

Wilberforce Quarterly

Strategic Analysis of Terrorism and Global Security

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Plumes of smoke choke the sky as an oil pipeline burns

Wilberforce Quarterly seeks to publish thoughtful analysis and balanced information on a broad range of security and strategic issues confronting the United States and its allies. The journal's goal is to satisfy the need for independent research on important security issues and generate scholarly discussion and greater public awareness of the changing patterns of international relations. The journal was founded by Marshall Mitchell, Executive Vice President, Anouar Boukhars, Director of Wilberforce Centre for Defense and Security Policy, and Reverend Dr. Floyd H. Flake, president of Wilberforce University and former member of Congress. The opinions expressed within are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of Wilberforce University.

Founder's Remarks

By Marshall Mitchell



Wilberforce University is proud to announce the creation of the Wilberforce Quarterly. The journal was created to address the pressing need for informed debate on the main strategic events touching on U.S. and international security issues. Wilberforce University, named in honor of the 18th century British abolitionist and Member of Parliament, William Wilberforce, is an ideal home for this form of intellectual examination of the leading issues of our time.

Wilberforce University, the first private historically black college in America, has a rich history of leadership in international affairs and global engagement. The first president of Malawi (Central Africa), H. Kamuzu Banda, was a graduate of Wilberforce. The University's current President, Floyd Flake, is a former member of the US House of Representatives and served on the important House Banking Committee.

In this capacity, he chaired and was a ranking member on the subcommittee with jurisdiction over the world's multilateral development banks like the Asian Development Bank, the African Development Bank, and the World Bank. This institution is no stranger to international engagement and foreign policy. Indeed, it is logical that we, Wilberforce University, would examine the most potent forces facing this nation and the world at this moment.

Dr. Anouar Boukhars was also a logical choice to lead this effort. He brings to the University -and the issue at hand- depth, humanity, a global perspective and honesty. Along with Dr. Boukhars, we have invited participation of many of the world's leading thinkers, policymakers, journalists, and scholars. I am personally proud of this effort as it grew out of my vision to engage the world in an age when there are motivations and calls by many to withdraw into illusory national, ethnic, religious, cultural and ideological cloisters because of current turmoil around the world. Now more than ever, there is a need for serious, honest, thoughtful and robust engagement of the world, not retreat!

Editor's Welcome

By Anouar Boukhars



Wilberforce Quarterly is an electronic journal that seeks to publish thoughtful analysis and balanced information on a broad range of security and strategic issues confronting the United States and its allies. The journal's goal is to satisfy the need for independent research on important security issues and generate scholarly discussion and greater public awareness of the changing patterns of international relations. Working through an extensive network of analysts, the journal editorial board enlists world-class experts to provide new insights on WMD proliferation and counterproliferation, homeland security and terrorism, war and strategy, terrorism financing and state responses, and Islamic extremism.

Wilberforce Quarterly is one of three journals that the Center for Defense and Security Policy (CDSP) produces. As an integral part of Wilberforce University, CDSP is dedicated to providing the best information and analysis on strategic issues for politicians, foreign affairs analysts and defense commentators.

Through its various interrelated and mutually supporting activities, the Center strives to help improve wider public understanding of domestic and international security problems and influence the development of sounder public policy. The Center's publications are timely. Its journals of Disaster Preparedness, New Insights and Wilberforce Quarterly are widely regarded as providing authoritative commentary and analysis on the main strategic events touching on national and global security. The Center's publications, conferences, seminars and workshops place it at the forefront of public policy development.

The Scourge of Oil Terrorism

By Gal Luft

One unintended consequence of the recent economic boom of China and India has been a major run up in oil demand and with it an erosion in the world's spare production capacity. Since the 1970s, Saudi Arabia and other Persian Gulf producers held a cushion of 3-5 million barrels per day which were used to insulate the market against costly supply disruptions. When instability occurred in the Middle East, Africa or Venezuela and supply faltered, there was always someone to step in and pick up the slack. But in 2004, global spare capacity dropped to a dangerous level of under one million barrels per day making the oil market highly vulnerable. Any drop in supply, whether due to a hurricane in the Gulf of Mexico, riots in the Niger Delta or a terror attack in Iraq, sends prices to record levels. Terrorists who strive to weaken the Western economy have taken note of this development.

In various public statements, Osama bin Laden has mentioned economic warfare as the pillar of his strategy. He contends that it was economic pressure that brought the jihadists victory over the Soviets in Afghanistan during the 1980s and subsequently caused the fall of the Soviet empire.

In his October 2004 tape he boasted: “We bled Russia for ten years until it went bankrupt and was forced to withdraw in defeat. [...] We are continuing in the same policy to make America bleed to the point of bankruptcy.” [1] It was surely not the jihadists that brought the collapse of the Soviet Union, but this does not prevent al Qaeda from broadcasting a narrative that victory against the U.S. and its allies can be accomplished through a sustained campaign against the lifeline of the Western economy—its energy supply. “The killing of 10 American soldiers is nothing compared to the impact of the rise in oil prices on America and the disruption that it causes in the international economy,” declared one jihadi website in 2004. [2]

Such calls are now being increasingly heeded, and energy installations like pipelines, refineries and pumping stations have become terrorists’ targets of choice. The most active arena for this economic warfare is Iraq, where there have been close to 300 attacks since the end of major military operations in April 2003. [3] These attacks have strategic impact on U.S. efforts to stabilize the country. They undermine the prospects of Iraqi reconstruction by denying the Iraqi economy much needed oil revenues. They also have a corrosive influence on the morale of the Iraqis and their attitude toward the presence of U.S. forces in their country. Iraqis are growing increasingly vexed by the slow progress in the reconstruction effort and the inability of the government to guarantee a reliable supply of electricity, which in Iraq is primarily derived from oil. Worse, the sabotage campaign has created an inhospitable investment climate in Iraq and has scared away the international oil companies that were supposed to develop its oil and gas industry, which will be the country’s primary source of income for many years to come.

Outside of Iraq, attacks against oil targets have taken place in Nigeria, Pakistan, Sudan, Algeria, Turkey, Azerbaijan, Russia, Iran and Saudi Arabia. The cumulative impact of oil terrorism is profound. All together, terrorists have succeeded in denying the oil market more than a million barrels per day through sabotage alone.

This at a time when oil is in very high demand. Had this oil been in the market, prices would have dropped by \$15-\$20 per barrel. This means that the jihadist campaign has been successful in diverting billions of dollars from the economies of oil consuming countries to those of the producers. Saudi Arabia earns extra half billion dollars per day in comparison to the 2001 prices, whereas Iran is raking extras 125 million. This terrorist premium has also contributed materially to record trade deficits and other economic adversities among the major oil consuming economies. [4]

High as the terrorist oil premium on global economy is, things can get much worse. One scenario the world economy cannot withstand is a major attack on one of Saudi Arabia’s oil facilities. The Saudi oil system is extremely vulnerable to terrorist acts. This is not only due to al Qaeda’s strong presence in the Kingdom and its ability to carry out coordinated attacks but also because of the concentration of large amounts of oil in a small number of strategic sites. For example, about two-thirds of Saudi Arabia’s crude oil is processed in a single enormous facility called Abqaiq, 25 miles inland from the Gulf of Bahrain. Another strategic installation is the Ras Tanura terminal - the world’s largest offshore oil loading facility, through which a tenth of global oil supply flows daily. A terrorist attack on each one of the hubs of the Saudi oil complex or a simultaneous attack on few of them is not a fictional scenario. In summer 2002, a group of Saudis was arrested for involvement in a plot to sabotage Ras Tanura and pipelines connected to it. In Spring 2004, a series of attacks took place against oil employees in the Kingdom and in September 2005, Saudi security forces thwarted a group of jihadists intent on attacking Saudi oil facilities.

A single terrorist cell hijacking an airplane in Kuwait or Dubai and crashing it into Abqaiq or Ras Tanura could turn the complex into an inferno. This could take up to 50% of Saudi oil off the market for at least six months and with it all of the world's spare capacity.

Such an attack could be more economically damaging than a dirty nuclear bomb set off in New York City. Since September 11 it has become apparent that there is no shortage of suicide terrorists who are willing to sacrifice their lives for the sake of denying the world economy its oil. On October 6, 2002, a suicide terrorist rammed a fast boat into the French oil tanker *Limburg*, off the coast of Yemen.

On April 24, 2004 a group of suicide bombers in three boats blew themselves up in and around the Basra oil terminal in Iraq, one of the most heavily guarded facilities of its kind in the world.

The most effective way to address the scourge of sabotage is to confront terrorists wherever they are. By pursuing jihadists and separatist groups, denying them freedom of operation and destroying their infrastructure, the number of attacks could be greatly reduced. But waging the war on terrorism could take decades, while global demand for oil is only going to increase. Until terrorism is defeated, governments, oil companies and pipeline operators will have to put in place mechanisms to reduce the impact of the scourge. In Iraq more than 20,000 security guards have been deployed along the pipelines and in critical installations. The Iraqi government also provides financial incentives to tribal leaders in exchange for their protection of uninterrupted supply of oil running through their territory. Elsewhere, oil companies deploy a wide variety of technologies, including sophisticated ground and air surveillance systems, to reduce the success rate of saboteurs and mitigate the damage in case they succeed in carrying out their mission. These expensive remedies add a surcharge to the price of a barrel, which is already unusually high.

To compensate for the erosion in OPEC's spare capacity, major oil consuming countries can take steps to insulate their economies from supply disruptions by creating liquidity mechanisms of their own. At its current capacity of 700 million barrels the Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR) is sufficient to mitigate supply disruption to the U.S. market but it is not sufficient to tide the global economy over if there is a severe disruption of oil supplies.

However, were the SPR expanded beyond its current capacity, and were Europe and Asia encouraged to establish similarly large oil banks, those strategic reserves could serve as a liquidity mechanism to replace that of OPEC's capacity. An expanded global reserve also would signal to the terrorists that the oil weapon can no longer be used against oil-consuming countries.

Finally, because of oil's role in the war on terror, it is important that Western economies do their utmost to reduce their dependence on petroleum. In the U.S. 97 percent of the energy used in the transportation sector is petroleum based. By shifting the sector from petroleum to next generation, non-petroleum based fuels such as ethanol, methanol, biodiesel, electricity and hydrogen and commercializing automobile technologies that can run on these fuels, industrialized countries can insulate their economies against supply disruptions. A coalition of national security and foreign policy think tanks, environmental and religious groups and labor unions called "Set America Free" has shown that through persistent national will and strong leadership the U.S. can cut oil imports by half within two decades by deploying available technologies. [5]

Undoubtedly, as long as the war on terrorism continues, oil terrorism will continue to be an important tenet of the jihadists' strategy. With two thirds of the world oil reserves concentrated in the Middle East and with most of the world's oil shipments passing through areas where radical Islamists are known to

operate the world energy system will continue to be at the mercy of oil kamikazes determined to go for its jugular. If we stay on the present course, Western economies will bleed more dollars each year as the jihadists gather strength. A smart combination of military and energy policies is therefore our best hope for breaking the economic backbone of the jihadists before they do so to us.

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Notes:

1. Gal Luft, "Osama's War on America's Wealth," *Frontpage Magazine*, December 15, 2004.
2. SITE Institute.
3. Iraq Pipeline Watch, Institute for the Analysis of Global Security, <http://www.iags.org/iraqpipelinewatch.htm>

The Mind of Jihad: Gnostic Ideology and Radical Islam

By Laurent Murawiec

What is it that makes 'them' tick, or, in the phrase that marked the days after September 11, 2001: "Why do they hate us?" What are the springs and the cogs that activate the bloodthirsty jihad launched against India, Israel, the United States, Britain and the West in general? Admittedly, there would not be much of a jihadi war if it had not been played, sustained and supported by a number of states: Saudi Arabia, Iran, Syria, Saddam's Iraq, Pakistan, Libya, and a few more. But the enabling and sometimes orchestrating role played by states does not account for the jihadi mindset, even if the ideological output, the indoctrination and the propaganda that issue from those states greatly contribute to it. The entire 'food chain' of modern jihad rests on a world-outlook that is the daily sustenance of its members.

The investigation of the "mind of jihad" has only started. Within the limitations of the present article, the author will try to give a broad-brush description of an avenue of research that could allow us to escape the series of vexing shibboleths often trotted out to answer the questions posed at the outset. Among those yarns: there is no Islamic terrorism, it is but an invention of the U.S. government to persecute Muslims and Arabs (Fawaz Gerges, John Esposito) [1]; Islamism is past its peak anyway and not really dangerous (Gilles Kepel, Olivier Roy) [2]; The victimological doctrine of "grievances" (Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch are among its standard bearers) and its associate, the quasi-Marxist dogma that finds the "roots" of terror in poverty and its sister-dogma in obfuscation, which roots it all in generic "frustration," as if it were the preserve of Muslims or their natural condition to be "frustrated." Jihad is also presented as a rational-choice means to an end (Robert Pape) [3], and its causes are purported to lie with "occupying powers," mostly Western, while, incredibly enough, religion and ideology are thus said to be of no significance for jihad or terror itself.

We are further told that jihad means "effort" and "striving in the way of Allah." Muslim clerics and leaders have often been heard making disingenuous denials such as "the authors of such acts are not Muslim... no real Muslim could, etc." (e.g., Khaled Abou El Fadl). [4] Most Muslim societies have in fact not only tolerated, but encouraged, applauded and lionized jihadi terrorism: the killers may be a numerical minority, but they enjoy a great deal of admiring support, as public opinion polls carried out in the Muslim world have repeatedly shown. [5]

Contemporary terror carried out in the name of jihad differs from most forms of terrorism recorded in modern history: its scope, ambitions and designs are world-wide; the depth of popular support it enjoys, its desire and ability to wage war throughout the world against its chosen enemies – the rest of the

world – are equally unprecedented. One trait is even more novel in modern history: Russian Nihilists of the 19th century, the ferocious Macedonian IMRO of the early 20th, IRA bombers or even Basque assassins gave death, they did not love it. [6] What may be the most distinctive characteristic of jihadi terror is summed up by the oft-repeated phrase: “We love death more than you love life” in its many variants.

In the abundant traditional jurisprudence of jihad, the holy warrior, though he is willing to meet his death and die a martyr on the field of battle, does not seek death: the distinction is considerable. [7] For the modern jihadi, as the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood Hasan al-Banna wrote « The Quran has commanded people to love death more than life. Unless the philosophy of the Quran on death replaces the love of life that has consumed Muslims, they will reach naught. Victory can only come with the mastery of the art of death. »[8] The hypnotic chant of the Brotherhood, itself a principal matrix of modern jihad, is explicit: *Allah ghayatuna/ Al-rasul zaimuna/ Al-Quran dusturuna/ Al-Jihad sabiluna/ Al-mawt fi sabil Allah asma amanina/ Allah akbar, Allah akbar*: “God is our goal, The Prophet is our leader, The Quran is our constitution, Jihad is our way, Death in the service of God is the loftiest of our wishes, God is great, God is great.”

The Muslim Brothers’ twin, the Saudi *Ikhwan*, whose wholesale massacres over twenty years of wars won Abdulaziz ibn Saud his kingdom, served under a clear-cut creed: “in wars of religion, we exterminate everybody.” [9] Nowadays, the former imam of the great mosque of King-Saud University, Riyadh, Sheikh Mohsin al-Awaji, can state: “the glory of the [Islamic] nation appeared when our Prophet taught us the industry of death – when he taught us how to create death. Then life became cheap in our eyes... This we see as the industry of death.” [10]

In this thanatophilia, Shiite radicals do not distinguish themselves from their Sunni opposite numbers. [11] Witness the bloodlust of “Islam-Marxist” Ali Shariati as well as that of Ayatollah Ruhollah

Khomeiny. His doctrine of “Red Shiism,” Shariati calls “the manifestation of the blood revolution.” [12] The cult of martyrdom that plays the central role in the doctrine is embodied in the phrases: “Die before you die “ and “ If you can, give death. If you cannot, die.” [13] Shariati had appropriated and reformulated the Sartre-Fanon creed according to which to kill a White Man is a double liberation, since it liberates the Colonized by allowing him to retrieve his identity stolen by the Colonizer, and it liberates the Colonizer by liberating him (in death) of his identity as a Colonizer. [14] Hear Khomeiny’s own words, in a 1979 speech at a school of theology: “Islam grew with blood (...) The great Prophet of Islam in one hand carried the Quran and in the other a sword; the sword for crushing the traitors and the Quran for guidance. For those who could be guided, the Quran was their means of guidance, while as for those who could not be guided and were plotters, the sword descended on their heads. Islam is a religion of blood for the infidels but a religion of guidance for other people. We have sacrificed much blood and many martyrs... We do not fear giving martyrs.” [15]

A broad spectrum of modern Muslim thinking is united in a cult of death, a yearning for blood, in a lust to inflict pain and a passion for giving death, a sadistic craving to assert one’s power through such means. The Arab-Muslim world abounds in jihadis who proudly profess their love of death, who despise life Earth, who exalt the path of Death and maximize the attraction of an After-Life gained through the choosing and the giving of death: Egyptian Muslim Brother Sayyed Qutb and Pakistanis doctrinaire of Jihad Maulana Mawdudi, Lebanese Hezbollah leader Nasrallah, defunct PLO leader Arafat, sundry “Marxist” and Islamist Palestinian leaders, Osama bin Laden and his cohort Zarqawi who luxuriates in being called the “Sheikh of Slaughterers.” The doctrine of modern jihad has grossly altered traditional proportions by radically depreciating life and exalting death. For any society love of death is unnatural and aberrant. It is so considered in Muslim jurisprudence. It goes against society’s survival. It is, quite literally, a nihilistic impulse that leads a society to its self-destruction.

The contemporary ascendancy of nihilism in the Arab-Muslim world, however, is not an unheard-of occurrence in world history. The mighty Millenarian cults that wreaked havoc of much of Europe for more than four hundred years, from the First Crusade at the end of the 11th century, into the 16th, espoused a strikingly similar belief-structure. The essential isomorphism of our contemporary jihadi with the insurgent Europeans of yore is striking.

In a society disoriented by rapid change, whose members lived precarious lives, their traditional certainties shattered by rapid change, these eschatological and often apocalyptical cults moved people by their hundreds of thousands, recruited them into utterly self-destructive patterns of behavior, caused them to engage in indiscriminate slaughter of chosen scapegoats, Jews, the Clergy, the rich. Inspired by Millenarian prophecy, mesmerized by *prophetae* who promised them more than Salvation, self-brainwashed into desperate belief, these masses, Taborites of Bohemia, Flagellants of Italy and the Flanders, members of the Paupers' Crusade, Pastoureaux of France, Anabaptists of Germany, Brotherhood of the Free Spirit throughout Europe – all shared a common belief-structure, as was magisterially shown by the British historian Norman Cohn in his classic *The Pursuit of the Millenium: Revolutionary Millenarians and Mystical Anarchists of the Middle Ages*. [16]

Pseudo-Christian sectarians of yore, Muslim jihadi of today all share a belief-structure, that of Gnosticism, this parasite of the monotheist religions which has shadowed them from Antiquity. God had invested the Gnostics with a unique mission, a task of cosmic proportion, the final victory of Good over Evil, the final destruction of Satan. God spoke through the Gnostics, who were possessed of a perfect knowledge, who knew God's plan, knew how to erect here and now the perfect world. They were Perfect, they were above all laws, they were the law unto themselves.

Whatever they did was sanctified by the nature and dimension of their mission, no matter what it may be in the eyes of normal mores and traditions. They brought Salvation to the world now. Salvation demanded gigantic human sacrifices, the shedding of torrents of blood: the Millenium would not come without huge slaughters of sinners. "Soon we will drink blood for wine," one of them wrote, "Kill every one of them!". Salvation would be collective, terrestrial, imminent, total, miraculous.

Thirty years ago, Norman Cohn wrote: "during the half century since 1917 there has been a constant repetition, and on an ever-increasing scale, of the socio-psychological process which once joined the Taborite priests or Thomas Müntzer and the most disoriented and desperate of the poor, in phantasies of a final exterminatory struggle against 'the great ones,' and of a perfect world in which self-seeking would forever be banished... The old religious idea has been replaced by a secular one, and this tends to obscure what otherwise would be obvious. For it is the simple truth that stripped of their original supernatural sanction, revolutionary millenarianism and mystical anarchism are with us still." It should come as no surprise that Nazi and Bolshevik influences are to be spotted in so much of the genealogy, ideas and practices of contemporary jihad. [20] The German-American philosopher Eric Voegelin, whose analysis of modern "civil religions" as forms of Gnosticism I used, powerfully demonstrated the essential filiation between the Ancient and Medieval Gnostics, and modern "civil religions" which promised the Millenium here and now, in the name of various fetishes: Race, Class or others. With the changes and differences that a Muslim cultural idiom and religious fabric imply, Voegelin's and Cohn's analysis of Bolshevism and Nazism equally applies to what President Bush recently called "islamo-fascism" and "the ideology of jihadism" when he finally shifted attention from the means of the war launched upon us, terror, to the ends pursued by the jihadis.

Understanding the profound similarity between these

disparate phenomena should allow us to pierce the fog of misexplanations that shrouds radical Islam and its favorite instrument, terror.

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Notes:

1. See Jonathan Calt Harris, "Who Is Fawaz Gerges? Another problem Mideast scholar," National Review, July 21, 2003. See John Esposito's invention of "five centuries of peaceful coexistence" after Muhammad's time, the termination of which he ascribes to an "imperial-papal power play" in *Islam: The Straight Path*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1998, 58.
2. See Béatrice Bouvet and Patrick Dernaud *Les guerres qui menacent le monde*, Kiron - Editions du Félin, issued on April 11, 2001 for a collection of gems on the subject from leading French experts, who did not substantially differ from their colleagues world-wide.
3. "The Logic of Suicide Terrorism: It's the occupation, not the fundamentalism," *The American Conservative*, July 18, 2005, an interview with Prof. Robert Pape, whose recent book is a case of a scholar who sees what he believes rather than believe what he sees: Robert Pape, *Dying to Win : The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism*, New York, Random House, 2005.
4. Khaled Abou El Fadl, "The Place of Tolerance in Islam," in *The Place of Tolerance in Islam*, Boston, MA, Beacon Press, 2002, 19.
5. See for instance Pew Global Attitudes Project, <http://pewglobal.org/reports/display.php?ReportID=248>
6. See a discussion of the Russian Nihilists in Walter Laqueur, Walter Laqueur, *No End to War: Terrorism in the 21st Century*, New York & London, Continuum, 2004 and in Alain Besançon, *Les origines intellectuelles du léninisme* Paris, Calmann-Lévy 1977.
7. See Alfred Morabia, *Le ġihad dans l'islam medieval*, Paris, Albin Michel, 1993, *passim*.
8. Quoted in Richard P. Mitchell, *The Society of the Muslim Brothers*, Oxford University Press, Oxford & New York, 1969, 206-7.
9. Lewis Pelley, *Report on a Journey to Riyadh (1865)*, London, 1866, reprint Cambridge, 1978, Oleander Falcon.
10. MEMRI, Special Dispatch No. 400, July 18, 2002, Saudi Opposition Sheikhs on America, Bin Laden, and Jihad
11. This useful term is borrowed from Dr. Shmuel Bar, of the Inter-Disciplinary Center at Herzliya, Israel.
12. Ali Shariati, *Red Shiism*, Houston TX, Free Islamic Literatures, 1974, 8.
13. Farhad Khosrokhavar, *Les Nouveaux martyrs d'Allah*, Paris, Flammarion, 2002, 76.
14. Jean-Paul Sartre, introduction to Franz Fanon, *Les Damnés de la Terre*, Paris, F, Maspéro, 1961.
15. Speech at Feyziyeh Theological School, Aug. 24, 1979, FBIS, Aug. 27, 1979, quoted in Barry Rubin & Judith Kolp Rubin (Eds.), *Anti-Americanism and the Middle East: a Documentary Reader*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2002., 32-3.
16. Norman Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millenium: Revolutionary Millenarians and Mystical Anarchists of the Middle Ages*, revised and enlarged edition, Oxford and NY, Oxford University Press, 1961-1970, 15.
17. H.A.R. Gibbs, *Modern Trends in Islam*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1947, 120.121.
18. *Ibid.*, 121.
19. *Ibid.*, 272.
20. See Wolfgang Schwanitz, "Germany & the Middle East", *The Middle East Journal*, 58(2004)3 and [Djihad Made in Germany. Deutsche Islampolitik im 19. und 20 Jahrhundert.](#), trafo verlag Berlin 2005.

A New Strategy for the New Jihad?

By Sherifa Zuhur

President Bush's October 6 remarks on the Global War on Terror, Ayman al-Zawahiri's July 9 letter to Abu Mus'ab Zarqawi released in October, and interpretations

of popular responses to the simultaneous suicide bombings in Amman, Jordan on November 9 – each indicators of new strategies in jihad against the West, and the global war waged against that jihad. President Bush should be concerned that a list of terrorist actions undertaken since September 11, 2001 is far longer than the ten instances of American success in foiling acts of terror that he mentioned in that speech. The franchising of jihadi violence is clearly something to be concerned about. His more specific concentration on Islamist terror in these remarks is to me, a positive sign of recognition that while terrorism is practiced globally and does not emanate from Islam, we must understand the regeneration, franchising, and longevity of jihadi movements. Since so many of these movements have emerged, just as predicted by Hosni Mubarak back in 2003, [2] it appears that the US and other nations must scrutinize their new strategies against these movements’ “new jihad.”

Can either our current strategies, or a new one deal with the export of jihad from country to country? Al-Zawahiri describes, in his letter to al-Zarqawi, the relocation of jihad from Iraq into Egypt and the Levant, now that its former haven in Afghanistan has been vitally disrupted. That parallels an earlier migration of Egyptian Islamic Jihad members to Afghanistan. So do al-Zawahiri’s pragmatic suggestions for relocation fully explain the violent attacks in the Sinai in July 2005 and October 2004 [3] and in Cairo in April 2005? [4] Local (non-global) Egyptian Islamist groups refrained from violence since the Luxor attacks of 1997. Yet there is disagreement about whether “al-Qa’ida” was involved or merely inspired these attacks. Similarly, the 7/7/05 attacks in London were not prevented, nor apparently preventable by the ongoing tactics against jihad. They illustrated, once again that jihadi cells with little or no direction from al-Qa’ida might easily organize attacks.

We badly need to understand why the jihadist message resonates with new listeners, whether Sinai bedouin, Cairenes, or English-born Muslims. What measures should the US or other nations adopt to dampen the zeal for jihad?

And how well are we reading public reaction to the war on terror? For instance the Western media reported that many Jordanians honked their automobile horns and marched in the streets to denounce terrorism after the Amman attacks. [5] However, the Western media did not widely report that some Jordanians believed the attacks were engineered by Israelis. That conspiracy theory – similar to one that circulates about 9/11 -- was not even put to rest with the release of details about the Amman bombers. [6] It was bolstered somewhat by Zarqawi’s statement that Israelis and intelligence were his target, not Muslims and wedding celebrants. [7]

In his letter, which some experts suspect to be a fake, al-Zawahiri broached concern to Zarqawi that the Muslim masses would cease sympathizing with al-Qaeda’s struggle after witnessing attacks on Shi’i civilians and the brutal videotaped beheadings of captives. Perhaps the terrorists fragmentation or lack of unity, which has been expressed, at least in Iraq [8] would also fray at their support. Seasoned al-Zawahiri, survivor of the rout from Afghanistan should be concerned about wasting the momentum of jihad. Yet if the jihad is in trouble, why are there new attacks? And why do the experts disagree about the tenacity of the new jihad?

What exactly is this new jihad? Is it a modernization or a morphing of Islam’s production of purist offshoots? Why is this contemporary version different from any other? Is it simply that today’s actors developed global rather than local, or irredentist aims? [9] When Ottoman forces laid siege to Vienna (a failed campaign) weren’t their objectives ‘global’? Why do we need such labels for militant ambitions?

The new jihad draws in some ways from the language of an Islamic awakening (*sahwa Islamiyya*) that swept across the Muslim world since the 1970s. This awakening has metamorphasized; it has in turn, been influenced by this “new jihad,” since the mid-1980s or 1990s. It is represented by groups like the Muslim Brotherhood of Egypt, the Da’wa Party of Iraq, Hizbullah of

Lebanon, Hamas in Palestine, or individuals like Egyptian televangelist `Amr Khaled. It speaks to a battle between `asala (authenticity, but not necessarily traditionalism) and *mu`asara* (modernity) as embodied in globalization, commercialization, secularism and the perceived demise of a family-oriented society. It calls for increased social justice and religiosity.

Many moderates and Islamist extremists share anti-materialist ideas and call for reinterpretation or renovation of Islamic traditions. The new jihad goes further, and promotes a global battle against Western nations and local “apostate” governments, without exempting civilians, whereas those who believe merely in a spiritual awakening may refute violence, or even political change. This is confusing. Members of the militant World Islamic Front may appear and act at will without coordination by a central authority. They ally when necessary with other Muslim groups with local – not global – ambitions. Their vision of an emirate, or caliphate would not revert to seventh-century Arabia, it would surpass it.

The new jihad promotes a new moral code, a method of internalizing Islamist values: an elevation of the “new Islamic” man or woman. [10] The new jihad illustrates an understanding of the media, of Muslim youth and their sensitivities. The new jihad invents its own *shari`ah* (Islamic law) breaking with classical doctrines of jihad and the law of nations by torturing and killing Peoples of the Book, and other Muslims. [11]

After the classical age, Muslim modernist reformers approached jihad with a cognizance of the military and political supremacy of the West. These thinkers narrowed the rationale for jihad. It was valid only when one was prevented from carrying out the duties (or pillars) of Islam). Many spoke of jihad’s divisions into two forms: lesser (military) and greater (personal striving or goal-setting).

Wahhabism, the form of Islam practiced in Saudi Arabia and some other Gulf states decried the “demotion” of jihad’s importance, as did the extremist Islamists. [12]

Hence, central claims or characteristics of the new “jihad” are:

- its promotion of battle against the West and local “apostate” governments and civilians;
- its malleability. Groups aiming at the “far enemy” (the U.S., other Western nations, and Israel) may ally with groups who primarily combat the “near enemy”
- it is required, and cannot be bounded by a peace treaty as was true of the classical definition;
- it requires *tarbiyya*, more than *ta`lim*. *Ta`lim* means education in the sense of enlightenment. *Tarbiyya* involves training and socialization, and thus, military information, strategy, rationalizations for violence, and a construction and glorification of jihad and jihadi history
- it calls for an end to secularism, and the transformation of Muslim societies, cleansing them of doctrinal innovation. Democracy is rejected insofar as it promotes secularism
- it calls for the withdrawal of Western military forces, political and economic influence from Muslim lands, as well as international agencies like the United Nations, and the World Bank.

Problems with Strategic Responses

In devising a new strategy against terrorism intended to combat this new jihad, US policy-makers adopted definitions that were simultaneously too broad and too narrow. They also ignored or seemed incapable of learning some tactical lessons from the experiences of foreign governments like Egypt, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Israel, Algeria, Pakistan, Tunisia, Morocco, Sudan or Iran with regard to salafi-jihadism, or Islamist opposition.

I am not claiming that these governments successfully dealt with this problem that had arisen since the 1970s, but that measures we could roughly term “carrot,” “stick,” and “denial” have all yielded dif

ferent kinds of responses which have been closely studied. Without any consensus about the way to redress a new jihad, or more generally, the political and social potential of the Middle East and Muslim world, we lack a global forum for informed discussion of all of this with the possible exception of academia, where crafting policy is of less concern. As a result, it seems that both the US and its allies are revisiting some of the problematic tactics previously utilized by those nations' paramilitaries.

A war on terror is too broad when it fails to consider the specific ideology in question -- the Islamist militant strand. The initial statements on the Global War on Terror lumped criminals and terrorists of all ilk together without regard to ideology. But Islamists are not precisely, or even very much like drug cartels or other groups that utilize terror as means of obtaining profit. Also, sequencing and the definition of a global popular will to engage in a war on terror must be considered. Western as well as secularist Muslim governments want to provide evidence of timely strategic victories, not least to ensure continuing public support. But the Islamists' view of time is dissimilar to most Americans' or Europeans'. They can wait, or continue insurgencies for ten or twenty years, or even decades. [13] There is no defeat for them, only martyrdom. The broader revival that challenges a vision of politics supreme over faith is going to continue. And the new jihad will remain an element in this overall process.

On the other hand, strategists have focused too narrowly by targeting al-Qaeda and a small number of close associates as the primary enemy. Highlighting differences between al-Qaeda and world jihad networks and other organizations with more limited territorial objectives would allow the United States to claim strategic victory when any of these few groups are eliminated.

However, as new jihadist organizations emerge, Muslims are encountering an intensified Western interventionism at home, and difficulties abroad. Many lack exposure to America or Europe, even other Muslim countries and relatively few Americans are sufficiently informed about Islam or the Muslim world.

Post 9/11 measures in the US and post 7/7/05 policies in the UK are making it impossible for many ordinary Muslims, students, businessmen -- people with good will toward the West -- to travel, study, do business, or receive medical treatment in the US. In US, the implementation of the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System delayed the application process. At a recent policy forum addressing educational exchanges, Ambassador Cresencio Arcos, Director of International Affairs at the U.S. Department of Homeland Security "acknowledged that some of the security measures put into place after 9/11 were "targeted against the very people we were trying to reach out to." [14]

Meanwhile, Iraqis, Saudis, Jordanians, Egyptians, Syrians, Lebanese and others are encountering American calls for democratization, or rapid reform of their home region. These ideas are as yet only partially articulated. In Iraq, for instance, while a democratic system of representation is being shaped, it is not entirely clear what role *shari'a*, Islamic law will play in family law courts or political discourse, or how a negative sectarianism can be overcome. In Egypt it is not clear if America supports a pluralism that will include political parties like the Muslim Brotherhood. Saudis fear that a too-rapid democratization will similarly empower conservatives and Islamists, or destabilize the country. Most importantly, all over the region, there is concern about democratization that is formulated according to an American blueprint.

Until a less one-sided form of communication about democratization ensues, or more dialogue is established about other American policy objectives in the region, regional actors will regard with suspicion the U.S.'s stated aim to deny sanctuary to terrorists, or the elimination of, in President Bush's words "the conditions that feed radicalism and the ideologies of murder." [15]

The US has expressed other admirable sentiments -- like addressing tyranny and despair with the hopes of disabling support for jihad. It is very important that these aims do not take a back seat to the preservation of regimes that promise to rein in Islamist radicalism.

Related to this disjuncture in perspectives is the idea that the Global War on Terror is actually a US War on Islam. This sentiment is expressed by Muslims in the region and some in the West. Muslims base their claims on Western ideological attacks on Islam, as a civilization or a religion, as well as specific actions against fellow Muslims. It does not help when they face new heightened security procedures, are denied jobs, face discrimination, or see local mosques attacked or investigated. While hate crimes against Muslims in the US descended from the 1717 incidents reported in the first six months following 9/11 to 141 in 2004, a high number of civil rights cases were filed last year, and a strong increase was reported in detentions, searches/seizures, interrogations and “unreasonable arrests.” [16]

Western experts have suggested that moderate Muslims be supported while attacking radicals. That might be a beneficial way of proceeding except that the Islamic awakening’s impact has been to blur the distinctions between the two on some issues. Here, we need to recognize that as in Christianity, those who share an Islamic faith may disagree on elements of practice, theology, and the degree to which other Muslims should regulate their behavior or beliefs. Also, Muslims who argue for a re-opening of *ijtihad*, a juridical concept, or the decoupling of martyrdom from jihad, or even the idea that a Muslim woman can lead prayer are provocative to other Muslims. Most of all, it should not be up to non-Muslims to determine the direction of an already complex faith.

Eliminating Leaders, Clerical Inspiration and recruits.

If one aspect of our new strategy against the new jihad was to effectively transform its operating environment, and that is not proceeding smoothly, then what about other aspects of our new strategy? How well are we targeting the new jihad’s leadership, or recruitment? As measured in specific attacks since 9/11, it seems that Islamist terrorism has greatly increased, given hundreds of incidents in scores of countries. [17] Cutting off the heads of a hydra is easier said than done.

Here we need to examine the track record of some ally nations. Israel utilized what they termed “targeted eliminations” [18] against political and military leadership of organizations like Islamic Jihad and Hamas. The killing of Hamas’ quadriplegic leader, Shaykh Yasin garnered very different reactions from Israelis or Palestinians. The attack probably lent even more support to the group, and that has been followed by political failures and perceived corruption of the Fatah elements of the Palestinian Authority. Similarly, Israel’s use of collective punishment against Palestinians served a public relations function for the government, but created long-term resentment, and even heightened militancy.

While in the short-term, targeted eliminations do prevent the planning and functional operation of organizations, the broader front of the war on terror must then meet the challenge of new groups inspired by the “martyrdom” of fallen leaders. So, simply checking off names on a list of Bin Ladin-associated, or al-Zarqawi-associated operatives, or those of the al-Qa’ida fi-l-Jazirah al-`Arabiyyah in Saudi Arabia did not prevent the attacks in Amman, nor the second Bali attacks, nor the ongoing waves of violence against Iraqi civilians and police and army recruits. This is because jihadi leaders from Sayyid Qutb, Shukri Mustafa, Muhammad’ Abd al-Salam Faraj, al-Zawahiri, Usama bin Ladin to Abu Mus’ab al-Zarqawi have manipulated and enlarged the legitimacy of particular themes of the new jihad.

Until these ideas can be delegitimized, or rendered less compelling to future recruits, leaders and their human environment, the new jihad will probably continue drawing in those who bear grievances against the West and their own governments’ policies.

This leads us to the public attempts to discredit the ideas of Islamist leaders or clerics who inspire them. President Parvez Musharref recently suggested that the war on terrorists is being won, and that we “should not pay too much attention to the thinking of” these militants, [19] but I disagree. First, we need to remember that clerics had maintained some independence from, as well as the right

to religiously advise, political leaders. Modern secularist Muslim states sought to control their freedom of speech and bin Ladin has accused state-appointed or recognized *ulama* of being government lackeys. So when U.S. (or Muslim governments) declare that certain Islamic leaders are legitimate while others are not, we replicate the jihadis own behavior. They divide the world into good Muslims who support their cause and bad Muslims and infidels who do not. We and our allies are trying to divide the believers and clerics into those who support our aims in the GWOT and echo our sentiments and those who do not. But the cleric's function is different than that of a political leader or a foreign power, in that he must speak spiritual truths, or provide legal guidance even if they are politically inconvenient. And it is important that the Muslim world draw on or renew its tradition of philosophical pluralism and tolerance, and seek to convince rather than to outlaw.

Targeting clerics who inspire jihadists acknowledges the power of ideology in this struggle. However arrests, detentions or trials of clerics whose connection to jihad does not go beyond inspiration brings into question the West's commitment to freedom of thought, something that Muslim governments have rarely upheld even before this particular struggle. We need to remember Muslim suspicions of our commitment to justice in the wake of Abu Ghraib, accusations about prisoner treatment at Guantanamo, and revelations of secret prisons.

What part of our new strategy makes sense, then? There may be no perfect strategy but rather only measures that suit particular situations. Certain local governments have explicitly or implicitly sought to separate moderates from radicals, or those who could be co-opted from the irredeemable. This strategy – narrowing the very broad field of potential enemies, has been attempted to some degree in Iraq where Islamist parties like SCIRI and al-Da'wa are now operating as legal, representative organizations, and an accord achieved with Muqtada al-Sadr and his followers essentially bounded their rebellion, allowing them a role in political life.

The Egyptian government's truce with radical Islamists forged in the wake of the 1997 Luxor attacks provided a truce to jihad there prior to the emergence of several new radical cells. [20] The Saudi authorities have tried to negotiate with militants through neo-salafists who forswore violence and cooperated by issuing amnesty calls. Yemen and Algeria provide other examples. Paying attention to these examples means more fully internationalizing the GWOT. And that implies granting more authority to ally nations, listening to their acquired knowledge, finding ways to improve cooperation and coordination with them, and establishing standards in counterterrorist efforts.

Dampening recruitment is another tricky aspect of this war. Recognizing the specificity of jihad's attractions is essential. Young fighters, in particular, exhibit certain individual and organizational characteristics found in gang cultures. But do anti-gang tactics developed elsewhere in the world work in these instances? Would young recruits accept pay-offs? Probably not. Democratization and economic development are promoted as environmental solutions, but will require decades, not months. It is true that reconstruction and rehabilitation post-disaster as in Pakistan or Kashmir, or post-war as in Iraq, are part of the prevention of militant recruitment. In the short run, different efforts are necessary. Potential recruits need to understand the callousness of their leadership, and witness the lack of emotion in the testimony of would-be *mujahida*, Sajida Moubarak Atrous (al-Rashawi) whose husband detonated himself at the Radisson Hotel in Amman, and the way that she took so little responsibility for her own actions in her statement.

Jihadists' hypocrisy is all about rhetoric's power versus communal affiliations. Since fighters use the term *al-qa'idin* (the sedentary folk) to ridicule and condemn those who won't adopt jihad, sedentary folk need to battle back in their own way, re-establishing communal trust and diminishing the allure of jihadist's symbology. This is just another instance of the internationalization of counterterrorist strategy that may do some good in the long war

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Notes

- 1 The views expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the Army, Department of Defense, or the U.S. Government.
2. Husni Mubarak, Televised Speech, Egyptian Television, March 31, 2003; and "Egypt's Mubarak Warns '100 Bin Ladens'" *CBS News*, March 31, 2003 <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2003/03/31/world/main547033.shtml>
3. "Toll Climbs in Egyptian Attacks," *BBC News*, 23 July 2005 http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/4709491.stm
4. Sherifa Zuhur, "A New Phase for Jihad in Egypt," in *Unmasking Terror: A Global Review of Terrorist Activities*. Vol. II, edited by Christopher Heffelfinger, Washington D.C.: Jamestown Foundation, 2005.
5. "Furious Jordanians Take to the Streets." *CNN*. November 11, 2005. <http://www.cnn.com>; "Thousands of Jordanians Protest Amman Bombings," *National Public Radio*, Nov. 11, 2005; <http://www.npr.org>; "Zarqawi Defends Jordan Attacks," *BBC News* 18 November, 2005, <http://www.bbc.co.uk>
6. "Who Profited from Amman Bombings? - Israelis Were Evacuated Hours Before the Attack." *Al-Jazeera.com* 11/15/2005 at <http://www.aljazeera.com/cgi>
7. "Zarqawi Defends Jordan Attacks," *BBC News* 18 November, 2005, <http://www.bbc.co.uk>
8. Stephen Ulph, "Internal Jihadist Criticisms of the War in Iraq." *Terrorism Focus*, 9 Jan, 2006.
9. Fawaz Gerges, *The Far Enemy: Why Jihad Went Global*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
10. Fariba Adelkhah, *Being Modern in Iran*. Trans. by Jonathan Derrick., New York: Columbia University Press, 2000; Sherifa Zuhur, *Revealing Reveiling: Islamist Gender Ideology in Contemporary Egypt*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992.
11. Youssef Aboul-Enein and Sherifa Zuhur, *Islamic Rulings on Warfare* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2004) printed copies no longer available see www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdf/PUB588.pdf, pp. 15-16 and 18-21.
12. This does not however mean that all Wahhabis call for violent jihad. There remains a very active debate about the meaning of this duty. Muhammad Taqi-ud-Din Al-Hilali and Muhammad Muhsin Khan, "The Call to Jihad in the Qur'an" *Interpretation of the Holy Quran in the English Language: A Summarized Version of Al-Tabari, Al-Qurtubi and Ibn Kathir with Comments from Sahih-Bukhari, Summarized in One Volume*. Riyadh: Dar al-Salam Publishers, 1994, pp. 1043-1064.
13. Hence the logic in Porter J. Goss, "Global Intelligence Challenges 2005: Meeting Long-Term Challenges with a Long-Term Strategy." Testimony of the Director of Central Intelligence Before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, 16 February 2005.
14. International Education Central To U.S. Public Diplomacy, Says Panel," *NAFSA: Association of International Educators*, 23 November 2005, http://www.nafsa.org/press_releases.sec/press_releases.pg/public_diplomacy_event_2
15. State of the Union (2005) Address. <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2005/02/20050202-11.html>
16. The Status of Muslim Civil Rights in the United States, 2005. Washington DC: Council on American-Islamic Relations, 2005.
17. For a list of many, though not all, militant attacks, and counterstrategies see: Sherifa Zuhur, *A Hundred Osamas: Islamist Threats and the Future of Counterinsurgency*, Carlisle: Strategic Studies Institute, 2005, or online <http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs/people.cfm?authorID=555>
18. The *Haaretz* newspaper has used the word "assassination" instead of targeted eliminations for some years.
19. CNN interview with President Pervez Musharref, 11:34 a.m. Eastern Standard time aired November 13, 2005.
20. Zuhur, "A New Phase for Jihad?"

The Credibility of Jihadi Web Sites

By Reuven Paz

The credibility of information obtained from open sources for intelligence and security communities has always been a problematic issue. Historically, intelligence communities—many of which had served totalitarian regimes such as Nazi Germany or Stalinist Russia—were often known as ‘masters of disinformation.’ The former KGB, for instance, could have obtained much valuable information simply by perusing the foreign press. Instead, the most notorious intelligence service of the former Eastern block relied upon the same information only if it came from its secret agents.

Western intelligence communities and security services have not always granted much more credibility to open sources than the KGB and its former Eastern block sister services. Not only were Western agencies well aware of the complicated relations between intelligence and the media, but they frequently utilized the media for psychological warfare. Hence they too were suspicious towards the use of open sources, as well as the tricky process of distinguishing between information and disinformation.

The culture of militant Global Jihad is a new phenomenon in the Islamic world that thus far is advocated only by a small minority of Muslim groups, movements, scholars, and individual sympathizers. Various factors however, have widened the rank and file of supporters and sympathizers of this culture. These include the extensive use of terrorism (primarily by martyrdom-suicide operations); the insurgency in Iraq; the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; growing anti-American and anti-Western sentiments; social and economic frustrations among Muslims; and growing multinational integration among Muslim communities in the West or regions of conflict in the Muslim world. Global Jihad is deeply rooted in the interpretations of the earliest sources of Islam and Islamic history, and adheres to the strictest doctrines of Salafist scholars;

it is primarily a doctrinal development that requires legitimacy on the part of clerics and scholars, in the form of interpretations, rulings, and preaching. It embodies the Islamists’ struggle to revive the Islamic civilization through global solidarity and brotherhood on one hand, and the demonization of the eternal enemy, on the other. Most importantly, however, this process takes place publicly.

In the past decade, the global war on terrorism and the exceedingly access to Islamic and Islamist media through the Internet have produced a synergy that has affected the attitude towards open sources of information. The highly intensive and efficient use of the Internet by Islamic movements and groups in general, and the wide scope of Islamist terrorist groups in particular, provide us with an extremely wide range of information, that also affects intelligence communities. In addition there is some “competition” with the Western media, which is relying on these web sites as well, and thus provides them with an enormous exposure. Yet, it seems that Western intelligence and security services have still a long way to go before they can more fully rely upon the information available on Jihadi web sites. Two main obstacles stand in their way of exploiting the information available on these web sites:

First, the global Jihadi phenomenon is still new and unfamiliar to many Western analysts. Furthermore, it is a very dynamic phenomenon, and controversial even among the various Jihadi groups and trends themselves. It is admittedly very difficult to understand the differences, disputes, argumentations, and mindset of the Jihadis in all its complexities. The Jihad movement is more akin to an “ideological umbrella” than to a homogeneous movement, which makes swimming in this deep ocean a challenging task. The dynamic nature of the Jihadi phenomenon is also a function of the Jihadists’ “relationship” with the “enemy” and a response to its “aggressive nature,” especially since 2001. In the eyes of most of the Jihadis,

theirs is a struggle in an asymmetric war of self-defense.

Secondly, despite its global nature and aspirations, the Jihadi phenomenon developed from within the Arab world and is subsequently exported to the larger Muslim world. The Jihad is therefore, almost entirely directed in Arabic and its content is intimately tied to the political context of the Arab world. The American and Western occupation in Iraq and the Jihadi insurgency that followed increase the importance of the Arab element in this phenomenon. Likewise, the majority of the supporters of global Jihad involved in forms of terrorism among Muslim communities in the West are Arabs or from Arab origins too. Most of the Western intelligence and security analysts are still unable to read the information in the original Arabic language, and lack the knowledge, insights, and tools, required to analyze Islamist radical groups and their mindset.

Jihadi use of the Internet – the Open University for Jihad

There are several main reasons why Jihadi movements, groups, clerics, and scholars, turned the Internet into their main, and sometimes only, vehicle for propaganda, indoctrination, publicity, and teaching of their messages. Besides the known advantages of this medium of communication, several factors should be noted:

- Most Arab and Muslim countries face oppositions that are oppressed and groups that are persecuted, rendering the Internet their only alternative to spread their messages. Citizens and groups are prevented from freely publishing books and newspapers, or from giving open lectures. Moreover, in most Arab and Muslim countries they have no access to the traditional means of Islamic religious indoctrination, such as mosques, Friday sermons, religious univer-

sities and colleges, or religious ceremonies.

- The nature of the Jihadist ideology and doctrines, as well as the core of Jihadi mission is to create a global solidarity and brotherhood. To that end the Internet is nowadays the best means to promote this goal cheaply and rapidly, while reaching the broadest possible audience.
- The Internet is the best means available today to create a spectrum of doctrines, new interpretations, and a multitude of new groups, but also to create an image of a large volume of activity.
- The Internet is intensively surfed and read by the global media. Every Jihadi event or message is instantly exposed to the world, circulated by news agencies, and cited in Muslim countries, whose populations do not read Arabic.
- The past decade, has witnessed a heightened significance and weight of this medium in the eyes of Jihadis, due to a number of highly important events. These include the 9/11 attacks and the subsequent global war on terrorism; the occupation of Afghanistan and Iraq; Jihadi terrorist operations all over the globe; the image of a global clash of religions and civilizations; and the rise of Jihadi terrorism as a global strategic factor in the West. There is a growing dynamic in the mutual relationship between the Jihadi groups that use the Internet and the global media.
- The strategy of the global Jihadi doctrines is to target the Arab and Muslim youth—the largest, most educated—and in terms of the Internet—most connected segment of Muslim societies. Besides, the use of the Internet for various goals, and the access to it in many Arab and Muslim countries is growing rapidly, alongside the growing development of education in many of these publics, including of females.

Most importantly these groups are above all targeting their own societies and not Western regimes and their citizens. The Internet may be used to intimidate Western publics, knowing the audiences' wide exposure to the global media and the huge effect that exposure has upon the sense of security in the West. Jihadis know that the widely circulated video clips of beheaded foreigners and Muslims in Iraq terrorize Western publics. Even so, the main reason why Jihadis circulate these clips, photos, audio material, books, articles, or military manuals, is to indoctrinate their own Arab and Muslim audiences; plant feelings of pride, a sense of belonging, and a new identity in their minds; and recruit their support. The Internet provides by far the best means to achieve the desired goal of virtual nation building of the Muslim nation—*Ummah*—an aspiration anchored in the doctrines of the Jihadi-Salafi currents. In other words, the Internet is the global Open University for Jihad.

One of the documents of indoctrination published in 2003 and recently re-circulated by the Global Islamic Media Front (GIMF) [1] is talking about the nature of the University of global Jihad. [2] The author, nicknamed Ahmad al-Wathiq bi-Allah, deputy director of GIMF, presents Al-Qaeda as an “organization, state, and university”:

Since the operation of USS Cole [November 2000] and the glorious events of Manhattan [September 2001] until the present events of this blessed month [Ramadan 2005] hundreds of Muslims from all over the world join this global Jihadi university, in which they study all the studies of the Jihad, its rules and kinds... This is a non-central university, with no geographic borders, which has its presence everywhere, and each person zealous for his religion and nation can join it... This university has its own presidency, whose role is to incite, guide, indoctrinate, and encourage the awareness of the Mujahidin. Its presidency is the leadership of the Mujahidin headed by Osama bin Laden... The university includes several faculties,

among them for electronic Jihad, martyrdom, and the technology of side bombs and car bombs.

The article bears propagandist overtones, but it clearly summarizes the indoctrinative nature of global Jihad, and thus, the center of gravity of this phenomenon, i.e. the Muslim audience. If this is the main audience then there is almost no room for disinformation. An intensive reading of these web sites, and especially of the most radical 15-25 Jihadi forum [3] and dozens of message groups, reveals the highly serious approach and attitude of their participants, i.e., those who are targeted by this global indoctrination. In some Muslim communities in the West, but especially in the Arab world, we can trace a growing role of this indoctrination in the willingness to support, justify, and volunteer to join Jihadi terrorist groups. Since 2001, these Jihadi web sites have gradually replaced the old Madrassa as a tool of recruiting the first generation of Jihadis in the 1980-90s. The Internet, in fact, has become one global madrassa.

Another recent publication by GIMF—an analysis of the global strategy of Al-Qaeda—is even more lucid.

Under the title “Al-Qaeda’s War is Economic not Military,” [4] the author, a Saudi scholar and supporter of global Jihad, analyzes the significant role that indoctrination plays in the global movement:

We should direct some of these efforts to other targets that could serve another goal, namely to promote the glory of the Muslims, especially among the youth, who are swimming in the oceans of pleasures and lust. Those youth are in fact unused petrol, while many efforts are dedicated to confront those clerics who are selling their minds to the dictatorships, and who are useless too. These moral attacks would have a tremendous impact on the souls of the defeated youth.

Many idle youngsters were motivated to join the Jihad by a photo or a video such as of the USS Cole, or Badr al-Riyadh, or by watching

the crash of the planes into the high buildings. Those youngsters, even though they were not fully aware of the impact of the attacks upon them, turned their minds and bodies towards the Jihad. Here comes the role of indoctrination and developing the thinking of these people. It is a mistake to leave these youngsters with their superficial understanding of the nature of the war.

Conclusion

In the final analysis global Jihad must use open indoctrination in order to sustain and broaden its audience in general, and its younger generations in particular. Open indoctrination is incompatible with disinformation. Therefore, once we have established the authenticity of a Jihadi web site, we can be reasonably certain that the words we read from their lips are credible. The Jihadist instigators cannot allow themselves to mislead the “Solid Base”—*Al-Qaeda al-Sulbah*—the base of the future pioneering Jihadi generations. Furthermore, we should understand the role of Jihad played by the present ideological umbrella of global Jihad.

This role is not merely one of terrorism but, and perhaps more importantly so, a crucial pillar in the current solidarity among Arabs and Muslims, as well as in the nation building process of the future Muslim Caliphate. In April 1988, Dr. Abdallah Azzam, the spiritual father of modern global Jihad, wrote so very clearly in the article in which he established the idea of Al-Qaeda: [5]

The Islamic society cannot be established without an Islamic movement that goes through the fire of tests. Its members need to mature in the fire of trials. This movement will represent the spark that ignites the potential of the nation. It will carry out a long Jihad in which the Islamic movement will provide the leadership, and the spiritual guidance. The long Jihad will bring people’s qualities to the fore and highlight their potentials. It will define their positions and

have their leaders assume their roles, to direct the march and channel it...

Holding of arms by the group of believers before having undergone this long educating training—*Tarbiyyah*—is forbidden, because those carrying arms could turn into bandits that might threaten people’s security and do not let them live in peace.

The long Jihad with which the West—and indeed much of the world—is currently facing uses the Internet to provide both Jihadists and ourselves, a wide spectrum of diversified information. Western intelligence and security analysts can learn more about Jihad by reading the lips of Jihadi clerics, scholars, operatives, commanders, leaders, and above all their growing audience. Improving their ability to do so, and above all in the original language must be our priority.

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Notes:

1. An organ of Al-Qaeda and global Jihad with a growing intensive virtual activity in the past year.
2. The article was published in most of the Jihadi forums. See on-line in: <http://www.al-farouq.com/vb/showthread.php?t=2682>
3. The number varies since these forums are often closed by security services, Western hosting companies, or as a result of technical problems, and reappear in other addresses.
4. Abu Mus`ab al-Najdi, *Ma`rakat al-Qaeda – Ma`rakah Iqtisadiyyah la `Askariyyah*, 3 October 2005. See on-line in: <http://www.al-farouq.com/vb/showthread.php?t=3383>
5. Abdallah Azzam, “Al-Qa`idah al-Sulbah,” *Al-Jihad* (Afghanistan), No. 41 (April 1988), pp. 46-49.

The Transformation of Hamas

By Omar Karmi

The overwhelming victory of the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, in Palestinian parliamentary elections in January 2006 is without a doubt the single most significant development on the Palestinian political scene since the signing of the Oslo Accords between Israel and the PLO in 1993.

The event itself – the first truly democratic elections in the Arab world – and its aftermath are likely to prove decisive not only for the future of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict but for the region as a whole, at least in the short to middle-terms.

The international response to Hamas' entrance into the Palestinian Authority is crucial in this context. So far, however, that response has been knee-jerk and characterized by a lack of any kind of sophistication or understanding vis-à-vis regional realities.

Whatever the international community may think of Hamas regarding its commitment to armed resistance against Israeli occupation, its methods, and its stated aim of recovering all of historical Palestine for Palestinians, it cannot ignore that the movement has proven itself at the ballot box and is, in terms of Palestinian public opinion at least, going from strength to strength. An opinion poll, conducted in March by the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research, PCPSR, before the international financial boycott of the Hamas-led PA came into force, showed that rather than waning as a result of its entrance into institutional politics, Hamas was gaining and at the expense of its main rival, Fateh.

And while the boycott on transferring monies to the PA is likely to hit ordinary Palestinians hard, there is no reason that that will affect the popularity of Hamas, which can simply blame all its troubles on the international community and Israel. In a sense, Hamas can't lose *especially* if it loses.

What may be lost is an opportunity, however. While the extent of its victory by all accounts took even Hamas leaders by surprise, the fact that Hamas decided to stand for parliamentary elections in the first place signals a shift, however implicit, of the movement's political platform and an acknowledgement by its leaders that armed resistance cannot completely preclude a political process.

With the PA's erstwhile dominant party, Fateh, fractured and in disarray, Hamas is simply too important to be shunted aside, indeed, arguably the only Palestinian political movement still capable of providing any kind of leadership. With a reputation for financial probity, a long and respected track record of charitable work, and an unflinching attitude to Israel, Hamas has surged in popularity amongst a people despondent with negotiations, tired of corruption and weary after five years of violence.

The rise of Hamas is in some ways ironic for Israel. Hamas was formed as the military wing of the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood during the first Palestinian intifada. The Muslim Brotherhood, itself a late 1940s outgrowth of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, had long stayed on the sidelines as regards armed resistance to the Israeli occupation and Israel had come to see it as a potential rival to the PLO and its dominant party, Yasser Arafat's Fateh. After occupying the West Bank, East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip in 1967, Israel thus allowed the Muslim Brotherhood to get on with its wide-ranging charity activities that included orphanages, medical relief and educational institutions.

Charitable work alone established the Muslim Brotherhood in Palestine as a potential rival to Fateh at least in the Gaza Strip and West Bank, even if the movement was roundly criticized among Palestinians for staying outside the armed resistance. It was not until 1984 that the movement first started building military cells, a short-lived effort that was quickly unraveled by Israel. Only when the first intifada started in 1987 was Hamas – the word is an Arabic acronym for the Islamic

Resistance Movement – founded and became truly militarily active. In 1989, Hamas formed a military group called the mujahedun, which carried out shootings, hand grenade attacks, interrogated collaborators, and kidnapped Israeli soldiers.

Having soon outgrown its parent organization and become a political movement in its own right, Hamas created its own military wing, the Izzedin Al Qassam Brigades, in 1992, and between 1992 and the signing of the Oslo accords in September 1993, Hamas had made its mark on the Palestinian street.

Israel responded accordingly. In 1989 more than 2,000 members, including leaders Sheikh Ahmed Yassin and Ismail Abu Shanab, both assassinated by Israel during the current intifada, were arrested. In 1992, 400 Hamas activists were deported to Lebanon.

Despite these campaigns, and the tens of Hamas members who were also killed, it soon became apparent that Israel would neither eliminate nor paralyze the movement. The growth in popularity of the movement was only stalled by the signing of the Oslo Accords.

Hamas was implacably opposed to the Accords. The movement saw them as granting legitimacy to the Israeli occupation given that the PLO agreed to negotiate in the first place and to relinquish the Palestinian claim to the historical borders of Palestine in exchange for a Palestinian state on part of this territory. Ibrahim Maqadmeh, one of Hamas' leading intellectuals [who was assassinated by Israel in March of 2003], outlined the reasons for the movement's rejection of the accords in his book, "The Gaza-Jericho Agreement – an Islamic Perspective". Palestine, according to Maqadmeh, is Islamic Waqf land, which cannot be surrendered; the PLO was not authorized to negotiate in the name of the Palestinian people; and the accords in general served the Israeli occupation because they took away Israel's responsibility

for those under occupation and replaced Israeli security control with Palestinian security services working to the same ends. Finally, the accords did not provide any solutions to the principal issues: Jerusalem, the refugees, Israeli settlements and the right to self-determination.

But Oslo held out the promise of a state for Palestinians that was generally well received. While many were wary and suspicious of Israeli motives and dubious that two of the central pillars of Palestinian grievances, the rights of Palestinian refugees and Jerusalem, would be justly resolved through such a process, the lure of statehood and independence was strong and the establishment of the PA with some of the trappings of statehood proved irresistible in the short term.

Hamas was forced onto the back foot and the PA was confident enough to clamp down on the movement from 1994, culminating in March 1996, when hundreds of Hamas members were imprisoned, Hamas-affiliated institutions were closed down and the movement's weapons were confiscated. Hamas subsequently sat out Legislative Council elections in 1996, arguing that as elections for a body created by the Oslo Accords they served only the Israeli occupation.

But the clampdown of 1996 also forced a subtle shift in the movement's dealings with the PA. Wary of being accused of being an obstacle to the PLO's negotiations strategy, Hamas opted to allow the PA to get on with things rather than confront it.

Every subsequent breakdown in negotiations between the PLO and Israel, however, strengthened Hamas. And as negotiations headed for ultimate deadlock at Camp David in 2000, with Israeli settlements in the West Bank multiplying and the economic situation for ordinary Palestinians deteriorating amid widespread accusations leveled against the PA of mismanagement and corruption, Hamas grew ever more popular.

The outbreak of the second intifada in September 2000 signaled the beginning of the latest shift in power on the Palestinian scene, even if Hamas did not enter the fighting until months later. The Israeli strategy of targeting PA security institutions served not only the purpose of rendering the PA paralyzed but showed up its weakness in defending its own people, bolstering the Hamas argument that that indeed was not what it was intended for.

Israeli-imposed closures, meanwhile, destroyed the Palestinian economy; Israel assassinated Palestinian leaders at will and raided Palestinian cities unopposed by the security services. Arafat became isolated internationally and was physically contained in his headquarters in Ramallah.

Among Palestinians, the Hamas argument that Israel could not be negotiated with was vindicated, and for a people with no weapons capable of fighting the Israeli army's F-16s, Apache Helicopters and Abrams Tanks, suicide bombings became seen as one of the only effective weapons to strike back.

The PA's popularity plummeted. Fateh and Fateh-affiliated groups fractured, with deep fissures that Arafat's stature barely managed to conceal. Hamas, on the other hand, used to working underground both under direct Israeli control and after the advent of the PA, kept its shape and structure intact. Capable of still providing services to people through its network of charities, it provided a stark contrast to the PA, which was totally dependent on international aid.

Nevertheless, Hamas felt the squeeze as much as everyone else. The tight siege on Palestinian territory dramatically increased poverty, and popular pressure for relief from the violence grew ever stronger. In 2003, Hamas and other opposition factions agreed to a unilateral truce with then Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas and Yassin proposed an open-ended truce with Israel, to last decades, based on the parameters of a two-state solution, leaving it

to future generations to decide upon outstanding issues.

While Yassin's truce was not commented on much at the time, and the 2003 truce eventually collapsed, it represented a leap in Hamas' thinking. The intifada had presented itself with opportunities as well as realities and, typical of the movement's pragmatism, strategy was adjusted accordingly.

The opportunity arose with Israel's unilateral disengagement from the Gaza Strip. As usual, suspicions abounded about Israeli intentions, but once Israel came to the point of no return, Hamas quickly adjusted. With Abbas now president, and tensions in Fateh more exposed, Hamas agreed to another truce, still only in agreement with the PA, but after PA agreement with Israel in Sharm Al Sheikh in February 2005.

In addition, the movement announced its intention to run for the long-delayed Legislative Council elections for which a date had been set after the presidential elections.

The two events were not unrelated. Hamas could with some plausibility argue that the Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip not only represented a victory for the armed resistance, but, because it was unilateral, signaled the end of the Oslo Accords and everything that followed. Thus freed from its own rhetorical constraint vis-à-vis the PA, Hamas enabled itself to cash in on its popularity and legitimize itself via democratic elections.

Nevertheless, a softening of Hamas' stance, however much denied by its leaders, is also implicit in the move. Significantly, Hamas leaders have not discounted the idea of negotiating with Israel, whether directly or through intermediaries. In an interview conducted before PLC elections with this journalist, Hamas leader and now PA foreign minister Mahmoud Zahhar said negotiations with Israel would be

entered into if they yielded results, though “not for the sake of negotiating”. By results, Hamas means an acknowledgement by Israel that all territory occupied in the 1967 war, including East Jerusalem, constitutes territory upon which a Palestinian state should be built. Since taking office that has been the consistent message from Hamas.

Running for parliamentary elections also represents an acknowledgement of the legitimacy of the PA itself. In addition, Hamas, despite continued Israeli military strikes, incursions, assassinations and arrests, has remained committed to what is increasingly its own truce. Though the movement remains committed to the armed resistance, it does so now, as Zahhar said, as an “option”, further signaling a shift in the group’s position.

But when confronted with three conditions by the international community – unconditionally to recognize Israel’s right to exist, renounce violence, and honor past agreements between the PA and Israel – Hamas has been given little option but to refuse to budge.

The reason is as much ideological as it is political. Hamas ran on a ticket of not repeating the mistakes of the past. Most important of these was not to give concessions to Israel without getting anything in return. It is a message that resonates well with the vast majority of Palestinians, a majority that is increasing if the aforementioned PCPSR poll is to be believed.

Furthermore, with Ariel Sharon and now newly elected Israeli PM Ehud Olmert loudly proclaiming Israel’s intention to unilaterally set its own borders, having claimed that first Arafat, then Abbas, now Hamas can not be partners in a political process, Hamas, indeed most Palestinians, sees little point in entering into negotiations, the outcome of which already appears settled.

Unless the international community, led by Washington, believes it can get Israel to the negotiating table for meaningful talks, it does not matter much

who is at the helm of the PA.

But Washington shot itself in the foot in 2004 by implicitly backing Israel’s retention of major settlements in the West Bank in a letter from US President George W. Bush to Ariel Sharon.

By starving the PA of desperately needed cash, most of which goes to pay the salaries of some 160,000 people, the international community is going down a poorly conceived path. Hamas is likely to follow one of two options available to it: either it sticks to its guns as the PA government and waits to see if the international community blinks first and finds a formula for allowing aid to reach Palestinians; or it rejects the PA completely, reverts to an all-out opposition group and ends the truce.

The second way, the PA likely collapses. Hamas’ superior organization and greater popularity will ensure that outside the PA it is within its power to destroy, one way or another, any group foolish enough to want to play ball with the international community.

But if it remains in power and is allowed funding, then it has to prove that it can indeed administer and is committed to the democratic process that brought it into power next time elections are due. That represents the best hope of the current Palestinian opposition.

The international community also needs to take a broader view. On a regional level, international willingness to consider Hamas a legitimate actor could signal an important change in the region where “Islamist” movements are largely understood to be the most vibrant political forces but are also largely lumped into one category. Hamas remains committed to the notion of a greater Islamic nation, but consciously points to the European Union as a model rather than the Islamic Caliphates. Said Zahhar, “unlike westerners, we do not believe in the clash of civilizations but the cooperation of civilizations. But

only as equals.”

At a time when America is perceived to be slowly sliding into a war with the entire Muslim world, reaching out to moderate political Islamic forces ought to be a guiding policy if the US and the international community hope to attain any of their regional objectives. Doing so, in one way or another, with Hamas would send the signal that the international understanding of democracy in the region is not restricted to the participation of those Washington finds acceptable.

It is crucial to getting anywhere in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

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