Harmony and Disharmony

Exploiting al-Qa'ida's Organizational Vulnerabilities

February 14, 2006

Combating Terrorism Center

Department of Social Sciences

United States Military Academy

Executive Summary

This study, conducted by the faculty and research fellows of the Combating Terrorism Center (CTC) at West Point, serves multiple purposes, the most important of which is contributing to the depth of knowledge about the al-Qa'ida movement. Evidence supporting the conclusions and recommendations provided in this report is drawn from a collection of newly-released al-Qa'ida documents captured during recent operations in support of the Global War on Terror and maintained in the Department of Defense's Harmony database. In the text of these documents, readers will see how explicit al-Qa'ida has been in its internal discussions covering a range of organizational issues, particularly regarding the internal structure and functioning of the movement as well as with tensions that emerged within the leadership.

In the first part of the report, we provide a theoretical framework, drawing on scholarly approaches including organization and agency theory, to predict where we should expect terrorist groups to face their greatest challenges in conducting operations. The framework is informed as much as possible by the captured documents, and provides a foundation upon which scholars can build as more of these documents are declassified and released to the public.

Our analysis stresses that, by their nature, terrorist organizations such as al-Qa'ida face difficulties in almost any operational environment, particularly in terms of maintaining situational awareness, controlling the use of violence to achieve specified political ends, and of course, preventing local authorities from degrading the group's capabilities. But they also face problems common to other types of organizations, including private firms, political parties, and traditional insurgencies. For example, political and ideological leaders—the principals—must delegate certain duties to middlemen or low-level operatives, their agents. However, differences in personal preferences between the leadership and their operatives in areas such as finances and tactics make this difficult and give rise to classic agency problems.

Agency problems created by the divergent preferences among terrorist group members present operational challenges for these organizations, challenges which can be exploited as part of a comprehensive counterterrorism strategy. Thus, the theoretical framework described in this report helps us identify where and under what conditions organizations can expect the greatest challenges in pursuing their goals and interests. Understanding a terrorist organization's internal challenges and vulnerabilities is key to developing effective—and efficient—responses to the threats they pose and to degrade these groups' ability to kill. The captured al Qa'ida documents contribute significantly to this type of understanding.

The experiences of the "Moslem Brotherhood" and "The Fighting Vanguard" (al-Tali'a al-Muqatila) in Hamah, Syria are examined as a particularly relevant case study. The lessons learned from these groups' efforts during the 1970s—based on the actual

internal assessments of senior jihadi ideologues themselves—are summarized here. Many of the jihadi experiences in Syria have striking parallels to current al-Qa'ida sponsored operations in Iraq, and we highlight several that we believe are especially relevant. This case study not only expands our understanding of the al-Qa'ida network and how it operates under pressure from the government, it also provides a useful model for other researchers to follow in applying a similar theoretical framework to the study of other terrorist organizations and their potential vulnerabilities.

Leveraging our framework and historical context from the Syrian case, we assess al-Qa'ida's emerging organizational challenges, internal divisions, and places where the network is most likely vulnerable to exploitation. Our analysis emphasizes that effective strategies to combat threats posed by al-Qa'ida will create and exacerbate schisms within its membership. Members have different goals and objectives, and preferred strategies for achieving these ends. Preferences and commitment level vary across specific roles performed within the organization and among sub-group leaders. Defining and exploiting existing fissures within al-Qa'ida as a broadly defined organization must reflect this intra-organizational variation in preferences and commitment in order to efficiently bring all available resources to bear in degrading its potential threat. While capture-kill options may be most effective for certain individuals—e.g., operational commanders—we identify a number of non-lethal prescriptions that take into account differences in al-Qa'ida members' preferences and commitment to the cause. Many of our prescriptions are intended to induce debilitating agency problems that increase existing organizational dysfunction and reduce al-Qa'ida's potential for political impact.

To achieve long-term success in degrading the broader movement driving terrorist violence, however, the CTC believes the United States must begin aggressively digesting the body of work that comprises jihadi macro-strategy. We therefore also seek to apply our model to the ideological dimension of al-Qa'ida revealed in numerous instances in these documents, the goal being to identify ways to facilitate the ideational collapse of this body of thought. The included documents provide insights into the points of strategic dissonance and intersection among senior leaders that must be better understood in order to be exploited.

In sum, this theoretically informed analysis, along with assessments of the individual captured documents themselves, contributes to existing bodies of research on al-Qa'ida. It provides several tools for identifying and exacerbating existing fissures as well as locating new insertion points for counterterrorism operations. It presents an analytical model that we hope lays the foundation for a more intellectually informed approach to counterterrorism. And perhaps, most importantly, this assessment demonstrates the integral role that scholars can play in understanding the nature of this movement and in generating smarter, more effective ways to impede its growth and nurture the means for its eventual disintegration.

The views expressed in this report are those of the authors and not of the U.S. Military Academy, the Department of the Army, or any other agency of the U.S. Government.

Table of Contents

Foreword……..……..……..……5

Part I

Introduction …… 7

Theoretical Framework: The Challenges of Organizing Terror..……..11

Syria Case Study: Back to the Future……25

Organizational Vulnerabilities and Recommendations to Exploit Them…..40

Part II

Introduction……...54

Harmony Document List……..……57

Harmony Document Summaries ……..59

Foreword

Back to table of contents

In war, traditional nation-states have specific attributes, such as territory, military forces, governmental structures, and economic capacity that can be the objectives of grand strategy and resulting military campaigns. Non-state actors, such as al-Qa'ida, do not have these same centers of gravity. Al-Qa'ida has non-traditional strengths and weaknesses reflecting its own unique human personalities, structure, organization, processes, and procedures. The purpose of this study is to examine the internal characteristics of al-Qa'ida so that policymakers and analysts can develop strategies to focus on their key vulnerabilities and degrade their effectiveness in supporting the global Salafist insurgency.

One of the best ways to learn about al-Qa'ida is to read the papers, manuals, and other documents which al-Qa'ida leaders have written to guide and discipline their own enterprise. Many of these documents have been captured by military and law enforcement forces and can provide insight into the way the organization works. Other key references are readily available on the World Wide Web. The Combating Terrorism Center (CTC) at West Point was given 28 recently de-classified documents from the Defense Department's "Harmony" database, which consists of literally thousands of documents. Analyzing these documents is akin to gathering several parts of a complex jigsaw puzzle. The documents themselves are interesting, but to get a more complete picture, the CTC authors found that it was important to combine the pieces from the al-Qa'ida documents, other published reports, books, articles, and studies on al-Qa'ida, organization theory, and other similar historical cases. The resulting analysis provides a complex but coherent assessment of al-Qa'ida's organization, identifying several areas of vulnerability and potential strategies to exploit these vulnerabilities. This analysis of these documents, buttressed by the CTC authors' insight and other publications comprises part 1 of this study.

While Part 1 is an extremely helpful analysis, 'Part 2 of this study may be even more important and useful for researchers. Part 2 contains the complete original text of all of the documents selected from the Harmony database for this study—in both Arabic and English—with a useful synopsis and short analysis of each document prepared by the CTC authors. These documents are hyperlinked on the compact disk version of the study and on the CTC website at: http://www.ctc.usma.edu/aq.asp. The intent is to provide open access to these documents for other researchers so that they can be analyzed and used to learn more about al-Qa'ida and better understand the organization. We expect that future research into these documents, the al-Qa'ida websites, and other newly captured materials will continue to advance our knowledge of al-Qa'ida and its franchises and imitators. In any case, the intellectual discussion about—and understanding of—the internal organization and functions of al-Qa'ida is critical to developing an effective long-term counterterrorism strategy.

This project contributes to the mission of the Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, which is to better understand the foreign and domestic terrorist threats to U.S. national security, to educate leaders who will have responsibilities to combat terrorism, and to provide policy analysis and assistance to leaders dealing with the current and future terrorist threat. The Combating Terrorism Center is part of the Department of Social Sciences of the U.S. Military Academy, and the work of its faculty and staff is closely integrated with the instruction of cadets and with the Academy's outreach and support of projects to educate and inform current and future leaders.

The work for this project was done by a team of associates and faculty members in the Combating Terrorism Center, which was led by Lieutenant Colonel Joe Felter and included significant work by Major Jeff Bramlett, Captain Bill Perkins and Professors Jarret Brachman, Brian Fishman, James Forest, Lianne Kennedy, Jacob Shapiro, and Tom Stocking. They have tried to make this as user-friendly as possible, with hyperlinks to all references throughout the documents to facilitate understanding and cross-checking of the source material. Additional questions about the report can be directed to LTC Felter at (845) 938-3247 or joseph.felter@usma.edu.

WAYNE A. DOWNING
General, U.S. Army (retired)
Distinguished Chair
Combating Terrorism Center

MICHAEL J. MEESE
Colonel, U.S. Army, Ph.D.
Professor and Head
Department of Social Sciences

The views expressed in this report are those of the authors and not of the U.S. Military Academy, the Department of the Army, or any other agency of the U.S. Government.

Introduction

Back to table of contents

A proliferation of research on al-Qa'ida within the last decade has revealed much about the strategic objectives, ideology, members, tactics, finances and other relevant aspects of this organization. Scholars such as Bruce Hoffman, Rohan Gunaratna, Michael Scheuer, Peter Bergen and Gilles Kepel have described in great detail the nature of political Islam and how al-Qa'ida has incorporated its own interpretation of jihad into a global insurgency against sectarian political regimes and symbols of western globalization.[1] Other researchers, like John Arquilla and David Ronfeldt, have explored the growing incidence of networked organizations in areas of transnational crime, insurgency, and terrorism.[2] By integrating these areas of research into an analytical framework informed by organization and agency theories, this report seeks to identify specific vulnerabilities within the al-Qa'ida network that can be of value to combined efforts to combat terrorism.

A Networked Terrorist Organization

An understanding of today's al-Qa'ida requires an appreciation for the organization's adoption of fourth generation warfare tactics.[3] The concepts of fourth generation warfare were first presented in a 1989 *Marine Corps Gazette* article entitled "The Changing Face of War: Into the Fourth Generation," which argued that such warfare was "likely to be widely dispersed and largely undefined; the distinction between war and peace will be blurred to the vanishing point."[4] The authors of this article also provide what became an ominous prediction of the terrorist threat we now face: The "political infrastructure and civilian society [will] become battlefield targets." Adherents of fourth generation warfare call for the use of psychological operations (including propaganda) and terrorism to erode an enemy's moral, mental and physical ability to wage war over many years until they eventually lose their willingness to stay in the fight. According to one well-received definition, fourth generation warfare is an "evolved form of insurgency [that] uses all available networks—political, economic, social, military—to convince the enemy's

---

[1] For example, see: Peter L. Bergen, *Holy War, Inc.: Inside the Secret World of Osama Bin Laden* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2002); Rohan Gunaratna, *Inside Al-Qa'ida* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002); Gilles Kepel, *Jihad: The Trail of Political Islam,* Translated by Anthony F. Roberts (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002); and Anonymous, *Through Our Enemies' Eyes: Osama Bin Laden, Radical Islam, and the Future of America* (Washington, D.C.: Brassey's, 2002).

[2] John Arquilla and David Ronfeldt, *The Advent of Netwar* (Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND, 1996).

[3] For further definition and examples of "fourth generation warfare," see John Arquilla and David F. Ronfeldt (eds.), *Networks and Netwars: The Future of Terror, Crime, and Militancy*. (Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, 2002); Robert Bunker (ed.), *Non-State Threats and Future Wars* (Frank Cass Publishers, 2002); Bard E. O'Neill, *Insurgency and Terrorism: Inside Modern Revolutionary Warfare* (Potomac Books, 2001); and Sun Tzu, *The Art of War* (Dover Publications, 2002).

[4] William S. Lind, Keith Nightengale, John F. Schmitt, Joseph W. Sutton, and Gary I. Wilson, "The Changing Face of War: Into the Fourth Generation," *Marine Corps Gazette* (October 1989), 22-26

decision makers that their strategic goals are either unachievable or too costly for the perceived benefit."[5]

The advantages of this approach for any sub-national or transnational group are fairly obvious: decentralized, networked terrorist organizations are less vulnerable to the traditional counterterrorism measures used by the hierarchically organized security forces of a national government. In February 2002, the Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI) reported that an al-Qa'ida document posted to the Internet embraced fourth-generation warfare. "This new type of war presents significant difficulties for the Western war machine" the publication said. "Fourth generation wars have already occurred and . . . the superiority of the theoretically weaker party has already been proven; in many instances, nation-states have been defeated by stateless nations."[6] Al-Qa'ida's adoption of fourth generation warfare tactics offer a useful case study for understanding networked terrorist organizations.

According to most counterterrorism analysts today, al-Qa'ida has evolved from a centrally directed organization into a worldwide franchiser of terrorist attacks.[7] Indeed, since the war in Afghanistan, which significantly degraded bin Laden's command and control, al-Qa'ida has become increasingly decentralized, and is seen by some as more of a "movement" than any other form of organization. Experts involved in counterterrorism have observed "a growth in this global Sunni extremist movement, partly driven by Iraq, but also by other events, which is much more difficult to track, follow and ultimately disrupt. So as we're doing really well against what was al-Qa'ida, we've got a new threat—this movement, which is much more of a challenge."[8]

As inspirational leaders of this movement, bin Laden and al-Zawahiri have provided ideological guidance, while leaving planning and financing of operations to the local commanders of allied but autonomous organizations. The March 2004 attack in Madrid, which killed 191 people, is often cited as the key turning point in the evolution of this global Islamist extremist movement. Initially, Spanish and U.S. counterterrorism officials sought to identify organizational links between al-Qa'ida and the Madrid bombers, but quickly they realized those connections were tenuous at best. The Madrid attack was organized and implemented within eight weeks, using stolen explosives and cell phone detonators assembled by one of the conspirators. It required no central direction from the mountains of Pakistan, simply a charismatic leader with links to men trained in the war in

---

[5] See *Armed Forces Journal,* November 2004, as cited in Myke Cole, "From The Military: Applying 4GW Theory to The Intelligence Community," *Defense and the National Interest* (10 August 2005). Available online at: http://www.d-n-i.net/fcs/cole_lessons_from_the_military.htm

[6] Scott Wheeler, "Expert Links Probing Attacks to 'Fourth-Generation Warfare'" *CNS News* (16 August 2004). Online at: http://www.cnsnews.com/ViewSpecialReports.asp?Page=/SpecialReports/archive/200408/SPE20040816a.html

[7] Peter Grier, "The New Al Qa'ida: Local Franchiser," *Christian Science Monitor* (11 July 2005). Online at: http://www.csmonitor.com/2005/0711/p01s01-woeu.html.

[8] Robert Windrem, "The Frightening Evolution of al-Qa'ida," *MSNBC.com,* (24 June 2005). Online at: http://msnbc.msn.com/id/8307333.

Afghanistan against the Soviet Union. For motivation, though, they had Spanish help for the U.S. war in Iraq, and for inspiration they had bin Laden and the 9/11 attacks.

Since the March 2004 Madrid bombings, other groups have followed this model. For example, there is no evidence to suggest the attacks that killed dozens of westerners in Casablanca, Morocco, were carried out with the knowledge of al-Qa'ida leadership. Further, investigators do not believe al-Qa'ida played any role in the July 2005 mass transit attack in London, although a videotape produced afterward by al-Zawahiri applauded the suicide bombers. In essence, al-Qa'ida is becoming what its earliest architects had hoped it would be: a support "base" for Islamist radicals around the world. Even "al-Qa'ida in Iraq," the new name for Abu Musab al Zarqawi's group, does not take orders from bin Laden or his No. 2, Ayman al-Zawahiri—rather, the Iraqi insurgents draw inspiration, technical support and military guidance.[9]

From a strategic perspective, it makes sense that Osama bin Laden and his colleagues would seek to nurture a loosely-organized terrorist movement. Indeed, several years ago al-Qa'ida's leaders recognized that the achievement of their ultimate goals and objectives required a more decentralized, networked approach. In 2001, following the ouster of the Taliban from Afghanistan, a number of al-Qa'ida leaders suddenly found themselves in detention centers facing long months of interrogation. Abu Zubaydah, al-Qa'ida's "dean of students," who directed training and placement for the group, was captured in Faisalabad, Pakistan, in February 2002. Ramzi Bin al Shibh, the organizer of the Hamburg, Germany cell that formed the core of the 9/11 hijackers, was captured in Karachi, Pakistan, on the first anniversary of the attacks. These and other counterterrorism successes ultimately led to the capture of Khalid Sheik Mohammed, the mastermind of 9/11 and the financier of the first World Trade Center attack, in Rawalpindi, Pakistan, in March 2003. And a month later, Tawfiq Attash Kallad, the mastermind of the *USS Cole* attack, was apprehended in Karachi. In response to the loss of key leaders, al-Qa'ida allegedly convened a strategic summit in northern Iran in November 2002, at which the group's consultative council came to recognize that it could no longer exist as a hierarchy, but instead would have to become a decentralized network and move its operations out over the entire world.[10] By evolving in this way over the past few years, al-Qa'ida is demonstrating the type of adaptive flexibility that has become a hallmark of networked terrorist organizations.

The Vulnerabilities of Networked Terrorist Organizations

By their unique nature, terrorist organizations face difficult challenges in almost any operational environment, particularly in terms of maintaining situational awareness, controlling the use of violence to achieve specified political ends, and of course, preventing the authorities from degrading the group's capabilities. But, as Jacob Shapiro

[9] For more on this, please see James Forest, ed., *The Making of a Terrorist (Vol. 2: Training)* (Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2005); and James Forest, ed., *Teaching Terror: Strategic and Tactical Learning in the Terrorist World* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield; forthcoming, May 2006).

[10] Robert Windrem, 2005.

describes in the next chapter of this report, they also face problems common to other types of organizations, including private firms, political parties, social movements, and traditional insurgencies. For example, political and ideological leaders—the principals—must delegate certain duties to middlemen or low-level operatives, their agents. But because of differences in personal preferences, as well as the need to maintain operational secrecy, terrorist group leaders cannot perfectly monitor what their agents are doing. Thus, preference divergence creates operational challenges which can be exploited to degrade a terrorist group's capabilities.

Overall, the goal of this analysis is to provide a framework which can help us identify where and under what conditions organizations can expect the greatest challenges in pursuing their goals and interests. Understanding a terrorist organization's internal challenges and vulnerabilities is key to developing effective strategies to combat the threats they pose and degrade these groups' ability to kill.

Summary

As explored in greater detail throughout the remainder of this report, a networked terrorist organization like al-Qa'ida has vulnerabilities that can be exploited. We begin Part 1 of this report by developing a robust theoretical framework that helps us identify and understand these vulnerabilities. When combined with an assessment of what is known about the current characteristics of the al-Qa'ida network, this analysis reveals emerging organizational challenges, internal divisions, and an appreciation for where, and under what conditions, the network is most vulnerable to exploitation.

This theoretical analysis is followed by a case study which highlights the challenges faced by various jihadist movements in Syria during the 1970s and 1980s, providing a historical precedent for discussing current al-Qa'ida organizational challenges and associated network vulnerabilities. A number of interesting parallels between the jihadi's' experience in Syria and contemporary challenges faced by Zarqawi's "al-Qa'ida in Mesopotamia" are incorporated into this fascinating and relevant case analysis. This case study not only expands our understanding of the al-Qa'ida network, it also provides a useful model for other researchers to follow in applying a similar theoretical framework to the study of other terrorist organizations and their potential vulnerabilities.

Part 1 of this report concludes with policy-relevant findings inspired by the captured al-Qa'ida documents supporting this study and suggests opportunities to exploit al-Qa'ida's inherent organizational vulnerabilities. A number of prescriptions, both lethal and non-lethal, are presented here that respond more efficiently to al-Qa'ida's diversity in preferences and commitment to its cause, in an effort to induce debilitating agency problems that increase existing organizational dysfunction.

In Part 2 of our report we describe the methodology used to generate the document sample and present summaries and cursory analysis of all 28 captured al-Qa'ida documents used in this study. The full text translated to English as well as the original Arabic are accessible through hyperlinks in the document summaries.

The Challenges of Organizing Terror
A Theoretical Framework for Analysis[11]

Back to table of contents

This section uses a combination of economic and sociological organization theory to identify where and under what conditions terrorist organizations have faced, and continue to face the greatest challenges in pursuing their goals. Evidence from declassified Harmony documents (the full text of which is provided in part 2 of this report) and open source material suggest al-Qa'ida faces a number of these same organizational trade-offs and operational constraints. This theoretical frame provides a way of thinking about groups that starkly highlights where we expect to see terrorist limitations and vulnerabilities along with corresponding opportunities governments have to make the terrorists' goals more difficult to achieve.

Introduction

Terrorist organizations face difficult tasks in a hostile operational setting. First, they must execute a controlled use of violence as a means to achieving their specified political ends. Doing too much can be just as damaging to the cause as doing too little.[12] Second, they must maintain this calibrated use of force in an environment where becoming known to government equals operational failure.[13]

These challenges lead to several recurring themes in terrorists' organizational writings. We see a consistent focus on how to achieve the appropriate use of violence when the rank and file often clamor for more violence than is useful, or seek to enrich themselves in the course of their duties. Groups also struggle with the problem of maintaining situational awareness while staying covert, so that members understand which actions will support the political goal, and which will be counterproductive. Finally, there is regular concern with balancing the need to control operational elements with the need to evade government attention and limit the consequences of any compromise.

Problems of control in terrorist organizations first enter into the organizational writings of early Russian Marxist groups which had regular problems with local cells

[11] Jacob N. Shapiro, the primary author of this section, is a Fellow at the Center for International Security and Cooperation (CISAC) at Stanford University and an Associate of the Combating Terrorism Center at West Point.

[12] For example, the Real IRA (RIRA) bombing in Omagh in August 1998 proved hugely problematic for both the RIRA and the larger Republican movement. The attack killed 29 people, arousing intense public outrage at the RIRA. Since 1998, support for the group has withered and they have not conducted any significant attacks since June 2003.

[13] For example, a plot to attack tourist hotels in Morocco was compromised in November 2005 because the operational cell included former inmates at Guantanamo, individuals who were well-known to Moroccan security forces.

conducting revenge attacks that could not be justified by Marxist theory.[14] In like fashion, a 1977 "Staff Report" for the Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA) General Headquarters (GHQ) details reorganization plans intended to minimize security vulnerabilities while maintaining sufficient operational control.[15] Islamist groups are not immune from these concerns, though maintaining situational awareness seems more problematic for them. A lessons learned document from the Harmony database describing the failed jihad waged against the Assad regime in Syria from 1976-1982, includes a discussion of the problem of becoming detached from the masses because of the exigencies of maintaining security.[16] This same document contains a discussion of how to emulate the Italian Red Brigades' to better compartmentalize information while maintaining operational effectiveness. Finally, captured letters between al-Qa'ida members released from Harmony discuss how planning and conducting too many attacks can become counterproductive, bringing unwanted government attention toward the group.[17]

The key insight is that terrorist groups, and other covert organizations, face two fundamental trade-offs. The first is between operational security and financial efficiency. Here problems of trust and control—agency problems—create inefficiencies in resource allocation. Strategies to mitigate these problems all entail security costs. The second tradeoff is between operational security and tactical control. Here agency problems and other group dynamics lead to counterproductive violence. Strategies to mitigate these problems through greater control entail security costs for groups as a whole. We will explain the enduring importance of these tradeoffs for developing counter-terrorism strategies using theoretical insights developed from the study of firms, political parties, social movements, and traditional insurgencies. There are strong theoretical reasons to believe these problems are inescapable for all terrorist groups; evidence from the Harmony documents and open source accounts reinforce our assessment that al-Qa'ida struggles with similar trade-offs and challenges. Developing a better understanding of how to take advantage of these problems will help government more effectively degrade al-Qa'ida's (and other terrorist groups') lethality.

The Terrorists' Challenge

The terrorists' challenge is simple to describe. For security reasons, political and ideological leaders, the principals, have to delegate certain duties—planning attacks, soliciting funds, recruiting, and the like—to middlemen or low-level operatives, their agents. Such delegation poses no problem if all the agents are perfectly committed to the

[14] Anna Geifman, "Aspect of Early Twentieth-Century Russian Terrorism: The Socialist-Revolutionary Combat Organization," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 4, no. 2 (1992): 23-46.
[15] John Horgan and Max Taylor, "The Provisional Irish Republican Army: Command and Functional Structure," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 9, no. 3 (1997): 1-32. 21.
[16] Harmony AFGP-2002-600080.
[17] In the June 2002 Al Adl Letter from Harmony, Abd-al-Halim Adl, a member of Al-Qa'ida vigoroulsy challenges Osama bin Laden's leadership. He argues that the group needs to take an operational pause to regroup following setbacks in East Asia, Europe, America, the Horn of Africa, Yemen, the Gulf, and Morocco. Continuing to engage in "foreign actions" is described as bringing excessive pressure to bear on the organization.

cause and agree with leaders on how best to serve the cause. Under those conditions, the preferences of the principals and their agents will be perfectly aligned, and the agents will act exactly as the principals would like.

However, preferences aren't always aligned. When they are not, the covert nature of terrorist groups necessarily implies that agents can take advantage of delegation to act as they prefer, not as their principals would like. We see this type of problem repeatedly among members of al-Qa'ida who exhibit differing levels of commitment to the cause. Thus, L'Hussein Kherchtou, a member of al-Qa'ida's operational cell in Nairobi during the 1998 U.S. Embassy bombings, testified for the prosecution because he disagreed with the spending priorities of the senior members of his team.[18] He saw their priorities as un-Islamic, essentially charging them with embezzlement. We see this same dynamic in al-Qa'ida's affiliate organizations. For example, Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) has recurring problems with local leaders engaging in counter-productive violence. In October 2003, senior JI leaders had made a decision to develop Poso, in Central Sulawesi, as a safe haven and area for ideological outreach. However, local motivations led to a series of sectarian attacks against Christians, against the leadership's preferences. These attacks attracted government attention to the area, destroying its value as a safe-haven.[19]

Thus, terrorist leaders have a problem. Security concerns mean they cannot perfectly monitor what agents are doing.[20] Moreover, the nature of the operational environment means that it is hard to punish agents, even when leaders do catch them taking unauthorized actions. In terrorist groups, the agents hold an implicit threat over group principals—they can go to the government. For example, Jamal Ahmed Al Fadl, who testified in the Embassy bombing trial, stole money from al-Qa'ida, got caught, went on the run, and approached the U.S. government in an attempt to save himself and his family. Moreover, the agents are often operational elements that specialize in violence, so leaders cannot wield a credible threat against them. This problem plagued the leadership of the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) and Ulster Defense Alliance (UDA), protestant paramilitaries in Northern Ireland, who could not put a stop to the politically damaging mafia-style activities of their operational cells.[21]

---

[18] L'Hussein Kherchtou testimony: Direct examination, *U.S. v. Usama Bin Laden et. al.,* S(7) 98 Cr. 1023, pp. 1280 – 1284; 1307 – 1316; 1383-1385; 1492-1494; 1536.

[19] International Crisis Group, "Indonesian Backgrounder: Jihad in Central Sulawesi." ICG Asia Report 74 (2004).

[20] Leaders of Al-Qa'ida have attempted to use auditing to check up on their agents, as illustrated in a 1999 e-mail from Ayman al-Zawahiri to a Yemei cell leader. In that e-mail, al-Zawahiri complains that the Yemeni leader is spending too much money and is not properly reporting his expenses. Clearly, such communications are a huge security risk. See Alan Cullison, "Inside Al-Qa'ida's Hard Drive," *The Atlantic Monthly*, September 2004. Similar issues arise in a June 2005 letter reportedly from Ayman al-Zawahiri to Abu Musab al-Zarqawi. In that letter, Zawahiri allegedly notes that the leadership in Afghanistan "do not know the full truth" of the situation in Iraq. He also argues that some of Zarqawi's most violent activities may be politically counterproductive.

[21] Andrew Silke, "In Defense of the Realm: Financing Loyalist Terrorism in Northern Ireland – Part One: Extortion and Blackmail," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 21 (1998): 331-361; Andrew Silke, "Drink, Drugs, and Rock 'n Roll: Financing Loyalist Terrorism in Northern Ireland – Part Two." *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 23 (2000): 107-127.

The problems outlined above fall into the larger category of "agency problems." Such problems arise when three conditions exist: (1) a principal needs to delegate certain actions or decisions to an agent: (2) the principal can neither perfectly monitor the agent's actions, nor punish him with certainty when a transgression is identified; and (3) the agent's preferences are not aligned with the those of the principal'.[22] The framework of agency theory has been used with great success to explore a wide range of issues including corporate governance, pork-barrel spending in Congress, the behavior of regulatory agencies, civil-military relations, and problems of tactical control in insurgent organizations.[23] Here we use it to frame our discussion of vulnerabilities within the al-Qa'ida network, many of which are revealed by captured jihadi documents in the Harmony database. Understanding why groups face preference divergence, and when preference divergence creates operational challenges, facilitates government actions intended to exacerbate internal organizational problems of the terrorists. Doing so multiplies the impact of other counterterrorism efforts.

The remainder of this section looks at two specific areas of conflict within terrorist groups: resource allocation and tactics. In the first area, agency problems create inefficiencies in how resources are allocated. Methods to mitigate these problems create operational vulnerabilities. Thus, groups face a security-efficiency tradeoff. In the second area, agency problems lead to cells undertaking politically suspect behaviors. Groups can mitigate this by exercising tighter control, which reduces group security. Thus, groups face a trade-off between security and control. In both cases, there are a number of actions that governments can take to make the trade-off harder for the terrorists.

Why Preference Divergence?

Open-source analyses of terrorist organizations generally begin from the perspective that members of these groups are uniformly motivated by the cause, are equally willing to sacrifice for the cause, agree on what the cause is, and see eye-to-eye on the best tactics to achieve their strategic end.[24] However, substantial evidence has accumulated to indicate this is not the case. The Harmony documents reveal a surprising level of infighting and conflict, even within highly capable groups such as al-Qa'ida (Al Adl Letter, Harmony AFGP-2002-600080). Historically, terrorist groups have repeatedly

---

[22] David M. Kreps, *A Course in Microeconomic Theory* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990). Chapters 16 & 17 provide an excellent general development of agency theory.

[23] On civil military relations, see: Peter D. Feaver, *Armed Servants: Agency, Oversight, and Civil-Military Relations* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003). On problems of tactical control in insurgent organizations, see: Scott G. Gates, "Recruitment and Allegiance: The Microfoundations of Rebellion." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 46(1): 111-130. On motivations for violence against civilians by insurgent organizations, see: Lucy Hovil and Eric Werker, "Portrait of a Failed Rebellion: An account of rational, sub-optimal violence in western Uganda." *Rationality and Society* 17, no. 1 (2005): 5-34.

[24] The following are examples of this approach. William F. Weschler and Lee S. Wolosky, "Terrorist Financing: Report of an Independent Task Force Sponsored by the Council on Foreign Relations," (Council on Foreign Relations, 2002); "Report on Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing Typologies," (Paris: Financial Action Task Force, 2004); Jean-Charles Brisard, "Terrorism Financing: Roots and Trends of Saudi Terrorism Financing," Report Prepared for the President of the United Nations Security Council (New York: JCB Consulting, 2002); and "The Jemaah Islamiyah Arrests and the Threat of Terrorism," White Paper (Singapore: Ministry of Home Affairs, 2003).

splintered into different factions because of differences of opinion about how to conduct the struggle. For example, the Irish Republican Army has spawned at least 6 splinter groups since the mid-1970s, including the Provisional IRA, Official IRA, Real IRA, Continuity IRA, Irish National Liberation Army (INLA), and the Catholic Reaction Force (CRF). Several documents from our sample provide additional evidence to suggest that the cohesion of Islamist terrorist groups is similarly tenuous. The Harmony documents reveal strong evidence of significant disagreements over strategic focus and conflicts over arcane points of doctrine.[25] We next examine why there is such divergence in preferences over spending and tactics.

Preference Divergence over Spending

The primary cause of preference divergence over spending is a natural selection process that occurs over the course of terrorists' career paths. Within the population of new terrorist recruits, there is a distribution of commitment to the cause.[26] Even though all may seem quite committed to us, some are always more willing to sacrifice than others.[27] Over the course of many years in the jihad, the most committed members are the most likely to volunteer for risky or inherently fatal assignments. As members of a cohort move into finance and logistics oriented positions, the proportion of less committed members will increase because those more committed remain in comparatively more dangerous assignments and are more prone to be selected out of the population. Note that terrorist organizations typically use individuals who have been around for some time to handle logistical and management tasks.[28] What this career progression means is that, on average, those handling financial and logistical tasks will be more risk-averse and less committed than the leadership or rank-and-file.

These selection dynamics are exacerbated by the fact that participants in terrorist support networks face dramatically lower levels of risk than tactical operatives. Beyond not being asked to participate in risky or inherently fatal ventures, they are less likely to

[25] See for example Harmony AFGP-2002-600053.

[26] Here, a more discrete notion of commitment to the cause is useful. We can array potential supports or a group along a seven-point scale running from –3 to 3. Those at –3 are die-hard supporters of the terrorist group, willing to sacrifice everything. Those at 3 are die-hard supporters of the government. Those at 0 are neutral between the sides. We believe individuals' roles within the network are highly correlated with their level of commitment. Senior leadership and operational elements are at –3, and can only be selected out by violent action i.e. captured or killed. Individuals filling logistical and outreach roles will generally be at –2. Tacit supporters of a group, those who attended training camps in Afghanistan as a kind of summer holiday, can be placed at –1 on this scale. The lower an individual's commitment, the greater the additional inducements required for them to take a given level of risk. This variation in commitment requires different mechanisms for selecting out individuals or shifting them "right" along the spectrum of commitment to the cause. For a full treatment of this idea, see Roger Petersen, *Resistance and Rebellion: Lessons From Eastern Europe*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, Studies in Rationality and Social Change, 2001).

[27] For example, those who facilitate suicide bombings in Iraq are not so committed as to send their own children to conduct attacks. See Aparisim Ghosh, "Professor of Death," *Time* (17 October 2005).

[28] The logic for groups is simple. Those who've been around know the business, but are also more likely to be known to government, and so are less likely to be able to successfully conduct operations. On the IRA, see Horgan and Taylor (1997). On Hamas, see Shaul Mishal and Avraham Sela, *The Palestinian Hamas* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000).

be dealt with by government forces. When they are dealt with, support personnel are less likely to be killed. And when arrested, they face more lenient treatment. Using biographical and network data on 366 members of al-Qa'ida and affiliated groups, we found that financiers' have rarely been killed and that their survival rate has been consistently better than that of operators.[29] The capture rate for financiers also tends to be lower than that faced by tactical operatives.

When governments do succeed in capturing logisticians and other support network members, they face dramatically lower consequences than operators. Only one of the 32 financiers and logisticians removed from the global Salafi jihad between January 2001 and December 2003 was killed. A particularly telling example is the Jemmaah Islamiyah cell which was broken up in Singapore in late 2001. The cell provided fund-raising services to JI and was engaged in making logistical arrangements for an al-Qa'ida attack in Singapore. Of the 30-plus people arrested, the 13 engaged in direct logistical support each received two years in prison.[30] Those engaged in fundraising activities were released but not permitted to leave the country.[31] This risk differential exacerbates the selection effects, as those who take operational jobs because they are extremely committed are more likely to be removed. This process makes it even more likely that those tasked with managing funds and distributing them to operational cells will have different preferences than the leadership.

Even without this adverse selection process, there is reason to expect preference divergence. The lenient treatment observed for support network members means that the threshold level of risk acceptance and commitment required for participation in support activities is much lower than for participation in tactical roles. Thus, individuals with a given level of commitment might participate in support activities while balking at other roles within the organization. Seeking to maximize operational capability, terrorist groups would concentrate such individuals in support roles, freeing up the true believers for riskier operational duties. These personnel decisions would then lead to consistent variance between levels of the organization.

Harmony documents suggest al-Qa'ida has formally encouraged such preference divergence within their ranks early on in the accessions and recruitment process. For example, one captured document describes the roles and responsibilities of the various committees al-Qa'ida members can serve on. In this document the Military Committee lists the following goals: *Preparation of freedom fighting young men, their training, and organizing them for combat; Organization and supervision for combat participation on the battlefield; Preparation of programs and military procedures; Offering what is needed of military mechanics for combat.* Compare this with the four listed goals of the Administrative and Financial Committee included in the same document: *Offering the best of administrative services for all the group members and their families; Undertake*

[29] Data generously provided by Marc Sageman. Used originally in Marc Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004).
[30] A corollary to this line of argument is that lenient punishment for financiers may not be bad as it creates the conditions for inefficiency and conflict in terrorist organizations.
[31] Maria A. Ressa, *Seeds of Terror* (New York: Free Press, 2003): 158-160.

the work of hospitality for the guests of different kinds in the most generous possible manner of hospitality; Undertaking the work of accounting, keeping books on the front, which safeguards the group's general funds; Undertaking the financial work for the group.[32] Clearly, the preferences of individuals attracted to supporting requirements such as "providing hospitality" and "keeping books" are likely to differ substantively from those who select into positions responsible for organization and supervision for combat participation on the battlefield.

Groups may even refrain from centrally-directed personnel movements because they create connections between cells, yet still suffer preference divergence. Because of security considerations, some terrorist organizations recruit directly into specific positions with little opportunity for movement. Terrorist organizations often fill positions using a strategy of recruitment through existing social ties.[33] Any member tasked with the recruitment and early ideological training of potential members will have access to a limited population. From this population, he will need to fill various spots. Commitment to a group's ideology follows a bell-shaped distribution—with the purely ideological or purely venal individuals being rarer than those who place moderate weight on the cause—meaning that it will be harder for the recruiter to find potential tactical operatives than logisticians. Unless the recruiter knows a huge number of potential members, he will place individuals in the riskiest position they will accept. Thus, individuals will rarely be more ideologically motivated than is necessary given the risk level of their occupation, leading to preference divergence by position.

Preference Divergence Over Tactics

The causes of preference divergence over tactics in terrorist organizations are somewhat more straightforward, stemming from the very nature of terrorist operations. The first cause is that people who are good at violence, who make ideal recruits as far as their ability to conduct operations, often seek more violence than is politically desirable.[34] For example, al-Qa'ida in Mesopotamia's campaign of beheadings in 2004 significantly damaged the foreign insurgents' reputation among Iraqi Sunnis.[35] Early Marxist militants were the first to document this problem. Lenin and others noted repeatedly that those recruited for their ability to conduct military operations often pushed for such activities even when not politically advantageous.[36] In like fashion, the PIRA suffered repeated problems with Active Service Units (ASU), made up of combat specialists, pushing for

[32] Harmony AFGP-2002-000078 and Harmony AFGP-2002-000080 list various roles individuals can aspire to within these committees along with job descriptions and compensation.

[33] *Groupe Salafiste pour la Prédication et le Combat* (GSPC), an Algerian terrorist organization, uses just such a recruitment system in expatriate Algerian communities in France. See Mohamed Sifaoui's journalistic account of his penetration of a GSPC fundraising and recruiting cell in Paris, in Mohamed Sifaoui, *Inside Al-Qa'ida: How I Infiltrated the World's Deadliest Terrorist Organization* (New York: Thunder's Mouth Press, 2003).

[34] Jemaah Islamiyah has suffered numerous problems of this type related to recruitment of *preman*, career criminals, to fill out its paramilitary units. International Crisis Group, "Jemaah Islamiyah in South East Asia: Damaged but Still Dangerous." *ICG Asia Report* 63 (2003).

[35] Zawahiri letter.

[36] Newell, David Allen. 1981. *The Russian Marxist Response to Terrorism: 1878-1917*. PhD Dissertation, Stanford University. 262-3, 267, 269-272, and others.

violence when the organization as a whole wanted to lay low. There is something of a trap here for organizations that adopt limited non-terrorist uses of violence in response to government pressure. Such organizations are often forced to adopt more violent tactics than the strategic situation demanded in order to retain the allegiance of their most radical cells.[37] This trap also affected Italian and German left wing militants. These groups' dependence on violent factions for survival, given the tactics of state police, pushed them into higher levels of violence against civilians, even when such violence was not politically ideal.[38]

The second cause of preference divergence over tactics is that the cognitive dynamics of an underground organization—isolation from the outside, negative physical incentives to external contacts, excessively strong affective ties, and the like—mean that operational cells often become divorced from reality, seeking to do more violence than those removed from the situation would like.[39] Islamist groups suffered deeply because of this problem in Syria, where Harmony documents reveal local cells repeatedly made attacks that the outside leadership opposed.[40] The Italian Red Brigades suffered this problem as well. Over time the group had to devote an ever-larger portion of its energies to attacks that appealed only to the membership, attacks that were costly in terms of outside support.[41] In larger groups, where the leadership is organizationally isolated from operational cells, or where it is geographically separated from them, these cognitive dynamics will lead to preference divergence between leaders and operators.[42]

Finally, competition for prominence within a movement often leads to more violence then political leaders would like. Here, the best example is the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Hamas began promoting terrorist events largely due to competition with the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ), even though such actions ran counter to the preferences of the larger Muslim Brotherhood movement.[43] Before the second *intifada*, suicide missions were intended to undermine not only the peace process but also the legitimacy of Palestinian Authority.[44] After November 2000, in the second *intifada*, Hamas and other radical organizations relied on the success of suicide missions as a key to gaining popular

---

[37] Newell (1985).

[38] Donatella della Porta, *Social Movements, Political Violence, and the State: A comparative analysis of Italy and Germany* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

[39] For a summary of these dynamics informed by the Northern Ireland case see J. Bowyer Bell, "Revolutionary Dynamics: The Inherent Inefficiencies of the Underground," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 2 (1990): 193-211.

[40] Harmony AFGP-2002-600080.

[41] Della Porta (1985), 120, 174.

[42] Harmony AFGP-2002-600080 highlights this well in the context of the Syria as does the Zawahiri letter dated June 2005.

[43] Mishal and Sela (2000).

[44] Mia M. Bloom, *Dying to Kill* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005). Mia M. Bloom, "Palestinian Suicide Bombing: Public Support, Market Share, and Outbidding," *Political Science Quarterly*, 119, no. 1 (2004): 61-88. See also, Matthew Levitt, "Hamas Social Welfare: In the Service of Terror," in *The Making of a Terrorist (Vol. 1: Recruitment),* edited by James J.F. Forest (Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2005); and R. Kim Cragin, "Learning to Survive: The Case of the Islamic Resistence Movement (Hamas)," in *Teaching Terror: Strategic and Tactical Learning in the Terrorist World*, edited by James J.F. Forest (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield; forthcoming, May 2006).

support. Fatah then invested in suicide attacks to stem the growing popularity on the street of Hamas rather than to win concessions from Israel. It was therefore the dynamics of the factionalized internal politics within the Palestinian movement that prompted suicide missions.[45] In essence, the Palestinian Authority could only reestablish its authority by showing the population that it could play the suicide mission game. However, as the subsequent destruction of Palestinian Authority resources by Israel shows, this was tremendously counter-productive with respect to larger political goals.

So we see three internal dynamics leading to preference divergence over tactics: (1) individuals recruited because of their skills in violence will tend to seek more action than leaders would prefer; (2) cognitive dynamics of underground organizations will lead operational units to see the world differently than their leaders; and (3) competition for prominence within the movement will lead factions to engage in politically unnecessary actions. All three result in agency problems.

How Groups Respond to Preference Divergence

This analysis reveals a number of terrorist group strategies for responding to agency problems, all of which create specific security vulnerabilities—the type of tradeoff we highlight throughout this report. One strategy applies primarily to the handling of funds, while other strategies apply more generally.

Providing funds only on a need-to-have basis is a very effective way in which principals can prevent less-committed individuals from taking advantage of their control over funds. The Embassy bombings in Africa, the Bali bombings, and the 9/11 attacks were funded in this fashion, with operators receiving a certain amount of funds, burning through it, and having to request more from the central leaders. By increasing the frequency of transfers and reducing their size, leaders build up better knowledge about the nature of the relationship between what they spend and the success rate they observe. This reduces the scope of what the agents can get away with. However, because each additional transfer entails communications and financial transactions, there is a security cost to this strategy.

Auditing strategies are another option for developing better information about what agents are doing. This entails requiring agents to provide periodic, detailed reports on their activities, as al-Qa'ida used to do.[46] These reports effectively make it easier for leaders to know when their agents are behaving differently than they would like. However, this additional efficiency comes at the cost of additional communications traffic, which entails an increased risk of compromise. To the extent that groups believe

[45] Luca Ricolfi, "Palestinians, 1981-2003." In *Making Sense of Suicide Missions* edited by Diego Gambetta (London: Oxford University Press, 2005): 77-129.

[46] These communications were revealed in great detail on the hard drive of Ayman al-Zawahiri's laptop, which was purchased in a Kabul computer shop by Wall Street Journal reporter Alan Cullison shortly after the fall of Kabul. For summaries, see the series of four *Wall Street Journal* articles by Alan Cullison and Andrew Higgins on 20 December 2001, 30 December 2001, 31 December 2001, and 16 January 2001.

they have secure communications channels, these strategies will be more likely to be employed.

Punishing agents who do not behave as the principals would like depends on both identifying such behavior and being able to wield a threat over agents. There are both efficiency and security costs to using punishment. The efficiency cost is that engaging in punishment diverts resources from the struggle. For example, as Hezbollah moved into Southern Lebanon in the early 1980s, it encountered efforts by Israeli proxies to penetrate the organization, and had to create a security bureaucracy to police the organization. While this provided better security, it diverted significant resources from the struggle with Israel. The security challenge is that punished agents can always follow the example of Jamal Ahmed Al Fadl and go to the government. This security cost is especially hard for transnational groups who have agents in areas where they lack operational capabilities, and hence the means to violently punish their agents.

Another common way to deal with agency problems is to encourage members to enter into trust-inducing relationships such as marriage within their group.[47] Those who enter into marriages within the movement face a larger cost if they are caught behaving against their leaders' wishes. Not only do they lose a future income stream, but familial and community connections as well. Such a strategy is central to the success of the *hawala* funds transfer system.[48] Of course, if a member embedded in a dense network of strong ties is captured, myriad opportunities for compromise are created. A second problem for terrorists groups whose members live far away is that they will enter into close relationships outside the network which can dilute commitment, as competing social costs become important. This dynamic was observed in the Syrian case, as the foreign jihadis who married locals often lost their motivation and left the struggle.[49] Thus, government counterterrorism efforts naturally involve scrutiny and attention toward a terrorist's personal and social network—attention which creates security vulnerabilities for the group. For example, Hamas had to cut ties with a generation of trusted, experienced operational leaders because they were easily traced.[50]

Terrorist leaders may also reduce preference divergence by requiring initiation rights that either prove their members' commitment or make it hard to leave the group. The Japanese Red Army followed this strategy, making prospective members commit violent crimes.[51] Some accounts suggest that the training program in Afghanistan served as such

---

[47] For example, JI recruits within existing social networks and encourages intermarriage among members' families. "Al-Qaeda in Southeast Asia: The Case of the Ngruki Network in Indonesia," in *Indonesia Briefing* (International Crisis Group, 2002). See also "Jemaah Islamiyah in South East Asia: Damaged but Still Dangerous," and Zachary Abuza, "Education and Radicalization: Jemaah Islamiyah Recruitment in Southeast Asia," in *The Making of a Terrorist (Vol. 1: Recruitment),* edited by James J.F. Forest (Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2005)

[48] Lisa C. Caroll, "Alternative Remittance Systems Distinguishing Sub-Systems of Ethnic Money Laundering in Interpol Member Countries on the Asian Continent," (Interpol, 2004).

[49] Harmony AFGP-2002-600080.

[50] Mishal and Sela (2000).

[51] Sun-Ki Chai, "An Organizational Economics Theory of Antigovernment Violence." *Comparative Politics* 26, no. 1 (1993).

a screening process for al-Qa'ida.[52] The problem for groups is that these strategies create predicate offenses that can identify individuals to the government. Former trainees in Afghanistan have received significant scrutiny around the world, with those who evince even tangential ties being arrested in the United States.[53] The lengthy ideological debates that are a critical part of the recruiting process in European Islamic expatriate communities fulfill this function. Indeed, lengthy ideological discussions are an old screening tactic of militant organizations, one practiced by GSPC, the Red Brigades, ETA, and others. However, this strategy may weed out people with useful skills who do not have the patience for lengthy doctrinal debates.

Overall, strategies to reduce agency problems entail security costs. It is vital for government counterterrorism officials to identify ways for raising theses costs.

The Difficult Challenge of Balancing Security with Efficiency and Control

Organizations configure themselves and operate in ways that maximize their utility. For businesses, this utility is normally measured by profit. For terrorist organizations, it is most accurately determined by political impact. The maximum political impact a terrorist group can have is constrained by the security environment in which it operates, the efficiency with which it disburses its resources and the degree to which it can control its members.

As introduced earlier, terrorist organizations face two tradeoffs that create internal discord. The *security-efficiency tradeoff* creates conflicts over spending when three conditions exist: (1) preferences over spending are not perfectly aligned;[54] (2) principals cannot perfectly monitor their agents' uses of money or cannot credibly punish them; and (3) resources are constrained so that leaders won't just accept the financial inefficiencies created by agency problems.

The *security-control tradeoff* creates conflict over tactics when three similar conditions are present: (1) preferences over tactics are not perfectly aligned, so that some agents want to attack different targets or want to conduct more or fewer attacks than leaders want; (2) principals cannot perfectly monitor their agents' tactical planning and cannot wield a threat of violence over them; and (3) political goals are being placed at risk by the freelancing of operational elements. Under either of these sets of conditions, terrorist organizations will face significant internal tension.

These tradeoffs are illustrated in Figure 1 below. This figure places the level of security on the y-axis, and the level of efficiency or control on the x-axis.[55] Given the

[52] "Testimony of FBI Agent John Anticev on Odeh," *United States of America v. Usama bin Laden, et. al.,* 5 (7) 98 Cr. 1023, 27 February 2001, 1630-1638. See also Brian Michael Jenkins, *Countering Al-Qa'ida* (Santa Monica: RAND, 2002), 5.

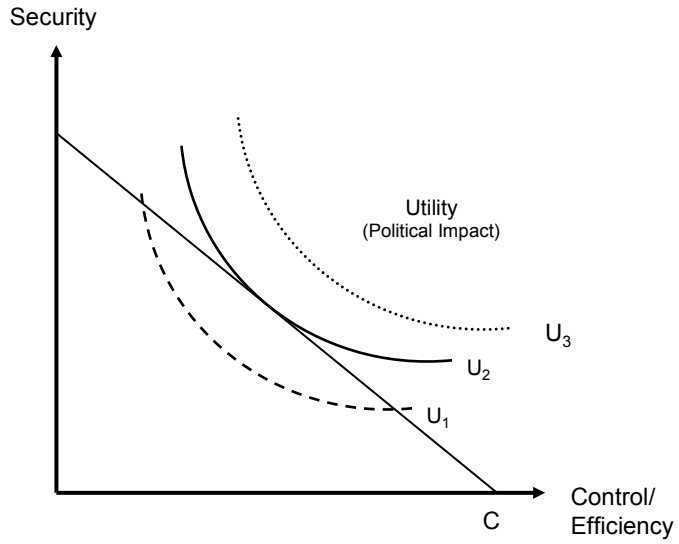
[53] See for example the arrest and prosecution of the Lackwanna Six.

[54] For example, some middlemen want to take a larger cut for themselves than is authorized.

[55] Control and financial efficiency have important distinctions. Placing them here does not imply they are the same but that the potential utility available to terrorist groups in terms of political impact is

level of government security pressure, and the level of preference divergence within a group, we can define a line expressing the feasible security-control tradeoffs. This line, labeled C, starts at the maximum level of security, achieved when the leadership has no control over operations and is decreasing to the maximum level of control or efficiency where a group is operating openly with no security or without any concern for fiscal accountability respectively.

Figure 1: The Security-Efficiency Tradeoff



There is a set of tradeoffs between security and efficiency as well as security and control that are acceptable given the level of discrimination in the use of violence that groups must exercise to achieve their political goals. These tradeoffs define a series of indifference curves where the nature of this tradeoff is represented by the shape of the dashed, solid, dotted curves (U_1, U_2, U_3) presented on the chart.[56] Higher curves—those moving "up" and "right" in this graph—mean greater utility measured in terms of political impact.[57] The terrorists, seeking greater political impact, will prefer to increase their security, control and efficiency—move towards U_3, the dotted line indifference curve as shown here. Government efforts intended to degrade terrorist capacity can do so by reducing security, control and/or efficiency—moving the group "down" to U_1, the

determined by the possible combination of security and control as well as the possible combinations of security and financial efficiency—both depicted in this case by line C.

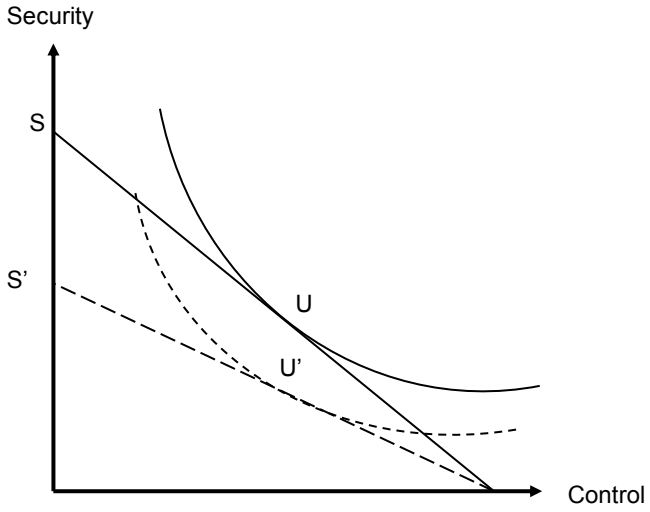
[56] The following development is similar to an analysis of the choices a firm has to make when allocating resources between two producing two goods.

[57] Although not necessarily more attacks since too much violence can be damaging.

dashed line indifference curve, and its corresponding reduction in potential political impact.

Government agencies can impact both ends of C. Interventions that reduce the level of security for the terrorist group will force them to accept lesser utility given their preferences for maintaining control and financial efficiency. Figure 2 below depicts this in graphic form. Here the government has taken actions that reduce the maximum feasible level of security from S to S', and the group has had to respond by moving to a lower indifference curve—U'.

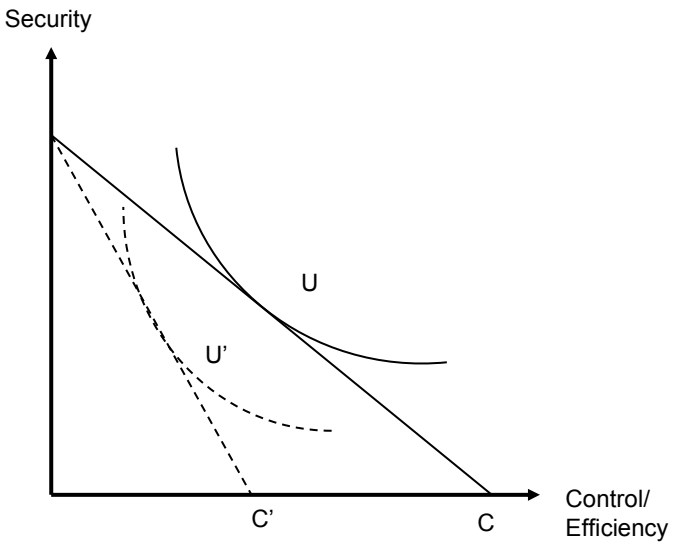
Figure 2: The Impact of Constraining Organizational Security



Alternatively, a government can encourage agency problems that reduce terrorist groups' ability to control its operatives or finance its operations. Reducing either or both of these shifts down the maximum possible level of political impact for the terrorist group. This dynamic is represented in Figure 3 below. In this case, the line C represents the possible combinations of security and control, or security and efficiency that a terrorist group can choose from before government intervention.

Here, the line C′ represents the case where government has taken actions to reduce the level of control its leaders can exercise, such as by increasing internal dissension within the group. As demonstrated in this illustration, the best feasible tradeoff for the group has shifted down from U to U', meaning the group has less capability to achieve political impact. Now the group has to accept much less control than before in order to maximize political impact. A similar tradeoff occurs when the government degrades terrorist groups' financial efficiency and forces them to accept lesser utility measured in terms of political impact.

Figure 3: The Impact of Constraining Organizational Control



The key intuition represented in these examples is that government actions to make the security environment harder reduce the feasible level of political impact for terrorists. Government actions and environmental changes that increase preference divergence and challenge the control and financial efficiency within terrorist groups have a similar effect. Exactly how these changes will alter groups' optimal tradeoff between security and control, or between security and financial efficiency, will depend on the exact shape of their indifference curves. These will vary across groups for numerous reasons such as . In the concluding section of this analysis, we will use this framework to suggest a number of actions to make the terrorists' organizational challenges harder. Doing so will reduce their ability to conduct attacks and achieve their desired political impact.

Back to table of contents

Al-Qa'ida: Back to the Future
The Vanguard and Muslim Brotherhood Operations in Syria

Back to table of contents

> *The lessons from the Syrian experience should be studied and analyzed by us and by others who choose to follow this path; it is of tremendous value to our brethren in other countries who choose to hoist the jihad banner. The Muslim arena is similar in all countries, the enemy is the same, the battle is the same, the circumstances of war may or may not be the same, Allah knows best, Allah guides our path and grants us success.*
>
> — Abu Mus'ab Al-Suri[58]

Harmony document AFGP-2002-600080 recounts al-Qa'ida's "lessons learned" from the Syrian jihad. It articulates the organization's failure to balance the need for operational security with financial efficiency and tactical control. The experiences of the Muslim Brotherhood and the al-Tali'a al-Muqatila[59] (The Fighting Vanguard) in Syria from 1976-1982 provide a textbook case of an organization that initially possessed little awareness of the agency problem that in retrospect likely doomed the effort from the start.

This section begins with a brief history of the Muslim Brotherhood followed by specifics of the conflict in Syria. Next we address al-Qa'ida's "lessons learned" in Syria as outlined in Harmony AFGP-2002-600080, which we believe is the work of Abu Mus'ab al-Suri (the *nom de guerre* of Mustafa Setmariam Nasar). In this document, he details a series of salient points that are meant to transmit the experience of what he terms the first generation mujahadeen (those who fought the global jihad in the time of the Syrian conflict) to the third generation mujahadeen (those who fight currently). Finally, we apply organizational and agency theory to understand these "lessons learned," and compare the Syrian experience to Abu Musab al-Zarqawi's current efforts in Iraq.

The History of the Muslim Brotherhood

The history of the Muslim Brotherhood is replete with examples of preference divergence and factionalism. The Muslim brotherhood sprang from Muslims' increasing disenchantment with Arab Nationalism and a perceived void in Political Islam after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the last caliphate. The Muslim Brotherhood was founded in 1928 by Hassan al-Bannah, an Egyptian schoolteacher from a small town in the Nile Delta, as a small social club. Bannah sought to form an "Islamic System" that would gradually reform civic, social, family, and educational organizations, which he believed had been torn apart by Western secularism (non-religiosity) and materialism.[60]

---

[58] This quote is from Harmony AFGP-2002-600080.
[59] Harmony translates al-Tali'a al-Muqatila (The Fighting Vanguard) as "Attilea," which appears to be a phonetic transcription. We use the term al-Tali'a in this chapter to insure consistency with other sources.
[60] Ghassan Salame, "Islam and the West" *Foreign Policy* 90 (Spring 1993): 24

This movement originally did not advocate the overthrow of national governments and was in fact very supportive of the nationalist ideology that was popular at the time.

The movement gained traction quickly among college students and young professionals. Anti-western sentiment began to increase dramatically in Egypt by the end of WWII largely because of British troop presence and increased exposure to Western ideas resulting from Egypt's economic expansion. With the increased focus on the West, the group became increasingly radicalized and established a small militant wing known as the Secret Apparatus. Guerillas from this group reportedly fought against Israel in 1948.

Although Bannah's approach was measured, his goals were perceived as radical by the government. Fearing the Brotherhood was becoming a state within a state, the Egyptian government outlawed the organization and assassinated Bannah. The Brotherhood revived in 1950, and some of its members ran in elections by registering as independents. In 1952, army officers led by Gamal Abdel Nasser seized control of the Egyptian government and legalized the Brotherhood, only to ban it again in 1954. The Secret Apparatus retaliated by trying to assassinate Nasser, who responded by deporting or imprisoning and executing many fundamentalists.

Nasser's imprisonment of fundamentalists during the 1960s had the unintended result of further radicalizing the fundamentalists. The relationship between the Egyptian government and the Muslim Brotherhood continued to ebb and flow. Just before the Six Day War in 1967, Egyptian authorities attempted to recruit inmates for the *jihad* against Israel. Members of the Muslim Brotherhood in the notorious Abu Za'bal prison camp expressed unrelenting support for the *jihad* and resolved to fight. A small group of inmates refused, however. They were led by Sheikh 'Ali Abduh Isma'il and believed that the state of Egypt was apostate and so were its supporters. The group was turned over to prison authorities and isolated from the rest of the prison community. Eventually, they were returned to the general population, but chose to keep to themselves and refused to associate with Muslim Brotherhood inmates. This was one of the first cleavages between the core membership of the Muslim Brotherhood and those who were becoming increasingly radicalized. This splinter group would eventually evolve into Takfir w'al Hijra, a group that more closely resembled a religious cult than a politically motivated terrorist group.

The defeat of the Arab armies by Israel in 1967 marked the beginning of the end for pan-Arab nationalism. Many fundamentalists viewed the defeat as the ultimate failure of corrupt governments that had attempted to show strength in the struggle against Zionism. The Israeli victory in 1967 reordered the priorities of radical groups. Instead of focusing on retaliation against Israel, they began to turn inward towards Arab society, to fight the "*jahiliyya* within." *Jahiliyya* refers to a state of ignorance—specifically, Arab culture prior to God's Koranic revelations to Mohammed. The radicals attracted new recruits from those who were turning to terrorist organizations and schools for answers to the societal trauma caused by the Arab defeat. This was a significant departure from previous thinking. In May 1965, a month before his death, the famed Muslim Brotherhood leader

Sayyid Qutb met with other leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood to discuss future tactics. He was opposed to large-scale terrorist operations that could weaken Egypt and carry out the work of the "Zionist threat." The organization overruled him, however, and went ahead planning operations. Any of the residual feelings Qutb—and especially his followers—had with regards to violent tactics were resolved in Cairo's military prisons. Prison guards would torture and berate the prisoners, likening them to the Jews and accusing them of being a greater threat to Arab society than Israel. Thus, the first generation of what Sivan calls the "New Radicals" was born.[61]

The New Radicals movement was less a cohesive operational organization than it was a collection of ideologically similar national groups with no overall leadership. National decentralization of the groups also occurred, leading to the fragmentation of the New Radicals into many small groups and factions. The theological justification was based on 14th century theologian Ibn Taymiyya's writings regarding the necessity of having many imams when there are many Islamic states. However, ideological differences and decentralization led to fights among (and even within) the new groups.

The Muslim Brotherhood in Syria

It was during this same period that a parallel development involving one of these factions transpired in Syria. Similar to Egypt, Syria was experiencing a growing conflict between Islamic groups and a nationalist regime in the 1940s. Initially, this conflict was mainly non-violent, but after the Ba'ath party took power in 1963, the conflict between secular Ba'athists and the Muslim Brotherhood escalated. Beginning with the anti-Ba'athist sermons, events degenerated into riots and violence. The Muslim Brotherhood began operations to undermine the regime and increasingly radicalized sub-groups were formed. This is perhaps best exemplified by the creation of al-Tali'a al-Muqatila (The Fighting Vanguard), founded by Marwan Hadeed.[62]

In this first phase of the struggle between the Syrian Government and the Muslim Brotherhood, the radical factions were fairly unified. The Muslim Brotherhood did not always anticipate the reaction of Damascus, however, and in the wake of repeated assassinations of Ba'ath party officials, President Amin al-Haffez ordered the Army into Hama for the first time, and went so far as to authorize air raids on the Sultan Mosque, a Muslim Brotherhood enclave. Decimated by these attacks, the Muslim Brotherhood was forced to temporarily cease militant activity.

In the mid-1970s, they resumed operations against the Alawite controlled regime of Haffez al-Assad. Once again there was a failure to anticipate the threshold level of violence that could be inflicted on the government without drawing a crushing response. The Vanguard, allegedly without Muslim Brotherhood authorization, launched a series of deadly attacks, including one on the Syrian Artillery School in Aleppo that killed all the

---

[61] Emmanual Sivan, "The Clash within Islam" *Survival,* Vol 45, no, 1, Spring 2003, 25-44.

[62] "The Battle Within Syria: An Interview with Muslim Brotherhood Leader Ali Bayanouni" *Terrorism Monitor* III, 16 (August 2005): 8-1

Ba'athist cadets as well as many Sunnis. The prominent Sheikh Mohammad al-Shami was killed in a related attack. In an attempt to distance themselves from the attack, the Muslim Brotherhood issued a statement denying involvement and denouncing the Vanguard.[63] This did not prevent the government from responding with devastating violence. The most visible and memorable event occurred at the culmination of the conflict when the Syrian government laid siege to Hama for a second time. By this time Hama was a city of 180,000 and a center of Sunni radicalism. In February, 1982 more than 4,000 Syrian troops engaged members of al-Tali'a al-Muqatila (The Fighting Vanguard) as well as other members and supporters of the Muslim Brotherhood in bloody house-to-house fighting. When all was said and done, an estimated 5,000 civilians and insurgents were killed, along with over 1,000 troops. The city was essentially leveled in the course of the assualt.[64]

The Lessons of the 1st Generation: Failure to Manage Agency Problems

As shown in the preceding chapter, terrorist organizations face fundamental tradeoffs between operational security on the one hand, and financial efficiency and tactical control on the other. Balancing these needs is a major leadership challenge for any successful terrorist network. In the case of the Vanguard and Muslim Brotherhood in Syria, the leadership failed to understand and compensate for these agency problems and preference divergences. The tradeoff between operational security and tactical control was not effectively managed as evidenced by the following lessons learned, described in Harmony document AFGP-2002-600080:

Lack of secure communications. The movement usually used primitive, insecure communication methods. These included un-encoded messages sent by courier, regular face-to-face meetings, and unsecured phone lines. The movement had almost no wireless communication ability until the later stages of the conflict, even at the tactical level. With a lack of secure and reliable communication methods, maintaining even a minimal level of operational security required relinquishing a significant amount of tactical control. By employing more secure communications, terrorist leadership could have executed greater tactical control while still maintaining the same level of operational security. The document also notes the lack of a system for compartmentalizing information. By ensuring that all information is "need-to-know," leadership could have maintained higher tactical control *and* operational security, because a captured foot soldier or informant would only know a small part of the overall operational picture.

Ineffective military command structure. The Muslim Brotherhood and Vanguard lacked a centralized planning and strategy capability, and field commanders too often found themselves cut off from the headquarters. Although a certain level of autonomy is necessary for tactical success, this extreme situation resulted in well-intentioned commanders acting out of concert with headquarters' intent as well as a lack of proper allocation of resources on the battlefield. Although part of this decentralization was due

[63] Sami Moubayed, "The History of Political and Militant Islam in Syria" *Terrorism Monitor* III, 24 (August 2005): 6
[64] Thomas Friedman, "A Syrian City Amid Rubble of Rebellion," *New York Times,* 23 May 1982

to the communication problems discussed above, the situation is very instructive. Although the terrorist leaders enjoyed a very high level of operational security, the accompanying loss of tactical control proved extremely detrimental to the war effort.

The following examples from Harmony AFGP-2002-600080 illustrate how tradeoffs between operational security and efficient allocation and control of resources were not effectively managed in this case:

Dependence on outside sources for support. The terrorist network did not adequately predict and prepare for the costs and expenses of a high intensity conflict. The movement became dependent on erratic sources of income from such unexpected places as the Iraqi regime. Operational security was subsequently reduced as the number of incoming funding lines increased as well as the influence that donors exerted on operational goals. Had the Vanguard and Muslim Brotherhood ensured that the organization possessed sufficient funding for a continuing conflict, they could have maintained a much higher level of operational security and control. Because it proved so difficult to maintain even a minimal level of financial efficiency due to constant fund solicitation, the operational security suffered dramatically as a result.

Time in training camps inefficiently spent. The leadership "powered down" the training in camps and other locales to very low level leaders in the organization. By providing resources and then staying out of the management, operational security is maximized. However, the efficiency of the resource management, in this case those allocated for the training of recruits, suffers due to a lack of higher-level supervision. Criticisms of the training program include a lack of emphasis on physical fitness training, a lack of practical application of theoretical knowledge, a complete lack of training for vital subject areas, and an inexperienced cadre. This may have been avoided if the leadership sacrificed some operational security and ensured resources for training programs were better disbursed to meet organizational objectives.

Failure to air a consistent public relations message. The terrorist leadership utterly failed to coherently communicate the vision and goals of the movement in order to win the support of the populace. Aside from a few ineffective communiqués, there was no organized public relations campaign, leading to a situation where lower level members were the primary mouthpiece of the movement. Operational security was maximized due to the isolation of the higher-level leadership. Predictably, however, the loss of message control ensured that the public relations of the movement was ineffective. Although the Muslim Brotherhood later tried to start a public relations campaign in exile, the propaganda-like nature ensured its failure.

The Lessons of the First Generation: Strategic Failure

In addition to the agency problems and preference divergences discussed at length above, there are numerous reasons why movements, in particular insurgent/terrorist groups, experience schisms. One theory, posited by Bard O'Neil, suggests that there are seven main causes for disunity within insurgent/terrorist groups – social, political-

cultural, personal, teleological, theoretical, strategic, and tactical.[65] The movement in Syria suffered from all of these to one degree or another, but the strategic problems assume a greater significance when examined through our framework.

As highlighted in Harmony AFGP-2002-600080, the level of strategic planning was quite poor at the outset of the conflict. This problem only worsened as factionalism set in and the mujahadeen began taking heavy casualties. There are three strategic subcategories worth examining. The first is the mobilization strategy, the second is leadership strategy, and the last is political-ideological strategy.

Mobilization. One example was the failure to mobilize rural areas and focus recruitment efforts solely on urban centers. The urban poor had long been dissatisfied with the Assad regime, and members of this segment of Syria's society were considered the "low hanging fruit" in terms of recruitment. The failure to mobilize them is particularly interesting because there had been a similar failure in the 1940s when the radical anti-government clerics targeted their efforts almost exclusively at the urban poor. The president adroitly turned this strategy back on them by shutting down social welfare programs in these neighborhoods and declaring that if the people needed milk they should "go to the sheiks, let them give you milk." When the sheiks could not supply these services, the disenfranchised poor turned against them very quickly.[66]

There was a great deal of resentment in the outlying areas as well, but the mujahadeen failed to capitalize on this. Syria had long been a class-driven society, and the Ba'ath party's ascendancy had significant class implications that extended to those within the Islamist movement.[67] The Ba'ath party gained power largely on promises of land redistribution and the restructuring of Syrian society to enfranchise the poor.[68] These promises were rarely realized, which opened the door for the kind of disillusionment that the mujahadeen could have capitalized on.

The mujahadeen's failure to expand the jihad to the countryside made targeting significantly easier for the regime. The Assad government used siege tactics to wear down the insurgency. Allepo, Damascus and Hama—all major urban centers—became the battlefields in this struggle. Because the movement was so heavily concentrated in the cities, the regime had a much easier time isolating the various wings and destroying them.

It is critical for an insurgency to avoid isolation from a supportive population or containment.[69] Isolation in Syria was initially self-imposed through a poor recruitment strategy, which allowed the Syrian army to capitalize on their lack of broad public support. Had the mujahadeen employed a more diffuse recruitment strategy, they would

---

[65] Bard O'Neil, *Insurgency and Terrorism*, (Potomac Books, 2001): 101-103
[66] Sami Moubayed, "The History of Political and Militant Islam in Syria" *Terrorism Monitor* III, 16 (August 2005): 6
[67] John Galvani, "Syria and the Ba'ath Party," *Middle East Research and Information Project* Report No. 25, February 1974, 3-16
[68] John F. Devlin, "Syria: Modern State and Ancient Land" *Middle East Research and Information Project* 125/126 (July-September 1984): 61
[69] Robert Taber, *War of the Flea* (Washington, DC: Brassey, 2002) p. 163

have had a much more secure network for moving people, supplies and money into and out of cities as they fought. The decreased operational security through such a strategy would have been significantly outweighed by the increased tactical control and greatly benefited the movement in terms of the political impact of its activities.

Leadership. Leadership defines strategy. Many successful insurgencies have had a key individual leader who drew support from charismatic appeal of one form or another. Personal valor, a dynamic personality, and other laudable traits can greatly bolster an insurgent movement, though it is hard to quantify the impact of such leadership. What is safe to say is that the loss of such leadership can have an equally negative impact. Even more disastrous are public fractures within the leadership that can be amplified within the movement as a whole.

The movement in Syria suffered from both. From the beginning there were serious schisms between the field commanders and the international leadership of the Muslim Brotherhood. Marwan Hadeed—who had participated in the jihad against the Syrian government in 1965—tried to bridge these gaps, which were both internal and external to Syria. Within Syria, there were fractures between the Vanguard and the Muslim Brotherhood, and within the Brotherhood itself there were regional fractures between the cells in Damascus, Allepo, and Hama. Several key leaders tried to forge more cohesive ties. Marwan Hadeed and Adnan Akla both had limited success, but were ultimately stymied—the latter by unilateral agreements between Iraq and the International Leadership of the Muslim Brotherhood and the former by his capture, torture and execution by the Assad regime. Adnan Akla was also eventually captured on the Syrian border. His persona had grown to such mythical proportions that when he was imprisoned, the Vanguard in Syria—now with all ties to the Muslim Brotherhood severed—could not recover.

Political-ideological. Once the political-ideological schisms started, they were exacerbated by political failures on the part of the leadership. As the leaders with the clearest understanding of the political goals of the group were killed or captured, their replacements began to operate along increasingly disparate political agendas. Adnan Akla, leader of the Vanguard, at one point declared that all who followed the Muslim Brotherhood or supported the alliance they entered into with Iraqi Ba'athists were *kufar* (infidels or heretics), even as Adnan Sadduddin declared in an interview that the members of the Iraqi Ba'ath party were true Muslims. This mixed message was not only indicative of diametrically opposed political stances, but also evidence of a burgeoning ideological fracture, which was far more troubling for the long-term prospects of radicals in Syria than diverging political views.

This growing factionalism was not unique to Syria. The various chapters of the International Organization of the Muslim Brotherhood all dealt with internal political divisions in their home nations. Adherence to a central political line began to waver. The Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood, for example, ended up providing religious justification for the Hashemite kingdom's legitimacy in exchange for concessions from the rulers.[70]

[70] Jiles Kepel, *Jihad: The Trail of Political Islam* (Harvard University Press, 2000) p. 335

Though some group members perceived these moves simply as the *realpolitik* of the Middle East, others—particularly the extreme elements—saw such actions as Faustian bargains which would ultimately corrupt the cause if left unchecked. This and other similar actions only exacerbated the divide growing within the Muslim Brotherhood.

Another leadership problem facing the mujahadeen in Syria was that power and leadership were concentrated in the hands of a few, creating a considerable amount of cronyism that eventually eroded the quality of the leadership throughout the movement. Harmony AFGP-2002-600080 delves into this to some extent, though the author takes care not to besmirch the names of those who may have died in the jihad. This, too, harkens back to the isolation discussed in the strategy section of this report, and is a clear example of how reductions in control can lead to agency problems. The movement was simultaneously isolated and factionalized, and so leaders tended to circle the wagons. While this may not matter in a lower intensity environment where leader deaths or detentions are somewhat infrequent, it most likely will cause friction in a higher intensity environment such as that in Syria.

The problems triggered by this strategic disunity are deeply intertwined with the tactical problems. In the jihadist insurgent movement there are often few degrees of separation between those controlling strategy and those executing tactics, especially relative to more traditional models such as the nation-state or state-sponsored terrorist groups. Thus in the case of the Muslim Brotherhood and the Vanguard in Syria, several tactical decisions had dire strategic consequences. One of these was the decision to assault the Syrian Artillery School in Allepo in 1979, a decision made entirely by the Vanguard and ultimately disavowed by the Muslim Brotherhood.[71]

The Third Generation: Applying Syria's Lessons to Iraq

The existence of a formal third generation of jihadists is debatable, but there is some evidence that they exist and are now fighting in Iraq. A recent study of the posted list of names on al-Qa'ida in Iraq websites shows that only about 5% of those slain in Iraq have previous mujahadeen experience and that their average age is 27.[72] In the recently discovered and declassified letter from Zawahiri to Zarqawi, there are several allusions to the generational nature of the jihad and the importance of handing over the fighting to this new generation.[73]

This generation appears to have learned some of the lessons discussed in AFGP-2002-600080, while others seem to have been disregarded. The final portion of this case study focuses on three recurring problems mentioned in Harmony AFGP-2002-600080 that appear to be continuing problems for the insurgency in Iraq.

---

[71] Mahan Abedin, "The Battle Within Syria: An Interview with Muslim Brotherhood Leader Ali Bayanouni" *Terrorism Monitor* III, 16 (August 2005): 8

[72] Murad al-Shashani, "Abu Mus'ab al-Suri and the Third Generation of Salafi-Jihadists" *Terrorism Monitor* III, 16 (August 2005): 1

[73] Letter from Ayman al-Zawahiri to Abu Musab al-Zarqawi declassified in October 2005 and available at http://www.dni.gov/release_letter_101105.html

Ideological and Religious Indoctrination

The author of Harmony AFGP-2002-600080 spends a good deal of time discussing the problems among the mujahadeen in Syria due to insufficient indoctrination. Clearly, al-Qa'ida learned from this and did not make this mistake in Afghanistan in the 1990s, as they incorporated indoctrination heavily into their training regimen. Since late 2001, however, groups have been highly constrained in their ability to conduct consolidated training. Agency problems arise when principals have a difficult time controlling their agents. In the Syria case, when the training of new mujahadeen became more decentralized and was delegated out of necessity, we observed a greater variance in the quality and intensity of the indoctrination of the new recruits. There is a positive correlation between the level of ideological indoctrination and the level of control a group exerts over its members. Thus we can expect increasing agency problems going forward as newly matriculated members are increasingly less ideologically grounded.

It is very difficult to exert central control over a group like the Muslim Brotherhood except by sacrificing security. The best example of this is the use of various Salafi-Jihadist websites, which are frequently used as repositories for messages from radical clerics and ideologues. The websites are then accessed by operational cells, thereby ensuring some degree of homogeneity in the global jihadi message, even though the cell may be physically quite decentralized. Here we see an example of the security-efficiency tradeoff described earlier: In order to spread centrally approved "talking points" to the scattered operational cells, the messages must be posted in a fairly accessible place. This is an efficient but inherently insecure method. If the leadership were to make more use of encryption, for instance, they would clearly reduce their vulnerability but they would also exert less centralized message control given the expectation that fewer members would ultimately access these encrypted "talking points."

Alliances of Necessity with Untrustworthy Arab Regimes

The historical precedent set when the alliance with Iraqi Ba'athists greatly undermined the Muslim Brotherhood in Syria, suggests that cooperation between jihadists and secular elements of the Iraqi insurgency will be temporary. There is certainly an alignment of short-term goals among the various components, but an insurgency—more so than any other form of warfare—is intrinsically political, and there is a high degree of dissonance between the political goals of the various groups in Iraq. Ba'athist nationalists have always held views considered heretical by al-Qa'ida. Furthermore, the Ba'athist component has goals which are more practical. Reasserting control by members loyal to the former regime, while unlikely to succeed given continued U.S. presence, is still far more achievable than restoring the caliphate, which is the ultimate goal of al- Qa'ida.[74]

The difference in the probability of success provides an opportunity to fracture the insurgency. The Sunni component of the insurgency is primarily interested in local power. By designing a package of incentives that incrementally increases political power,

[74] Ibid.

it is possible that much of the *causus belli* could be drained away from this component of the insurgency over time. Because the long term goals of al- Qa'ida are so much broader, we can achieve a market separation within the insurgency. Additionally, any acceptance of these "carrots" by the Sunnis will be seen as a betrayal by the more ideologically motivated within the movement, just as the *realpolitik* decisions of the Muslim Brotherhood ultimately isolated the Vanguard in Syria. The targeting of Shiites is likely an attempt to provoke a backlash on Sunnis that will compel moderate groups to adopt Zarqawi's more extreme positions.[75] Countering this will be a tremendous challenge. The coalition's tenuous peace with the Shia militias makes managing their outrage appear almost impossible. Nevertheless, providing political insurgents access to the political process, coupled with mitigating the security impact to them of political failure, while simultaneously urging Shia restraint in the face of Zarqawi's provocations, seems the best policy option.

Command Structure

As in the Syria case, there is a growing gulf between the central al-Qa'ida leadership and those engaged in close combat. Al-Qa'ida's central authority has been heavily disrupted and been reduced largely to providing ideological leadership in the form of frequent messages. There is a palpable degree of discomfort with this detachment from the field commanders, such as Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, when one reads documents like the recently declassified letter from al-Zawahiri.[76] The undercurrent within this letter seems eerily similar to the situation described in Harmony AFGP-2002-600080, where the author describes the increasing tensions between the leadership within the country and the foreign leadership. Again, this can be examined using agency theory framework. The preferences of al-Qa'ida's central leaders and Zarqawi, while always a source of tension, are diverging in new and important ways. This is evident in the shifting tactics and targeting of attacks and corroborated in the captured documents and correspondence. This preference divergence will almost certainly continue to grow, and the agency problems associated with this divergence have an increasingly deleterious impact on al-Qa'ida's capability to centrally direct future operations.

In fact, this may have already occurred. In October 2004, al-Qa'ida publicly released a letter from *al-Tawhid wa'l Jihad* (Tawhid refers to the Muslim declaration of monotheism) where Zarqawi offered a *bayat* or pledge of loyalty to Osama bin Laden and al-Qa'ida. The subsequent name change to *al-Qa'ida in Iraq* reflected this new arrangement. While this relationship caused concerns within the intelligence community, it is worth noting that, by al-Qa'ida's own admission, this pledge of loyalty was the result of eight months of negotiations between Zarqawi and al-Qa'ida.[77] This bargaining process reflects the serious strategic and tactical differences which had to be reconciled

[75] Zarqawi letter captured in early 2004 after arrest of Hassan Ghul, provided by Coalition Provisional Authority at http://www.cpa-iraq.org; Gary Gambill, "Abu Musab al-Zarqawi: A Biographical Sketch," *Terrorism Monitor* II, 16 (December 2004): 1

[76] Letter from Ayman al-Zawahiri to Abu Musab al-Zarqawi declassified in October 2005 and available at http://www.dni.gov/release_letter_101105.html

[77] Zarqawi's Pledge of Allegiance to al-Qaeda from Mu'askar al-Battar, Issue 21, obtained from a translated copy by Jeffrey Pool appearing in *Terrorism Monitor* Volume II, Issue 24, 16 December 2004.

between the two groups. Undoubtedly, compromises were made by both sides, but those compromises could easily become untenable in the light of the shifting tactical situation faced by al-Qa'ida in Iraq. The June 2005 letter from Zawahiri to Zarqawi suggests that even after the *bayat* there are still latent tensions that can be exploited.

Critical examples are Zarqawi's persistent attacks against Shiites. Although these attacks reflect a policy publicly articulated long before signing on with al Qa'ida, Zawahiri's letter suggests that they are now a source of tension between the two. This separation between an operational commander and a senior leader is indicative of the kinds of agency problems that the author of Harmony AFGP-2002-600080 believes undermined the Muslim Brotherhood's efforts in Syria.

Zarqawi: Building an Ideology of Isolation

Although maintaining his loyalty to al-Qa'ida for the time being, Zarqawi's recent public statements emphasize his unwillingness to follow orders from the center. In a lecture entitled, *It is Allah Whom ye Should More Justly Fear,* Zarqawi explains his disapproval of scholars advising mujahadeen from safety far from the jihad's actual fighting.[78] Although Zarqawi defends his position in ideological terms, an unwillingness to take direction seems as much a personality trait as ideological decision. Nevertheless, Zarqawi's argument has two components: he takes orders from God, not from men, no matter how wise; and calling for jihad is not nearly as important as taking action for jihad.

There are two possible targets for Zarqawi's vitriol in his *Justly Fear* lecture. The first is Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi, Zarqawi's spiritual mentor while he was imprisoned in Jordan. The two have waged a very public debate about the acceptability of suicide bombings and attacks on Shiite civilians over the past two years. Furthermore, the tension between Maqdisi the scholar versus Zarqawi the soldier has long defined their relationship. In prison, Maqdisi—by far the more renowned scholar—took a backseat to Zarqawi as he used impassioned speeches and promises of bold action to recruit supporters. The tension between the idealism of scholars and the practicality of soldiers may be an increasing dilemma for the modern radical Islamic movement.

The second possible target is Ayman al-Zawihiri, Al Qaeda's number two leader and author of the well publicized letter to Zarqawi criticizing his attacks on Shiite civilians. Zarqawi does not explicitly identify who he is targeting in *Justly Fear*, which is odd because he has shown no qualms about using Maqdisi's name in past statements.

Despite Zarqawi's vagueness, it is likely that he is again targeting Maqdisi rather than Zawahiri. Zarqawi identifies scholars that avoid the hardships of jihad and live "in the land of infidels," a characterization that fits Maqdisi much more than what is known about Zawahiri.

[78] Posted on www.world-news-network.net. 14 October. GMP20051019520001 (Internet) Jihadist Websites – FBIS Report in Arabic 19 Oct 05

Zarqawi's critique is that scholars merely issue declarations and live far from the arena of jihad. This is important because the violent fundamentalist Islamic movement is largely tied together by ideologues able to disseminate their views using modern communications systems. Zarqawi, essentially, is arguing that this alone makes them ill-fit to be leaders of the radical militant movement. Only by sacrificing do they demonstrate their worthiness to lead the jihadist movement. Zarqawi makes his case quite explicitly:

> *Those who examine the situation of religious scholars and leaders will see that their status varies in the eyes of people according to the association between their words and their actions. People always respect the one who accompanies his words with deeds and the opposite is true…Action is more forceful than the verbose call itself.*[79]

The problem with scholars, Zarqawi argues, is that even the wisest among them are human, while the true mujahadeen should take direction only from God.

> *The members of the victorious group, although they respect the status and worth of religious scholars, do not know the truth through these scholars. They know men through the truth, since men are only a means to know the truth by stating its proof and basis. This is not because truth is known through them and therefore their words and deeds are followed. Following men, irrespective of their religious knowledge and performance, leads to the widest paths of falsehood and greatest causes of misguidance if they lack authority.*[80]

After explaining why scholars are misguided, Zarqawi begins to discuss his current situation.

> *Recently, some of our brotherly scholars, who were pioneers in the call for God's way, fell into fault and made mistakes, caused by their distance from the arenas of jihad and by the fact that they are not actually involved in jihad. Thus, their lapses were greatly advertised, and the guided news media carried them everywhere. All that was aimed at causing disunity, dissension, keeping people away from jihad, and making them hate the mujahadeen.*[81]

Zarqawi argues that scholars should not simply be thinkers; they must have knowledge of both "the rule of God and the *situation to which this opinion applies*."[82] Zarqawi rejects what he calls the term "theoretician of the Salafist Jihadist Trend," which in essence are men like al-Maqdisi who have provided the intellectual foundation for jihad but failed to fight themselves. It is not clear that Zawahiri, who has been involved at the operational level of al Qa'ida, would fall into this category.

> *This term is actually an undesirable separation between words and deeds. Scholars were throughout the ages at the forefront of the bandwagon of jihad…the theoreticians of the jihadist current were the ones who carried the Book and sword in their hands and took the front line. They led the masses and abandoned the transient pleasures of life. They preferred the reward of eternal life. They abandoned their palaces and houses and chose to live in caves and mountains. They did so to protect their religion and couple their words with deeds.*

[79] Ibid.
[80] Ibid.
[81] Ibid.
[82] Ibid.

A scholar living in the land of infidels away from the arenas of jihad and the real situation of the mujahadeen should not issue fatwas to the people on issues the least that can be said about them is that they express an independent judgment that can be interpreted differently.[83]

The destruction of al Qa'ida's Afghanistan-based hierarchy drove the movement underground and initiated a metamorphosis into the loosely-linked, ideological-based network we see today. This transition makes the movement very difficult to track, but raises critical agency problems because of the absence of a typical command structure. Particularly for agents pressured by intense operational demands, as in Iraq, we are likely to see tension between central ideological thinkers and the operational leaders on the ground.

Zarqawi and al-Tali'a: *Side by Side Comparison*

Zarqawi's unwillingness to accept direction is not the only way that AFGP-2002-600080's lessons provide perspective on Zarqawi's organization. Zarqawi's *Al-Qa'ida in Mesopotamia* most closely resembles the al-Tali'a in Syria. Both are extremist, even compared to their militant Islamic peers, and relatively small components of a multifaceted insurgency. Table 1 compares the mistakes AFGP-2002-600080 attributes to al-Tali'a and compares them to Zarqawi's performance on similar issues.

Table 1: A Comparison of al-Tali'a in Syria and Zarqawi in Iraq

al-Tali'a	Zarqawi
No prior strategic planning	**Improved.** Although little is known of Zarqawi's preparation for jihad in Iraq, his training camp in Heart, relationship with former Syrian Muslim Brotherhood operatives, and detailed planning documents indicates strategic planning.
Lack of media and political arm	**Much improved.** Zarqawi has well developed media and ideological organizations.
No clear sense of purpose and goals	**Improved.** Although not tied to specific political results, Zarqawi has developed a clear set of strategic goals based mostly around the purification of the practice of Sunni Islam.
Lack of central coordination of military operations	**Improved.** This is aided by the information revolution. At times, Zarqawi has shown the capacity to unleash devastating attacks in different regions almost simultaneously.
Inability to adjust tactics	**Improved.** Zarqawi's group has used car bombs, IEDs, ambushes, and large-scale defensive tactics as in Fallujah.
Dependence on foreign government aid	**Improved.** Unlike al-Tali'a in Syria, Zarqawi is not dependent on a foreign government suitor for weapons and money.
Inability to replenish cadres	**Improved.** Zarqawi has lost several legal and military advisors and has maintained his effectiveness.[84]
Dependence on non-locals	**Unclear**. Recent reports suggest Zarqawi is recruiting Iraqis, but the core of his original organization was not Iraqi.
Extremism—labeling other groups 'infidels'	**Poor.** Zarqawi's ideology is extremely exclusionary. He rejects tribal affiliations, Shiites, all Arab governments, and has developed major doctrinal schisms even with other Salafists. Zarqawi's extremism is likely his greatest weakness.

[83] Ibid.
[84] Examples include: Abd al-Hadi Daghlas, Khalid al-Aruri, Abu-al-Ghadiyah, and Abu Anas al-Shami

Leadership cult	**Unclear.** Zarqawi has emphasized the importance of maintaining his movement even if he is killed. He has developed into almost a legendary figure in jihadist circles, which improves his ability to generate support in death.

Zarqawi's most important improvement on al-Tali'a's model is his media operation. Unlike al-Tali'a', Zarqawi has effective media and ideological operations designed to both indoctrinate his followers for a drawn-out fight and to publicize his activities to domestic and international audiences. This will build a resilient movement and is critical for de-territorializing the Iraq conflict in order to attract non-Iraqis to the fight.

Zarqawi also has a clear set of strategic and operational goals, necessities that al-Tali'a did not possess. But, like his al-Tali'a predecessors, Zarqawi's ideological perspective is extraordinarily exclusionary. [85] Zarqawi labels Shiites, Arab governments, and all those that cooperate with secular regimes as either 'infidels' or 'apostates' and vows to fight them.

Furthermore, Zarqawi's insistence on a purely 'Islamic' perspective may prevent him from successfully exploiting the unique political opportunities posed by an occupation in an ancient, proud, and tribal society. In other words, Zarqawi's religious lens allows him to transform the war in Iraq into a struggle relevant to all Muslims, but it may limit his ability to successfully exploit the unique grievances of Iraqis. The author of AFGP-2002-600080 seems to believe that al-Tali'a's dependence on foreign logistical support was a major handicap; in Iraq, Zarqawi can easily access the materials of guerilla warfare, but depends on a universalist ideology that may create a similar dynamic for him in Iraq.

The primary limitation of Zarqawi's ideology is that it limits his ability to develop strategic relationships with different insurgent organizations. In an effort to recreate the persecution and struggle of the prophet's companions, Zarqawi recognizes and embraces the exclusionary nature of his ideology. His understanding of Islam is that it is in a continual struggle against numerically superior forces of infidels and apostates. Zarqawi likely sees widespread condemnation of his movement as a sign that his interpretation of Islam is correct.

Nevertheless, this perspective is politically limiting. Although Harmony AFGP-2002-600080 points out the danger of accepting large numbers of low quality recruits into the ranks, Zarqawi's insistence on Islamic 'purity' as he understands it is a major weakness. Harmony AFGP-2002-600080 quotes a Muslim Brotherhood cadre speaking about al-Tali'a leader Adnan Akla in a manner that could easily be used to describe Zarqawi: "I do not doubt Adnan Akla's loyalty and integrity as a leader, nor do I doubt his courage, I also have no doubt that he lacks the wisdom to benefit from those two characteristics."

As Zarqawi attempts to expand his reach beyond Iraq, his agency problems will likely increase. Within Iraq he has demonstrated a remarkable capacity to organize near simultaneous attacks in geographically separated areas. This tactical control is harder to

[85] Harmony AFGP-202-600080.

exert over operatives working farther away. For example, the Amman hotel bombings last year should be considered strategic failures from Zarqawi's perspective—although many were killed, the bomb was detonated in the middle of a wedding, which generated a predictable backlash against the attack and Zarqawi's group generally in the Jordanian population.

Although it is possible that Zarqawi approved of targeting the wedding, it is equally possible, and perhaps more likely that the bomber detonated himself in the midst of the largest crowd without thinking through the strategic impact of his tactical decision. Zarqawi seems to have recognized the negative strategic impact and disavowed the bomb detonated amongst the wedding party.[86] This is indicative of the agency problems we have identified in Syria and will be increasingly common if Zarqawi continues to broaden his reach beyond Iraq. The need to delegate tactical control to subordinates increases as the theatre of operations expands, and that in turn increases the chance that tactical decisions made by subordinates will undermine Zarqawi's strategic intent.

Back to table of contents

[86] Zarqawi audio statement released 18 November, 2005. FBIS GMP20051118336002

Organizational Vulnerabilities and Recommendations to Exploit Them

Back to table of contents

The recently declassified documents used in support of this study are a small sampling of those contained in the Harmony Database. These documents do not provide compelling evidence that U.S. counterterrorism policies to date have been misguided or have overlooked any major developments. To the contrary, the documents reflect ongoing jihadi concerns about operational security and sustainability in the midst of America's counterterrorism efforts. Encouragingly, some of the documents even reflect al-Qa'ida's fear that U.S. intelligence collection efforts are in some cases exceeding al-Qa'ida's ability to enact countermeasures.

Perhaps the most interesting insight from the present collection of documents is the way in which they demonstrate how al-Qa'ida executives deal with the same banal challenges that occupy any other organization—be it employee salary and benefits, debates over strategic vision, or underlying doctrinal interpretations. This report's application of principle-agent theory and organizational approaches to this declassified document collection are meant to provide a useful model for conducting terrorism analysis as well as identify new insertion points for counterterrorism policy.

Any external assessment of al-Qa'ida's weaknesses will have inherent limitations. The Combating Terrorism Center at West Point believes an *internal* assessment—from actual members of the al-Qa'ida organization—is the best method to accurately assess their own true vulnerabilities.[87] Whereas Western analysts rely on incomplete information and informed speculation about such matters, jihadi strategists are enmeshed in the daily functioning of their own organization, and have a privileged perspective from which to view such shortcomings. Although the jihadis have been quite open with one another about those weaknesses, few in the U.S. Government have recognized the significance of these internal "lessons learned" documents. Abu Musab al-Suri's reflections on "what not to do" based on the experiences of the mujahadeen in Syria, for instance, need to be viewed as a guidebook for the United States in formulating policy recommendations. The following section will illustrate how even a seemingly eclectic and disparate set of documents such as these can produce important and novel counterterrorism policy recommendations, when taken in concert with an existing body of scholarship and a rigorous theoretical framework.

Like all terrorist groups, Al-Qa'ida values the ability to achieve political impact. In the pursuit of this, the organization must balance its need for security with operational control as well as with financial efficiency. Government efforts to degrade al-Qa'ida's capacity will succeed if they reduce its security environment, the degree to which it can control operations, and/or its ability to fund its activities. We identify potential points of pressure and methods for achieving these ends. We also suggest methods of exploiting al-

[87] The CTC thanks one of its Fellows, William McCants, for his insights on this topic.

Qa'ida's network vulnerabilities and creating internal discord within the organization that leverage underlying preferences for security, control, and efficiency of its leadership.

1. Disrupt al-Qa'ida's control of operations and limit its financial efficiency.

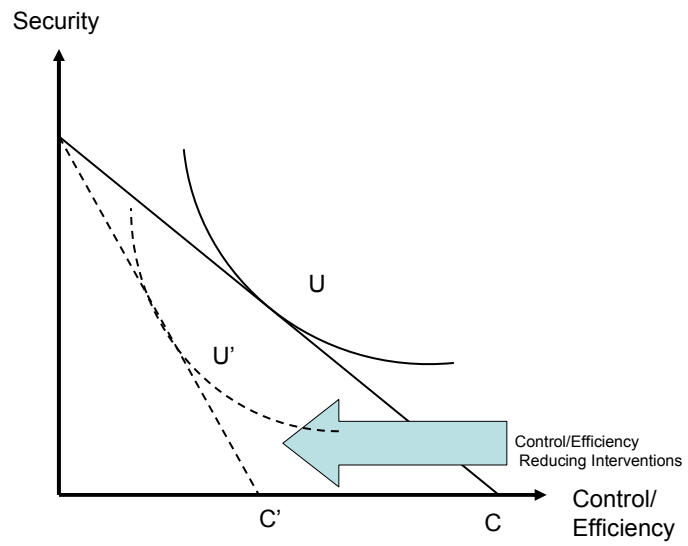
Government interventions that reduce operational control and/or efficiency within the al-Qa'ida organization generate a corresponding reduction in the political impact al-Qa'ida is capable of generating. These captured documents shed further light on al-Qa'ida's organizational preoccupation with their ability to control their membership as well as their position vis-à-vis other jihadist organizations. Abu Huthayfa's memo to Bin Laden for instance, shows an al-Qa'ida member calling for the establishment of a database on al-Qa'ida members and programs, the goal being to guide the organization and the broader jihadi movement by the study of its people.[88]

This need for control is not limited, however, to just intra-organizational activities. For example, an al-Qa'ida employment contract from another Harmony document reveals the obligation for new members to swear loyalty to al-Qa'ida alone and the requirement that members "have no dealings with any other Islamic group."[89] The document describing al-Qa'ida's bylaws reinforces the same theme, arguing that al-Qa'ida should not be "distracted" by relief and aid operations around the world.[90] This obsession with control is a vulnerability that can be exploited by the government. Figure 4 illustrates the consequences of external efforts that decrease the maximum possible level of control over al-Qa'ida's organizational functions.

In this diagram, the line C′ represents the projected impact of government actions to increase internal dissension within the group and other interventions that degrade the leadership's ability to control their operatives. As indicated here, the resulting best feasible tradeoff for the group has shifted down from U to U', meaning the group has to accept much less control than before to maximize political impact. The optimal tradeoff between security and financial efficiency is reduced in the same manner through efforts to increase inefficiencies in the financing of operations.

[88] Harmony AFGP-2002-003251.
[89] Harmony AFGP-2002-600045.
[90] Harmony AFGP-2002-600048.

Figure 4: The Impact of Constraining Organizational Control



The U.S. Government can intervene to reduce al-Qa'ida's control and financial efficiency within the organization—thus limiting its potential political impact—by pursuing carefully crafted policies grounded in al-Qa'ida's own assessments of their vulnerabilities. The following general prescriptions highlight possible ways governments can thwart al-Qa'ida's organizational development.

Refrain from actions that encourage preference alignment. Al-Qa'ida members who appear less committed should not necessarily be removed from the network if they can be reliably observed, even if they present easy targets. By leaving them in place, the probability that the group will identify agency problems and hence adopt security-reducing measures increases. Consider the February 11, 1999 e-mail by Ayman al-Zawahiri to a Yemeni cell leader:

> *"With all due respect, this is not an accounting. It's a summary accounting. For example, you didn't write any dates, and many of the items are vague. The analysis of the summary shows the following:*
>
> *1–You received a total of $22,301. Of course, you didn't mention the period over which this sum was received. Our activities only benefited from a negligible portion of the money. This means that you received and distributed the money as you please....*
> *2–Salaries amounted to $10,085–45 percent of the money. I had told you in my fax...that we've been receiving only half salaries for five months. What is your reaction or response to this?*
> *3–Loans amounted to $2,190. Why did you give out loans? Didn't I give clear orders to Muhammad Saleh to...refer any loan requests to me? We have already had long discussions on this topic...*

4–Why have guesthouse expenses amounted to $1,573 when only Yunis is there, and he can be accommodated without the need for a guesthouse?" [91]

The individual on the receiving end of Zawahiri's ire increases agency problems and organizational dysfunction that may arguably contribute more to degrading al-Qa'ida's capabilities if he is allowed to remain in the organization than if he were selected out. Importantly, it is the *perception* of financial inefficiency that is important not the inefficiency itself. This can be achieved by pursuing measures that incriminate financial agents and add to suspicions of graft and corruption in the eyes of their leaders

Make credible punishment of operatives harder for al-Qa'ida. This is most easily done by providing an exit option for members other than indefinite detention or death. This approach can yield benefits in two ways. First, it will make it harder for groups to enforce discipline-hence control- through the use of force against their own members.[92] This will reduce the level of political impact groups can achieve. Second, offering well-publicized amnesty or reduced punishment for defectors will encourage those dissatisfied with the organization to leave by reducing the perceived costs of exit. In response, al-Qa'ida will have to become more careful about screening applicants, which will in turn reduce the pool of potential members, or increase the use of problematic screening mechanisms.

Increase internal dissension within the al-Qa'ida leadership. Dissension among the leadership of al-Qa'ida decreases cohesiveness and control within the organization. An example from Harmony includes a letter to "Mukhtar" that refers to senior al-Qa'ida military director Khalid Sheikh Mohammed. In this letter, one 'Abd al-Halim Adl expresses concern that al-Qa'ida is "experiencing one setback after another and have gone from misfortune to disaster." 'Abd al-Halim Adl blames this series of failures on faulty leadership, arguing that those in charge rush "to move without vision." Focusing on the negative impact that Osama Bin Laden has had on the organization in particular, the letter pleads with Khalid Sheikh Mohammed to reject Bin Laden's orders and instead concentrate efforts on reorganizing and reinvigorating both the organizational infrastructure and the relationship between the commanders and the foot-soldiers. Effective information operations can achieve similar effects and will bring into question the theological justification for actions as well as the legitimacy of key leaders within al-Qa'ida.

Publicly emphasize the differences between al-Qa'ida leaders and affiliate groups. Agency problems can be enhanced within al-Qa'ida by reducing incentives for al-Qa'ida subgroups to remain closely linked to the center. Giving Osama bin Laden credit for Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi's terrorist attacks only legitimizes and strengthens their relationship.

---

[91] Alan Cullison, "Inside Al-Qaeda's Hard Drive," *Atlantic Monthly*, September 2004. http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/200409/cullison. The response email to Zawahiri's pointed concerns explains a number of these financial anomalies to Zawahiri in a defensive, seemingly irate manner.

[92] An example of this is the defection of Ali Abd al-Rahman al-Faqasi al-Ghamdi from Saudi Arabia in June 2003. Al-Ghamdi was involved in the May 12, 2003 bombings of Riyadh and was known to have close ties with Al-Qa'ida. Debate continues regarding al-Azdi's impetus to give up, but his own father told reporters that "security agencies have promised that if he gives in and is convicted of the alleged crimes, his punishment would be reduced to half."

Publicly recognizing the differences between peripheral groups and the center, however, may generate competition for authority between them. Terrorist organizations are inherently weak relative to their opponents and must overcome that weakness in order to rally supporters to their cause. Al-Qa'ida's central leadership maintains nominal relationships with peripheral groups in part to generate a perception that it is a powerful group that can realistically challenge its enemy. Effective policies to degrade al-Qa'ida's capacity will avoid supporting this tactic and highlight differences in the movement instead.

Make the management of al-Qa'ida's financial assets more difficult. One way to accomplish this is to refrain from publicizing the freezing of funds or seizure of assets. When government freezes funds in this way, the individual responsible for those funds has to explain what happened. Either he must make up the funds from his pocket, or come under suspicion within the group, creating the perception of diverging preferences that lead to agency problems. Keeping asset seizures secret also increases the perceived uncertainty of the operational environment, making it more difficult to maintain effective oversight in many interactions.[93] This in turn leads to a worsening of many agency problems in the long term.

Crack down on fundraising through legitimate businesses and charities. Forcing al-Qa'ida to resort to criminal fundraising will greatly reduce the efficiency of its financial transactions. Illicit fundraising has historically created dissent over both resource allocation and tactics. With respect to resource allocation, money from illicit purposes must be laundered to prevent investigators from using the predicate offense to gain information on the group. The laundering process is inefficient and requires secrecy, making it harder for leaders to monitor how funds are used, and making the group more prone to corruption. Moreover, as the IRA experience shows, terrorist cells trained in illicit fundraising are extremely likely to begin seeking opportunities for personal profit, even at the expense of political goals.[94] In the tactical arena, reliance on criminal fundraising also creates opportunities to generate negative reactions in the community.[95] So, when al-Qa'ida's cells are allowed to choose their own targets to enhance security, and they choose targets that arouse public ire, the leadership faces an unpalatable tradeoff. Efforts to exert greater control in response to this tradeoff will lead to a reduction in potential political impact.

Make sole source funding unavailable. One further implication of the agency theory framework presented in the first section is that central control over al-Qa'ida's funding provides at least a minimum level of organizational control to its central leaders. Leaders can control their agents by withholding funds if they do not behave as desired. PIJ leaders in Lebanon reportedly use this method to condition logisticians arranging suicide

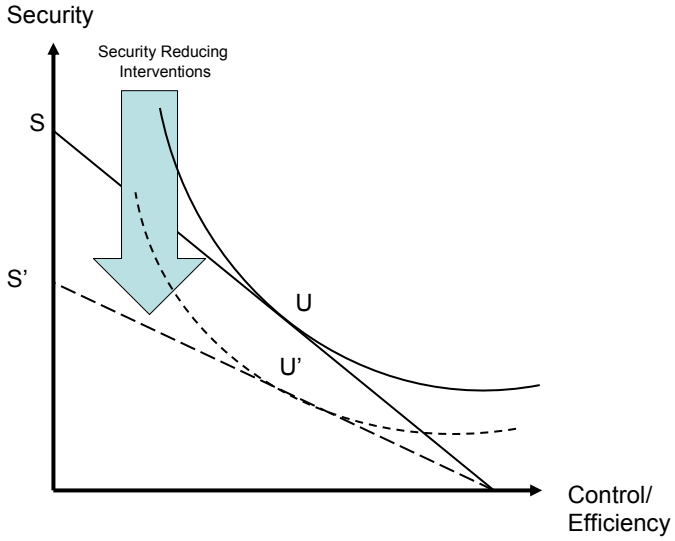
[93] In an uncertain environment, it is harder to know if an operation failed because your agent did not faithfully execute his orders, or because you got unlucky. More explicitly, the lower the signal-to-noise ratio in the environment, the less informative is any one signal.
[94] Horgan and Taylor (1997).
[95] FARC, JI, PIRA, UDA, and UVF all suffered politically for their moves into criminal fundraising.

bombings.[96] Central control of funding occurs when groups rely on a few deep-pocket donors who prefer to deal with one leader rather than several factions, or when they raise funds from sources requiring centralized infrastructure.[97] This centralized process guarantees leaders *de facto* control over resources. So, to the extent that government actions can deter donations from deep-pocket al-Qa'ida donors, the frequency of agency problems will increase.

2. Constrain al-Qa'ida's security environment.

Government interventions that make the environment less secure for al-Qa'ida also reduce al-Qa'ida's ability to create a political impact. An illustration of this is provided in Figure 5.[98] Here we see the projected impact of government actions that reduce the maximum feasible level of security from S to S'. Maintaining sufficient operational control and/or financial efficiency in this changed security environment forces the group to move to a lower indifference curve and accept a corresponding reduction in political impact—U'. In other words, the government's security reducing interventions produce environmental changes that increase preference divergence among the group's membership.

Figure 5: The Impact of Constraining the Security Environment



[96] According to the sometimes-reliable DEBKA report.
[97] For example, Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam (LTTE) fundraising in the Sinhalese Diaspora in Canada is facilitated by the coordinated use of social pressure. LTTE leaders control organized groups that blacklist businesses and individuals who do not contribute.
[98] See pages 22-25 for a more complete explanation of how al-Qa'ida's ability to achieve political impact is reduced when its ability to control operatives or maintain a level of efficiency in its financial transactions is reduced.

Create uncertainty about operationally relevant technical information. One key vulnerability of all terrorist organizations is communications. A greater volume of communications between operational cells and others presents a proportionally greater number of opportunities for compromise. If al-Qa'ida's operators can readily find reliable technical information on bomb-making and the like, they can operate with a great deal of independence. However, if public technical data sources are rife with misinformation, then cells will need to communicate more to make sure they are using appropriate materials/techniques. These increased communications reduce the maximum feasible level of security.

Make screening strategies appear risky. Al-Qa'ida can reduce preference divergence, and hence increase their ability to achieve political impact, by screening their membership more closely. A common strategy to do so is to recruit within familial networks. By openly monitoring the family relations of known al-Qa'ida members, governments can create the perception that using family ties to screen potential members is a security risk. This takes away a useful screening strategy, reducing the maximum feasible level of security. Note that this is an additional benefit not available when monitoring is strictly covert.

Enhance intelligence collection operations. The greater the level of intelligence activity in an area al-Qa'ida intends to operate in, the lower the feasible level of security it can achieve. This is not a new observation, but it is worth noting that although increasing the density of all types of intelligence collection will reduce al-Qa'ida's political impact, it does not have a definite effect on how it is organized. Depending on the political goals of the respective al-Qa'ida group's leadership, it may actually adopt measures to achieve greater control.

3. Prioritize efforts based on sub-group vulnerabilities.

We believe that al-Qa'ida sub-groups' critical organizational vulnerabilities are largely determined by their need for discrimination in the use of violence to achieve political objectives. For example, a group like the IRA is attempting to achieve objectives that require significant popular support. They need to be very careful about who they hit in order to avoid losing this critical support. In contrast, groups like Zarqawi's in Iraq operate with very loosely defined political goals which appear to extend little beyond driving out the United States and preventing a political settlement. Given their objectives do not hinge on winning broad based popular support, Zarqawi's group does not need to be as careful about whom they inflict casualties upon.[99]

Our application of this theory to the Harmony documents and related cases leads us to conclude that, in cases where terrorist leaders have strong preferences for controlling operatives, interventions that reduce this control have greater impact on the organization

[99] Zarqawi's "indifference curve" would thus look different compared to those leaders- principals- who demand greater control and discrimination.

than those that degrade the security environment. However, in cases where government is combating terrorist factions that place a lesser value on control, they will do better pursuing actions that reduce the group's security. For example, when developing strategies to limit the political impact of al-Zarqawi's group, reducing control does not matter much because he values it less.[100]

However, for al-Qa'ida terrorists operating in groups whose leaders insist on greater discrimination in their application of violence, reducing their level of control should lead to a greater probability of accepting a lower level of political impact. Terrorist leaders with such preferences would therefore be more likely to scale back on violent actions than risk collateral damage and alienating others.

4. Conduct an aggressive study of jihadi strategy and foreign policy.

Operational approaches discussed thus far must be pursued in concert with strategies that focus on undermining the body of ideas driving this violence. Students of al-Qa'ida would be remiss to think that the organization did not have its own understanding of international politics and its own foreign policy objectives informed by that understanding. Each stated objective, however, should be viewed as a new avenue by which to fracture the movement from within. The captured documents presented in this study reflect an important point of tension on the strategic level regarding the prioritization of countries in which to wage jihad, and the criteria for determining whether a population is ripe for accepting jihadi ideology.

The prioritization of countries to be attacked continues to be disputed both inside and beyond the al-Qa'ida movement. One captured document details a scouting trip, likely from the mid-1990s, on the prospects of waging jihad in Kenya.[101] Other documents reveal that senior leaders looked to Yemen as a high priority target. In other Harmony documents, jihadi commanders argue for the need to preserve strong, secure rear areas in places like Sudan and Afghanistan while launching offensive strikes into Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.[102] The United Arab Emirates slowly made its way up the targeting chain through the 1990s. But Somalia was seen as not being "ready for classic jihad" because the Somali movement had already come close to alienating itself from the masses.[103]

[100] In Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi's case, operating at a distance from the center will inherently create agency problems that the United States should be prepared to exploit. It should include closely monitoring goods and people leaving Iraq and preparing intelligence services in neighboring states for the intellectual and operational influence of Zarqawi. For these states, that should mean emphasizing the nationalist nature of opposition groups and the deliberate demonization of Zarqawi's particularly brutal tactics. Creating a market separation between nationalist groups in Iraq and Zarqawi will be very difficult; neighboring countries should begin that process with their own opposition groups now and head off violence before it begins.

[101] Harmony AFGP-2002-600113.

[102] Harmony AFGP-2002-600053.

[103] Harmony AFGP-2002-600053.

The importance of maintaining connections between jihadi leadership and the people has been critical to most jihadi policy planning since Abdallah Azzam advocated such a policy in the 1980s. Al-Qa'ida strategist Abu Musab al-Suri argues, in documents found in this collection and elsewhere, that this loss of connection between jihadi leadership and the people has been a key factor in the failure of jihadi movements, particularly in Syria. By understanding both consensus and dissension among al-Qa'ida strategists about targeting priorities, U.S. policymakers increase their options for posing challenges to the organization's operations.

5. Deny jihadi groups the benefit of security vacuums they seek to exploit and create.

Policymakers are correctly concerned about the existence of ungoverned spaces as being potential safe-havens for terrorist groups. The Harmony documents demonstrate that al-Qa'ida has been thinking about the necessity to exploit such spaces since their organizational founding.

The Somali document referenced above identifies a five-point strategy to unite Somali forces and create an Islamic national front.[104] The author argues for:

1. expulsion of the foreign international presence;
2. rebuilding of state institutions;
3. establishment of domestic security;
4. comprehensive national reconciliation; and
5. economic reform and combating famine.

This approach parallels the June 2005 Zawahiri letter addressed to Abu Musab al-Zarqawi in Iraq.[105] In this letter, Zawahiri argues that jihad in Iraq should proceed incrementally, according to the following phases:

- expel the Americans from Iraq;
- establish an Islamic authority or emirate, then develop it and support it; and
- extend the jihad wave to the secular countries neighboring Iraq.

He also notes that jihad in Iraq may coincide with what came before: the clash with Israel, because Israel was established only to challenge any new Islamic entity.

Both of these documents focus on the need to create viable operational space by first expelling occupiers and then by establishing and nurturing their own system. By identifying, catalyzing and swallowing ungoverned spaces, jihadi strategists believe they will be able to consolidate their strength and pursue their broader political and internationalist agendas. Notice that what is important to these thinkers is not the existence of a security vacuum, but what comes next, establishing functioning state institutions under jihadi control. In fact, existing security vacuums have not proven to be a viable base for exporting attacks abroad. No major international attacks, for example, have been supported out of Afghanistan, Iraq, or Somalia.

[104] Harmony AFGP-2002-600053. Pg. 6.
[105] Available online at: http://www.dni.gov/release_letter_101105.html

Thus, while a concern with security vacuums is warranted, the implication is not that we must consistently prevent security vacuums.[106] That takes immense resources, as the largely unsuccessful effort to end the security vacuum in Iraq show.[107] Indeed preventing all security vacuums would be a Herculean task involving American power in numerous failed and failing states around the world. However, denying terrorists the benefits of security vacuums is likely a more feasible strategy. The massive troop deployment in Iraq has so far denied terrorists the use of that country as a staging ground for attacks in the West. Meanwhile, terrorists are denied the benefits of a potential Afghan security vacuum with 18,000 troops, while CJTF HOA effectively denies jihadis the use of Somalia and the rest of that region with only 1,600 troops[108]—in both cases, these deployments are far less resource-intensive than would be required to actually end the security vacuum. A more cost-effective strategy, we believe, may be to maintain the capability to act decisively when necessary in security vacuums, without embarking on an unsustainable mission to end security vacuums worldwide.[109]

6. Turn the jihadi vanguard back on itself.

The strategic proponents of al-Qa'ida are what Vladimir Lenin, among a wide variety of other revolutionaries, described as the "vanguard." These "professional revolutionaries" possessed both the intellectual capacity and the fighting spirit to blaze the trail toward revolution. As most students of jihadi terrorism know, Abdallah Azzam employed this same notion of the vanguard in his early conceptualization of the al-Qa'ida organization. The application of Marxist-Leninist-Maoist revolutionary doctrine is critical to understanding jihadi strategy. Jihadi strategists have formulated a general roadmap for breaking what they see as America's physical and virtual chokehold on the periphery—both in the literal international political sense, but also in a cognitive sense. Their solution draws not only on Lenin but also on Mao's "Rural Strategy" or "Encirclement" path to revolution. Mao argued that the vanguard party needed to engage the masses, who in China were predominantly "poor and blank" peasants. These peasants provided the perfect launching pads for establishing pockets of resistance in the periphery. Although Mao's long-term goal was to actually overthrow the urban centers of capitalist entrenchment, his immediate objective was to encircle these centers with strategic footholds and wage stealth, pinpoint strikes. In Harmony AFGP-2002-600053, the author (Hassan) bolsters this point when he argues that "the strategy of the 'Jewish West' is to strike at the periphery of the Muslim lands."[110]

---

[106] What made Afghanistan so useful to Al Qaeda from 1995 onwards was not an absence of state institutions, but that it was that Al Qaeda could operate under the protection of a sovereign state, relying on that state's sovereignty to shield its infrastructure from potential attack by Western forces. Operating in a security vacuum, where training camps and the like could be targeted directly by the United States, and indirectly by local allies, is much less attractive.

[107] Whatever political and military progress is being made in Iraq, it is indisputable that the country suffers from a security vacuum relative to most states.

[108] Menkhaus, Ken. *Somalia: State Collapse and the Threat of Terrorism*. International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2004.

[109] This supports the rationale behind SOCOM's expanded roles and missions in support of the GWOT.

[110] Harmony AFGP-2002-600053.

As jihadi strategists see it, their Mao-styled mobility has allowed their own resistance to seamlessly open new fronts of battle when other ones close, thereby causing American action to be perpetually defensive in nature. This logic is not only reflected in the upper echelons of al-Qa'ida leadership. Indeed, in a letter included in this Harmony sample from a Central Asia-based jihadi commander, Hassan al-Tajki, one can see this calculus play out. Tajiki sees Russia in a state of economic, political and military chaos. However, as much as jihadi forces would like to exploit this political space, he identifies that "America is planning, indeed has actually begun, to fill the political vacuum occurring in the area."[111] Unpredictable waves of jihadi "attack and retreat" campaigns serve, in their eyes, to confuse coalition forces and paralyze their ability to formulate and implement their own offensive strategy, thereby freeing jihadists to proceed virtually unencumbered.

We can learn a great deal from jihadi strategists and their application of historical insurgency tactics against our forces in Iraq and Afghanistan. The U.S. can similarly employ tactics that seek to surprise and exhaust jihadi safe-havens by coordinating attacks in an unpredictable yet continuous fashion. Effective strategies will aggressively seek opportunities to create power vacuums within jihadi areas of responsibility

7. Confuse, humiliate, demoralize and embarrass the jihadi rank-in-file.

Taken in context with our theoretical model, the Harmony documents suggest government policies would find success facilitating intra-movement rivalries and competition within al-Qa'ida. As one of the Harmony documents details, Tajik mujahideen had been demoralized by the intimidation and bullying from other jihadi forces. Subsequently, "the majority of the young men snuck away and went back looking for work with their old area commanders."[112] Jihadi-on-jihadi tension has historically run high, seen in the conflict between the "Afghan Arabs" and the Afghan mujahadeen, as well as in other jihadi combat experiences. When jihadi recruits, at least in this case, felt unwanted, they were compelled to leave the movement and return home. Government efforts to stymie recruitment of new jihadis ought to capitalize on the psychological need by many of these men to feel a sense of belonging to an organization. By denying that psychological payoff, jihadis on the margins of support for the cause may otherwise return home, like the Tajik mujahideen described in the Harmony document above.

8. Subvert the authority of senior commanders.

The sample of documents from Harmony released for this study highlight the long-standing concern that the al-Qa'ida organization has had with securing the right kind of leader, often referred to as the Emir. Senior strategists learned from past jihadi experience. As Abu Musab al-Suri's observations on the Syrian experience illustrates, without an active and highly trained cadre of senior leaders, any movement is destined to fail.[113] This dearth of senior jihadi leaders reduces the maximum level of control al-

[111] Harmony AFGP-2002-600053. pg. 12.
[112] Harmony AFGP-2002-600053, Letter Four, pg. 50.
[113] Harmony AFGP-2002-600080.

Qa'ida can exert and thus reduces the potential for political impact as discussed earlier in this section.

While al-Suri's treatment focuses on general trends concerning the role that commanders play in jihad, other documents contain sections dedicated solely to articulating the professional qualifications, personality characteristics and organizational duties of commanders.[114] Still others concentrate on the need for providing leaders with real-time information about the movement, its members and the broader political space in which it operates. In fact, among the documents that speak to the role and activities of leaders, they almost uniformly reflect having learned al-Suri's lessons from Syria: not letting untrained people into senior command positions; not letting the senior leadership lose touch with its operatives on the ground; and the importance of training junior members not just with tactical and operational knowledge but with the strategic relevance of their participation in jihad.

With the goal of turning jihadi strengths against them, increased focus on pursuing strategies that seek to separate leaders from their troops may be effective. Identifying the lines of communication among jihadis is key to this effort. Sometimes these are best monitored clandestinely. In fact, there is significant anecdotal evidence from jihadi use of the Internet that the paranoia about being monitored hampers operations by significantly increasing the types of operational security measures that may be employed. In other instances, those tasked with counterterrorism efforts should seek to inundate those lines of communication with alternative discourse, thereby disorienting and confusing jihadis. In rare instances, it may be both operationally expedient and necessary to shut down these lines of communication.

9. Facilitate misunderstanding as well as understanding of America's intentions and capacity.

Throughout its historical evolution, the al-Qa'ida organization has internally wrestled with a number of strategic concerns, particularly those related to where and how to implement violence. The Harmony documents provide insight into the jihadi understanding of American foreign policy priorities, which jihadis believe to have been significantly handicapped by the American experience in Vietnam.

In one series of letters extracted from Harmony regarding the American military experience in Somalia, one jihadi author writes that:

> *The Somali experience confirmed the spurious nature of American power and that it has not recovered from the Vietnam complex. It fears getting bogged down in a real war that would reveal its psychological collapse at the level of personnel and leadership. Since Vietnam, America has been seeking easy battles that are completely guaranteed. It entered into a shameful series of adventures on the island of Grenada, then Panama, then bombing Libya, and then the Gulf War*

[114] Harmony AFGP-2002-000078 and Harmony AFGP-2002-000080.

farce, which was the greatest military, political, and ideological swindle in history.[115]

This statement reveals several important insights. First, at least throughout the 1980s and 1990s, al-Qa'ida believed the United States to be an aggressive and belligerent power, perpetually seeking opportunities to exercise its military domination. Those following al-Qa'ida rhetoric over the recent decade have heard statements arguing that the only language the United States understands is that of violence.[116] America's perceived bellicose leanings, however, were seen as being tempered by the lessons learned in Vietnam—namely, that protracted wars of attrition should be avoided at all costs. Jihadists writings generally portray the United States as a paper tiger, one that possessed overwhelming military power, but constrained in its ability to employ this strength by a domestic population and leaders who lacked the resolve to sustain military campaigns without public support.

Jihadi assumptions about America's reluctance to use military force were reinforced following the perceived lack of response to the 1998 bombings of U.S. Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, as well as to the *USS Cole* attack in 2000. The predominant jihadi assumptions about America's perceived risk aversion likely caught them off guard and facilitated American military success against those jihadists in the early 2000s. There may be an advantage in allowing jihadists to underestimate American resolve and power, in certain situations, as it may lead to a decreased perception within al-Qa'ida of the need for operational security measures.

10. Force jihadi propagandists back on their heels.

Ultimate success for al-Qa'ida lies in reshaping mass perceptions about good and evil. As was the case since Hasan al-Banna founded the Muslim Brotherhood, it is essential to grasp the fact that the long-term goal of this jihadi salafi movement is to change the face of society. Al-Qa'ida has been relatively successful in packaging and marketing their message in a social movement. Through the persuasive figurehead of Osama Bin Laden, the persistent continuation of global terrorism and the work by an army of propagandists to spin the tale of jihad, al-Qa'ida as an idea is actually much more difficult for governments to counter than when it was more or less an organization or confederation with its associated organizational vulnerabilities described earlier in our analysis.

The jihadi movement's strategic coherency to this point is attributable, in large part, to how skillfully its members used propaganda instruments, particularly since 9/11, for weaving a historical record, as one senior al-Qa'ida ideologue called it. As a repository of images, videos and stories, the Internet has come to codify a particular jihadi foundational myth, accessible to anyone, anywhere, anytime. Publishing their ideas in short forum postings, longer articles floated online or in voluminous books, jihadi strategists not only recruit new members into this worldview, but they spoon-feed recruits

[115] Harmony AFGP-2202-600053.
[116] Bin Laden's "Letter to America." November 24, 2002

with their virulent (and tedious) vocabulary for expressing their anger, and provide direction to operators on the ground, both in Iraq and abroad.

In a Harmony document written in 1994, the author (Hassan) contends that "more effective radio broadcasts are needed to launch a propaganda campaign in Yemen and Somalia." Much like the prolific jihadi propagandists at work today, Hassan believed that "radio stations are more powerful than atomic bombs." Again, the target of propaganda campaigns, he argues, must be the youth, who in small numbers can bring "correct teaching" to a large area.[117] Bin Laden himself, in a captured letter he wrote to Mullah Muhammad 'Omar, wrote "It is obvious that the media war in this century is one of the strongest methods; in fact, its ratio may reach 90% of the total preparation for the battles."[118] In "A Memo to the Honorable Sheikh Abu Abdullah," the author, Abu Huthayfa, suggests that Muslims should seek to integrate jihad into all aspects of their lives. For example, he argues, marriage ceremonies "should include speeches, songs, and poetry promoting jihad."[119]

It seems imperative that combating terrorism efforts do everything possible to contain the spread of the jihadi body of ideas. The insight gained from the application of our theoretically informed model to this limited number of documents suggests that governments would find success implementing policies that focus on denying jihadis the operational space they seek; pitting groups, ideologues and even propagandists against one another; encouraging parochial squabbles within organizational leadership; and demoralizing new recruits while providing viable alternatives and exit strategies to them.

11. Understand and exploit the ideological breaks in the jihadi movement.

Combating the al-Qa'ida movement over the long term requires identifying where key jihadi thinkers break with one another. The documents in this report reveal how such doctrinal disagreements have historically driven wedges within the upper echelons of al-Qa'ida. It is this intra-movement contention that comprises the soft underbelly of violent jihad, which can be exploited to great ends. Interdicting and corrupting the lines of al-Qa'ida's ideological influence strikes at the core of its ability to exert indirect control of its members. Ideological influence may prove to be al-Qa'ida's center of gravity as a social movement; efforts to attack this should be weighted accordingly.

One Harmony document, for instance, points to debate among al-Qa'ida thinkers about Muhammad Nasir-ud-deen, better known as Shaikh Al-Albani, who is a renowned name among salafists and a revered Hadith scholar. He—like other late salafi sheikhs (part of what is known as the Awakening Movement) including Abd al-Aziz Bin Baz, Salim al-Hilali, and Rabee Madkhalee, among others—preached about the deviations made by Sayyid Qutb and those who follow in his path, which includes followers of al-Qa'ida. In this document, Ayman al-Zawahiri criticizes Sheikh Albani for constraining

[117] Harmony AFGP-2002-600053.
[118] Harmony AFGP-2002-600321, pg. 2.
[119] Harmony AFGP-2002-003251.

the pursuit of jihad to "forgiveness, education and prayer."[120] Zawahiri, like his ideological comrades—whom Awakening Salafis label "Qutubis" for their ardent following of Qutb's deviant teachings—rejects such limits as appeasement. It is necessary for Muslims to go beyond simply gaining knowledge and education, which implicitly means enduring the oppression of perceived apostate leaders and "imperialist infidels," and instead take action. This ideological break is but one of many that exist within the broader movement that can be usefully exploited.

12. Anticipate al-Qa'ida's transformation from an organization to a social movement.

The United States and its allies have found great success fighting al-Qa'ida as an organization. We have significantly degraded its formal command structure, debilitated its capabilities to readily move money and closed most of its training facilities. Despite the success against the organization, however, terrorist attacks in the name of al-Qa'ida, such as those witnessed in London or Madrid, continue. While not coordinated by the al-Qa'ida organization, they are informed by the model that al-Qa'ida popularized. This report highlights a number of effective methods for limiting al-Qa'ida's potential political impact in cases where the terrorist group can be characterized to a greater degree as an organization. Al-Qa`ida's continued transformation into a broad-based social movement, however, will pose overwhelming challenges to U.S. and other governments' counterterrorism efforts and therefore must be stopped at all costs.

One senior al-Qa'ida strategist, Abu Musab al-Suri, advances in one of the included Harmony documents—as well as in other writings found elsewhere—a comprehensive call to violent revolution among Muslims.[121] His writings need to be understood for what they are: a template for morphing the loose coalition of organizations, personalities and ideas that has come to be known as al-Qa'ida into a global revolutionary movement. His movement is well-conceived and designed it to be organic, clandestine, adaptable to changes in political reality and self-sustaining.

Since the Afghan training camp system had been shut down, Suri argues for the need to transfer the training to each house of each district in the village of every Muslim. By making appropriate training materials available to more than a billion Muslims in the world, Suri believes that he can catalyze a revitalized culture of preparation among them. Taking advantage of information technology like the Internet, Suri contends that anyone interested can access military and ideological training in any language, at any time, anywhere. Muslim homes, as envisioned by Suri', not only become the new training camps, where families can recruit, educate and train, but also serve as staging grounds from which ideological adherents are able to consolidate their strength and wage terrorism. Further complicating matters, Suri articulates expanded opportunities to participation in jihad for the large numbers of Muslims who may agree with the ideology he advances but are reluctant to engage in acts of violence.

[120] Harmony AFGP-2002-601041.
[121] Harmony AFGP-2002-60008

Aggressive and proactive efforts are needed to curtail al-Qa'ida's transformation from a terrorist organization to that of a social movement. Increasing opportunities and mediums for individuals to support jihad, along with greater variation in the types of roles available, will require ever more comprehensive responses and mechanisms to deter them.

Concluding Remarks

The analysis provided in this report and accompanying selection of recently declassified documents from the Department of Defense's Harmony database included in Part 2 will hopefully accomplish three basic objectives. First, they provide a new source of raw data to scholars, analysts and others interested in learning more about al-Qa'ida from the perspective of the organization's members. The 28 documents presented here represent a small number of an ever-growing collection of al-Qa'ida related material, which will be increasingly made available to the public.

Second, this report seeks to demonstrate the utility of organization and agency theory for conducting terrorism analysis. Based on the logical frameworks of this field of inquiry, the analysis provided here illustrates concepts and insights that can help conduct a more nuanced study of primary source documents. Its focus on the dynamic interplay between organizational necessity for concomitantly pursuing security, efficiency and control emphasizes opportunities for those tasked with countering the terrorist threats.

Finally, the policy recommendations presented here are meant to expand the perspective of the US Government and all concerned states on the types of instruments and timelines it can use to combat al-Qa'ida. This list is not exhaustive, and as more information is provided through additional documents, the Combating Terrorism Center and other researchers can continue to research, analyze, develop, and refine recommendations. Certainly, this report represents just one component of a much larger, comprehensive effort to combat al-Qa'ida with increasing sophistication and success.

The views expressed in this report are those of the authors and not of the U.S. Military Academy, the Department of the Army, or any other agency of the U.S. Government.

Back to table of contents

Part II: Al-Qa'ida "In Their Own Words"
The Harmony Documents

Back to table of contents

The United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) has the responsibility to plan and synchronize efforts across the Department of Defense for the war on terrorism. In conducting their operations over the past several years—particularly Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF)—representatives of USSOCOM have uncovered scores of documents authored by members of al-Qa'ida. These documents, which currently reside in a classified database called "Harmony," shed important new light onto the inner workings of the organization as well as the personalities and preferences of their authors. The database houses thousands of items with a wide range of content, including loose papers, multimedia, and personal letters.

In the latter half of 2005, the Combating Terrorism Center (CTC) at West Point was given access to a small subset of recently declassified Harmony documents and asked to provide an analysis of potential network vulnerabilities and conflicts of interests within the organization. The CTC was chosen to conduct this study based partly upon its expertise in analyzing al-Qa'ida's strategic texts, jihadi images, video clips, and other materials distributed on the Internet. The documents used in this study were initially identified, processed and translated based upon criteria established to support military planning efforts, including:

- al-Qa'ida documents (media, letters, loose papers) discussing ideology, tactics, techniques, procedures, strategy, and operations;
- Taliban documents discussing prior or future terrorist actions in Afghanistan or the region and the interaction/coordination with al-Qa'ida;
- any material related to al-Qa'ida extremist ideology, training, recruiting, and logistics flow;
- documents discussing any al-Qa'ida operation; and
- any dialogue from al-Qa'ida that threatens another country/group or its leadership.

The initial 28 documents extracted from the Harmony database that met combinations of the search criteria described above range from single page letters to 70+ page excerpts from larger jihadi texts, and were authored both before and after September 11, 2001. Every document released to the CTC from the Harmony database is included on the enclosed CD-ROM in both original Arabic text and English translation and is posted on the CTC website at http://www.ctc.usma.edu/aq.asp.

This collection of primary documents exposes the banality of al-Qa'ida's day-to-day operations. Its corporate culture appears to be similar to other modern organizations: permeated by personality conflicts, intra-organizational disputes about senior management decisions and conflict over the allocation of scarce resources. Readers of these documents will gain unique perspective into the leadership's utilitarian hybridization of jihadi principles and Western-styled bureaucratic structures.

In prosaic detail, the documents identify the al-Qa'ida recruitment criteria, the training program for "new hires," and the tactics of information, political, and military warfare needed to defeat the Jews and Crusaders and restore the Muslim lands to the rule of the caliphate. Beginning with the Islamist battle to overthrow the secular government of Syria in the 1970s and 1980s, and following jihadists through campaigns in Africa, Central Asia, the Caucasus, the Gulf States, and Afghanistan, these papers also reveal a high level of arrogance and intense ambition.

The al-Qa'ida vision, as reflected in the included documents, demands ruthless adherence to its leadership and teaching, and uncompromising hostility toward Jews, Crusaders, Buddhists, Hindus, and apostate Muslims. Apostasy is defined, of course, to include all those who disagree with al-Qa'ida's interpretation of Islam. While the theology may seem reactionary, the organization insists on using modern management principles as well. Instruction is provided on applying information technology, manipulating the media, and researching the use of nuclear weapons for the cause of jihad.

Given the broad swath of time, place and organizational level from which they come, these Harmony documents reveal sides of the organization not widely seen before. The documents reflect meticulous operational calculations being made by the leadership over intended results and available opportunities for exploitation. The strategic discussions reflect a patient, organized, and determined foe that has known defeats, but one with the ability to learn from its mistakes. Readers will see how some operations they know all too well had been in conceptualization or even planning stages long before much of the West had heard the term "al-Qa'ida."

Like other revolutionary ideologies that have emerged throughout history, the idea of al-Qa'ida—an organization which touts itself as representing the will of a broader constituency—has considerable appeal for those alienated by the penetration of global capitalism or those who feel victimized by corrupt, indifferent rulers. As the accompanying analysis seeks to demonstrate, the importance of al-Qa'ida's myth-making machinery cannot be underestimated. A careful reading of the documents here dispels the fiction that some have come to accept about al-Qa'ida: that it is a coherent, unified organization informed by Islamic principles. There is perhaps no better and more objective way to understand the fractured and duplicitous nature of al-Qa'ida than by simply listening to what its own leaders have said.

Back to table of contents

Harmony Document List

Back to table of contents

Al-Qa'ida Goals and Structure……61
AFGP-2002-000078

Interior Organization……...63
AFGP-2002-000080

Open Letter to King Fahd from bin Laden……..……....64
AFGP-2002-000103

Al-Qa'ida Staff Count Public Appointments……...65
AFGP-2002-000112

Letter of Threat to Americans…….....66
AFGP-2002-001120

A Memo to Sheikh Abu Abdullah……...67
AFGP-2002-003251

Employment Contract……..69
AFGP-2002-600045

Al-Qa'ida Bylaws……....70
AFGP-2002-600048

Five Letters to Africa Corps – Letter One……..…71
AFGP-2002-600053

Five Letters to Africa Corps – Letter Two……..72
AFGP-2002-600053

Five Letters to Africa Corps – Letter Three……....73
AFGP-2002-600053

Five Letters to Africa Corps – Letter Four……..…75
AFGP-2002-600053

Five Letters to Africa Corps – Letter Five……..…76

AFGP-2002-600053

Lessons Learned from the Armed Jihad Ordeal in Syria……78
AFGP-2002-600080

A Short Report on the Trip from Nairobi……....82
AFGP-2002-600113

Letter to Aba Khalid from bin Laden……..83
AFGP-2002-600157

Letter to Mullah Mohammed ‘Omar from bin Laden……84
AFGP-2002-600321

Call to Jihad Against the Syrian Regime……85
AFGP-2002-600966

A Response to Accusations Against Sheikh Albani……91
AFGP-2002-601041

Criticism of Abu Al-Bara’a……92
AFGP-2002-601346

Status of Jihad……..93
AFGP-2002-601693

Political Speculation……94
AFGP-2002-602181

Criticism of Sheikh Bin Baz……95
AFGP-2002-602187

Get the Idolaters Out of Arab Island……96
AFGP-2002-603856

Various Admin Documents and Questions……..97
AFGP-2002-801138

Letter to Pakistani Scholars from bin Laden……...…100
AFGP-2002-901188

Al Adl Letter……..…101

Letters from bin Laden……...102
AFGP-2002-003345

Brief Biography of Ayman Al-Zawahiri……....115
2RAD-2004-600457

Back to table of contents

Harmony Document Summaries

Doc ID: **AFGP-2002-000078**
Date: Unknown
Author: Unknown
Length: 9 pages
Title: None Assigned (Al-Qa'ida Goals and Structure)
Full Text: English Arabic

Back to Document List

Synopsis: The document sets forth the goals and structure of the Military Committee, Political Committee, Information Committee, and the Administrative and Financial Committee. Qualifications are listed for different positions of the committee. The intent is to develop Al-Qa'ida as an effective force under the direction of leaders who are professionally capable, trained in Islamic laws, faithful to jihad, and loyal to Al-Qa'ida.

Key Themes: The Military Committee has five divisions:
- President.
- Training-Combat
- Training-Operations
- Nuclear Weapons Section
- Library and Research Section

Specific qualifications are sought for each position. The president should possess the following abilities:
- Knowledge of Islamic Law
- Military operational experience.
- University Graduate (Military Academy Preferred)
- 30 years of age.

Qualifications for Training Section Supervisor are less demanding:
- 2 years of service in the Jihad.
- Possession of appropriate scientific knowledge.
- 25 years of age.
- High School graduate.
- Knowledge of Military Science
- Distinguished by wisdom, sobriety, and military discipline.

Similar qualifications are listed for Training Section Supervisor, General Combat Section Supervisor, and Special Operations Section.

The Political Committee and its leadership are charged with spreading political awareness among Al-Qa'ida members, between Islamic republics, and with other Jihad Movements. The committee is required to return to Al-Qa'ida before establishing a new

stance, and to avoid the public criticism of Islamic groups. Requirements listed for the President of the Committee; these are similar to the Military Committee with the exception of English proficiency, security awareness, and personal attributes such as: "large hearted, mild tempered, correct in opinion, good planner, smart and clever."

The Informational Committee is charged with spreading the Al-Qa'ida vision of jihad to all Muslims, and to develop and communicate expertise in scientific and legal areas as well. Branches of the committee are designated to handle the following areas: computers, printing, foreign relations, photography, phonetics, translations, and microfiche. This committee is also required to seek Al-Qa'ida approval for all new stances.

Requirements for the President of the Committee listed, but are less rigorous than the Political Committee Chairman.

The Administrative and Financial Committee duties include:

- Administrative Services
- Hospitality
- Accounting
- Financial Services

No requirements are listed, but the document ends abruptly indicating that it is either unfinished or missing additional pages.

Back to Document List

Doc ID: **AFGP-2002-000080**
Date: Unknown
Author: Unknown
Length: 9 pages
Title: Interior Organization
Full Text: English Arabic

Back to Document List

Synopsis: A description of Al-Qa'ida's organizational structure including the responsibilities and qualifications of the commander, duties of the five general committees, and general goals of the movement. Key goals are to establish the truth, get rid of evil, and establish an Islamic Nation.

Key Themes: A detailed, analytical statement of the goals of the Al-Qa'ida command and the qualifications of the Commander. The Commander presides over a ruling council which is divided into five committees: Military, Political, Administrative and Financial, Security, and Surveillance.

The commander is chief administrator and is "given obligations similar to the general obligations of the Imamate because it is expected that the commander will undertake the work of judging in the division of the spoils of the jihad's judgment.

With non-Jihad Muslim groups, the goal is to develop relations of love and friendship in an effort to bring out the good and correct mistakes. Al-Qa'ida seeks to eliminate regionalism and tribalism, and bring all Muslims into the Jihad. Muslims must be agitated so they can serve as "fuel for the battle."

For the "dictators of the earth and secular groups," the Al-Qa'ida position "is that there are innocents among them and unbelievers among them and that there will be continuing enmity until everyone believes in Allah."

Al-Qa'ida is structured as a Jihad organization, not an aid group, with the goal of administering Shariah law. It is committed to secrecy and self-reliance**.**

The commander is given a list of 11 personal characteristics which emphasize his commitment to Jihad, Shariah law, and personal qualities, and 17 duties which focus on managerial and administrative abilities.

Likewise council members are required to meet five qualifications, and the work and authority of the council are carefully delineated. The document is precise and specific and demonstrates the value Al-Qa'ida places on organizational design and leadership ability.

Back to Document List

Doc ID: **AFGP-2002-000103**
Date: 11 July 1995
Author: Osama bin Laden
Length: 34 pages
Title: Open Letter to King Fahd Regarding the Recent Cabinet Reshuffling
Full Text: English Arabic

Back to Document List

Synopsis: A letter which strongly criticizes the Saudi regime for not adhering to the tenets of Islam, particularly monotheism, as well as for rampant corruption and being essentially a puppet of America and other Western states.

Key Themes: This document is virtually identical to a document in the "Letters from Bin Laden" document and is analyzed there in detail.

Back to Document List

Doc ID: **AFGP-2002-000112**
Date: Unknown
Author: Unknown
Length: 7 pages
Title: Al-Qaeda Staff Count Public Appointments
Full Text: English Arabic

Back to Document List

Synopsis: A management review of Al-Qa'ida personnel and organizational structure and an exhortation to ensure that the new cadres are placed on the right path.

Key Themes: The organization must guard against complacency and maintain a faithful commitment to the goals and visions of Al-Qa'ida. This document emphasizes proper policies for keeping the organization focused and purposeful.

Through the establishment of a "Personnel Matters Section," equipped with its own dedicated computer, Al-Qa'ida will be able to properly management existing cadre and recruit the right people for the new cadre.

Describes the role of the military training camp. The intent is to not only instruct the candidates, but also to assess their personal qualities and potential for future advancement.

Stresses the importance of developing new leaders and providing time for rest and reflection for current leaders so that they can relieve stress and deal with psychological problems.

Proposes the equivalent of correspondence courses so that leaders in the field can keep abreast of the latest developments. Regular instruction in oral and written communication must be given to leaders in training.

Key areas of study for Al-Qa'ida commanders are:

Islamic Studies
Military Studies
Security Studies
Management Studies
Political Studies

Back to Document List

Doc ID: **AFGP-2002-001120**
Date: First letter undated (post 9/11); second letter 10 Nov 2001
Author: First letter Abu 'Abullah Al-Kuwaiti; second by Abu Yousef Al-Qannas
Length: 4 page outline of original 14 pages
Title: Letter of Threat to Americans
Full Text: English Arabic

Back to Document List

Synopsis: A letter from Abu 'Abdullah Al-Kuwaiti outlining the next attack against the Americans, and issuing a statement to the Americans to let them know of their fighters' readiness to kill hundreds of thousands with their nuclear and biological arsenal. The second letter is dated 10 November 2001 from Abu Yousef Al-Qannas to Khallad Al-Kuwaiti informing him that he is moving north by orders of the Sheikh (Osama bin Laden), and that he will join him in a week's time.

Key Themes: Abu 'Abdullah Al-Kuwaiti's undated letter is addressed to the American people. He writes that he is announcing publicly the next attacks against the Americans, and that groups in America and Europe, which are "above suspicion," have been given the green light to move. He also writes that there is no animosity between "us" and the Americans; the war is only between "us" and the Jews. By interfering in their countries, the Americans have brought this on themselves.

He goes on that they have nuclear and biological weapons with which they will kill "hundreds of thousands" of people that they don't otherwise wish to fight. He states that the billions of American dollars spent thus far have succeeded in killing less than ten "martyrs."

The next few pages list varied locations in Afghanistan, a series of names, a packing list of personal items, and an admonition to fast and pray during Ramadan.

The second letter, dated 10 Nov 2001, is by Abu Yousef Al-Qannas to Khallad Al-Kuwaiti. Al-Qannas writes that he is heading north by orders of the Sheikh (Osama bin Laden). He also notes that Khallad Al-Kuwaiti must meet with the Sheikh first.

A third letter is included at the end from Salman Yahya Hasan Mohammed Al-Rabi'I to Furqan Al-Tajiki professing his undying love. This is not of apparent consequence.

Back to Document List

Doc ID: **AFGP-2002-003251**
Date: 18 Rabeei Al Awwal 1421 AH(June 20, 2000)
Author: Abu Huthayfa
Length: 11 pages
Title: A memo to the Honorable Sheikh Abu Abdullah
Full Text: English Arabic

Back to Document List

Synopsis: The author writes to his honored mentor and presents his views on the leadership skills and tactics that Al-Qa'ida must use to achieve victory. Emphasis is given to the political and military methods as well as public relations strategies and information management techniques that can produce positive results for Al-Qa'ida.

Key Themes: The writer emphasizes a leadership style that calls for reflection, self-knowledge, and the development of a database on Al-Qa'ida members and programs. The movement must be guided by the study of its people and the development of practical conclusions.

Next is a review of the public relations assets. Osama Bin Laden is considered a "…star similar to the fortress of *Saddam*" who has used the Al-Jazeera channel very effectively. Insufficient effort was made to exploit the success of the Mujahideen in Somalia against the Americans. The bombings in Dar es Saalam and Nairobi likewise were not exploited successfully for their promotional value in the Saudi peninsula and are described as a "horrible informational and political shortfall."

Al-Qa'ida should emulate Hamas and have the statements of **"**martyrs**"** videotaped prior to their operations. If the efforts of martyrs from the Peninsula were publicized, this would have a tremendous impact on recruitment in Saudi Arabia. The document refers to an unspecified cruise ship attack which also lacked effective publicity for the martyrs and the cause of jihad.

The Taliban regime in Afghanistan provides an important sanctuary and training ground for the jihad. Trained brothers can go back to their homeland from Afghanistan to spread the message of jihad.

In between the review of operations is a paragraph emphasizing the importance of a right belief in the Unity of God.

The organization should be structured with separate political and information sections. The political section needs to control the movement to guarantee correct application of Shariah. All aspects of the work should serve to promote the movement. Marriage ceremonies, for example, should include speeches, songs and poetry promoting jihad. These celebrations should be videotaped and distributed by the political section for maximum publicity value.

The role of the information section is to link the movement to the masses by utilizing email and websites. Driveway.com is mentioned as a good place to store documents. The movement should have a web site to locate all legible, audible, and visible archives. Jihad must be promoted as a popular movement, not an elite organization.
Algeria is pointed out as a good example because the movement there started internally with the people and then Mujahideen from abroad could come in and receive cover provided by the masses.

At all times the movement must engage in critical self-analysis, and questioning of tactical assumptions. The only thing not subject to negotiation is the infallible Shariah. The debate over identifying the principal foe, the "original non-believers" or the "renegade non-believers" is important and should be discussed in an "open and …healthy environment."

The fight against the Americans (Jews and Crusaders) is characterized as a series of battles; the struggle with Saudi Arabia is a war. An **oil spot strategy** must be pursued against Saudi Arabia, with the goal of expanding the circle of jihad through successful operations that break down the fear barrier which keeps Mujahideen from fully engaging the Saudi state.

Back to Document List

Doc ID: **AFGP-2002-600045**
Date: Unknown
Author: Unknown
Length: 6 pages
Title: Employment Contract
Full Text: English Arabic

Back to Document List

Synopsis: An employment contract for potential recruits to enlist in Al-Qa'ida. The document sets forth the principal goals of Al-Qa'ida, and defines the salary, benefits, and job expectations of Al-Qa'ida members.

Key Themes: After an overview of Al-Qa'ida objectives, the document sets forth specific guidance for new recruits seeking to join Al-Qa'ida.

Objectives stated as:

> Support God's religion,
> Establishment of Islamic rule, and
> Restoration of the Islamic Caliphate.

Recruits are required to:

> Abide by Al-Qa'ida Rules
> Obey leaders without disobeying Islamic rules
> Have no dealings with any other Islamic group.
> Maintain secrecy
> Spread jihad to family and friends.

Salary, vacation, and home leave travel benefits are specified for married and unmarried personnel. Procedures for handling grievances and disputes are established in accordance with Islamic Law.

Recruits are challenged to show more zeal in serving religion than the infidels, and specialized knowledge and training is to be placed at the disposal of Al-Qa'ida.

Document concludes with a solemn written pledge that recruits must sign committing them to the service of Allah and Al-Qa'ida.

Back to Document List

Doc ID: **AFGP-2002-600048**
Date: Unknown
Author: Unknown
Length: 32 pages
Title: None (Al-Qa'ida Bylaws)
Full Text: English Arabic

Back to Document List

Synopsis: A lengthy organizational document covering the goals of Al-Qa'ida, organizational procedures, bylaws, benefits, and allowances. Reveals the highly centralized and controlling nature of the organization, and the extent to which it has embraced modern management practices while maintaining fidelity to its religious vision.

Key Themes: The document begins with an outline of Al-Qa'ida structure and bylaws, and the equivalent of a mission statement. The organization has four goals:

Spread jihad.
Prepare and train qualified Muslim personnel for jihad
Support local jihad movements around the world.
Coordinate international jihad movements so as to create a united global Jihad movement.

Al-Qa'ida must be prepared to wage jihad anywhere in the world, and not to be distracted by relief and aid operations. Al-Qa'ida must have no relation to the world of idols and secular and nationalist movements. Relations with non-jihadi Islamic groups should be respectful, but dedicated to pointing out their shortcomings and try to gain their support for jihad.

Lengthy job description is posted for the position of emir, his deputy, and other positions on the council. Of special interest is the position of the Executive Council Chairman who serves as a chief financial officer. His duties include control over bank accounts, expenditures, and budgeting. Salaries are paid according to a fixed schedule.

Policies are described for additional salary based on family size (married man receives 6,500 rupees with 700 rupees for each additional wife.) Provision is made for cost of living adjustments.

The document outlines medical, loan, furniture , vacation, disability, and severance benefits**.**

Also of interest are the duties for the Decision Execution Branch which has responsibility for imprisonment and torture as well as for the information and procedural security of the organization. This section is also responsible for personal security of the Emir and the guard detail chief be an Arab but Yemenis and Gulf Arabs are excluded. The chief of guards is instructed to keep very close watch over non Arab staff.
Back to Document List

Doc ID: **AFGP-2002-600053 (Letter One)**
Date: Mid 1990s
Author: "Your Uncle"
Length: 32 pages
Title: The Five Letters to the African Corps I
Full Text: English Arabic

Back to Document List

Synopsis: This letter is addressed to "Dear Brother Saif" and signed by "Your Uncle." The author has prepared a lengthy response to issues raised in two previous letters (not included in this collection) sent by Saif from Somalia where he is in charge of Al-Qa'ida activity. Uncle gives frank observations about the prospects for jihad in Somalia.

Key Themes: Uncle believes that Somalia is not ready for classic jihad and that Al-Qa'ida will not be able to find an ally with an identical intellectual force. The goal is to expel crusader forces from Somalia even if a semi-Islamic, semi-democratic government were to gain power.

Saif is warned that the Somali movement he is working with is in danger of isolating itself from the masses, and if the masses become suspicious of a movement it has no prospect for success.

The U.S. invasion of Somalia presents Saif with a golden opportunity to strike at the "bald eagle" now that it has landed unexpectedly in his sights.

Flexibility is required. If Al-Qa'ida could work with Sayyaf, Hikmatyar, and Burhan to achieve it purposes in Afghanistan, then Saif can work with Aideed, Mahdi, and Kharteet in Somalia. The Somali leadership, however, must be bolstered since they have even less manhood than Saddam Hussein and Arafat.

Uncle proposes a 5 point strategy to unite Somali forces and create an Islamic national front:

1. Expulsion of the foreign international presence.
2. Rebuilding of state institutions.
3. Establishment of domestic security.
4. Comprehensive national reconciliation.
5. Economic reform and combating famine.

The message ends with encouragement to persevere through financial difficulties and act according to the traditions "of our noble Messenger." Uncle cites God feeding Quraysh and the great Badr raid as examples of victories that come through the "confident belief that God will grant victory."
Back to Document List

Doc ID: **AFGP-2002-600053 (Letter Two)**
Date: September 30, 1993
Author: Hassan al-Tajiki
Length: 11 pages
Title: The Five Letters to the African Corps II
Full Text: English Arabic

Back to Document List

Synopsis: The letter provides an update and analysis concerning jihad activity in Tajikistan, Afghanistan, Russia, and China.

Key Themes: Tajikistan is judged to be a challenging but not hopeless area for jihad activity.

Russia is in chaos and the former republics of the Soviet Union are weak. America is preparing to fill the power vacuum in the region.

In Afghanistan America is supporting warlords and exploiting Civil War to neutralize opposition to its control of the region.

China is a rising power where future relations with the Islamic world will be of great importance.

The letter concludes with an upbeat assessment for future jihad operations in Tajikistan.

Back to Document List

Doc ID: **AFGP-2002-600053 (Letter Three)**
Date: May 24, 1994
Author: Hassan
Length: 36 pages
Title: The Five Letters to the African Corps III
Full Text: English Arabic

Back to Document List

Synopsis: Congratulations for the victory in Somalia and a strategic review of worldwide jihad operations. Success of the Africa Corps is contrasted with the difficult position of the Asian Corps.

Key Themes: Hassan begins by expressing his congratulations to the Africa Corps for their great victory in Somalia. He would like to join them is having difficulties traveling because he is now wanted for security reasons in Pakistan.

He asks the questions: "So how were our amazing Corps and its starving African Muslim allies able to be victorious over the greatest power in the world today?" The answer lies in the power of God, because "When we are truly fighting in the name and on behalf of God, we have nothing to fear…"

In Somalia, Islamic forces were able to exploit America's Vietnam Complex, because the American's fear getting bogged down in a real war. Al-Qa'ida needs to develop a tactical doctrine to exploit the weakness of its great enemy, and a Counter-Intelligence strategy to confront the power of the American security agencies.

Victory in Somalia must be followed up to avoid giving the defeated foe time to regroup. The strategy of the "Jewish West" is to strike at the periphery of the Muslim lands. The original crusaders tried to strike at the center of the Islamic lands, but were defeated. The Crusaders adapted, conquered the periphery, and were then able to control the Arabian Peninsula and Palestine.

Somalia represents a victory for Al-Qa'ida on the periphery. The hour for regaining the heartland has arrived, but much training is required before this phase can begin.

While the Africa Corps has been successful, the Asian Corps is very weak with only 5 members. Yemen is described as a crucial battlefield, an auspicious location for declaring jihad in the Arabian Peninsula.

More effective radio broadcasts are needed to launch a propaganda campaign in Yemen and Somalia. Demands should include:

> Evacuation of the Crusaders, Jews, and infidel forces from the Peninsula.
> Destruction of churches and Jewish and Buddhist temples.

Hassan observes that radio stations are more powerful than atomic bombs and that several dozen committed young believers can bring correct teaching to the whole area. Martyrdom attacks in Yemen create an auspicious opportunity to declare jihad in the Arabian Peninsula.

Next comes a review of lessons learned in Tajikistan. Serious errors have been committed by the Nahdha who have relinquished their Islamic identity. Nahdha like Saddam Hussein exploits Islam to gain popular support, but by no means expresses true adherence to Islam.

In Kabul, warlords who pursue their own agendas are weakening the work of jihad.

Back to Document List

Doc ID: **AFGP-2002-600053 (Letter Four)**
Date: May 24, 1994
Author: Hassan
Length: 14 pages
Title: The Fourth Letter about Jihad in the Caucasus
Full Text: English Arabic

Back to Document List

Synopsis: Hassan is writing from an Al-Qa'ida training camp and relates his disappointments concerning reverses Al-Qa'ida has experienced in Central Asia. He also seeks to apply lessons learned from the arrest of international terrorist Carlos.

Key Themes: In Tajikistan Al-Qa'ida has been outmaneuvered by the Nahdha movement and Ahmad Shah Mas'oud who have been able to extract arms and ammunition from Al-Qa'ida without providing training. Demoralized Mujahideen have been leaving the movement.

Arab fighters in northern Afghanistan are loathed by Mas'oud and his commanders and in Pakistan Arab fighters are restricted and harassed by Pakistani authorities. Combating Islam is now both a state motto and policy in that country. In Pakistan Islam is a "folkloric" religion.

Hassan state that Al-Qa'ida in Pakistan is besieged and that "All we have is the beleaguered space between our camp and Kabul in which to move with relative freedom."

Jews are gaining strength in Russia. Hassan engages in the eschatological speculation that the Jewish nuclear project will prepare the way for Armageddon and the rule of King Anti-Christ. He proposes bringing the jihad to Moscow with the ultimate objective of bringing jihad to Jerusalem.

Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan are essential fronts for fighting to overcome the developing American blockade in Central Asia.

The extradition of Carlos emphasizes the need for preserving strong, secure rear areas in Sudan and Afghanistan.

Hassan says that he is bored in Afghanistan and want to relocate his family to Sudan.

Back to Document List

Doc ID: **AFGP-2002-600053 (Letter Five)**
Date: 1994?
Author: Hassan al-Tajiki
Length: 14 pages
Title: The Fifth Letter to the Africa Corps
Full Text: English Arabic

Back to Document List

Synopsis: An analysis evaluating the impact of jihad in the Caucasus. Written while fighting is raging in Grozny, Hassan sees this struggle holding great promise for the future of jihad.

Key Themes: The Soviet Union collapsed as a direct result of the war in Afghanistan. This left the U.S. to run the world in an autocratic manner. The U.S. alliance of Western states is fragile, however, due to the warfare inherent in the capitalist system.

The new world order is America against everyone, and everyone against the Muslim. The Jews have succeeded in creating a Crusader alliance among Orthodox, Protestant, and Catholic churches. Then they added Hindu and Confucian Buddhist power in India, China, and Japan.

This alliance is fragile and just as the 11th and 12th century Crusaders succumbed to infighting, so too will this alliance. Jihadists can look forward to Russian gangs selling nuclear weapons and ultimately providing nuclear arms for the jihad.

The Caucasus is a strategically important zone because it provides access to the West. The U.S. is attempting to use Turkey and Pakistan to isolate the region, but the Chechens are rugged warriors.

Furthermore, harsh Russia violence in the region means only opportunities for martyrdom and paradise for Muslims. The Crusader strategy will backfire because the "bloody governing" of the Russians will result in a disaster inflicted by Islamic forces.

Al-Qa'ida can best support Chechen rebels by striking in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Arab fighters are at a disadvantage in the area since they do not know the language and culture.

In an aside, Hassan comments that the jihadi missionary must be patient. Most Muslims will not pick up a weapon and declare jihad "unless he has tasted killing and felt the knife as it passed across his throat."

Therefore the Crusader wars are welcomed, but the" armed missionary must realize that his moving amongst Muslims whose Islam exists in Name only." Apostasy reigns, not only in Turkey and Pakistan, but also in Saudi Arabia and Egypt. The challenge for Al-Qa'ida is to unite the rising jihadi spirit in Arab lands with that in the Caucasus. The

regions of Ingushetia, Dagestan, Abkhazia, and Azerbaijan are fruitful areas for expansion because of the hostility toward Russia in those areas.

Back to Document List

Doc ID: **AFGP-2002-600080**
Date: Unknown
Author: Unknown
Length: 53 pages
Title: Lessons Learned from the Armed Jihad Ordeal in Syria
Full Text: English Arabic

Back to Document List

Synopsis: A lengthy document of 20,000 words that examines the jihad waged against the Syrian regime of Hafez el Assad from 1976-1982. The document begins with a Chapter 2 entitled "Basics" followed by a Chapter 1 "Observations on the experience as a whole. This is followed by another Chaper 2 entitled "Lessons learned from the obstacles facing military jihad." The Syrian militants belong to one group called the Attalieaa-the Vanguard and their erstwhile allies in the Muslim Brotherhood fought secretly and openly against the Alawite regime in Damascus. Although brutally repressed, this campaign taught Islamic militants many valuable lessons.

Key Themes: Drawing on Islamic tradition and Twentieth Century examples of guerilla and information warfare, the study takes a critical look at the many failings of this campaign, and develops a strategy for waging jihad successfully.

Lessons learned can be grouped in these major categories:

Islamic Tradition: 18 Lessons Learned, of which the most important are:

Leadership Battles. The leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood were more concerned about their leadership battles than the struggle. They are accused by the author of treason and criminal behavior against jihad. They betrayed the faith and devotion of the young followers. The Vanguard while strong in faith and dedication, were weak in leadership and training. Their Islamic devotion was blessed by Allah who saved them from deviant thought and deterioration.

Insufficient religious instruction. Fighters were either not properly taught or not sufficiently instructed in Islam. This problem became more acute as the original fighters were killed off and replaced by members who lacked proper understanding of Islam. Insufficient number of committed Mujahadeen to fill all important positions.

Lack of study in the Islamic tradition. A myriad of rich experiences were readily available for those seeking knowledge, but nobody bothered to study these traditions.

Failure to develop a public relations campaign to communicate Mujahid Revolutionary Theory, The most important element of any revolutionary struggle is to communicate the right message. This was not done and the people therefore did not support the struggle.

Untrustworthy Arab Regimes. While reluctantly willing to support jihad against Syria, the Arab neighbors were at best temporary allies. The leaders of the neighboring countries in reality feared Islam and imprisoned the faithful.

Excessive Dependence on Outside sources of support. Mujahideen must be self-sufficient, otherwise they become dependent on unreliable external benefactors. It is better to depend on stealing from the hostile regime, than to develop a dependency on external supporters

Failure to deter allies of Syria. The lack of a means to strike at the allies of Syria meant that Arab regimes suffered no penalty for assisting Damascus.

Lack of Scholarly Contribution. Islamic scholars in the region failed to contribute their knowledge, and the Mujahideen likewise did not make sufficient effort to seek out and develop religious scholars.

Unprepared Islamic Missionary Groups. These groups did not understand the requirements for jihad and failed to prepare their followers both spiritually and militarily for the struggle.

Pan-Arabism Undermining the Islamic Message. When secular, pan-Arab nationalist thinkers became involved in the movement, the message of jihad was distorted by an Iraqi Baath message.

Lack of Operational Security. Groups used open lines of communication which made it easy for intelligence services to collect information and control the movement.

While all of these lessons do not appear directly related to the Islamic tradition, the conclusion to this section states that despite the failings of the religious leaders, the Muslim masses demonstrated the power of jihad, and Allah honored their sacrifice. “A giving Muslim nation willing to sacrifice is the ultimate capital.”

Lesson Learned in Jihad Operations and Guerrilla Warfare: (Text refers to “gang warfare” but the clear sense corresponds to the sense of guerrilla war)

No comprehensive Plan and strategy. The movement lacked a strategic vision, had no understanding of the importance of terrain, and failed to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the Syrian regime. This led to events, not plans, controlling the course of the battle.

Insufficient screening of recruits. Mujahideen failed to vet carefully recruits. This allowed many government informers and moles to join, and betray the movement.

Improper Command Structure. The movement was too dependent on outside sources and field commanders were not given sufficient authority. The organization must be provided with sufficient resources instead of depending on raiding the resources of the

opponents. Field commanders, however, must be in communication with a central command that performs the planning and strategy, or the field commanders may be isolated and subsequently destroyed.

Links to Intelligence Services. By developing relationships with the intelligence services of Arab states, the movement yielded its autonomy and came under the control of these groups.

Too Much Time Spent in Training Camps. Much of the time spent in training camps in other Arab countries was wasted because no military or spiritual training was pursued. Leaders must stay close to their troops to properly instruct, train, and inspire them.

Concentration of Forces. Too many of the forces were concentrated in Hama, Syria which allowed the Syrian military to concentrate its forces, encircle the city, and destroy the Mujahideen.

Detachment from the Masses. Citing a "gang (guerrilla) warfare theorist, the author repeats Mao's familiar wisdom that "The masses are the sea in which the vanguard organization should swim like a fish." The masses are the source of information, supplies, personnel, and organization. Successful examples of revolutionary war, Algeria, China, and Vietnam are contrasted with failures like Malaysia, Philippines, and Greece.

Adequate Supplies. Prior to launching an operation, the movement must have secured an adequate supply of arms and ammunition.

Communications Security. The organization must avoid open transmission of messages and develop a command structure that protects information and personnel from disclosure. Capture of fighters creates a problem if they are knowledgable about the organization and its structure. The movement is encouraged to emulate the Italian Red Brigades, the Baader-Meinhof gang, and ETA to see how organizations can compartmentalize information and still achieve operational effectiveness.

Care for the Wounded. Plans must be made to allow for the evacuation of the wounded to care for them and most importantly to prevent them from being captured by the enemy.

Role of Families. Mujahideen must accept that their families will be involved in the struggle, and that family members will be subject to punishment and torture by the regime. Retaliatory attacks will raise the morale of civilians and encourage the fighters. An American expert is quoted as follows: "…the brutality a regime uses against the civilians in retaliation to acts committed by the revolution is the best gift a revolution can receive, even neutral people will end up joining their ranks, the regime will be seen as the oppressor and the revolution will be seen as the just and fair side."

Victory. The war will not be won by defeating the enemy on the battlefield. Using the tools of modern communication combined with the power of faith the jihad will ultimately prevail. Victory will come in a protracted war in which the enemy is defeated

through exhaustion and annoyance. Mujahideen must be smart, dedicated, and well trained, and only the fighters with the right personality and temperament can make successful mujahideen. Ultimately Allah will provide the victory.

Back to Document List

Doc ID: **AFGP-2002-600113**
Date: Unknown
Author: Omar al-Sumale
Length: 6 pages
Title: A Short Report on the Trip from Nairobi to Cape Kambooni and the Situation in the Southern Region
Full Text: English Arabic

Back to Document List

Synopsis: Omar describes the tribal population, the region's cities, and the topography. He also writes about the schedule of future work, provides some examples of terrorist operations that his group carried out, and gives his opinion on the location and the future of the operation.

Key Themes: The notes made in the first section represent a terrorist scouting report for the Kenyan coast popular with tourists. Special attention is given to the areas where tourists congregate, and the patrols conducted by the police. Tactics for avoiding police detection are described as well as navigational details for moving by ship along the coast.

The second part of the document begins with ethnographic information about Bajuni, Ogaden, and Jal Jaal people of coastal northern Kenya and Somalia. Political programs were established with all three to promote their cooperation with Al-Qa'ida.

Operational requirements for the region are established, and the results of two operations analyzed.

Ambush of Belgian Patrol. Al-Qa'ida supported forces in Somalia are credited with killing a Belgian soldier in an ambush and driving the Belgians out of the region.

Attacks against Indian forces. Al-Qa'ida supported forces are credited with a successful attack against the Indian Army encampment at Bols Quqani, and in another operation driving the Indian out of Kambooni.

Omar has a high opinion of the local fighters who have proven to be successful and have inspired many Muslim youth to sign up and be fighters.

Back to Document List

Doc ID: **AFGP-2002-600157**
Date: unknown
Author: Osama bin Laden
Length: 1 page
Title: Letter to Aba Khalid
Full Text: English Arabic

Back to Document List

Synopsis: A one-paragraph response by bin Laden to a letter that Aba Khalid wrote to him. Bin Laden expresses pleasure that Khalid's letter reflected an understanding of the goals of the movement and the dangers confronting it. Bin Laden also states that they are considering the suggestions of Aba Khalid and will let him know their decision on them.

Doc ID: **AFGP-2002-600321**
Date: unknown
Author: Osama bin Laden
Length: 2 pages
Title: Letter to Mullah Mohammed ‘Omar from Osama bin Laden
Full Text: English Arabic

Back to Document List

Synopsis: A two page typed letter discussing the situation in Afghanistan, the continuation of jihad in the Islamic Republics, and the situation in the Arabian peninsula.

Key Themes: Through jihad Allah helped the Muslims to push the Communists out of Afghanistan. Following the Russian departure the country was in great turmoil, but under Omar’s leadership unification under Islamic law was made possible.

Bin Laden cites the great success in training and arming the jihadists in Tajikistan, and emphasizes that this effort must be continued. The continuation of jihad throughout the Islamic Republics will keep the Russians and American allies focused on stopping the spread of jihad and not on the Afghan issue. The scientific human capital available throughout the Islamic Republics will assist greatly in future jihad.

He then lists the reasons for the great significance of the Arabian peninsula:

- it holds the Ka’abah and the Prophet’s mosque
- it holds 75% of the world’s oil and whoever controls oil controls the world economy (this explains the tenacity of the Americans and others)

He also notes the extreme importance of the media battle and that it may consume 90% of total preparation for battles.

Back to Document List

Doc ID: **AGFP 2002-600966**
Date: 22 June 2000
Author: ‘Umar ‘Abd-al-Hakim
- a.k.a. Abu Mus’ab al-Suri
- a.k.a. Mustapha Hakim al-Set Mariam
- Born Mustapha Abdul-Qadir Mustapha Hussein al-Sheikh Ahmad al-Jakiri al-Rifa’ei

Length: 81 pages
Title: The Confrontation Between the Sunni Population of Al Sham against Al-Naserieh, Crusaders and Jews
Location: Kabul, Afghanistan
Full Text: English Part: One Two Three Four Five Six Arabic
Back to Document List

Background: Per translator, this is an abbreviated version of a longer book that was found on floppy disks captured from Mes Ainak, Jalalabad

The text is a call to jihad against the Syrian regime of Bashar Al-Asad. It outlines various offenses committed by the Alawites (also referred to as Nusayris) against Sunni Muslims, presents theological justification in support of jihad, and outlines a broad strategy for beginning jihad in Syria. In addition to Syrian Alawites, Al-Suri advocates killing Sunnis in the employ of the government, Jews, and Christians, specifically mentioning Americans, British, French, and Russian.

Table of Contents:
1. The Pharoah is Dead, and the Nusayri Alawites Are Implanted in Syria.
2. The Nusayri Alawites: Creed, History, and the Rules of Islam Concerning Them
3. Selections From the Modern History of the Nusayri Alawites, 1970-2000
4. The Mission Assigned to the Nusayris in Light of the Prospects for the Future
5. What God Has Decreed in This Matter and the Duty Incumbent Upon the Sunnis
6. Urgent Appeals
7. Advice on the Method of Confrontation Between the Sunnis and the Nusayri Alawites in Syria and Lebanon
8. Good News of the Book and the Sunni Concerning the Land of Syria and its People

References:
1. The Jihadist Islamic Revolution in Syria: Pains and Aspirations, by ‘Umar ‘abd-al Hakim
2. The Rules on Jihad Against the Apostates and Their Supporters, and the Rules on Driving Off the Tyrant, unpublished letter by ‘Umar ‘Abd al-Hakim
3. The Nusayri Alawites, by Muhajid al-Amin
4. The Conspiracy of Sectarian Statelets, by ‘Abd al-Ghani al-Nuwawi
5. Amal and the Palestinian Camps, by ‘Abdallah Gharib
6. The Turn of the Magi Has Come, by ‘Abdallah Gharib

7. The Missing Duty, by Martyr ‘Abd-al’Salam Faraj
8. Defending the Honor of Muslims is the Most Important of Individual Duties, by the martyr ‘Abdallah ‘Azzam
9. Major Fatwas Vol. 28, by Imam Ibn Taymiyah
10. Hadith on the Virtues of Syria, Edition of Al=Albani
11. Virtues of Syria and Its People, by Imam Ibn Taymiyah

Other citations not listed above: Imam Abu-Bakr al-Jassas, Ibn Kathir, Abu-Ya’la Said, Ibn al-Qayyim, Ishaq bin-Rahawiyah, Imam al-Shatibi, Imam al-Qurtubi, Al-Sheikh Muhammad Rida, Al-Sheikh Mahmud al-Alusi, Al-Sheikh Muhammad Amin Al-Shanqiti, Sheikh Muhammad Na’im Yasin, Ahmad Shakir, Sheikh al-Islam Mustafa Sabri, Ahmad Shakir, al-Tabari, ‘Abd-al Qadir ‘Awdah, Al-Jahidh Ibn Hajar, Imam al-Juwayni,

PART ONE:
The text is dedicated to martyrs through the ages and current heroes such as Usama Bin Laden, Abdullah Azzam, Abu Sayyaf, Sayid Qutb, Hassan al Banna, and Marwan Hadid (partial list). It is written for “a new generation of young men who are determined to join the jihad” on the occasion of the death of Hafez al-Asad.

PART TWO: Al-Suri presents theological arguments suggesting that the Alawites (also called Nusayris) are heretics who threaten the very survival of Muslims in Syria. The Alawite sect developed in the third century of the Hejira, drawing on rites drawn from Mazdaic, Jewish, Persian, Christian, Islamic, and Buddhist origins. Non-Islamic beliefs include the “idea of transmigration of souls, reincarnation, permissibility of fornication with the unmarriageable, and sex between men.” Additionally, Alawites celebrate Christmas, the Persian holiday of Nawruz, and Islamic holidays not recognized by Sunnis. Al-Suri writes that Alawites do not believe in heaven and hell, or in judgment, and that their prayer rituals differ from those of Sunnis. Furthermore, they oppose pilgrimage to Mecca, and “harbor special hostility to the Ka’bah.” He cites pages of anti-Alawite fatwas from Sheikh al-Islam Ahmad Ibn Taymiyyah stating that Alawites are “worse unbelievers than the polytheist Jews and Christians” and therefore it is the duty of any Muslim who is aware of their doctrines to expose them for what they are (apostates).

PART THREE: Al Souri describes the historical sins of the Alawites in Syria, beginning with their help to the “Tatar” invaders who occupied Syria in xxx. The author holds the Alawites responsible for allowing Jerusalem to fall to the Crusaders, and for collaborating with the French occupation of Lebanon in 1920. This occupation eventually resulted in the current confessional system of governance in Lebanon, which, according to al-Suri, favors Christian interests.

Al-Suri accuses the Alawites of supporting the rise of the socialist Ba’th party, and of deliberately losing the 1967 Arab-Israeli war by ceding the Golan Heights to the Israeli Defense Forces by secret arrangement. As evidence, he cites a Defense Ministry Communiqué, No. 66, which apparently ordered the Syrian army to withdraw from the battle lines seventeen hours before the IDF entered the town. Al-Suri goes on to accuse

the Alawites of abandoning Lebanon to IDF control when it withdrew the Syrian army from thirty-nine Lebanese villages in 1973.

The author declares that the recent crimes of the Alawites are too numerous to describe in full, so he limits himself to a selection of issues. The Alawites are accused of purging all Sunnis from political, party, and military leadership, thereby placing Nusayris in control of all security and intelligence services. This has been compounded by a history of graft and corruption that fragmented the army and the economy through linkages between the Alawite officers and a "circle of big merchants." The Alawites manipulated educational institutions through the Ba'th Revolutionary Youth, which led to distortions of the religion, and increased atheism, libertinism, corruption, dissolution, and rebellion. Furthermore, the Alawites eliminated any opposition from ulema, preachers, and sheikhs following the short-lived uprising led by Sheikh Marwan Hadid.

From 1978-1982 Marwan Hadid led an uprising against Hafez al-Asad. According to al-Suri, two thousand Sunni youth were killed by the government, and 30,000 were imprisoned, and 10,000 rendered homeless. Hadid was executed in 1976 (sic). Per al-Suri, the government "liquidated" thirty-thousand Sunni prisoners and "bearers of advanced degrees" between 1983 and 1996.

Al-Suri accuses the Alawites of co-opting members of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and then eliminating the PLO in Lebanon. According to the author, the Syrian army committed several massacres in Lebanon in 1975, and another in Hamah in 1982 which killed 45,000 civilians. In 1985 the Syrian army bombed Tripoli, killing several thousand and causing 300,000 to flee. He accuses the Alawite regime of cooperating with Christian Maronite militias to allow massacres in refuges camps in Al-Za'tar in 1976, and again in the Sabra and Shatila camps in 1982. He believes that the Syrian army arranged the Israeli invasion of Beirut in 1982.

The author criticizes Hafez al-Asad's manipulation of the government to allow his son Basil to be named as his successor. After Basil was killed in a car accident, al-Asad's second son, Bashar, was put in place through manipulation of the legislature. Al-Suri faults Bashar for having spent ten years living in England being trained in "lackeyhood" by the British [*per al-Suri, Bashar al-Asad is tainted because he completed his dentistry studies in England, yet al-Suri spent significant amounts of time in Spain and England*].

PART FOUR begins with the statement that Asad is fulfilling the "task entrusted to the Nusayris" by the "international Christian-Jewish order." The Nusayri mission is to allow the Jews to control the region through normalization of economic, cultural, political, military, and social relations with the West. He also accuses Arab leaders such as Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, Jordan's King Abdullah, Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah, and the U.A.E. president of complicity with the "Crusader Jewish New World Order." France comes under criticism for supporting the Maronite Christians in Lebanon, while Iran is accused of attempting to convert Syrian Sunnis to Shi'ism.

Al-Suri sees two possibile avenues by which the Nusayris may accomplish these missions. In the first scenario, Syria provokes a war with Israel so that Israel can "play the role of the hero." The largely Sunni army will be decimated by the IDF's superior firepower, and the Nusayris will then accept Israel's terms. This is the "Iraq model." In the second scenario, Bashar sponsors an era of openness to the Jews and Americans, resulting in a "deluge" of IMF loans and investments. The economy prospers, capitalism prevails, and the Syrian people are "plunged into the maelstrom of consumer luxury" wherein the rich get richer, and the poor poorer. Both scenarios ensure Jewish survival, Christian oversight, and glory for the Nusayris while the Syrian people suffer occupation and the army is broken. This is the "Egyptian model."

After either of these, Israel will destroy al-Aqsa mosque, rebuild the Temple of Solomon, and expel the remaining Palestinians to Jordan, where they will be abased according to a different scheme supervised by the Masons and the sons of the former apostate Husayn (father of Jordan's King Abdullah). The Lebanese Christians will control Lebanon, while the Syrian economy will be plundered by the Americans and Nusayris through American control of Syria's oil reserves. Al-Suri cites leaked information from unnamed strategic centers that indicate Syria's oil reserves equal or exceed Saudi reserves.

PART FIVE:
Al-Suri presents evidence suggesting that jihad is an individual duty in the case of Syria. He argues that jihad against infidels is an individual duty if the infidels seize any Muslim land, or if they "transgress against any of Islam's sanctities." In this case, the same rules apply to jihad against anyone who supports the infidels. He cites evidence based on two kinds of jihad: offensive (jihad al-talab) and defensive (jihad al-daf). Offensive jihad involves pursuing the infidels in their lands, which is a collective duty, the smallest part of which is to block enemy frontiers with believers and to send an army at least once a year to the front. The Imam is responsible for sending a force against the enemy once or twice a year, and the people must help him. If he fails, it is a sin. He quotes other unnamed "fundamentalists" who say that jihad is an obligatory call, and it must be carried out as much as possible so there will remain none but Muslims and those entered into peace treaty with Muslims [*the use of the term "fundamentalist" is important, as it may indicate that al-Suri is trying to position himself as a moderate, implying that his text is a mainstream argument containing nothing controversial]*.

The defensive jihad involves driving infidels out of Muslim lands, which is an individual duty. It is required in three (sic) cases: when infidels invade a Muslim town, if the two armies (Muslim and infidel) meet, if the Imam calls individuals or people to arms, and if infidels capture a number of Muslims [*the third instance is particularly important, as al-Suri is implying that he has the authority to call Muslims to arms*]. He cites Ibn Taymiyah's writing to illustrate that having no transportation to the battle is not an acceptable reason not to fight. This suggests that all Muslims must participate in defensive jihad, even if it constitutes a material sacrifice on their part. In other words, there are no exemptions from jihad. To illustrate the broad foundation of this argument, al-Suri also cites a Hanafi scholar (al-Suri is Hanbali) who argues that collective duty becomes individual duty if those closest to the fighting need reinforcement.

[A section of the text or the translation may be missing]

Al-Suri presents several pages of Sura and Hadith dealing with the importance of sharia law as the basis for law and governance. He quotes Ibn Taymiyah and Ibn Kathir extensively to illustrate that rulers who do not ensure that sharia is the law of the land are apostates, and that supplementing sharia with other kinds of law is not acceptable. Mustafa Sabri, writing at the time of the Ottomans, warned about the dangers inherent in the separation of church and state, as it constitutes an attempt to destroy religion. Europe therefore is apostate and atheist.

The next section provides evidence that alliances, collaboration, or cooperation with Jews and Christians are considered apostasy, again using Sura, Hadith, and quotations from scholars. From this, al-Suri presents evidence that it is a duty to fight apostate rulers. Critically, he writes that obedience to rulers is not a duty (‘Abd al-Qadir) and that Muslims do not need permission from anyone to undertake this duty. Other traditions of jurisprudence emphasize that obedience to rulers is necessary, even when they are unjust.

Based on the preceding paragraphs, al-Suri declares that there are two choices: organize jihad against the Jews and Christians, or organize jihad against the other apostate enemies of God that are the “closest enemy” (here he mentions Jordan). He acknowledges that because Sunni Muslims are employed by the governments of Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and other Arab countries, the jihad will necessarily involve fighting other Muslims. This leads into the next section, which discusses various scholarly opinions on dealing with “supporters of infidels and apostates.”

Al-Suri states that most of the Muslims employed by the apostate regimes are either ignorant or forced to serve these regimes. It is desirable to educate them so that they may avoid serving apostates. Barring this, these Muslims should avoid fighting for the apostate regimes. If they are forced to fight, Allah knows what’s in their hearts, and will make the appropriate judgment for them.

The next section explains that Muslims are allowed to defend their religion, life, honor, and property. Anyone who dies defending his life, honor, or property is a martyr (women and children are counted as part of the “honor” section). Property is broadly defined to include income, and this allows al-Suri to claim that tax collection is an attack on property, which can justifiably be fought.

PART SIX is an appeal to Sunni Muslims in Syria, Lebanon, and Greater Syria to join the jihad against the apostate rulers and the infidel Jews and Christians. He asks what Muslims are waiting for, and mocks them by asking whether they’re content with degrees, television screens, and satellite dishes. Jihad in the path of Allah is the shortest way to paradise. A series of specific appeals follows, beginning with Sunni youth, whom he calls the hope of Islam. He states that they do not need permission from anyone, as jihad is an individual duty. He urges the Ulema to awaken to their duty, arise from their negligence, and encourage jihad. Al-Suri’s appeal to the “sons of the Sunnis” that work in

police, army, and security services is a bit conflicted. He condemns them for their participation in apostate regimes and assures them that they will be severely punished by God while simultaneously urging them to join the jihad. He urges Bashar al-Asad to give up his infidelity by becoming a Sunni, or else flee to his Christian masters.

PART SEVEN: Al-Suri provides advice on how to confront the Nusayris in Syria and Lebanon, beginning with recruitment of more fighters. Unity of effort in da'wah, military and propaganda efforts is required. Avoid side clashes with other sects. Do not target Sunni supporters of the Alawites, especially those in the security services as it is preferable to win their support. Avoid infighting, and concentrate on domestic propaganda to further the cause. Methods for communicating the call to jihad include distribution of books, pamphlets, cassettes, computer disks, wall stickers, and writing "short slogans on walls." He urges attention to operational security, and tells mujahideen to avoid leaving any marks, stamps, handwriting, or fingerprints that could be traced by security services. He suggests that jihadi cells should be pyramidal in organization, emphasizing small, scattered groups whose recruitment should be based on personal connections.

Ulema should not be harmed, rather they should be presented with evidence that will correct their understanding of the situation. Al-Suri makes a strong point about this, repeating that it is a scandal to kill men of religion and knowledge. Moreover, it is a scandal to give the government an opportunity to accuse the mujahideen of committing such acts, as they will call the mujahideen "kharijites."

In the beginning, military confrontations should be limited to attacking small companies and individuals, including seizure of civil, military and security chiefs at home or abroad. He recommends killing Jews, American, French, and English citizens "to cause turmoil." He suggests that mujahideen should study the Quran, do extra fasts, and "work much and speak little."

PART EIGHT: Here al-Suri cites Sura and Hadith extolling Syria's importance and blessedness. He winds up with a final call to jihad, and signs off "from the Kabul Garrison."

Back to Document List

Doc ID: **AFGP-2002-601041**
Date: Unknown
Author: Ayman Zawahiri
Length: 3 pages
Title: The Response to the Serious accusations against Shiekh Albani concerning the silence of the turncoat leaders.
Full Text: English Arabic

Back to Document List

Synopsis: A call to Muslims to recognize shame and bad conditions of their lives is not the doing of fellow Muslims, but rather the result of the deception and cunning of the infidels. This three page document is an outline of an 18 page original document.

Key Themes: Shar'ia is proclaimed as the rule of God and whoever doesn't govern by Shar'ia is an infidel. Believers are called upon to kill the infidels.

Sheikh Albani accused of making grievous errors for prohibiting Muslims from participating in true jihad, and believing in a jihad based on forgiveness, education, and prayer.

While calling for attacks against the Jews, the first priority should be an attack against the apostate backslidden leaders.

The document refers to fatwas by Ahmad Shaker, Muhammad Hamid Al-Faqi, and Muhammad Bin Abr Aheem and revelations by Ibin A'bas and King Al-Shaj'ai.

Back to Document List

Doc ID: **AFGP-2002-601346**
Date: Unknown
Author: Unknown
Length: 3 pages
Title: Criticism of Abu Al-Bara'a
Full Text: English Arabic

Back to Document List

Synopsis: The author writes against those who "innovate in religion." In particular, he believes that Abu Al-Bara'a distorts Islamic law to his own ends. Abu Al-Bara'a ignores any evidence or arguments brought forth contrary to his opinions and picks and chooses what teachings fit his interests. People such as Al-Bara'a do not comprehend the truth.

Key Themes: It is wrong to "innovate in religion." Those who pick and choose which teachings to follow or advocate to fit their own interests are wrong and do not comprehend the truth.

Abu Al-Bara'a is the man targeted in this piece. He is quoted as stating that one cannot be declared an apostate unless solid evidence is established and that the scholars' statements do not address the issue of worshipping other deities than God. He specifically attacks Abu Hamza as being ignorant on this issue.

Abu Hamza is then quoted in response. He cites two scholars who committed apostasy as counterexamples to Al-Bara'a's note above. He also counters Al-Bara'a's accusation by stating that the scholars' rulings are not ultimate rulings but are based upon Islamic law. Also, he states that all scholars agree that polytheism is a damnable offense.

The author concludes by again attacking Abu Al-Bara'a for using a deceptive style to justify his own agenda with Islamic law. Al-Bara'a repeatedly ignored arguments and evidence based upon the Koran, the Prophet's traditions and scholars' views, and tried to convince his readers of the accuracy of his belittlement of the scholars. Such behavior is unacceptable.

Back to Document List

Doc ID: **AFGP-2002-601693**
Date: Unknown
Author: Abu Mus'ab
Length: 2 pages
Title: None (Status of Jihad)
Full Text: English Arabic

Back to Document List

Synopsis: A letter from Abu Mus'ab to Abu Mohammed relating a meeting with Abu Musab Zarqawi. The author and Zaraqawi agree that the Muslims fighting in Bosnia, Tajisistan, Chechnya, and Kashmir are polytheists and supporters of secular democracy, and that the Taliban are a front for Pakistan.

Key Themes: Zarqawi tells Abu Mus'ab that he is accused of Takfir (infidelity) because of his views about the Mulsims in Bosnia, Tajikistan, Chechnya, and Kashmir.
Their interest is in secular democracy and are all too willing to seek accommodation with secular power.

Doc ID: **AFGP-2002-602181**
Date: Unknown
Author: Unknown
Length: 2 pages
Title: None (Political Speculation)
Full Text: English Arabic

Back to Document List

Synopsis: This document is a response to issues raised in a previous correspondence. It appears to be addressed to Al-Sahal Al-Mumtan', but this could be the author's name. The author is analyzing the impact of the destruction of the Buddha statues, the fall of the Taliban regime, and speculates on future U.S. steps in the Middle East.

Key Themes: The author concurs with his correspondent in stating a low opinion of the Taliban. The Taliban has a "mentality based on fabrications, wrongdoing, beating around the bush and running away from reality." The destruction of the Buddhas is judged insignificant in comparison to the desire of some Taliban to gain respectability by taking a seat in the United Nations.

The author disagrees concerning Iranian leadership of the Islamic movement. He asks: "How can it fulfill the leadership role when it is incapable of guiding the Islamic insurgency?" He encourages Iran to attack Israel, and speculates that the U.S. is planning to attack Iran to protect Israel.

The final paragraph expresses a change in tone with admiration expressed for the Taliban for destroying the Buddhas and protecting Osama bin Laden.

Back to Document List

Doc ID: **AFGP-2002-602187**
Date: Unknown
Author: Unknown
Length: 2 pages
Title: None (Criticism of Sheik Bin Baz)
Full Text: English Arabic

Back to Document List

Synopsis: A letter addressed to Sheik Rida from an unknown author criticizing the sheik for his unfair criticism of Sheik Bin Baz's ruling on apostasy and his exaggeration of Sheik Magdasi's blunder.

Key Themes: Sheik Bin Baz issued two edicts: one forbade seeking the aid of infidels when the Syrian Mujahideen asked Saddam Hussein to overthrow the regime of Hafiz Al-Assad in Syria; the other edict allowed the Gulf regimes to depend on the infidels in attacking Saddam Hussein.

The author states that the recipient does not understand the position of Sheik Maqdasi, and should be open to the views of other's.

Doc ID: **AFGP-2002-603856**
Date: 14/May/June 2002 (sic)
Author: Al-Jihad Qa'ida Organization
Length: 2 pages
Title: Get the Idolaters out of Arab Island (Gulf Countries)
Full Text: English Arabic

Back to Document List

Synopsis: A warning to the officials of the United Arab Emirates to stop detaining Mujahideen sympathizers.

Key Themes: This letter signed by the Al-Jihad Qa'ida Organization warns officials that they risk retribution if they keep arresting and detaining Mujahideen sympathizers. The author boasts that the security agencies of the emirates have been infiltrated, and if the Americans are vulnerable so are they.

The tourist industry is described as shameless and the area is considered an easy target. Al-Qa'ida does not want to attack the Emirates, but policy in the area will compel an attack.

Doc ID: **AFGP-2002-801138**
Date: Sept. 2000
Author: Unknown
Length: 57 pages
Title: None (Various Administrative Documents, Minutes of Meetings, and Questions for Osama bin Laden and other al-Qaeda leaders)
Full Text: English Arabic

Back to Document List

Synopsis: This document is a collection of many administrative papers dated September 2000. They cover a range of administrative details concerning the administration of Al-Qa'ida camps in Afghanistan, issues raised by trainees in the camps, and interpretations of Qu'ranic verses.

Key Themes: This document contains hundreds of questions apparently posed by recruits in Al-Qa'ida training camps in Afghanistan. While answers are not given, the questions are remarkable for the breadth of topics which they cover and their bold, challenging, and at times naïve style. The major category of questions and sample questions are as follows:

1. **Questions about Taliban and Arab Freedom Fighters:**
   Please explain the legal reasons behind the guys fighting on the side of Taliban against Mas'oud, what is the fact behind this man and his followers.

2. **Ethics:**
   There are infidels in Pakistan and India of Christian and others (sic). Is it ok for us to kill them and take their possessions and properties? Is it ok to steal from the infidels residing in the Islamic and non Islamic countries?

3. **Saudi Arabia:**
   After listening to these words, what is our duty towards the occupation of the Holy Land (Saudi Arabia) and do we unify to save the most sacred places on earth?

4. **Jihad Movements:**
   The Eritrean movement is headed by brother Abu Suhail despite the weakness of their freedom fighters in guerilla warfare against the Afourqi Christian Jewish regime. Although the area is strategically important and Jewish experts are participating in fighting against the freedom fighters, no one is showing any interest in supporting this Jihad movement which is the entryway for combat in the Arabian Peninsula keeping in mind that the regime in it is Christian and that it was the land of the first migration of Islam?

5. **Pakistan**

What is the cover story used by the Americans concerning the presence of the American Special Forces in Pakistan and what are the Pakistani interests in this case?

6. **Geography**
   What are the countries that border Kosovo geographically on the map?

7. **Chechnya:**
   What is the latest news about Chechnya or how true is the news about the siege of the freedom fighters on the Dagestan borders?

8. **The United States**
   Dear Sheikh, you said that the United States can not pay its debts and to the rest of the countries. Does everyone borrow from the Jews?

9. **News and Events:**
   What are the latest news from Algeria, Philippines and Timor?

10. **Political Terminology:**
    How could one benefit from politics and gain political analysis and knowledge of events? Is it by listening to the news or by reading books? What are the books you advise reading to gain political knowledge?

11. **Old World Order:**
    You mentioned that the British handed the Arabian Peninsula over to Al Saud. How were they chosen?

12. **Military:**
    Please give us an idea about the AWACS aircraft. How is eavesdropping done from the aircraft, and what is the difference between it and the rest of the military aircrafts?

13. **Islamic Movements:**
    You mentioned that the Prophet accompanied him to battle the scholars, scientists, teachers and students. There was no excuse for anyone when it came to Jihad. What should we say to our famous scholars who did not participate in the Jihad against Russia in Afghanistan and the days of Serbia in the Bosnia and others?

14. **Globalization:**
    Dear Sheikh, don't you see that public awareness in purchasing locally produced goods even if it is highly priced will relatively solve the globalization problem?

15. **Islamic Countries**
    Numerous questions raised about the political situation in countries with active jihad movements.

16. Personal Qualities:

Dear Sheikh, we observed that you are a man of politeness, humbleness and bashfulness. What is humbleness and how is it gained?

17. Apostasy:

A matter is puzzling me and making me uneasy towards Jihad on the side of the Taliban. There is a presence of polytheism indicators in this country that is controlled by the movement. How would Sharia and monotheism be applied with the greatest of its pillars threatened now especially the existence of the tombs, and one of which is inside the mosque located in front of the offices of Emir al-Mu'mineen (Mullah Omar)?

18. Strategy:

What is the advantage of moving the camps from one location to another knowing the enemy has the capability to detect the location of the camps anywhere it is? We all know that the Al-Jazirah TV station announced the movement of the terrorist camps to the area near Helmand.

In addition to hundreds of questions raised by camp trainees, this document also includes a random assortment of papers dealing with the procurement of supplies for the camps, minutes of administrative meetings, and commentary about the meaning and applicability of Qu'ranic verses.

The final document contains instructions for working with Adobe programs, editing video, and organizing documents using Microsoft software.

Back to Document List

Doc ID: **AFGP-2002-901188**
Date: unknown
Author: Osama bin Laden
Length: 3 pages
Title: Letter to Pakistani Scholars from Osama bin Laden
Full Text: English Arabic

Back to Document List

Synopsis: A letter to the scholars of Deyubende in Peshawar, Pakistan. Osama bin Laden asks for a fatwa from them, noting that some Arab peninsula scholars have already done so. He also encourages them to recruit youth as soldiers for the jihad and the wealthy for donations to the cause. Finally, he asks for allegiance to himself and Mullah Mohammed Omar.

Key Themes: Bin Laden details the problem of the Islamic holy places continuing to be under the control of the Jews and the "Crusaders." The Islamic governments have done nothing to stop this and are useless. The people need a clear fatwa from the scholars to end this sacrilege.

The duty of the scholars is to explain the cause to the assembled masses who come to them for guidance. They must teach that the jihad is necessary for the sake of Allah. They must also teach that this jihad will occur under a group which obeys the will of Allah. Bin Laden specifically refers to Afghanistan under the leadership of Mullah Omar as being the embodiment of Allah's will.

He asks the scholars at their conference to encourage youth to join the jihad, persuade the rich to contribute funds, and to put out the fatwa he requests. He reminds them that some scholar in the Arabian peninsula have already issued this fatwa.

Finally, he asks for allegiance to himself then to Mullah Mohammed Omar.

Back to Document List

Doc ID: **Al Adl Letter**
Date: June 13, 2002
Author: ‘Abd-al-Halim Adl
Length: 4 pages
Title: Letter to Mukhtar
Full Text: English Arabic

Back to Document List

Synopsis: ‘Abd-al-Halim Adl vigoroulsy challenges the leadership of Osama Bin Laden and accuses him of being close-minded and oblivious to the great harm suffered by Al-Qa’ida in recent months. He writes to Mukhtar both to confront him for his complicity in these ill-conceived plans and to change Mukhtar’s thinking.

Key Themes: ‘Abd-al-Halim Adl writes a letter to his dear friend Mukhtar to challenge him for his role in the defeats that have befallen al-Qa’ida in the last six months, and to encourage him in his challenge to the management of Osama Bin Laden. The recent time period is one in which the movement has gone from “misfortune to disaster” with serious setbacks encountered in East Asia, Europe, America, the Horn of Africa, Yemen, the Gulf, and Morocco.

Al-Qa’ida needs to pause and regroup but ‘Abd-al-Halim ADL is a lonely voice on the exterior unable to impress those around bin Laden on the interior. He challenges Bin Laden’s leadership, and tries to convince Mukhtar to use his influence as one on the interior to halt the disastrous course of action pursued by Bin Laden. A pause for regrouping is desperately needed. But Bin Laden refuses to listen. ‘Abd-al-Halim Adl recognizes that Mukhtar has the ear of Bin Laden, and needs to tell him the truth about the external situation. Bin Laden, however, is difficult to persuade: “…unfortunately this is his habit that he will not abandon. If someone opposes him, he immediately puts forward another person to render an opinion in his support, clinging to his opinion and totally disregarding those around him, so there is no advice nor nothing.” (sic)

He calls on Mukhtar to disregard Bin Laden’s order**:** “My beloved brother, stop all foreign actions, stop sending people to captivity, stop devising new operation, regardless of whether orders come or do not come from Abu-Abdalla (bin Laden.)

‘Abd-al-Halim Adl writes out of conviction and appeals to Islamic obligation and his concern for Mukhtar that he not be judged by Allah for the errors which he has perpetrated.

He concludes the message by questioning the recent posting of another letter that ended up on a web site and revealed the identity of his family.

Back to Document List

Doc ID: **AFGP-2002-003345**
Date: 12 April 1994 to 7 May 1998
Author: Osama Bin Laden "The Committee for Advice and Reform"
Length: 103 pages
Title: Letters from bin Laden: A Collection of letters from Osama Bin Laden to various persons in Saudi Arabia
Statements 7 -21
Full Text: English Part: One Two Three Four Five Arabic

Back to Document List

Notes:
Skipped pages indicate repetition of a communiqué
The translations omit specific Sura and Hadith, as well as the names of scholarly sources that were mentioned in the original Arabic texts.

References: Imam Malik, Imam Ahmad, Ibn Taymiyah, Al-'Izz Ibn 'Abd-al-Salam

Synopsis: The following letters were written between 1994 and 1998, and cover a range of topics related to Saudi Arabia. The primary theme is the illegitimacy of the Saudi regime, and the allegation that they are supporting a Western plot to destroy the Muslim nation. Each letter addresses a current event, describing the event and providing the author's analysis of the context and implications of the regime's actions. Most statements end with a call to action on the part of the regime, the scholars, or the citizens of Saudi Arabia. The statements are coherently written and well-organized, and they are designed to motivate support through appeals to Muslim's better nature. Bin Laden's writing demonstrates an ability to communicate with multiple audiences, appealing to each group's pride and specific capabilities

Statement 7 (sic), pp. 001-003: Our invitation to Give Advice and Reform To: King Fahd Bin 'Abd-al 'Aziz Al-Saud and the people of Saudi Arabian Peninsula
02-11-1414 (12 April 1994)

King Fahd has asked Osama Bin Laden to return to the country, however this is unlikely as Osama Bin Laden's money was frozen and his passport confiscated. Religious scholars have previously asked King Fahd to cease actions against God's law but he has not done so. A petition signed by 400 people was sent in 1411 (during the Gulf War), and another in 1413. The people's rights have been abrogated and corruption infests government agencies. The country's monetary and economic situation is worsening, taxes have been raised yet the government wastes money. The armed forces are in poor condition, and shari'a law has been suspended. Foreign policy works against the interests of Muslims in Gaza, Jericho, and Algeria while supporting infidels. Attempts to promote reform have triggered reprisals and the "waging of war against just people who are hunted at home and abroad." To fulfill advisory promises, "we would like to announce the arrival of our brothers and scholars into the country." Osama Bin Laden urges King Fahd to abide by the requests of the Committee. End quote: God will not change people unless they do so for themselves.

Statement 3, p. 007: Saudi Arabia Supports the Communists in Yemen
27-12-1414 (07 June 1994)

The Yemeni communists have enslaved the Yemeni people, spreading apostasy and corruption. Infidel forces and their agents in the region led a conspiracy to re-establish two Yemeni states to promote conflict between them, Prince Sultan led a special committee that funneled support to the Yemeni Socialist Party. King Fahd is known to have anti-Islamic policies such as opposing Islamic awakening that would expose the artificiality of his rule; supporting anti-Islamic regimes such as the USSR, Algeria, Syria, and Christian groups in Sudan. Furthermore, he supported United Nations resolutions that cost Muslim lives in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Lebanon, and Kashmir, and which support the Jews in Palestine, Muslims now realize that the U.N. is an instrument in the hands of the Jews and Crusaders, Such behavior encourages divisions in the umma, leads to dispersal of wealth away from the Arabian Peninsula, supports socialists and communists who oppress the Yemeni people, is likely to provoke punishment from God, and allows for foreign intervention in the region. The letter ends with a call to the ulema to declare that these policies are dangerous and evil.

Statement 4, pp. 009-010: The Banishment of Communism from the Arabian Peninsula: The Episode and the Proof.
12-2-1415 (11 July 1994)

Jihad operations had been successful in eliminating socialist camps in Yemen, which is a lesson proving that all those who oppose the faith of the amah will fail. The Saudi regime, particularly Prince Sultan, supported the communist factions with money and weapons, which is a form of apostasy given that communists are atheists. Western

powers were too smart to back the losing side, showing that Western powers will not "take the risk of intervening in order to protect or assist corrupt regimes that do not have the support or endorsement of their people." The defeat of the communists is a rejection of secular and atheist regimes across the region.

Statement 5, pp. 013-014: Quran Scholars in the Face of Despotism
11-2-1415 (19 July 1994)

Osama Bin Laden praises scholars who have bravely unveiled the truth about the Saudi government. The government has used witchcraft and the media to justify its stands against Islam, while supporting the unbelievers. Scholars have raised the head of the ummah high to face the despotism and injustices of the regime. In turn, the government has slandered these scholars, taking away their freedom and trampling their rights.

Statement 6, pp. 017-018: Saudi Arabia Unveils its War Against Islam and its Scholars
08-04-1415 (12 September 1994)

In accordance with instructions from the United States, Saudi intelligence agents are arresting prominent anti-government scholars and preachers, including Salman Al-'Awdah and Safar al-Hawali. Prince Bandar also publicly acknowledged a relationship with the Zionist entity. This confirms that the Saudi government is in a war against Islam and is no different from secular governments. The government has been unable to deal with criticism, and indicates that the King and his "gang" obey the mercenary intelligence agents of foreign governments, Christians, and Zionists, Osama Bin Laden calls for righteous scholars to be patient and steadfast, for Muslim people to stay committed and not be confused by government deception, for silent scholars to take a stand, for Muslims in government to remember that they are accomplices unless they act against the regime, and to the government to be advised that they are at war with God.

Statement 7, pp. 21-22: Urgent Letter to Security Officials
11-04-1415 (16 September 1994)

Security officers are reminded that they were trained to defend the interests of their people and to act as their representatives. They must be vigilant guardians, but the government has attempted to take this "great and honorable position" away from them and turn them against Islam by forcing them to participate in the arrest and detention of scholars. He lists crimes of the Saudi government before calling on the security services to refuse to arrest any more scholars. He reminds them that God will bear witness to the punishment of those who stand by a tyrant, and reminds them that "every Muslim's blood, wealth, and food are forbidden to other Muslims." To show other Muslims that they are slaves of God alone, they should repent evil, refuse to obey orders to commit aggression against ulema, urge others not to obey such orders, help the people remove tyranny, not trust the regime, and strive to have the arrested scholars released.

Statement 8, pp. 25-26: Important Telegram to Our Brothers in the Armed Forces

14-4-1415 (19 September 1994)

The Saudi government has exposed its hostility to Islam by arresting the best of the ulema. The regime also imported Christian women to defend it, thereby placing the army in the highest degree of shame, disgrace, and frustration. It allowed American army bases in the peninsula, supported communists in Yemen, and has not helped defeat the IDF. Prince Sultan received five billion dollars' worth of commissions on arms sales in one year at the same time that allowances and reimbursements for soldiers were stopped. He argues that the regime has lost its legitimacy as a result of its friendliness with enemies of Islam and because of its hostility to the feelings of the people in a time of need. He predicts that it's only a matter of time until the regime falls. He reminds the "extraordinary men" that they are guardians of the faith, and reminds them that "if a man kills a believer intentionally, his recompense is hell, to abide therein forever and wrath and curse of God are upon him," (Quran 4:93) and that "the most despicable to God is he who kills a Muslim man" (Hadith).

Statement 9, pp. 29: Do Not Have Vile Actions in Your Religion
11-04-1415 (16 September 1994)

Muslim youth are called to action. The time of listlessness and relaxation is over. The Saudi government committed a fatal mistake in arresting scholars, as this shows that they are enemies of Islam. This not a trial but a blessing, as it reveals the truth about the battle between the regime and the people and their ulema, The people, who are "exploding with anger" are urged to renew their pledge to God by giving as much as they can (to zakat), to be disciplined and avoid taking actions that will harm the interests of the whole, to reveal the reality of the struggle to everyone they know, and to continue to demand the release of the imprisoned scholars.
There is a genius way of writing as if his opinions are already accepted and as if it should all be intuitive.

Statement 10, pp. 31-32: Higher Committee for Harm!!
10-05-1415 (15 October 1994)

After conducting an "insane campaign" against the ulema and scholars in Saudi Arabia, the regime created the Higher Committee for Islamic Affairs. This entity is an attempt to polish the regime's image by deceiving the people into believing that its purpose is to promote da'wah. Prince Sultan (Minister of Defense) and Prince Naif (Minister of Interior) are head of the council, which "leaves no room for doubt" about its intentions: "the destruction of true Islam and its da'wah, support for the religion of the king, and preparation for the history of the two black men filled with a malice for Islam." The duties and powers of the council are not defined, showing the arrogance of the regime.

The creation of this committee shows that the regime is not ready to listen to the good council of Sheikh 'Adb-al 'Aziz Bin Baz, who had tried to encourage reform. The committee has punished Sheikh Bin Baz by absorbing his powers. The strange thing is that the regime is able to find ulema that are still willing to back it.

Statement 11, pp. 35-38: Open Letter for Sheikh Bin Baz
27-07-1415 (29 December 1994)

Begins with praise and greetings, and a Hadith: "The best jihad is the word of truth in the presence of the unjust sultan." The ulema are heirs to the prophets and represent the good example and ideal model for the umma. The true ulema resist tyranny and speak the truth. Osama Bin Laden reminds the Sheikh of his great responsibility, and wonders at his silence during a time of liars and evil. Osama Bin Laden lists examples where the ulema have acted in error, about which Sheikh Bin Baz has not corrected the error.

1. Corruption has spread, and ulema have been complicit in sanctioning usury (charging interest for bank loans, which is considered haram by some Muslims). Osama Bin Laden states that the Sheikh has deceived the people by not making a distinction "between rulers who merely tolerate usury and rulers who legitimize and legalize usury." Those who legitimize usury are apostates and infidels, but Bin Baz continues to praise the regime. The current economic struggles are a punishment from God for allowing usury.

2. King Fahd wore a cross, and Bin Baz justified this action, although it is clearly apostasy. The king's poor health is clear indication that this was infidelity.

3. Bin Baz issued a fatwa permitting the Crusader-Jewish alliance that occupied the country in the name of liberating Kuwait. This was an abominable action that insulted the honor of the umma, sullied its dignity, and defiled the holy places.

4. Bin Baz kept silent when the Saudi regime aided the communists in Yemen, considering them to be fellow Muslims. Osama Bin Laden writes, "When were the communists ever Muslims? Aren't you the one who previously issued a fatwa on their apostasy and the necessity of killing them in Afghanistan? Or is there a difference between Yemeni communists and Afghan communists?"

5. Bin Baz wrote a fatwa allowing the "attacks and maltreatment" of the ulema that resulted in eh arrest and detention of Salman al-'Awdah and Safar al-Hawali.

More recently, Bin Baz supplied a fatwa sanctioning peace and normalization with the Jews, something that is painful for Muslims as it gives a veneer of legitimacy to the "surrender documents that the treacherous and cowardly Arab tyrants signed," opening Jerusalem to occupation.

Per Osama Bin Laden, the present Jewish enemy is "not dwelling in his original country," and therefore peace is not allowed (as it is with one who is warred on from outside). Jews have usurped sacred Muslim land, and they are an "attacking enemy" that corrupts religion. [The formulation that Jews are outside their original country allows any kind of warfare upon them.] Ibn Taymiyah is quoted as follows: The attacking enemy who corrupts the religion and the world must, in keeping with the faith, be repelled. There are

no (limiting) conditions." Therefore, it is religiously required to defend Palestinian people and the "stone-throwing heroes."

Osama Bin Laden goes on to argue that even if it were permissible to make peace with the Jews, the Arab leaders are illegitimate, and are therefore not allowed to make peace on behalf of the umma. Such apostate rulers have neither legitimacy nor sovereignty over Muslims. Bin Baz' fatwa gave legitimacy to secular organizations [the United Nations] and deceived the umma with its disgraceful summary and misleading generalization.

Osama Bin Laden suggests that the opinions of people who have experience in jihad are more legitimate than those who have no experience. Quoting Ibn Taymiyah, "Obligation is to be considered in matters of jihad according to the opinion of upright men of religion who have experience in what people of this world of, rather than those who mainly look at a matter from the viewpoint of religion. Do not adopt their opinion – not the opinion of men or religion that have no experience in the world." [This is another key formulation that gives Osama Bin Laden's opinion equal weight to that of religious scholars, and gives him the authority to challenge more learned men]. Whoever issued Bin Baz' fatwas has a "lack of awareness of the true nature of the situation." Osama Bin Laden closes with several paragraphs urging bin Baz to keep his distance from the tyrants and wrongdoers.

Statement 12, pp. 47-50: The Second Letter to Sheikh 'Abd al'Aziz Bin Baz
29 January 1995

Sheikh Bin Baz' latest fatwas have "scared Muslims in general, as well as freedom fighters, and weaker men/women and children of Palestine." These fatwas give religious legitimacy to Arab leaders' political treason in that it allowed reconciliation with the [Jewish] enemy. The Advice and Reform Foundation had expected Sheikh Bin Baz to take a stand against this, but instead he confirmed his earlier fatwas on the same subject.

The current situation in Palestine cannot be considered a truce, because only the enemy's terms have been met. Additionally, the deal was created by a group of apostate Arab leaders. The agreement, which establishes diplomatic representation and economic cooperation, effectively indicates Jews' "eternal ownership of the land – thus permanently calling off jihad" [Entering into treaty commitments legitimizes Israel's existence]. Secularism amounts to atheism, and so this agreement is based on "invalidity," therefore it is invalid itself.

"This fatwa's claim of Muslim's weakness and inability to fight Jews is invalid, because...subject experts did not issue it...It does not make sense [that] more than a billion Muslims who own the largest natural resources in the world are unable to defeat 5 million Jews in Palestine." The ailment is not the military or financial, but rather the leaders' betrayal and the scholar's acceptance of the current situation.

Osama Bin Laden calls for a return to fatwas issued by those who have knowledge of both religion and current affairs, urges Bin Baz to distance himself from the regime or resign his position.

Statement 13, pp. 51-52: Prince Salman and Ramadan Alms
12 February 1995

The Saudi regime has dissolved charitable organizations that used to deliver donations directly to needy people inside and outside the country. These independent organizations have been replaced by new institutions that are subservient to Prince Salman, who "has never been known to be interested and care for Muslim affairs." In the past, the Saudi regime used popular donations to influence Afghan freedom fighters to conform to Western policy goals. It also gave donations to Christian organizations in Bosnia, to Yemeni communists, to the communist Dostum (Rachid Dostum, an Afghani warlord), and the Al-Kata'ib party in Lebanon. The Saudi regime supported the Algerian regime as it suppressed Muslims, and also provided money to the Soviets to repress Muslims in Chechnya.

The timing of this initiative supports the U.S. presidents' decision to freeze the assets of groups that oppose the [Middle East] peace process. Osama Bin Laden draws the brother's attention to the danger of depositing monies into UD banks, as it may be frozen. Muslims are encouraged to avoid giving funds to the government agencies, but rather give them directly to the needy, or those "trusted individuals who will deliver them."

Statement 14, pp. 55-58: Saudi Arabia Continues Its War Against Islam and Its Scholars
09 March 1995

After Eid a- Fitr, a second group of clerics was detained, including Muhammad bin Sa'id al-Qahtani, Dr. Sa'id bin Zu'ayr (Zuhayr) and Dr. Bashar al-Bashar. This confirms the aggression of the Saudi regime against Islam and is evidently a "strategy planned by international infidel countries." These Sheikhs, like Salman al-'Awdah and Safar al-Hawali, have been imprisoned for speaking the truth, calling for the application of Islamic laws, and calling for reform of the media and administration. [Text goes on to list same grievances previously mentioned in preceding letters regarding usury, the state of the military, etc]. Reiterates the regimes hostility to Islam and these scholars personally, and reminds umma to be wary of fatwas issued on behalf of the regime's interests.

Osama Bin Laden notes that these most recent arrests came after NATO's "call tot eh countries of the region to cooperate in order to eliminate the danger that threatens its interests and desires for hegemony [referring to ?]. In fact, the Saudi regime has done Muslims a favor by revealing its true objective and providing proof to those who still think positively about the regime. He urges fair trials for the detainees, who are praised for their courage and reminded that this is a trial from Allah to differentiate the righteous from the others.

Statement 15, pp. 59-68: Scholars are the Prophet's Successors
16 May 1995

Scholars are the successors of the prophet and the defenders of religion. Because of their importance, it is important to distinguish between those working to further the word of Allah, and those who prefer earthly things and materials. Sura and Hadith emphasizing importance of scholars. Underestimating scholars, or talking negatively about their knowledge is "associated with danger," yet no one should be impressed with the knowledge of one who memorizes the Quran but doesn't follow its teachings. Bad scholars can be distinguished from good scholars in two ways: lack of acting on their knowledge, and changing what Allah said to interpret laws to their own benefit. "Disintegration of rulers is caused by scholar's dissolution, which is caused by love of money and material things," and standing up to bad scholars is a priority in defending Islam. Yet a majority of people believes that "obeying scholars had no limits" and this is a mistake, which is why religious laws warn against glorifying scholars. Quoting Sheikh Muhammad bin 'Abd-al Wahab in his book Al-Tawhid: those who obey scholars and rulers in forbidding that what Allah allows and vice versa, perceive them as gods. [Therefore, anyone who blindly follows any scholar in something contrary to Allah is an apostate.]

Several paragraphs about proper way to correct scholars follow, which show that a harsh response is legitimate when a scholar persists in a judgment or action after he is aware that he is "on the wrong side." Some exception is made for scholars who have good intentions but are taken advantage of by corrupt sultans. However, fatwas may not be issued by those who are not fully informed, and such fatwas are automatically null.

The requirements for a good scholar are listed. Scholars must be role models in knowledge and action, and must be sure of all the conditions of a fatwa. He must be aware of the possibility of being led into temptation, and have the courage to speak out. Salman al-'Awhad and Safar al-Hawali are examples of courageous scholars. Scholars must stay away from the "suspicious ways of rulers," and the Prophet is quoted as saying, "Whoever gets close to rulers will be infatuated, the closer a person gets to a ruler, the farther he gets away from Allah." Scholars who abide by these guidelines deserve respect and honor.

Statement 16. p. 69: Prince Sultan and the Air Aviation Commission
13-2-1415 (11 July 1995)

The Saudi regime has abandoned the requirements of monotheism and witnessing (there is no God but God, and Mohammad is his messenger), and therefore has lost its legitimacy. The economy is in terrible condition, due in part to the accumulation of interest debt and the plundering of public wealth by the regime. These debts have led to privatization of state assets such as the Saudi airline. Clearly, the regime intends to get new money "from the hands of the people." Privatization will get rid of the debts of the airline, but only after it purchases 7.5 billion dollars for 60 new American-made planes, which are not needed. The French made a much better offer, but royal family members

(particularly Prince Sultan) made the deal in order to please the Americans. This will provide 20,000 jobs to U.S. airline manufacturers, which will keep it operational for five years.

The private sector will probably be forced to buy the Saudi national airline at an unfair price, and will have to assume the accumulated debt. As a result, privatization will cost many people their jobs, and it is unclear who will then pay for the air travel of the royal family.

Statement 17, pp. 71-79, 89: An Open Message to King Fahd On the Occasion of the Latest Ministerial Shuffle
5-3-1415 (3 August 1995)

This letter is an attempt to "pierce the veil with which [the king] has surrounded [himself] so that [he] does not have to listen to the truth." Osama Bin Laden hopes to break through the wall that [the king] has built around [himself] "that stops the truth from getting to" him.

The king and his princes have deceived the people, and have tried to "absorb their anger through marginal and deceptive reforms," which were "nothing more than temporary sedatives for the people's anger." The Advisory council was "born dead" and the recent ministerial shuffle will have minimal impact. The king curbed the rights of the religious scholars, and desecrated the nation's holy places while plundering its wealth. He led the nation into an economic decline. The basis for these problems is that the king and the regime "strayed from the requisites of monotheism and its obligations."

Anyone who legislates human laws that are contrary to the laws of Allah is an infidel [Quranic citations apparently follow, but these were not included in the translation]. The Saudi regime is therefore practicing the arbitration of infidel laws, which are "positive" [can be developed and elaborated upon by people]. Trade councils and banking laws that allow interest in transactions are one example of such laws. A second example is the Gulf Cooperation Council, which lists as its legal basis the laws of the council itself, the principles of international law, the world conventions, and the principles of Islamic shari'a. Osama Bin Laden calls this mockery to the religion and contempt to the shari'a, and continues, "You placed the scum of human positivist thoughts, the customs and traditions of the pre-Islamic epoch, and the laws of infidel judicial associations above the shari'a." Several Sheikhs are quoted to establish the authenticity of this argument.

On the subject of interest, Osama Bin Laden writes that, "the one that was aware that it was forbidden to accept interest and goes ahead and does it, he had committed one of the gravest sins, Allah protect us; however, the one who legislates the laws that allow interest is an infidel. The bank towers themselves rival the towers of the two holy mosques.

The true motive of the regime is to protect infidel interests. Although the regime sometimes supports Islamic causes, it never supports these causes when they conflict with Western interests. Somalia, Bosnia, and Palestine, "the mother of Islamic causes"

are examples. He relates an incident in which President Clinton demanded that the king meet him at the American air base, not in Riyadh, as a humiliating example of American dominance, demonstrating that the kingdom is no more than an American protectorate subject to American laws.

The economic situation is dire. At the beginning of the king's reign, there was an estimated reserve of one hundred and forty billion dollars, with average daily oil revenue amounting to one hundred million dollars. In spite of this, the country is indebted by more than eighty percent of its national gross income, which makes it the most indebted nation in the world [?]. Average citizens suffer from high taxes and duties, and the rising cost of water, electricity, and food. Commodity prices are rising, and schools are suffering from over crowdedness. Hospitals are no being properly maintained or funded, and unemployment is rising. The government has urged people to conserve energy while the palaces are well lit, with the air conditioning running day and night. The king has built palaces all over the country, and in every major world capital and Western resort.

The causes of the crisis include falling oil prices, for which the king bears some responsibility as he allowed the oil reserves to be tapped in order to prevent price spikes. The king is subordinated to Western interests, as demonstrated by his decision to provide $25 billion to Saddam Hussein to keep the price of oil down during the Iran-Iraq war in order to hurt Iran. The king has not attempted to find alternate sources of income, and spent sixty billion dollars to underwrite the cost of the Gulf war. After the war, the regime spent an additional forty billion dollars on American arms, and also purchased Tornado aircraft from the British.

The regime borrowed from local international banks with interest, and the king has "broken every statistical record in squandering" public funds. This puts him in a class with the Shah of Iran, Marcos of the Philippines, Ceausescu (SP?) of Romania.

The first economic crisis of Saudi Arabia was in 1964 and 1965, due to the mismanagement of King Sa'ud who was removed from the throne to resolve the crisis. There was a second crisis in 1986 due to collapse of oil prices.

On judgment day, Allah will not talk to an adulterous sheikh, a lying king, or an arrogant destitute (Hadith). The king has limited options, none of which will be politically popular. In a mocking tone, Osama Bin Laden asks the king if he will reduce the interest, devalue the riyal, raise taxes, or sell government properties (by which he means palace furnishings). Osama Bin Laden tells the king that his "staying will be the cause of your extinction, and your continuing on will be the cause of your end."

The military situation: The army has traditionally consumed one third of the national budget, which is much more than other countries (France, for example, spends one percent). In spite of this spending, the army is just a lot of equipment with no human resources to use it. It has been used as a source of income by influential princes. Examples of unnecessary spending include the seventy F-15 aircraft purchased "to support George in his election campaign after the war." There was a deal to expand the

telephone system for the sake of Clinton, who "lost because of your support to his competitor George Bush" (sic).

During the Gulf war the air force "did not perform anything worth mentioning" while the navy didn't fire a single shot. In order to prepare one brigade of armored cars, the army had to bring in technicians from Pakistan. This demonstrates the failure of Prince Sultan as Minister of Defense.

In 1992 the citizens of the Arabian Peninsula spent more money on defense than Germany, Italy, Egypt, Romania, Poland, Spain, Ecuador, Uruguay, Ireland, and the United States combined (sic). Much of the money has gone to commissions and bribes, as princes seize between forty and sixty percent of the value of every arms deal. Most of the balance of money has been spent on bases and facilities that are too large for the national army, and were built to serve the American and Western forces. Why are the Americans still on these bases? Is Iraq still an imminent threat? Saudi Arabia has been delivered into "a condition of chronic military crippling in [an] effort to tolerate the Crusader and Jewish forces that are defiling the holy places."

The king and the defense minister are to blame, not the "members of the Army or the Guard, whose goodness, gallantry, and bravery have been witnessed by many." The King has always been afraid of allowing coordination between the forces, yet coordination is essential for successful military operation.

Summary: The regime has "committed sins against Islam that negate its guardianship in the eyes of Allah." These sins include corruption, subordination to the infidels and their laws, and failure in the areas of defense, economics and economics. These failures demonstrate the king's inability to run the nation, "even if he had not sinned against Islam." There is a deep struggle between two ideologies: a godly system that is whole and places all matters in the hands of Allah versus the regime itself. The religious scholars, reformers, merchants and tribal sheikhs will all go against the regime. This will not be considered a prohibited abandonment of the rulers because the regime lacks legitimacy: "what does not exist legally, does not exist at all."

Osama Bin Laden urges the king to accept responsibility and resign.

Statement 18, pp. 91-92: The Bosnia Tragedy and the Deception of the Servant of the Two Mosques
15-3-1416 (11 August 1995)

The Saudi government closed charitable organizations that delivered contributions of benefactors to deserving recipients. These organizations have been replaced with associations that are supervised by members of the ruling family such as Prince Sultan and Prince Salman. This revealed a scheme to monopolize charitable contributions to prevent Islam and Muslims from reaping any benefit. It has been used to pressure mujahideen and influence their policies. These "scandals" have become public, but the regime ignores the growing level of awareness about this situation. The government's

involvement is merely a show of support to "raise the value of its declining political stock."

By way of example, money donated to the Palestinian cause (the mother of all Islamic causes) was diverted to the "extortive Jews." Contributions that were meant for Bosnian Muslims were shared with Croats and Serbs. The Saudi regime sponsored a United Nations conference on Bosnia that was designed to ensure the destruction of Bosnian Muslims by denying them the means to defend themselves.

When individual citizens tried to intervene to help the Bosnians, the regime prohibited their travel in response to Western pressure, and then arrested these individuals when they returned to Saudi Arabia. The Bosnians know who their real supporters are, the "cream of youth who have slipped away from the grasp of the ruling regime."

The following lessons have been learned: Muslim regimes do not represent the will of their own people, human rights and equality are dead slogans of the west when it comes to Muslim matters, the United Nations is nothing but a tool to implement the Crusader's plan to kill the nation of Islam, and compliance with the United Nations constitutes conspiracy against Muslim causes.

Therefore, Muslims are urged to bypass the regime-sponsored charitable organizations and donate directly to trusted individuals who will ensure that the money is used for Muslim causes, not against them.

Statement 19, pp. 95-96: The Saudi Regime and the Repeated Tragedies of the Pilgrimage
8-12-1417 (16 April 1997)

Every year there are catastrophes and tragedies during that kill thousands of pilgrims. The Saudi regime has not taken the necessary precautions to prevent these tragedies. There are insufficient accommodations, which leads to crowdedness. The lack of security procedures, poor handling of events, and general negligence contribute to the problem. The number of pilgrims is increasing, yet little money is being spent on the problem. A little spending is all that's needed.

At the same time, the regime has made a big deal about the killing of a handful of American military personnel. "To satisfy the Americans, the regime offered the heads of a group of pure youth who are zealous about their belief , their country, and their nation….Since when are a handful of defiled Jewish souls and the conquering Americans more precious than thousands of guests of the most merciful and the pilgrims of his ancient house?" Adding insult to injury, the regime has kept some of the bodies of deceased pilgrims for autopsy materials.

Statement 20, pp. 97-98: (no title)
No date or signature

The recent arrest of scholars from Pakistan is one more example of the Saudi regime's "deep-rooted hate and animosity toward Islam." These guests were performing "the rituals of pilgrimage when they were arrested by Saudi intelligence services for the following charge: that some of them gave a fatwa in which they said that the Americans must be forced out of the land of the two holy mosques." These scholars were only doing their duty in honoring their covenant pledging to show the truth to the people. They mentioned nothing negative about the Saudi regime, which has demonstrated that it is not satisfied with that it is doing against its own people, but is seeking to generalize these rules of repression.

By its actions, the regime is actually strengthening the message of the scholars that have been persecuted. The scholars and influential people that have not condemned the regime's actions cannot be excused, as it is an obligation to help a brother Muslim.

Statement 21, pp. 103: Supporting the Fatwa by the Afghani Religious Scholars of Ejecting the American Forces Form the Land of the Two Holy Mosques
1-1-1419 (7 May 1998)

The united religious scholars of Afghanistan issued a fatwa that stresses the necessity of ejecting the American forces for the Arab peninsula and the land of the holy two mosques. The fatwa contained shari'a proofs that the entrance of these forces into this country is forbidden, and that their ejection is absolutely necessary. The responsibility of ejecting them and declaring jihad against the occupiers rests with the entire nation of Islam. This fatwa was originally issued eight years ago by Safar al-Hawali and Salman al-'Awdah, who willingly paid the price for their truthfulness. The prophet's last wish, may Allah's prayers and peace be upon him, was to drive the polytheists out of the peninsula, and he said that "the big countries are the cause of problems and instability in the region, and they are the ones that create incidents. They show up every time there is an incident under the pretense that they will improve the situation and eliminate the danger, yet they are the biggest danger of all. How can the fox be the shepherd for the sheep?"

Back to Document List

Doc ID: **2RAD-2004-600457**
Date: unknown
Author: unknown
Length: 2 pages
Title: A brief biography of Dr. Ayman Al-Zawahiri
Full Text: English Arabic

Back to Document List

Synopsis: A short biography pulled from an Islamic terrorist website focusing on his education, beliefs, formative experiences for his beliefs, his ties to bin Laden, and his terrorist activities. As one would expect, it is told from a sympathetic perspective.

For more information about this or other research initiatives of the Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, please visit our website, at:
http://www.ctc.usma.edu

Combating Terrorism Center
Lincoln Hall
U.S. Military Academy
West Point, NY 10996

Phone: (845) 938-8495
Fax: (845) 938-8472
E-mail: ctc@usma.edu