OSAMA'S WAKE:
THE SECOND GENERATION OF AL QAEDA

by

Blake D. Ward

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I. Introduction

> *The enemy is not a single political regime or person or religion or ideology. The enemy is terrorism—premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against innocents….Our priority will be first to disrupt and destroy terrorist organizations of global reach and attack their leadership; command, control, communications; material support; and finances.*
>
> –The National Security Strategy of the United States of America, 2002

The National Security Strategy (NSS) of the United States inadequately defines the threat which on September 11, 2001, propelled the United States towards a Global War on Terrorism and redirected the nation's security efforts. Most critics of the NSS point out the futility of waging war on "terrorism," since it is a time-worn means to an end. If the nation is to have a strategy to combat an enemy, it has to define who, or what, the enemy is.

The War on Terrorism should not be an infinite struggle against any entity willing to use terrorist means; and attempting to scope the threat to groups with "global reach" is not a discriminating factor in today's globalized and interconnected world. The enemy must be defined not just by their methodology but also by their ideology and politics.

Al Qaeda is a revolutionary salafist mujahedin terrorist organization. It cannot be appropriately defined in three words or less if it is to be distinguished from categories of terrorist and Islamic fundamentalist

groups. It is internationalist in nature, but it is not by any means the only one in existence. Whereas Al Qaeda may have been the only organization with the patience and means to execute the attacks of 9/11, the U.S.S. *Cole*, and the U.S. embassies, it is not unique in its intent. To focus U.S. instruments of national power to engage the threat, we must identify what Al Qaeda is, what is required to sustain it, what are its critical vulnerabilities, and who else shares its intent and capabilities.

Much commentary has been made on Al Qaeda's ability to replace its leadership, describing the losses of key figures as mere temporary setbacks because other personnel are able to fill the vacant committee positions. But with an organization heavily dependent on social contacts, key people become operative nodes necessary to sustain the organization – their loss has an impact on Al Qaeda's ability to maintain funding streams, operative cells, and alliances.

Some aspects of Al Qaeda are insurmountable in the near term: its ideology and agenda will not disappear with the demise of Osama bin Laden and his core Arab colleagues. Numerous groups exist with similar agendas supported by a portion of the Muslim population ever willing to finance jihad. What then, is the staying power of Al Qaeda following the loss of its core leadership? What linkages would remain between a succeeding leadership and Al Qaeda's support base? Would a surviving or allied group be willing to use weapons of mass destruction (WMD) against the United States to the extent the current leadership intends?

To measure the threat in the proceeding stage of the post-bin Laden era, this paper will attempt to examine the pervasiveness of Al Qaeda's ideology and its enduring capabilities in terms of organization, finance, and personnel. The most critical vulnerability to Al Qaeda is its social networks and, by extension, its alliances. Funding and recruiting will remain accessible until the attrition of key personalities is sufficient to tear the organizational fabric, allowing Al Qaeda to function internally and externally. Unfortunately, fragments of the Al Qaeda leadership and network can easily find refuge and purpose in other like-minded groups, perhaps initially remaining locally or regionally-focused until re-engaging the "far enemy." Ample Al Qaeda allies and sympathizers exist beyond the first generation to sustain a threat to U.S. interests.

This paper does not attempt to encompass the entire breadth of salafist mujahedin groups; instead a representation has been selected for discussion to illustrate the commonality and enduring scope of the threat.

II. The Wellspring

A Vision Shared

Not all Islamic fundamentalists are enemies of the United States and not all anti-Americans are Islamic fundamentalists. It is imperative to distinguish Al Qaeda in political and religious contexts. Al Qaeda wants to revive the Caliphate to its historic apex of Islamic power. To revive the Caliphate is to remerge political and religious power under one authority following the overthrow of secular or religiously impure governments and the withdrawal of foreign, corrupting influences from the region.

Al Qaeda is not unique in its worldview of the problems ailing the greater Muslim community; its blame and hatred of the West is shared by many Muslims and the objective of returning to a purer Islamic society is embodied in the philosophy of the transnational Muslim Brotherhood movement. But whereas the mainstream of the Muslim Brotherhood has forgone violence as a means to obtain Islamic utopia, in most Arab countries offshoots of the Muslim Brotherhood, Al Qaeda and other Islamic groups, have decided on militancy to change the destiny of the Muslim world.

The ideology of the mujahedin filling Al Qaeda's ranks envisions repulsion of Western influences and a return to early Muslim values in order to revive the glory days of Islam. To best describe the militant campaign of Al Qaeda and similar groups, the term, "salafist jihad," is preferred.[1] Hereafter, the term, "salafist mujahedin," will be used to describe militant, revivalist, Islamic fighters waging offensive war against "forces of evil" in religious terms of *Dar al-Harab*, the "House of War."

The salafist jihad ideology attempts to regain the height of Islamic culture and power of the Middle Ages by returning to early, "pure" practice of Islam as it was during the time of the first generation of Muslims (*salaf*). This variant of fundamentalist religion has appeal across the Muslim world; its promise of a better future through adherence to early Islamic practices offers an alternative to the feelings of humiliation and degradation felt as a by-product of Western military and economic dominance over the Islamic world. Since Islam's inception and propagation by the Prophet Mohammed, there is an important correlation

between Islam's stature and its political-military power;[2] therefore, in the believer's world view, the decline in relative influence/strength of Islamic civilization to the West reflects a reversal of Islam's power and displacement of its rightful role as the dominant religion of the world. Osama bin Laden spoke of this perspective when he mentioned the "humiliation and disgrace" felt since the fall of the Ottoman sultanate in his video message of October 2001.[3]

The current struggle against Western civilization is categorized by salafist mujahedin as a struggle against good and evil; a revival of the early and militant spread of Islam against "the forces of evil" in the first offensive jihad.[4] Since the United States is the epitome of non-Islamic power in the post-Cold War era, it is characterized as the clichéd "Great Satan" and target of Islamic militancy.

Salafist mujahedin interpret jihad beyond the moderate sense of personal spiritual improvement and defense of the Muslim community; it includes the moral duty of overthrowing Muslim governments and societies considered apostate (*Jahiliyya*). In their view, the obstacle to achieving the perfect Islamic state is the apostate governments and the U.S. policies supporting them. As Bernard Lewis writes, "some of them still see the West in general and its present leader the United States in particular as the ancient and irreconcilable enemy of Islam, the one serious obstacle to the restoration of God's faith and law at home and their ultimate universal triumph" [the spread of Islam globally].[5]

Besides Al Qaeda, groups embracing salafist jihad ideology, include: Jemaah Islamiya (JI); Jamma'at al-Tawid wa'al Jihad; Al-Jihad (EIJ); Al Tawid; Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG); Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF); Armed Islamic Group (GIA); Salafist Group for Call and Combat (GSPC); Salafia Jihadia (SJ); Asbat al-Ansar; Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU); Islamic Army of Aden (IAA); Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group (GICM); and the Tunisian Combatant Group (TCG).[6] Western realization of salafist jihad advocacy, and its irreconcilable political revolutionary implications to the security environment of Western and allied societies, can serve to identify future and current threats in the form of Al Qaeda allies or successors. Recognizing salafi jihadists could also forestall mistakes such as harboring religious extremists like Aba Hamza al-Masri (belatedly jailed in the UK) and Sheikh Omar Abdul Rahman (the 1993 WTC bombing conspirator).

Al Qaeda was initially distinguished from other salafist mujahedin groups by its global jihad operational view; other groups have or had jihadi objectives limited to their native land. As it has been observed, however, groups and individuals are willing to expand the domain of their jihad because they either lacked success in their locale, embraced the global jihad perspective, or acted as temporary surrogates for Al Qaeda. The transition from expanding the target set from the incumbent regime to the West has been exercised often.

The most obvious example is the EIJ. Though not all members of the EIJ agreed with the ideological shift detracting from overthrowing the Egyptian government, the majority decided to merge with bin Laden and join the jihad against America and Israel. Proximity of U.S. forces to current national salafi jihadist groups could also easily compel mujahedin to target U.S. interests. In Iraq, the salafist mujahedin are already active; in Afghanistan, salafi jihadists await the United States to leave. Salafi jihadists the world over have been encouraged by Al Qaeda's success and feel as unified participants in a global running war with the United States and its allies. Due to the geographical spread of salafist believers throughout the world, the insurgency waged by the salafist mujahedin is ensured to be of worldwide proportions. Though not seemingly coordinated on a global magnitude unless Al Qaeda is involved, due to the number of autonomous groups participating in this global insugency, the leadership of Al Qaeda could become irrelevant in the jihad's direction and sustenance.

A Common Means

It is important to note certain Islamic extremists do not consider the killing of innocents during the fight against evil as a moral dilemma since it is reasoned Allah will provide divine justice by rewarding or punishing the victims in the after life according to their virtue.[7] The lack of measures to avoid killing even fellow Muslim bystanders (who may be considered apostate since they are not mujahedin supporters) is a common trait of the salafist jihad movement. Their lack of distinction between combatants and non-combatants warrants applying the term "terrorist" to most salafist mujahedin, though there may be exceptional groups who only target government forces. Any salafist mujahedin terrorist group

should be considered the preeminent security threat and most likely to utilize WMD against U.S. interests. The salafist brand of jihad values public demonstration, or witness, of personal sacrifice as a necessary affirmation of faith. The suicidal and murderous 9/11 highjackings would be understood by salafist mujahedin as "spectacular martyrdom…the ultimate demonstration of jihad as a testament."[8]

Suicidal mass killings are meant as demonstrations of faith to fellow Muslims and meant to convey to non-believers that Islam's superiority is made evident by virtue of its followers who are more willing to sacrifice in the "cosmic struggle between good and evil" than its enemies.[9] With an ideological propensity for dramatic death and destruction, it is hard to imagine a salafist mujahedin group that would not use WMD if it had the capability. Indeed, clerics, such as the Saudi Naser bin Hamad al-Fahd, continue to fuel the extremist fire with the issuing of *fatwas* urging the use of WMD against non-Muslims.[10] The salafist mujahedin active in Iraq, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi and the group Ansar al-Islam, have chemical weapon knowledge with the propensity to use it. A Jordanian al-Zarqawi cell is claimed to have been prevented from committing a chemical attack in Amman, Jordan, in 2004.[11]

A successor or allied group to today's Al Qaeda will have the same commonalities: a goal of renewing the Caliphate by first establishing a fundamentalist Islamic state through violent overthrow; a willingness to attack the United States or western nations as a means to compel the West to withdraw from the Islamic community and, thus, undermining the targeted "apostate" local government; and a willingness to use WMD or equal conventional means to provide a catastrophic number of casualties.

III. Replenishment

Recruitment

On an individual basis, Muslim men throughout the globe may engage in militant jihad out of a sense of defending a Muslim community. In most cases it has been to defend a Muslim population from direct aggression (Afghanistan, Chechnya, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Iraq); for some, however, jihad also entails defending the global Muslim community from Western influences by attacking the United States and its allies. Perceiving the United States as a threat to Islam is made easier by the increasingly prevalent anti-American attitude in the Muslim world shared by non-salafist Muslims and salafist mujahedin alike.[12]

The realization of the disparity of power and prosperity between the Western and Muslim communities has fueled hatred against ineffective Muslim rulers and the Western powers perceived supporting them. The scholar Bernard Lewis writes, "By now there is an almost standardized litany of American offenses recited in the lands of Islam, in the media, in pamphlets, in sermons, and in public speeches."[13]

But hatred for a regime and its framework does not directly translate to suicidal mass-murder. Combined hatred, a sense of religious duty, and reward by sacrifice transforms grievance into murderous acts. Due to the number of disparate salafist mujahedin groups in Afghanistan and Pakistan in the 1990's, it is clear that although Al Qaeda presently serves as an inspiration, it is not the sole means or rally point for salafist mujahedin. In fact, Mohammed Atta and the rest of his Hamburg cell decided to join the mujahedin in Chechnya before being recruited by Al Qaeda.[14] It can be assumed aspiring mujahedin will continue to find a venue for their cause, with or without Al Qaeda.

What is the mechanism for attracting people to the salafist jihad ideology and providing recruits to Al Qaeda and other jihad groups? The means by which Al Qaeda obtains recruits is less overt than a recruiting office. Social bonds, more than propaganda, contribute to mujahedin recruitment. In a biographic study of 400 Islamic terrorists, University of Pennsylvania professor Marc Sageman discovered 70 percent of terrorists were recruited outside their native country, having traveled abroad in

search of improving their livelihood through jobs or education.[15] Family separation and a feeling of alienation from their host society prompted many to seek companionship with other Muslims at the mosques. Friendship accounted for 68 percent of the recruitment, kinship (directly or through marriage) 20 percent, and "discipleship" a mere 10 percent.[16] Social networking continues to be an indoctrination scheme utilized by the fundamentalist Muslim Brotherhood, a precursor movement of many of the salafist terrorist groups.[17] Mohammed Atta and his fellow cell members in Hamburg were bound to each other through a social network formed at the mosque.[18]

Although detecting active recruitment is unlikely, the social characteristic of these terrorist networks is a vulnerability of salafist mujahedin terrorist groups. Individuals serve as critical links between prospective recruits and mujahedin groups, as well as between autonomous groups. These human hubs connect communication, money, equipment, and expertise.[19] The elimination of these personalities would have the effect of isolating cells and reducing the efficiency of the organization severely. Isolated salafist jihad groups would be unable to launch an orchestrated operation of the scale similar to 9/11.[20] Additionally, if Osama bin Laden is eliminated, those that have sworn *bayat*, or fealty and abeyance, may not be bound to remain under Al Qaeda direction. Though personal agendas may remain the same, individuals may seek to join other local, less ambitious or efficient groups.

The numerous training camps in Afghanistan and Pakistan provided a collecting point for aspiring mujahedin from all over the world and a pool of candidates for Al Qaeda to selectively recruit from. The loss of the camps hinders recruitment, but probably has not prevented it. The recruitment needs of Al Qaeda seem to be qualitative in nature, not quantitative, and recruitment through social contacts may suffice until a large number of trusted individuals, who serve as the group's bridge to the disenchanted masses, are killed or captured. Although Al Qaeda has lost many of its frontline fighters in the Afghanistan battlefield, Al Qaeda does not rely on, nor have a need to reconstitute a standing army of Arab warriors. Al Qaeda is most lethal via its selective, carefully planned operations which could, out of necessity, utilize training sites of other groups (e.g., Hezbollah at least once provided explosive training in Lebanon).[21] What the camps certainly did provide was a place to vet

pools of new mujahedin to be prospective clandestine operatives. Mohamed Atta and his Hamburg friends were partially chosen because they spoke English and were accustomed to living in a Western country.

Additional sources of personnel may come from other jihad groups that heretofore only had local objectives. Where Al Qaeda and local jihad aims merge, Al Qaeda has a chance to hire services or recruit experts and operatives for missions under their direction. Recent Al Qaeda operatives have reportedly risen from Pakistani militant jihad groups and, for the near term, Al Qaeda can probably still have global reach through its contacts fostered in Afghanistan.[22] As it was before Operation Enduring Freedom, Al Qaeda will be the premier group to seek entry into as long as it has the funding to sponsor operations, partner with, and support other groups.

A question arises, however, if the Al Qaeda leadership were to be decimated to the point the organizational structure is defunct, would a leadership vacuum exist for the masses of mujahedin who desire to be part of a global jihad? A review of other Islamic terrorist groups reveals a dearth of leaders with resources and ambition equal to that of bin Laden.

Leadership

> *Al Qaeda at the time consisted of three elements...The first element is the 'Al-Qaeda hardcore'. In addition to the dozen associates who had stayed with him since the late 1980s, bin Laden was able to attract many of the pre-eminent militants active at the time. Most came for purely pragmatic reasons. Afghanistan between 1996 and 2001 was an excellent place to be. For militants who had spent years trying to mobilise and act, struggling all the while with domestic security services, Afghanistan was like a department store designed for Islamic terrorists. Recruits, knowledge, ideas and even cash could be had off the shelf. Bin Laden and his associates were running a whole floor, the biggest, the best stocked and the most glitzy. By the time of the September 11th attacks, bin Laden and his dozen or so close associates had been able to attract and retain the loyalty of around a hundred highly motivated individuals from throughout the Islamic world who all had*

> *key skills and expertise and were committed to a similar agenda...these hundred or so men, with the dozen or so long-term associates at their centre, can be considered the 'Al-Qaeda hardcore.'*
>
> –Jason Burke
> *Al-Qaeda: Casting a Shadow of Terror*

Although Al Qaeda is often referred to as a network, there existed an organizational framework at the top consisting of Osama bin Laden, Ayman al-Zawahiri, the *shura majlis* advisory council, and heads of the military, financial, information, political, foreign purchase, and security committees. The members of these committees constitute the functional core of the organization at its strongest when it still had the "long-term associates" described above.

Membership of the committees has since changed as personalities have been eliminated. Al Qaeda thrives on a network of senior personal contacts grown through the Afghan-Soviet war and Muslim Brotherhood involvement. A key consideration is whether Al Qaeda operates like an institution, or is still dependent on leadership personality to remain effective?

Osama bin Laden's leadership was initially dependent on his ability to provide funds. His access to money and equipment was the factor that elevated his profile among the many mujahedin in the Afghan-Soviet war. His familial contacts with the royal Saudi family and other wealthy elite in Saudi Arabia allowed him access to wealthy contributors and correspondingly allowed him to provide services and funds at an individual level that made him noticeable. His charity and his ability to deliver formed his reputation and stature. Now that bin Laden's organization successfully attacked the United States multiple times on a spectacular scale, his name inspires and draws mujahedin and contributors alike. His popularity alone amongst destitute Muslims must be worth capital.

A pivotal moment in Al Qaeda's history was the merger of the members of the Egyptian Islamic Jihad (EIJ) to bin Laden's group in 1998. The Egyptians from the EIJ are thought to have been the operational brains of Al Qaeda, matching their covert terrorist skills and

experience with the financial resources of bin Laden. The EIJ members dominated many of the top leadership positions within Al Qaeda, shaping Al Qaeda's organization along EIJ's committee structure.[23] Surviving members of this group would seem to be the natural successors should the leadership of bin Laden or Zawahiri be eliminated; however, a former EIJ member might not have adequate access to financing and be totally reliant on bin Laden's financial sources. It is postulated Al Zawahiri joined bin Laden because the EIJ was financially destitute.[24] Further, notable EIJ members known to have been part of Al Qaeda have been killed, arrested or detained, potentially reducing the number of experienced veterans, or those with financial links, to a critical few.[25] Saiid Al-Masri, a member of the finance committee, is still at large and can be assumed to have sufficient contacts to obtain funds; so too, Abdullah Ahmed Abdullah.

A search for successors to the current leadership of Al Qaeda requires two considerations: who can lead and who can inspire? Leadership will entail ability to conceive, plan, and fund operations. Ability to inspire others will be measured through their capability to attract funding and recruits. Legitimacy will be important in either case, either by association to bin Laden or continued clerical support for the ideology. Osama bin Laden's son, Saad bin Laden, may be the logical successor to Osama since he is part of the upper tier network and has a renown name to attract funding and converts. His implication in the May 2003 Riyadh bombings (despite his possible detention in Iran with Egyptians Saif al-Adel and Abdullah Ahmed Abdullah since 2002) suggests he may have planning experience as well.[26] If true, Saad bin Laden is able to direct operations in lieu of his father and may be able to garner the respect of the Al Qaeda peerage. It may be also safe to assume he shares the same vision of a revived Islamic Caliphate.

Should the Al Qaeda top leadership be eliminated, the remaining cadre may have to merge with another salafist mujahedin group. Outside the Saudi and Egyptian Al Qaeda clique, successive leadership of the salafist mujahedin movement is difficult to ascertain. If leaders share bin Laden's vision, but do not have access to their own income, it is doubtful they could be effective unless the Al Qaeda financiers were willing to make resources available. Experienced and known salafist mujahedin leaders that have cooperated with bin Laden in the past include:

- Imad Fayez Mugniyah, the Lebanese Hezbollah leader who masterminded the Beirut Marine barracks bombing; he facilitated explosives training for Al Qaeda and the escape of Al Qaeda members from Afghanistan to Iran.[27]
- Ahmad Abdel Karim al-Saadi (aka Abu Mohjen), the Palestinian leader of the Asbat al-Ansar terrorist group which received financing and training from Al Qaeda in the late 1990's. Al-Saadi is unlocated but his group is based in the uncontrolled Ain al-Hilweh refugee camp in Lebanon.[28]
- Abu Bakar Bashir, the Indonesian cleric and co-leader of the Jemaah Islamiya (JI). Bashir has close contacts with bin Laden and has demonstrated the willingness and capability to conduct transnational operations in order to achieve an Islamic state encompassing numerous Southeast Asia nations. Bashir was put on trial in Indonesia for the Bali bombings, but only received a two-and-a-half year sentence in the spring of 2005. He enjoys some popular support within Indonesia.
- Tohir Yuldashev, unlocated leader of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) who has expanded his goals beyond overthrowing the Uzbekistan government to include establishing a regional Islamic Caliphate. IMU conducts activities throughout central Asia and has supposedly joined with other regional groups to form the Islamic Movement of Central Asia (IMCA).[29]
- Burhanuddin Rabbani a Tajik mujahedin warlord and former Afghan President.[30] He is currently a member of the Loya Jirga and head of one of the largest political parties, Jami'at-e Islami.
- Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, an anti-American Pashtun Afghan mujahedin leader who ran terrorist training camps in the 1990's with Gulf nation and Pakistani ISI backing. He was designated a terrorist by the United States in February 2003 for his past support to Al Qaeda. Hekmatyar's Hizb-e-Islami Gulbuddin (HIG) has vowed to fight the Karzai regime and called for jihad against international troops in Afghanistan; his whereabouts are currently unknown.[31]

- Abdul Rasul Sayyaf,[32] the Afghan hardliner, who due to his Saudi financial ties, ran numerous and prominent mujahedin training camps in Afghanistan and Pakistan.[33] His forces are accused of numerous war crimes.[34] He is cited as Khalid Sheikh Mohammed's mentor when he arrived in Afghanistan.[35] He currently is a member of the Loya Jirga.

Although the sampling of the above leaders possess the qualifications, it is difficult to discern whether they: 1) would give up on their local struggle to attempt to orchestrate a global campaign and 2) could keep the Arab core, with all its financial and social contacts, together as a cohesive functioning organization. Certainly a number of groups would volunteer to absorb a financially well-endowed organization like Al Qaeda, but other salafist mujahedin leaders have exhibited little inclination to wage war on the "far enemy" in order to establish a Caliphate. Most leaders are singularly focused on establishing local Islamic states and have not engaged in activities outside their locale.[36] Even considering the overthrow of the local apostate government as a first and essential step towards larger Al Qaeda schemes, based on declared aims, only the JI, the Kumpulan Mujahidin Malaysia (KMM), and the IMU/IMCA have regional goals approaching the bin Laden/Zawahiri vision; and each have yet to support operations on another continent.[37] Even the Asian co-signatories to the 1998 "World Islamic Front" never left the gravity of their local Kashmiri or Bangladeshi issues, giving slight indication they were part of a global movement save their signatures on a piece of paper. Many groups have supporters abroad in Western nations, but the lack of converting support cells into attacking operatives may reflect a calculation where the negative consequences of attacking host countries outweighs the indirect locally gained benefits. Mahgreb groups such as the Armed Islamic Group (GIA), Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group (GICM), and the Tunisian Combatant Group (TCG), have conducted attacks against Western targets outside of their objective domain and reflect the most transnational modus operandi akin to Al Qaeda.

It is understood some of the salafist mujahedin groups are a loose regional alliance, providing mutual support and occasionally bound by the ties of Al Qaeda. But none presently compare to the unique, central, and capable role the Al Qaeda leadership has served the salafist mujahedin

movement to date. It is not clear how long the residual Afghanistan veteran network can serve as a conduit for cooperation. Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi is perhaps the only leader in a position to rally mujahedin for a cataclysmic contest in Iraq against the iconic Western superpower. If Zarqawi can survive bin Laden, Zawahiri, and his U.S. pursuers, he may have the reputation and the network to guide the global jihad.

Having sustainable resources, however, is also key to a global role in the salafist jihad. It is hard to imagine a JI leader or an Afghan warlord having an orchestrating role without the ability to financially attract and support allegiance. The numerous small mujahedin movements such as the Bangladeshi Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami (HUJI-B), Iraqi Ansar al-Islam (AI) or the Algerian Salafist Group for Call and Combat (GSPC) will most likely remain isolated efforts unless their leaders establish diverse financial sources able to nurture outside mujahedin interest.

Financing

Terrorist operations require funding for recruitment and propaganda, housing and feeding of operatives, training camps, equipment and weapons, forged identity documents, communications, bribery and intelligence gathering.[38] Although the 9/11 operation is estimated to have cost Al Qaeda between $400,000 to $500,000,[39] the attack on the U.S.S. *Cole* between $5,000 to $10,000, and the Bali bombing $74,000,[40] the upkeep of the organization at its height is estimated to be approximately $30 million a year. It should be noted, however, $10 million to $20 million of this figure was necessary to give annually to the Taliban for safe sanctuary.[41]

According to a UN study, 90 percent of Al Qaeda's expenses would stem from infrastructure costs such as communications, protection, networks, and training facilities, while less than 10 percent of their expenses were operational costs.[42] Al Qaeda may still pay for sanctuary today, but since it does not support the extensive training infrastructure it enjoyed in Afghanistan, it may have experienced a tradeoff of quantity of Al Qaeda cadre for lesser expenses. The lack of training facilities has made the use of affiliated groups and their locally trained ranks more important in executing operations on Al Qaeda's behalf. Al Qaeda gave Jemaah Islamiah $130,000 between 1996 and 2001, with another account citing $200,000 paid for operations beginning 2000.[43]

Major sources of revenue are available to terrorist organizations through charitable donations, businesses, and just about any illegal activity such as drug, weapon and immigrant trafficking, counterfeiting, forgery, kidnapping, etc. If access to a drug trade is not possible, the most lucrative monetary source available to Al Qaeda remains charitable donations. According to a 2003 United Nations Security Council report, Saudi charities alone send $800 million in funds overseas annually.[44] The same source of charitable funding for Al Qaeda is available to other Islamic groups, and sharing the same agenda as Al Qaeda, is likely to garner the same support base, though Osama bin Laden enjoyed excellent social access to wealthy contacts. Despite the claim by Muntassir Al-Zayat, in his book *Ayman Al-Zawahiri As I Knew Him*, that the 9/11 attacks dried up U.S. and European sources of income for jihadist causes, untraceable funds from Arab countries continue to suffice for jihadist movements.[45]

The *2002 UN report on Terrorism Financing* states the past venues for Al Qaeda to receive money are still in place; in other words, the collaborative relationship of wealthy *zakat* sponsors, money laundering banks, businesses, and charity fronts that provided Al Qaeda $300 million to $500 million between 1991-2001 is still functioning today (with an approximate annual income of $50 million).[46] Within the *zakat* system, the current individual or institutional brokers distributing religious-based contributions to charities or persons are probably the same who funneled money directly to Al Qaeda charities. These individuals or institutions are traditionally trusted and are unlikely to change unless implicated of willingly supporting terrorism. Even if not directly supported by sympathetic brokers within legitimate charities which have typical poor financial oversight, Al Qaeda can still be expected to have loyalists implanted within the organization to siphon off funds on Al Qaeda's behalf.[47] Front charities established by Al Qaeda and like-minded groups are assumed to be still functioning but under different guise. Charities, like the International Relations and Information Center (IRIC) established by Osama bin Laden's brother-in-law and responsible for funding Khalid Sheik Mohammed and Ramzi Yousef's *Bojinka* operation, may have changed names but not intent. The IRIC operations and staff were assumed by another Islamic charity headed by an associate of the IRIC

founder.[48] The transfer of funds is still untraceable due to couriers and the broadly-used and unregulated *hawla* money transfer system.

Small or local terrorist groups using simplistic attacks do not need large sums of money to execute operations, but sustaining a larger confederation of groups around the globe requires large sums to provide sanctuary, security, transport, and leverage with allied groups.[49] Although charitable contacts are believed to deliver the bulk of Al Qaeda funds, business revenue has been part of Al Qaeda's financial planning and has included joint ventures with other salafist mujahedin groups. When the hunt for Al Qaeda's money sources began, Osama bin Laden dispersed Al Qaeda's assets among different holding companies with investments in financial, commercial, and real estate institutions.[50] Though some business holdings may be discovered, bin Laden has exhibited flexibility in creating new investments and keeping them distributed.

Despite the government of Sudan confiscating his business holdings when he was evicted, bin Laden was able to reestablish new businesses elsewhere, replicating the same pattern he orchestrated in Southeast Asia. Businesses managed under JI members were started with initial capital from Al Qaeda with the intent to become profitable so as to provide income for the overall JI organization and local cells. Other businesses were established to be fronts in order to acquire equipment or launder money. The fronts were established at the rate of one a year between 1993 and 1996 and included a bio medical lab, two trading companies, and a computer firm.[51]

For further security, Al Qaeda diversified some of their financial assets into commodities. Al Qaeda is assessed to have transferred as much as $20 million into diamonds and gemstones between 2000-2001.[52] Al Qaeda also has assets in gold which have been reportedly shipped to Sudan in 2002, indicating the organization still has sufficient contacts in its former sanctuary.[53]

The fate of the Al Qaeda freighter fleet is also undetermined. Fifteen to fifty ships may have been under the control of Osama bin Laden at one time, generating income or supporting operations.[54] Marmoun Darkanzali, a Syrian businessman in Germany is sought by Spain on charges he helped buy a freighter for Osama bin Laden in 1993.[55] That Darkanzali was only being found out in 2004 attests to the organization's ability to conceal its financial network.

Any organization with the means to illicitly move personnel and equipment has the means to earn high profits from smuggling, apparently without moral reservation. Though the 9/11 commission report refutes Al Qaeda having access to Afghan drugs, the Taliban exhibited no hesitation in exclusively reserving this income to support their regime.[56] Likewise, other Islamist groups have used drug trafficking for an easy, profitable, and sustainable revenue stream.[57] Engaging in risky crimes such as robbery and kidnapping may be deemed as a last resort to groups or cells without support from significant outside funding. In the case of Al Qaeda, if it cannot tap into its significant holdings, various means to generate money, such as forgery and alien smuggling, is always possible to its cells although it may mean curtailing the scope of operations.

More intriguing than how money is obtained, transferred, or laundered, is how someone retains control of the organization's wealth and can direct its use. The diversity of Al Qaeda's income origins and assets indicates a number of personnel are necessarily part of the financial management network. Al Qaeda's financial committee is reportedly the largest of the leadership tier, consisting of approximately 20 financiers, bankers, and accountants to manage funds across the continents.[58] Though a few individuals identified as financiers and members of the financial committee have been apprehended, there appears to remain a sufficient number of dedicated caretakers to keep things running. The remaining assets and managers of Al Qaeda's financial base will be the most critical elements remaining of the top tier should attrition of key personalities be sufficient to cause organizational fragmentation. When Al Qaeda financiers find themselves unable to function at the service of a commander, they have the possibility of joining or supporting other salafist mujahedin groups and bringing powerful resources to local or regional actors in the Mahgreb, Southeast, South or Central Asia. Endowed with money and expertise, the inheritors can try to re-construct the inter-group relationships abandoned by Al Qaeda.

Training and Convergence Points

Even though the mujahedin prevailed over the Soviet-backed government in Afghanistan, throughout the 1990's training camps run by Hekmatyar, Sayyaf, the Pakistani government, and other Islamic groups

continued to provide jihadist training to Muslims arriving from around the world. In *Al-Qaeda*, Jason Burke writes, "…running camps was essential to sustained political and military success. Recruits, whatever their original background, naturally felt some allegiance to the group that trained them. An element of credit from the trainees' subsequent activities was reflected on their patrons."[59] Hosting mujahedin around the globe in camps, schools, and safe houses helped establish the bonds needed for cooperative efforts. Social networks were enlarged and allies were found for future ventures. Just as nations do in war, groups or individuals incorporated the war interests of their allies. Though some trainees may have arrived with only a limited objective in mind, they often left with a greater sense of global jihad or found themselves part of a mujahedin network Al Qaeda would utilize in later years. In the role of benefactor and trainer, individuals such as Osama bin Laden became global leaders. If people such as Gulbuddin Hekmatyar (HIG), Tohir Yuldashev (IMU), and Abu Bakar Bashir (JI) can generate the finances, find the sanctuary, and attract willing volunteers, they have the equal potential to become global figures of the jihadist movement.

There is still evidence Al Qaeda has been able retain some of its training infrastructure in Pakistan. Though military training camps are harder to conceal, safe houses are still run to host new mujahedin. Al Qaeda was still operating safe houses for extremists in Pakistan as late as 2003.[60] Military hideouts and training for extremists were still available throughout tribal lands in regions of the Afghanistan-Pakistan border in late 2004. Pakistan reported the presence of hundreds of foreign fighters in South Waziristan and the elimination of two foreign training camps in September 2004.[61] In late November 2004, Pakistani forces destroyed training camps belonging to a militant South Waziristan tribesman, Abdullah Mahsud,[62] who was once jailed at Guantanomo Bay and is blamed for the kidnapping and killing of Chinese engineers. The Pakistani Interior Minister accused Mahsud of harboring "foreign miscreants."[63] It remains to be seen if Pakistani military actions will have a lasting effect in deterring tribal leaders from hosting mujahedin.

Meanwhile, a Philippine secret report indicated Jemmah Islamiah (JI) and Al Qaeda have been able to train in southern Philippine island enclaves for the past seven years. Al Qaeda operatives trained Indonesian/Malaysian JI recruits and Moro Islamic Liberation Front

members (MILF) which would serve to sustain selective Al Qaeda recruitment and ties to the JI affiliate organization.[64]

At least one Pakistani group has used their resources to support external interests of other groups, though public evidence is not overwhelming. As recently as 2004, the former Harakat ul-Mujahidin (HuM), now Jamiat ul-Ansar (JUA), has diverted fighters from its traditional Kashmir battleground to Afghanistan in order to fight American forces.[65] JUA had until lately been led by Fazlur Rehman Khalil, a co-signatory with Osama bin Laden of the 1998 *fatwa* against the United States

Besides providing sanctuary for jihadi training, the importance of Afghanistan in the 1980s and 1990s was its role in allowing a community of ideologues to come together, mutually support each other, and propagate their ideology. Free-lance terrorists came seeking sponsors for their plans. Ramzi Yousef and Khalid Sheikh Mohammed were examples of those who utilized associations with various groups to obtain contacts, funding, and training to mount their own conceived operations. Jason Burke writes:

> Ramzi, in his short career, was involved with Arab veterans of the Afghan war of a dozen different nationalities, bankers from half the countries in the Gulf, a series of different Islamic militants, several former Afghan mujahideen leaders, Pakistani sectarian terrorists and a whole range of recruits he found in Bangkok, Manila, New York, Peshawar, Quetta and Karachi. Bin Laden's involvement in any of this was tangential at best.[66]

Afghanistan provided a convergence point and gave birth to a worldwide phenomenon and network to sustain it. Returning Afghan veterans perpetuated the vision and shared their deadly skills in their own lands. In remote regions of Yemen, the Sahara, Sub-Sahara, South Asia, or other places where the central government is weak, such as in South Lebanon, aspiring mujahedin could find sufficient haven to conduct training, but not in the open atmosphere the Taliban once provided. International vigilance and pressure has compelled lax governments to control militant groups in their midst. In the case of Indonesia and

Lebanon, the government may be limited by geography or military capability in how much control it can exert in its own territory. In the case of Yemen, which had an emerging mujahedin group by the name of Islamic Army of Aden, the government was successful in disbanding or co-opting the group. Yemen's actions denied Al Qaeda one less group it could lean on.

IV. Allies and Affiliates

Osama bin Laden's February 1998 *fatwa* against the United States from the "World Islamic Front" symbolized the united passion of the salafist mujahedin but also its diversification. Co-signed not just by his Egyptian co-conspirators, but also by representatives of jihad movements in Pakistan and Bangladesh, the *fatwa* clearly revealed disparate groups can ally themselves for common cause. The Al Qaeda core represents only the most ambitious portion of a grander salafist insurgency seeking to establish Islamic states via terrorist means. In describing the indeterminate number of jihad groups in Afghanistan before the Taliban's fall, the journalist Jason Burke describes autonomous nature of the groups despite their shared passions:

> But though they may see bin Laden as a heroic figure, symbolic of their collective struggle, individuals and groups have their own leaders and their own agenda, often ones that are deeply parochial and which they will not subordinate to those of bin Laden or his close associates. Until recently, many were deeply antipathetic to bin Laden. As many remain rivals of bin Laden as have become allies.[67]

Salafist mujahedin groups have been established specific to their own local conditions without the direction of Osama bin Laden and the Al Qaeda organization. These groups received material assistance from Osama bin Laden at times or became allied, but the underlying philosophical underpinnings of a segment of the Muslim community will continue to feed the formation of independent, like-minded Al Qaeda groups.[68] To illustrate the depth of the salafist mujahedin movement, the next two segments discuss three groups linked to Al Qaeda, each starting with an independent history but eventually combining their operations under the umbrella organization.

The Maturation of the Moroccan Affiliate

A large portion of the Moroccan populace is alienated from its constitutional monarchy due to a desire for greater democracy and political reform. Political disenfranchisement coupled with conditions of high unemployment, high illiteracy rates, and low per capita income widened the appeal of Islamic fundamentalism.[69] Morocco experienced Islamic radicalism in 1969 with the birth of the Shabiba Islamiya (Islamic Youth) movement. The group was banned and split into two factions, one evolving into the government-accepted PJD party, the other into the unrecognized Al Islah wa al-Tawhid. The lineage of Moroccan terrorist groups from Shabiba Islamiya is not clear; but members probably volunteered for the Afghan-Soviet war and returned with new ideas for commencing "jihad" at home. The indigenous extremist group, Salafia Jihadia (SJ), was founded in the early 1990s by veterans of the Afghan war.[70] Salafia Jihadia and another terrorist group, Takfir wal-Hijra (Judgement on the Infidels), were responsible for approximately 300 murders across Morocco metting out Islamic justice for non-Islamic behavior. By 2002, it had 400 known members and was alleged to be providing logistical support to the Saudi Al Qaeda cell plotting attacks on the Straits of Gibraltar.[71]

An audiotape released in February 2003 and attributed to bin Laden, described Morocco as "ripe for liberation," giving indications of impending attacks.[72] The following month on May 16, 2003, twelve suicide bombers in Casablanca conducted five coordinated attacks on Western and Jewish targets, killing 45 people.[73] More targets were intended, but some of the would-be attackers failed to execute their missions, suggesting the home-spun attackers were not under the tutelage of Al Qaeda, but may have been merely inspired by the bin Laden's call to jihad.[74] The government blamed the attacks on SJ, which advocated violence and war against infidels. Eighteen Moroccans eventually received heavy sentences for their participation; ten were accused of belonging to SJ, the remaining eight men were accused of belonging to a second group, the Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group (GICM) whose members were accused of being trained in Afghanistan and receiving support from Al Qaeda.[75]

The GICM emerged after SJ in the late 1990s with the aim to establish an Islamic state in Morocco and support Al Qaeda's jihad against the West.[76] Its initial membership also originated with Afghanistan war veterans. GICM reportedly has émigré groups throughout Europe and sustains itself through trafficking of arms and falsified documents.[77]

The relationship between the two Moroccan groups is not clear; SJ appears to operate within Morocco, while GICM has a focus abroad, either through deliberation or by default of its immigrant operatives. Moroccan individuals, whose membership in either organization is not discernable, tie the groups together through personal association while also providing links to the Al Qaeda umbrella organization.

On March 11, 2004, explosions ripped through the Madrid train station killing 191 people, and injuring 2,000. A group calling itself the "Abu Hafs Al Masri Brigades" and claiming to act on the behalf of Al Qaeda took credit for the attack while demanding Spain's withdrawal from Iraq.[78] Twenty of the 24 people charged to date with the Madrid attacks are Moroccan. The bombings have been subsequently attributed to the GICM. Its leader for this attack was initially believed to be Jamal Zougam, a 30 year-old Moroccan from Tangiers. Serhane ben Abdelmajid Fakhet, a Tunisian who had worked in Morocco before moving to Spain, was later identified as the ringleader.[79] Fakhet and six other terrorists, all Moroccan, died in a self-detonated explosion during the police siege of their Madrid apartment in April 2004.

The Ties that Bind

The GICM coordinator of the Madrid bombings was the Tunisian, Serhane Fakhet. Though first believed to be the architect of the plan, Italian telephone wiretaps revealed an Egyptian, Rabei Osman Ahmed, as the self-confessed mastermind of the bombings. In the years prior to the bombing, Ahmed was financed for unspecific purposes by a Saudi cleric, purportedly a friend of Osama bin Laden.[80] If Ahmed is a paid operative of Al Qaeda, then a direct tie to the GICM operation can be linked.

One of the prime suspects in the Madrid bombings is Jamal Zougam, a Moroccan cell phone shop owner who has ties with SJ and numerous personalities in the terrorist web. He is a follower of Imad Eddin Barakat Yarkas, aka Abu Dahdah, a leader of a Spanish Al Qaeda cell. In a 2001

telephone conversation, Zougam tells Abu Dahdah he is ready and willing to provide finances to Mohamed Fizazi, the spiritual leader of SJ.[81] Zougam's role is perplexing in that it is not discernable whether he is part of the Spanish Al Qaeda cell or one of the two Moroccan groups, but he apparently knows key figures of both. Zougam represents a human node connecting linkages of Islamic terrorist groups bound via shared ideology and personal relationships (see Figure 1). Zougam also personally knew two Moroccan suspects in the Casablanca bombings, the brothers, Abdelaziz Benyaich and Salaheddin Benyaich. The Benyaich brothers temporarily stayed with an Al Qaeda member in 1998, David Courtailler, who had connections to Zacarias Moussaoui and Richard Reed.[82]

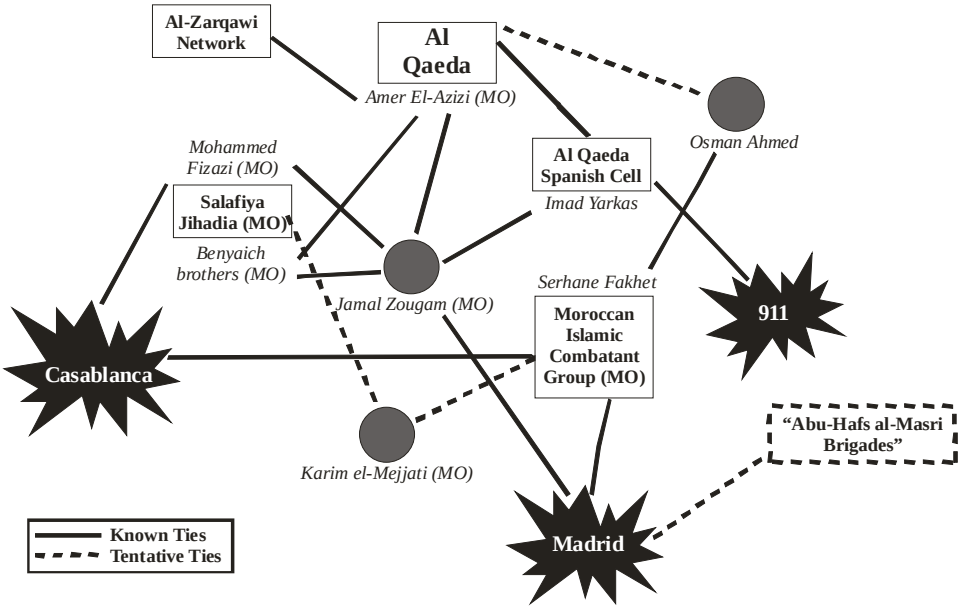

Figure 1. The Moroccan Networks

An additional key Moroccan player is Amer el-Azizi, an Afghanistan veteran who served as an Al Qaeda emissary to extremist cells in Europe. He was in contact with Yarkas and is believed to have been a close associate of Zougam.[83] Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi, the head of another terrorist network, was Azizi's benefactor between the 9/11 attacks and the

Madrid bombing.[84] Another Moroccan believed to be a high level member within the loose affiliation of Al Qaeda groups, Karim el-Mejjati, is suspected to be an accomplice to both Casablanca and Madrid bombings and is still at large.[85]

Investigations to date have not established a hierarchal linkage between the mujahedin; instead a picture is forming of a family of separate groups with members who can interoperate between them. While SJ may remain committed to waging jihad in Morocco and allowing itself to host Al Qaeda in preparation for its Strait of Gibraltar attack, the GICM may consist of SJ members spun off specifically to conduct operations in Europe at the behest of Al Qaeda. They may have been recruited while at training camps in Afghanistan or Pakistan and were subsequently supplemented by non-Moroccans. Citing intelligence and police reports following two months of investigation, Baltasar Garzon, the Spanish investigating judge for the Madrid train bombing, assessed Morocco was home to roughly 100 "Al Qaeda cells," each cell consisting of 5-10 members.[86] Based on documents found in Al Qaeda premises, Moroccan authorities estimate 600 Moroccans have trained in Al Qaeda camps in Afghanistan, Bosnia, and Chechnya. The Moroccan government cannot account for the whereabouts of 400 of the attendees,[87] signifying the mujahedin could be in Europe, Morocco, or elsewhere.

More than one reason could explain why the GICM targeted Spain. First, there are a large number of legal and illegal Moroccan immigrants in the country, making it a convenient staging ground for Al Qaeda-inspired attacks in Europe. Secondly, Morocco has historical colonial grievances with the Spanish, making it a sentimental "imperialist target" for Moroccan jihadists.[88] Even as recently as December 2004, four GICM members were arrested in the Spanish Canary Islands suspected of establishing a new base. Lastly, as an Al Qaeda Internet posting warned before the attack, and as the "Abu Hafs Al-Mari Brigades" claimed afterward, the attack was a concentrated effort to remove Spanish troops from Iraq.[89] The combination of having a pre-positioned proxy cell of Moroccan ex-patriots in Spain (GICM) timed with Spanish involvement in Iraq, gave Al Qaeda an opportunity to strike another blow at the West.

Al Qaeda Lite

If there was one organization coming close to resembling Al Qaeda on a smaller scale, it is Jemaah Islamiya (JI). Since its inception, it has had a collaborative alliance with Al Qaeda. The number of followers within the JI is unknown; the U.S. State Department's *2003 Patterns of Global Terrorism* states the number can range between the hundreds to thousands. Suffice to say, the JI has sufficient members to conduct operations within Indonesia and throughout Southeast Asia, having proven the capability to create cells and stage operations in Thailand, Singapore, and the Philippines. It also has a mature, intact income-producing apparatus composed of charities, front companies, *hawala* banking proceeds, gold/gem smuggling, and petty crime[90] and historically has established training grounds throughout remote parts of Indonesia and southern Philippine Islands. Given income, remote locations, and a following, JI would seem poised to assume a commanding lead of the jihad scene following a setback for Al Qaeda. Already, signs indicate Al Qaeda is increasingly relying on the region to hide its money, though JI and Al Qaeda maintain separate control of their funds.[91]

The JI has suffered numerous setbacks of its own with the arrest of two of its founding leaders and arrest of approximately 250 members in December 2003.[92] Commentators cannot agree on the amount JI has been diminished, however, factors such as social ties through marriage, extremist Muslim boarding schools, and a membership suspected to be in the thousands across a vast archipelago will contribute to the group's resiliency.[93] Evidence of the type of progeny that an intact or fractured larger group can produce is noted by Mujahidin KOMPAK, a Muslim extremist group on the Indonesian island of Sulawesi (differing in its rashness and impatience), Laskar Mujahidin, and Laskar Jundullah. Many of the leaders are derived from the JI, and the groups share the same goals and desire for self-sufficiency.[94]

Like Al Qaeda, JI fostered relationships with foreign mujahedin groups to enlist support for training and operations. Aside from its extensive collaboration with Al Qaeda, mutual support was given and received from the Malaysian KMM and Philippine MILF, respectively. How much remains of the personal ties that typically cement these inter-

group relationships is unknown, but Hambli and Bashir's detention has possibly weakened some bonds.

Due to the Indonesian government's increased seriousness about not allowing jihadist groups to thrive under their noses, no outstanding leader has risen to level of prominence as Bashir (who is still highly visible during his trial). Abu Rusdan, the supposed spiritual replacement for Bashir, is still fulfilling his short prison sentence, but the 2004 bombing of the Australian Embassy proves JI is functioning regardless. JI has a networked organization which can continue to function as long as operative cells can produce revenue, or receive a hand-out from Al Qaeda. The Indonesian group has a common history, the infrastructure, and co-location to Al Qaeda's assets to be an attractive refuge for a decimated Al Qaeda organization.

The Iraqi Jihad

With the resounding loss of Afghanistan as a fundamentalist state, the salafist jihad objective of establishing a Caliphate has been severely disrupted. Iraq now serves as their new jihadi front and a fresh opportunity to establish an Islamic state under *sharia* law. The Jordanian Abu Musab al-Zarqawi currently is the most prominent figurehead of an insurgent movement in Iraq fighting against coalition forces. Although it is speculated he was linked to Al Qaeda before Operation Iraqi Freedom, his affiliation with the organization before 2004 is debatable and reports indicate he was previously at odds with the organization.[95] Zarqawi headed his own mujahedin group during the 1980s, formed his own Jund al-Shams Jordanian network, initially sending them to an Al Qaeda training camp in 1999.[96] He eventually ran his own training camps near Heart, Afghanistan, in 2000, utilizing his own funding and recruiting streams, illustrating that many activists in Afghanistan and Pakistan were capable of operating independently from Osama bin Laden.[97] By 2001, Zarqawi established the Al Tawid group in Germany, demonstrating the generic terrorist pattern of importing recruits to training camps and then deploying them abroad to form franchise groups or cells under direct control. Like most foreign mujahedin, Zarqawi had to flee Afghanistan after the fall of the Taliban and ended up in Iraq where he re-established

contacts with Arab donors.[98] He may have been welcomed by Baathists who were willing to support a guerilla veteran with an anti-U.S. passion.

Although he has been active in Iraq since mid-2003, recent evidence indicates Zarqawi was not an Al Qaeda associate until late 2004. A copy of a letter attributed to him was captured in January 2004 and is believed to be addressed to Osama bin Laden.[99] In it, Zarqawi reports on the situation within Iraq and his strategy for engagement, but the language in the letter does not leave one with the impression it is a report from a subordinate to his commander. Zarqawi acknowledges the addressee as the figurehead of the global jihad, but the letter insinuates his jihad in Iraq is an independent effort with the possibility of competing with Osama's limelight when he states, "We do not see ourselves as fit to challenge you, and we have never striven to achieve glory for ourselves…." Zarqawi describes his campaign as "the spearhead, the enabling vanguard," with which he hopes to achieve a victory to establish an Islamic state. The letter concludes with a solicitation to the recipient to support Zarqawi's campaign; it does not resemble a request for additional funds to something already supported. In fact, Zarqawi indicates he has yet to swear fealty, or *bayat*, to the recipient—something that Al Qaeda operatives swear to bin Laden before being assigned an important mission. Though Zarqawi concludes with a statement that he and the addressee share a common vision, he acknowledges there is room for disagreement. It does not have the tone of supplication but of coalition building.

It is not evident what Zarqawi was in need of, whether it was funding, fighters, weapons, or the Al Qaeda name for recruitment purposes. The letter was captured before his suspected Fallujah base was overrun in November 2004. The writing on the wall of his hideout, "Al Qaeda Organization,"[100] indicates he swore *bayat* to Al Qaeda sometime in October 2004 and changed the name of his organization from "Jam'at al-Tawid wa'al Jihad" to "Al Qaeda in Iraq."[101] Zarqawi must have had his own source of recruiting, supply, and funding to run insurgent operations prior to his subordination to bin Laden. The Iraqi *hawala* system was and remains intact to funnel funds from outside donors.[102] U.S. officials confirm there are ample finances available to the insurgency originating from loyal Baathists, Hussein relatives, charities, and Saudi donors who still transfer money through Syria.[103]

But why would Zarqawi need the assistance of bin Laden, if the usual terrorist business practices were available to him? Perhaps for the simple reason he could not elicit the necessary amount of support to expand operations as the reputable bin Laden name could, or he lacked sufficient personal contacts for sustained avenues of funding. After all, if Zarqawi envisions Iraq to be the jihad frontier and a replacement for Afghanistan, he requires more fighters, and notably those with the same Islamic fervor as the Afghanistan mujahedin. He complains in the letter attributed to him, "we are striving urgently…to create companies of mujahedin" in order to have a sufficiently overt fielded fighting force. Zarqawi's disappointment in current recruits is plain, however, when he refers to the secular Iraqis as those who "still prefer safety and returning to the arms of their wives;" they obviously were still uncommitted to the idea of martyrdom.

As much as Iraq symbolizes the opportunity to plant democracy in the Middle East, Iraq symbolizes as grand an opportunity to the salafists. The conditions must seem favorable from their viewpoint: the fall of a secular regime in the Arab heartland; an unshackled, disgruntled populace fresh to the ideas of salafist Islam; and an American enemy ("easy quarry") to rally behind the jihad banner.[104] Osama bin Laden is the most recognizable jihadist in the world; if Zarqawi can benefit from the association and realize his dream in Iraq, he could potentially usurp bin Laden as the leader of the global Jihad. Unfortunately for the United States, Iraq has the potential to be another breeding ground for additional terrorist networks that individuals like Osama bin Laden or his successor can exploit. Just as Osama used the social contacts between mujahedin groups in Afghanistan and Pakistan to form an umbrella global network of cooperative jihad organizations and foot soldiers, Iraq's battleground could provide Al-Zarqawi a similar environment should he survive and achieve some foothold. Without geography to aid him and unity of effort of the Iraqi populace, however, he will likely fail.

Zarqawi's group represents one upstart organization in Iraq with the potential to take a leading role in the global jihad. Perhaps nothing illustrates the regenerative capability of the salafist mujahedin and the incorporation of residual extremist networks into succeeding groups better than Ansar al-Islam (AI). Following the disruption of Al Qaeda operations with the loss of Afghanistan, AI began in December 2001 as a

Kurdish/Arab group to create an independent Islamic state in Iraq. The U.S. State Department describes AI as a distinct but allied group with Al Qaeda that trained its members in Al Qaeda's camps in Afghanistan. It is attributed to providing refuge to Al Qaeda fighters after their Afghan rout.[105]

The origin of AI began with the founding Kurd, Mullah Krekar, who was exiled to Europe over ten years ago and singularly focused on Kurdish northern Iraq. Notably, a Lebanese, Abu Mohammed Lubnani (aka Mustapha Darwich Ramadan), is now the leader of the group, bearing evidence the group has an expanded membership beyond Kurdish origins. AI has begun to attract numerous recruits from Europe and the Middle East to join the jihad against U.S. presence by utilizing recruitment and smuggling networks that may have, or continues to be used, by Al Qaeda. Lubnani (who lived in Denmark for 14 years) probably added his own personal network to the nascent AI, but attesting to the role personal contacts play in maintaining networks and bridging distinct groups, Abderrazak Mahdjoub (an Algerian immigrant) has been identified as being associated both with Al Qaeda's 9/11 Hamburg cell and smuggling fighters into Iraq for AI.[106] Again, as in the Moroccan example, sympathetic individuals possess dual roles or membership in separate organizations – willing and able to serve emerging and established organizations. What is also clear in examining AI, is the recruitment base for salafist jihad is growing; although depleted by U.S. attacks in 2003, AI membership has resurged to its pre-Operation Iraqi Freedom levels.[107] AI attacks are currently confined to Iraq, but it is not beyond expectation for the group to expand its scope to other areas. If the battle of Iraq is perceived as the beginning of a greater Islamic caliphate, the mujahedin may decide to broaden the front.

The generation of terrorists bound together by their Afghanistan experience is being rolled back through the combined counter-terrorism measures of allied nations. A new class of mujahedin is being inducted in Iraq, but with dimmer prospects for victory than their predecessors. After the war culminates in victory for the current Iraqi government, the surviving mujahedin are likely to disperse to their native lands, but not without the use of a new socially-based operational network to potentially continue the jihad.

Hopefully, the most stunning blow to the global salafist mujahedin movement, more than the physical elimination of the Al Qaeda core leadership, would be the moral loss of Iraq to Coalition forces and the establishment of a secular, liberal government. The myth and momentum of the mujahedin, which started with victory over the Soviet superpower and slowed with the fall of the Taliban, might be diffused by the democratization of Iraq. Even in a war of ideologies, tangible success or failure, eventually matters.

V. Conclusion

Due to the current resiliency of the salafist jihad ideology and lack of political freedom and economic opportunity in the Muslim world, there is no lack of recruits to wish harm to the United States and its allies. Matching intent with means, however, remains dependent on linkage to an organization with an ability to execute successful operations via leadership, resources, and means.

The decapitation strategy of eradicating the top leadership of Al Qaeda may be assumed to have the effect of fragmenting the organization to a point of ineffectiveness. To date, attrition of key figures has probably slowed operations, but the core leadership, its cells, and allies are still threaded together by relationships involving bin Laden, Zawahiri, and their lieutenants. The number of key social "hubs" in the organization are unknown, as are the number of corresponding alliances and franchises; to this end, it is hardly known when all the targets have been hit.

Post mortem bin Laden, the remnants of top tier personnel will most likely have financial means available to them due to the diverse distribution of monetary assets currently in place. Survivors could merge with another salafist mujahedin group, reforming its leadership from within the old Al Qaeda or adopting a leader from the new partner. Potential candidates for merger could stem from the independent groups that have executed the majority of the post 9/11 attacks (Al-Zarqawi, Abu Sayyaf, AI, SJ, GICM, GSPC, JI, etc.)[108]

In his essay, *Killing In the Name of God*, Jerrold Post proposes four scenarios following the elimination of Osama bin Laden from the Al Qaeda movement. Given the following: Al Qaeda's reliance on individuals to sustain social networks for coordination and access; a steady stream of revenue to sustain remote cells and procure allegiance; and the need for ambitious and competent leadership, the most likely outcome proposed by Post is one predicting the dispersal of Al Qaeda members/cells into other local salafist mujahedin groups. While he expects regional or local jihads to persist and transnational operations to abate in this scenario, I propose regional and local groups will eventually expand their operations as financial and social ties are re-sown. Even if short of success in his local arena, a leader with burgeoning resources can

establish his own franchise abroad, forge new alliances, and widen the jihad to again engage the "far enemy" – as long as the idea of resurrecting Islamic power through militant jihad continues to appeal.

A successful U.S.-Iraqi conclusion to the insurgency in Iraq could deliver a severe setback to the aspirations of salafi jihadists, while the pursuit of entities affiliated with Al Qaeda can dissuade collaboration and alliances. The United States should not be mistaken, however, into thinking the dismemberment of Al Qaeda will mean an end to the war on terrorism. Constant identification and prosecution of salafist mujahedin will be necessary to curb a growing and adaptive threat.

Notes

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2. Bernard Lewis, *The Crisis of Islam: Holy War and Unholy Terror* (New York, N.Y.: The Modern Library, 2003), 20.

3. Ibid., xv.

4. Ibid., 26.

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6. If listed, spelling is derived from the U.S. State Department's list of Foreign Terrorist Organizations available at http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/fs/2004/35167.htm.

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8. Jason Burke, *Al-Qaeda: Casting a Shadow of Terror* (London, U.K.: I.B. Tauris & Co, 2003), 33-36.

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10. Daniel Benjamin and Steven Simon, *The Age of Sacred Terror: Radical Islam's War Against America* (New York, N.Y.: Random House, 2003), 468.

11. Robert S. Leiken and Steven Brooke, "Who is Abu Zarqawi?" *The Weekly Standard*, 18 May 2004, Vol. 09, Issue 35, On-line, Internet, 11 December 2004, available from http://www.weeklystandard.com/Content/Public/Articles/000/000/004/094npvzg.asp?pg=1. The article also reports Zarqawi denies having chemical weapons, although he states he would use them against Israel if he did. *2003 Patterns of Global Terrorism*, U.S. Government Report (Washington, D.C.: Department of State, April 2004), 116, also refers to a chemical/toxin weapon expertise within Ansar al-Islam.

12. The loss of favorable global Muslim public opinion towards the U.S. is documented in *The 9/11 Commission Report* (New York, N.Y.: W.W. Norton & Company, 2004).

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17. Gary Servold, "The Muslim Brotherhood and Islamic Radicalism," in *Know Thy Enemy: Profiles of Adversary Leaders and Their Strategic Cultures*, ed. Barry R. Schneider et al. (Maxwell AFB, Ala.: USAF Counterproliferation Center, 2003), 55.

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19. A display of social and operational Al Qaeda linkages created by Marc Sageman reveal parallel relationships and social nodes presented by key personalities. Sageman, "Understanding Al Qaeda Networks," 7-27.

20. National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States, Terrorism, Al Qaeda, and the Muslim World, July 9, 2003, 10.

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30. Burke, 55. Rabbani and Sayyaf were the most prominent of Osama Bin Laden's contacts when he first arrived in Pakistan in 1980.

31. "Profile: Gulbiddin Hekmatyar," *BBC News*, 28 January 2003, On-line, Internet, 14 December 2004, available from http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/2701547.stm.

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35. *The 9/11 Commission Report*, 146.

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37. Based on review of U.S. State Department's *2003 Patterns of Global Terrorism*.

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