lay out. I'll come to the second in a moment.

161

Other Threats

27. But I don't want to pass on without mentioning other threats that require our attention.
28. Whilst there has been great progress in Northern Ireland, dissident Republicans continue to carry out terrorist attacks aimed at the police, prison officers and others. There were more than 20 such attacks in 2014, most of which – thankfully – were unsuccessful.
29. The key statistic is that for every one of those attacks we and our colleagues in the police have stopped three or four others coming to fruition.
30. Northern Ireland experience teaches us that terrorist threats are enduring; that it requires sustained long-term effort and teamwork to counter them; and that it's unrealistic to expect every attack plan to be stopped, even where the perpetrators may in some cases have been on our radar for many years.



31. MI5's origins more than a century ago lie in protecting the United Kingdom against espionage threats and we remain at the forefront of that fight today. There are two particular challenges for us here:

- the first is that some of our adversaries operate at industrial scale to build and deploy highly intrusive capabilities which, unlike us, they use without any of the constraints of the legal and ethical norms of democratic and open societies; and
- the second is that the internet now provides ever increasing opportunities for the conduct of cyber espionage and sabotage remotely.

32. We and partner agencies continue to achieve considerable success in defending the UK from such attacks. But the challenge is significant, growing in scale and changing in nature. Responding to it depends on the partnership between the Intelligence community, wider Government, key parts of the private and public sector and our international allies.

The Capability Challenge

33. So to the second trend: the way in which technology-related change is affecting our ability to deal with these threats.

34. The range and severity of threats the UK has faced over the years has meant that we have needed to build substantial security and intelligence capabilities. MI5, with our close partners in GCHQ, SIS, and the police together embody an intelligence and security effort of a quality that is the envy of many partner nations.

35. It is focused on those who threaten harm, not on the private lives of the population at large. All of it is set within a robust legal framework that governs, properly constrains and, through oversight, holds us to account. Having that framework is vital to the legitimacy and public consent that we need to do our work. And it is intrinsic to the sort of country we are protecting.

36. MI5 operates with the tools, capabilities and resources provided to us by the Government and Parliament. All three of these areas saw significant developments in 2014 as the wider context in which MI5 does its work changed alongside the developing threat picture.

37. I've said before why the ability to access terrorist communications is vital to MI5's ability to keep the country safe – let me explain now in a bit more detail why this is so.

38. Interception of communications, which includes listening to the calls made on a telephone, or opening and reading the contents of emails, form a critical part in the Security and Intelligence Agencies' toolkit. And one – it is always worth reiterating - that we can only exercise with a warrant signed by the Secretary of State after careful consideration of our reasoning and the necessity and proportionality of the case.

39. Interception alone does not enable the Agencies to investigate and disrupt threats to the UK. It is one of a number of capabilities and techniques, which work together to build an understanding of the threat that an individual or a network poses, be that from espionage, terrorism or the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction.

40. It provides us with an insight into the activities and associates of individuals involved in planning or facilitating terrorism. It helps to build broader and deeper coverage of their activities of concern. And it helps to identify means by which to disrupt their activity before they damage the national security of the UK or endanger lives.

41. Changes in the technology that people are using to communicate are making it harder for the Agencies to maintain the capability to intercept the communications of terrorists. Wherever we lose visibility of what they are saying to each other, so our ability to understand and mitigate the threat that they pose is reduced.

42. The value that visibility of online communications can bring to understanding terrorist threats is clear. Just a few weeks ago it was revealed in court that the first person in the UK to be convicted of terrorist offences in connection with the Syria conflict had received advice on how to access extremist training and weaponry in Syria through online contact with other extremists based overseas.

43. And this is not an isolated incident. Almost all of MI5's top priority UK counter terror investigations have used intercept capabilities in some form to identify, understand or disrupt plots seeking to harm the UK and its citizens. The further reduction of this capability will seriously harm our ability to investigate and disrupt such threats in the future.

162



44. For the evidence, look back over recent years. Consider the case of the largest and most serious terrorist plot that we have ever faced – Operation OVERT. Between 2008 and 2010 ten individuals were convicted of plotting to blow up multiple transatlantic airliners. The investigation employed a range of intelligence and evidence gathering techniques in order to understand the risks posed by the conspirators.

45. A key part of the evidence which brought the plotters to justice was coded conversations by email, forensically retrieved by police following their arrest, between the conspirators and Al Qaeda linked extremists in Pakistan, in which they discussed the preparations for their attacks and the selection of targets.

46. Or consider the 2012 conviction of nine individuals for planning to attack the London Stock Exchange and other iconic targets in the capital. Information recovered forensically following the group's arrest indicated that electronic communications over the internet played a key role in how the group met and stayed in touch, including through internet forums and other publicly available communications methods.

47. None of this is a surprise. The internet has changed so many aspects of our lives – better in so many ways, revolutionising commerce and communication, providing greater choice and better access to information for us all. But also, as the examples show, it offers the same advantages and opportunities to terrorists too. They use it to spread propaganda, to radicalise impressionable individuals, to arrange travel, to move money. But most of all to communicate with one another, to plan and organise.

48. And that is why the capability to intercept these communications is so important to MI5 – the ability to monitor the terrorists' communications as they plan is central to our chances of knowing their intentions and stopping them. So, if we lose that ability, if parts of the radar go dark and terrorists are confident that they are beyond the reach of MI5 and GCHQ, acting with proper legal warrant, then our ability to keep the country safe is also reduced.

49. The ability to access communications data is likewise vital to our ability to protect our national security. Such data has been crucial to MI5 and to the Police in detecting and stopping many terrorist plots over the last decade. We use those powers carefully, only where it is necessary and proportionate to do so. But unless we maintain this capability, our ability to protect the country will be eroded.

50. The passage of emergency legislation in the summer underlines how important these issues are and how seriously Government and Parliament is prepared to take them. Since then there have been some improvements. But, as the Prime Minister made clear a few weeks ago, there remains more to be done.

51. Alongside the passage of that legislation, we also saw the launch of important new work to consider the vital questions of longer term agency capability and the legislation that should enable it. The Intelligence and Security Committee of Parliament has been considering the issues of Privacy and Security since the summer of 2013. Added to that we also have the review work that David Anderson QC, the independent reviewer of terrorism legislation, is leading for the Government. We also have the independent panel which the Royal United Services Institute has brought together.

52. I welcome all of this and we are engaging with each body. It is never for the Director General of MI5 to say what the final answers should be to these sorts of questions. I am a public servant and it is for Ministers and Parliamentarians to decide on how our society can best address the challenges and choices we face.

53. But it's right that senior intelligence professionals should contribute to the debate and help ensure that in so far as possible it is grounded in a proper knowledge of the facts and the consequences of different options. So you have seen in recent months Director Comey of the FBI speak forcefully of the dangers to the United States of 'going dark'. And Robert Hannigan, the Director of GCHQ, has highlighted the challenges the UK's security and intelligence agencies face and the need for a mature debate about privacy in the digital age. I strongly support what they both said.

54. I've said before and I'll say again MI5 does not browse through the private lives of the population at large. We need to have powerful capabilities that enable us to range widely, with the potential to reach anyone who might threaten national security – but with our efforts always concentrated on the tiniest minority who actually present threats. That is because this is a free country under mature, liberal democracy. It is this free country that it is MI5's task to protect against those who seek to harm it.



55. We all value our privacy – and none of us want it intruded upon improperly or unnecessarily. But I don't want a situation where that privacy is so absolute and sacrosanct that terrorists and others who mean us harm can confidently operate from behind those walls without fear of detection.

56. I often hear the privacy and security debate mis-characterised as if the two are somehow a trade-off: more security means less privacy, that for us to be able to keep you safe you have to accept less freedom in your daily life.

57. The reality is that the opposite is true. Our driving purpose is to protect the freedoms of the majority by identifying and focussing on the small number of people who threaten our safety, security and freedoms. This can only be achieved with effective powers to find out what they are doing and to stop them.

58. If we are to have the best chance of preventing such harm, we need the capability to shine a light into the activities of the worst individuals who pose the gravest threats. They use the same communications tools as the rest of us. But technological and market changes risk closing off areas where we need to be able to operate. The dark places from where those who wish us harm can plot and plan are increasing. We need to be able to access communications and obtain relevant data on those people when we have good reason to do so.

59. That is the second trend. There is still a lot we can do and there have been some positive developments. But sustaining our reach is still a profound challenge and one that we must do more to tackle if we are to do our job.

Oversight

60. Alongside the increased threat and the changing capability landscape, it has also been a year of significant developments in terms of oversight.

61. Let me be clear at the outset – accountability and professional ethics have always been central to MI5's mission. Put simply that mission is to keep the country safe, but the way in which we do it – with an enduring commitment to necessity and proportionality – is just as vital to safeguarding the sort of country we live in too.

62. As the DG of MI5, I know particularly well the skills, expertise and care that my officers bring to their work – years, even decades, of experience of gathering intelligence, assessing it, using it to investigate threats and then to disrupt them.

63. MI5 is steeped in an ethos that prides itself not only on the outcomes we achieve but the ways in which we do our work. Professionalism and a deep commitment to acting only in ways that are necessary and proportionate are at the centre of our mission.

64. And rightly we are also subject to an extensive system of external oversight and authorisation to assure that we are meeting these high standards.

65. First and foremost I am accountable to the Home Secretary, who is in turn accountable to Parliament and the British people, a responsibility that she treats with the utmost seriousness. As well as the important general responsibilities that this entails, the use of our most intrusive powers requires her to consider and, where satisfied, authorise individual warrants. And similarly, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland performs the same duties, with the same rigour for our work in Northern Ireland.

66. Second, MI5 is overseen independently by Parliament through the Intelligence and Security Committee, strengthened by the Justice and Security Act of 2013.

67. Third, our internal processes that govern our intrusive work are inspected by two independent commissioners (senior serving or retired judges). This means that any warrant or authorisation can be subject to their learned and forensic scrutiny and that – rightly – MI5 staff know that they must prepare all cases with rigour and precision.

68. Fourth, we are held to account with regard to any complaints or alleged breaches of human rights by an independent tribunal presided over by a senior judge – the Investigatory Powers Tribunal.

69. Now all of that may sound like dry process that is not readily meaningful to those not steeped in the detail of National Security work. So let me give you a sense of what it means in practice for me as the Director General of MI5.

70. Last year, I made four appearances before the Intelligence and Security Committee. We submitted hundreds of pages of evidence to them, fully disclosing detailed, TOP SECRET information about our capabilities and actions.

164



71. I see the Home Secretary regularly, sometimes as often as two or three times a week for discussions about MI5's work. I brief her in person and in writing on the most serious threats we are investigating and we discuss the wider policy and operational questions that arise. She herself, as she recently said publicly, spends hours each week considering our warrants and coming to her own view as to whether the intrusion we wish to make is necessary and proportionate.

72. We have had a series of visits by the two Commissioners in which they have rigorously examined and tested a sample of the full range of warrants and internal authorisations which authorise our intrusive work case-by-case.

73. From my position, I know that the oversight to which MI5 is subject is searching and intensive. It is right that it should be. But that is not always evident to the public because much of the detailed substance can only be dealt with secretly. The arrangements Parliament has created for our oversight are fully equipped and able to deal with the most sensitive material, and do so.

74. The fact that it is done in secret means that we can always engage with these arrangements with absolute openness and candour, as our overseers have often said. But despite that necessary secrecy, there is still a need for oversight bodies to explain publicly whatever they can about their work and what they find. That transparency is improving all the time. There is still more that can be done.

75. The recent Intelligence and Security Committee report about the circumstances surrounding the horrific murder of Fusilier Lee Rigby – as well as being the serious consideration of a dreadful event that was required – demonstrates the rigorous application of the new model of oversight that was created by the Justice and Security Act.

76. As its very detailed and comprehensive report shows, the Committee did not stint from its task or pass lightly over the complicated realities of intelligence work. Even though the report concludes that, given what was known at the time, the attack was not preventable, we acknowledge that there are lessons that we need to learn and ways that we can improve. I take this very seriously. How we are responding to the Committee's recommendations will be set out in full in a detailed Government response in the coming weeks.

Conclusion

165

77. I have spoken of several trends tonight. My sharpest concern as Director General of MI5 is the growing gap between the increasingly challenging threat and the decreasing availability of capabilities to address it. It is that gap that led Government to bring forward fast-track legislation twice last year. And, not least because of the sunset clause in the recent DRIPA legislation, it is that gap which Government, Parliament and society will need to consider again in 2015 and 2016: what are the right intrusive powers, at what scale, and under what oversight, to ensure sufficient security against the threats we face.

78. But I don't want to sound either unduly pessimistic or to suggest we face some sort of unmanageable crisis. We do not. There are serious challenges, but for more than four decades the UK has faced down different styles and shapes of terrorism. The going is getting tougher but there are good reasons for confidence in our enduring ability to respond. This country has in MI5, SIS, GCHQ and the police strong institutions with deep reserves of knowledge and skill to deploy. It's well-understood that we can't guarantee to stop everything, but we continue to strive to get as near to that as we can.

79. I believe that there should be no more MI5 than is necessary to deal with the worst of the security problems the country faces. I will only ever seek the resources, tools and powers that are actually needed to deal with the worst – those who genuinely present a threat to our country.

80. And I believe that we must debate and consider the implications of technological change for public protection. We increasingly face a world in which those who pose a serious threat may be able to operate beyond our reach. There is a legitimate desire for privacy of ordinary citizens, which I share and support. But we must beware of the opportunities that are created for those who mean us serious harm. If we are to do our job, MI5 will continue to need to be able to penetrate their communications as we have always done. That means having the right tools, legal powers and the assistance of companies which hold relevant data. Currently this picture is patchy.

81. MI5 has no desire to seek sweeping powers for their own sake or loosen our long-held commitment to necessity and proportionality. You should not imagine that MI5 is always



arguing for new powers or more tools – sometimes we've advised that further powers are not necessary.

82. MI5 is made up of men and women who only joined to do the organisation's work in a proper and ethical way and who only stay because that is the sort of organisation we are committed to remaining. As Prime Ministers and Home Secretaries have said from time to time, the confidence they have in MI5 comes not just from knowing our capabilities and track record, but from knowing the sort of people we are.

83. As the Director General of MI5, it is my duty – and my privilege – to lead an organisation devoted to keeping the country safe. But, just as importantly, whilst I and my staff take great pride in the work we do and the contribution we make to our society, we never lose sight of the fact that it will be an even better day when we can do less of it, whenever that may be.

84. Finally, I would like to pay tribute to the extraordinary and often unrecognised efforts of all those who work hard to keep the country safe against many dangers. The men and women of MI5, together with GCHQ, SIS and the police, and courageous members of the community who assist us together make a formidable team, on which much depends. They all have my deep thanks.

85. May I also express my great appreciation for the support and practical assistance we receive from the wider public. Opinion polls consistently show most of our fellow citizens positively support us in the difficult work we do. We value that enormously and I'm grateful. We will continue to do our very best to keep earning that trust.

EDITOR'S COMMENT: In such a long address a sentence on "new emerging threats" (CBRNE) would fit well – but is missing (**unless is hidden behind paras 21 and 24**). But if we do not say things by their names, how can we confront them?

Unarmed French police literally retreated in the face of Islamist attackers

By Noah Rothman

Source: <http://hotair.com/archives/2015/01/07/unarmed-french-police-literally-retreated-in-the-face-of-islamist-attackers/>

166

Jan 07 – The two French police officers, who both lost their lives in the effort to prevent the Charlie Hebdo attackers from executing their grim mission, are heroes. Their sacrifice in defense of their fellow citizens is beyond noble, and their bravery will be remembered in the coming days.

It is not a knock on Parisian police but French domestic policy to note and criticize the fact that the first responders who arrived at the scene on bicycles and without defensive weaponry were entirely unprepared to face an ongoing attack by murderous, AK-47-wielding Islamist gunmen. The first police to arrive at the scene of the attack were forced to withdraw in the face of superior firepower.

The Guardian reported:

"We heard shouting in the street," Benoît Bringer, who works at a press agency on the same floor as the magazine's offices, told France Info radio. "We saw hooded men carrying Kalashnikovs entering the building. We called the police. After a few minutes we heard heavy firing – a lot of firing, a hell of a lot. We went upstairs to take shelter on the roof. Then after about 10 minutes we saw two armed men come out on to the street. There was more shouting, more firing.

"Three policemen had arrived on bikes but had to leave because the men were armed, obviously ... Then the attackers took off in a car."

Another, unnamed witness from an office across the corridor said she and her colleagues had heard "a huge boom". "Then someone opened the door to our office and asked where Charlie Hebdo was. He had a rifle. We backed away. Afterwards he left, we heard gunfire. We went to the windows, there were two men running with guns, speaking in bad French ... They were shouting outside, and shooting again. Afterwards I saw someone leaving the building with his hands covered in blood." [Emphasis added]



It is speculative at this stage, but it is also relatively safe to assume that if those officers had been armed they would have had an opportunity to disable the attackers before they fled. As a result of the lack of preparedness on the part of the Parisian police, the three gunmen who killed 12 and wounded 11 more remain at large. Perhaps this atrocity will result in a review of Paris's counter-terror planning ahead of the next terrorist incident. It is surely coming.

As an aside, the final paragraph of that block quote is interesting. All morning, cable news analysts in the United States have been assuring their audiences that the audio of the attackers indicates that the terrorists were locals. They spoke perfect French, the analysts asserted, and their accents did not indicate any foreign origin.

But the local Parisians who recalled hearing the attackers speak "bad French" suggests otherwise. Now, comments like these could be simple chauvinism. The majority Muslim areas of Paris are often sequestered from the rest of French society and might have developed their own French dialects (at least to the ear of the native Parisian). But this observation from a witness to this attack at least raises an element of doubt as to just how homegrown it truly was.

EDITOR'S COMMENT: There are some good points in this article. But this is every day's reality. First responders arrive at the incident site without having the worst case scenario in mind. On the other hand, you cannot expect special forces to arrive in all incidents involving shootings. A second problem is that in modern times offenders are mostly using AKs with superior fire power compared with standard police issues. A third problem is training – depth of training to be more specific. In-depth training provides confidence and confidence drives to successful intervention. A fourth problem is the on-scene improvisation that results from in-depth training. You are after terrorists' car in a highway – what do you do? Just following them in high speeds or overfly them and set some nasty spikes on the road 3-4km before them? (just an example). The **fifth problem is the biggest** one but the only one we can effectively manage! We all appreciated the (live/photo) news flow by mass media and social networks. On operational basis this was unacceptable. Media should be totally restricted at the scene or forced to follow from a distance. Terrorists and criminals can see what is happening outside or hear about measures to be taken. Citizens can also see the unsuccessful attempts of special forces to climp a small grass-slippery ground – yes the same people that the planet expected to save the hostages of the kosher grocery in Paris. And we do not want that! In mega incidents public information flow should be controlled and managed according to operational needs; not publicity or exclusivity! There is a sixth problem (already mentioned in p.154) – planners. After the police dispatch center is notified about an incident, it will take 5-15min for ordinary first responders to arrive. In that time terrorists might escape either on foot or with a car or bike covering a distance of some kilometers. If we automatically deploy police blocks in circles of 1 to 5km there is a good possibility to spot the escape vehicle and intercept it. The point is that instead of going to them we let them come to us. Of course in parallel other forces will approach the scene and do their things based on SOPs. In conclusion: criticism is easy from the comfort of our sofas or computers. But reality usually plays unexpected scenarios and **people involved in them are real heroes and we salute them!** But even heroes can do their job in a better and more effective way by adjusting their mindset and tactics to those of the enemy. Because you have to know the enemy to win the battle!



167

Swedish far-right leader reported to police for 'anti-Islam comment'

Source: <https://dokmz.wordpress.com/2015/01/09/swedish-far-right-leader-reported-to-police-for-anti-islam-comment/>

Jan 09 – A Swedish Member of Parliament reported a far-right leader to the police on Friday for alleged incitement to hatred over a comment related to the Charlie Hebdo massacre in Paris. In a Facebook comment to an article on the killings at the French satirical weekly's office Wednesday, the party secretary of the Sweden Democrats Bjoern Soeder wrote "The religion of peace' shows its face." "He has linked practising Muslims to a terrorist act, it's extremely offensive," Veronica Palm, from the ruling Social Democratic party told TV4



news. "This statement is offensive to a group of people and I want to see if it comes under laws against inciting racial hatred," said Palm. Soeder is also a deputy speaker of the Swedish parliament where his anti-immigration party doubled its support to 13 percent in a September election — making it Sweden's third political party.

What We Can Learn From the French About Terrorism

By Bruce Ackerman

Source: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/bruce-ackerman/what-we-can-learn-from-th_10_b_6442488.html



Assume the worst: the attack on Charlie Hebdo is the opening gun in an escalating terrorist campaign. In the coming days, another band of extremists succeeds at a second-strike, escalating the prevailing anxiety to new heights. Confronting the emphatic demand that the President "do something" to regain control of the situation, Hollande considers his next step. **Here is where the French Constitution comes in. It authorizes the President to exercise extraordinary powers whenever the Republic's institutions are under "grave and immediate threat."** Once he invokes this authority, he can, for example, order sweeping preventive detention measures that would not be tolerated under ordinary conditions.

With one proviso. He can only exercise his powers for a maximum of 60 days. Beyond that point, he must convince the country's highest tribunal, the **Constitutional Council** that the threat continues to be "imminent." If the Council doesn't agree, the emergency comes to an end. Even if it goes along, the Council is under a continuing obligation to rein in the president "at any moment" if it determines that the risk has returned to more normal levels.

This set-up permits France to make a sharp distinction between the short-term and long-

term dangers that follow a successful terrorist attack. In the short term, drastic measures -- short of torture -- may well be reasonable to disrupt terrorist networks that have successfully eluded the security services. Without such steps, there is too great a risk of escalating destruction, and massive public reaction against outside groups.

Nevertheless, these decisive short-term actions pose long-term problems. Emergency measures will develop a momentum of their own, and entrench themselves into "normal" practice. Even after the immediate danger has passed, security services are in the business of detecting threats, and will defend draconic practices as essential.

Worse yet, it will prove impossible to prevent all future attacks. With seven billion people in the world, there will always be tens of millions of haters. When the "new normal" fails to prevent some new group from blasting its way into tragedy, the public will demand even harsher measures. Over the decades, the "new normal" will become increasingly repressive. Recognizing this grim prospect, the French insist that the Constitutional Council order a return to the "old normal" once the immediate danger has passed. It is too soon

168

to say whether the Council will serve as an effective constraint. Its role was only established by a 2008 amendment, and fortunately, the new system has not yet been tested in real life.

In any event, its methods of institutional control make sense only within its distinctive institutional framework. **For a host of reasons, our Supreme Court cannot and will not unilaterally intervene to check the President in the French manner.**

Nevertheless, we can adapt the basic insight to fit our own constitutional logic. The French are right to insist that there is a "third way" between an endless war on terrorists and a rigid adherence to normal legal standards when confronting a wave of terrorist attacks. Congress should pass a statute under which it, not the Court, decides whether conditions remain sufficiently grave to justify the continuation of extraordinary measures.

Consider this framework. In response to a serious terrorist attack, the President may declare an emergency for 60 days. But his special powers lapse unless a majority of both

houses approve another 60-day extension. When the second period begins to run out, Congress can allow another extension, but this time only by a 60 percent majority; and the next time, by 70 percent; all further extensions require an 80 percent vote. This "super-majoritarian escalator" will return the system to normal within a reasonable time -- unless the tragedy assumes epic proportions.

This and other "third way" approaches to terrorist emergencies deserve serious consideration. Congress is up to the task. The standard partisan divisions need not prevent the construction of a solid system of checks-and-balances for future emergencies. There are strong civil libertarians and national security advocates in both parties. The challenge is to reach common ground.

Many other countries have, like the French, enacted new emergency regimes in the expectation that terrorism will generate grave, but intermittent, crises throughout the twenty-first century.

It is past time for us to do the same.

Bruce Ackerman is Professor of law and political science, Yale; Author "The Decline and Fall of the American Republic".

169

Overview of French multi-targets terrorism attack

Source: <http://www.debka.com/article/24334/Kouachi-brother-die-in-suicidal-attack-on-French-siege-force-Four-hostages-dead-in-Jewish-Paris-mini-market>

Four hostages whom Islamist gunman held Friday, Jan. 9 at a Jewish grocery store in Paris were reported dead by French police, shortly after they mounted a rescue operation that killed the gunman, Amedy Coulibaly, who earlier shot dead a policewoman. Other captives were set free. Minutes before, Said and Cherif Kouachi died in a shooting attack on the police siege force at a factory near Dammartin-en-Goele, 40 km northeast of Paris. They were holed up there threatening to "die as martyrs" with their hostage.

Coulibaly and his partner Hayat Boumedienne had threatened to kill their hostages in Paris if the Kouachi brothers were not freed. Boumedienne, a female terrorist, is reported to have managed to get away. This is not confirmed.

And so the Islamist terror crisis kicked off in France by the murder of 12 people at the

Charlie Hebdo magazine Wednesday reached a bloody conclusion - for now.

debkafile reported earlier Friday:

The two Charlie Hebdo terrorists were Friday, Jan. 9 holed up in a printing plant outside Dammartin-en-Goele northeast of Paris, with one or more hostages after a shootout with police. They were surrounded by hundreds of police backed by helicopters overhead. Negotiations for the release of hostages were met with the Islamist gunmen's willingness to "die as martyrs" rather than surrender. This was the first time Said and Cherif Kouachi were located nearly three days after they massacred 12 people at the magazine in Paris, despite a manhunt by 88,000 police officers, soldiers, security and intelligence personnel.

The French authorities must admit to failure on two counts: Nabbing



the two Islamic terrorists on the run and averting a string of terrorist attacks in Paris, in which three police officers paid with their lives - although the brothers, at least, were long known to French and Western anti-terror services as terror threats.

debkafile's counterterrorism experts account for this apparent blindness by



those agencies' over-reliance on technology and double agents, instead of planting ears to the ground on the spot in the terrorists' natural habitats.

Consequently, Western governments, including Washington, have become inured to admitting after major terrorist attacks in the last three years that the perpetrators' identities and intentions were actually known in advance to their intelligence and anti-terror agencies. And even, in a few cases, double agents had been recruited and planted inside international Islamic terrorist organizations, including Al Qaeda.

Even so, when it came to the point, these known jihadis were never deterred from carrying out major terrorist crimes. This was demonstrated in a number of atrocities:

- On April 15, 2013, the brothers Tamerlan Tsarnaev, 26, and Dzokhar Tsarnaev, 19, tried to blow up the Boston Marathon.
- On May 22, in the same year, Michael Adebolajo and Michael Adebawalo performed an Islamist rite on the streets of London by decapitating the British serviceman Lee Rigby.
- A year earlier, on March 2012, Mohammed Merah was responsible for two attacks: He murdered two French commandos in

Montauban for France's participation in the Afghan war, then slew the teacher and pupils of a Jewish school in Toulouse.

- On May 24, 2014, Mehdi Nemmouche, 29, from the North of France, was able to attack the Jewish Museum in Brussels and kill the Israeli couple, Miriam and Emanuel Riva, as well as a Frenchwoman and Belgian

citizen. This was despite the fact that French intelligence had been keeping an eye on Nemmouche because of his association with groups of Islamists who fought in the Syrian war in 2013.

Friday, Jan. 9, the Kouachi brothers were found on the US no-fly list of Americans and foreigners who are barred from flying to the States because of specific security

concerns. They were therefore familiar names to counterterrorist agencies when, two days earlier, they murdered 12 people at the Charlie Hebdo satirical magazine in Paris, including the editor and top French cartoonists and two police officers.

Both had known records.

Cherif had spent time in a French prison in the early 20s for terrorist activities in connection with the recruitment of fighters in the Iraq War, while Said spent time in Yemen four years ago training with Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP).

Their bloody outrage in the heart of Paris did not fit the "lone wolf" or "lunatic" epithet attached to recent terror attacks in France, along with the argument that such actions are impossible to predict or thwart. This argument was heard after a string of attacks on a synagogue, a Jewish-owned printing plant and the mowing down of Christmas shoppers by a vehicle.

There was no question that this was a targeted multiple assassination that called for detailed planning and reconnaissance, as well as knowledge of the location of the editorial board room and the timetable of board meetings

170

attended by the targeted journalists.

In terms of logistics, the perpetrators would have had to get hold of Kalachnikov assault rifles, ammunition belts, bullet-proof vests, gloves, balaclavas and masks, as well as a vehicle for arrival and getaway from the scene of the slaughter.



All these arrangements point to a complex, well-oiled support network, with experience in combat, terror, logistics, intelligence and communications operations.

Nonetheless, neither the French DGSE (external security) nor the DGSI (internal security) got wind of the murderous conspiracy afoot against the satirical magazine, which was famous for its irreverent cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad as well as holy figures of other religions.

Their signal intelligence (SIGINT) should have at least picked up the chatter which usually precedes terrorist activity. However, this omen too may have escaped them because of incorrect or unfocused "tuning" to suspect communications sites.

French intelligence runs a network called Frenchelon (the counterpart of the US Echelon), which enjoys free rein and huge

budgets and is capable of intercepting any voice, linear, cellular or computerized communications transmitted worldwide.

This system operates aggressively from French embassies and other institutions in foreign countries, including Israel. Its overriding task is to forestall terrorist activity on French soil and abroad, and it works in partnership with the US FBI and the British MI6 and MI5.

The warning by MI5 domestic security chief, Andrew Parker, the day after the Charlie Hebdo massacre of a growing threat of "mass casualty attacks" was indeed timely. He said "intelligence pointed to the existence of specific plots." But the UK official also admitted that although three terrorist plots had been foiled in recent months, "it was almost inevitable that one would eventually succeed."

And therein lies the rub.

The failure of the mighty, many-branched Frenchelon to spot Said and Cherif Kouachi's plans for the magazine massacre and locate them after the attack when they were on the loose were the symptomatic result of **Western over-dependence on technical intelligence** and waiver of human intelligence inside the Muslim communities of Paris, Europe and the United States. **Anti-terror agencies are therefore short of real-time, tactical information on terror plots afoot - or even the states of mind current in those communities.** Both are essential for pinning down violence before it erupts. In consequence, the two terrorists, instead of being located by the army chasing them, broke cover first and staged the Dammartin-en-Goele hostage-stunt northeast of Paris. They said they are ready to die as martyrs rather than surrendering, so that they can go down in a cloud of Islamist glory.

171

Paris Attacks: The Changing Face Of Terrorist Targeting

Source: <http://www.ibtimes.com/paris-attacks-changing-face-terrorist-targeting-1779160>

As simultaneous Paris standoffs ended with the death of three of the four terror suspects on Friday, the murders of 12 people in the Charlie Hebdo office and the taking of hostages in a kosher supermarket raised the specter of a new kind of terror. **After decades of attacks targeting skyscrapers, aviation, seats of**

power and other high-profile targets, are terrorists shifting to a different mode of operation, one in which they go for workplaces, stores and other arenas of everyday civilian life?

While the suggestion that terrorism has evolved from

attacking major infrastructure to softer targets is a valid one after Paris, it's also a difficult question to answer, because of the opportunistic nature of terrorism.

"Terrorist targeting over the years has always been a mix of big and little," said Brian A. Jackson, director of the Safety and Justice Program at the U.S. think tank RAND, who specializes in terrorism research. "It's driven by a lot of the planning and logistical complications that small groups face."

At one point recently, Jackson said, a wave of planned attacks were aimed at military recruiting centers in the U.S. because the impact was high and the target was easy. That mix of attacks, from major operations like 9/11 to simpler assaults with weapons, or even anthrax letters in the mail, is going to remain a feature of terrorism. In short, some perpetrators have plenty of resources, cash and operatives and others simply have a pressure cooker and a grievance.

"Pulling off big events is always more difficult to do," Jackson said. "And for smaller groups that don't have the capability to try big things like that, there always have been easy, smaller targets."

But Dr. Mark Hamm, an expert in terrorism at Indiana State University, says that despite increased security, terrorists will always continue to aim at big targets because they garner greater attention. "All the way from 2001 up until 2014, we've seen attacks against federal buildings, airports, power grids, places of worship, abortion clinics and so on, so the events of Paris don't suggest a major change," he said.

"Hard targets" are normally protected infrastructure, such as military bases, police stations, government buildings -- whereas soft targets have low security, such as train stations, nightclubs, stores and media offices. Many American embassies and diplomatic posts in dangerous countries have closed in

recent years, suggesting, Hamm said, that a new tactic for thwarting terrorists is to take away their targets. But he noted that does not necessarily influence the way perpetrators think or select their targets. **"There may be a trend towards more soft targets, but it's hard to say overall that terrorists have changed the way they select their targets,"** he said.

But what has been clear, certainly in the United States and in Europe, is that terrorists have had to innovate as legislation and advances in defensive tactics make it difficult to replicate traditional large-scale attacks. In the wake of the Oklahoma City bombing in 1995, for example, the U.S. Congress introduced legislation that made the highly explosive chemical ammonium nitrate, often used by farmers and employed in the attack, traceable by incorporating so-called chemical taggants.

Furthermore, in 2008, munitions manufacturer Honeywell, in partnership with the Department of Homeland Security, developed a nitrogen-based fertilizer that would not detonate when mixed with fuel oil, meaning that two of the most popular ingredients for bombmaking were no longer compatible. That kind of innovation has forced terror tactics to evolve in some places. The use of gas cylinder bombs by a jihadi bomber targeting Israelis in Bulgaria, when seven people were killed and 30 injured, is an example of that.

While it's unclear if the Paris suspects tried to obtain explosives, terrorist groups have still been able to get their hands on them. The 2005 London Underground attacks, which killed 52 and injured 700, used organic peroxide, a highly explosive bleaching agent. **In Madrid the year before, affiliate of al Qaeda used a Spanish-made explosive, Goma-2, and dynamite to kill 191 people and injure thousands.**



Olympics in Boston would require unprecedented security

Source: <http://www.bostonglobe.com/news/nation/2015/01/09/olympics-boston-would-require-unprecedented-security-effort/W9I8tEcQZfX2OnvpvX9LlJ/story.html>

Hosting the 2024 Summer Olympics in an age of terrorism would require a security effort unprecedented in Boston's history, requiring the efforts of tens of thousands of police

officers, soldiers, spies, and private security firms.

Some of the city's neighborhoods would be

transformed into something approaching armed camps with security personnel carrying automatic weapons — and possibly even anti-aircraft batteries, according to security specialists familiar with security precautions at recent Olympic games in London and Sochi, Russia.

While Boston has successfully hosted its share of high-profile events in the past — including the 2004 Democratic National Convention — it hasn't had to organize anything of this magnitude, said Representative William Keating, the Bourne Democrat and member of the Homeland Security Committee.

"The scope of the Olympics brings it entirely to a new level," Keating, who was part of a US delegation that assessed security at the Winter Olympics in Sochi last year, said in an interview. "The security will have to be extraordinary."

And extraordinarily costly — although precise estimates are difficult to come by.

When preparations began for the last summer Olympics, held in London in 2012, officials estimated security would cost \$361 million. In the end, the price tag came in at more than four times that, or \$1.6 billion.

And when the London opening ceremonies began, there were barely enough guards and other personnel available to protect the athletes and screen millions of spectators. British soldiers were summoned to duty to help. The demands in Boston are unknown, nearly a decade before the event. But the security costs would likely be paid for with federal tax dollars.

"We don't know what the threat will be years from now, and we don't know what the technology will be like nine or 10 years from now that may make it easier," said

Juliette Kayyem, a former federal and state homeland security official who is now advising the Boston bid team on security matters.

But she said planning is already underway and that officials envision three different tiers of government security.

There would be the role of state and local agencies like the Boston Police, Massport, the National Guard, and university security forces. The next layer would be comprised of federal agencies, such as the Secret Service, the FBI, and the Department of Homeland Security, which includes the Transportation Security Administration and the US Coast Guard. Finally, international intelligence and security personnel would be required to assess

potential threats and coordinate arrangements for the Olympic teams from individual countries.

The terrorist shootings in France this week brought yet another reminder of the threats in today's society. Those events follow other tragedies, including the Boston Marathon bombing of 2013 and a history of security disasters at past Olympics.

Eleven Israeli athletes were murdered by Palestinian terrorists at the 1972 games in Munich, Germany. In 1992, Basque separatists threatened to attack the games in Barcelona but failed to succeed, while a right-wing domestic terrorist set off a pipe bomb at the 1996 Olympics Games in Atlanta, killing one and injuring 11 others.

The enhanced focus on security was underscored by the so-called "steel ring" that the Russians placed around last year's Winter Olympics in the Black Sea resort of Sochi, which was within driving distance of several centers of Islamic militancy in the Caucasus region of Central Asia.

In the wake of the Sochi games, the head of Russia's Federal Security Service credited the help of intelligence agencies in the United States, Austria, France, Germany, and the Republic of Georgia in helping to thwart terrorists attacks aimed at the Olympics.

Security preparation have long dogged the games. **Failure to screen employees working at the Summer Olympics held in Los Angeles in 1984 enable convicted felons to hold security posts — without any major incidents.** The verdict following the Atlantic Games in 1996 — where a bombing killed two — was that public safety preparations were wholly inadequate.

When former Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney oversaw the 2002 Winter Olympics held in Salt Lake City, Utah, the 9/11 attacks that took place just four months earlier loomed large.

"Among the steps we took were double-fencing, cameras, motion detectors, bio-hazard detectors, food testing, mail testing, and screening people and goods twice before letting them in, and an inner, even more secure location that only the athletes could access," Romney recalled in his 2004 book

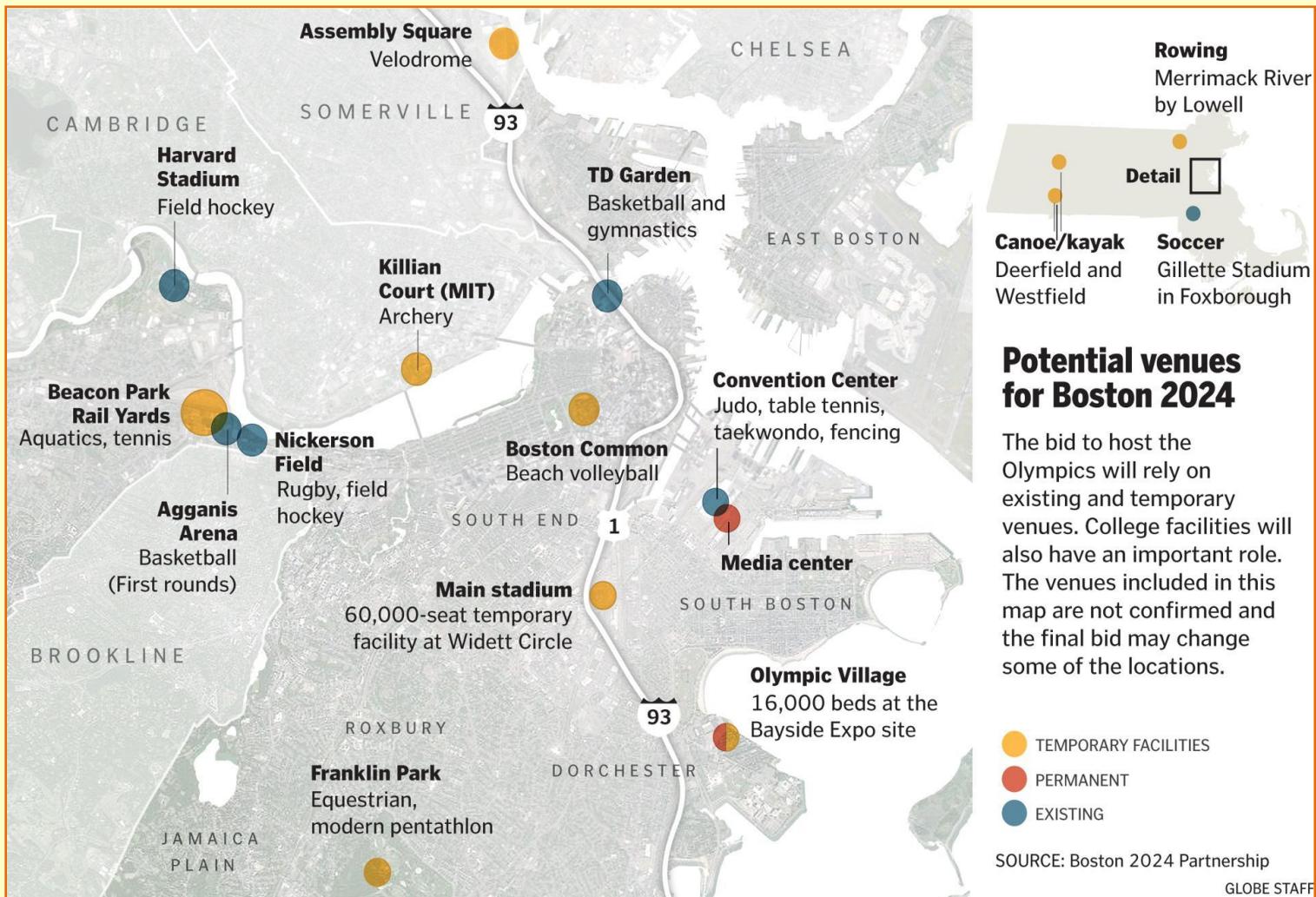
"Turnaround," which detailed his experience overseeing the 2002 games.

173



Ultimately the federal government spent an estimated \$1.5 billion for security in Salt Lake

served as head of security for the London Organizing Committee.



City.

Boston also would be seeking federal help, according to several officials.

The US Department of Homeland Security would be expected to designate the Olympics a National Special Security Event, which would place the US Secret Service in charge of security and also prompt Congress to authorize federal funds.

"It is an international event and Boston would have enormous federal resources for security for the event," Keating predicted. "And international support in terms of security as well."

Kayem said officials are closely studying the London experience.

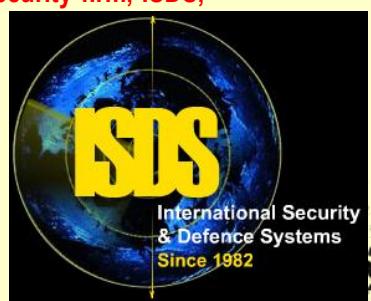
The 2012 games ultimately had a total of 128 venues that required more than 1,200 security cameras and 20,000 security personnel to screen more than 15 million people, according to Andrew Amery, who

The dragnet also had to be coordinated with a total of 55 separate law enforcement agencies from Britain and abroad, Amery said in a final report.

Security preparations included establishing a dedicated intelligence center, while new facilities built for the competitions were constructed with security in mind.

A key decision if the games are to be held in Boston will be how much of the security umbrella to out-source to private firms.

Late last year an Israeli security firm, ISDS, was awarded a \$2.2 billion contract to coordinate security at the Summer Olympics scheduled for next summer in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, a venue that is seen as particularly challenging



due to high levels of crime and drug trafficking.

But such private sector help also requires additional oversight. For example, the British company that helped manage security for the 2012 games failed to properly estimate the number of personnel needed. At one point Olympic organizers withheld payments to the firm, G4S, after it said it would be unable to meet its commitment to provide 10,400 security guards. In the end, more than double that number were actually needed.

"Security can't be delegated and it can't be ignored," Kayyem said of the London

experience. "It is a huge preparedness undertaking. Security and preparedness planning has to begin today."

Keating, however, believes that if the Russians were able to secure Sochi that Boston is more than prepared to take on the task of securing the 2024 games, especially in the wake of the Boston Marathon bombings.

"People should be mindful how resilient our city was after the Marathon, which is an international event," he said. "Boston is ahead of the curve in cooperation with federal agencies."

Charlie Hebdo terror mentor's wife on benefits in Leicester

Source: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/terrorism-in-the-uk/11337056/Charlie-Hebdo-terror-mentors-wife-on-benefits-in-Leicester.html>



The wife of an al-Qaeda lynchpin who mentored the Charlie Hebdo murderers is living on benefits in Britain after deciding France was too strict against Muslims.

Sylvie Beghal, a French citizen, lives rent free in a four bedoomed house in Leicester after she came to the UK with her children in search of a more "Islamic environment".

Mrs Beghal lives with her four children in a smart home next to a park in Leicester. Her landlord, who did not wish to be named, said: "She doesn't have a job. She doesn't even leave the house much."

If Mrs Beghal is claiming full housing benefit, she would be entitled to more than £10,000 a year. She has two children under 18 years old, entitling her to around £1,500 a year in child benefit. With jobseekers allowance added, Mrs Beghal may have cost taxpayers more than £150,000 since she moved back to the UK.

► Read the full story at source's URL.

175

Ex-Guru to Charlie Hebdo Killer is Nurse at Victims' Hospital

Source: <http://www.terrorismwatch.org/2015/01/ex-guru-to-charlie-hebdo-killer-is.html>

In a bizarre twist, the former spiritual guide to one of the gunmen behind the mass killing at French satirical weekly Charlie Hebdo was working at the same hospital where some of the massacre's victims were taken.



Farid Benyettou, who was convicted in 2008 of being a holy war recruiter, is a trainee nurse at the emergency services of Pitie-Salpetriere Hospital, Paris Hospitals' spokeswoman Clemence Remy said.

Benyettou, whose past was known to administrators and whose training is almost over, was taken off the roster as a precaution.

He "never had contact with victims from Charlie Hebdo," Remy said in a brief email.



Benyettou's interest in nursing is a long way from his past role as a hard-core fundamentalist Muslim who pointed his followers toward jihad in Iraq. In 2008, he would receive a six-year sentence for conspiracy to commit terrorism.

Among his former students was Cherif Kouachi, one of a pair of brothers who opened fire in and around Charlie Hebdo's office in Paris on Wednesday, killing 12 people. Several more were wounded, and some of the victims were sent to Pitie-Salpetriere. The Kouachi brothers were killed in a standoff with police about 40 kilometers (25 miles) northeast of Paris on Friday. A Facebook message sent to Benyettou wasn't returned. His account was deleted after The Associated Press got in touch.

Islamist Terrorism - a perspective from the West

Source: <http://www.dnaindia.com/analysis/standpoint-islamic-terrorism-a-perspective-from-the-west-2051689>

'Respect for religion' has become a code phrase meaning 'fear of religion.' Religions, like all other ideas, deserve criticism, satire, and, yes, our fearless disrespect.'

- Salman Rushdie on the Charlie Hebdo attacks



Jan 11 – While the Charlie Hebdo hostage situation on January 9 was still unfolding in Paris, 6,500 km away in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, a young man named Raif Badawi was flogged 50 times in public after the prayers. The crowd chanted *Allah-hu Akbar*. His crime: he had created an online blog to discuss ideas of liberty and democracy and was accused of insulting Islam. Raif was sentenced to 10 years of jail last May and has been ordered 1000 lashes (50 lashes every week, for 20 weeks) and a fine of 1 million Riyals (2.6 lakh USD).

Feeling nauseated? Look at another massacre happening in your world, parallel to Charlie Hebdo: 2,000 people are feared dead in one of the most gruesome attacks by the Boko Haram in Nigeria, in the first week of January. The militants sprayed bullets indiscriminately in northern Nigerian villages, leading to the piling up of human bodies everywhere.

The list can go on.

176

These examples illustrate a civilizational clash that radical Islam has created in the modern world. Humanity is witnessing a cultural clash where we have a larger part of the world that believes in freedom of speech and religion and another part of the world which is medieval in its outlook, where human rights of people (and women in particular) are openly subjugated and more astonishingly, where violence is unleashed if you do not agree with them. As if, it is my way or the 'death way'!

The Charlie Hebdo incident has once again brought into focus the issue of Jihad. Its magnitude is nothing close to 9/11 or the Mumbai attack, but the shock it has generated is no less intense. It has raised a question that is staring in our face more acutely than ever: Shall we address the core issue?

Here's the narrative that is being presented after the Charlie Hebdo attack.

David Studer, Standards and Practices Director of Canadian Broadcasting

Corporation (CBC), stated in an internal circular: "Let us not show the cartoons of Prophet Mohammed. Other elements of Charlie Hebdo's content and style are fine, but this area should be avoided, as quite simply, it is offensive to Muslims as a group". In the name of Islam, people are being killed, throats are being slit, kids (Peshawar, Pakistan) are being slaughtered, women are being raped and minorities (Yazidis in Iraq by ISIS) are being persecuted.

After the Charlie Hebdo incidence, **the New York Times editorial board stated:** "This is also no time for peddlers of xenophobia to try to smear all Muslims with a terrorist brush". **Dean Howard, former Vermont Governor and Democratic National Convention (DNC) chair, said:** "Charlie Hebdo attackers are not Muslim terrorists. They are as Muslim as I am".

Hillary Clinton- probable Presidential aspirant for 2016-expressed after the French attack that other side's version too must

be understood. Tarek Fatah – a noted Canadian activist and important voice of liberty in Islam says: "If the object (cartoons in this case) that is central to the whole story is missing, what kind of (media) reporting are you trying to build upon? It may be noted that the media is generally not showing the cartoons so as not to hurt the feelings of Muslims. Tarek notes that the basic principle of journalism is to report the truth or facts and not conclude in the first place!

Therefore, it seems that everyone wants to condemn the violence without condemning the underlying religion. But Somalia-born American activist Ms. Ayaan Hirsi Ali says: "This argument now has become redundant. There is a strong relationship between the violence and Islam. You cannot divorce Islam (religion) from these acts of terrorism."

There is an impression that the left and liberal media in USA is avoiding to examine the issue critically lest it give rise to anti-Islamic sentiments (Islamophobia).

However, this time, some media channels are shooting direct. Fox channel is criticising Obama for equating terrorist attacks with a mere criminal activity. Largely, the political leadership is trying to be politically correct by not linking this issue with religion. But as Peter King (R-NY), member of Homeland Security Committee says: "First, label it 'Islamic Terrorism' and not plain extremism". Another commentator asked: "Have we become politically so correct that we have become suicidal?"

Charlie Hebdo shows that extremism has won again. It seems as if the whole narrative has been handed over to the Islamists! They have 'avenged' the insult of the prophet by killing the satirists. That was the message they wanted to convey and they have apparently succeeded. But, all along in last 20 years, the public at large has been trying to say: "Oh, No, No! Terrorism has no religion. This is not Islam. Let us not link Islam to these attacks. Islam is a peaceful religion."

Does the problem emanate from the spirit of Islam? Tarek Fatah does not mince words when he says: "Let us not even talk about West and violence. Within Islam, there is a running celebration of violence." Looked more carefully, there is a cancer of violence within Islam and the biggest victims of this are Muslims itself. Look at the conflict-stricken Middle East where democracy is not able to

even sleep in. The royalties and kingdoms in the modern times are a telling story.

Tarek says, referring to the battle of Karbala, that we (Muslims) killed the grandson of our own Prophet. Similarly, the whole Ummayad caliphate (700- 800 people) was killed in Damascus in a day around 700 C.E. and the new caliphate of Abbasids had dinner over the dead bodies. In the 14th century, after the Mongols destroyed the Arab sovereignty, Islam evolved out of two characters: Ibn Taymiyyah and Ibn Qudamah. These were the people who created almost a new religion of Islamic ideology that finds itself rooted in Saudi Arabia and Persian Gulf. Ibn Taymiyyah's teachings have a great impact on what we see in today's Salafism, Wahhabism and Jihadism. Needless to say, the Muslim Brotherhood, Al-Qaeda, Taliban, and ISIS all come from that school of thought. In addition, this puritanical form of Islam inherently believes that Arabs belong to a superior race (and the consequent racism that sets into Islam, where by non-Arab Muslims are treated with a sense of inferiority in the Middle East. My Indian and Pakistani friends working in the Middle East will vouch for it).

Is Islam a victim of its own ghetto mentality? Look at the number. **There are 751 official "no-go zones" in France where only Muslims live.** They do not allow French to be taught here, have their own Sharia in these conclaves and are literally segregated from the mainstream society. This is a perpetual situation. Why would you set up ghettos in the Western world where equality, liberty and free speech are the mantra?

Robert Spencer, director of Jihad Watch, explains the reasons behind this. He argues that Islam is a political system as well as religious one. It has a complete system for governance and social order. Thus, the migrating Muslim populations continue to nurture the idea that their system of rules (Sharia) must replace the existing law even in the newly adopted lands. Once Muslim immigrants achieve a threshold, they start pushing or supporting the idea in all earnest. The clash with the culture of land is inevitable.

The exact diagnosis would require that we look at the symptoms more critically. At the root of Islamic extremism lies an ideology that does not have the spirit of liberty and intellectual inquiry. And then there are compounding factors. According



to a Pew Research analysis in 2012, nearly a quarter of the world's countries and territories had anti-blASPHEmy laws or policies, and one-in-ten had laws or policies penalising apostasy. These are most common in the Middle East and North African countries.

Where do we go from Charlie Hebdo? Does the tragedy give us an opportunity? I think it does. **Without raking up xenophobia, honest conversations need to happen within the world communities and within the Islamic community.** The attack on the French magazine raises an issue that has political, security and societal dimensions. There are more than 1.6 billion Muslims in the world. Why is there no outcry among them? The world would be a better place even if a small segment of Muslim population stands up and says: "Enough is enough. Stop killing people in the name of Islam." Why do Imams and Mullahs seem to be more concerned about the burning of Koran rather than continued

incidences of violence and killing in the name of Islam? The answers must come from within Islam and not outside.

Why don't we see any Mahatma Gandhi (who was killed by a fanatic of his own faith, that is, Hinduism) in the Islamic world willing to exhort his own people to bring peace? Why is the US president so lenient to Pakistan, where the doctor who gave crucial information leading to finding of Osama bin Laden, is holed up in jail? Why is the US still giving aid to a country where 150 children were gunned down in a school by the Taliban? The West has to figure out if they will impose an embargo on the Islamic countries or let the medieval mindset continue to nest within pluralistic societies. Islam is at a crossroad and is threatening others more than themselves.

Will a hard look at the problem be welcome or will we like to continue to look the other way?

EDITOR'S COMMENT: Really interesting questions posed in this article! But asking questions is not enough! Not any more! We need both answers and actions that will restore balance in the planet and lead to a peaceful (as much as possible) symbiosis between people who are brought to live for reasons other than dying in horrible ways.

And another interesting approach from a LinkedIn connection from London, UK:

178

As a risk expert look at it closer and give me an honest answer. Here are some clues you might have missed. Start by reading up on the original blasphemy case concerning the release of the 2006 article. This broke the law under the Incitement of religious hatred laws. They did this after the controversy resulting from the Danish publications. Simple put Charlie Hebdo made a large amount of money, daring Muslims to attack and possibly kill innocent French people.

Added to their first publication they were recently paid more to produce the desired result. In this case, terrorists' related deaths. One of the later cartoons posted fairly recently by one of those murdered; pictured a Muslim armed with an AK47 with the caption said: "Still no terrorist attacks in France - Wait, we have until the end of January to send you our best wishes".

Charlie Hebdo knew Muslims take blasphemy very seriously, nevertheless they published their caricatures of the Prophet and they ridiculed him. It was deliberately presented in a provocative manner to produce a desired effect. They wanted a terrorist action in France? All indications imply they were paid to design a motive to implicate or incite hatred against Muslims....

Look at Stephane Charbonnier the editor renowned as someone who prints anything controversial. His wife Jeannette Bourgrab was the former State Secretary of the Ministry of Youth and Community Life. Her father was a Harki Muslim but she describes herself as an Atheist. The Harkis are Algerian Muslims who supported the French army during the Algerian war for Independence. They are classed as traitors by NLF inspired Algerians. It would be easy to get a couple of Algerians to assassinate her husband.

Stephane Charbonnier using Charlie Hebdo knew what he was doing, why it was done and who they did it for. They knew an attack would happen in France and possible when it would happen (January). As such they expected innocent French people to die because of their story.

France was attacked and it happened in their offices. This part they would not have expected. But if it was part of a set-up they should have expected it. From where I am looking whoever wanted these dramatic effects and to set the scene they first had to pay Hebdo? They then had to get rid of the witnesses.



It was not carried out by radicalised Muslims nor was it a couple of young suicide martyrs. These were well trained obviously professionals, dressed in black and well-concealed from any surveillance cameras. In Europe this alone would take planning meaning they planned to escape. This was not consistent to a couple of out of work Algerian immigrants who might have had some training. Nobody could have done this without foreign government support and major financial assets.

After the event they made a calm and flawless escape. This first phase copycats Ambassador Stevens' death and the movies released of the prophet. Next is the Boston Marathon. One also drops his ID-cards in the getaway car. Remember the passport found at the 9-11 crash site. Also in the abandoned getaway car were two Molotov cocktails and two jihadist flags from a different terror group which they claimed to be from????

Do you think we might have been fooled???

Boko Haram is now a mini-Islamic State, with its own territory

Source:<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/nigeria/11337722/Boko-Haram-is-now-a-mini-Islamic-State-with-its-own-territory.html>

After days of razing villages and pitiless massacre, Boko Haram finished the week with its most chilling atrocity.

As people bustled through the Saturday market in the Nigerian city of Maiduguri, a device borne by a ten year-old girl exploded

human bombs as they carve an African "Caliphate" from the plains of northern Nigeria.

Today, Boko Haram controls about 20,000 square miles of territory - an area the size of Belgium.

Within this domain, the black flag of jihad flies over scores of towns and villages scattered across the neighbouring states of Borno and Yobe.

The latest conquest was the fishing town of Baga on the shores of Lake Chad, which fell to the Islamists last Wednesday.

"For five kilometres (three miles), I kept stepping on dead bodies until I reached Malam Karanti village, which was also deserted and burnt," one surviving fisherman, Yanaye Grema, said.

Boko Haram's fighters have now achieved mastery over 11 local government areas with a total population exceeding 1.7 million people, according to the official 2006 census.

Once, the movement's fighters would launch hit-and-run

attacks on defenceless villages. Now, Boko Haram's realm stretches from the Mandara Mountains on the eastern border with Cameroon to Lake Chad in the north and the Yedseram river in the west.

The Nigerian army, crippled by corruption and incompetence, has shown itself unable to resist the jihadist advance.



near the entrance.

A witness said the girl probably had no idea that a bomb had been strapped to her body. The explosion just before lunch killed 20, including the girl, and injured 18, according to the police.

Boko Haram did not immediately claim the attack, but the Islamic insurgents have increasingly used young girls as

179

Last September, Abubakar Shekau, the self-styled "Emir" of Boko Haram, proclaimed his ambition to conquer a "Caliphate" and follow the example of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (Isil).

Diplomats believe this was a logical escalation of Boko Haram's campaign.

"There is a copy-cat element at work here," said Andrew Pocock, the British High Commissioner to Nigeria. "If Isil can declare a Caliphate, then so can we. Boko Haram want to be seen by their peers as grown-up jihadis. They want to show 'we can control territory, we can control a Caliphate'."

There is also a clear practical rationale for Boko Haram to capture territory. "Success - and they have had success - creates a different kind of requirement," added Mr Pocock. "You need a place where you can base yourself and keep equipment and supplies and, indeed, captives. It means that you've got to hold territory."

Shekau has established Boko Haram's unofficial headquarters in the town of Gwoza in Borno state. This stronghold has been chosen with great care.

Gwoza is shielded from attack by the volcanic peaks of the Mandara Mountains spanning the nearby frontier with Cameroon. Most important of all, the surrounding area is the homeland of Shekau's own ethnic group, the Kanuri.

From this base among his brethren, Shekau sends his fighters to strike across a vast area. The border with Cameroon means nothing to Shekau, since it slices directly through the area inhabited by the Kanuri. His men have frequently attacked villages in the neighbouring country, killing 68 of Cameroon's soldiers in the last month alone.

Sometimes, Shekau's goal is to grab more territory - as with the assault on Baga last week. Just as often, he dispatches his fighters on what can only be described as slave raids.

Boko Haram profits greatly from the trade in human beings. Last April, Shekau committed his most infamous act by abducting over 200 schoolgirls from the town of Chibok, about 50 miles south-west of Gwoza, triggering a global campaign to "bring back our girls". By his own admission, the girls were then sold into slavery.

Britain and France stamped out the slave trade in this part of Africa a century ago, but Boko Haram has succeeded in partially reversing this achievement. Today the ancient caravan routes running north across the Sahara are active once more, except that trucks have replaced camels as the means of conveying human cargo.

Boko Haram has expanded to a point where it defies simple categories. Its name is normally translated as "Western education is banned", yet "boko" means "book" in the Hausa language, so "books are banned" would be more accurate.

In part, Boko Haram is a branch of al-Qaeda's brand of jihadism. As well as seizing towns, Shekau's men carry out suicide bombings in Nigerian cities, including Abuja. Like the Taliban in Afghanistan and Isil in Iraq, they have become expert users of improvised explosive devices. In particular, its men have mastered the technique of creating charges that are carefully shaped to destroy armoured vehicles.

In short, Boko Haram have learnt the classic tactics of al-Qaeda. Its operatives have picked up these skills from the jihadist tentacles stretching across the Sahel region of Africa. "Unquestionably, Boko Haram have benefited from the broader Sahelian jihadi network," said Mr Pocock.

Yet at the same time, Boko Haram is a Kanuri tribal insurgency. In addition, the movement works as a criminal gang, profiting from theft, extortion and slave raiding. Shekau amounts to a global jihadist, crime boss and tribal rebel leader - all at the same time.

If there are limits to his ambitions, they have not been imposed by the Nigerian army. The 7th division was specially created to fight Boko Haram and deployed to Borno. In practise, it does little but try to mount a static defence of Maiduguri, the state capital. In common with the rest of the army, it lacks the mobility and the manpower to challenge Boko Haram's control of the surrounding area.

The army may also lack the resolve. Last year, the federal government allocated 20 per cent of its budget to the armed forces - over £4 billion.

180



Yet precious little trickled down to the soldiers in the frontline, who remain poorly armed and equipped. Instead, a large proportion of the military budget simply disappeared into the pockets of senior officers.

Despite being the headquarters of the 7th division, Maiduguri lives under the constant threat of attack.

Oliver Dashe Doeme, the Roman Catholic Bishop in the city, said that 70 of the 150 churches in his diocese had been destroyed by Boko Haram. "We have many parishes which have been sacked and overrun," he said. "Our major concern is not our buildings - it's not the churches themselves - but our people who have been driven away from their homes. Some are living in mountains and forests, some are in Cameroon and some have gone elsewhere in Nigeria."

About 10,000 Catholic refugees have gathered in Maiduguri after fleeing Boko Haram's new domain, added Bishop Doeme.

President Goodluck Jonathan, who faces re-election next month, has declared an emergency in the three states most threatened by the Islamists. But Bishop Doeme has no confidence in the army's ability to recapture the territory lost to Boko Haram.

"Nigeria is a very corrupt nation," he said. "Our main problem is not that Boko

Haram cannot be contained, but that you have a deep-seated corruption in high and low places. Many of our top military officers are gaining from what is happening here because it means that a lot of money is coming in their direction."

Instead of being imposed by the army, the borders of Boko Haram's new domain may be defined by the ethnic patchwork of northern Nigeria.

Shekau is confident of holding the territory inhabited by his fellow Kanuris, but his grip is looser wherever other groups hold sway. He recently withdrew from a string of towns in Adamawa state, perhaps because they were inhabited by non-Kanuris.

Boko Haram possesses armoured personnel carriers, anti-aircraft guns and rocket launchers - in other words, the heavy weapons of a conventional army. Despite all this firepower, the invisible borders of ethnicity may still be a brake on its expansion.

For Bishop Doeme, however, this comes as little consolation. "We have cases here of soldiers deliberately abandoning their armaments," he said.

"There are cases of corrupt senior officers. The president should sack them so there is an example to the others - but that has never happened."

181

Sisi calls for “revolutionizing” Islam

Source: <http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20150112-sisi-calls-for-revolutionizing-islam>



On 28 December 2014, Egyptian president Gen. Abdel Fattah al-Sisi gave an astonishing speech to Islamic scholars at Al-Azhar University in Cairo. Al Azhar, founded in 970, is regarded as the world's oldest and most important center for Islamic studies.

Not less astonishing than the speech was the fact that it was hardly covered in the West, despite its importance.

In his speech Sisi called for “revolutionizing” Islam. Here are the relevant sections:

I am referring here to the religious clerics. We have to think hard about what we are facing — and I have, in fact, addressed this topic a couple of times before [a reference to a speech he made on 14 January 2014]. It's inconceivable that the thinking that we hold most sacred should cause the entire umma [Islamic world] to be a source of anxiety, danger, killing, and destruction for the rest of the world. Impossible!

That thinking — I am not saying “religion” but “thinking” — that corpus of texts and ideas that we have

sacralized over the centuries, to the point that departing from them has become almost impossible, is antagonizing the entire world. It's antagonizing the entire world!

Is it possible that 1.6 billion people [Muslims] should want to kill the rest of the world's inhabitants — that is seven billion — so that they themselves may live? Impossible!

I am saying these words here at Al Azhar, before this assembly of scholars and ulema [religious elite consisting of Islamic of scholars] — Allah Almighty be witness to your truth on Judgment Day concerning that which I'm talking about now.

All this that I am telling you, you cannot feel it if you remain trapped within this mindset. You need to step outside of yourselves to be able to observe it and reflect on it from a more enlightened perspective.

*I say and repeat again that we are in need of a religious revolution. You, imams, are responsible before Allah. The entire world, I say it again, the entire world is waiting for your next move... because this umma**

is being torn, it is being destroyed, it is being lost — and it is being lost by our own hands.

* It is not clear whether in the second instance of referring to umma Sisi means Egypt ("the nation") or whether he is referring, as he did in the first instance, to the entire Islamic world (we may find a clue in the fact that he used the adjective "entire" the first time he referred to umma)

"Is al-Sisi the 'Muslim Martin Luther' people have been waiting for? Almost surely not," writes Jonah Goldberg in *USA Today*. "Al-Sisi, a military man, not a cleric, could be more like an Egyptian Atatürk — the Turkish strongman who modernized and secularized Turkey a century ago."

Goldberg concludes: "What is clear, however, is that this is a big deal. Al-Sisi is doing exactly what Westerners have been crying out for since at least Sept. 11, 2001, if not before that.... Whatever your own view of the man, and whether you think he's sincere, al-Sisi's efforts to combat Muslim extremism — militarily and rhetorically — deserve closer attention, if not now then after the images from Paris fade."

182

There Are More French Muslims Working for French Security than for Al Qaeda

By Olivier Roy

Source: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/olivier-roy/paris-attack-muslim-cliches_b_6445582.html

The attack against the Paris satirical newspaper *Charlie Hebdo* has re-launched an ongoing debate in France about the compatibility between Islam and the West.

The issue is more fraught in Western Europe than in the United States because of the huge number of Muslims who are not only settled there, but who also have citizenship.

By a strange coincidence, on the same day of the deadly attack on *Charlie Hebdo*, we saw the long awaited release of the

most recent novel by the bestselling French author Michel Houellebecq, titled "Submission" ("Soumission"). The book imagines the victory of a moderate Muslim

party in the 2022 French presidential and parliamentary elections.

The issue of the compatibility between Islam and French or Western political culture is no longer confined to the usual suspects: the populist right, conservative Christians or staunch secularists from the left. The issue has become emotional and now pervades the entire political spectrum. The Muslim population -- which does not identify with the terrorists -- now fears an anti-Muslim backlash. Roughly speaking, two narratives are conflicting: the dominant one claims that Islam is the main issue, because it puts loyalty toward the faith community before loyalty to the nation, it does not accept criticism, does not compromise on norms and values and condones specific forms of violence like jihad. For the adherents of this narrative, the only solution is a theological

reformation that would generate a "good" Islam that is a liberal, feminist and gay-friendly religion. Journalists and politicians are always tracking the "good Muslims" and summoning them to show their credentials as "moderate."

On the other side, many Muslims, secular or believers, supported by a multiculturalist left, claim that radicalization does not come from Islam but from disenfranchised youth who are victims of racism and exclusion, and that the real issue is Islamophobia. They condemn terrorism while denouncing the backlash that could in turn radicalize more Muslim youth.

The problem is that both narratives presuppose the existence of a French "Muslim community" of which the terrorists are a sort of "vanguard."

The juxtaposition of these two narratives has created a deadlock. To overcome this, it is necessary to first take into account a number of inescapable facts -- facts which we do not want



to acknowledge because they show us that the radicalized young people are in no way the vanguard or the spokesmen of the Muslim population, and in particular, **that there is no "Muslim community" in France.**

Radicalized young people, who rely heavily on an imagined Muslim politics (the *Ummah* of earlier times) are deliberately at odds with the Islam of their parents, as well as Muslim culture overall.

They invent an Islam which opposes itself to the West. They come from the periphery of the Muslim world. They are moved to action by the displays of violence in the media of Western culture. They embody a generational rupture (parents now call the police when their children leave for Syria), and they are not involved with the local religious community and the neighborhood mosques.

These young people practice self-radicalization on the Internet, searching for a global jihad. They are not interested in the tangible concerns of the Muslim world, such as Palestine. In short, they are not seeking the Islamization of the society in which they live but the realization of their sick fantasy of heroism ("We have avenged the Prophet Muhammad," claimed some of the killers at *Charlie Hebdo*).

The great majority of the converted amongst radicals clearly shows that radicalization is taking place among a marginal fringe of the youth, and not at the heart of the Muslim population.

Beyond clichés

Conversely, one might say, the facts show that French Muslims are more integrated than commonly thought. Each "Islamist" attack has involved at least one Muslim victim amongst the police force -- for example Imad Ibn Ziaten, a French soldier killed by Mohamed Merah in Toulouse in 2012, or the officer Ahmed Merabet, killed when he tried to stop the killers at the *Charlie Hebdo* offices.

Paris' Grand Mosque

Instead of being cited as examples, they are considered counter-examples. The "real" Muslim is said to be the terrorist and the others are the exceptions. But statistically, this is false: **in France, there are more Muslims in the army, the police, and the gendarmes than in the Al Qaeda network, not to mention in government administration, the hospitals, law practices or the educational system.**

Another cliché is that Muslims do not condemn terrorism. But the Internet is overflowing with condemnations and anti-terrorist fatwas.

If the facts contradict the thesis of the radicalization of the Muslim population, then why are they not recognized? Because one attributes to the Muslim population a far-reaching community for which they are, at the same time, criticized for not exhibiting. Muslims are criticized for being a community, but then asked to react against terrorism as a community. **This is called the double bind: be what I ask you not to be.**

183

If, at the local level, in the neighborhoods, there are certain forms of community, such a thing does not exist at the national level. The Muslims of France have never had the desire to put in place representative institutions or even, at the very least, a Muslim lobby. There are no signs pointing toward the beginning of the establishment of a Muslim political party. The candidates of the political sphere who are of Muslim origin are spread out across the French political spectrum (and include the extreme right). There is no "Muslim vote."

There is no network of denominational Muslim schools (less than 10 in France), no mobilization in the street (no demonstrations around a Muslim cause has attracted more than a few thousand people) and almost no grand mosques (which are almost always financed from outside funding). There are only a handful of small local mosques.

If there is an effort at community, it comes from above, from the state, not the citizens. The purported organized representation of the French Council of the Muslim Faith at the Grand Mosque of Paris is held at arm's length by the French government and by foreign governments alike. And it has no local legitimacy. In short, the Muslim "community" suffers from a very Gallic individualism and remains recalcitrant. That is the good news.

Yet, both the left and the right do not cease to speak of that famous Muslim community, either to denounce its refusal to integrate, or to paint it as the victim of Islamophobia. The two opposing narratives are based on the same fantasy of an imaginary Muslim community.

In France, there is not a Muslim community, but a Muslim population. To admit this simple truth would already be a good antidote against the current hysteria, and the hysteria to come.

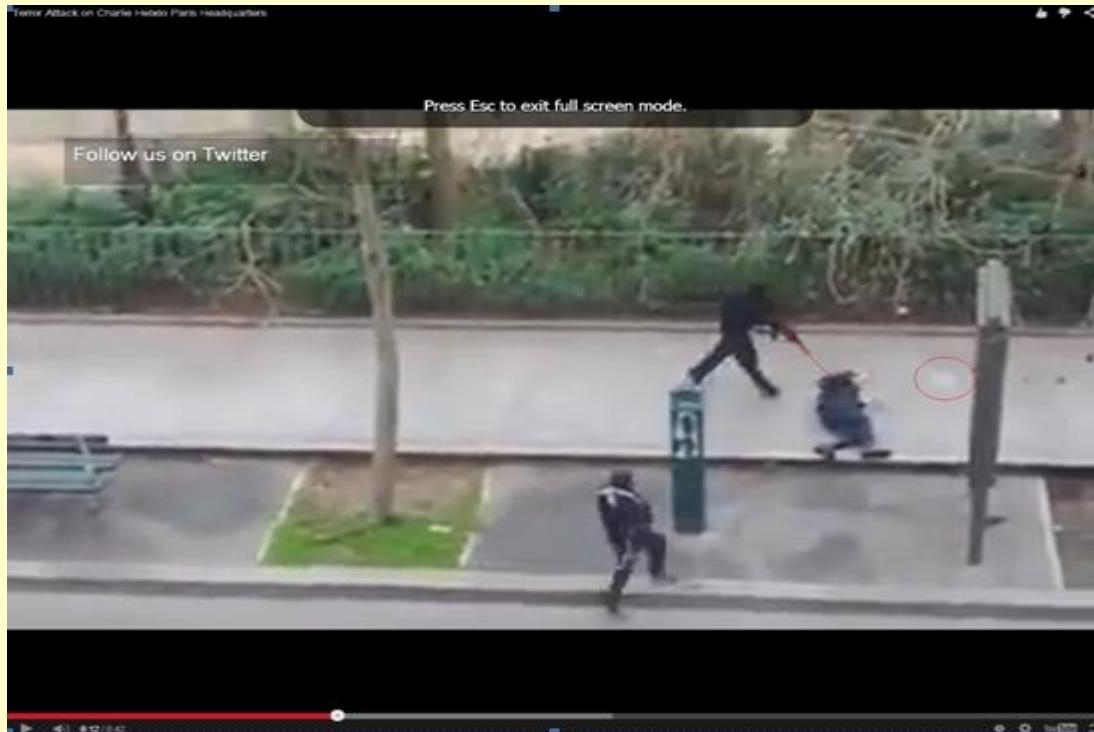
Olivier Roy is with European University Institute; author of "The Failure of Political Islam".



Was the policeman at Charlie Hebdo executed by **this** terrorist?

Source: http://www.liveleak.com/view?i=8d8_1420946135

184



Red line is the expected fire line; red circle is the crash of bullet on the sidewalk (not consistent with fire line); no apparent "blood lake" after shooting with an AK-47 – What is going on?



Debate

Should nations worldwide confiscate passports/IDs of persons intended to travel to Iraq or Syria in order to join jihadists

OR

should nations let them travel but cancel their passports after take off so they would not be able to return to their homelands?

Here's What Makes Paris-Style Terrorist Attacks So Scary

Source: <http://www.terrorismwatch.org/2015/01/heres-what-makes-paris-style-terrorist.html>

This week's assault on Paris does not fit into the mold of what we typically think of as a terrorist attack. The attackers ● employed guns, rather than bombs, ● fled the scene of the initial attack rather than martyring themselves, and ● displayed some level of tactical acumen without it being clear that they were trained professionals.

It's not that commando-style raids have never happened. They just receive less attention than suicide bombings because they more often take place in war zones, where there's less media coverage than in major international cities. A U.N. report released last July, in fact, found that the Taliban had shifted their tactics from improvised explosive devices to gun battles in heavily populated areas.

This is one major reason for the recent increase in civilian casualties in Afghanistan. And this week hundreds are believed to have been killed in a series of shooting raids by Boko Haram on a town in northern Nigeria.

"I would place [the Paris attack] into the 'urban warfare' model of attacks," said Daveed Gartenstein-Ross, a senior fellow at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies and co-author of a 2012 report commissioned by the U.S. Congress on the use of small arms by terrorists. "First, it's an attack that's designed to make use of a broader urban area as a battleground. Second, the attackers intend to survive long enough to extend this out over a couple of days, thus to prolong the terror and keep a place feeling skittish. Urban warfare attacks also often involve taking hostages in one place or another."

The first example of such an attack on a city at peace was Mumbai in 2008, when about two dozen militants from the Pakistani group Lashkar-e-Taiba attacked multiple locations in the Indian city, firing on civilians, setting off explosives, and taking hostages. The attacks "were perceived as being hugely successful, and al-Qaida has been talking about how to emulate this for some time," said Raffaello Pantucci, a terrorism analyst at the Royal United Services Institute in London. In 2010, intelligence services of the United States, Britain, France, and Germany claimed to have disrupted a plan to carry out "Mumbai-style" attacks on several European cities.

Last year's al-Shabab attack on the Westgate shopping mall in Nairobi also fit the mold, involving multiple shooters, hostages, large numbers of casualties, and unfolding over the course of several days.

In the case of the Paris attacks, attention has focused on the possible role of Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula, the networks' Yemen-based affiliate. According to a Reuters report Friday, intelligence officials believe that one of the two brothers who carried out the shootings, Said Kouachi, met with the U.S.-born AQAP cleric Anwar al-Awlaki during a visit to Yemen in 2011 and may have spent time training with the group.

Pantucci says that in terms of its international operations, AQAP "has mainly been focused on getting very complicated and sophisticated bombs onto planes." But, he says, that doesn't mean it's surprising that the group would be involved in something like this. "These

185



guys don't have one methodology and that's it. They're flexible and out to make the maximum impact," he says. The group's English-language magazine, *Inspire*, has suggested a plethora of potential attack methods, and Awlaki had also been in touch with Fort Hood shooter Nidal Hasan.

The appeal of this kind of attack is obvious. As Pantucci puts it, "The marauding-shooter scenario has maximum effect and only really requires people with guns." Commando-style attackers need some training—the Indian government has long alleged that members of Pakistan's intelligence services played a role in training and coordinating the Mumbai attackers—but not necessarily a whole lot. The Paris shooters clearly were well-equipped and weren't complete amateurs, **but also made some major tactical mistakes**. Military experts interviewed by the *Washington Post* have said the Kouachis' shooting stance betrayed a lack of professional training. Plus, they initially got *Charlie Hebdo*'s address wrong.

Given the amount of damage the Paris attack caused and the international attention it has garnered, the natural question is whether we'll

see more attacks of this type in the future. The director of MI5 warned Thursday that Britain is at risk of what are now being called "Paris-style" attacks. (It's worth noting intelligence agencies have a habit of hyping threats to justify their own activities and budgets.) As for the United States, al-Qaida has been suggesting for years that the country is "awash with easily obtainable firearms" that could be used in a jihadist attack.

The good news is that in order for urban-warfare-style attacks to be really effective, they require multiple participants and some amount of coordination. That means they're easier to catch before they happen. "It requires plotters, not just a plotter, and **Western intelligence services are better at stopping groups**," says Gartenstein-Ross.

"Lone wolf" attacks, like those seen in Canada and Australia in recent weeks, are much harder to detect ahead of time but also usually less effective. Though as numerous non-jihadist American shooters have demonstrated in recent years, a lone gunman can also cause a frightening amount of damage under the right circumstances.

186

EDITOR'S COMMENT: Assumptions are right providing the intelligence services are doing their job correctly. Despite the fact that many terrorists' plots have been revealed and neutralized on time in almost all instances that an attack was successful it was an intelligence failure that let the attack happen. Perhaps it is time to upgrade methodologies and tighten the noose the moment sufficient evidents are available. It is desirable to follow a group hoping to lead to the mastermind but rarely happens in real life.

The new war on the press: When satire sparks terrorism

By Howard Kurtz

Source: <http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2015/01/09/new-war-on-press-when-satire-sparks-terrorism/>

When I think of freedom of the press, what comes to mind is the Pentagon Papers, Watergate, Abu Ghraib, NSA surveillance—the tough terrain of investigative reporting. Not the handiwork of people trying to get a few laughs.

Yet satire, it seems, has suddenly become the new battleground for free expression. And that requires some rethinking for all of us.

I love a good comedic skewering as much as the next person. But satire, fairly or not, has always seemed less "serious" than other forms of journalism, more of an indulgence.

Yet as the massacre at Charlie Hebdo reminds us, cartoonists, satirists and funnymen are often on the front lines of very risky battles. Perhaps because their barbs sting in a personal way that news stories and commentary do not. Perhaps because the comedic overlay gives them license to tackle incendiary subjects from which others shy away.

And here's the rub: Sometimes what they peddle is truly offensive—maybe to me, maybe to you. And that makes it harder to defend.



Who wants to go to bat for the Piss Christ photo, or the Virgin Mary covered in cow dung, or depictions of Mohammad that obviously make Muslims angry? But we must defend the right to publish, if not the content. Free speech is meaningless if it doesn't apply to unpopular, even repulsive speech.

If you think about the North Korean-backed hacking of Sony Pictures, it was triggered by a movie whose idea of comedy was a plot to assassinate Kim Jung Un that ends with his head exploding. That, as I said at the time, was an incredibly stupid and needlessly provocative project. Yet I also ripped Sony for caving to threats and deep-sixing the film before bowing to public and Hollywood pressure and making "**The Interview**" available. In America, you have the right to make a moronic movie.

Nor would I defend the content of such Charlie Hebdo cartoons as one in which rolls of toilet paper were marked "Bible," "Torah" and "Quran," with the caption: "In the toilet, all religions." But the satirical French newspaper has the right to publish outrageously offensive material without being attacked by terrorists.

The issue has surfaced before because of Charlie Hebdo's poke-in-the-eye editorial approach. The paper's offices were firebombed in 2011 after it published a cartoon mocking Muhammad. The following year, both the White House spokesman and the French foreign minister criticized the newspaper—but not it's right to publish—for another Muhammad cartoon following the Benghazi attack that the administration initially blamed on an anti-Islam film.

Howard Kurtz is a Fox News analyst and the host of "MediaBuzz. He is the author of five books and is based in Washington.

Worth reading about:

Satire

Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Satire>

Satire is a genre of literature, and sometimes graphic and performing arts, in which vices, follies, abuses, and shortcomings are held up to ridicule, ideally with the intent of shaming individuals, corporations, government or society itself, into improvement. Although satire is usually meant to be humorous, its greater purpose is often constructive social criticism, using wit as a weapon and as a tool to draw attention to both particular and wider issues in society.

A feature of satire is strong irony or sarcasm—"in satire, irony is militant"—but parody, burlesque, exaggeration, juxtaposition, comparison, analogy, and double entendre are all frequently used in satirical speech and writing. This "militant" irony or sarcasm often

Stephane Charbonnier, the paper's courageous editor and one of the 12 killed in Wednesday's attack, told ABC in 2012: "We can't live in a country without freedom of speech. I prefer to die than to live like a rat."

Chuck Lane made the broader point in his Washington Post column: "It turns out that such political jesters take big risks, bigger than perhaps even they realize or anticipate — and the repercussions affect us all.

"Yet it is vitally important that the United States and all other Western democracies rally to their unequivocal defense."

Lane faulted the officials who criticized Charlie Hebdo in 2012 for "mixed messages" that ran the risk of conveying "how dangerous it is to give violent extremists a veto over what your citizens can and cannot say."

The Washington Post ran one of Charlie Hebdo's Muhammad cartoons in a gesture of solidarity yesterday. Other news organizations, including Fox News, CNN, the AP and the New York Times, have since made an editorial decision against running the images. Some critics say that's cowardly; I think it's a tough call.

I would prefer that they continue aggressive reporting, commentary and, yes, satire if warranted against Islamic terrorists and those who would extinguish free speech at the point of a gun.

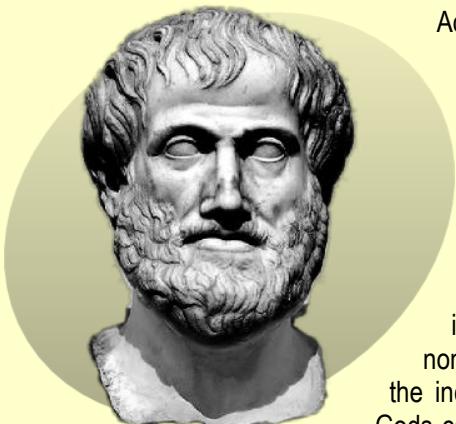
In one encouraging sign, Google, Guardian Media and several French publishers have donated money to ensure that Charlie Hebdo will publish next week. That is a message that even terrorists can understand.



professes to approve of (or at least accept as natural) the very things the satirist wishes to attack. Satire is nowadays found in many artistic forms of expression, including literature, plays, commentary, television shows, and media such as lyrics.

Parody

Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parody>



According to Aristotle (*Poetics*, ii. 5), Hegemon of Thasos was the inventor of a kind of parody; by slightly altering the wording in well-known poems he transformed the sublime into the ridiculous. In ancient Greek literature, a *parodia* was a narrative poem imitating the style and prosody of epics "but treating light, satirical or mock-heroic subjects". Indeed, the components the Greek word are παρά *para* "beside, counter, against" and ὄδει *oidē* "song". Thus, the original Greek word παρωδία *parodia* has sometimes been taken to mean "counter-song", an imitation that is set against the original. The *Oxford English Dictionary*, for example, defines parody as imitation "turned as to produce a ridiculous effect". Because *par-* also has the non-antagonistic meaning of *beside*, "there is nothing in *parodia* to necessitate the inclusion of a concept of ridicule". Old Comedy contained parody, even the Gods could be made fun of. *The Frogs* portrays the hero-turned-god Heracles as a Glutton and the God of Drama Dionysus as cowardly and unintelligent. The traditional trip to the Underworld story is parodied as Dionysus dresses as Heracles to go to the Underworld, in an attempt to bring back a Poet to save Athens.

Roman writers explained parody as an imitation of one poet by another for humorous effect. In French Neoclassical literature, parody was also a type of poem where one work imitates the style of another to produce a humorous effect. The Ancient Greeks created satyr plays which parodied tragic plays, often with performers dressed like satyrs.

188

Muslim mayor of Rotterdam Ahmed Aboutaleb tells Islamists to 'pack your bags' and 'f**k off' on live TV

Source: <http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/muslim-mayor-rotterdam-ahmed-aboutaleb-tells-islamists-pack-your-bags-fck-off-live-tv-1483127>



Moroccan-born Mayor of Rotterdam, Ahmed Aboutaleb, tells Islamists to pack their bags and leave.



The Muslim mayor of the Dutch city of Rotterdam has told Muslims who turn their back on freedom to "pack your bags" and "f**k off", live on television.

Ahmed Aboutaleb told NewsHour of his anger at the refusal of a number of Muslims to adapt to their new surroundings, which he said he has done after living in Holland since 1976.

"It is incomprehensible that you can turn against freedom... But if you don't like freedom, for heaven's sake pack your bags and leave," he said.

"There may be a place in the world where you can be yourself, be honest with yourself and do not go and kill innocent journalists. And if you do not like it here because humorists

you do not like make a newspaper, may I then say you can f**k off.

"This is stupid, this so incomprehensible. Vanish from the Netherlands if you cannot find your place here. All those well-meaning Muslims here will now be stared at".

Over half of Rotterdam's population consists of ethnic minorities and non-native residents.

Aboutaleb is Moroccan-born and became the mayor of Rotterdam in 2008. According to Breitbart, he was initially criticised by anti-Islam parties within the Netherlands but has outlasted the stigma of his faith.

This is not the first time that he has made controversial comments about Dutch Muslims, in 2004 he said that if they did not wish to

practice Dutch values they could "catch the first plane out".

Aboutaleb is not the only Dutch politician to speak out against Muslims who are perceived as being against Dutch values.

Party for Freedom (PVV) leader Geert Wilders has been under police protection since 2004 for his statements on Islam.

"Anyone who expresses support for terror as a means to overthrow our constitutional democracy, as far as I'm concerned, should leave the country at once," he told the Hague last September.

"If you are waving an Islamic State [IS] flag, you are waving an exit ticket. Leave!"



White House: Refusal to Describe Attacks As 'Radical Islamic Terrorism' A Question Of 'Accuracy'

Source: <http://www.breitbart.com/big-government/2015/01/13/white-house-refusal-to-describe-attacks-as-radical-islamic-terrorism-a-question-of-accuracy/>

Press Secretary Josh Earnest defended President Obama and White House officials for refusing to describe the terrorist attacks in Paris as a consequence of radical Islamic terrorism.

Earnest explained to White House reporters during the press briefing that this is a question of "accuracy."

"We want to describe exactly what happened. These are individuals who carried out an act of terrorism, and they later tried to justify that act of terrorism by invoking the religion of Islam in their own deviant view of it," he said.

Critics of Obama have questioned his refusal to identify the terrorist actions as an act of radical Islamic terrorism.

"You cannot win a battle against radical Islamic terrorism if you're unwilling to utter the words 'radical Islamic terrorism,'" Sen. Ted Cruz said last June.

"[W]e have not chosen to use that label because it doesn't seem to accurately describe what had happened," Earnest said.

Earnest explained that the White House didn't want to be in a position of "legitimizing" an "illegitimate justification" for violent actions, calling the ideology of the terrorists a "distorted deviant view of Islam."

He reminded reporters that reports suggested one of the victims of the terrorist attack in Paris was a Muslim as well as one of the hostages at the Kosher grocery store.

He noted that the violent actions were "roundly condemned" by Muslim leaders in Paris and that French Muslims marched with French Jews and French Christians in opposition to the attacks.

189

EDITOR'S COMMENT: I am sure most of us do not like to be called "idiots" out in the open!

Dramatic new footage of Islamist gunmen's rampage emerges, showing the killers calmly stopping to reload their weapons before firing at police as they drive towards them

Source: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2908675/Dramatic-new-video-shows-Kouachi-brothers-apparently-shooting-police-car-Charlie-Hebdo-attacks.html>

- Said and Cherif Kouachi took on French police in shocking Paris gun fight
- They were making their escape after massacring Charlie Hebdo journalists



- Opened fire on police car which confronted them in a narrow city street
- Used doors for cover and shot at policemen, who retreated from the killers
- Video shows them chanting: 'we have avenged the Prophet Muhammad'



Police car intercepts terrorists' black car



Terrorists fire against police car that retreats



Terrorists' car pass in front of the police car

► Watch the video at source's URL

EDITOR'S COMMENT: In our modern digital era nothing remains hidden from public audience. This video simply shows that police crew: (1) were not trained for this scenario; and (2) did not have the proper weaponry to counter opponents AKs. If things were different, then this police crew could have given an end to the long story to follow...

190



Since the start of the millennium, suicide attacks have become a common mode of operation for many terrorist groups around the world, particularly Sunni Salafist jihadi organizations affiliated with global jihad. For them, suicide attacks are not only an effective tactic for causing death and destruction and sowing terror; they are also a trademark and proof of the willingness of their operatives to sacrifice themselves for the sake of God (*fi sabil Allah*). As in previous years, in 2014 these organizations were responsible for most of the

Suicide Attacks in 2014: The Global Picture

Source: <http://i-hls.com/2015/01/suicide-attacks-2014-global-picture/>

suicide attacks around the world. These attacks disproved (once again) the claim that most suicide attacks are perpetrated against foreign occupiers. In fact, only about 3 percent of all suicide attacks were aimed at foreign armies. Most were directed against governmental or military targets or local security forces, or were perpetrated in the context of religious and sectarian rivalry.

In 2014 there were 592 suicide attacks, a 94 percent increase over the previous year, which caused the deaths of approximately 4,400 people (compared to some 3,200 in 2013).¹ This trend was influenced by three main factors: The turmoil in the Middle East, which causes governmental

instability and allows non-state organizations to grow stronger; the meteoric rise of the Islamic State (IS) as an influential player in the region and the world; and the US withdrawal from Afghanistan.

The figures for 2014 include some noteworthy trends:

1. In the Middle East, there was an increase in the number of suicide attacks over 2013. There were about 370 attacks with a death toll of about 2,750 (compared to 163 attacks in 2013 and a death toll of some 1,950). The increase was especially evident in Iraq (271 in 2014 vs. 98 in 2013), Yemen (29 vs. 10), Lebanon (13 vs. 3), and Libya (11 vs. 1). The number of attacks carried out in Syria (41) remained the same. In Egypt, there were 4 suicide attacks (compared with 6 the previous year).
2. There was also an increase in the number of suicide attacks in the non-Arab Muslim world and in Africa. For several years, Afghanistan has been at the top of the list (124 suicide attacks in 2014 compared to 65 the previous year). In Pakistan, where suicide attacks are also common, the figures for 2014 and 2013 were similar (36 vs. 35). The number of attacks in Africa increased, particularly in Nigeria (32 in 2014 as opposed to 3 the previous year) and Somalia (19 vs. 14).
3. There was an increase in suicide attacks by women (15 in 2014 vs. 5 the previous year). Most were in Nigeria (16 blew themselves up in 13 attacks, and another 4 were caught before carrying out the attack). There were also other female suicide bombers, one in Djibouti and one in Kobane in Syria.

The turmoil that has gripped the Middle East since the Arab Spring began in late 2010 continues to fuel instability in many countries in the region, chief among them Iraq, Syria (where the turbulence is spilling over into Lebanon), Libya, and Yemen. IS conquests in Iraq and Syria, followed by the mid-2014 declaration of the Islamic caliphate by IS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, led to an escalation in violence, including the widespread use of suicide attacks by the group; some 382 suicide bombers participated in these attacks. Indeed, many of the suicide bombers operating in Iraq were foreign IS volunteers. The organization rarely took responsibility for suicide attacks, but presumably it was responsible for the vast majority of the attacks carried out in Iraq.

Seventy-one percent of the attacks in Iraq were directed against the security forces – military checkpoints, bases, police stations, and soldiers. Seventeen percent were aimed at civilian targets. Six percent of all targets were political – government buildings and polling stations – while 3 percent of the attacks were against targets of a religious nature, namely, mosques and mourner tents. The number of suicide attacks in Iraq in 2014 was the highest since 2008 and accounted for 45 percent of all such attacks in the world that year.

Some 420 people died in suicide attacks in Syria, most of which (78 percent) were aimed at security targets. IS took responsibility for 11 attacks in Syria, and Jabhat al-Nusra for 4 (a total of some 36.5 percent of the attacks). There were no claims of responsibility for the other 26 attacks. The conflict continued to spill over from Syria into Lebanon, where 13 suicide attacks took place (as opposed to 3 the year before). Jabhat al-Nusra took responsibility for 7 of the attacks, IS for 2, the Free Sunnis of Baalbek for 2, and the Abdullah Azzam Brigades for one. There was one attack for which no organization claimed responsibility.

In Yemen, 20 of the attacks were against security forces. The other 9, which were carried out against the backdrop of political rivalry and the ethnic-religious divide in the country, were directed against the Shiite population, and in particular, the Houthi community. Most of the attacks in Libya were against security targets, while one was directed at the Parliament and another, in the center of town, was aimed at civilians. In the background is the fighting between Islamists and government forces for control of the state, which has been disintegrating since the fall of the Muammar Qaddafi regime.

In 2014, the number of suicide attacks in Egypt remained relatively small, even though there was a large increase in terrorist activity in the country in general and the Sinai Peninsula in particular, which claimed many victims in the Egyptian security forces. During Operation Protective Edge the Egyptians thwarted an attempt by Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis to send a suicide bomber from Sinai to the Kerem Shalom border crossing in Israel as an expression of the group's support for the Palestinians in Gaza. There were also reports in the Israeli media, unconfirmed by Israeli military sources, that

191



Hamas made use of a number of suicide bombers during the fighting against the IDF in the Gaza Strip.

Against the backdrop of the withdrawal of Western forces from **Afghanistan** in late 2014, fighting continues between the Taliban and its partners on the one hand, and the army and NATO forces on the other. Most of the attacks in Afghanistan were directed at local security targets (about 53 percent), foreign security targets (some 14 percent), and civilian targets (about 15 percent). In **Pakistan** too, most of the suicide attacks were aimed at security targets (some 58 percent), while about 25 percent were directed at civilian targets. These attacks were part of the fierce battle that is raging between the Pakistani government on one side, and the Pakistani Taliban and its affiliates from the Haqqani Network and al-Qaeda on the other.

In Africa, attacks by Boko Haram, which declared an Islamic emirate in **Nigeria**, were especially prominent. (The group was responsible for the abduction of more than 200 school girls who were forced to convert to Islam and are still being held hostage.) The 32 suicide attacks carried out by the group in 2014 accounted for about half of all such attacks it has perpetrated since it had recourse to this method in 2011. About 500 people were killed in Boko Haram suicide attacks in 2014; the female suicide bombers who operated in Nigeria were sent by the organization. The suicide attacks were aimed mainly at civilian targets (59 percent), security targets (25

percent), and Shiite religious targets (12.5 percent).

In 2014, all the suicide attacks **in Somalia** were carried out by the al-Qaeda-affiliated Somali al-Shabab, which claimed responsibility for the vast majority. Most of the attacks were against security targets (52 percent) and political targets (42 percent). Al-Shabab also used a female suicide bomber to carry out an attack in Djibouti. According to the group, the attack was in response to Djibouti's participation in the forces of the African Union. In 2013, the military campaign in **Mali**, which included African Union forces aided by French forces, was the background to a wave of suicide attacks. However, in 2014, there was a marked decline in Mali in suicide attacks.

In conclusion, suicide attacks will likely continue in 2015 and beyond, given the ongoing instability in various countries; the large number of ethnic-religious conflicts; and the strengthening of global jihadi elements, primarily IS and al-Qaeda and its affiliates, which see suicide attacks as a proven means of struggle and an article of faith. Terrorist organizations affiliated with global jihad that use suicide bombers now have a stronger presence in the countries bordering Israel, and Israel must prepare for the possibility that some of their attacks will be directed against it. Such a development could spur Israel's traditional enemies, Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and other local groups inspired by global jihad and Islamic State, to join in the growing suicide attack phenomenon.

192

US military equipment stockpiled for possible battle vs. ISIS

Source: <http://i-hls.com/2015/01/us-military-equipment-stockpiled-possible-battle-vs-isis/>

There are signs that the U.S is preparing a ground offensive against ISIS in Iraq.



ambush-protected vehicles known as MRAPs – are parked. This, in addition to electronic equipment and other supplies, the magazine reported, citing defense officials.

The U.S. military has been stockpiling huge quantities of gear in **Kuwait** in preparation for shipping it across the border into Iraq for possible use in a coordinated offensive against the terrorist group Islamic State, according to U.S. News & World Report.

The gear is being housed near a busy commercial port, which is now the place where roughly 3,100 vehicles – mostly

The gear, which is primarily from the U.S. Army, will be repaired and assessed for use as planners decide what the United States and its allies will need to defeat Islamic State, also known as ISIS.



Fox News reported that the U.S. military is planning a massive spring offensive to help Iraqi and Kurdish Peshmerga fighters take back territory from Islamic State.

193

Coastal defense element in a Spanish port

Source: <http://i-hls.com/2015/01/israeli-technology-major-coastal-defense-element-spanish-port/>

Securing seaports and defending them has unfolded as a key priority in recent years. **The threat posed by terrorist organization sets its eyes on coastal facilities and ports as veritable “underbellies”.**

Securing the large area ports often occupy is a tall order. Recent years have seen Israeli technology play a prominent role in meeting the requirements this entails.

MAGAL Security Systems is a major player in this sector, thanks to unique proprietary technology it had



developed for perimeter defense of sensitive facilities of all kinds.

It was recently announced that Phase 2 of the Tarragona Port Upgrade project in Spain, designed to have the port ISPS-ready, will be performed by MAGAL Spain. This is a fully owned MAGAL S³ subsidiary. The project is estimated at \$2.1 million.

The challenge MAGAL has faced head



on was far from simple. "ISPS standard code is far from detailed," says Hagai Katz, Senior V.P., Marketing & Business Development. "This code does not specify what systems to apply. Nevertheless,



it does set the security policy in the framework of which one has to exercise one's own judgment in order to receive the UN's international Maritime Organization (IMO).

As it often happens elsewhere, the security systems at Tarragona Port have been set up piecemeal over the years, so they are not coordinated. Katz explains: "A smart fence, control gates, public announcement system, Infrared detectors, and video cameras – these various systems did not interface with one another at all. This has two primary ramifications: **first**, managerial sources and manpower are wasted, tasked as they are with establishing manual integration between systems. **Secondly**, you cannot receive the big picture from all the systems together, and you cannot have data layers per various attributes."

During the first phase, MAGAL S³ integrated a PSIM system which GIS-linked all the local systems. PSIM enables grouping various fragments of each system into one picture, based on a geographical criterion, or on another feature.

The second phase consisted on installing detectors in the aesthetic perimeter fence, linking up existing cameras and adding 150 new ones. "In the course of the second phase, we installed long range thermal cameras, which reach far into the sea," add Katz. "The VMD systems we integrated into these cameras help screen the irrelevant background movements this area has in abundance."

The project is valued at \$2.1 million.

194

U.K. anti-radicalization strategy is not working: Critics

Source: <http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20150114-u-k-antiradicalization-strategy-is-not-working-critics>

Jan 14 – **The surge in young Britons flocking to Syria and the Middle East to join radical Islamist groups, including the Islamic State, is a result of failed policies and inadequate funding for anti-radicalization efforts, according to counterterrorism experts.**

British officials are dealing with the issue inadequately, contributing to radicalization in the United Kingdom, says Fiyaz Mughal, a former anti-extremism adviser to Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg, and currently director of interfaith and anti-extremist

organization Faith Matters. Mughal insists that while the previous Labor government invested in projects that work with vulnerable Muslim communities, the current government has taken a "laser-type approach," which has led to major "gaps in adequate anti-radicalization strategy."

In 2007 the Labor government established **Prevent, a counterterrorism strategy, along with other policy elements — Pursue, Protect, and Prepare.** Prevent was intended to deter individuals from becoming radicalized, but Mughal believes that the government needs a broader approach to carry out Prevent. "The laser-type approach is taken to ensure that the government is not seen to be spending public money in a way that is seen as frivolous since that is what this coalition accused the previous government of. In doing so, they also need to review the capacity, penetration, and capability of organizations they are supporting and to also ensure that they are innovative, consistent, proactive, and working on a continuous basis," Mughal said.

Haras Rafiq, head of counter-extremism think tank Quilliam Foundation, agrees that the U.K. government is failing to tackle radicalism at its roots. He explains that Prevent was designed in two parts — a "sharp" end aimed at providing interventions post-radicalization, and a "soft" end which works with communities and local partners to build resilience amongst young Muslims when they are introduced to radical elements.

"At the sharp end, which was assigned to the Home Office in 2011, they are doing quite a good job since there hasn't been a terrorist attack since the 7/7 bombings and Lee Rigby. What they have failed to do however, is to prevent radicalism in the first place. And they continue to do so," Rafiq said.

Newsweek reports that Mughal wants the U.K. government to reexamine its current counter-extremism strategy and allocation of funds. "Some of the groups they fund have no penetration at all into Muslim communities yet

they continue to fund them. Also, many are simply not proactive enough." Mughal's organization, Faith Matters, does not currently receive government funding for its anti-radicalization efforts, although he believes Faith Matters works with the most vulnerable youths.

Labor MP Hazel Blears, a member of parliament's Intelligence and Security Committee who introduced the Prevent program when she was counterterrorism minister, is also disappointed with the current anti-radicalization strategy. "In recent years I do not feel enough has been done by the government to support councils and other public organizations and community bodies in working with people at risk of being radicalized," she said. Blears wants the Home Office and local law enforcement agencies better to collaborate and be proactive. The current strategy is "focusing only on people who have already been radicalized," but she warns, "prevention is better than cure." Blears adds that more government support for Muslim leaders who are developing a counter-ideology strategy would be helpful.

In response to criticism, the Home Office points out that the prime minister established the Extremism Task Force to improve the government's approach to fighting extremism. In addition to Prevent, the Home Office will soon initiate a counter-extremism strategy that tackles all forms of extremism. "That strategy will aim to build up the public sector and civil society to identify all forms of extremism, so we can confront it, challenge it and defeat it," the office wrote in a statement.

Since 2011 the Home Office has trained over 100,000 frontline public sector workers to identify and prevent extremism. The Home Office notes that it has "excluded more preachers of hate than any other government and successfully having taken down over 65,000 pieces of unlawful terrorist-related material from the Internet."

195

Turkey Will Fight Islamic Extremism, as Soon as It Finds Some

Originally published under the title, "How Turkey Fights Extremism: 'Do Not Keep Pet Dogs at Home!'"

By Burak Bekdil

Source: <http://www.meforum.org/4973/turkey-will-fight-islamic-extremism-as-soon-as-it>

Turkey cannot be serious about fighting Islamist extremism. In the first place, Turkey's leader, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, does not believe "Islamic terror" exists.

Recently, Erdogan fabricated a new acronym for the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), or "Daesh" in Arabic, by taking out the word "Islamic," creating "Deas." Last week, the Turkish military HQ and Foreign Ministry [started to refer](#) to ISIL as "Deas" on their web pages.

The Paris attacks have, once again, unmasked the Turkish leaders' stubborn Islamist ideologies. Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu rushed to Paris to march with world leaders in protest of the attacks. But once again, his words left millions puzzled. Islam, Davutoglu [said](#), is the "most fundamental element of the European continent." Furthermore, in a not-so-hidden euphemism for the Islamic lands, Davutoglu reminded us that the terrorists who attacked the satire magazine, *Charlie Hebdo*, in Paris "did not grow up in Muslim countries; instead they grew up in Paris."

Turkish politicians are not shy about going as far as to claim that the Paris attack could be a non-Muslim conspiracy to fuel Islamophobia in the Western world. A member of parliament from Turkey's ruling Justice and Development Party [AKP] has [claimed that the attack](#) was "staged like a movie scene." Ali Sahin sent a series of tweets saying the lack of traffic in the Paris street during the attack was "thought-provoking" and that it seemed "as if it was a movie scene." He also claimed that the "Allahu Akbar" (Allah is greater) rallying cry of the assailants was "a fabricated mise-en-page [layout]," apparently mixing up the French phrase "*mise-en-scène*."

Turkey's Islamic clergy is far from having a pro-democracy, liberal mindset, with apparently no interest in offering a less-Islamist, more liberal, alternative to the Turks. Take, for instance, Turkey's top Muslim cleric, Professor Mehmet Gormez. Speaking to a press conference in the aftermath of the Paris attacks, [Gomez said](#) that the use of Islamic symbols by the perpetrators of the attack is a sign of "a perception manipulation." In other words, Professor Gormez thinks it was a "false flag" operation: someone else carried out the attacks and put the blame on Muslims.

In 2012, as part of efforts to fight Islamophobia and boost interfaith dialogue, Gomez visited Denmark, home of cartoonist Kurt Westergaard, who then (and probably even to this day) was living under police protection, because he had drawn "blasphemous caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad" seven years earlier. Prior to that visit, this author [made a suggestion](#) to Gomez:

Mr. Gomez, since you are visiting Denmark with the purpose of fighting Islamophobia, perhaps you can do a great service for your objective. Denmark is a small country, and Arhus is not too far away from Copenhagen. So, Mr. Gomez, you can always go to Arhus and visit Mr. Westergaard and start your interfaith dialogue. I am sure Mr. Westergaard and his heavy police protection would welcome you ... But can you do it, Mr. Gomez?

196

Of course, he did not visit Westergaard.

The government institute that Gomez heads, the Religious Affairs Directorate (or *Diyanet* in Turkish), enjoys a huge budget (including funds to buy a \$400,000, [chauffeur-driven Mercedes](#) for Gomez) to eradicate misunderstandings and false knowledge about Islam. When the Islamist extremists in Paris were probably putting the final touches on their gruesome plan, *Diyanet* was busy issuing fatwas and publishing a religious calendar for three million or so desks and walls in offices and homes.

For instance, *Diyanet* recently issued a fatwa that urges [Muslims who have tattoos](#) to repent if they are unable to erase them. [Another fatwa](#) was mentioned in *Diyanet's* 2015 calendar. "Do not keep pet dogs at home ... Prophet Mohammed once said: 'Angels do not visit homes where there are dogs and paintings.'"

It is perfectly normal that the social fiber cannot remain sterile and sane as the dominant state ideology, and official Islamic teachings, feature such absurdity. Abdurrahman Dilipak, a columnist for the pro-government, Islamist *Yeni Akit* newspaper [wrote](#):

Now cry, Paris!... These people [who perpetrated the Paris attacks] have nothing to lose. There are many young ones who want to take revenge on those who condemned them to a life full of sins; many young ones who want to take revenge instead of committing suicide."

Yeni Akit also ran a [story](#) that said the "anti-terror" march in Paris this week turned into a show of terrorists. The newspaper deliberately put the word terror inside quotation marks in a sign that it does not agree the Paris attacks were acts of terror. And the march had turned into a "show of terrorists" because protesters had waved pro-Kurdish flags as well as flags of the "terrorist state Israel."



Yeni Akit is not a marginal newspaper. One of its staff often is invited to Erdogan's or Davutolu's private jet during flights to foreign countries, a privilege enjoyed by only a handful of lucky journalists. This is Turkey's own fight against radical Islamist terror, which it claims does not exist. Everything will be fine if Turks stopped sporting tattoos or keeping pet dogs at their homes, while journalists who are Erdogan's protégés keep on shouting: "Now cry, Paris!"

Burak Bekdil, based in Ankara, is a columnist for the Turkish daily Hürriyet and a fellow at the Middle East Forum.

The black market for weapons in Europe serves terror cells

Source: <http://i-hls.com/2015/01/black-market-weapons-europe-serves-terror-cells/>

"Marine and land containers are used to smuggle huge numbers of weapons to Europe and they are in the hands of terror cells," an Israeli security experts told i-HLS.

The Charlie Hebdo shooters used AK-47 assault rifles, a firearm that is smuggled all around the EU's open borders.

According to *International Business Times*, despite stringent firearms controls and ramped-up efforts to combat illegal gun trafficking, thousands of "war weapons" remain strewn across the European Union's 28 member states. Many, like the AK-47 assault rifles used by the gunmen who fired at the staff inside the *Charlie Hebdo* offices in Paris on Wednesday, are bought by gun collectors, organized crime affiliates and, as was the case this week, terrorists.

There is no definitive count, but the bloc estimates that around half a million lost or stolen firearms remained unaccounted for



within the EU. And that only accounts for weapons that were once registered and later went missing.

Many of the automatic "war weapons" are illegally trafficked from the Balkan Peninsula and former Soviet Bloc states, where millions of leftover arms from the Croatian, Bosnian and Kosovo wars are regularly stolen, bought and transferred in small numbers, mostly to organized crime clients in Southern Europe, according to Gunpolicy.org.

In France, there are an estimated 10 million to 20 million illegal weapons alone, according to a Christian Science Monitor report.

Israeli experts said that the open borders policy in the EU makes it very easy to smuggle weapons in "huge numbers" from country to country. Some of the weapons are being offered on the Deep Web and price lists are published there.

197

Belgian arms dealer confesses to supplying Paris attackers

Source: <http://www.haaretz.com/news/world/1.637034>

Jan 14 – The terrorists who perpetrated the attacks in Paris last week got their weapons from an arms dealer in Brussels.

The dealer, a known figure in Brussels' underworld, turned himself in to local police on Tuesday, according to Belgian media.

Federal police, who searched the suspect's apartment, found papers linking him to a transaction with Amedy Coulibaly, the jihadist who murdered four Jewish men and held

others hostage at the Hyper Cacher kosher supermarket in east Paris on Friday.

According to the local press, the man sold Coulibaly the Skorpion submachine guns he used in the attack, as well as the rocket propelled grenade launcher and the Kalashnikov automatic assault rifles that Said and Cherif Kouachi used to perpetrate the massacre at the

offices of Charlie Hebdo. The weapons were purchased near the Midi railway station in downtown Brussels for less than 5,000 euros, according to the reports.

French media reports Wednesday morning said that the funding for the arms purchase was simply a standard loan of 6,000 euros (\$7,050) that Coulibaly took out on December 4 from the French financial-services firm Cofidis. He used his real name but falsely stated his monthly income on the loan declaration, a statement the company didn't bother to check, the reports say.

The suspect, a known arms smuggler and dealer in the underworld, from the town of Charleroi, turned himself in on Tuesday to the Charleroi police and asked to confess to supplying the



weapons. He told police that a few months ago Coulibaly had initiated contact with him, seeking to buy a car. The man said that once he realized that Coulibaly was a jihadist terrorist, he feared that the detectives would reach him because of the link between them.

In a search of his apartment, police found not only the papers regarding the car sale, but also proof of Coulibaly's other purchases — arms and ammunition. According to a police source

quoted in the Belgian newspaper La Libre, the documents seized in the dealer's apartment also contain evidence of the transaction involving the 7.62-millimeter Tokarev rifle that Coulibaly carried when he burst into the Hyper Cacher supermarket and opened fire, killing four.

From cocaine in banknotes to airport bomb detection: chromatography

Source: <http://i-hls.com/2015/01/cocaine-banknotes-airport-bomb-detection-chromatography/>

What could detecting cocaine on bank notes possibly have in common with airport screening?



As some of us just noticed over the holiday season, some air travelers have been subjected to a swab at the airport to test clothes and baggage for explosives. But have you ever wondered how airport security actually works? The answer is chromatography coupled with mass spectrometry. Contemporary detectors harness analytical chemistry for monitoring and screening.

Although instrumental chromatography is a mature technology (the first instruments were produced just after WWII), new applications frequently pop up. Some are a matter of scale. Pharmaceutical companies that produce monoclonal antibodies (often used in cancer treatments) make use of capture chromatography to purify their products.

On an industrial scale, these can be tens of centimeters in diameter and meters in length (typical lab scale systems are a few millimeters diameter and 5 to 30cm long).



198

Other uses can either be in a specific new application, such as detecting cocaine on bank notes using the gas chromatography systems often seen at airports as bomb and drug detectors. This, according to a report on *HomeLand Security News Wire*.

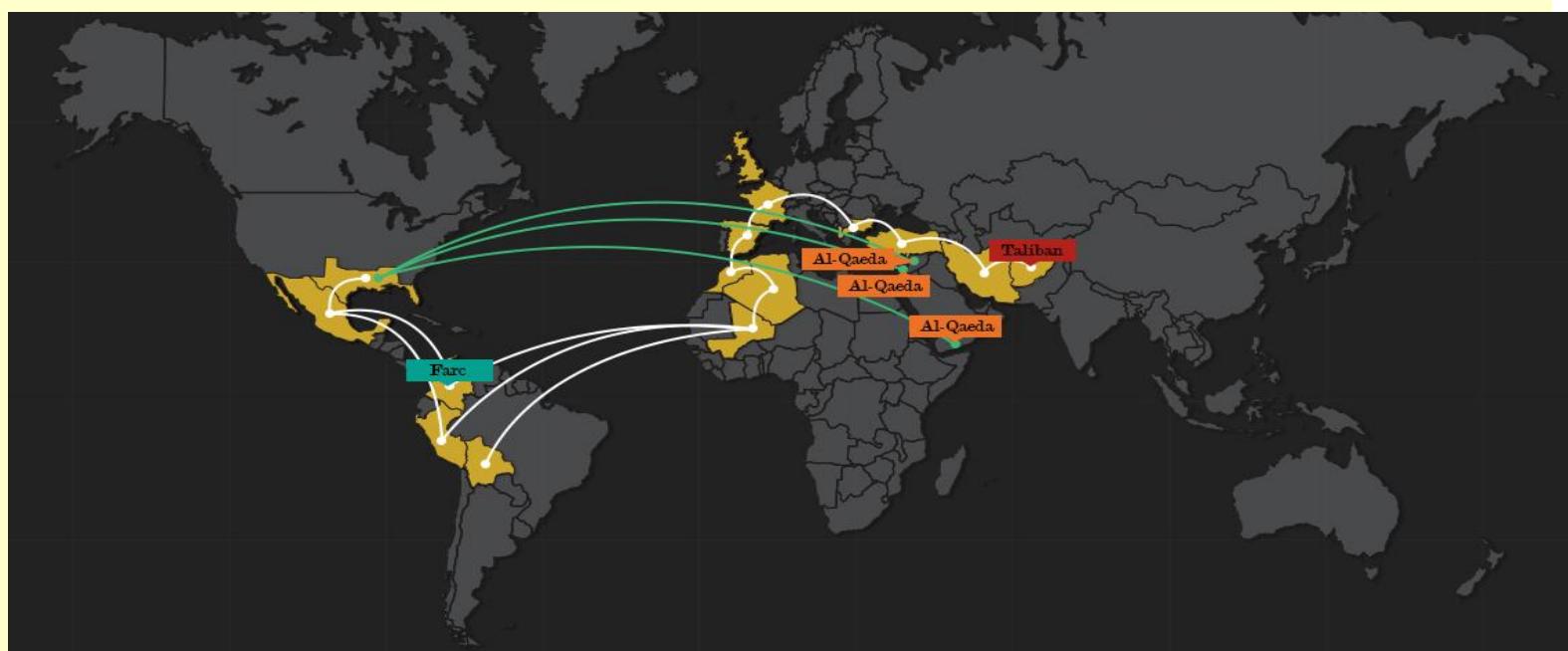
The presence of cocaine on US paper currency has been known for a long time. Banknotes become contaminated during the exchange, storage, and abuse of cocaine. The analysis of cocaine on various denominations of US banknotes in the general circulation can provide law enforcement circles and forensic epidemiologists objective and timely information on epidemiology of illicit drug use and on how to differentiate money contaminated in the general circulation from banknotes used in drug transaction.

The Two-Front War: Synthetic Drugs and Terrorism

Source: <http://www.terrorismwatch.org/2015/01/the-two-front-war-synthetic-drugs-and.html>

Synthetic drugs aren't really a novel threat. According to the Office of National Drug Control Policy, a shipment of "Spice"—one of the many code names for "synthetic marijuana"—was seized in Dayton, Ohio back in 2008.

The DEA director of the Special Operations Division Derek Maltz told The Daily Beast: "I'll be the first to admit that synthetics have been around for a while. But our concept of the magnitude of the problem,



even in the last few weeks, it's increased, and at the end of the day these drug dollars are going to places where they don't like us very much. That's not good."

From only a handful of synthetic drugs identified in 2009, the number jumped to a whopping 158 in 2012. Moreover, in 2011 alone, the drug known as "K2" caused 39,000 trips to the ER, and 7,000 calls to poison control centers around the country.

Despite these frightening statistics, synthetic drugs continue to be popular, especially with teenagers. In their 2012 survey, the U.S. National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) found that 1 in 9 high school seniors used synthetic marijuana.

"For terrorists, the synthetic drug market is a two-for-one deal: Poison gets distributed in the West, and they make millions in the process," said Maltz.

As shown in the infographic by Clarity Way below, narco-terrorists aren't likely to bail out on a \$400 billion dollar industry. The drug money from synthetic marijuana has been linked to terrorists in Yemen. The DEA has cracked down on synthetic drug dealers in America and have seized more than \$80 million in cash and assets.

► Click on the infographic to enlarge it

<http://www.economicvoice.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/DrugSuperhighways.jpg>



Piracy down, ship hijackings up 2014: IMB

Source: <http://www.terrorismwatch.org/2015/01/piracy-down-ship-hijackings-up-2014-imb.html>

Small tanker attacks in Southeast Asia spurred a jump in the number of ship hijackings in 2014, despite an overall fall in the number of piracy attacks.

While the global number of reported piracy attacks was down to 245 in 2014 according to the International Maritime Bureau (IMB), 44% lower than the Somali piracy peak of 2011, the number of hijackings was up at 21 last year compared to 12 in 2013.

"The global increase in hijackings is due to a rise in attacks against coastal tankers in South East Asia," said Pottengal Mukundan, director of IMB.

"Gangs of armed thieves have attacked small tankers in the region for their cargoes, many looking specifically for marine diesel and gas oil to steal and then sell."

The IMB highlighted the death of a crew member shot in an attack on a bitumen tanker in December as a possibility the incidents were becoming more violent. It is believed the pirates targeted the wrong vessel as it was carrying a cargo of bitumen rather than gas oil which they could have siphoned off as they have in other similar attacks.

The IMB commended the role of the Indonesian Marine Police and the Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency in combatting the attacks.

"It is important that these gangs are caught and punished under law, before the attacks become more audacious and violent," Mukundan said.

West Africa remains a cause for concern with 41 attacks reported and the IMB believes many more went unreported. Five vessels were hijacked in West Africa last year. "Hijackings of product tankers appeared to subside in the last quarter of 2014, with the last reported case at the end of July 2014," the IMB noted.

Fighting Piracy off the Coast of Somalia: Lessons Learned from the Contact Group

200

Source: <http://eubulletin.com/3885-fighting-piracy-off-the-coast-of-somalia-lessons-learned-from-the-contact-group.html>

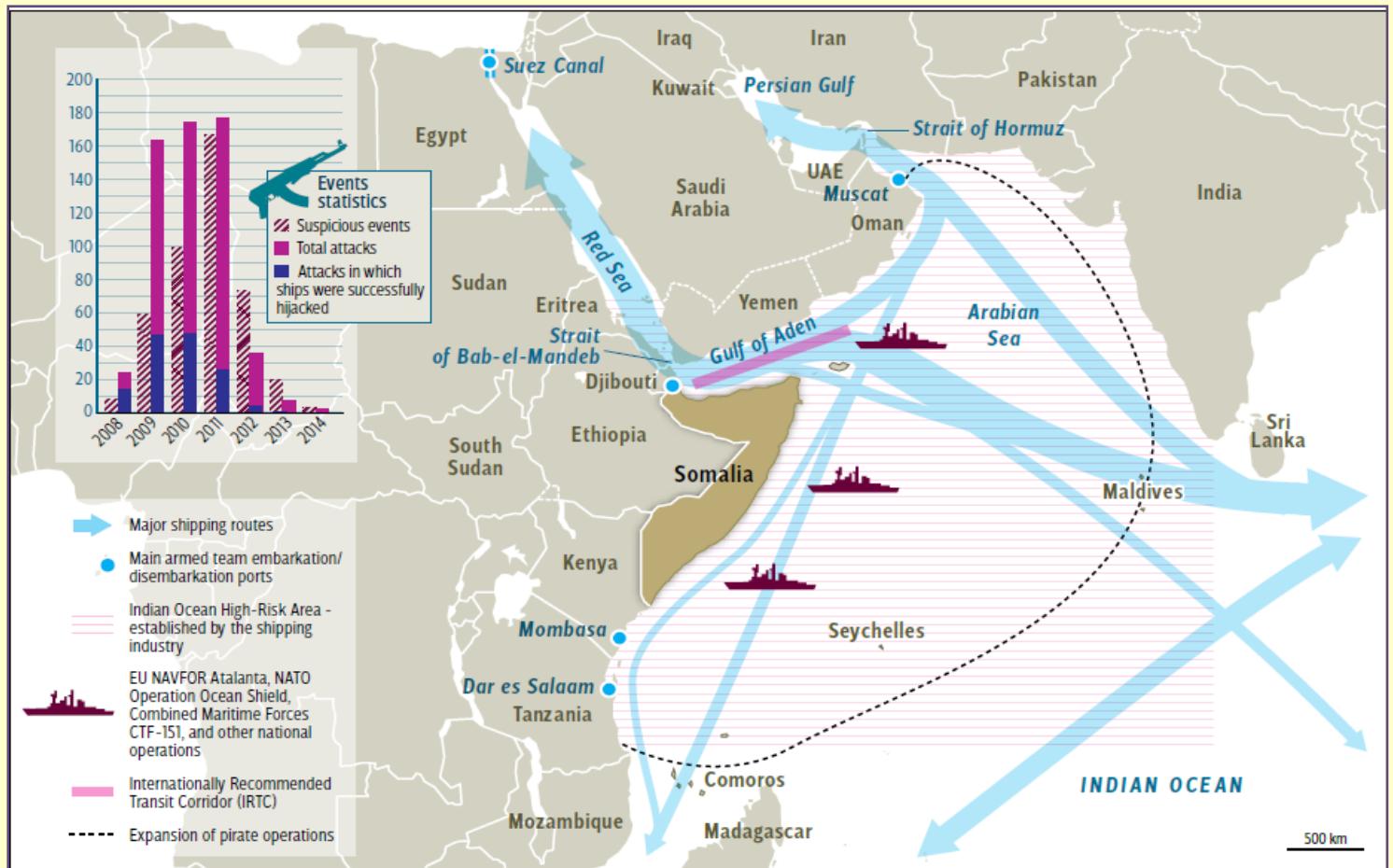


One of the priorities of the 2014 EU Chairmanship of the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia (CGPCS) has been to adequately document the lessons learned from the Contact Group. This includes both the accounts of people affected by piracy or involved in the fight against piracy and also the more academic, analytical work whose aim is to generate conclusions, observations and recommendations. To achieve this objective, a CGPCS Lessons Learned Consortium was established in 2013 consisting of the EU Institute for Security Studies, Cardiff University and Oceans Beyond Piracy.

The Contact Group grew from a limited diplomatic initiative launched in 2009 as an elastic instrument in the fight against Somali piracy and, by 2014, had stimulated effective and coordinated action by stakeholders from virtually every sector of global society affected by the problem of piracy. As a result, no commercial ship has been captured since 10

May 2012; pirates are holding no merchant ship for ransom; and fewer than 50 hostages

acknowledge the key motive for the pirates who rely solely on the economic model of the



remain in captivity, all of whom were taken by pirates on or before 26 March 2012.

Thanks to the Contact Group's efforts, **three crucial counter-piracy policies were adopted:** 1) the remarkable voluntary operational coordination among naval counter-piracy forces operating in the region; 2) the measures taken by the shipping industry, including privately contracted armed security teams embarked on commercial ships and, 3) the creation of a legal framework for counter piracy. None of these three aspects had been neither formulated nor enforced before 2009. The Contact Group provided a forum for political debate and discussions that ultimately enabled these critical efforts to succeed.

Since then, the debate has moved to the question of piracy onshore, which is pivotal in resolving the problem in its complexity. The study also emphasizes the need to

ransom payment and for whom the cash flow becomes the focal point.

From the UN perspective, the co-operation with the Contact Groups was not anything new, for it has been working with similar organizations often in the past 20 years. The Somali case was characterized by a fairly strong unity of the international community in the question of the fight against piracy. However, it is improbable that this model of close co-operation between an informal coordination mechanism and an international organization could be applied to all critical situations.

From the Somali perspective, it could be stated that the principal causes of piracy have not been eliminated despite a 6-year long period of counter-piracy activities. Only a comprehensive approach, combining security and development activities together with good governance, could lead to the eradication of the piracy threat.

► You can download the report at:

http://www.iss.europa.eu/uploads/media/Report_20_Piracy_off_the_coast_of_Somalia.pdf

5 Guantanamo prisoners released, sent to Estonia and Oman

Source: <http://www.aol.com/article/2015/01/14/5-guantanamo-prisoners-released-sent-to-estonia-and-oman/21129986/>

Jan 14 – Five men from Yemen were freed from the U.S. Navy base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, after more than a dozen years of captivity and sent to Estonia and Oman for resettlement, U.S. officials said Wednesday,



the latest in a wave of releases that have alarmed congressional opponents of closing the detention center.

Four of the men went to Oman and one to Estonia, according to a Pentagon statement. It was the first time either nation accepted Guantanamo prisoners for resettlement. The men had been cleared for release since at least 2009 but the U.S. has balked at repatriating Guantanamo prisoners back to Yemen, where the government is battling an al-Qaida insurgency.

All five were captured in Pakistan and detained by the U.S. as suspected al-Qaida fighters. U.S. officials later determined it was no longer necessary to detain them but

have struggled to find other countries willing to take them in. The men are all in their 30s and 40s, including one who was 17 when he was sent to Guantanamo.

President Barack Obama came into office pledging to close the detention center on the U.S. base but was blocked by Congress, which barred transferring any prisoner to the U.S. for any reason and imposed restrictions on sending them elsewhere.

Congress eased the restrictions on transfers abroad in December 2013 and the Obama administration has stepped up the releases in recent months. There are now 122 prisoners at Guantanamo, including 54 who have been approved for transfer. Of those cleared to leave, 47 are Yemeni and will likely have to be resettled in other countries, given the security situation in their homeland.

"We are committed to closing the detention facility. That's our goal and we are working toward that goal," said Ian Moss, a spokesman for the U.S. State Department on Guantanamo issues.

The recent releases have angered some members of Congress, who have argued that Guantanamo is necessary to detain terrorism suspects. Republican senators on Tuesday proposed restrictions that would bar transfers to Yemen for two years and suspend the transfer of men previously classified as high-risk or medium-risk.

"Now is not the time to be emptying Guantanamo," Sen. Kelly Ayotte said at a news conference during which she warned of fresh terrorist threats.

202

U.S. fight against extremism, terrorism hobbled by Obama's qualms about using the term "Islamist": Critics

Source: <http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20150115-u-s-fight-against-extremism-terrorism-hobbled-by-obama-s-qualms-about-using-the-term-islamist-critics>

Jan 15 – Next month, on 18 February, the White House will host a summit on efforts to counter violent extremism. Attendees will include law enforcement and counterterrorism officials as well as representatives from U.S. cities and other countries who have had to battle Islamic extremism. The main objective is

to "better understand, identify and prevent the cycle of radicalization to violence at home in the United States and abroad," the White House wrote in a statement.

The summit will also review domestic and international efforts to prevent extremists and their

supporters from recruiting others to carry out acts of violence. "This is the issue of our time," said Farah Pandith, a former special representative to Muslim communities who was appointed by former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. "Thirteen years after 9/11, we know a lot about it," she said, referring to the recruitment of young people to be terrorists as well as who the primary supporters of recruitment efforts are.

Counterterrorism analysts say Saudi Arabia, and wealthy individuals and charities in the Gulf States are funding many Islamic extremist efforts by spending billions on gleaming mosques, well-equipped madrassas, and well-trained imams who relentlessly and systematically promote Wahhabism, the most fundamentalist and rigid form of Islam, in Muslim countries in Asia and Africa, and in Muslim communities in Europe and elsewhere in the world.

"It's mind-blowing, the money to build shiny new mosques with a particular viewpoint," Pandith told the *Daily Beast*.

Announcement of the summit comes a week after the Paris terror attacks by Islamic extremists, but the White House has made a point not to refer to the February summit as an anti-terrorism or anti-Islamic extremism event. The White House has also refused to label the Paris attacks as acts of "radical Islam."

The administration believes using the term "Islam" in describing the acts of terrorism in Paris would grant legitimacy to the attackers, who, they believe, are not true representatives of Islam.

"I certainly wouldn't want to be in a position where I'm repeating the justification they have cited that I think is illegitimate. They had invoked Islam to justify their attacks," White House press secretary Josh Earnest told reporters earlier this week. "I think what I'm trying to do is to describe to you what happened and what they did. These individuals are terrorists. ... We have chosen not to use

that label (of radical Islam) because it doesn't seem to accurately describe what happened."

Jack Pitney, a professor of politics at Claremont-McKenna College, believes President Barack Obama is reluctant to use the term combating "radical Islam" or "Muslim extremism" "because there are an awful lot of good Americans who are Muslims, and we have Muslim allies throughout the world. On the other hand, to deny Islam had anything to do with this is like saying Catholicism had nothing to do with the IRA" (Pitney adds: "Being Catholic, I get to say that").

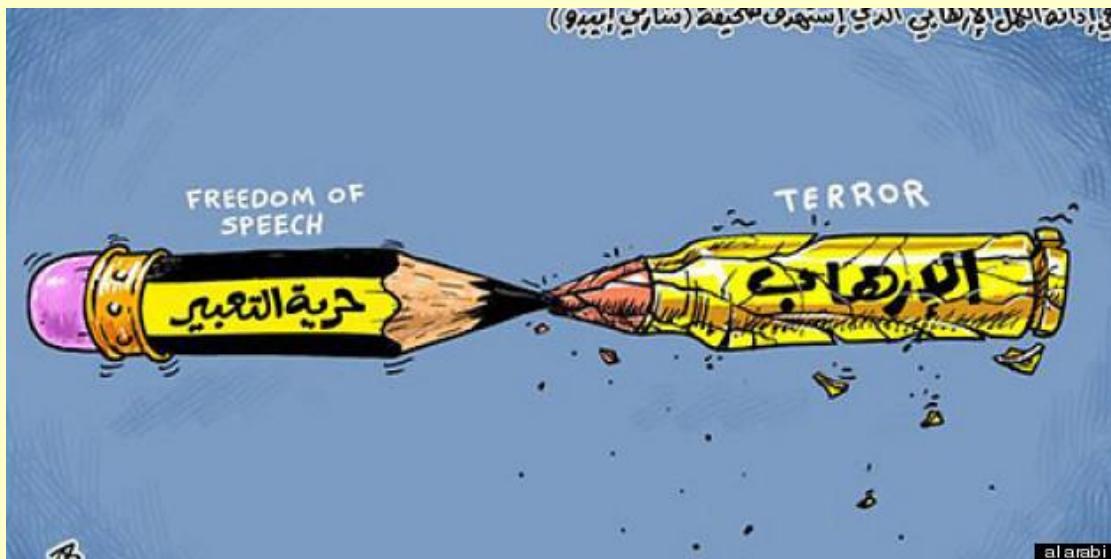
Since he took office, Obama has focused on making the conversation about combating extremism of all kinds. Even some supporters of the administration disagree with this attempt at a nuanced approach to the subject. "The thinking is that in the current climate to call it Islamic extremism or violent Islamic extremism is to rub salt in the open wound of the West and the Muslim world," says Bill Galston, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution. "That was then, and this is now. It's hard to deny the evidence when ordinary people read about terrorism, nine times out of ten it's al Qaeda, or ISIS, or Boko Haram, or Nidal Hasan, or the Tsarnaev brothers." Galston wants the Obama administration to label the current fight against Islamic extremism, just that. Doing so will allow the U.S. government to focus its resources on the current ideological struggle between moderate Muslims and extremist Islamists, and between extremist Islamists and the rest of the world. At the moment, the extremists are receiving more support to further their ideology. The "Saudis have spent upwards of \$100 billion to disseminate it (Wahhabism), building mosques, supplying teachers and training imams," Galston said.

For Galston, the administration's reluctance to use the term "Islamist" or "Muslim" (as in "Islamist terrorism," "Islamist radicalism," "Muslim extremism") is not merely a problem of nomenclature, a refusal to employ terminology which may be overly broad or which might be offensive to some. Rather, it exposes a lack of strategic focus, and potentially weakens the government's hand in the fight. "If you're willing to use the phrase, then you can focus government resources on the ideological struggle against a named foe," he told the *Daily Beast*. "Are we prepared as part of this united front against violent

extremism inspired by a misguided interpretation of Islam, are we prepared to confront the Saudis who have played a central role in spreading these tenets?" he asks.

Former Florida senator Bob Graham (D), who chaired the Senate Select Committee which investigated the 9/11 attacks, has urged the Obama administration to declassify twenty-

eight pages from the Senate report that document the role of Saudi Arabia in funding and supporting the nineteen Saudi hijackers who partook in the attacks. "If Paris isn't a turning point in our passivity toward the role the Saudis have played, what will it take?" he told the *Daily Beast*.



Qatari newspaper Al-Arabi Al-Jadeed

24 Islamic Massacres You Haven't Heard About

Source: <http://www.newsmax.com/t/newsmax/article/618801>

The 9/11 hijacker attacks in the United States, the embassy bombings in Tanzania, Kenya, and Beirut, the Madrid train bombings, the suicide attacks on the London Underground — these are among the most familiar examples of horrendous massacres by Islamic militants around the world.

But there have been many other attacks by Muslim extremists that have received far less attention in the media. **Here is a look at two dozen of the deadliest over the last two decades:**

1. **July 2, 1993:** An arson attack on anti-extremist intellectuals gathered in Sivas, Turkey, kills 35.
2. **Nov. 17, 1997:** Six Islamic terrorists attack tourists at the Luxor ruins in Egypt, killing 62 and injuring 26.
3. **Feb. 14, 1998:** Bomb attacks kill 58 and injure more than 200 in Coimbatore, India.
4. **Oct. 12, 2002:** Bombings in a tourist district of Bali, Indonesia, kill 202 and injure 240.
5. **Aug. 25, 2003:** Two car bombings kill 54 and injure 244 in Mumbai, India.
6. **Nov. 15-20, 2003:** Bombings in Istanbul, Turkey, kill 57 and injure 700.
7. **Sept. 1, 2004:** Terrorists attack a school in Beslan, Russia, killing 344, including 186 children.
8. **July 23, 2005:** Bomb attacks in the Egyptian resort city of Sharm el-Sheikh kill at least 64.
9. **Oct. 29, 2005:** Multiple attacks in Delhi, India, kill more than 60 and injure over 180.
10. **Nov. 9, 2005:** Suicide attacks on hotels in Amman, Jordan, leave more than 60 dead and 115 injured.
11. **Aug. 14, 2007:** Suicide vehicle bombings in two Iraqi towns kill 796 and injure 1,562.
12. **July 26, 2008:** Bombings in Ahmedabad, India, kill 56 and injure more than 200.
13. **Nov. 26, 2008:** Extremists kill at least 166 in a series of attacks in Mumbai, India.

204



14. June 18, 2009: Attacks by the Al-Shabaab Islamic group kill 35 in Somalia.
15. May 28, 2010: Pakistani militants attack two mosques and kill nearly 100.
16. Jan. 21, 2011: Bombing at an airport in Moscow kills 37 and wounds 137.
17. Dec. 25, 2011: Attacks on churches in Nigeria leave more than 41 dead.
18. May 11, 2013: Car bombings in Reyhanli, Turkey, kill 52 and wound 140.
19. Sept. 21, 2013: Attack on a shopping mall in Kenya kills 67 and injures 175.
20. Sept. 22, 2013: Suicide attack on a church in Peshawar, Pakistan, kills more than 80 and injures 250.
21. Sept. 29, 2013: Boko Haram militants massacre 44 students at a college in Nigeria.
22. May 20, 2014: Bombings in Jos, Nigeria, kill at least 118.
23. May 22, 2014: Militants in Urumqi, China, kill 39 and injure more than 90.
24. Dec. 16, 2014: Terrorists open fire at a school in Peshawar, killing more than 140 including at least 132 children.

EDITOR'S COMMENT: Perhaps the title is suitable only for the US audience that in general has limited information about what is happening in the rest of the world. At the same time this list shows that our reaction on terrorism is eclectic and only when comes to elit nations in our part of the world.

Increasing Hezbollah activity in Europe worries security officials

Source: <http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20140801-increasing-hezbollah-activity-in-europe-worries-security-officials>



In August 2014, it was revealed that Hezbollah agents operating in Europe made procurements for "parts and technologies" in Bulgaria which would allow them to operate surveillance drones in the country.

As Defense One reports, under the Stars Group Holding company, the owners, subsidiaries, and "certain managers and



individuals" functioned as Hezbollah procurement group which sought to purchase technological equipment from around the world and utilize it in Europe. The organization was recently blacklisted by the U.S. Treasury.

Following this and further incidents — such as a plot to target Israeli tourists in the country six months ago, and an infamous airport bus

bombing in Burgas two years ago — U.S. intelligence members and lawmakers are growing increasingly worried.

Last Tuesday, the House of Representatives unanimously passed a bill that would potentially allow the United States to impose harsh sanctions on the organization, including the punishment of banks that worked with them.

These attacks and efforts on the part of Iran-partnered Hezbollah over the past two years mark a historical change in terms of their European operations and planning — a rise in activity following a lower profile after their more renowned activities of the 1980s.

In response to this, the EU also banned Hezbollah's military wing last summer, which allowed for the seizure of much of its finances in Europe. This has led to successful incidents such as the seizure of 770,000 euros in the possession of two Lebanese airline passengers, and the German raid of a fundraising front organization known as the "Orphan Children Project Lebanon."

As Defense One notes, however, these measures fail to counteract the activities of the group in certain meaningful ways.

The surveillance drone incident is the first catch that truly has affected their operations.

205



Treasury Undersecretary David Cohen said that the latest incident reinforced that "it is critical that countries throughout the world work

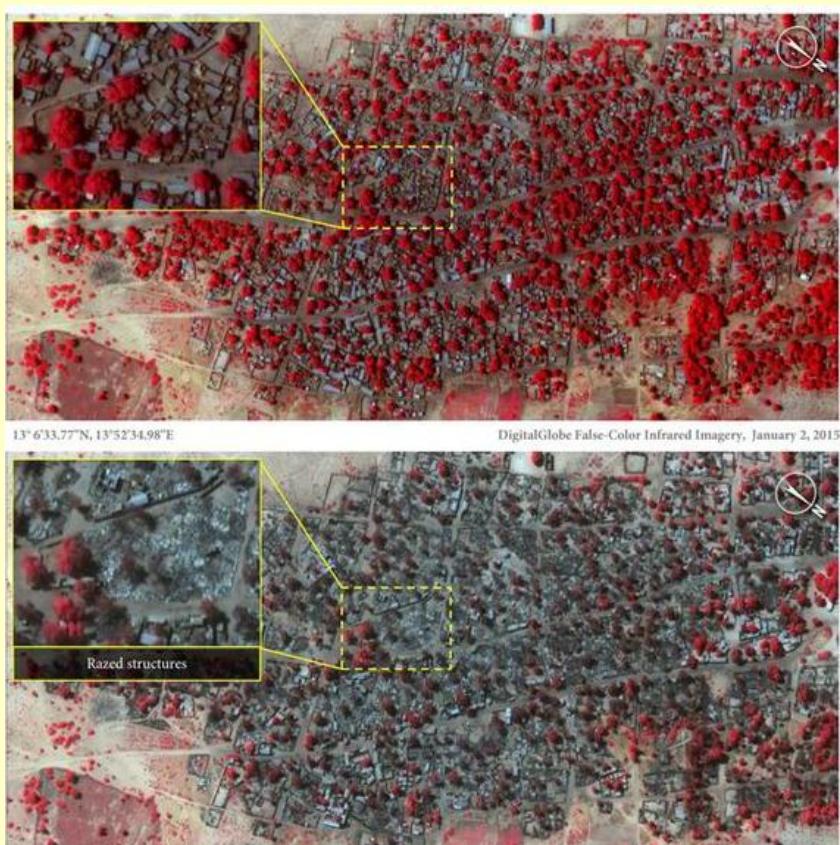
together to combat this dangerous organization and sever it from sources of revenue and support."

ANALYSIS – The African Jihad Problem

By Kylie Bull (Managing Editor HSToday.us)

Source: <http://www.hstoday.us/single-article/analysis-the-african-jihad-problem/29d74223247daae9fd44a55c22fd312b.html>

Jan 15 – Last week, terror attacks in France killed 12 people. At the same time, Boko Haram terrorists in Nigeria murdered approximately 2,000. The disparity in the media



and public reaction to both events is immense. On the same day as the attacks on the satirical newspaper *Charlie Hebdo*'s office in Paris, the French reacted with public displays of unity, solidarity and defense of free speech. This diffused to other European countries and around the world. There have been no such displays or widespread condemnation in relation to the attacks in Nigeria, which not only amassed a greater number of casualties, but used female and child suicide bombers – one as young as ten years old.

Why is this? In this day and age surely there is nobody who believes that an African life is worth less than an American,

a Dutch or an Australian life. No, it's not that.

Since September 11 2001, our perception of terrorism has morphed from "how dreadful for those poor people," to, "can this happen to me?" Terrorism has spread like a virus around the world, seeping into every corner and becoming so commonplace that it is no longer something that happens elsewhere – it *can* happen to you. The public therefore identifies most with acts of terrorism that are closest to them, either in terms of geography, culture or theme – the attack on *Charlie Hebdo*'s staff was seen the world over as an attack on free speech, something many of us hold very dear.

Jan 3 to 7: SHOCKING satellite images (by Amnesty International) have revealed how two Nigerian villages were almost "wiped off the map" during attacks by Islamic extremists Boko Haram.

A track appearing on a 1993 album by UK reggae band UB40 contains the chorus: it's a long, long way from here, don't you worry yourself my dear. Nigeria is a long way from the US and the UK, probably more so in terms of culture than geography. For that reason, we don't worry about Boko Haram. It's an African problem, right?

Correct, but it has the potential to be a global problem on a formidable scale. US Africa Command (AFRICOM) has said Boko Haram is trying to emulate Al Qaeda and that fighters have received training at the hands of Al Qaeda operatives. Furthermore, Boko Haram has lately adopted similar ideologies to the Islamic State. For one, Boko Haram also aims to create an Islamist caliphate. Now

206

imagine for a moment those three entities – Al Qaeda, Islamic State and Boko Haram – working together as one. Although its focus is very much on western Africa at present, Boko Haram, with its links to Al Qaeda and IS, could well be the catalyst that creates this three-headed monster.

There is also the diaspora angle to consider – the UK and other European countries such as Germany and Spain have large and increasing Nigerian populations. Nigerians also make up the largest contemporary African immigrant group in the United States. While first generation Nigerians, especially those who have fled violence at the hands of Boko Haram, may not be a threat to the West, second or third generation Nigerians may become so when coupled with the seeming inability of the West to stop the radicalization of disaffected youth.

So, should we continue to turn a blind eye to Boko Haram? The difficulty is that, to some extent, this is exactly what Nigeria is doing. Nigerian people have a suffer in silence approach. The attacks have become commonplace. It happens. God will look after us. We carry on. If Nigerians had come out in defense of their freedom as vociferously as the French did, other nations most likely would have followed suit in support.

Boko Haram's abduction of schoolgirls attracted international attention because the Nigerians themselves spoke up (although their plight was largely forgotten and many people

today couldn't tell you what the current situation is). But how can the Nigerian public, who are most likely terrified of Boko Haram, be blamed for suffering in silence when their own president instantly condemned the Paris attacks, yet has still not made an official comment on Boko Haram's recent atrocities in his own country?

Nigerian presidential elections are just weeks away. Perhaps a new leader could revitalize the military and make more of a stand against Boko Haram, or lead the Nigerian people by example in not allowing terrorists to silence and instil fear.

Nigeria will need help from the international community to put an end to Boko Haram's campaign in Nigeria and its spread to other parts of West Africa. And this help must come soon, not just for our own futures, but for the people of Nigeria.

Last year, US Secretary of State John Kerry said after the schoolgirls abduction: "We are going to do everything possible to counter the menace of Boko Haram."

He has not elaborated since, largely because there is disparity not only between Nigeria and the US on the best way to counter the threat, but also division among US officials on the matter. This and the increase in lone wolf and offshoot jihad group attacks around the world may mean that the US, and the West in general, takes its eye off the ball as far as Boko Haram is concerned.

207

Iran Goes Ballistic

By Yoel Guzansky and Yiftah S. Shapir

Source: <http://www.meforum.org/4911/iran-goes-ballistic>

While discussions of Iran's growing strategic threat focus almost exclusively on its nuclear capabilities and objectives, Tehran's massive ballistic missile arsenal poses a clear and present danger to both the oil installations of the Persian Gulf monarchies and to the Western military presence in the region. This in turn has prompted members of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) to acquire air defense and ballistic missile defense (BMD) systems at various levels and in various configurations. At the same time, endemic inter-gulf rivalries (e.g., the growing rift between Riyadh and Doha) have left these nations highly vulnerable to Iranian missile threats.

► Read the full article at source's URL.

*Yoel Guzansky is a fellow at the Institute for National Security Studies, Tel Aviv University, and former Iran coordinator at Israel's National Security Council. His recent publications include *The Arab Gulf States and Reform in the Middle East: Between Iran and the "Arab Spring"* (Palgrave, 2014).*



Yiftah S. Shapir is the head of the Institute for National Strategic Studies' Middle East Military Balance project.

Counter terrorism: rooftop training

Source: <http://i-hls.com/2015/01/counter-terrorism-rooftop-training/>



208

The roof of one a famous building in Tel Aviv [normally used as an academic institute for training teachers] was recently the scene of something completely different. This time, the facility was taken over by combat fighters, cadets and trainees at Israel's counter terrorism training school. They had just completed a special counterterrorism course at Israel's famous counterterrorism unit.

The rooftop at a residential area was a welcome change of scene from the all too familiar military



training ground. The combat fighters made their way stealthily from the roof into the building's top floor through the windows, learning how to use the altitude into their advantage. "Climbing to the roof and sliding through the window is one way to take out terrorists," explains course commander Captain R. He further highlighted their motto: "maximum barrels through maximum positions in minimal time."

High altitude counterterror fighters are an essential part of counter terror warfare, hostage rescue

operations and continuous security missions. Sliding from the roof down the windows where terrorist are holding hostages is a tactical tool applied at situations that call for unconventional ways to arrive at the scene and engage the enemy. Elevation is just one of many challenges counterterror fighter must rise to, in addition to a variety of weapons systems and carrying heavy loads.



According to the IDF's website, counterterrorism course graduates will in turn train the IDF's other special units when it comes to rope climbing, sliding and other uses, as well as additional undisclosed warfare-related expertise.

If you're afraid of heights, then this isn't for you.

[Image courtesy of IDF Spokesperson](#)



meters from the enemy and operate weapon systems and additional equipment without being detected.

Given this obvious difficulty, course candidates are carefully screened in order to make sure they do not suffer from vertigo, etc.

Reportedly, the course commander told the fighters the main feature of their work is stealth. The reason being, that sometimes, they are required to make their way a few

meters from the enemy and operate weapon systems and additional equipment without being detected.

Also in counterterrorism news:

The Eilat-headquartered counterterrorism force is to receive **new helmets** and **new weapon sights**. The new helmets are lightweight and come complete with imbedded night vision means. These helmets were tailor-manufactured especially for these fighters.

As part of the lessons of "Operation protective Edge", the unit received new sights which increase accuracy by dozens of percent.

Eilat Counterterrorism Force is an intervention-takeover unit in charge of terror threats in Eilat, the Negev and the Arava. Consisting of reservists, the unit's men are all veterans of IDF Special Forces. **They always carry beepers and pagers, as they must all be on constant alert.** Each year, they undergo several tours of training. This year, they practiced handling a mission scenario of a terrorist incursion into a settlement.



209

About Eilat Counter-Terrorism Force

1) The unit has trained in every major building in Eilat

The Eilat Counterterrorism Unit conducts an exercise in almost every building in the city that is open to the public. Familiarity with the building's structure gives the soldiers a significant advantage, and prevents them from feeling like they are walking into a maze. "The goal is for the unit to feel as familiar as possible with the buildings so that they will know how to work in case of an emergency," Lt. Col. T. says.

2) During winter downtime, the unit trains in Eilat's hotels

During the winter, many resorts in Eilat close sections of their hotel for renovation. This gives the Counterterrorism Unit soldiers the perfect place to train and improve their skills.



3) All of the unit's soldiers live in Eilat

The Eilat Counterterrorism Unit is a reserve unit, whose soldiers are required to be residents of the city between the ages of 20 and 60. Because the soldiers live in Eilat, not only do they know the area very well, but they can also react to any situation quickly, arriving at the scene directly from their workplaces or homes. That feeling, of being the ones who protect their homes, their families and their friends, gives the soldiers motivation to do their best.

4) The unit started as a small backup force

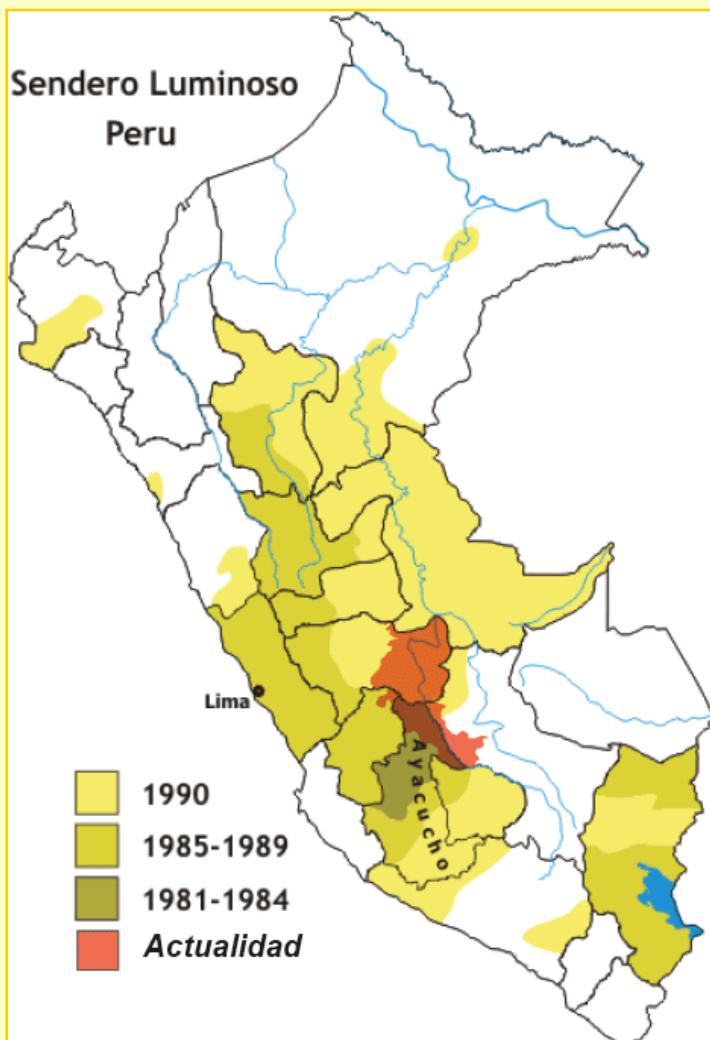
Only three units in the IDF are authorized to free hostages, and one of them is the Eilat Counterterrorism Unit. Established in the beginning of the 80s, it was meant to provide only an immediate response until the special units could arrive. A few years after it was established, the unit was called to operate a hostage situation, and lead a remarkable rescue. After proving itself, the unit became an intervention unit, like the General Staff Reconnaissance Unit and the Yamam (Israeli SWAT).

5) One of the unit's teams is called the 'Terror Monkeys'

The Eilat Counterterrorism Unit is composed of a number of teams, including the 'Terror Monkeys'. This team specializes in extreme operations, like breaking into buildings through a window or the roof. They can hit a terror target anywhere – even on the 40th floor of a skyscraper.

Peruvian Guerrilla Shining Path Launches Political Party

Source: <http://www.terrorismwatch.org/2015/01/peruvian-guerrilla-shining-path.html>



The Movement for Amnesty and Fundamental Rights (Movadef), considered the political arm of Peruvian guerrilla Shining Path, launched on Wednesday, January 13, a coalition with other political organizations seeking to participate in the upcoming presidential elections in 2016.

The Front for Unity and Defense of the Peruvian People (Fudepp) is "a social political movement driven by political, social, and trade organizations, which aims to unite the people around a program to defend their rights against the onslaught of right," according to a statement from Movadef.

Aside from Movadef, the coalition will consist of the group Homeland for Everyone, led by Jorge Paredes Terry, a former adviser to a government deputy linked to illegal miners; the Etnocacerista Runamasi party, led from prison by Antauro Humala, brother of Peruvian President Ollanta Humala; and the Green Earth Party.

Manuel Fajardo, a Shining Path founder and lawyer for guerrilla leader Abimael Guzman, said the front will be driven "as one," and Movadef "will be one more" within this unit.

Percy Medina, a Peruvian specialist on electoral

210



issues, believes Movadef's registration will not be accepted until "there is no clear demarcation with Shining Path, and a commitment to democratic values."

"It is unacceptable that those who promoted a bloodbath in the country, killing hundreds of thousands of people, today say they want to participate in politics as if nothing had happened, without true repentance and apology to the country," he said in statements to *Andina*.

Medina noted that the electoral authority denied Movadef's registration as a political organization in 2012 and said it is likely that "history repeats."

For their part, the National Youth of Political

Parties Forum of Perú rejected Movadef's presence in the political arena and described it as an "offense to thousands of victims of genocide and terrorist violence."

Le Journal du Dimanche



Four of ten in France against depictions of Mohammed cartoons

Source: <http://www.i24news.tv/en/news/international/58089-150118-four-of-ten-in-france-against-depictions-of-mohammed-cartoons>

211

Jan 18 – A survey published Sunday found that 42 percent of French people think media should avoid running cartoons of the Prophet Mohammed to avoid hurting Muslim sensibilities. Some

50 percent of those polled favor limiting freedom of expression on the Internet and on social networks, according to the poll for the weekly *Le Journal du Dimanche*.

7 mil copies sold after the Jan 2015 massacre



Some 80 percent of those polled said they support revoking the citizenship of dual nationals convicted of terror acts on French soil, nearly 70 percent support banning a return of French citizens suspected of having gone to fight for jihadists abroad, and 68 percent support preventing the departure of French citizens suspected of seeking to travel to areas controlled by terrorist groups.



But Charlie Hebdo's chief editor defended the cartoons, saying they safeguard freedom of religion.

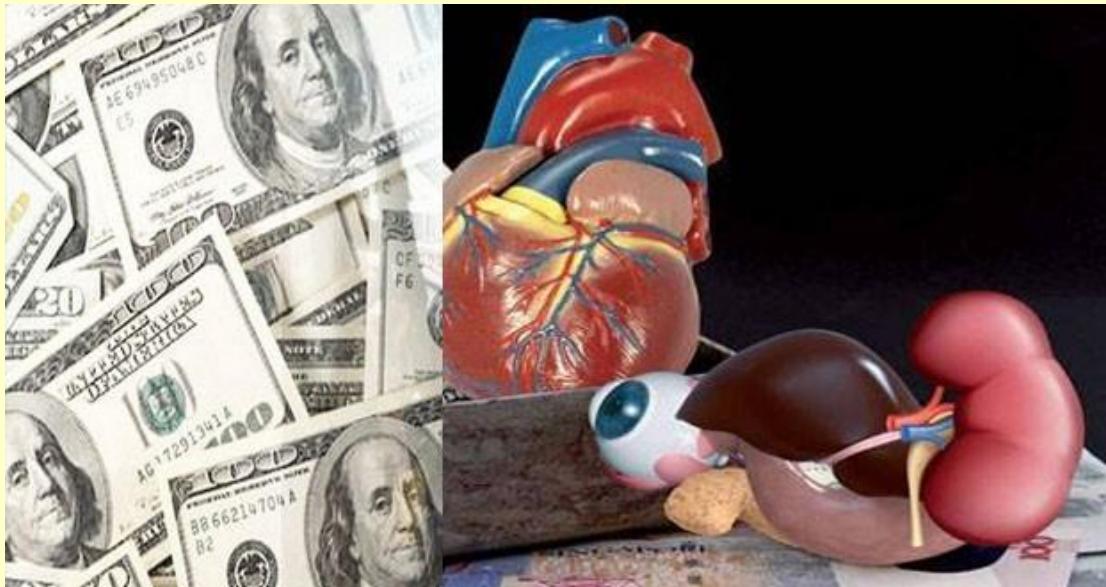
"Every time we draw a cartoon of Mohammed, every time



we draw a cartoon of prophets, every time we draw a cartoon of God, we defend the freedom of religion," Gerard Biard told NBC's "Meet the Press".

ISIL traffics human organs, moves them into Saudi Arabia and Turkey

Source: <http://www.islamicinvitationturkey.com/2014/12/21/isil-traffics-human-organs-moves-them-into-saudi-arabia-and-turkey/>



212

Dec 21, 2014 – **The terrorist organization of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) has turned its hand to human organ trafficking to fund its terror activities across the Middle East**, Daily Mail newspaper said.

Mathew Blake wrote in an article published yesterday on the British newspaper's website that ISIS has added human organ trade to "a variety of shadowy sources including oil production, human trafficking and drug smuggling," which it has been depending on to raise money to carry out their attacks and seize areas, particularly in Syria and Iraq.

The writer highlighted that ISIS has been **"recruiting foreign doctors for months to harvest the internal organs not only from the bodies of their own dead fighters but also from living hostages – including children – snatched from minority communities in Iraq and Syria."**

The Daily Mail article referred to a report by al-Monitor news website which cited an Iraqi ear, nose and throat doctor named Siruwan al-Mosuli as saying that ISIS leaders have hired foreign doctors to run an extensive organ trafficking system from a hospital in the city of Mosul, northern Iraq, that is already beginning to generate huge profits.

It added that the terrorist organization is believed to having even set up "a specialist organ-smuggling division whose sole responsibility is to sell human hearts, livers and kidneys on the lucrative international black market."

In further evidence of the Turkish and Saudi regimes' involvement in the crimes committed by ISIS through the unlimited support they have offered the organization in terms of money, armament, training and movement, the article noted that most of the organs harvested are being smuggled out of Syria and Iraq into neighboring countries like Saudi Arabia or Turkey "where criminal gangs sell them on to shady buyers across the globe," citing the Assyrian International News Agency.

The Daily Mail also referred to drug smuggling is one of ISIS most lucrative revenue streams another, citing Al Monitor's report as saying that ISIS traffics Afghan heroin into Europe from the city of Nineveh, with this drug business becoming so successful in recent months that reports claim that ISIS now supplies half of Europe's entire heroin market.

Jihadis using Ireland as a transit base due to soft laws and lack of counter terrorism police

Source: <http://www.independent.ie/irish-news/news/jihadis-using-ireland-as-a-transit-base-due-to-soft-laws-and-lack-of-counter-terrorism-police-30914704.html>

Jan 17 – Islamic extremists have started using Ireland as a base and transit zone after the introduction of new laws that limit their movement elsewhere in the EU, European police agencies have told Gardai. Gardai are now monitoring the movements of a number of suspected jihadis, including one who recently arrived back into the country, as a result of intelligence from French, Scandinavian and German agencies.

The Garda Síochána Ombudsman Commission was set up in 2007 to provide efficient, fair and independent oversight of policing in Ireland. Its vision is to be a driver of ever-improving police accountability. Its principal role is to deal with complaints about the conduct of members of the Garda Síochána.



Senior gardai say the force is not fit for purpose for dealing with international terrorism and a specialised intelligence service is required.

Gardai are working closely with their counterparts across Europe compiling intelligence on the movements of the terrorists. Security sources have revealed the Government is desperately trying to downplay the use of Ireland by the groups.

Last week, the Irish Independent revealed how a hard core group of Islamist terrorists - most of whom were granted political asylum in this country - were helping to co-ordinate logistics for terror groups such as al-Qa'ida and Isil.

High-level intelligence sources have discovered that prospective recruits for various Islamist terror groups have been sent on "training camps" in Irish mountains. The Irish Independent understands that one such camp took place on a mountain range in the east of the country in recent weeks.

Security sources revealed that those taking part - young men in their late teens and early 20s - were being "tested" to assess if they had the "mental and physical strength" to be jihadis. It is understood that the potential Islamist terrorists were made to endure the hardships of living rough in the mountainous terrain, which included swimming in frozen lakes and camping under the elements.

"This was being done primarily to test if they have the mental and physical strength to be selected as jihadis," a security source revealed. "Those taking part are not necessarily aware that this is being done to test them out initially - there are no weapons or military tactics used and no laws were broken."

"Those considered having potential and the correct religious orientation are then taken aside for more indoctrination and sent abroad to join IS in Syria," the source added.

Meanwhile, Gardai want officers armed again with Uzi sub-machine guns to counter the threat from Islamic terrorists.

Armed officers have complained for more than two years after the Israeli-made weapons were



The move comes as the French authorities clamped down on the movement of suspected Islamist terrorists trying to join IS (Islamic State) after the 'Charlie Hebdo' attacks in Paris. But because Ireland has more lax passport regulations than other European countries, it has become a hub for jihadis making their way to war zones in the Middle East.

Many who cannot return home to the continent because of local laws are free to travel here and then move on.

Meanwhile, a chain of businesses in the country is being used to launder money and safehouses are also in operation.

213

withdrawn from use and replaced with handguns. However, gardai believe attempted attacks by terrorists are now possible and they are not equipped to deal with them.

Jihad after Paris

Source: <http://www.terrorismwatch.org/2015/01/jihad-after-paris.html>

You could not have missed the tone of caution—and in some instances even revulsion—after the initial outpouring of outrage. Was the attack on *Charlie Hebdo* a case of first-rate cause and third-rate art? I would have said that about Taslima Nasreen but not about the men who died for their drawings. I-am-not- Charlie-Hebdo, coming from the left as well as the right side of the argument, asks us to take a pause before pointing our moral Kalashnikovs at the killers alone; it urges us to have a second look at the tastelessness of dissent. The non- Charlie refuses to join the theatre of protest and to buy the absolutism of free speech. He sees behind the prime time punditry and shrieking headlines the Manichean division of the world into good and evil, which itself is another manifestation of fundamentalism. The non-Charlie argues that every newsroom killing, every desert beheading, is a dramatic turn in a complex narrative of accumulated injustices, Western double standards, and the revolutionary history of Utopia. And the new killer, the martyr in service of a god threatened by cartoonists, columnists and novelists, is as much a victim as a villain, the product of a complexity the instant inquisitors will not see. So spare a thought for the lone wolf with a mind damaged by the ways of the world we, the cosy majority, live in.

It is a beguiling position, and it is an act of escapism as well. The *Charlie* version of satire is direct, and could even look crude. They are not English, working for *The Spectator*, stylists of understatement and subtlety. They are, invariably, more scatological than satirical; and lampoonery—straight and blunt—is very French. You could say that the fearless debunkers at *Charlie Hebdo* were insensitive to the faith and belief system of others; but they

They say the Sig semi-automatic handguns they have been equipped with are no match for the high-powered Uzi, and the country cannot rely on the five armed regional response units.



were not infantile as accused by some. If you are not a believer, religion is more than great literature and storytelling. It is cruel, violent and even comical, and it is this religion that the cartoonists and writers at *Charlie Hebdo* keep laughing at. Even in the land of Voltaire, the right to say—or draw—things others may not agree with is under threat. When religion abhors questions, it gets as tyrannical as ideologies that seek complete copyright over the believers. The radicalisation of Islam repudiates the inquiring mind. The blasphemer earns his banishment or death. Still, some cartoonists in Paris laughed.

That laughter does not make you a non-Charlie unless you are the last defender of the sacred. This writer still believes that religion is the most effective organiser of humanity. Does it mean that religion, man's most abiding identity, is too sacred to tolerate doubt? This question leads to non-Charlie's rage against reducing jihad to an all-Islamic evil. Fourteen years may be a tiny patch in history, but the scars on the twenty-first century have only one adjective—religious, or to be specific, Islamic. From 9/11 to Afghanistan to Iraq to the Islamic State, and in between such incendiary datelines as Bali, London and Mumbai, it has been the story of one religion's struggle for/against power. The beauty of religion is the literary elasticity of its texts, their possibilities of interpretations. The horror of religion is... well, the literary elasticity of its texts, their possibilities of interpretation. The text of Islam continues to be read and misread for sustaining the twin essentials of its power struggle: conquest and the cult of martyrdom. Someone out there, somewhere in Arabia or Persia, is deconstructing the text for the expansion of a monochromatic imperium of absolute faith. And

214

no other religion in modern history has undertaken such a global project in empire building. The lone wolf has internalised the imperium, and when he pulls the trigger, or draws out the knife, or faces his executioner with the greatness of his god on his lips, he becomes a voluntary slave at this century's most ambitious construction site of religion. The lone wolf has never been alone.

Is naming his religion, or attributing an adjective to his enterprise, an act of insensitivity? The struggle within Islam is no longer a case of an innocent majority shadowed by the perversion of a few deviants. As the idea of Islam continues to be rewritten, and its geography redrawn, how is it possible to make an argument for sanity and peace without naming the nature of the struggle? And no amount of historical injustices—or indignations—can justify, or win, an argument for Islam's struggle today. What can make a

difference, though, is an audible, visible rejoinder from the saner side of Islam. Wrote the French philosopher Bernard-Henri Lévy in the wake of *Charlie Hebdo*: 'What is needed from Islamic scholars and their followers is a courageous statement of modernisation—like the *aggiornamento* of the Second Vatican Council in the 1960s—clearly stating that, in a democracy, forcing obeisance to the holy is an attack on the freedom of thought. They should explicitly acknowledge that, in the eyes of the law, religions are systems of thought with no greater, or lesser, status than that of secular ideologies—and that the right to doubt them, debate them and laugh at them, like the right to join them or leave them, is the inalienable right of every citizen.'

In this enveloping silence, the scream of the next lone wolf will resonate louder. The world will be a better place if it pierces the conscience of the quiet majority within Islam.

Concerns grow about attacks on rail systems by domestic terrorists

Source: <http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20150119-concerns-grow-about-attacks-on-rail-systems-by-domestic-terrorists>

Between September 2001 and December 2011, at least 838 attacks on passenger rail systems have killed more than 1,370 people. As DHS officials focus on assuring the American public that security agencies remain on high alert, last week's incidents on two of the nation's major metropolitan rail systems raised more concerns about public safety and preparedness.

The terror attacks in Paris have renewed a sense of insecurity among residents of major U.S. cities. One of the latest Islamic State threats calls on its supporters to target and bomb key U.S. targets, including public transportation hubs, and even police stations. Law enforcement officers in New York have been ordered to remain vigilant. "Pay close attention to people as they approach and look for their hands as they approach you," reads an internal New York Police Department safety memo which the *Daily News* obtained.

As DHS officials focus on assuring the American public that security agencies remain on high alert, last week's incidents on two of the nation's major metropolitan rail systems

raised more concerns about public safety and preparedness.

Last Monday, one person died and eighty-four fell ill after heavy smoke filled the L'Enfant Plaza Metro in Washington, D.C. Officials believe an "electrical arcing event" caused the incident. "The train did not derail.

There was no fire on the train. The arcing event was on the wayside, involving the third rail and the supply cables going to the third rail," National Transportation Safety Board Investigator Mike Flanigan said. "The early indications are this did not involve terrorism but involved a mechanical failure that occurred," White House press secretary Josh Earnest told reporters.

The following day, roughly 150 New York Fire Department firefighters responded to a three-alarm fire at a construction site in Penn Station that began before 2:30 a.m. The fire, labeled an accident, injured two firefighters. *Western Journalism* notes that an ISIS supporter published multiple threats on Twitter a few hours before the fire, warning that



215

"tomorrow New York will burn" and predicting a "3:00 a.m. bomb."

From the 1997 New York City subway-bombing plot to the attacks in Madrid (2004) and London (2005), terrorists have targeted Western rail systems. Between September 2001 and December 2011, at least 838 attacks on passenger rail systems have killed more than 1,370 people. Al-Qaeda militants in Guantanamo told interrogators in 2003 of a plot to target the D.C. metro rail system, and in 2010, Afghan-born jihadist Najibullah Zazi pleaded guilty to terrorism charges after planning to blow up New York subways. Last year, two al-Qaeda-backed terrorists were arrested after plotting to bomb and derail Canada's rail service between Toronto and Penn Station.

Some commuters involved in the D.C. metro incident reported that the evacuation process was "poorly managed." "It's disheartening because there did not appear to be an emergency plan," said longtime metro rider Lesley Lopez. Chris Geldart, director of the District of Columbia's Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency insists that the response was as efficient as possible giving the circumstances. "We had our firefighters go down in a smoke-filled subway tunnel with 200 people on a train and all of the people coming out of the station itself. To ... do an event where we go through and do what we call a mass casualty — assess all the folks and get 84 people transferred all in the amount time that they did it — that's a good response."



Kathryn Bigelow and the bogus link between ivory and terrorism

By Diogo Veríssimo

Source: <http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20150120-kathryn-bigelow-and-the-bogus-link-between-ivory-and-terrorism>

216

It is often said that if something is repeated often enough, it becomes accepted as true. This has certainly been the case for the link between terrorism and the poaching of

elephants for the ivory trade.

A wide range of public figures have repeated the claim that ivory plays a major role in bankrolling terrorist organizations in Africa. These include former U.S. secretary of state Hillary Clinton, U.K. foreign secretary William Hague, and Kenya's president Uhuru Kenyatta.

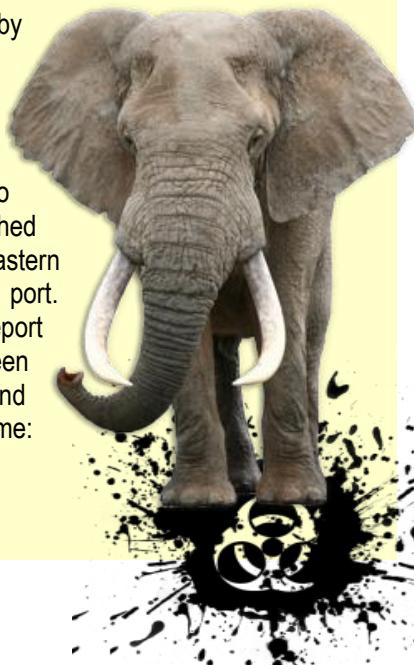
The most recent voice to be added to the choir was that of cinema director Kathryn Bigelow. The Oscar-winning director teamed up with charity WildAid to create a short video asserting that trade in ivory is funding the Somali terrorist group al-Shabaab, responsible for the 2013 Westgate Mall attack in Kenya in which sixty-seven people died.

As with any illegal activity, it is very difficult to obtain reliable data on the size of the ivory trade. Although there is evidence that it has

been used to finance armed groups in Africa such as the Lord's Resistance Army or the Janjaweed in Darfur, the allegations linking ivory to terrorist groups are much weaker.

They essentially rest on a single report published by the Elephant Action League in 2012. The report asserts, based on a single unnamed "source within the militant group," that al-Shabaab makes between US\$200,000 and US\$600,000 from ivory, up to 40 percent of its income. This over-reliance on a single source and the fact that only a short "journalistic summary" of the report was ever released, has led to skepticism.

Recently, a joint report by INTERPOL and the UN Environmental Program classified EAL's claims as "highly unreliable" as they would require al-Shabaab to bring nearly all ivory poached from west, central, and eastern Africa to a single Somali port. However, this same report establishes a solid link between al-Shabaab's finances and another environmental crime: illegal charcoal production.



The trade in charcoal leads to widespread deforestation and is already driving erosion and desertification in parts of Somalia. Al-Shabaab's main financing mechanism appears to be the taxing of charcoal coming to the port of Baraawe (and until recently Kismayo) south of Mogadishu, **with the value of the trade estimated to be US\$38-56 million per year.**

This means that, even if the EAL's inflated ivory estimates were true, the trade in charcoal would still generate sixty to ninety-four times more revenue for al-Shabaab.

We've known about the charcoal trade in the Horn of Africa for a while now — the UN, for instance, highlighted the issue in a 2013 monitoring report on the Somali conflict.

It is thus puzzling that some Western political and conservation figures have decided to focus on the unproven link between ivory and terrorism instead of the more relevant and substantiated conservation issue. A possible (yet cynical) explanation is that those highlighting the issue are trying to gain notoriety by bringing together terrorism, a top issue for all Western governments, and the elephant, one of the most widely used conservation flagship species.

This would surely generate more attention than the more abstract issue of desertification and a few obscure tree species. The increased visibility could then be used to generate extra

votes, donations, or simply a more environment-friendly image.

If this was the case, then we would for example expect these efforts to focus on those more likely to vote or donate, instead of those more likely to buy ivory. In the case of Kathryn Bigelow's video and the "Last days of ivory" campaign it spearheads, all materials are only available in English, a language not relevant for the key ivory markets in Southeast Asia.

All the first four actions proposed to those who visit the campaign's Web site revolve around either sharing the campaign image and content on social networks or donating to the associated charities. This campaign does indeed appear to be targeting those who can donate rather than those who can directly impact the ivory trade.

Those involved clearly have something to gain from pushing the link between ivory and terrorism beyond the available evidence. However, it is also clear that in the long run it is not only their own credibility that is at risk but that of a whole conservation movement. Conservationists have focused large on messages of doom and gloom that often sound as if holding humanity for ransom if the environmental crisis is not addressed. If we are serious about keeping the public's trust, we must ensure that we are driven by evidence, not the hype, lest we become the boy who cried wolf.

217

Diogo Veríssimo is David H. Smith Conservation Research Fellow at Georgia State University.

Looking for the roots of terrorism

By Sara Reardon

Source: <http://www.nature.com/news/looking-for-the-roots-of-terrorism-1.16732>

In the wake of terrorist attacks last week on the French satirical magazine *Charlie Hebdo* and a Paris supermarket, the world has struggled to understand the combination of religion, European culture and influence from terrorist organizations that drove the gunmen. **Scott Atran, an anthropologist at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor and the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique in Paris, studies such questions by interviewing would-be and convicted terrorists about their extreme commitment to their organizations and ideals.** Atran recently returned from Paris, where he talked with members of the shooters' communities. He spoke with *Nature* about what he discovered.

What sociological and cultural factors are behind the Paris attacks?

Unlike the United States, where immigrants achieve average socioeconomic status and education within a generation, in Europe even after three generations, depending on the

country, they're 5–19 times more likely to be poor or less educated. France has about 7.5% Muslims and [they make] up to 60–75% of the prison population. It's a very similar situation to black youth in the United States.

The difference is here's an ideology that appeals to them, it's something that's very attractive to more people than you might think. In France, a poll by [ICM Research] showed that 27% of young French people, not just Muslims, between 18 and 24 had a favourable attitude toward the Islamic State. The jihad is the only systemic cultural ideology that's effective, that's growing, that's attractive, that's glorious — that basically says to these young people, "Look, you're on the outs, nobody cares about you, but look what we can do. We can change the world."

And of course they are. These three lowlifes, they managed to capture the entire world's attention for the better part of a week. They mobilized all of French society. That's a pretty good cost-benefit for the bad guys.



So is this a ready-made population for groups such as the Islamic State and Al Qaeda to recruit from?

It's not about recruitment, it's about self-seekers. The Islamic State and Al Qaeda don't directly order commando operations. Basically they say, "Hey guys, here are ideas, do it yourself. Here's the way to make a pressure cooker bomb; here are likely targets that will terrorize people; here are things we hate. Go out and do it."

Do the terrorists you study seem to have fit this pattern?

I talked to people in the neighbourhood where the [9/11 pilots] came from, their families. They didn't know what the hell they were doing. They were guys who worked at a technical university, they sort of hooked up, went to mosque together, got an apartment together, wanted to do something together. They dragged in mattresses, they watched videos. Neighbours told us the place stank because they never went out of the apartment.

None of this was carefully planned. But the [attacks] we remember, the ones that work, they pick carefully planned targets. The attacks on the [World Trade Center] and Pentagon, these shook America to the core. In Madrid, [when a set of train bombings in 2004 killed 191 people] they changed the government. But they're petty criminals with a little bit of training.

It's the organized anarchy of it that does more to terrorize than actually carefully planned commando operations. Of course, a lot more of these guys are now heroes. They're going to be models for other guys.

Can anything be done to predict extremist attacks?

I think people want to be able to predict, to have surety. [But] it wouldn't help if you knew about every single [foiled] plot in terms of being able to predict it. The fact is that anybody at any time anywhere can start to make their own network with their friends. It's like when you boil water, when the cones rise up, you don't know which will boil first and pop. Complexity theory is not good for modelling these things. You'll never be able to predict with certainty.

It depends on the poll, but 7–14% of Muslims worldwide supported the Al Qaeda strike against the United States. If something like that support the Islamic State, that's a lot of people, [over 100] million. But who is actually willing to fight and die? There is a problem of specificity. Even if people buy into the ideology, buy into the values, it's far from a sufficient condition.

The best predictors turn out to be things like who your friends are and whether you belong to some action group. In the case of the Kouachi brothers [who committed the *Charlie Hebdo* attack], we had the greatest bonding experience and that is prison. But it could be soccer, it could be whitewater rafting.

If you want to find out who's going to fight and die, if you want to break up a particular terrorist cell, find out what they're eating and how they dress. Plots never occur in mosques: you have to be quiet in a mosque. They occur in fast food places, soccer fields, picnics and barbeques.

Why aren't more people doing anthropological fieldwork, such as interviewing jihadis and their families?

The problem is you can't have large samples. The insights you get can't come from surveys. They have to come from in-depth field interviews and very tightly controlled experiments.

If you really want to do a scientific study with jihadis — I do it — you

have to convince them to put down their guns, not talk to one another, and answer your questions. Some people, if you ask them if they would give up their belief in God if offered a certain amount of money, they will shoot you. So you can't ask that question.

It's not just because it's dangerous. It's because human subjects reviews at universities and especially the [US] defence department won't let this work be done. It's not because it puts the researcher in danger, but because human subjects [research ethics] criteria have been set up to defend middle class university students. What are you going do with these kind of protocols when you talk to jihadis? Get them to sign it saying, "I appreciate that the Defense Department has funded this work," and by the way if you have any complaints, call the human subjects secretary? This sounds ridiculous and nothing gets done, literally.

Have you run into such difficulties with your fieldwork?

As an example, I got permission, before the [three] Bali bombers [who carried out a set of simultaneous attacks in 2002] were executed, to interview them. They were going to be shot because they blew up 200 people. I couldn't get human subjects approval because "you have to bring a lawyer, and besides we won't allow anyone to interview prisoners." I said why? "You can never be sure you're not violating their right to speech."

Then you have crazy things [required by US funding bodies] like host country authorization. Suppose you want to do work in Israel and Palestine. So you go to the Israelis, say, "We want to do studies, just like we do in American universities," and say, "We need host country authorization from some government." They say, "Are you crazy?" And in many countries that are in chaos, who's going to give you permission?

Sara Reardon joined Nature in 2013 and writes about biomedical research and policy. She has previously written for New Scientist and Science, and has a master's degree in molecular biology from the University of Washington.

219

Charlie Hebdo: Report from Europe

The culpability of the Western media in lies, death, and destruction is extreme



Source: <http://www.infowars.com/charlie-hebdo-report-from-europe/>

► Read more at source's URL

Rio reviews 2016 Olympic Games security operation after Paris attacks

Source: <http://www.theguardian.com/sport/2015/jan/20/rio-olympic-games-2016-paris-attacks>



Security for Rio was increased in the World Cup and has been reviewed for the Olympic Games.
Photograph: Ricardo Moraes/Reuters

Jan 20 – The organisers of the 2016 Olympic Games are reviewing their security arrangements in light of recent events in Paris but have insisted that plans for Rio de Janeiro remain on track despite heavy criticism about their progress last year.

On a visit to London, Mario Andrada, the Rio 2016 director of communications, confirmed that the recent terrorist attacks in France had led to a review of security arrangements. "We worked for the [2014] World Cup with a system that linked the state police, the federal police, the federal intelligence agency and the military. Our security plan has been approved by all levels of government," he said. "I understand from the security director that they review their plans on a bi-weekly basis and that the Paris incident was the theme of a recent revision." He also said organisers hoped the main athletics venue would become known as the Olympic Stadium after the Games rather than keeping its present name. It is currently named after João Havelange, the 98-year-old former Fifa president who was forced to give up his honorary position within the International Olympic Committee after being implicated in the \$100m ISL bribery scandal. As is the case in all Olympics, the athletics venue will be

known as the Olympic Stadium for the competition but Andrada said he expects the name to be retained afterwards. Locally, most know the stadium by its nickname, Engenhão. Last April, the Australian IOC member John Coates said preparations for Rio were the "worst ever". But following a World Cup widely seen as a success operationally and moves by the IOC to accelerate progress, by August Coates was saying the prognosis was "much, much better".

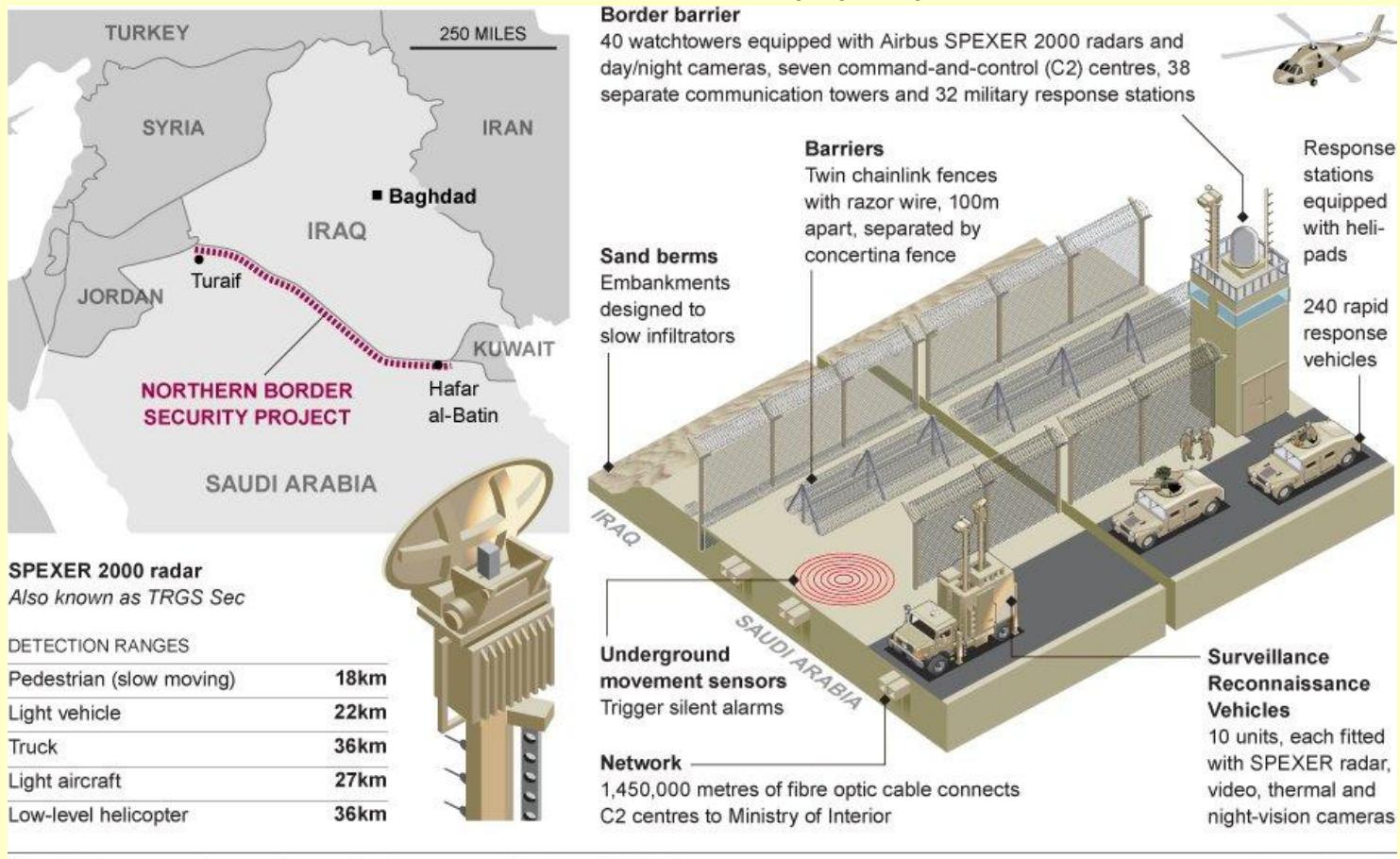
Andrada said the successful staging of the World Cup, which passed off peacefully and with few logistical problems even if serious questions remain over the legacy use of the stadiums, had eased the pressure on organisers. Andrada said: "It [the World Cup] eased a lot of pressure from us in a way, because Brazil proved capable. There were zero security issues," he said. "In the end, it was a very positive experience for the country. We gained confidence and proved that we could do it."

"If you go through the nuts and bolts, there were probably a lot of details that could be improved. But that happens with any major event. People enjoyed it."

220

Are Israeli companies going to build the great Saudi Wall?

Source: <http://i-hls.com/2015/01/exclusive-israeli-companies-going-build-great-saudi-wall/>



SOURCES: UPI, AIRBUS DEFENCE AND SPACE, ANIMETRICS' FORENSICAGPS

GRAPHIC NEWS

Israeli companies are seeking ways to get work in connection with the 600 mile long 'Great Wall' Saudi Arabia is building along its border with Iraq.

Israeli companies that have systems that can integrate into a border fence are already working to find a way to get chunks of work in the huge project. Sources told i-HLS.

Some Israeli security companies have affiliate companies abroad and these may try to get work. The Israel border security technologies are considered the best in the world.

Saudi Arabia is building a 600-mile-long wall along its border with Iraq in an effort to keep out militants of the Islamic State group, who have

stated that one of their key goals is to capture the two holy Muslim cities of Mecca and Medina, both of which lie in the Saudi territory.

According to the *International Business Times*, the massive wall, from the northern town of Turaif close to the border with Jordan, to the eastern city of Hafar al-Batin, where Saudi Arabia and Kuwait meet, includes five layers of fencing with 40 watchtowers, sand



embankments, radar and cameras, the United Press International (UPI) reported, adding that Riyadh has deployed 30,000 troops in the area.

The "Great Wall" of Saudi Arabia, as it is being dubbed by some media reports, was proposed during the 2006 Iraqi civil war, but work began only in September. The wall is expected to separate the Saudi desert territory from that of Iraq, which is struggling with the ongoing turmoil triggered by ISIS.

ISIS considers Saudi Arabia's links to the West as a treachery of Islam. The group has reportedly called for lone-wolf attacks against Saudi security forces, as well as Shia Muslims and foreigners. Saudi Arabia is currently backing U.S.-led strikes on ISIS over Syria and Iraq.

Europe Plans its War on Islamist Terrorism

Source: <http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/190255#.VMC8ES6TLz4>

Jan 21 – French and European officials will unveil the details of counter-terror measures Wednesday to deal with threats of new Islamist attacks and strengthen cooperation in the wake of the recent lethal shootings in Paris.

In the French capital, on high alert since jihadist attacks left 17 dead two weeks ago, Prime Minister Manuel Valls will outline promised measures to boost security forces.

The worst attack on French soil in decades put Europe on high alert, and a wave of police raids, investigations and extraditions have taken place across the jittery continent.

European Commissioners in Brussels will meet to discuss the 28-nation bloc's new counter-terrorism strategy, including changes to the region's Schengen Agreement free travel area and intelligence cooperation.

Meanwhile in Washington, President Barack Obama said the US stood side by side with terror victims around the world, citing the Paris attacks in his State of the Union address late Tuesday.

"We will continue to hunt down terrorists and dismantle their networks," he said, vowing action against "terrorists who pose a direct threat to us and our allies."

Last week Valls announced the creation of special files for people linked to terrorism, and said prisoners linked to radical Islam could be isolated in jail, a hotbed for radicalization.

Interior Minister Bernard Cazeneuve has said intelligence services could receive additional

funding while security forces could get more powerful weapons and improved equipment. According to a source, **400 million euros (\$460 million) will go to the police for hiring, upgrading information systems and equipment.**

Counter-terror raids across Europe

Four men suspected of supplying one of the gunmen behind the Paris attacks with weapons and vehicles were brought before an anti-terror judge Tuesday, the first to face possible charges over the shootings that shook France to its core.

The three gunmen who carried out coordinated attacks from January 7-9 were killed in dramatic police sieges, and prosecutors are now hoping to pin down those who assisted them.

Prosecutors called Tuesday for the men believed to have supplied gunman Amedy Coulibaly with weapons and vehicles to remain in detention and be charged with conspiracy to commit terrorist acts.

Coulibaly was behind the murder of four Jewish hostages at a kosher supermarket, and the murder of a policewoman, after brothers Said and Cherif Kouachi gunned down 12 people at satirical magazine *Charlie Hebdo*.

The attacks prompted a flurry of police activity across Europe.

In Germany some 200 police carried out raids on 13 apartments in Berlin and other locations to find evidence against two men arrested last week for allegedly backing jihadist violence in Syria.

This followed raids in Belgium last week that foiled potential



222

attacks against police officers, and led to arrests in several European countries. Greece on Tuesday ordered the extradition of a 33-year-old Algerian man with suspected links to the jihadist cell dismantled in Belgium. The suspected mastermind of the plot, Abdelhamid Abaaoud, a 27-year-old Belgian of Moroccan descent, remains at large. And in Bulgaria, a court ruled that a Frenchman who knew two of the Paris attackers should be returned to his home country. France had issued an arrest warrant for Muslim convert Fritz-Joly Joachin, 29, who denies being an extremist but was detained after trying to cross from Bulgaria into Turkey before the attacks.

In southern France, five Russians from Chechnya were arrested on Tuesday with what police described as a dangerous amount of explosives, although the case was believed to be linked to organized crime and not radical Islam.

EU beefing up security measures

Many EU states have pushed for a US-style database of air travellers' details on the grounds that it would help track Islamist suspects, but the European Parliament has so far blocked the scheme saying it would breach civil liberties.

Some European nations have also been pushing for a tightening of the Schengen visa-free zone.

"They will discuss subjects including passenger name records and data retention, the functioning of the Schengen area and cooperation between security services," Commission spokesman Margaritis Schinas told a briefing on Tuesday ahead of Wednesday's meeting.

Charlie Hebdo magazine responded to the murder of many of its senior staff by publishing a new cartoon of Mohammed, the founder of Islam, which has led to massive protests in Muslim countries.

The Muslims burned French flags, and threatened the country in protests that have taken place in Chechnya, Afghanistan, Gaza, Iran and Pakistan - and even on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem.

In Niger protests turned deadly as ten people died and dozens of churches were torched by the Muslim mob.

In light of the Islamist terror attacks, France has begun discussing the inability to integrate poorer, migrant Muslim families, with Valls claiming on Tuesday that the country was plagued by "social and ethnic apartheid."

223

Sheriffs sound off on Islamic 'terror camps' in U.S.

By Leo Hohmann

Source: <http://www wnd com/2015/01/sheriffs-sound-off-on-jihad-training-camps-in-u-s/>



Sheriff John Carter of Wayne County, Georgia, received a hot tip in February last year that he remembers well.

The caller said he had reason to believe the Muslims of America, a mysterious Islamic commune with cult-like devotion to a radical Pakistani sheikh, was building underground bunkers on its land near the tiny town of Jesup.

Sheik Mubarak Ali Gilani is the spiritual leader of Pakistan-based Jamaat al-Fuqra and its U.S. front group, the Muslims of the Americas.

He immediately paid a visit to the reclusive Muslim group's compound, where Mecca Circle turns off of Oreo Road several miles north town. About 38 people

live in the commune, where women wear burqas and the men don the skullcap common among Sufi Muslims.

"We haven't had a lot of crime out there. They have not been unfriendly or rude in any way. They do want their privacy. It is a concern. We're monitoring them, and I believe they're monitored federally, although I don't know that for sure because they're not going to tell you," Carter told WND. "But most of the concerns that bring us out there have come from outside the county."

The sheriff has a file in his office about an inch thick titled "Mecca Circle," filled with articles and CDs about the clannish Muslim enclave that keeps an extremely low profile in Wayne County.

And what about the report about those "bunkers?"

"I personally went up there, February a year ago, because this person was saying they were putting in bunkers," he said.

He inquired of the leader, a man named Kareem, who led him to a site where the ground had been disturbed.

"They were replacing a septic tank," Carter said.

Most police calls to the 22 MOA compounds nationwide have resulted in similar "false alarms," as residents are understandably upset when they find out they have a possible jihadist training camp operating in their county, or even their state or region.

There has been a few crimes committed by MOA members in Wayne County, Carter said, but nothing approaching an act of terrorism.

"The only thing I can recall, and I was chief deputy for 16 years before I became sheriff, was two of them did an armed robbery at a liquor store some years ago. We caught them and they went to prison," Carter said. "There's eight trailers out there on Mecca Circle, one vacant lot, a frame house and a mosque facing the east. I haven't seen much more than that."

The remote compound outside of Jesup is the smaller of two MOA encampments in Georgia whose members swear allegiance to Sheikh Mubarak Ali Gilani, the Pakistani cleric and spiritual leader of Jamaat al-Fuqra. The group's U.S. headquarters, Muslims of America, is in Hancock County, at the foot of the Catskill Mountains in upstate New York, at a place called Islamberg.

At another compound in Red House, Virginia, the local sheriff's office says they have about

20 trailer homes and a mosque. Another large compound exists in York County, S.C., with others in Michigan, Tennessee, California and other states.

The Virginia camp, in a remote area of Charlotte County, also happens to be the closest to the Lynchburg office of Christian Action Network, an activist group led by Martin Mawyer that produced the documentary film "Homegrown Jihad." The film takes a critical look at Muslims of America and Jamaat al-Fuqra. The network's film crew has visited the compound in Virginia several times.

Maj. Donald Lacks of the Charlotte County Sheriff's Office told WND that the sheriff does not consider MOA to be a threat and he doesn't take seriously the information put out by Mawyer and others about the network of 22 "jihadist training camps."

But the phone calls and visits from concerned Americans continue to occur intermittently, mostly from folks outside Charlotte County, Lacks said. They often occur after an article has been published, such as WND's story last week about the MOA communes.

"These people live there, they have their own mosque there. They don't bother us. I've gotten a couple calls this week from West Virginia where they're reading on the Internet what a militant place we have here and that's not what it is," Lacks said. "They've been here a good while, probably 10 to 15 years. It's not a city, it's a residential area, probably 15 or 20 mobile homes there and a mosque. We go there all the time. It might be a civil paper we're serving or it might be to unlock a vehicle. Routine stuff."

'Nosy people' are the problem

Lacks said he's never been inside the mosque, but he has entered the commune.

"I have an officer that lives within a mile and a half of that community. There are no complaints. The only complaints I get are from people who read articles that are not true. We're a rural county but we have residents living near there and have no complaints," he continued. "The biggest problem we have is people driving here from outside the area being nosy, trying to find out what we have here. They give us more problems than the Muslims."

Lacks had harsh words for the Christian Action Network and its investigative work.

224



"They've been banned from here. They fly over

JAMAAT AL-FUQRA IN THE UNITED STATES



Known Jamaat ul-Fuqra camps

(Also known as: Muslims of America and Quranic Open University)

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Deposit, NY
<i>(National Headquarters)</i> | 14. Marion, AL |
| 2. Hancock, NY | 15. Houston, TX |
| 3. Springfield, MA | 16. Talhina, OK |
| 4. Philadelphia, PA | 17. Coldwater, MI |
| 5. Hyattsville, MD | 18. Buena Vista, CO
<i>(Raided and shut down by Colorado authorities in 1992)</i> |
| 6. Fairfax, VA | 19. Baladulla, CA
<i>(Leader convicted of scamming state out of \$1.3 million in 2006. Compound now abandoned.)</i> |
| 7. Bethany, WV | 20. Oak Hill, CA |
| 8. Red House, VA | 21. Onalaska, WA |
| 9. Meherrin, VA | |
| 10. Dover, TN | |
| 11. York, SC | |
| 12. Commerce, GA | |
| 13. Jessup, GA | |

and drop numerous pamphlets. One of them got charged. I believe it was for littering. They've got it in their minds that these people are militant and wanting to kill everybody," Lacks said. "Well, that's not been our experience here."

Mawyer stands by the accuracy of his 2012 book, "Twilight of America," which he co-authored with Patti Pierucci, and their documentary film, "Homegrown Jihad." He said one of the group's members was charged with littering but the charge was quickly thrown out of court.

When his film crew showed up at the compound in Red House they were greeted by

hostile Muslim of Americas members. The leader of the group confronted the crew as they exited their car.

"Leave," he said. "Don't say another word. Leave, period. You understand?"

As the crew drove off, the Muslim leader struck their car window with his cane.

"We toured a lot of these camps and by and large all the camps have a pretty good working relationship with the police department or the sheriff that is in the immediate area," Mawyer told WND. "Whenever we've tried to meet with any of these police agencies and present our findings they won't let us in to show any of the evidence. Maybe it's just to keep their heads buried in the sand because they certainly don't approach this group with any degree of seriousness."

He said local sheriffs refused to take a serious look at evidence indicating that MOA has its roots in the jihadist ideology of its Pakistani leader and, according to Mawyer's research, is a ticking bomb "ready to go off."

When Mawyer approached residents living near the encampments, he says he found plenty of nervous neighbors.

"If you talk to the people that live there they will express a great deal of fear of these people for the most part, although you always have some that will tell you they have no problem with what's going on," he said. "You can imagine how much more heightened that fear would be if the local sheriff said they have a terrorist camp in their county."

"So I think that is why the sheriffs are reluctant to criticize this group."

Mawyer also believes Gilani selected the remote, rural outposts for a reason.

"They know these are small communities that don't have the resources to regularly monitor what's going on," he said.

Group not on federal radar, at least not officially

In the 1990s, the U.S. State Department listed Jamaat al-Fuqra under "other terrorist organizations" in a document

225

called "Patterns of Global Terrorism." That was after a raid on a Colorado camp turned up a stash of AK-47 assault rifles and pipe bombs that were primed and ready to fire. More troubling, however, was a recruitment video captured in the raid in which Sheikh Gilani boasts, "We have an advanced training course in Islamic military warfare."

At some point around 1997 Gilani and his network of camps dropped off the federal watch list.

"We did away with that section many years ago and only list the groups that are designated as Foreign Terrorist Organizations," said Rhonda Shore, press secretary for the State Department's Bureau of Counterterrorism, in an email to WND.

The administration of President Barack Obama has preferred to deal with domestic terrorist threats in terms of more generic "violent extremism," avoiding at all cost the term "Islamic" or "terrorist" when describing incidents such as the Fort Hood shooting by Maj. Nidal Hason that claimed 13 lives. That incident, like others, have been designated as "work place violence."

The White House announced last week it will now move forward with plans to host a previously delayed summit on "violent extremism" on Feb. 18.

While the federal government treads gingerly through the weeds of Islamic radicals, it has expressed no such reticence in calling out "radical right wing" extremists such as pro-life people and disgruntled veterans, citing them in a 2009 report as potential terrorists. This trend has its roots in the federal siege of the Branch Davidian compound at Waco, Texas, during the Clinton administration in 1993, and the FBI's fatal shooting a year earlier of Randy Weaver's wife, son and dog at Ruby Ridge under President George H.W. Bush.

The White House later pulled the 2009 report following a strong backlash from conservatives in Congress.

Frank Spano, executive director of the Counter Terrorism Institute, said in a 2013 interview with WUSA9, a CBS affiliate in Washington, D.C., that the differences in the federal government's approach to right wing extremism and Islamic extremism are stark.

"It's almost to the point now where we buy their story upfront: 'Oh, we're just a group of individuals, like-minded, who choose to live together and defend ourselves,'" Spano said.

"Well, that was the same case with the Branch Davidians at Waco."

Spano said that outlook is "dangerous."

"That's the terrorist next door," he said. "That's where the U.S. really needs to reconsider how we address these organizations."

A known 'jihadist' organization

Because Jamaat al-Fuqra and Muslims of America are not on the State Department's foreign terrorist list, state and local law enforcement have less freedom to monitor them, said Clare Lopez, vice president of research and analysis for the Center for Security Policy in Washington, D.C.

"I don't know if Jamaat al-Fuqra has ties to al-Qaida, but they are known to be a jihadist organization," Lopez said. "They're definitely jihadist in their ideology, and what's concerning is they are in the U.S."

Wall Street Journal reporter Daniel Pearl was investigating Jamaat al-Fuqra in 2002 and was on his way to interview Gilani in Pakistan when he was kidnapped and beheaded.

"And the one who did the beheading was Khalid Sheikh Muhammad (the al-Qaida operative considered the architect of the 9/11 attacks)," Lopez said. "A lot of these groups are not formally connected. But they are jihadist and any group with a jihadi ideology is linked by Islam. Sometimes they do cooperate across organizational structures."

Iran helps fund Hamas, for instance, even though Iran is Shiite and Hamas is Sunni Muslim.

"It's the fundamental ideology that binds them even when the sectarian differences might divide them," Lopez said. "All of Islamic doctrine divides the world into Dar al-Islam and the Dar al-Harb, and it's the Dar al-Harb that becomes the target either through conquest or through civilizational jihad... so they do cooperate against the enemy, which is us."

Three criteria must be met for a group to get placed on the State Department's foreign terrorist list: The group must be foreign based, it must have committed violent acts, and it must be deemed a national-security threat. The State Department reviews its list every two years.

The Center for Security Policy released a study Jan. 16 that outlines a new strategy Lopez says would provide a more systematic and thorough

226



assessment of the global jihadist threat, both at home and abroad.

Sleeper cells waiting to wake up?

A group like Jamaat al-Fuqra could be a sleeper cell that lies dormant for years, only to be activated one day by its leader, analysts such as Lopez and Spano surmise. It has not carried out any organized acts of violence for more than a decade.

"It's troubling, because we've got this network of dozens of encampments across the U.S. and of course it's not like the no-go zones in Europe because these are out in the countryside and neighbors report that they have heard gunfire inside the encampments but gun ownership in America is legal," Lopez said. "So you would need a warrant, probable cause, all these things. It's just been difficult for law enforcement."

Even if a local sheriff wanted to thoroughly investigate MOA, there is no legal basis for doing so because they operate on private property and have separated themselves from society under the premise that they are practicing their religion.

"That is pretty clever of the group," Lopez said. "Our Jan. 16 report is a national strategy to defeat the global jihad movement, recognizing it is not only a religion, because a religion is pietistic. It involves worship of a deity, maybe has a diet, rules for living, and that's completely covered by the First Amendment and if that was all Islam was then we wouldn't be having this conversation."

Islam also has its own legal system, shariah law, which Lopez said could be seen as a violation of Article 6 of the U.S. Constitution.

"So we have to stop talking about it as a religion only. It is a totalitarian political system and supremacist in nature, and as part of the belief system itself obligates Muslims to conquest," she said. "Now, happily, a big percentage of Muslims don't want anything to do with that."

Lopez cites a 2013 Pew Research survey of the Muslim world, which includes 1.6 billion adherents. In this survey, a surprising 19 percent of U.S. Muslims did not agree that suicide bombings were never justified.

"Even if a majority of the 1.6 billion never pick up a gun or a bomb they still go to mosque and still make donations, and one-eighth of the donation goes to jihad. That's according to the law of Islam. They're supporting it, they're

perpetrating it," Lopez said. "So it's not just the ones that pick up the guns and the bombs. It's every single parent that allows them to go to an Islamic school. I can understand why people don't want to take that on. It seems pretty daunting. But if one-fifth of world's population is Muslim think of the other side, four-fifths are not Muslim. So we're going to be concerned about a backlash from the one-fifth?"

WND informed Lacks that several reputable researchers, media outlets and even the FBI itself, have documented the terrorist ties of Gilani's group. Comments from Gilani himself make reference to America being the "enemy" of Islam and that he was "establishing training camps" for the "Soldiers of Allah."

Lacks said he had to go answer another phone call and abruptly ended the interview with WND before he could be asked if he was aware of specific incidents, such as the 1992 raid on MOA's Beuna Vista, Colorado, compound that found a cache of assault rifles and explosives, or about the firebombing of a Hindu temple in Colorado by MOA members. The camp in Colorado was also where a recruitment video was captured in which Gilani touted the "Soldiers of Allah" and showed members engaging in military-type drills, marching with rifles, setting off explosives and assaulting fictional enemies.

One police chief not convinced group is 'peace loving'

But not all law enforcement officers are dismissive of the group and its potential as a terrorist sleeper cell within the U.S.

John W. Gaisser, the police chief of Commerce, Georgia, near the MOA camp in Franklin County, is a retired Navy commander who has spent a career in law enforcement, working directly on military and civilian counter-terrorism issues.

Gaisser was a security consultant for the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta and also testified in 2010 to a U.S. House Subcommittee on Intelligence. He believes it would be a mistake to dismiss Jamaat Fuqra and Muslims of America as merely pietistic Muslims trying to live in peace out in the countryside.

"Their spiritual mentor is Sheikh Gilani and his concept is to make your enemy your friend and then kill them," Gaisser said.



Gilani came to America in 1979 and got his start in a mosque in New York.

"And of course the U.S. always seems to back the wrong hound, and when the Afghans were fighting the Russians he recruited 100 men who trained in Pakistan and then fought under Osama bin Laden," Gaisser said. "In any event he is a radical clerical."

Yet, the compound on Madinah Road outside of Commerce in a remote area of north Georgia has not had any reported acts of violence.

"You could probably surmise that all these groups are probably on a federal radar screen, but there is no department of pre crime. We act on intelligence but until someone commits a crime there is not much to do, we still have a free country," Gaisser told WND. "We've had no overt acts of violence. That is not to say they are benign because if you research Jamaat Fuqra in other parts of the country we have had acts of violence. We have not had any violent acts from the group here but you have to look at the roots. We have enough information to know there are specific facts that can be stated about this particular organization."

FBI documents show the group's members have been tied to 10 murders, three firebombings and one attempted firebombing, as well as welfare fraud.

"We know al-Qaida and ISIS have called for lone-wolf attacks against law enforcement and now we've seen object lessons in Europe, and we've also seen them in Fort Hood, Texas, and in Oklahoma, and in Boston and in New York. This is not something to take lightly. The notion that it can't happen here and it can't happen to me is pretty myopic in terms of a world view. That's a fatal philosophy for police."

Mawyer said he believes the favorable treatment from local law enforcement boils down to politics.

"You can speculate about why the local law enforcement community always puts out such positive stuff about these groups, but put yourself in their position. They don't have any legal means to do anything with these camps, and to try to face re-election every four years with the possibility that you have a terrorist training camp in your jurisdiction, it's just easier to try to say these are not terrorist camps, just peace-loving people trying to educate their own kids and do their own farming," he said.

"There's a lot of political pressure on these sheriffs."

Gaisser said one thing is certain – that political correctness has seemed into law enforcement at the federal level and some of that has leaked down to the state and local levels.

"It seems that if an attack is sponsored or directed by a terrorist organization they will label it a terrorist act. But if an act or event is jihadist inspired, that is by someone who was radicalized by a teaching in a mosque or over the Internet, they will not call it an act of terrorism," he said. "But a rose by any other name is still a rose. Why would you want to cloud the issue or deny the reality of it?"

Sheriff Stevie Thomas of Franklin County, where the larger of the two Georgia camps has operated for years, near Commerce, did not return repeated phone calls from WND. Sheriff Bruce Bryant of York County, S.C., which also has a large MOA enclave, also did not return calls.

"So for any sheriff to claim that we put out false information, they will never put a finger on anything we've shown that is in anyway false because they can't. It's all very well researched," Mawyer said. "We hear this all the time, not just from sheriff's departments. Is the video false? Are Gilani's own words false?"

Mawyer points to Gilani's diatribe in the captured video from Colorado as the most damning evidence.

"He said, 'We are establishing the most advanced Islamic warfare training camps and we're in upstate New York, we're in Georgia, we're in Michigan and you can reach out to join us. And America is the enemy.'"

Mawyer said he has no message for the local sheriffs who ignore or denigrate his research.

"They have a duty to perform in their communities," he said. "I hope they do it well."

"Why Sheriff Jones (of Charlotte County) feels these are nice peaceful people, I don't know," he continued. "Our entire goal was just to say 'Look, they are here and here's what they've done in the past, and here's what they are capable of doing now.'"

What happened in Colorado in 1992 should stand as a lesson, he said.

"They had their Colorado compound raided and shut down, and if you were to read all the newspaper pieces from back prior to that raid it would sound the same way — these are nice peaceful people —



and then they found caches of weapons and explosives."

Little chance of congressional hearings

Mawyer said he asked one congressman, "who will remain nameless," about holding hearings on Jamaat Fuqra and Muslims of America. His response was jolting.

"How far would I get if I tried to advance hearings on Capitol Hill into a group dealing with a lot of women in its camps, most are

black, and a minority religion, how far would I get?" the congressman asked him.

"It's like three strikes and you're out. You're not going to hold a hearing on these people, because you'd be depicted as racists and Islamophobes and anti-women," Mawyer said. "All the facts are in the documentary, and the book, it speaks for itself. If people want to take the word of their sheriff's department over what this group puts out themselves, then so be it."

Leo Hohmann is a news editor for WND. He has been a reporter and editor at several suburban newspapers in the Atlanta and Charlotte, North Carolina, areas and also served as managing editor of Triangle Business Journal in Raleigh, North Carolina.

Are most victims of terrorism Muslim?

Source: <http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-30883058>

After the Charlie Hebdo attack, a Paris imam went to the scene and condemned the murders. "These victims are martyrs, and I shall pray for them with all my heart," said Hassen Chalghoumi (above). **He was also quoted as saying that 95% of victims of terrorism are Muslim. How accurate is this statistic?**

The claim is similar to one in a 2011 report by the US government's National Counter-Terrorism Center (NCTC), which said: "In cases where the religious affiliation of terrorism casualties could be determined, Muslims suffered between 82 and 97% of terrorism-related fatalities over the past five

years."

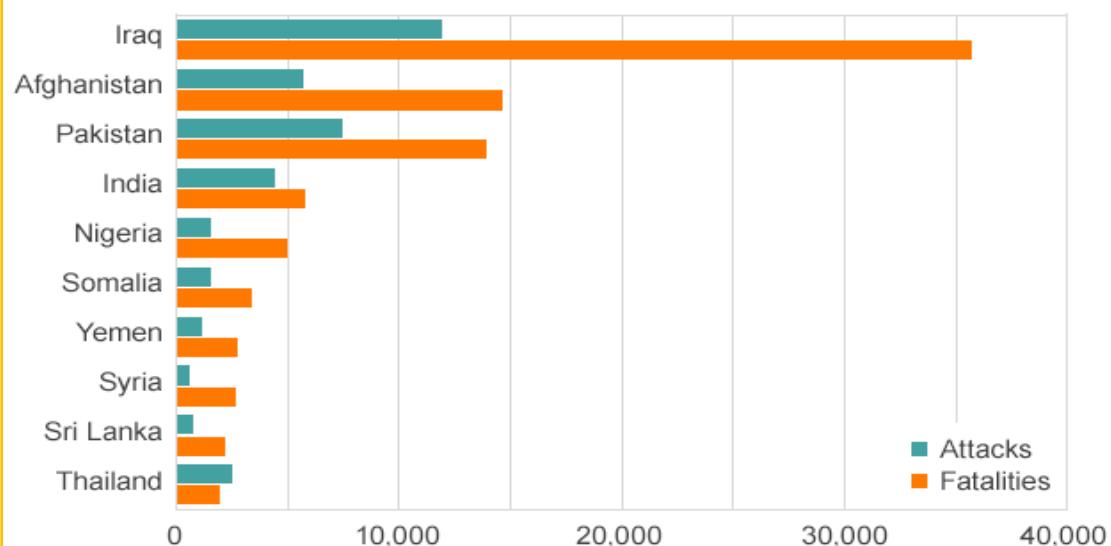
However, the report did not say in what proportion of cases it had been possible to determine the victims' religious affiliation - or whether these cases were representative of the others. The answers are not easy to obtain, because the report is no longer produced.

Another US-based team, the **Global Terrorism Database (GTD)** at the University of Maryland, does still compile terrorism statistics - but it doesn't attempt to determine the religion of people killed or injured. To do so would be "very difficult" says the GTD's Erin Miller.

The reason is that most of the raw data comes from news reports, and these often don't

229

Countries with most fatalities from terror attacks, 2004-13



Source: GTD

mention the religion of the victims. In about 50% of cases the GTD doesn't even know who carried out the attack.

Miller does point out, though, that between 2004 and 2013 about half of all terrorist attacks, and 60% of fatalities due to terrorist attacks, took place in Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan - all of which have a mostly Muslim population.

So while she doubts that 95% of terrorism victims are Muslim, she thinks the truth might not be far off.

"It's not out of the realm of possibility, given the extreme concentration of attacks in majority-Muslim countries," Miller says.

Defining 'terrorism'

The GTD defines a terrorist attack as the threatened or actual use of illegal force and violence by a non-state actor to attain a political, economic, religious, or social goal through fear, coercion, or intimidation.

When people in the West think of terrorist attacks, they may think of Charlie Hebdo, or the 7/7 London tube and bus bombs, the Madrid train bombs and of course 9/11 - and although some Muslims did die in these

attacks, most of the victims wouldn't have been Muslim.

The overall number of deadly terrorist attacks in France, the UK, Spain and the US, however, is very low by international standards.

Between 2004-2013, the UK suffered 400 terrorist attacks, mostly in Northern Ireland, and almost all of them were non-lethal. The US suffered 131 attacks, fewer than 20 of which were lethal. France suffered 47 attacks. But in Iraq, there were 12,000 attacks and 8,000 of them were lethal.

Erin Miller says there is another reason why she would advise against focusing on the religious affiliation of victims, quite apart from the fact that reliable data is hard to find.

"It's tempting for many people to try and turn it into almost a scorecard, trying to figure out which religious groups are more violent than others, and boil it down to this grossly oversimplified keeping of score, like it's a football game," she says.

This is a mistake, she argues. Most terrorist attacks are rooted in geopolitics, she says. "Religion is certainly a part of them, but it is not the only part."

230

Radicalized Muslims from Central Asia flock to Syria to join ISIS

Source: <http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20150123-radicalized-muslims-from-central-asia-flock-to-syria-to-join-isis>

Jan 23 – The Islamic State (IS) is attracting Central Asians to Syria and fostering new links among radicals within the region. Unless the five Central Asian governments develop a credible, coordinated counter-action plan, including improved security measures but also social, political and economic reforms, growing radicalism will eventually pose a serious threat to their stability.

The fallout from the conflicts in Syria and Iraq is a major security concern for Central Asian governments. An International Crisis Group release reports that between 2,000 and 4,000 of their citizens have left for IS-held territory to fight or otherwise support the Islamic State cause. The five — Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan — crippled by corruption, poor governance and policing, have done little to address a threat as intricate as radical Islam. Instead, they are fuelling further radicalization by curtailing civil liberties and

initiating security crackdowns. The latest International Crisis Group briefing, Syria Calling: Radicalization in Central Asia, analyses the socio-political context behind growing radicalism in the region and argues that a comprehensive solution requires the states to improve coordination between security services, but as importantly to liberalize religious laws and provide greater outreach and economic opportunity to and for young people, including women.

The briefing's major findings and recommendations are:

- While fatigue with social, economic and political circumstances is an important linking thread, ideological commitment to jihad is for many the main reason Central Asians are drawn to IS. The growth of radical Islam is exacerbated by poor religious education and multiple grievances against



- the region's secular governments.
- Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) members have been active recruiters for IS



in the Ferghana Valley and have taken advantage of what in Central Asia is seen as a glamorous association to reinvigorate their own group. The IMU also appears to have acted as a bridge for a wider variety of Central Asian fighters, including Uighurs from western China.

- A program in which European and Asian police share with security services in Central Asia their experience in rehabilitating former radicals, male and female, would be highly desirable. However, the capacities of Central Asian police forces to absorb and implement

lessons learned are undermined by weak state structures and distrust of the police.

- Central Asian officials, Russian and Western diplomats and regional experts all expect the Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan security services to take a zero-tolerance approach to returning fighters. Islamic State supporters seeking to return to Central Asia and avoid a tough homecoming would likely choose to go to Kyrgyzstan, thus putting it at greater risk.

"It is easier for IS to gain recruits in Central Asia than in nearby Afghanistan and Pakistan," says Deirdre Tynan, Central Asia Project Director. "Its appeal in the region is

rooted in an unfulfilled desire for political and social change. Rich or poor, educated or not, young or mature, male or female – there is no single profile of an Islamic State supporter."

"Central Asia is fortunate that Syria is relatively distant, no major attacks have yet occurred, and the risks are still in infancy," says Paul Quinn-Judge, Europe and Central Asia Program Director. "But governments should assess accurately the long-term danger jihadism poses to the region and take proper preventive action now, not brush the danger aside or exaggerate it in a way that will only make the problem worse."

— Read more in *Syria Calling: Radicalization in Central Asia, Europe and Central Asia Briefing no. 72 (International Crisis Group, 20 Jan 2015)*

231

Jihadism in Tunisia: The Growing Threat

By Stefano Maria Torelli

Source:http://www.jamestown.org/programs/tm/single/?tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=43440&tx_ttnews%5BbackPid%5D=26&cHash=cc18971de8048c1d27f95bb2ae4757f0#.VMNB-C6TLz4

At the end of December 2014, the Tunisian Interior Ministry reported that during 2014, 23 security force members (mostly soldiers and members of the National Guard) had been killed during the past year by Islamist militants. The ministry also said that government counter-terrorism operations during the same period had killed at least 30 jihadists and led to the arrest of more than 1,000 other suspects (Marsad, December 30, 2014). As in 2013, most counter-terrorism operations had focused on northwestern Tunisia, particularly in areas bordering Algeria and around the

mountains of Jebel Chaambi. The government figures underlines that the Tunisian government is continuing its efforts against Islamist militancy.



State (Tunisie Secret, December 18, 2014). [1] These and related developments have led some local experts to estimate that there are around 400 active terrorist cells in Tunisia linked, ideologically or materially, to the Islamic State (*Echourouk* [Algiers], January 15). Even if such estimates are not entirely accurate, it is nonetheless clear that Tunisia is currently home to a range of terrorist cells, some of which have global links.

Recent Attacks and Counter-Strategy

Typical of the pattern of counter-terrorist operations and jihadist attacks during the last year are the events of late October and early November. First, the Tunisian Army led a counter-terrorism raid on October 28, near Krib in northern Tunisia, which led to the arrest of eight suspects (Business News, October 28, 2014). The suspected terrorists were found in possession of explosive devices with electronic detonators as well as solar powered charging systems for electronic devices, such as cell phones and laptops (*Tunisie Numerique*, October 28, 2014). This unusual equipment suggested that these individuals were in contact with jihadist cells operating in isolated areas of Jebel Chaambi, where militants are typically without access to electric power. A few days later on November 5, jihadists attacked a bus carrying a convoy of soldiers with their families near Nebeur in western Tunisia, close to Algeria. Five soldiers were killed in the ambush (African Manager, November 5, 2014). A few days after that, the Tunisian authorities announced the arrest of two Syrian nationals, who the government identified as belonging to

However, as this data also shows, Tunisia continues to face a considerable jihadist challenge, both in the form of the approximately 3,000 Tunisian fighters reportedly active in Iraq and Syria and as shown by the government's continuous dismantling of local jihadist cells, some of which also sporadically conducted attacks inside Tunisia (al-Arabiya, December 15, 2014). The overlap between these two trends of growing domestic radicalization and increasing connections between local militants and jihadist groups abroad is underscored by the recent actions of Boubaker al-Hakim, a Tunisian jihadist. In a video posted in December, he claimed responsibility for the 2013 killings of two leading secular politicians, Chokri Belaid and Muhammad Brahmi, and declared himself to be a member of the Islamic

232

the Islamic State, on the border between Algeria and Tunisia (*El Watan*, November 5, 2014). The timing of this apparent infiltration attempt coincided with an announcement by the Okba ibn Nafaa Brigade, a Tunisian jihadist group, that it was now affiliated with the Islamic State. A short period after this, on December 1, 2014, jihadists ambushed a car in Kef; one of its occupants, a National Guard member, was killed and beheaded by the attackers (*Jeune Afrique*, December 1, 2014). These episodes, taking place in the course of just over a month, show that Tunisian jihadist elements are still active in several parts of country, particularly near the Algerian border, and are capable of carrying out a wide variety of attacks.

In response to such developments, between November and December, the Tunisian army conducted several anti-terrorist operations in the Jebel Chaambi and Ouergha areas, which have been the base for various jihadists during the last two years. During these operations, the army deployed about 1,000 soldiers and 2,000 rapid intervention special forces, leading to the identification and

killing of at least seven jihadists and the discovered of 13 improvised mines (*Le Temps*, December 31, 2014). These operations have continued through January 2015. In addition, after a policeman was assassinated in Zaghouan, the army launched a large-scale anti-terrorist operation in the Kasserine region (Direct Info, January 4; *Tunisie Numerique*, January 11). Following this, on January 11, Tunisian security services identified a cell in northern Tunisia that was allegedly preparing an attack, prompting the security forces to move promptly against it (Hakaekonline, January 11). In the subsequent raid on the group's hideout, the cell's members were found in possession of military uniforms, which were apparently to be used in an ambush. Five further arrests were made on January 14, in Menzel Bourguiba, a town approximately 40 miles northwest of the capital Tunis, further indicating the wide geographical spread of jihadist cells.

As these successful raids indicate, the Tunisian government has taken several important and effective steps in its fight against terrorism. Most recently, on December 2014, Prime Minister Mehdi Jomaa inaugurated a new Counter-terrorism and Organized Crime Division and a new counter-terrorism force, following the earlier creation of a joint intelligence, security and defense agency in November in order to produce "a comprehensive vision of the successful fight against terrorism" (*Tunis Afrique Presse*, December 16, 2014). In the long-run, these institutions – if effectively managed – have the potential to greatly help the Tunisian authorities combat domestic terrorism. However, officials have also said that they remain concerned about external threats too. Jomaa himself said in January that the situation in Libya poses a potential threat to Tunisian stability and security (Medafrica, January 3). To combat such external threats, the Tunisian authorities have stepped up their cooperation not only with Algerian intelligence, but also with France, Italy and the United States (*Le Figaro*, November 11, 2014; AllAfrica, January 19; Magharebia, August 28, 2014).

Further highlighting the government's growing anti-terrorist capabilities, in recent months policing efforts have also focused on tackling jihadist groups' financial resources. For instance, a major operation conducted in October led to the arrest of six suspected

terrorists in Ben Guerdane in southeastern Tunisia and the seizure of around \$700,000 in cash (*Echourouk* [Algiers], October 18, 2014). The arrested individuals were allegedly dealers in arms and counterfeit goods and, according to official sources, they also recruited fighters to travel to Syria. Taken together, these developments show that Tunisia is developing an increased capacity to tackle terrorism threats both at home and abroad.

At the same time, however, there are indications that the terrorist threat is continuing to develop rapidly. On October 24, two days before the country's elections, Tunisian security forces identified and raided a terrorist cell in Oued Ellil, a neighborhood of Tunis (Kapitalis, October 24, 2014). During the resulting siege of the apartment where the militants had taken refuge, six suspected jihadists were killed. The episode highlighted two important emerging trends. On the one hand, as outlined above, it showed the Tunisian security forces acting proactively, successfully identifying and destroying the terrorist cell before it became operational and illustrating the government's capacity to conduct effective intelligence gathering. On the other hand, this raid was the first time that a high percentage of women were found among suspected terrorists; of the six militants who were killed, five were young women who, according to some sources, were radicalized in Tunisia in the previous months (*Tunisie Numerique*, October 24, 2014). This development underlines the fast-mutating nature of the jihadist threat in Tunisia, even as the government ramps up its own capabilities.

Foreign Links

While it is often difficult to determine the exact nature and origin of terrorist cells operating in Tunisia, or their exact affiliation with jihadists groups abroad, their ongoing ideological alignment with militants operating in Syria and Iraq is growing clearer, as illustrated by some of the above recent declarations of allegiance to foreign organizations. For instance, if al-Hakim's claimed role in the political assassinations of 2013 were confirmed, it would indicate not only an ideological affiliation to the Islamic State among some jihadists, but also potentially direct contact between the Islamic State and Tunisian jihadist groups, even if some such links postdate

233



the assassinations themselves. This trend would go hand in hand with other developments in North Africa, including the recent proclamation by jihadists in Derna, Libya, of their own allegiance to the Islamic State (al-Arabiya, October 6, 2014).

At the same time, however, other developments also suggest that the divisions between the Islamic State and al-Qaeda-related groups have also reached North Africa. For instance, in one of his most recent messages, Abu Iyad al-Tunisi, the leader of Ansar al-Shari'a in Tunisia, made an appeal to all jihadists to unite under one banner in an apparent attempt to repair the breach between al-Qaeda, the Islamic State and their respective affiliate groups in the region (African Manager, June 14, 2014). Similarly, after the appearance of Islamic State affiliates in Libya, the Algerian group Jund al-Khalifa and the Tunisian group Okba ibn Nafaa, led by the Algerian jihadist Abu Sakhr, publicly declared their affiliation to the Islamic State; such groups had previously gravitated towards al-Qaeda (al-Akhbar, October 23, 2014).

Note

1. The video, now removed, was posted on YouTube on December 18, 2014, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kmQem1XICuY>.

234

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Iran Has a Lot to Gain from the Death of a Crusading Argentine Prosecutor

By Armin Rosen

Source: <http://www.businessinsider.com/what-iran-gains-from-the-death-of-a-crusading-argentine-prosecutor-2015-1>

It seems Alberto Nisman was on to something.



Conclusion

In addition to the above developments, the January 7 jihadist attack in Paris on the offices of the French satirical weekly *Charlie Hebdo* magazine highlighted both the potential influence of Tunisian radicals abroad. In particular, one of the Paris attackers, Chérif Kouachi, was reportedly in contact with Boubaker al-Hakim via the "Butte-Chaumont network" of French jihadists, which funneled fighters to Iraq in the early and mid-2000s (*Tunisie Numérique*, January 9). Similarly, in the wake of the Paris attacks, the Italian authorities announced that they had expelled nine people suspected to have links with the Islamic State, five of whom were Tunisians, (*La Repubblica*, January 19). These events indicate that the threat from Tunisian jihadists is not only confined to Tunisia and that Tunisian radicals may also pose a danger to third party countries, particularly if operating in conjunction with local al-Qaeda affiliates such as AQIM and other groups such as the Islamic State.



On Sunday, Nisman, the Argentine prosecutor responsible for investigating the 1994 bombing of a Jewish community center in Buenos Aires — along with a suspected quid pro quo between the two countries' governments aimed partly at concealing Iran's involvement in the attack — was found dead in his apartment.

On Thursday, President Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner said that the death was not a suicide, although she did not elaborate.

Nisman was scheduled to testify to a parliamentary committee the day after his death and was expected

to accuse the Kirchner government of swapping increased trade with Iran for a promise not to prosecute the Iranian officials who plotted the attack.

The New York Times reports that intercepted conversations between Argentine and Iranian officials "point to a long pattern of secret negotiations to reach a deal in which Argentina would receive oil in exchange for shielding Iranian officials" from being formally accused of orchestrating the terror attack.

The conversations were part of a 289-page criminal complaint written by Nisman and made public by an Argentine judge on Tuesday night.

If genuine, The Times notes, the transcripts show "a concerted effort by representatives of President Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner's government to shift suspicions away from Iran in order to gain access to Iranian markets and to ease Argentina's energy troubles."

Nisman's death was tentatively being considered as a suicide, with the jurist felled by a single bullet wound to the head and clutching the gun that killed him. But there are indications that it was something much more sinister.

The lack of an exit wound suggested the fatal shot was fired at a further distance than Nisman could have managed had the wound been self-inflicted. His last WhatsApp message was a photo of stacks of documentation related to the next day's testimony, and Nisman had apparently given his maid a grocery list for the following week. A 10-person government security detail was reportedly pulled off of his apartment the night of his death. Most damningly, there was no gunpowder residue found on Nisman's hands, physical evidence that he didn't discharge a firearm prior to his death.

Theories abound as to who killed Nisman and why. But no matter who is responsible for his death, the Iranian regime benefits.



235

[Wikipedia](#) Remains of the AMIA after the 1994 AMIA bombing in Buenos Aires.

After a decade of work, Nisman concluded that Iran's government planned and executed the 1994 car-bomb attack on the Asociación Mutual Israelita Argentina (AMIA), in which 85 people were killed.

As Washington Institute for Near East Policy scholar Matthew Levitt recounts in his book "Hezbollah: The Global Footprint of Lebanon's Party of God," Iranian intelligence chief Ali Fallahian "was given overall operational responsibility for the attack," which was approved by Iran's Supreme National Security Council on Aug. 14, 1993.

The act was carried out through a terrorist cell organized by an Iranian-born and Buenos Aires-based Shi'ite cleric named Mohsen Rabbani, who had been given a sinecure at the Iranian embassy in Buenos Aires just months before the attack. Phone records connect



the embassy to a number in Brazil's border region belonging to a safe house used by agents from Hezbollah, the Iranian regime's adjunct in Lebanon, responsible for actually executing the attack.

The AMIA bombing was one of the worst anti-Semitic massacres anywhere in the world in decades. But it was part of what was then a consistent policy of big-ticket state-sponsored terrorism by Tehran's revolutionary regime, which had been in power for only 15 years at the time.

Iranian agents assisted in Hezbollah and Shi'ite militia attacks on the US Marine barracks in Beirut in 1983 and on attacks on the US embassy in the city in 1983 and 1984, which killed a combined 394 people. Hezbollah and a second Shi'ite group carried out a series of attacks in Kuwait in 1983 that

targeted the US and French embassies and that nearly destroyed an oil terminal.

Tehran sent agents to assassinate four leading Iranian-Kurdish opposition activists in a Greek restaurant in Berlin in 1992, while pro-Iranian elements carried out a series of attacks in Paris in the mid-1980s to punish France for its support of Saddam Hussein's government during the Iran-Iraq War.

In total, Iranian elements

assassinated 18 regime opponents on European soil in the late 1980s and early 1990s. And Tehran assisted in the Hezbollah attack on the Israeli embassy in Buenos Aires that killed 23 people in 1992.

In 1997, Mohammad Khatami was elected president of Iran. He helped shift the regime's international posture away from the kind of revolutionary confrontation that had dictated the Islamic Republic's foreign affairs until that point.

Nevertheless, Iran's powerful Revolutionary Guards continued to export terror with high-level regime approval while Khatami (1997 to 2005) helped refashion the Islamic Republic's image as a regime whose actions could be considered increasingly within the mainstream of acceptable international behavior, an objective that has been successfully advanced by Hassan Rouhani, the country's current and similarly reform-minded president.

In 2011, Iranian agents were uncovered plotting to assassinate the Saudi ambassador to the US. And in 2012 a Hezbollah suicide bombing targeted Israeli tourists in Burgas, Bulgaria, killing six people. (Hezbollah operatives came close to pulling off a major attack against the Israeli embassy in Bangkok in 2012.) Aside from Shi'ite organizations like Hezbollah and Iraq's Badr Group, the State Department's 2013 citation of Iran as a state sponsor of terrorism notes its support for Al Qaeda elements in Iraq, some of which later formed the Islamic State.

Consequently, the AMIA bombing is a reminder of a period in Iranian history that most likely embarrass many of the country's current crop of leaders, of a time in which blatant and essentially unprovoked attacks on civilian targets inside of foreign countries was one of the signal elements of the regime's "revolutionary" foreign policy.

Twenty-one years after the AMIA bombing, Iran has successfully shed its pariah status while retaining terrorism as an instrument of policy. Nisman's investigation threatened to upset that balance, partly by exposing how Iran managed this feat in the first place.

Nisman's specific allegation that high-ranking Argentinian politicians had compromised the integrity of the investigation into the AMIA bombing at Iran's behest only proved how badly political elites in both countries want the truth of the incident to remain buried. And it showed how Iran believed it could edge its way back to respectability while continuing to support and abet terrorism far beyond its borders.

Nisman's testimony would have shown that the AMIA bombing wasn't just a discrete event, but an ongoing, two-decade-long conspiracy that implicated Argentina and Iran in the execution and cover-up of a major act of terrorism.

Nisman's death may end up being part of that very conspiracy. His absence keeps the story buried: It is now even less likely that the attack's Iranian plotters will face justice in Argentina (or countries with extradition treaties with Argentina), and his death shields

236



Argentine leaders who treated the AMIA attack as a dreary diplomatic inconvenience rather than state-sponsored mass murder.

However, Nisman believed the evidence he had collected would outlive him. Four days before his death, according to The New York Times, he told an Argentine TV interviewer that, "With Nisman around or not, the evidence is there."

Armin Rosen is Business Insider's defense and military editor.

Britain open to terrorist drone attacks due to lax aviation rules

Source: <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/britain-open-to-terrorist-drone-attacks-due-to-lax-aviation-rules-experts-fear-9999184.html>



237

Jan 23 – Terrorists could use swarms of drones to bring down passenger aircraft, disperse chemical or biological weapons and target a nuclear power plants in Britain because of our lax aviation rules.

The stark warning comes from former Labour security minister Lord West, who is urging tougher laws to stop jihadis taking advantage of the “march of drone technology” to pull off a low-cost, high-impact attack using drones available for just £300 on the high street.

In particular, security experts fear that terrorists could use small drones to bring down an airliner over the centre of a British city.

Lord West has tabled an amendment to the Government’s Counter-Terrorism and Security Bill to create a specific offence of using a drone for “the purposes of terrorism”. The respected Labour peer and former senior Royal Navy commander is also calling for the establishment of more stringent “no-fly zones” for drones over sensitive sites, including nuclear plants and airports.

Lord West, who is a member of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Drones, told the *Independent*: “The march of increasingly affordable and sophisticated small drone technology means that we do really need to think about how we protect ourselves.”

“These drones are so cheap that terrorists will be able to buy many of them, practise and make repeated attacks. Airline pilots are worried, and the fear is that a 20kg drone from a the high street packed with 20lbs of explosive could easily bring down a jumbo over east London on its approach to Heathrow.”

An unmanned drone attack would have huge symbolic value to Islamic extremists because of their use by the US and the UK in countries such as Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria.

Lord West’s amendment, which will be debated on Monday, follows a Birmingham Policy Commission report by Prof David H Dunn and

Sir David Omand, the former head of the GCHQ, which warned that drones could be used by terrorists as flying bombs to take down passenger aircraft.

In July 2014, a drone flew within 20ft of an Airbus A320 as it landed at Heathrow Airport. The drone was not picked up on radar and its operators could not be traced in an incident that Prof Dunn said exposed a "gaping hole" in Britain's security.

The Civil Aviation Authority can prosecute people who fly drones into aircraft, crowds of buildings, but experts including the British Airline Pilots Association (Balpa), want it to be more rigorous in enforcing the rules. They have also called for drone no fly zone near airports.

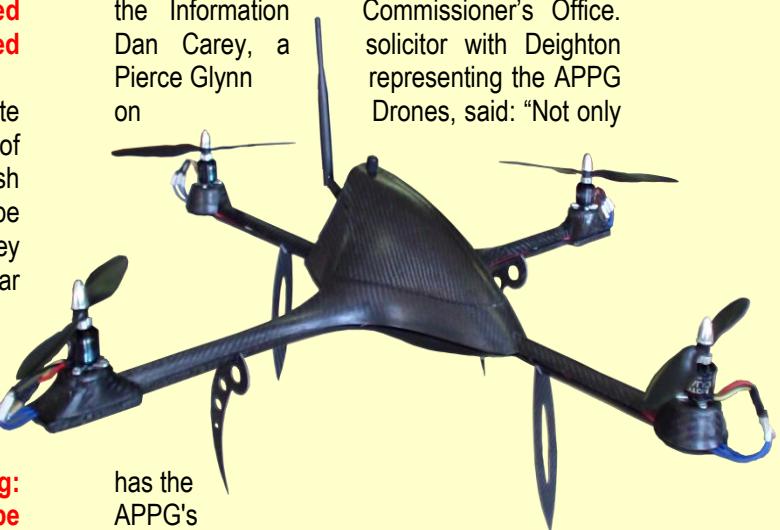
Lord West said: "Small drones under 20kg are barely regulated by the CAA. As the Birmingham Policy Commission report says, existing regulation is driven by the UAV market and designed to be enabling: but there is a serious risk drones can be equipped with improvised explosive devices or used as a means of dispersing chemical or biological agents."

The warning from the Labour peer comes as concerns have been raised by drone campaigners of an alleged "culture of secrecy" in the Government's working group setting policy on drones.

Tom Watson MP, chair of the APPG, said: "Lord West has raised a very important issue that needs to be addressed. The government must now respond in full to this proposal for

specific criminal offences and no-fly safe havens. The Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems Cross Government Working Group cannot determine the risk posed by misuse of drones, or response to it, in secret."

The working group has refused requests for information from MPs, prompting a complaint to the Information Commissioner's Office. Dan Carey, a solicitor with Deighton Pierce Glynn on



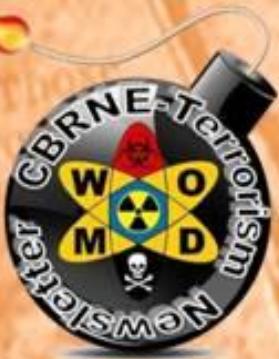
has the
APPG's

Freedom of Information request to the RPAS Cross Government Working Group been refused, but we have had to argue with the Information Commissioner to receive even a summary of the Government's reasons for refusing to disclose them. The APPG's FOIA appeal will continue, but it is clearly time for public debate, not just debate in secret."

A Home Office spokesperson said: "We will respond formally to the amendment when it is debated in the House of Lords next week."

238





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10 Years
of
CBRNE-Terrorism Newsletter

CWAs

BWAs

WE have to be lucky all the time. THEY have to be lucky only once!