

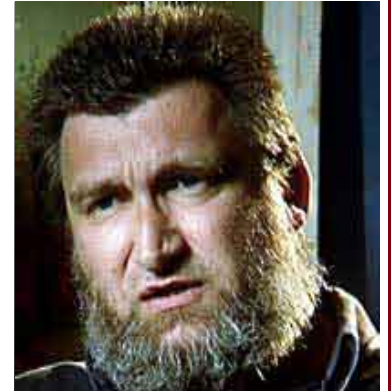
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Australian Convert Jack Roche

Al-Qaeda's Caucasian Foot Soldiers

By Hayder Mili

In the West, Islamic terrorism is a threat traditionally associated with Middle Eastern men whose faces are easily perceived as "alien" and who present a suitable profile around which to organize law enforcement monitoring. Recent events have again shown that this profile is outdated. The July 7, 2005 London bombings and the further discovery of other operational cells in Britain and Canada included several converts, such as 25-year-old Hindu-Canadian convert Steven Chand and Germaine "Jamal" Lindsay, the young Briton who not only participated in but led the four-man suicide bombing cell on July 7. The activities of converts, or rather those who adopt a militant ideology inspired by Salafi-Jihadi interpretations of Islam, have become increasingly important in executing terrorist attacks. The incorrect perception of the "face of terror" risks obscuring our understanding of how terrorist groups operate. In monitoring and preventing terrorist activity, law enforcement agencies need to move beyond the current profile and react to the empirical reality.

Blue-Eyed Emirs

That empirical reality has been apparent for some time, particularly in France. The logistical support cell involved in the Algerian Armed Islamic Group's (GIA) 1995 bombing campaign in France included two converts, David Vallat and Joseph Raime, who had been converted to Salafi-Jihadism while in prison by GIA "emir" and Afghan veteran Ahtmane Saada. Beyond logistical support, French law enforcement also found operational converts when they investigated the ultra-violent jihadi-gangster Roubaix Gang (*Terrorism Monitor*, January 12). Notably, the gang was composed of Algerians led by two ethnic Frenchmen,

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both veterans of the war in Bosnia.

In another French example, the "blue-eyed emir" Pierre Robert, who was apprehended by authorities, was the recruiter and leader of several Salafi-Jihadi cells involved in the Casablanca suicide bombings of May 2003 (*La Gazette du Maroc*, February 4, 2004). Other converts were involved at different levels in this operation, including Andre Rowe, a Briton of Afro-Caribbean origin who was a Bosnian war veteran linked to the Roubaix Gang (*The Telegraph*, July 9, 2005). In the latter examples, French and Algerian cultural/historical enmity had no effect on cooperation. Easily bypassing racial and ethnic divides, the French converts were cell leaders whose faith, commitment and legitimacy were not questioned on account of their ethnic or cultural background. In fact, conversion may help to strengthen perceptions of devotion in some cases.

Beyond France, the participation of converts in al-Qaeda activities has been visible at all levels of operations. German national Christian Ganczarski, accused of involvement in the Djerba synagogue attack along with another white convert Daniel Morgenej, was asked for a religious blessing by young suicide bomber Nizar Nawar moments before he struck a Tunisian synagogue (AFP, April 20, 2002). Not only was he respected enough as a religious ideologue to offer such a blessing, but he had maintained a close personal relationship with al-Qaeda's inner circle, including Khalid Sheikh Mohammed and Osama bin Laden himself, indicating a high-level of trust from the secretive organization. Not simply foot soldiers, Australians Shane Kent and Jack Roche also met bin Laden personally and, as reported by terrorism analyst Trevor Stanley, Roche was given a mission to create a "Caucasian Cell," highlighting what appears to be a tactical shift for al-Qaeda. Other reports seem to support this. According to the London *Times* on June 7, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi had called for "an army of 'white-skinned' militants, men born in Europe and America who can convert to Islam and become harder for the authorities to detect."

Converts are fully trusted to carry out attacks, lead cells and to lend logistical, financial and even ideological support. It was a Jamaican convert, Trevor William Forest, imam at the Brixton mosque in Britain, who radicalized Zacarias Moussaoui as well as converts Xavier Jaffo and Richard Reid. This is an issue that contemporary counter-terrorism officials need to take into account in order to prepare themselves for terrorists who do not fit the nationality profile.

Propaganda

The use of converts in al-Qaeda videos is a further sign of their growing symbolic importance for al-Qaeda's legitimacy and for increasing recruitment efforts aimed at Muslims and non-Muslims. In August 2005, an Australian East Timor veteran Mathew Stewart appeared in a propaganda video exhorting jihad. Most recently, al-Qaeda member Adam Pearlman (known as "Azzam the American") appeared for the third time in a broadcast inviting Americans to convert to Islam. Al-Qaeda may presume that English language propaganda will attract more Westerners to Salafi-Jihadi ideology.

Beyond al-Qaeda's strategy or tactics, much of the phenomenon revolves around the nature of the ideology itself. There is still a misconception in the general public that the al-Qaeda movement is Arab-centrist when in fact it effectively transcends ethnic differences, rejecting Arab nationalism (and any other nationalism) and stressing the supremacy of the Muslim Ummah. A good example is the conflict in Chechnya, where "Chechen" field commanders are from various ethnic and cultural backgrounds, including ethnic Russians like Vitali Smirnov. The Islamist website Kavkaz Center frequently claimed that many disaffected Russian soldiers—captive or otherwise—had joined the ranks of the Chechen fighters and there is some evidence to support this. On June 11, 2000, ex-Russian soldier Sergey Dimitriyev conducted a suicide mission in Khankala, Chechnya [1]. This was not an isolated case; another ex-soldier, Pavel Kosolapov, was recruited by warlord Shamil Basaev prior to his involvement in several bomb attacks and, as reported by The Jamestown Foundation, one of the Beslan ringleaders and perpetrators of several bomb attacks in southern Russia was an ethnic Ukrainian convert and veteran of Chechnya, Vladimir Khodov (Newsru.com, May 13, 2005).

While "profiling" measures in Russia (especially in Moscow) are particularly stringent, Russian law enforcement authorities are at a loss when trying to deal with a threat generally associated with people of Middle Eastern or North Caucasian ancestry. In Dagestan, ex-Russian soldier Sergei Tiunov, who was arrested in November 2001, had allegedly been commissioned—along with two other accomplices—by the warlord Khattab to assassinate Russian Prosecutor General Vladimir Ustinov (Vesti7.ru, November 18, 2001). More recently, it was disclosed that the February and August 2004 Moscow subway blasts are believed to have been organized by mostly Slavic converts led

by ethnic Ukrainian Nikolai Kipkeyev (Gazeta.ru, August 31, 2005). The "Karachai Jamaat" network, as it calls itself, is also thought to be behind several deadly explosions in Krasnodar, Russia.

The phenomenon of conversions to Islam, however, needs to be separated from the conversion to a destructive ideology such as Salafi-Jihadism, which is a violent revolutionary strain of fundamentalist Islamism. As illustrated by the case of Franco-Algerian Khaled Kelkal (who converted to Salafi-Jihadism in prison), there are in effect two types of converts: those who convert to Islam and those, both Muslims and non-Muslims, who gravitate toward Salafi-Jihadi ideology. A good example of the significance of this distinction is in Central Asia. In that region, governments and clergy are pitting local traditional Islam against imported Salafi-Jihadism, denouncing the latter as a deviancy in media and speeches and warning against converting to "alien ideologies." It is telling that the only documented terrorist act attempted in Kazakhstan was by an ethnic Russian convert, Andrey Mironov, arrested in January of this year for attempting to blow up a public administration building he had infiltrated as an employee (Kompromat.kz, January 6).

Conflict Zones and Virtual Recruitment

What has continued to be more important than nationality in security profiling is personal history, especially engagement with radical preachers (often veterans of past jihads) and/or exposure to Islamicized conflict zones. With regard to the latter, war in Muslim countries and the associated loss of lives are heavily exploited in extremist propaganda to attract recruits. A central component of this effort is the presentation of injustices—real or perceived—on graphic videos posted on the internet. Converts such as French terrorist Lionel Dumont and David Vallat have testified that footage of the Bosnian genocide or the Chechen conflict was a primary catalyst in their radicalization (*La Croix*, December 16, 2005; *L'Humanité*, December 3, 1997).

Al-Qaeda's ideology is undoubtedly gaining legitimacy in the current international context, which it tries to frame as a war on Islam and Muslims through propaganda concocted by media-savvy jihadi groups. In Romania, Florian Les was preparing a car bomb attack in the city of Timisoara when arrested by Romanian security services. His stated intent was to "teach a lesson" to Romania for its involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan and to avenge "his brothers in Chechnya and Bosnia" [2]. Authorities

believe that he was radicalized after exposure to jihadi literature and videos on the internet, which also enabled him to forge links with jihadi fighters around the world, just as Wyoming native Mark Robert Walker had done in his efforts to provide material assistance to al-Ittihad al-Islami in Somalia (News365.ro, June 27). The impact and effectiveness of this "virtual recruitment" can also be seen in the failed attempts of former U.S. National Guardsman Ryan Anderson to assist al-Qaeda, as well as young Dutch convert R. Maik who discovered Salafi-Jihadism and Takfir ideology on the internet, subsequently building a home-made bomb and sending death threats to controversial Dutch politicians (*De Volkskrant*, November 7, 2005).

The Magnet

Conflict zones are also a destination of choice for jihadis and converts who wish to undergo military and ideological training. Afghanistan has, for a long time, been such a destination. Australian Jack Thomas is but one of many Westerners suspected of having trained in the country and it is telling that three of the nine Britons arrested in Afghanistan and detained in Guantanamo are catholic-to-Islam converts. Kosovo was a training ground for Australian David Hicks, and Chechnya (like Bosnia) attracted a number of Westerners, including American Aqil Collins and French convert Xavier Jaffo, a propagandist for the jihadi site Azzam.com who was killed in 2000 (CNN, July 3, 2002). Beyond Europeans and North Americans, many jihadi converts from the post-Soviet states also travel to the North Caucasus (in part for geographic but also linguistic reasons), such as in the case of the Belarusian and alleged chemical weapons expert Sergei Malyshev who was recently arrested in Spain for his involvement in a recruitment network for Iraq (Regnum.ru, December 20, 2005). Somewhat bewildering, in August 2002 Hiroshi Minami, a Japanese convert who had fought in the war-torn republic, was arrested with a Chechen militant trying to cross the Georgian border into Chechnya. Interestingly, Palestine has remained relatively free of this phenomenon, with the possible exception of Stephen Smyrek, a German convert who was arrested in Israel in November 1997 (*Al-Abram Weekly*, August 26-September 1, 1999). An admitted member of Hezbollah, he had allegedly been trained in southern Lebanon to carry out a suicide attack in Tel Aviv.

Iraq has now become a magnet for jihadis. While the majority of foreigners in Iraq are still from the Arab world, there is evidence that converts are at least

involved in logistical support and recruitment in Europe. The recently arrested Spaniard José Antonio D.M. is one of 18 men charged in relation to a cell supplying volunteers to Iraq. At the operational level, Peter Cherif, the young French convert who was arrested in Iraq by U.S. forces, had been radicalized and incited along with other young Frenchmen by Afghan veterans (*El País*, December 21, 2005; *Le Figaro*, May 21, 2005). These examples further showcase the "egalitarian" non-ethnic nature of many of the jihadi networks; these networks are increasingly non-Arab as a result of the first Afghan jihad generation dwindling in numbers and veterans of other conflict zones entering the arena.

The tightening of security measures, particularly profiling, may put more pressure on the networks to rely on individuals who would otherwise be able to pass the first security "screening" with more ease, mainly Caucasian men but also women. The latter would prove to be even more of an interdiction nightmare. As French anti-terrorism Judge Jean Louis Bruguière has long warned, al-Qaeda is also interested in recruiting women. The case of 35-year-old Belgian female Muriel Degauque's successful suicide attack against a U.S. convoy in Iraq should therefore not be viewed as an anomaly. In May, for example, *Der Spiegel* reported on a foiled suicide bombing plot in Iraq involving a German female convert. It is interesting to note that convert Pascal Cruyppenninck, the alleged head of the Belgian network sending suicide bombers to Iraq, was preparing a similar operation with another female convert named Angelique when he was apprehended by authorities (*La Dernière Heure*, December 2, 2005). Just as unsettling, in March, Australian Jill Courtney was arrested on terrorism charges, while in the Netherlands Martine Van Den is alleged to have had strong links to the Dutch Islamist militant organization the Hofstad Group (which also included several Dutch converts) (*De Volkskrant*, July 6, 2005).

Conclusion

Where conversion involves an adoption of violent ideologies, traditional profiling techniques may be inadequate. Nevertheless, it is clearly a mistake to simply expand the profile to include all converts. Law enforcement monitoring faces a clear challenge in creating a suitable filter to inform this distinction and the existence of this endogenous threat should not feed the fantasies of a "fifth column." Many converts and born Muslims are at the forefront of the anti-jihadi struggle. For example, it was friend and fellow convert

Ibrahim Fraser who first alerted police about Australian Jacke Roche's obsession with jihadi ideology. Similarly, the El Fath Mosque in Amersfoort threw out the Walker brothers, who were members of the Hofstad Group, and also informed the authorities of their extremist tendencies.

Recent arrests in Britain involving at least five converts (of Afro-Caribbean origin) training to become suicide bombers—as well as the arrest of Dhiren Barot, a convert plotting a dirty bomb attack in the United States—indicate that this trend is on the upswing, reflecting both the globalization and growing appeal of Salafi-Jihadism and a tactical adjustment to Western security and profiling measures on the part of al-Qaeda and its affiliates. It also underscores the truly transnational and cross-cultural nature of the threat, against which profiling may not provide an adequate defense.

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Notes

1. International Policy Institute for Counter-Terrorism, June 20, 2000.
2. See http://www.roumanie.com/Justice-Un_homme_converti_islamisme_soupconne_de_terrorisme-A1250.html.

Devising a New Counter-Terrorism Strategy in Europe

By Ludo Block

Before 2005, suicide terrorist attacks in Europe were only a dreaded scenario feared by police and the security community. Then, on July 7, 2005, four suicide bombers blew themselves up in three underground trains and one bus in London, causing 52 fatalities and injuring nearly 700 people. Two weeks later on July 21, 2005, four attempted suicide bomb attacks, again in London, failed apparently as a result of faulty explosives. Recently, on August 10, British police arrested almost 30 people suspected of plotting suicide bombings aboard 10 transatlantic flights departing from London. The nightmare became real since the most unsettling part was that many of the suicide bombers were born

and raised in Britain.

In terms of risk analysis, the incidents in London show that the threat has shifted from jihadi veterans—who played a large role in the 2004 attacks in Madrid—to a poisonous ideology of martyrdom. Vulnerabilities have changed from permeable borders and uncontrolled logistic and financial flows to adolescents susceptible to indoctrination and radicalization. This situation is not unique to Britain, but is relevant in many European countries. In a recent assessment, the Dutch Security and Intelligence Service (AIVD) concluded that elements from transnational veteran jihadi networks are still active in Europe. The fragmentation of these networks, however, has led to a temporary reduction of the threat of internationally coordinated attacks. The AIVD states that "the most serious threat to the Netherlands appears to emanate from local jihadist networks rooted in their own breeding ground" [1]. This and further details from the incidents in London contain lessons for a broader counter-terrorism strategy in Europe.

From the incidents in London, it is now known that the bombers in each case had a crystal-clear intent to cause fatalities on a large scale. In light of this intent, various sides, including the security community, now question the effectiveness of tough anti-terrorism legislation that has been adopted throughout Europe. In its recent assessment, the AIVD not only warns of radicalization, but also of social polarization. From a strategic perspective, al-Qaeda-inspired terrorism in Europe has become as much of a social problem as a law enforcement problem.

Governments have started to realize that an effective counter-terrorism strategy needs to include combating the jihadi ideology of martyrdom by lowering its appeal and unmasking its spurious claims. In December 2005, the European Union adopted a strategy to counter radicalization and recruitment to terrorism. Three key elements are addressed in this strategy: 1) Facilitating factors providing for recruitment; 2) Motivational factors leading individuals to become radicalized; 3) Structural factors creating a socio-economic environment in which the radical message becomes appealing [2]. Consistently, the EU response to the recently foiled airline plot did not contain the previously recurring void calls for strengthening police cooperation and tougher legislation. On the contrary, it placed further emphasis on efforts to counter radicalization and to enhance protective security cooperation [3].

Addressing the root causes that can lead to radicalization is important, especially for the long term security situation. For the short term, however, as the official account of the bombings in London on July 7, 2005 clearly shows, the real difficulty for law enforcement agencies and local communities is identifying potential terrorists. Three of the four bombers on July 7 were well integrated in society, and one of them was even considered a role model in his community [4]. Despite the much needed effort in the social field, a sizeable law enforcement effort remains necessary to protect society against those already radicalized.

The territoriality of the threat is not an assuring thought, yet it gives law enforcement some direction for an effective counter-terrorism strategy. For example, confronted with the preparedness of radicalized young Muslims to become martyrs, the limitations of repressive legislation are clearly shown. When countering jihadis from abroad that are using a local community as cover, penalizing "association with terrorists" can be a very effective approach as experience in France has shown (*Terrorism Monitor*, September 8, 2005). In contrast, prosecuting members of the Muslim community for not giving up their own youth to authorities is likely to result in the opposite and lead to more radicalization instead. Winning the hearts and minds of local communities is not achieved through prosecution. This, of course, should not be mistaken for allowing local communities to ignore their responsibilities in this shared problem.

In contrast to preparations abroad, preliminary activities of terrorists on domestic soil leave traces within direct reach of the agencies that can be very difficult to uncover. Domestic human intelligence becomes fundamental, and it appears that this indeed has been crucial to the success in the prevention of the recent airline plot. Nevertheless, both infiltration and the use of informers can be incredibly effective in combating terrorism, yet neither is a risk-free strategy. Infiltrating whole communities will send the wrong signal. Priority should be given to distinguish the "talkers" from the "doers," the latter being legitimate targets for infiltration.

After the attacks of July 7, 2005, it was widely believed that the bombers had links to the al-Qaeda network. Al-Qaeda second-in-command Ayman al-Zawahiri praised the attacks and stated that they were launched by al-Qaeda. The apparent careful handling of the bomb making indicates that the plotters received advice from someone with previous experience. Two of the four bombers traveled to Pakistan at the end of 2004 and

might have received military training there. Between April and July 2005, the group was in contact with unknown individuals in Pakistan.

Nevertheless, the overall costs of the attacks, which amounted to US\$15,000, were self-financed without external sources of income. Furthermore, while the bombings were typical of those inspired by al-Qaeda's ideology, no evidence of any direction from abroad has been uncovered. Altogether, the 7/7 report concludes that "there is as yet no firm evidence to corroborate this claim or the nature of al-Qaeda support, if there was any" [5]. The characteristics of the threat of autonomous self-sustaining local networks predict disappointing results from prioritized efforts in finding global terrorist networks through, for instance, counter-terrorist finance systems and controls.

Other clues for a counter-terrorism strategy can be found in the means used by the 7/7 plotters. Although no official statements have been made about the explosives used in any of the incidents, it is widely assumed that these were home-made and peroxide based. This would be consistent with the bleaching effect of the used mixtures in the uncovered bomb factory as described in the 7/7 report. Most likely, the July 7 bombers manufactured triacetone-triperoxide (TATP), which can be made from commercially available precursors. TATP is widely used by suicide bombers in the Middle East and was utilized as an improvised detonator by the "shoe bomber" Richard Reid in his attempt to blow up an airplane in December 2001 (*Times Online*, July 15, 2005). In September, TATP was found during the arrest of suspected terrorists in the Danish city Odense (*Politiken.de*, September 11).

The use of home-made explosives indicates an effective control of commercial explosives in Europe. Then again, little comfort is found in the proliferation of the knowledge for successful production of high power explosives. The chemical characteristics of TATP, in particular the absence of any nitrates in its compound and its unsuspecting appearance of white sugar, make it difficult to detect. On the other hand, it has a low chemical stability making it susceptible to impact, open flame, friction and causing it to sublime easily, limiting its use altogether [6].

The feasibility of the airline plot by smuggling "liquid TATP" aboard as was claimed by unnamed "U.S. senior officials" can seriously be questioned (*Time.com*, August 10). Although TATP can be dissolved in ether to detonate it, that solution then needs to be highly concentrated.

Such a solution would be extremely sensitive and, like nitro-glycerin, probably detonate spontaneously as a result of any sudden movement. The idea of making TATP from its liquid precursors aboard a commercial flight is mere fiction, even if one assumes that the cabin crew would not interfere. Nonetheless, the plot shows that continuous research and education of the police and security community on (the application of) home-made explosives should be part of a counter-terrorism strategy.

A final point illustrated by the airline plot is that timing and mode of intervention remain a continuing challenge in counter-terrorism strategy. As a result of the present-day intensive political attention on counter-terrorism, a strong tendency exists to take tactical and operational decisions in counter-terrorism cases at a higher level politically. At that level, however, political rationality claims a larger role, and other interests start interfering with what decisions should be made based upon professional and judicial considerations. For instance, the current media strategy that leads to excessive coverage (as was witnessed in the airline plot) can be questioned from a professional or legal perspective. A professional counter-terrorism strategy should cover such scenarios in advance by clearly defining the aims, boundaries, roles and responsibilities of the media.

The exact nature of the nightmare of home-grown suicide bombers that are now a real threat for Europe is still unknown. Reflection on the counter-terrorism strategy, however, needs to be a continuous process. Lessons learned could help mitigate current and future threats.

Ludo Block is a former Dutch senior police officer and served as the Dutch police liaison officer for Russia and surrounding countries between 1999 and 2004. He is currently writing a PhD on police cooperation in the European Union.

Notes

1. AIVD, "Violent Jihad in the Netherlands. Current Trends in the Islamist Terrorist Threat," April 2006.
2. Press Release, 2696th Council Meeting, Justice and Home Affairs Brussels, December 1-2, 2005.
3. Press statement on the Informal London Meeting on Counter-Terrorism, issued jointly by the ministers of UK, Finland, Germany, Portugal, Slovenia, France and the vice-president of the European Commission, August 16, 2006.

4. House of Commons, "Report of the Official Account of the Bombings in London on 7th July 2005," May 2006.

5. A full copy of the report can be downloaded at: <http://www.official-documents.co.uk/document/hc0506/hc10/1087/1087.asp>

6. Dubnikova et. al (2005), "Decomposition of Triacetone Triperoxide is an Entropic Explosion," *Journal of the American Chemical Society*, Vol. 127 (4), p. 1146 -1159.

Combating the Ideology of Suicide Terrorism in Afghanistan

By Waliullah Rahmani

Although there was no record of Afghan suicide attacks during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the pursuant civil war, suicide attacks in the country have steadily increased since the fall of the Taliban. Since January, more than 85 suicide attacks in Afghanistan have killed or injured 700 people (BBC Persian, October 13). Recently, on September 30, a suicide bomber blew himself up in an entryway to the Afghan Interior Ministry, killing more than 12 people and injuring 42 others (Radio Farda, September 30). Since the September 30 attack, Kabul has suffered from at least one suicide bombing per week. Statistics show that this year alone, Afghanistan was hit by more suicide attacks than in all past years combined. With the absence of a historical tradition of suicide attacks, important cultural and sociological questions must be addressed. For example, what has convinced Afghans to adopt suicide attacks as a military tactic? When was this tactic adopted? Were there outside influences or examples that influenced Afghans? Most importantly, can this ideology of suicide terrorism in Afghanistan be combated?

Suicide Attacks: Low-Cost and High Profile

After the fall of the Taliban, there was a large-scale campaign to bolster the support of the Afghan government through the strengthening of the Afghan army and the presence of coalition forces. Initially, this made ground operations for the Taliban difficult. In recent months, however, the Taliban insurgency has adapted and has changed tactics to fit the new situation on the ground. Kabul-based Afghan analyst Fahim Dashti,

the editor of *Kabul Weekly*, argued that the current surge in suicide attacks marks a "change in tactics by the Taliban." He stated that "suicide attacks have been executed to decrease the Taliban's casualties" and "to create fear" among the Afghan people. Dashti explained that by "killing civilians and causing insecurity, the Taliban want to motivate people against the foreigners in Afghanistan" (Radio Dari, May 12). The rationale behind this strategy rests on the assumption that the population will blame the U.S.-led coalition and the Afghan government, rather than the Taliban, for the lack of security in the country.

Mukhtar Pidran, an Afghan political analyst, told The Jamestown Foundation on October 2 that the Taliban needed to have an instrument for imposing their religious influence on people who resisted their position. "Insurgents brought suicide terrorism to Afghanistan since it had worked in Iraq. Mostly here [Afghanistan], people are illiterate and know less about the complicated issues of Islam like jihad [*amaliyat istishhadi*] or martyrdom and can therefore be easily duped into adopting them. Through their use of suicide attacks, insurgents have reaped great benefits. For example, a suicide attack that claims the lives of many people can put a group in the headlines of the international media." Pidram added, "This tactic is working in Afghanistan and is giving the Taliban and other insurgents a high-profile identity."

The "Islamic Theory" Behind Suicide Attacks

Abdullah Azzam, one of the masterminds behind Hamas, theorized suicide attacks and spent part of the 1980s in Peshawar supporting Afghan mujahideen who were fighting against the Soviet invasion. He found religious and Islamic justifications for using suicide attacks against Israel and in the greater Muslim world (*Payam-e-Mujahid*, September 27). The first suicide attacker in Afghanistan was in 1992 when an Egyptian fighter for Gulbuddin Hekmatyar in Kunar killed Maulvi Jamil Rahman, a Salafi leader who was against Hekmatyar and headed the Jamaat al-Dawat w'al-Quran wa Sunna group (*Payam-e-Mujahid*, September 27). Suicide attacks, however, increased in Afghanistan after the September 9, 2001 assassination of Ahmad Shah Masoud, the leader of the Northern Alliance who fought against the Taliban. It is believed that al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden ordered the assassination. In the first years of Afghan President Hamid Karzai's government, the Taliban rarely used Afghans as suicide bombers. Yet, since the end of 2005, suicide bombings

have been widely exercised by Taliban insurgents.

Al-Qaeda and their allies in the Taliban have published books for their followers in which they call upon men to join the Taliban, al-Qaeda and Hekmatyar's Hezbe-Islami—groups that are based on Sharia law. A series of books in which they argue for the legitimacy of their actions is called "Zad al-Salam," or the "Muslim Provision." These books are used in military training centers and give justifications for every military tactic based on statements from the Quran, Hadith and the Sunna.

The fourth series of the "Muslim Provision," titled "Al-Amaliyat al-Istishhadiya Fil Islam Wa Hukm Aawan al-Tawaghiet Wa Junudahum," specifically focuses on suicide attacks. The 158-page book bases the legitimacy of suicide attacks in Buruj, a chapter of the Quran, which focuses on jihad, bravery and the toleration of difficulties. The author references suicide attacks to a part of Buruj which states that Allah prefers those Muslims who fight against threats to their religion. The author additionally links encouragement for joining jihad to committing suicide attacks. For example, he quotes a story about one of the Prophet Muhammad's companions who asked the Prophet whether a person would be martyred if he was slain fighting infidels. The Prophet answered, "He would enter Paradise." In response, his companion went to the scene of the war and fought until his death (*Payam-e-Mujahid*, September 27).

These factors make clear that there are religious reasons driving the attackers to sacrifice themselves for the "benefits of others." The majority of Afghans who have attended religious schools in Pakistan or in other Muslim countries are easily indoctrinated by the religious propaganda issued in these madrassas. Unfortunately, many begin their studies at a young age and therefore their knowledge of Islam is confined to the often misguided teachings they receive.

Sociological Landscape of Afghan Suicide Attacks

Motivating an Afghan to perform a suicide attack is no simple task. The leaders of the Taliban and Hezbe-Islami motivate insurgents in the name of "Afghanistan's occupation" and the obligation to perform jihad (*Terrorism Focus*, October 10). The creation of a Sharia-based Islamic government is the motivation that extremists use to rally the support of insurgents. They argue that infidels dominate the secular government of Karzai and are not properly pursuing Sharia (Afghan

National Security Intelligence Report, October 4). One such way that insurgent leaders recruit fighters is by saying that the West is decadent and completely opposed to the implementation of Sharia. One Afghan intelligence agent reported that in many madrassas for Afghan students, videotapes are played that show women in the West wearing bikinis while walking in public and going to nightclubs (Azadi Radio, October 4). Students at these seminaries are taught that Afghan girls employed by NGOs are sexual bait for the Western male employees. By pushing these views about the United States and European countries, extremist groups motivate Afghans to engage in conflict against the coalition. Many of the people in the seminaries want to see Sharia implemented, at least outwardly such as in the national dress code (<http://www.armans.info>, September 29).

Yet the main unresolved question is that of the domestic makeup of the suicide attackers. Since its formation in late 2001, the Afghan government has yet to create active diplomatic channels with other Islamic countries. It is alleged in other Muslim societies that Afghanistan is an "occupied country" and therefore it is necessary for Muslims to engage in jihad against the "occupation." These sentiments encourage Muslims to fight Western and government forces in Afghanistan.

Afghan MP and political scholar Qayum Sajjadi, in an interview with The Jamestown Foundation on October 7, said that there should be a difference between a country under "occupation" and a country that has "invited" foreign forces to help maintain stability. "The foreign diplomacy system in Afghanistan acts passively," said Sajjadi. "The diplomats should contact the Islamic countries to define their position about what is taking place in Afghanistan. Afghan diplomats should contact the people, media and governments of Islamic countries to explain the conditions in Afghanistan in order to prevent fighters from these outside countries from joining the Taliban. Afghan diplomats should argue that their constitution is Islamic and that their law is Islamic. This will remove the perception held in other Muslim countries that Afghanistan is a country under occupation." Unfortunately, Afghan elites and moderate clerics are not taking active roles in promoting the image of their country abroad. In Afghanistan's media and elite circles, for example, there is a lack of scientific discussion on the use of suicide tactics (www.armans.info, September 29).

Conclusion

The main question that remains is how to curb suicide attacks in Afghanistan, which has increasingly become both a tactical ideology and a popular fear that may change the face of traditional Afghan culture. It is critical to propose methods for curbing suicide attacks so that they do not become culturally inured into Afghan culture. The leaders of the Taliban and al-Qaeda are not experts in Islamic jurisprudence nor well-respected Islamic scholars, but rather a group that have the potential to resist even Islamic Sharia if it is necessitated by their political ambitions. Since Afghanistan was subjected to the rule of extremism for nearly the past three decades, it is very difficult to purify the Islamic jurisprudence from the extremists' ideology. Yet it is the essential need of Afghanistan to purify Islam of this ideology. The work of countering extremist ideology has been started in other Islamic countries by some scholars.

Aside from the purification of extremist Islamic ideology, the role of politics in the development of suicide terrorism in Afghanistan runs deep. The existence of madrassas or religious seminaries in Pakistan—a country that has used Islamism for its political objectives in Afghanistan and Kashmir—shows that a significant number of seminaries are used to indoctrinate and radicalize students. These seminaries are specifically operated for political objectives. The practical way to counter this is to open moderate seminaries in Afghanistan. Another practical way to curb violence and suicide attacks is an active foreign policy that engages other Islamic countries in the Arab world. Good ties with Islamic governments will help connect people and will encourage them to share radio and television programs from their respective countries. This will also reduce the validity of the argument that Afghanistan is under occupation. Moreover, it is important to act upon a coherent strategy that introduces Afghanistan to the world as an Islamic and democratic country.

Finally, in domestic affairs, forming committees with the participation of real Islamic scholars is the only way to prevent Afghan citizens from joining extremist groups. Academic institutions, mosques and the media could be a great help in curbing suicide terrorism. Acting upon such a strategy, the Ministry of Haj and Awqaf could lead the mosques and clerics in the campaign against this violent ideology.

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The Threat of Islamic Radicalism in Suriname

By Chris Zambelis

The threat of radical Islamism in Latin America and the Caribbean remains a vital concern for U.S. and regional security officials, particularly in light of allegations that al-Qaeda nuclear terrorist Adnan Shukrijumah lived in Suriname at one point. The region's reputation for porous borders, political and economic instability, endemic corruption and poverty make it a center of transnational organized crime involving the smuggling of drugs, arms and people, money laundering, document fraud, counterfeiting and other illicit activities. While currently there is not a tangible threat to U.S. national security emanating from this region, many observers believe that al-Qaeda is poised to exploit these factors to strike a future blow against the United States or its interests in the region.

Based on these assumptions, it is no surprise that the region's modest, albeit dynamic and diverse Muslim community is receiving increased attention from security analysts. Many observers believe that al-Qaeda's proven track record of inspiring sympathizers with no past ties to terrorism to its cause to take the initiative and act in Western Europe and elsewhere is a warning sign of developments to come. Al-Qaeda's success in attracting some Muslim converts to its violent program is also raising alarm bells about growing Muslim conversion trends in the region.

Given this context, it is worth considering the position and outlook of the Muslim community in Suriname, subjects that have received little academic and media attention. The former British and later Dutch colony is renowned for its ethnic, religious and cultural diversity. It is the country with the largest percentage of Muslims out of its total population in the Western Hemisphere. Suriname is also a member of the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

Instability and Radicalism

Although there is no current credible evidence pointing to a burgeoning radical Islamist current in Suriname, the country has experienced an alarming surge in violent crime in recent years. Suriname's small population, dense rainforest and network of rivers that traverse its widely uninhabited territory, strategic position on the

northern ridge of South America and direct air and sea connections to Europe and the Caribbean islands, have made it an attractive trans-shipment point for drug and arms traffickers. The country was mired in a bloody insurgency in the mid-1980s and early 1990s. Suriname also made U.S. and regional headlines when some sources alleged that Shukrijumah might be hiding there. These reports have not been confirmed (*Trinidad Guardian*, November 20, 2004).

In December 2004, the U.S. Embassy in Paramaribo closed its consular services section after receiving what diplomats described as a credible threat of a possible terrorist attack. No further details were made available. According to a U.S. official who spoke on the condition of anonymity, however, the embassy received threats about an impending strike against the facility or another location in Suriname affiliated with the United States (*Caribbean Net News*, December 3, 2004). The U.S. Embassy is located on a busy one-way street. Fearing a possible car bombing, embassy officials requested that Surinamese officials close the street and extend the grounds of the facility in order to create a more secure buffer from possible attacks (*Caribbean Net News*, December 3, 2004).

Reports that Jamaat al-Fuqra (JF), an obscure Muslim group with branches in Pakistan and North America that has been linked to terrorism and crime, is making inroads into the Caribbean, especially among Afro-Caribbean Muslim converts and East Indian Muslims in nearby English-speaking Trinidad and Tobago and neighboring Guyana, raise concerns about Suriname (*Trinidad Guardian*, April 8). Sheikh Mubarak Ali Shah Gilani, JF's founder and leader, is believed to have spearheaded the movement in Pakistan in the early 1980s. Gilani also heads the International Quranic Open University (IQOU), which is affiliated with the Muslims of the Americas (<http://www.iqou-moa.org>). JF has been implicated in a series of murders and bomb plots targeting religious and ideological rivals in the United States and Canada. In the United States, JF is comprised primarily of African-American Muslim converts. The group is best known for establishing a number of isolated rural communities across the United States for its members (*Terrorism Monitor*, August 10).

Organized Crime and Corruption

In June, Shaheed "Roger" Khan, also known as "Short Man," a Guyanese national of East Indian descent and reputed narcotics and arms kingpin wanted by

U.S. authorities on an outstanding warrant for crimes committed while residing in the United States, was arrested in the Surinamese capital of Paramaribo; three Guyanese associates and eight Surinamese nationals were also apprehended. Khan is believed to have fled his native Guyana after being implicated in the theft of arms from the Guyanese armed forces. He is known locally as a key player in the drugs and arms trade between Guyana and Suriname. Both countries are experiencing an alarming increase in organized criminal and violent street gang activity (*Guyana Chronicle*, June 18).

Surinamese sources claim that Khan was planning to assassinate Surinamese government and judicial officials, including cabinet members (*Guyana Chronicle*, June 19). The sting operation that led to Khan's arrest yielded over 200 kilos of cocaine and an assortment of arms. Paramaribo expelled Khan to nearby Trinidad for entering the country illegally. Trinidad denied Khan entry into the country because he lacked valid travel documents. He was subsequently handed over to U.S. officials and is currently awaiting trial in a U.S. jail on drug trafficking charges (*Caribbean Net News*, June 19).

There is no evidence that implicates Khan in terrorism. Nevertheless, the relative ease in which Guyana's most wanted man fled to Suriname along with a cadre of trusted cohorts to continue his lucrative criminal enterprise underscores Suriname's vulnerability in the eyes of security officials. In fact, both Suriname and neighboring Guyana have served as sanctuaries for high-profile criminals on the run. David "Buffy" Millard, a member of Trinidad's Jamaat al-Muslimeen, was arrested in Guyana recently and extradited to his native Trinidad to face murder charges (*Trinidad Guardian*, May 6). In another case, Brazilian authorities implicated Surinamese security officials in an illicit arms trading network that allegedly smuggled weapons to criminal gangs in Brazil, including violent groups such as the Red Command and the First Capital Command. Both organizations are involved in a lucrative drug and arms trade based out of Brazil's impoverished favelas (urban slums) and prisons (*Caribbean Net News*, February 3).

Islam in Suriname

Although accurate demographic figures are difficult to pinpoint, Muslims comprise between 15-20% of Suriname's total population of approximately 500,000. Suriname's Muslim heritage stems back to the slave trade, when colonial authorities imported

African Muslim slaves from West Africa. Today, most Surinamese Muslims trace their origins to South Asia, especially India, Pakistan and Afghanistan, and are known locally as East Indians, Indo-Surinamese or Hindustanis. An overwhelming majority of East Indian Muslims are Sunnis, while a small minority adheres to the Shiite branch of the faith. Suriname is also home to followers of the Ahmadiyya movement. Like their kin in Guyana and Trinidad, most East Indians are Hindu and, to a lesser extent, Christian. Suriname is home to a small Arab Muslim community with roots in Lebanon, Syria and Palestine. There are also reports of a growing Muslim conversion movement in the Afro-Surinamese community, a trend that mirrors other parts of Latin America and the Caribbean [1].

Suriname's East Indians were brought as indentured laborers to what was then known as Dutch Guyana by colonial authorities in different waves following the abolition of slavery in the late 1800s in order to satisfy demands for labor in the local plantation economy. Despite their sectarian differences, Suriname's complex demographic makeup and ethnic rivalries have instilled a sense of East Indian solidarity. Their common plight as indentured laborers also fosters a sense of collective identity that transcends religious differences. The community experienced a substantial decline in its overall population due to migration to the Netherlands after Suriname gained its independence in 1975.

Despite their linguistic differences, Surinamese Muslim associations maintain close links with their Guyanese, Trinidadian and regional counterparts. They maintain ties to organizations based in South Asia, especially Pakistan [2]. Tablighi Jamaat and other influential Muslim missionary organizations originating in South Asia have a presence and a following in Suriname [3]. Suriname's Dutch legacy also has had a profound effect on society, including on the Muslim community. Surinamese Muslims maintain close links with their kin and Muslim associations in the Netherlands.

Suriname is home to a sizeable ethnic Javanese Muslim community that traces its origins to present day Indonesia, which was once under Dutch colonial rule. Like East Indians, Javanese migrated to Suriname beginning in the late 1800s and ending in the 1930s as indentured laborers in order to compensate for local demands for labor following the abolition of indentured labor practices in South Asia [4]. The Javanese maintain close cultural links to their kin in Indonesia and to the ethnic Javanese community in the Netherlands.

The Javanese community came under scrutiny when Suriname's Defense Minister Ronald Assen announced that Ali Imron, an Indonesian of Javanese descent linked to Jemaah Islamiya in Southeast Asia and currently serving a life sentence in Indonesia for his role in orchestrating the October 2002 attacks in Bali, spent a year in Suriname prior to the attack, teaching and studying at a mosque in the town of Moengo. Dutch and Indonesian sources, however, refute these allegations, declaring them a case of mistaken identity. Assen's claims evoked a strong condemnation from Surinamese Muslims, including Dr. Issac Jamaludin, a local Muslim leader, who denied any links to al-Qaeda or the existence of a radical trend (Nieuws.nl, November 11, 2003). No further evidence has surfaced supporting the defense minister's claims.

Conclusion

Although no hard evidence points to an emerging threat of Islamist extremism in Suriname, security officials should remain wary of attempts by radical groups to exploit vulnerabilities already in use by criminal organizations to great effect. In this regard, Suriname is by no means a unique case in Latin America or the Caribbean. Policymakers and security officials should take these factors into careful consideration in order to better gauge potential threats to U.S. security interests in a region that is becoming a growing concern in the war on terrorism.

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Notes

1. Raymond Chickrie, "The Lalla Rookh: Arrival of the First Hindustani Muslims to Suriname 1873," <http://www.guyana.org/features/LallaRukh.pdf>.
2. Raymond Chickrie, "History of Politicking of Islamic Organizations in Guyana," http://www.guyana.org/features/Guyana_Islam_org.May2006.pdf.
3. Yoginder Sikand, *The Origins and Development of the Tablighi-Jama'at (1920-2000): A Cross-Country Comparative Study* (India: Orient Longman, 2002).
4. Rosemarijn Hoefte, *In Place of Slavery: A Social History of British Indian and Javanese Laborers in Suriname* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1998).