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**THESIS**

**JEMAAH ISLAMIYAH: REEVALUATING THE MOST  
DANGEROUS TERRORIST THREAT IN SOUTHEAST  
ASIA**

by

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December 2010

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**JEMAAH ISLAMIYAH: REEVALUATING THE MOST DANGEROUS  
TERRORIST THREAT IN SOUTHEAST ASIA**

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
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## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis examines Jemaah Islamiyah (JI), Southeast Asia's most dangerous terrorist threat. Since the group manifested its presence with its suicide bombings in Bali, Indonesia on October 12, 2002, considerable efforts have been devoted to describing the group responsible for the most damaging terrorist attacks in Southeast Asia and interpreting how it has changed over time. Over the course of the last decade, two competing interpretations of JI emerged. One view held that JI was divided between a large group of traditionalists and a smaller group of pro-violence militants. This became the conventional wisdom and served as the foundation for most countries' counterterrorism policies. The other held that the two factions worked closely together. By reconsidering JI's evolution in light of recently available evidence, this thesis shows that the second view more accurately describes JI. In particular, this thesis suggests that the two factions should be viewed as mutually supportive "administrative" and "operational" components of a single, adaptable terrorist group. To be successful over the long term, counterterrorism policies will need to pay greater attention to the administrative faction and its relationship to the operational wing, which conducts actual terrorist attacks.

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ASG	Abu Sayyaf Group
AQA	Al-Qaeda in Aceh
CT	Counterterrorism
DI	Darul Islam
Det 88	Detachment 88 Densus 88
GAM	Free Aceh Movement
JAT	Jemaah Anshorut Tawhid
JI	Jemaah Islamiyah
MMI	Mujahidin Council of Indonesia
MILF	Moro Islamic Liberation Front
PUPJI	General Guide for the Struggle of al-Jama'ah Al-Islamiyah <i>Pedoman Umum Perjuangan Al-Jama'ah Al-Islamiyah</i>
SEA	Southeast Asia
TII	Islamic Army of Indonesia
TNI	Indonesian Military
TQJ	Tandzim Qoedtatal Jihad

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# I. INTRODUCTION

## A. MAJOR RESEARCH QUESTION

Terrorist groups evolve in different ways. Some terrorist groups end while others “adapt over time into more-effective organizations and become increasingly dangerous threats.”<sup>1</sup> This thesis studies the evolution of a terrorist group that has not ended—Jemaah Islamiyah (JI). This thesis asks the question: how has JI evolved?

JI is Southeast Asia’s (SEA) largest and deadliest Islamist terrorist network. Over the past decade, JI operatives conducted five major terrorist attacks in Indonesia, beginning with the 2002 Bali nightclub bombing that killed more than 200 people.<sup>2</sup> In each of the next three years, they launched a single, well-planned suicide bombing attack against Western hotels or embassies in Jakarta and Bali.<sup>3</sup> These attacks cemented JI’s position as the leading terrorist network in Southeast Asia.<sup>4</sup> JI’s operatives did not launch another attack until 2009. The four-year gap led most observers to conclude that Indonesia’s success in killing or detaining many of the group’s top leaders had badly damaged JI’s capacity to carry out further attacks.<sup>5</sup> However, the 2009 attack against two U.S. hotels in Jakarta demonstrated that the JI network remains the most serious terrorist

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<sup>1</sup> Brian A. Jackson et al., “Volume One: Organizational Learning in Terrorist Groups and Its Implications for Combating Terrorism,” *Aptitude for Destruction* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2005), III; and Seth G. Jones and Martin C. Libicki, *How Terrorist Groups End: Lessons for Countering al Qaeda* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2008), xiii.

<sup>2</sup> Zachary Abuza, “Jemaah Islamiyah and Islamist Terrorism,” *Political Islam and Violence in Indonesia* (New York, NY: Routledge Publishers, 2007), 37.

<sup>3</sup> Jane's World Insurgency and Terrorism page on “Jemaah Islamiyah,” accessed September 01, 2009, [http://www8.janes.com/JDIC/JTIC/documentView.do?docId=/content1/janesdata/binder/jwit/jwit0490.htm@current&pageSelected=allJanes&keyword=jemaah%20islamiyah&backPath=http://jtic.janes.com/JDIC/JTIC/search&Prod\\_Name=&activeNav=http://www8.janes.com/JDIC/JTIC](http://www8.janes.com/JDIC/JTIC/documentView.do?docId=/content1/janesdata/binder/jwit/jwit0490.htm@current&pageSelected=allJanes&keyword=jemaah%20islamiyah&backPath=http://jtic.janes.com/JDIC/JTIC/search&Prod_Name=&activeNav=http://www8.janes.com/JDIC/JTIC).

<sup>4</sup> Zachary Abuza, “Indonesian Counter-Terrorism: The Great Leap Forward,” *Terrorism Monitor: In-Depth Analysis of the War on Terror*, The Jamestown Foundation VIII, 2 (January 14, 2010), 6-8; Peter Chalk and Carl Ungerer, “Neighbourhood Watch: The Evolving Terrorist Threat in Southeast Asia,” *Australian Strategic Policy Institute* (June 2008), 5; and Greg Fealy and Aldo Borgu, “Local Jihad: Radical Islam and terrorism in Indonesia,” *Australian Strategic Policy Institute* (September 2005), 51.

<sup>5</sup> Sidney Jones, “The Changing Nature of Jemaah Islamiyah,” *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 59, 2 (2005), 175.

threat in Southeast Asia.<sup>6</sup> Together with recent reports that JI leaders formed a *jihadi* coalition called al-Qaeda in Aceh (AQA) and planned to assassinate Indonesia's president, the attack strongly indicates that JI's leadership, organization, and tactics have changed in ways that few observers predicted. Thus, recent developments not only create a need to describe how JI has evolved but they also present an opportunity to reassess conventional interpretations about how JI changed in response to internal and external pressures on the group.

## B. IMPORTANCE

Recent investigations on JI are illuminating. JI members remain committed to attacking Western targets. They have expanded their target set to include Indonesian government officials, and are executing precision small arms assaults.<sup>7</sup> Individuals linked to JI are still willing to wage *jihad* to establish an Islamic state, but they appear frustrated with JI traditionalists' empty rhetoric and the late Noordin Top's pro-bombing faction's tactics and lack of direction.<sup>8</sup> These recent events challenge the conventional wisdom about JI and make analyzing JI's evolution important. By analyzing JI's evolution, the author has determined how JI's leaders have adapted the network's organization and tactics, and described as accurately as possible the nature of the threat that JI poses today and for the future.

The primary purpose of this thesis is to describe JI's evolution. Describing JI's evolution is important for two reasons: (1) the need to understand what JI has become today in order to properly evaluate the threat it poses to U.S. and Indonesian interests,

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<sup>6</sup> Abuza, *Political Islam and Violence in Indonesia*, 37; John Aglionby, "Al-Qaeda Link Is Suspected in Jakarta Blasts," *The Washington Post*, July 18, 2009, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/07/17/AR2009071700756.html>; Farouk Arnaz, "Terrorist Plotting Attack on President, Foreigners," *The Jakarta Globe*, May 14, 2010, <http://www.thejakartaglobe.com/home/terrorists-plotting-attack-on-president-foreigners/374937>; and James C. Whitmire, "Jemaah Islamiyah Remains Active and Deadly," in Michael T. Kindt and Post Jerrold, M., Schneider Barry R. eds., *The Most Threatening Networks and Criminal Gangs* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan Publishers, 2009), 179.

<sup>7</sup> Binsar Bakkara, "Indonesia's Changing Face of Terrorism," *The Associated Press*, October 10, 2010, <http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5gLNypKBPA5AvcTpxrJBAfsgsjzSIgD9IOMQV80?docId=D9IOMQV80>; and Farouk Arnaz, "Terrorist Plotting Attack on President, Foreigners," *The Jakarta Globe*, May 14, 2010, <http://www.thejakartaglobe.com/home/terrorists-plotting-attack-on-president-foreigners/374937>.

<sup>8</sup> "Indonesia: Jihadi Surprise in Aceh," *ICG Asia Report* 189 (April 2010), i.

and (2) the broader need to understand how terrorist groups might evolve. Having completed his purpose, in this thesis the author offers a description that could influence the revision of conventional interpretations of JI's evolution.

JI's attacks have been deadly. JI's high-profile bombings between 2002 and 2009 killed over 300 people and injured close to 700 people.<sup>9</sup> Before that, JI operatives carried out several, near-simultaneous bombing attacks on 38 churches or priests in 2000 where 19 people were killed and around 120 people wounded, and JI members participated in communal conflicts in the Malukus and Sulawesi where countless people were hurt or killed.<sup>10</sup> Moreover, JI members assisted in at least one confirmed joint attack with the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) where 116 people were killed.<sup>11</sup> The latest attack in 2009 and investigations since strongly indicate remaining JI leaders are evolving their organization and tactics, so that they can continue to execute major terrorist attacks as well as regenerate their support base using more nonviolent means. The JI network still represents the most serious security threat in the region. Despite the variety of pressures placed on the JI network, its operatives are adapting in ways that enable them to present a new yet still devastating danger to Indonesian and American interests.

### C. PROBLEMS AND HYPOTHESES

This thesis tackles a major analytical problem in the study of the JI terrorist network: the evolution of JI. The challenge is that there are two competing interpretations that describe how JI has evolved. The first and leading interpretation until 2009 suggests JI splintered into two distinct factions, "including one which opposes the current bombing campaign."<sup>12</sup> The two factions share a desire to use *jihād* to accomplish their

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<sup>9</sup> Peter Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2009), 99. The Bali bombings in 2002 killed 202 and injured 209. JI's 2003 Jakarta hotel bombing killed 12 and injured 150. The Australian Embassy bombing in 2004 killed 11 and injured 200. Bali II in 2005 killed 25 and injured 129, and JI's latest suicide bombings in 2009 killed 9 and wounded at least 50.

<sup>10</sup> "Indonesia Backgrounder: How the Jemaah Islamiyah Terrorist Network Operates," *ICG Asia Report* 43, (December 2002), 5.

<sup>11</sup> Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 99.

<sup>12</sup> Abuza, *Political Islam and Violence in Indonesia*, 37-39.

objectives, but the first group referred to as “traditionalists” believes bomb attacks are counterproductive.<sup>13</sup> Traditionalists who have a long-term *jihad* strategy argue JI members should be preparing Indonesia and Southeast Asia for *jihad* through religious outreach and military preparation. In the eyes of the traditionalists, “the personnel and the strength to carry out *jihad* are both lacking.”<sup>14</sup> The second faction, known as “radicals,” “pro-bombers,” or what the author refers to as the “pro-violence” faction led most recently by the late Noordin Top, wage *jihad* by carrying out terrorist attacks on U.S. and Indonesian interests now.<sup>15</sup> The second interpretation for how JI has evolved admits internal debate within the JI network exists, but argues the splintering of factions is overstated. It suggests JI remains a far more cohesive group whose leaders have learned and adapted to their environment in ways that allow it to survive, sustain its operations, and continue to advance the goals of the movement.<sup>16</sup> This thesis and its description of JI’s evolution will reinforce the accuracy of the second interpretation.

The author argues that despite internal differences within the organization, JI factions remained cohesive and were closer to a delineation of functions: administrative and operational. This division of responsibility allowed JI’s faction leaders to sustain and improve upon their organizational structure as well as operations and tactics, which supported JI pro-violence actors in their efforts without sacrificing the long-term strategy of the group or exposing traditionalists to counterterrorism measures. The author’s description of JI’s evolution shows how traditionalists and pro-violence elements supported, not detracted from, one another’s activities. The author’s hypothesis is that JI’s leaders have evolved the network into an increasingly complicated and sophisticated movement. JI’s leaders have changed the organization’s structure and their commands execute different sets of operations and tactics, but they converge their efforts when necessary because they remain united through their ideology. As such, JI pro-violence

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<sup>13</sup> Abuza, *Political Islam and Violence in Indonesia*, 37-39; ICG Asia Report 189, 14; and “Indonesia Backgrounder: Jihad Central Sulawesi,” *ICG Asia Report* 74 (February 2004), 1–4.

<sup>14</sup> ICG Asia Report 189, 14.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

<sup>16</sup> Abuza, *Political Islam and Violence in Indonesia*, 40.

terrorists and traditionalists collectively work towards JI's near- and long-term strategies to create a pan-Islamic state, which represents a progressively more dangerous threat to American and Indonesian interests.

The author argues that over the past twenty years, JI traditionalists and pro-violence leaders have adjusted their organization, operations, and tactics in order to survive, improve, and make progress toward their intended objectives. By examining JI over the course of three distinct periods of time, the author shows JI is a more coherent network than some analysts have acknowledged. This description, explored in greater detail both in the literature review and in this thesis, allows the readers to better understand the nature of the JI threat faced today.

#### **D. LITERATURE REVIEW**

Over its short but violent twenty-year history, JI has evolved in many ways. This literature review briefly describes how JI has changed. It shows that JI's ideology provided continuity, and that organizational, operational and tactical changes allowed the organization to remain focused, connected, capable of carrying out terrorist attacks, and thus advanced it towards its goals. The author begins by introducing the conventional wisdom on how terrorist groups evolve into more effective organizations and become increasingly dangerous threats. He describes the significance of ideology, leadership, organizational structure and operations and tactics, and how capturing changes in them illustrates how terrorist groups evolve in order to remain coherent organizations and continue to carry out attacks. Bound together through their ideology, JI's leaders evolved the organization and its operations and tactics three times in response to internal and external pressures. Therefore, this literature review is organized around JI's development and evolution over three periods of time.

In the first time period, JI's inception in 1993 up through Bali 2002, JI's founders Abdullah Sungkar and Abu Bakar Ba'asyir along with men picked to be JI's core leaders created a strong religious ideology, established a cohesive organization, and developed an operational and tactical repertoire. This allowed JI to operate as a major terrorist organization, culminating in the 2002 Bali bombings. In the second time period, post-Bali

2002 through Jakarta 2009, the author highlights the various government responses to JI and how JI leaders changed JI's organizational structure and tactics following the 2002 Bali bombings crackdown so that the group could continue to operate and execute major attacks, ending with the 2009 Jakarta hotel bombings. In the third time period—post-Jakarta 2009 to the present—the author discusses the Indonesian government's response to the 2009 Jakarta bombings and how JI leaders are adapting their organizational structure and tactics to counter the CT policies of the Indonesian and U.S. governments, which led to the successful dismantling of the JI cell responsible for the Jakarta attack. JI leaders joined forces with other *jihadi* movements to form the AQA coalition, and its operatives are planning and carrying out guerilla-style ambushes on Indonesian authorities. JI's latest evolution is an example of how terrorist groups learn and change in order to survive and sustain further terrorist attacks. The literature review concludes with the presentation of the two competing interpretations of how JI has evolved and why analysts should reconsider conventional descriptions of how JI has evolved.

### **1. Current Knowledge on the Adaptation and Evolution of Terrorist Groups**

There are several explanations for why some terrorist groups last longer than others, namely “ideological motivation, economic conditions, regime type, the size of groups, and/or the breadth of terrorist goals.”<sup>17</sup> Ideology, particularly those with nationalist or religious goals, seems to allow terrorist groups to last the longest. Poor economic conditions “may heighten grievances, which provide a more supportive environment for terrorist groups and increase their longevity.”<sup>18</sup> On the other hand, a regime like a democracy is “associated with less discrimination and repression,” and may entice terrorist groups to entertain the idea of nonviolent political participation.<sup>19</sup> Terrorist group size also allows it to survive, with larger groups being able to survive longer than smaller groups because “they have more resources...can sustain activities longer than smaller groups...and can endure government pressure to break the group up

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<sup>17</sup> Jones and Libicki, *How Terrorist Groups End: Lessons for Countering al Qaeda*, 15.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 16.

<sup>19</sup> Jones and Libicki, *How Terrorist Groups End: Lessons for Countering al Qaeda*, 17.

since they have more members and resources.”<sup>20</sup> Lastly, the breadth of terrorist goals also affects a terrorist group’s ability to survive; Jones and Libicki have found that “the broader the goals of terrorist groups, the less likely they are able to achieve them, and the more willing they are to use nonviolence to achieve them.”<sup>21</sup> This observation boils down to cost-benefit analyses by terrorist group leaders. Leaders weigh how much benefit their group gains from a terrorist attack against how much pressure their group can endure once a government responds. In other words, terrorism often provokes more repression than it offers achievement of broad objectives.<sup>22</sup>

When a terrorist group survives, it often has adapted and evolved into a more effective organization and may become an increasingly dangerous threat. A terrorist group evolves when it can learn from its experiences, and from those experiences, it “can act systematically to fulfill its needs, strengthen its capabilities, and advance its strategic agenda.”<sup>23</sup> It can

develop, improve, and employ new skills that can enable it to change its capabilities over time, one of the most important being the ability to thwart countermeasures and improve its chance of surviving attempts to destroy it, and preserve the capabilities it has developed even if some of its members are lost.<sup>24</sup>

Thus, tangible changes in organizational structure and operations and tactics are indicators of the ability to learn. As Jackson found, “The greater a group’s learning capabilities, the more threat it poses to adversaries and the more resilient it is to the pressures exerted by law-enforcement and intelligence agencies.”<sup>25</sup> The most enduring terrorist groups have been marked by their ability to “innovate and learn across a number of dimensions.”<sup>26</sup> Terrorist groups that evolve into more effective organizations and

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<sup>20</sup> Jones and Libicki, *How Terrorist Groups End: Lessons for Countering al Qaeda*, 18–19.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 15, 24–26.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 24–26.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, ix.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, ix.

<sup>25</sup> Brian A. Jackson et al., “Volume Two: Case Studies of Organizational Learning in Five Terrorist Groups,” *Aptitude for Destruction* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2005), 2.

<sup>26</sup> Jackson et al., *Aptitude for Destruction*, vol. 2, 179.

increasingly dangerous threats are those that learn as an organization: “When knowledge is organizational, a group acquires new knowledge or capabilities that can improve existing capabilities and advance the aims of the group, which creates a capacity that goes beyond dependence on any individual member.”<sup>27</sup> Evidence shows that JI has learned and adapted collectively in spite of internal differences.

## **2. Understanding the Ideology and Capabilities of Terrorist Groups**

Terrorist group ideology, leadership, organizational structure, and operations and tactics are the factors that “sustain a group’s existence as a coherent entity and allow it to conduct a series of successful attacks.”<sup>28</sup> A terrorist group often has to learn how to change, protect, and improve upon its capabilities in order to survive. These include leadership, organization, operations and tactical skills so that it can continue to carry out near- and long-term strategies. By showing how JI’s leaders evolved the organization into administrative and operational functions the author illustrates that JI traditionalists and pro-violence elements share their ideology and capabilities with one another. As such, the author presents an alternative view of JI.<sup>29</sup>

## **3. From Inception to Bali Bombing 2002**

Jl’s twenty-year history is well known by those who study security in Southeast Asia. Inspired by their experiences during the Anti-Soviet War in Afghanistan, in the mid 80s two Indonesians and Darul Islam (DI) members Abdullah Sungkar and Abu Bakar Ba’asyir developed a vision that Muslims should be actively waging *jihad* against the Indonesian state and its Western supporters in order to establish an Islamic state. To breathe this vision to life, the two decided to “create a disciplined and militarily capable organization” that would lead this struggle.<sup>30</sup> Sungkar and Ba’asyir founded JI in 1993

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<sup>27</sup> Jackson et al., *Aptitude for Destruction*, vol. 2, 181–182.

<sup>28</sup> Kim Cragin and Sara A. Daly, United States Air Force, RAND Corporation and Project Air Force (U.S.), *The Dynamic Terrorist Threat: An Assessment of Group Motivations and Capabilities in a Changing World* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2004), 4.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>30</sup> Fealy and Borgu, “Local Jihad: Radical Islam and terrorism in Indonesia,” 25–26.

while they were exiled in Malaysia. From inception to early 2000, the two established and developed JI into a coherent terrorist network aimed at creating a pan-Islamic state to be won through widespread, violent *jihad*.<sup>31</sup>

Sungkar and Ba'asyir preached JI's ideology, mapped out their vision of the JI network, and built JI's membership base. JI's ideology advocates establishing a caliphate won through unlimited, violent *jihad*. They envisioned JI as a hierarchical network consisting of an *amir* and four councils who advise the *amir*, one of which oversees a central command, which in turn controls regional commands across Southeast Asia known as *mantiqi*. *Mantiqis* are made up of subdivisions called *wakalah* and consist of branches called *qirdas* made up of cells or *fiah*. JI members were recruited from all over Southeast Asia. Pious Muslims picked to be part of JI overwhelmingly demonstrated commitment to Islam and obedience to the organization.<sup>32</sup>

Importantly, Sungkar and Ba'asyir brought in dedicated, charismatic men with whom they had bonded with during the Anti-Soviet War and charged these commanders with the responsibility of building the JI network. These operational leaders were fiercely loyal to Sungkar, Ba'asyir, and the JI ideology. JI leaders developed religious, ideological, and military training programs to cultivate their recruits into dedicated JI members. JI's core leaders established and led the *mantiqis*, where they were responsible for recruitment and generating financial and military resources. Each *mantiqi* was

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<sup>31</sup> Zachary Abuza, *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003), 71, 125-128; "Al-Qaeda in Southeast Asia: The Case of the 'Ngruki Network' in Indonesia," *ICG Indonesia Briefing*, (August 2002), 1-16; Greg Barton, *Indonesia's Struggle: Jemaah Islamiyah and the Soul of Islam* (Sydney, AUS: UNSW Press, 2004), 15, 56; Brek Batley, *The Complexities of Dealing With Radical Islam in Southeast Asia: A Case Study of Jemaah Islamiyah*, Strategic and Defence Studies Center: The Australian National University: Canberra (2003), 1; Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 87-91; ICG Asia report 43, 1. Jones, "The Changing Nature of Jemaah Islamiyah," 169; and Sidney Jones, "Jemaah Islamiyah: A Short Description," *International Seminar, Islamic Militant Movements in Southeast Asia* (July 22-24, Mulia Hotel, Jakarta 2003), 1. It is important to emphasize that JI's *jihad* is a violent struggle against all they perceive to be non-Islamic. Throughout this thesis, the author will utilize Singh's concept of *jihad*. For more, refer to Bilveer Singh, *The Talibanization of Southeast Asia* (Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2007). This thesis discusses Darul Islam in greater detail in Chapter II.

<sup>32</sup> JI leaders consider themselves *salafi jihadis*, which is different from traditional *salafis*. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to describe the differences between the two. What is important to understand is that on several levels, JI leaders morphed *salafi* thought into ways more permissible to JI leaders achieving their objectives. For an excellent explanation, please see Fealy and Borgu, "Local Jihad: Radical Islam and terrorism in Indonesia," 26-32.

autonomous, but *mantiqis* also supported each other when needed.<sup>33</sup> *Mantiqi* leaders established complex, relationships with al-Qaeda and other terrorist groups throughout Southeast Asia.<sup>34</sup> For close to seven years, JI leaders shaped their *mantiqis* into a coherent, far-reaching network with dedicated members and core capabilities that would allow them to support a sustained campaign of terrorist attacks. When Suharto fell in 1998, Sungkar and Ba'asyir made Indonesia JI's operational nucleus by beginning to expand its network under the umbrella of political Islam and participation in communal conflicts.<sup>35</sup>

In the late 1990s, communal conflicts in Indonesia provided the opportunity for JI leaders to recruit new members, establish paramilitary cells, and participate in violent and non-violent *jihād*.<sup>36</sup> Al-Qaeda "provided significant funding, financial infrastructure, training, and arming of JI militants" which improved JI's sustainment capacity.<sup>37</sup> Thus, JI members carried out near-simultaneous bombing attacks against thirty-eight churches across five provinces on Christmas Eve in 2000.<sup>38</sup> In these attacks, the nature of JI's sophisticated operational skills and its cohesive character could clearly be seen.

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<sup>33</sup> Abuza, *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror*, 128-140; Barton, *Indonesia's Struggle: Jemaah Islamiyah and the Soul of Islam*, 54-58; Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 92; ICG Indonesia Briefing 2002, 19; and Jones, "Jemaah Islamiyah: A Short Description," 4-7.

<sup>34</sup> Zachary Abuza, "The State of Jemaah Islamiyah: Terrorism and Insurgency in Southeast Asia Five Years After Bali," *Jebsen Center for Counter-Terrorism Studies Research Briefing Series*, vol. 2, no. 1 (November 2007), 1; Barton, *Indonesia's Struggle: Jemaah Islamiyah and the Soul of Islam*, 17, 54; Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 92; ICG Asia Report 43, 1; ICG Indonesia Briefing 2002, 1-2; Jones, "Jemaah Islamiyah: A Short Description," 7-8; Singh, *The Talibanization of Southeast Asia*, 65-69; Abuza, *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror*, 132-152; and Jones, "The Changing Nature of Jemaah Islamiyah," 172-175.

<sup>35</sup> Abuza "The State of Jemaah Islamiyah: Terrorism and Insurgency in Southeast Asia Five Years After Bali," 1; Abuza, *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror*, 138-145; Barton, *Indonesia's Struggle: Jemaah Islamiyah and the Soul of Islam*, 15-16; Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 89; ICG Asia Report 43, 2-4; and ICG Indonesia Briefing 2002, 17.

<sup>36</sup> Abuza, *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror*, 145-148; Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 89; ICG Asia Report 43, 2, 21; and Elena Pavlova, "From a Counter-Society to a Counter-State Movement: Jemaah Islamiyah According to PUPJI," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 30 (2007), 794.

<sup>37</sup> Abuza, *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror*, 148.

<sup>38</sup> Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 98; Fealy and Borgu, "Local Jihad: Radical Islam and terrorism in Indonesia," 27; and ICG Asia Report 43, 5-6.

In 2001, JI leaders shifted tactics to full-blown terrorism.<sup>39</sup> Members of JI's Singapore cell developed attack plans for JI's first major terrorist attacks against hardened U.S. and Western targets. Hambali, JI's overall operational commander, agreed to the plan to carry out "major suicide truck bombs with several tons of ammonium nitrate against targets in Singapore."<sup>40</sup> Before the Singapore cell could execute, Singaporean and Malaysian authorities foiled the attack and subsequently dismantled JI cells in their countries. Interrogations of detainees illuminated JI leaders' intent to attack U.S. targets and interests throughout the region. The information was shared with Philippine authorities, which enabled them to identify and dismantle the JI cell in that country.<sup>41</sup>

In the midst of losses in members and resources as a result of counterterrorism (CT) operations in Singapore, Malaysia and the Philippines, the leaders and members of the JI network regrouped and adapted their organization's tactics, which signifies JI's first major evolution. Hambali changed his target choice to "soft" economic targets frequented by Westerners. The first such target was the Sari nightclub in Bali. JI successfully carried out this suicide bombing attack on October 12, 2002, killing 202 people. This attack showed that despite earlier losses JI leaders could adapt the organization to its environment, and further demonstrated that JI was cohesive enough and had the capacity to coordinate across regions and carry out a major attack. It also announced JI as the paramount terrorist organization in Indonesia.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Abuza, *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror*, 152–154.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 138, 155–158.

<sup>41</sup> Abuza, *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror*; and ICG Indonesia Briefing 2002, 2.

<sup>42</sup> Abuza, *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror*, 158-164; Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 98; Sidney Jones, "Jemaah Islamiyah and New Splinter Groups," in Arnaud de Borchgrave, Thomas Sanderson and David Gordon eds. *Conflict, Community, and Criminality in Southeast Asia and Australia, Assessments from the Field*, A Report of the CSIS Transnational Threats Project (Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington D.C. June 2009), 11; and Jones, "The Changing Nature of Jemaah Islamiyah," 169.

#### 4. Post-Bali 2002 to Jakarta 2009

Bali 2002 provoked a variety of responses from SEA governments and Indonesia's Muslim-majority public. Singapore, Malaysia, and the Philippines further pursued and effectively dismantled JI cells. After the 2002 Bali attack, Indonesian officials admitted they had a terrorism problem and gradually cracked down on JI.<sup>43</sup> Investigations of JI's Singapore and Philippines cells and of the 2002 Bali attack had exposed the organized, multi-regional JI network and its ties to al-Qaeda and other regional Islamist separatist organizations. SEA governments learned that for the past decade, JI leaders had developed a terrorist network that facilitated the acquisition of money, training, people, and weapons from all over Southeast Asia.<sup>44</sup> Following Bali 2002, Indonesian and SEA authorities captured or killed somewhere between 200 and 450 JI members, which included some of JI's "most prominent and adept operational leaders and field commanders."<sup>45</sup> The arrests and evidence that flowed from the Bali 2002 investigations disrupted JI operations significantly and were "instrumental in turning public opinion against JI."<sup>46</sup> After Bali 2002, Indonesia established an elite CT entity called Detachment 88 (Det 88) to hunt down JI operatives.<sup>47</sup> Due to the pressure applied by SEA governments and Indonesia's Det 88, analysts believed JI was constrained both in personnel and resources, and that these constraints exacerbated emerging divisions within the organization.

Some evidence shows internal debate over tactics between JI's core leaders initially developed when Sungkar looked to transition JI's attacks from sectarian violence to "al-Qaeda style" terrorist attacks in 1999. Hambali, leader of *Mantiqi I* (Malaysia/Singapore) and JI's overall operational commander, supported Sungkar's

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<sup>43</sup> "Jemaah Islamiyah in Southeast Asia: Damaged but Still Dangerous," *ICG Asia Report 63* (August 2003), 1.

<sup>44</sup> Barton, *Indonesia's Struggle: Jemaah Islamiyah and the Soul of Islam*, 7; and ICG Asia Report 43, 25.

<sup>45</sup> Barton, *Indonesia's Struggle: Jemaah Islamiyah and the Soul of Islam*, 53; and Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 94, 99.

<sup>46</sup> Barton, *Indonesia's Struggle: Jemaah Islamiyah and the Soul of Islam*, 23.

<sup>47</sup> Abuza, "Indonesian Counter-Terrorism: The Great Leap Forward," 6-7.

initiatives while Ba'asyir and *Mantiqi* II (Indonesia) leaders argued over the preparedness of the environment for *jihad* and the efficacy of attacking Western targets.<sup>48</sup> This internal debate continued but did not stop JI operatives from carrying out Bali 2002. The regional crackdown on JI and Muslim public backlash following Bali 2002 intensified this debate. *Mantiqi* I leaders were prepared and had demonstrated their willingness to carry out violent *jihad*. *Mantiqi* II leaders felt JI should be waging war to protect Muslims under attack, not executing attacks where Muslims could get killed. Moreover, JI was without a “founder” to resolve the debate.<sup>49</sup> Sungkar died in 1999 and Ba'asyir was arrested in late 2002. Hambali was arrested in 2003, but several of his followers, including Dr. Azahari and Noordin Top, remained faithful to his al-Qaeda style tactical approach. These two men masterminded JI's 2003, 2004 and 2005 bombings. *Mantiqi* II leaders, now called traditionalists, remained divided over the cost-benefit of suicide bombings.<sup>50</sup> The unrelenting pressure applied by Det 88 and “large numbers of Muslim casualties” that resulted from Bali 2002, Jakarta 2003, 2004, and the Bali 2005 attacks only intensified their apprehension.<sup>51</sup>

The unresolved debate between Hambali and his pro-violence followers and *Mantiqi* II leaders led some experts to conclude that JI split into two factions that shared the idea of violent *jihad* but were on separate paths to Islamizing the region. This interpretation supports the idea that JI became less coherent, but it assumes the two competed from the same pool of resources instead of evolving their structure and tactics in ways that both factions could use in concert. The relationship between traditionalists and pro-violence elements remained unclear, but the description that JI had split became

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<sup>48</sup> Jones, “The Changing Nature of Jemaah Islamiyah,” 169, 174; ICG Asia Report 74, 1-4; and Pavlova, “From a Counter-Society to a Counter-State Movement: Jemaah Islamiyah According to PUPJI,” 779.

<sup>49</sup> Jones, “The Changing Nature of Jemaah Islamiyah,” 176-177. Ba'asyir had first become increasingly involved in political Islam, then arrested following Bali 2002. For more see Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 91. ICG Asia Report 74, 1-4; Jackson et al., *Aptitude for Destruction*, vol. 2, 62; and Jones, “The Changing Nature of Jemaah Islamiyah,” 174.

<sup>50</sup> ICG Asia Report 43, 2.

<sup>51</sup> Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 99; Jones, “The Changing Nature of Jemaah Islamiyah,” 174; and Pavlova, “From a Counter-Society to a Counter-State Movement: Jemaah Islamiyah According to PUPJI,” 780.

the leading interpretation of how JI has changed over time. Admittedly, traditionalists publically distanced themselves from JI's bombings, but pro-violence attacks had links to traditionalists.<sup>52</sup> In nearly every one of JI's major bombings, evidence shows bombing operatives sought and received safe-haven and logistical support from traditionalists. If these factions are two halves of a whole, traditionalists and their rhetorical condemnation of pro-violence activities could be described as an organizational and tactical shift, whereby traditionalists secretly execute administrative functions in support of pro-violence operations.

Developments beginning in late 2003 showed JI's organization was changing, but at the same time their separate efforts demonstrated JI's divisions remained cohesive. Leaders fell into traditionalist or pro-violence camps and their operations reflected different responsibilities. Traditionalists embraced administrative responsibilities. They rebuilt the organization both in and outside of Java in areas where communal conflicts had taken place previously, and they moved some of their operations and rekindled relationships in areas where they had regional partners in the past.<sup>53</sup> They focused on religious outreach or *dakwah* in order to regenerate the network with new recruits and resources. Moreover, traditionalists engaged in charity, social work, and new business ventures. Since 2004, traditionalists have been involved in "the provision of social services...to include fundraising, social-welfare activities, humanitarian relief and religious outreach."<sup>54</sup> They also became heavily involved in *jihadi* propaganda as a way to both propagate their message and generate funds.<sup>55</sup> These adaptations allowed

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<sup>52</sup> Zachary Abuza, "Making Sense of the Jakarta Bombings: The Shades of Grey," *Counterterrorism Blog*, accessed May 13, 2010, [http://counterterrorismblog.org/2009/07/making\\_sense\\_of\\_the\\_jakarta\\_bo.php](http://counterterrorismblog.org/2009/07/making_sense_of_the_jakarta_bo.php); Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 91, 95-96, 99; Noor Huda Ismail and Carl Ungerer, "Jemaah Islamiyah: A renewed struggle?," *Australian Strategic Policy Institute* (July 2009), 2; and Pavlova, "From a Counter-Society to a Counter-State Movement: Jemaah Islamiyah According to PUPJI," 779.

<sup>53</sup> Abuza, "Indonesian Counter-Terrorism: The Great Leap Forward," 7; Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 93, 96-97, 100; and Jones, "The Changing Nature of Jemaah Islamiyah," 175. Traditionalists' recruited new members, developed resources, and worked with the Muslim public.

<sup>54</sup> Abuza, "Indonesian Counter-Terrorism: The Great Leap Forward," 8; and Abuza, "The State of Jemaah Islamiyah: Terrorism and Insurgency in Southeast Asia Five Years After Bali," 4.

<sup>55</sup> Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 102.

traditionalists to recruit new members, acquire much needed financial resources and reconfigure the network to best achieve its goals.<sup>56</sup> These major changes illustrate JI's intent to survive and describe the traditionalists' administrative role.

Pro-violence operatives continued to carry out bombing attacks symbolic of JI's struggle against the Indonesian government and its Western supporters.<sup>57</sup> Top and Azahari masterminded suicide car bombings in 2003 and 2004, then shifted tactics from car bombs to backpack bombs for their 2005 and 2009 attacks.<sup>58</sup> Their operatives received safe haven and logistical support from traditionalist circles, which allowed them to successfully carry out these attacks.<sup>59</sup>

From late 2004 to 2008, SEA governments applied more pressure to pro-violence elements. In late 2005, Dr. Azahari was killed and dozens of bombs were seized in multiple CT raids, setting JI terrorist operations back significantly.<sup>60</sup> Leadership gaps developed, but the JI network and its binding ties remained. Since 2006, traditionalists have prioritized on expanding the network and their activities while pro-violence elements tried to recover and adjust their operations and tactics based on what was lost between 2005 and 2008.

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<sup>56</sup> Abuza, "Indonesian Counter-Terrorism: The Great Leap Forward," 8; and Jones, "Jemaah Islamiyah and New Splinter Groups," 14.

<sup>57</sup> Abuza, "The State of Jemaah Islamiyah: Terrorism and Insurgency in Southeast Asia Five Years After Bali," 1; Barton, *Indonesia's Struggle: Jemaah Islamiyah and the Soul of Islam*, 58; Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 91, 96; Jones, "The Changing Nature of Jemaah Islamiyah," 169-170; and Pavlova, "From a Counter-Society to a Counter-State Movement: Jemaah Islamiyah According to PUPJI," 794. JI hardliners, led by Top and Azahari carried out annual suicide bombings between 2003 and 2005.

<sup>58</sup> Abuza, "Indonesian Counter-Terrorism: The Great Leap Forward," 6; and Abuza, "The State of Jemaah Islamiyah: Terrorism and Insurgency in Southeast Asia Five Years After Bali," 3.

<sup>59</sup> Abuza, "Indonesian Counter-Terrorism: The Great Leap Forward," 7; Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 93, 95; Ismail and Ungerer, "Jemaah Islamiyah: A renewed struggle?," 2-3; ICG Asia Briefing 95, 1; Jones, "The Changing Nature of Jemaah Islamiyah," 170; and Singh, *The Talibanization of Southeast Asia*, 68, 80-85. This change could be interpreted as a response to control innocent casualties, ease of use and movement to evade CT/law enforcement, or may be interpreted as militants meeting traditionalists half way.

<sup>60</sup> Abuza, "Making Sense of the Jakarta Bombings: The Shades of Grey."

Most evidence clearly shows that during this time period, JI evolved into two separate factions: the traditionalists and pro-violence militants.<sup>61</sup> However, the evidence also shows the relationship between JI divisions deserves fresh interpretation. On the one hand, traditionalists became a movement that operated openly and increasingly non-violently because it was difficult for the government to pressure civic society groups that did not have concrete links to violence.<sup>62</sup> Pro-violence elements operated autonomously, but as the author has shown, some evidence indicates they relied on traditionalists for support.<sup>63</sup> Despite Indonesia's efforts during this period, and the possibility of a divided JI, on July 17, 2009, JI carried out suicide bombings on Western hotels in downtown Jakarta.<sup>64</sup> Noordin Top, the leader of JI's pro-violence faction who claimed responsibility for the attack, sought personnel, resources, and safe-haven from traditionalists, thus suggesting there was some degree of cooperation between the factions.<sup>65</sup>

## 5. Jakarta 2009 to Present

Indonesia responded to the July 2009 suicide bombings with an iron fist. Det 88 hunted down and killed Noordin Top and captured or killed several members of JI's pro-violence division, effectively crippling his cell.<sup>66</sup> Traditionalists openly condemned the

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<sup>61</sup> Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 103; Ismail and Ungerer, "Jemaah Islamiyah: A renewed struggle?," 2; Pavlova, "From a Counter-Society to a Counter-State Movement: Jemaah Islamiyah According to PUPJI," 779, 794; and Singh, *The Talibanization of Southeast Asia*, 111, 135–136.

<sup>62</sup> Singh, *The Talibanization of Southeast Asia*, 110–111.

<sup>63</sup> Abuza, "The State of Jemaah Islamiyah: Terrorism and Insurgency in Southeast Asia Five Years After Bali," 2; Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 99; Pavlova, "From a Counter-Society to a Counter-State Movement: Jemaah Islamiyah According to PUPJI," 777, 794; and Singh, *The Talibanization of Southeast Asia*, 100.

<sup>64</sup> Abuza, "Indonesian Counter-Terrorism: The Great Leap Forward," 6; Abuza, "The State of Jemaah Islamiyah: Terrorism and Insurgency in Southeast Asia Five Years After Bali," 2; John Aglionby, "Al-Qaeda Link Is Suspected in Jakarta Blasts," *The Washington Post*, July 18, 2009, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/07/17/AR2009071700756.html>.

<sup>65</sup> Abuza, "Making Sense of the Jakarta Bombings: The Shades of Grey."

<sup>66</sup> Tom Allard, "Hotel Bombing Suspect Goes On Trial," *Sydney Morning Herald*, February 11, 2010, Jakarta, Indonesia, <http://www.smh.com.au/world/hotel-bombing-suspect-goes-on-trial-20100210-nsde.html>; Heru Andriyanto, "I Plotted to Kill SBY, Admits Jakarta Hotel Bombing Suspect," *The Jakarta Globe*, February 10, 2010, <http://www.thejakartaglobe.com/home/i-plotted-to-kill-sby-admits-jakarta-hotel-bombing-suspect/357965>; and Agencies, "Jakarta Hotel Bombing Trial Begins," *Al Jazeera English Asia-Pacific*, February 10, 2010, <http://english.aljazeera.net/news/asia-pacific/2010/02/201021053631787690.html>.

attack but not Top and his faction. Remaining pro-violence elements witnessed Det 88 effectively take down close to an entire suicide-bombing cell. The aftermath of Jakarta 2009 appears to have influenced a third change. JI leaders—Ba’asyir and Dulmatin—consolidated parts of JI’s structure and tactics within the *jihadi* movement construct so they could better advance towards their goals.

Ji’s traditionalist/pro-violence split allowed Top to carry out the Jakarta bombing with little impact on traditionalist activity, but it also led to his cell’s neutralization. Thus, pro-violence operatives evolved in order to survive and conduct more terrorist attacks, and traditionalists focused their activities on recruitment, indoctrination, resource generation and military training. Pro-violence leaders looked to have temporarily shelved suicide bombing since Jakarta 2009. Abu Rusdan, a *Mantiqi* II leader who assumed the *amirship* following Ba’asyir’s arrest until his detainment and subsequent release in 2005, and Ba’asyir released from prison in 2006— both believed to be leading traditionalists— openly condoned *jihad* but condemned the Jakarta bombings as “misguided” to avoid being investigated for links to terrorism.<sup>67</sup>

Little is known of traditionalist activity currently, but evidence of Ba’asyir and Dulmatin’s initiatives surfaced in early 2010. A paramilitary training camp was discovered on Aceh, and preliminary investigations strongly indicate the Aceh camp was the base of the AQA terrorist coalition led by JI senior operational leader Dulmatin.<sup>68</sup> Dulmatin, a well respected JI commander, master bomb maker and guerilla warfare expert, was brought back to lead JI’s violent operations. His expertise and well-established connections with other *jihadi* organizations are evidence of some JI leaders’ desires to bolster the JI network and make the best use of its capabilities to carry out

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<sup>67</sup> “Indonesia: Noordin Top’s Support Base,” *ICG Asia Briefing* 95 (August 27, 2009), 8; and Whitmire, 201.

<sup>68</sup> Heru Andriyanto and Nurdin Hasan, “Aceh Seen as a ‘Safe Haven’ for Terror Group Jemaah Islamiyah,” *The Jakarta Globe*, February 24, 2010, <http://www.thejakartaglobe.com/news/aceh-seen-as-a-safe-haven-for-terror-group-jemaah-islamiyah/360644>; and Tom Allard, “Training Camp Raid Sparks Fears Over Terrorist Resurgence,” *The Sydney Morning Herald*, February 25, 2010, Jakarta, Indonesia, <http://www.smh.com.au/world/training-camp-raid-sparks-fears-over-terrorist-resurgence-20100224-p3mq.html>. Once discovered, Indonesian authorities quickly raided the camp several times, made many arrests, and eventually located and killed Dulmatin in March 2010. See Peter Gelling, “Police Kill Bali Nightclub Bombing Suspect,” *The New York Times*, March 09, 2010, Jakarta, Indonesia, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/10/world/asia/10indo.html>.

some form of terrorism. Members of Top's crew who remain at large have been linked to the Aceh camp along with other members of regional *jihadi* groups.<sup>69</sup> Additionally, individuals arrested in connection with Top and the 2009 bombings and the Aceh camp have been linked to a radical Islamist group called Jemaah Anshorut Tawhid (JAT), founded and led by Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, a man to whom some traditionalists are still fiercely loyal.<sup>70</sup> This evidence demonstrates that some traditionalists are recruiting, indoctrinating, and providing logistical and financial support to JI's terrorist activities. Ba'asyir denies any ties to the camp on Aceh, and he still denies the existence of JI. However, on August 9, 2010, Indonesian authorities arrested Ba'asyir and have evidence that Ba'asyir's JAT financed the AQA coalition camp and was personally involved in the planning of AQA's terrorist operations, thus compromising the integrity of his statements.<sup>71</sup>

At the very least, the intelligence gleaned from the raids on AQA's camp and subsequent investigations hint at how traditionalist and pro-violence leaders remain connected and how they are driving changes in JI's organization and tactics. Some preliminary evidence indicates AQA's camp was "a new coalition...that rejected both JI...and the more violent splinter group led until his death in 2009 by Noordin Top."<sup>72</sup> It is known that Top's pro-bombing faction was linked to the camp, and investigations strongly suggest JI operational commander Dulmatin led AQA and was backed by Ba'asyir and his JAT organization. Not surprisingly, AQA's approach mirrors traditionalist rhetoric, but promises near-term action through guerilla ambushes and

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<sup>69</sup> ICG Asia Report 189, i.

<sup>70</sup> Heru Andriyanto, "Man Gets Eight Years for Sheltering Hotel Bombers," *The Jakarta Globe*, May 31, 2010, <http://www.thejakartaglobe.com/news/man-gets-8-years-for-sheltering-hotel-bombers/378024>; Candra Malik and Farouk Arnaz, "Bashir Quizzed by Clerics Over Jakarta Raids," *The Jakarta Globe*, May 10, 2010, <http://www.thejakartaglobe.com/home/bashir-quizzed-by-clerics-over-jakarta-raids/374120>; and Candra Malik and Farouk Arnaz, "Bashir Links to Aceh Group Emerge," *The Jakarta Globe*, May 07, 2010, <http://www.thejakartaglobe.com/city/bashir-links-to-aceh-terror-group-emerge/373693>.

<sup>71</sup> Zachary Abuza, "Fall of the Teflon Terrorist?," *Australia/Israel and Jewish Affairs Council* (August 2010), 5; Andriyanto, "Man Gets Eight Years for Sheltering Hotel Bombers," *The Jakarta Globe*; Malik and Arnaz, "Bashir Quizzed by Clerics Over Jakarta Raids," *The Jakarta Globe*; Malik and Arnaz, "Bashir Links to Aceh Group Emerge," *The Jakarta Globe*; and Candra Malik, "I'm Real Target of Raid, Bashir Claims," *The Jakarta Globe*, May 08, 2010, <http://www.thejakartaglobe.com/news/im-real-target-of-raid-bashir-claims/373849>.

<sup>72</sup> ICG Asia Report 189, i.

attacks on Indonesian authorities. AQA agrees with traditionalist-supported *dakwah* but views traditionalist rhetoric as insufficient.<sup>73</sup> Experts are not quick to tie the camp to traditionalists because traditionalists claim Indonesia is not ready for violent *jihād*.<sup>74</sup> In any case, some JI leaders have evolved their tactics, and traditionalists led by Ba'asyir appear to be supporting these efforts in various capacities. AQA's rejection of traditionalists suggests overt separation between traditionalists and pro-violence elements, which further supports alternative interpretations that JI's evolution has kept traditionalist activities from being linked to terrorism.<sup>75</sup>

Investigations into Ba'asyir's JAT and Dulmatin's AQA coalition reveal both groups have alumnus from traditionalist-led schools and that AQA's leaders were teaching classic guerilla tactics: assassinations and coordinated, precision small arms attacks. Potential targets include both Indonesian and U.S./Western government officials, including one exposed plan to assassinate the president of Indonesia.<sup>76</sup> These types of guerrilla tactics, if planned right, will be much more difficult to counter. Discoveries of AQA's makeup indicate the coalition is not solely JI, but both traditionalist and pro-violence member involvement in the coalition strongly suggests that JAT and AQA were Ba'asyir and Dulmatin's response to Indonesia's CT efforts. Additionally, it was their attempt to consolidate JI's divisions, change their tactics, and become a more capable and dangerous threat to Indonesian and U.S. interests.

To summarize, this literature review has briefly presented the current state of knowledge on how terrorist groups evolve, and why analyzing ideology, leadership, organizational structure, and operations and tactics is an effective way of describing how a terrorist organization evolves. It also described JI's foundational development and briefly showed how JI has evolved over three distinct periods of time in response to the

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<sup>73</sup> ICG Asia Report 189, i.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., i.

<sup>75</sup> "Indonesia: The Dark Side of Jama'ah Ansharut Tauhid (JAT)," *ICG Asia Briefing* 107, (July 2010), 1.

<sup>76</sup> Farouk Arnaz, "Terrorist Plotting Attack on President, Foreigners," *The Jakarta Globe*, May 14, 2010, <http://www.thejakartaglobe.com/home/terrorists-plotting-attack-on-president-foreigners/374937>.

various reactions and pressures of Southeast Asian authorities and the Muslim public throughout the region. It captures the two competing interpretations that describe how JI has changed over time.

The first interpretation is that JI has evolved into two deeply divided factions: traditionalists and pro-violence. The alternative interpretation is that JI evolved into two mutually supportive factions closely connected through their shared ideology. The author suggests that within JI there has developed a division of responsibilities in which the traditionalists carry out JI's spiritual, administrative and logistical responsibilities and advance the long-term strategy of the group. Traditionalists "germinate and melt away...take cover in various legitimate religious activities...camouflage its activities behind the cloak of Islamic practices."<sup>77</sup> Traditionalists blend terrorism and Islam together, with the former masked by the latter, which both allow for increased membership numbers and a more difficult problem to isolate: an image of combating terrorism only, not Islam.<sup>78</sup> Traditionalists and their condemnation of bombing attacks help create a perception that they are no longer directly linked to terrorist activity. Propagation of JI's ideology, espoused by traditionalists, helps create "angry, highly motivated, and highly trained individuals" who are prepared to go to any lengths to achieve the strategic goal.<sup>79</sup> Traditionalists surreptitiously support the attack operations of pro-violence elements by providing access to funding, equipment, highly trained personnel and safe-haven as investigations into Top's network and attacks demonstrate.<sup>80</sup> Moreover, recent inquiries into the composition of JAT and AQA reveal close relationships between traditionalists and pro-violence leaders persist.<sup>81</sup>

Having evolved into this seemingly divided organization, JI faction leaders can continue to build a network of *jihadists* for the long-term and carry out attacks against U.S. and Indonesian interests today. It appears Ba'asyir and Dulmatin's JAT and AQA,

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<sup>77</sup> Singh, *The Talibanization of Southeast Asia*, 126, 131.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 131.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, 152-153.

<sup>80</sup> ICG Asia Briefing 95, 1-14; and ICG Asia Briefing 94, 1-8.

<sup>81</sup> ICG Asia Briefing 107, 1-12; and ICG Asia Report 189, 1-17.

which incorporate traditionalist and pro-violence elements, were an attempt to adapt to bring JI's factions closer and bolster their capabilities by forming a coalition with other *jihadi* organizations. The author's alternative description of how JI has evolved demonstrates JI leaders are fighting not only for JI's survival but also for adaptation into a new and more dangerous threat. With the alternative interpretation in mind, the author will more thoroughly describe how JI has evolved, present the nature of the JI threat today, and further consider the possibility that JI is far more connected than divided.

## **E. METHODS AND SOURCES**

This thesis is a case study of JI over the past two decades. JI's ideology, leadership, organizational structure, and operations and tactics are examined over the course of three time periods over the last two decades: (1) from its inception in 1993 to the 2002 Bali bombing; (2) from the aftermath of the 2002 Bali bombing to the 2009 Jakarta hotel bombing; and (3) from the aftermath of that attack until the present. These time periods were chosen because they each represent a time period in which JI members acted, others responded to JI's actions, and JI leaders drove the organization to evolve in response to others' reactions to JI's own actions.

To tackle the complex issue of interpreting how JI has evolved the author has identified and described the factors of ideology, leadership, organizational structure, and operations and tactics because they best capture how JI has changed over time and could help analysts interpret how other terrorist groups have evolved.<sup>82</sup> The author focused his observations on the above criteria during each time period, emphasizing how they illustrate changes in JI and how JI's leaders have made the most of them collectively. The author focused on these factors because they are the "organizational and operational

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<sup>82</sup> Cragin and Daly point to 11 basic elements that describe terrorist groups: (1) ideology, (2) leadership, (3) recruitment pools, (4) publicity, (5) command and control, (6) weapons, (7) training, (8) operating space, (9) operational security, (10) intelligence, and (11) money. The author will apply Cragin and Daly's definitions of the abovementioned criteria to guide his analysis throughout this thesis. However, he focuses on ideology, leadership, organizational structure, and operations and tactics, which he sees as encompassing many of these capabilities. For their exact definitions please refer to Cragin and Daly, *The Dynamic Terrorist Threat: An Assessment of Group Motivations and Capabilities in a Changing World*, 29-59.

resources...that sustain groups...and allow terrorists to sustain attack campaigns.”<sup>83</sup> If one is to show that traditionalists and pro-violence elements have remained cohesive over time, one must illustrate not only how JI has changed over time, but also how leaders and members of JI still share their ideology and support one another’s operations and tactics.

This approach uncovered how JI has actually changed and hints at why JI has remained a substantial threat to U.S. and Indonesian interests. This will help the United States and Indonesia to understand JI and their ongoing war with JI, and it will assist audiences “interested in the dynamic threat of terrorism.”<sup>84</sup>

The three periods analyzed as discussed in the author's methodology are not all equally covered in the scholarly literature. Analyses from the first two periods were drawn primarily from the secondary reviewed literature. To account for the third and most recent period, this thesis drew on the extensive reporting by mass media on JI, especially with respect to recent developments, since few scholarly analyses have been published.

## **F. THESIS OVERVIEW**

This chapter outlined the major research question, its importance, the analytical problems to be tackled and the author's preliminary hypothesis, literature review, methodology, and thesis overview. As should now be understood, there is room to reinterpret JI because it has evolved in ways that analysts have not completely accounted for. Based on recent events and investigations, a clear understanding of JI’s evolution and the current nature of the JI threat are warranted.

Chapter II establishes the foundational understanding of JI from its inception up through the Bali bombings in 2002. It describes the formation and development of JI’s ideology, leadership, organizational structure, and operations and tactics leading up to JI’s first successful major terrorist attack and the reactions to it. The importance of this chapter is that it shows how JI became a coherent organization. Following the Bali

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<sup>83</sup> Cragin and Daly, *The Dynamic Terrorist Threat: An Assessment of Group Motivations and Capabilities in a Changing World*, 23–25.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, xi.

bombings, the Indonesian public and various states from the international community applied pressure to JI. JI countered by evolving. Culminating with Bali 2002, the chapter summarizes the nature of the initial JI threat.

Chapter III addresses how JI evolved in response to the variety of pressures applied to it following Bali 2002 until 2009. This chapter provides insight into JI's internal division, but it shows how JI acted collectively allowing the group to survive and carry out several attacks during this time period. It draws attention to the backlash JI felt from the Indonesian public and the CT/law enforcement response from Indonesia/SEA. This chapter shows how JI's leaders organized the group and changed their tactics to counter internal and external pressures. The author describes how JI's ideology provided group cohesion and how its leaders changed JI's structure and expanded their operational and tactical repertoire, utilizing them both separately and collectively. It appeared JI operatives had carried out their final major terrorist attack with Bali 2005, at least in the short-term. Analysts were led to believe the variety of pressures applied to JI members had diminished their capacity to carry out attacks. JI pro-violence militants did not carry out another suicide bombing until July 2009. This chapter ends with a summary of JI's evolution up through the Jakarta bombing in 2009 and compares it with the JI threat in 2002.

Chapter IV examines the period of JI's evolution following the Jakarta 2009 suicide bombings up to the present. It identifies and describes how some JI leaders have evolved the organization further in response to the external and internal pressures JI members have felt for nearly a decade. This chapter concludes with a summary of the threat JI members pose at present and compares it with the JI threat described in the previous periods discussed. This final description will provide a clearer understanding of the nature of the JI threat today.

The final chapter reviews the author's observations and highlights how his analysis bolsters the accuracy of alternative interpretations of how JI has evolved. It identifies key implications of the author's findings about JI for Indonesian and U.S. policy toward JI and toward terrorism more broadly. By addressing the main problems in the above fashion, the author will have contributed to the conventional wisdom because

he will have effectively described how JI has changed and how JI's ideology, which ultimately provided group cohesion, allowed JI's leaders to make shifts in JI's organization and tactics. These changes have led to new threats that require improved responses.

## II. BECOMING SOUTHEAST ASIA'S DEADLIEST TERRORIST NETWORK

### A. INTRODUCTION

On October 12, 2002, JI operatives carried out large-scale suicide bombing attacks on the Indonesian island of Bali. These bombings caused mass casualties “at two nightclubs in the Kuta section of Bali...At the same time, another bomb was detonated near the U.S. consulate in Sanur, Bali.”<sup>85</sup> At least two bombs were detonated near bars and nightclubs where many Western tourists were known to congregate. JI’s field coordinator for the attack employed suicide bombers and multiple detonators to ensure the bombs would do their job. The third bomb, which went off at a street curb outside the U.S. consulate, was a message to ensure that the United States and Westerners knew the attack was against them.<sup>86</sup> The bombings killed 202 people and wounded several hundred. This attack showed that some of JI’s core—led by Hambali— were determined to carry out terrorist attacks as the quintessential means to establish a caliphate in Southeast Asia. Their attack aimed at undermining both Indonesian and Western governments and echoed the actions of terrorist groups like al-Qaeda by hitting targets perceived by *ihadists* as corrupt to Islamic ideals.<sup>87</sup> Now referred to as Bali 2002, this attack was “JI’s most destructive bombing to date,” and led analysts to believe a group like al-Qaeda was bent on waging violent *ihad* in Southeast Asia.<sup>88</sup>

Terrorist groups do not just appear out of thin air though. All terrorist groups have a beginning—a period of time—in which a group engages in activities that allow it to become a cohesive organization and carry out successful terrorist attacks.<sup>89</sup> Terrorist groups establish their system of beliefs, develop a cadre of core leaders, set up an

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<sup>85</sup> Jackson et al., *Aptitude for Destruction*, vol. 2, 70.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., 70; and Whitmire, “Jemaah Islamiyah Remains Active and Deadly,” 201.

<sup>87</sup> Whitmire, “Jemaah Islamiyah Remains Active and Deadly,” 180.

<sup>88</sup> Jackson et al., *Aptitude for Destruction*, vol. 2, 70–71.

<sup>89</sup> Cragin and Daly, *The Dynamic Terrorist Threat: An Assessment of Group Motivations and Capabilities in a Changing World*, 25-26. These activities build and emerge as capabilities and intentions.

organizational structure with functional requirements, and build a foundation of operations and tactics so that they are capable of carrying out their plans and advancing towards their goals. JI, like other terrorist groups, experienced this period of development, and it allowed JI's leaders to develop the organization into the largest and deadliest terrorist network in Southeast Asia.

This chapter describes JI's developmental path from its inception up through the Bali bombings in 2002. More importantly, the purpose of this chapter is to establish a foundational understanding of the group. The chapter examines the formation of JI's ideology, leadership, organizational structure, and operations and tactics—the key factors the author perceives—that allowed JI to become the “largest and most sophisticated terrorist network in Southeast Asia” as demonstrated in Bali 2002.<sup>90</sup> Of note, Bali 2002 was not JI's first major attack attempt. JI's formative years experienced both successes and setbacks. By examining JI's ideology, organizational structure, and operations and tactics and how JI's leaders applied them to execute attacks—both accomplished and thwarted— one also begins to glean insights on JI members' ability to learn and how JI's subsequent evolution unfolded. This chapter is important because if one is to understand how JI has changed over time, then a clear picture must be painted of how JI developed into the effective, dangerous terrorist organization it was in 2002. Culminating with Bali 2002, this chapter concludes having clearly described the nature of the JI threat at that time.

The author argues that during this time period, JI's members became an organized, coherent, and dedicated terrorist group whose leaders largely felt that carrying out al-Qaeda style attacks would allow them to begin setting the conditions necessary to establish a SEA caliphate. He also argues that JI members early on demonstrated an aptitude to learn from their mistakes so that they could evolve into a more effective organization and continue to carry out high-profile bombings against Indonesian and Western interests. After serious losses in personnel and resources, JI members were able

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<sup>90</sup> Fealy and Borgu, “Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia,” 25.

to adapt to their environment and operate collectively. As such, JI operatives carried out the Bali suicide bombings in 2002. These bombings confirmed JI was the most serious, lethal threat to U.S., Indonesia, and SEA nations in the region.

## **B. IDEOLOGY**

If the author is to understand the nature of JI, he must be able to describe what inspires and unites JI members and what they aim to achieve. He must describe JI's ideology.<sup>91</sup> All terrorist groups form from ideas. From these ideas, group leaders form ideologies. A terrorist group's ideology establishes its purpose. More specifically, ideology encapsulates all beliefs, principles, aims and goals, and conceptualizes them to the organization in captivating and powerful ways. Inspired by the ideology espoused by their leaders, a motivated, connected movement will then take the steps necessary to advance towards its goals.<sup>92</sup> In JI's case, two Indonesian nationals, Abdullah Sungkar and Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, both committed to Darul Islam's (DI) idea of an Islamic state of Indonesia, and inspired by their experiences during the Anti-Soviet War in the late 1980s broke off from DI and founded JI in 1993. Subsequently, Sungkar and Ba'asyir developed an ideology that they would use to inspire JI members to develop an organization and operations and tactics centered around preparing for and carrying out violent *jihad* to establish a SEA Islamic state.<sup>93</sup>

DI and the anti-Western ideals of pan-Arab radical Islam and al-Qaeda inspired Sungkar, Ba'asyir, and their followers to create JI's ideology, which is both religious and political in nature. They initially drew from DI's vision to create an Islamic state of Indonesia, but their ideology also paralleled al-Qaeda's larger global caliphate ideology. Because JI's ideology is regional in scope, it falls somewhere between DI and al-Qaeda.

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<sup>91</sup> Cragin and Daly define ideology as "the consensus of grievance and objectives that a terrorist group is trying to address through violence." See Cragin and Daly, *The Dynamic Terrorist Threat: An Assessment of Group Motivations and Capabilities in a Changing World*, 29.

<sup>92</sup> "Ideology frames a terrorist group's organizational structure, leadership and membership motivation, recruitment and support, and strategies and tactics." For more refer to Rohan Gunaratna, "The Ideology of Al-Jema'ah Al-Islamiyah," in Hillel Fradkin, Husain Haqqani, and Eric Brown eds, *Current Trends in Islamist Ideology*, Washington D.C.: Hudson Institute (2005), 68.

<sup>93</sup> ICG Asia Report 74, 1-4; and Jones, "Jemaah Islamiyah: A Short Description," 1-2.

JI's ideology proclaims Southeast Asia should be an Islamic state with Indonesia as its nucleus. "It is espoused as both a divinely justified and obligatory mission" and advocates the "transformation of society and politics, by whatever means, into an absolute theocracy" guided only by strict interpretation of the *Qur'an* and *Hadith*.<sup>94</sup> It espouses violent *jihad* against "non-Muslims, Muslim apostates and other anti-Islamic forces that seek to destroy Islam," and enforces all Muslims to live life under strict *Shari'a* (Islamic law) as the quintessential means to support this end.<sup>95</sup> How JI members achieve this end is described clearly in JI's manifesto, namely the PUPJI.<sup>96</sup> Understanding that these factors together formed JI's ideology, this section examines the influence of DI, al-Qaeda and the *mujahidin* experience, and describes the end product, which is JI's ideological doctrine. These three major points in the development of JI's ideology allowed Sungkar, Ba'asyir, and their followers to take the necessary steps towards establishing a network capable of carrying out terrorist attacks.

### **1. JI's Origins and History - The Influence of Darul Islam**

As early as the 1970s, nearly twenty years before they founded JI, DI members Sungkar and Ba'asyir had already begun developing an ideology that expanded on the beliefs, principles, and purpose of DI. DI was a radical Islamist group that rebelled against the policies of the new Indonesian central government in an effort to establish an Islamic state in Indonesia. The movement had some momentum during the 1950s, but it failed to capture the support of the Indonesian Muslim majority. The Indonesian Army

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<sup>94</sup> Barton, *Indonesia's Struggle: Jemaah Islamiyah and the Soul of Islam*, 3, 15, 28; and Batley, *The Complexities of Dealing With Radical Islam in Southeast Asia: A Case Study of Jemaah Islamiyah*, 1, 3.

<sup>95</sup> Barton, *Indonesia's Struggle: Jemaah Islamiyah and the Soul of Islam*, 3, 15, 28; Batley, *The Complexities of Dealing With Radical Islam in Southeast Asia: A Case Study of Jemaah Islamiyah*, 1, 3; and Whitmire, "Jemaah Islamiyah Remains Active and Deadly," 179.

<sup>96</sup> Known as the General Guide for the Struggle of al-Jama'ah Al-Islamiyah (*Pedoman Umum Perjuangan Al-Jama'ah Al-Islamiyah*). Pavlova, "From a Counter-Society to a Counter-State Movement Jemaah Islamiyah According to PUPJI," 778.

put down the DI rebellion in the 1960s, but the movement resurfaced in the next decade only to be betrayed by the government, further fueling the anger of radical Islamists all over Indonesia.<sup>97</sup>

The DI movement began as a local militia in west Java and a support node to the Indonesian nationalist movement in the 1950s. Unhappy with the moderate direction the nationalist movement took, some DI leaders broke off from the nationalists and became the Islamic Army of Indonesia (TII). Shortly thereafter, DI established an Islamic state of Indonesia on west Java. During the 1950s and 1960s, TII fought a *jihad* against the Indonesian military (TNI) and the Indonesian state's secular policies. After over a decade of struggle, the rebellion was put down, but was later revived ostensibly with government agency persuasion to support Indonesia's national efforts to battle communist encroachment. When DI fighters came out of hiding to face the communists, Indonesian military units arrested them. This betrayal turned many Islamists against the central government. At the same time, events like the Iranian Revolution and the proliferation of the scholarship of the Muslim Brotherhood were occurring. These events further fueled radical Islam's resentment for secular government throughout the 1970s. Sungkar and Ba'asyir, both purportedly DI members, wanted the *jihad* for an Islamic state of Indonesia to carry on. They felt betrayed by the Indonesian government and wanted *Shari'a* and the widespread rejection of the Indonesian government to prevail.<sup>98</sup> Many

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<sup>97</sup> Azra Azyumardi, "Bali and Southeast Asian Islam: Debunking the Myths," in Ramakrishna, K. and S. Tan eds, *After Bali: the Threat of Terrorism in Southeast Asia*, World Scientific; Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies: Nanyang Technological University, Singapore (2003), 49; Barton, *Indonesia's Struggle: Jemaah Islamiyah and the Soul of Islam*, 2; Bilveer Singh, "The Challenge of Militant Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia," *The Australian Journal of International Affairs*, 58, 1 (2004), 48-51; Jones, *Jemaah Islamiyah: A Short Description*, 2; and Whitmire, "Jemaah Islamiyah Remains Active and Deadly," 184.

<sup>98</sup> Abuza, *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror*, 61-73. Chapter Three of Greg Barton's book *Indonesia's Struggle: Jemaah Islamiyah and the Soul of Islam* provides an excellent description of the genesis of Darul Islam, pointing out the causal factors that shaped the ideology of DI and JI. For a more comprehensive explanation, please refer to Barton, 47-62; and Batley, *The Complexities of Dealing With Radical Islam in Southeast Asia: A Case Study of Jemaah Islamiyah*, 6. Another comprehensive synopsis of DI's history and its influence on the founders of JI is Ken Conboy's, *The Second Front: Inside Asia's Most Dangerous Terrorist Network*, (Jakarta, IND: Equinox Publishing 2006), 1-35. ICG Indonesia Briefing 2002, 1-6; and Singh, "The Challenge of Militant Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia," 50-52.

radical Islamist groups would adopt this stance, but the DI offshoot that would come to represent the greatest threat to Indonesia and Southeast Asia would be Sungkar and Ba'asyir's JI.

## 2. The Influence of al-Qaeda and the *Mujahidin* Experience

By the mid-1980s, the idea of expanding DI's Islamic state of Indonesia into a SEA caliphate was little more than a vision of Sungkar and Ba'asyir, but their exile to Malaysia and exposure to the Anti-Soviet War soon changed that. Suharto's crackdown on radical Islam in the late 1970s and early 1980s forced Sungkar, Ba'asyir, and other Indonesian Islamists to flee to Malaysia where they could freely preach radical Islam. The pair was still dedicated to DI, but while exiled they were exposed to pan-Arab radical Islam and were captivated by the *Mujahidin* War being fought in Central Asia.<sup>99</sup> This exposure influenced Sungkar, Ba'asyir and their small, dedicated following. Islamist groups met and discussed the righteousness and obligation of *jihād* to restore the caliphate. These discussions led to Sungkar and Ba'asyir's vision of a caliphate in SEA won through widespread, violent *jihād*. Sungkar, Ba'asyir, and their following craved exposure to *jihād*, so they made their way up to Central Asia to fight alongside the *mujahidin*.<sup>100</sup>

The effects of this exposure on the founders and leaders of JI were heavy. The leadership of Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda's ideologues, as well as the perceived success of the *mujahidin* and al-Qaeda inspired Sungkar, Ba'asyir and their Indonesian *jihādists*.<sup>101</sup> They looked to emulate al-Qaeda and probably "inclined them to believe that terrorist actions such as bombings and assassinations carried strong religious sanction and represented an obligation for Muslims."<sup>102</sup> They began to consider a new *jihād* of their own back in Indonesia and embedded the ideology, organizational structure, training,

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<sup>99</sup> Jones, "Jemaah Islamiyah: A Short Description," 2-3; and Whitmire, "Jemaah Islamiyah Remains Active and Deadly," 184.

<sup>100</sup> Abuza, *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror*, 71.

<sup>101</sup> Jones "Jemaah Islamiyah: A Short Description," 3.

<sup>102</sup> Fealy and Borgu, "Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia," 26; and Jones, "Jemaah Islamiyah: A Short Description," 3.

operations and tactics they saw in Afghanistan into their own vision.<sup>103</sup> Al-Qaeda's success emboldened "JI leaders of the righteousness of their own cause."<sup>104</sup> Debate exists over how close al-Qaeda's leaders and JI's founders became, but the similarities analysts have captured between al-Qaeda and what became JI are remarkable. The training, experience, and inspiration future JI members received from al-Qaeda must be considered.<sup>105</sup> Experts characterize JI's ideology as "very much in line with the thinking of the al-Qaeda leadership and yet thoroughly Indonesian."<sup>106</sup> Sungkar and Ba'asyir were committed to bring about a SEA Islamic state, and violent *jihad* was the quintessential means to accomplish it.

Slowly, the Sungkar and Ba'asyir's *jihadists* left Central Asia energized and ready to wage their own *jihad*. In 1993, Sungkar and Ba'asyir broke off from DI and officially formed JI.<sup>107</sup> Between 1993 and 1998, JI's founders and the men they had chosen to lead JI continued to meet and develop JI's ideology. During this time, JI's leaders expanded their vision into organizational, operational and tactical preparation for violent *jihad* to achieve their objectives. After Suharto resigned in 1998, Sungkar and Ba'asyir rejoined many of their inner-circle of Pondok Ngruki/*mujahidin* veterans in Indonesia, and together they preached their new ideology and implemented their vision at their Islamic boarding school or pesantren Pondok Ngruki near Solo, Central Java. At the same time, JI's leaders further developed the organizational structure as well as operations and tactics of the JI network.<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> ICG Asia Report 63, 2.

<sup>104</sup> Abuza, *After Bali: The Threat of Terrorism in Southeast Asia*, 136.

<sup>105</sup> Fealy and Borgu, "Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia," 48; and Gunaratna, "The Ideology of Al-Jema'ah Al-Islamiyah," 68.

<sup>106</sup> Jones, "Jemaah Islamiyah: A Short Description," 3.

<sup>107</sup> ICG Asia Report 74, 1-4.

<sup>108</sup> ICG Indonesia Briefing 2002, 1; and Whitmire, "Jemaah Islamiyah Remains Active and Deadly," 184-185.

### 3. The Declaration of the Ideology and Doctrine of JI

Sungkar and Ba'asyir began with the tenets of DI, fused them with the pan-Arab radical Islamist ideology of the Muslim Brotherhood, the *mujahidin* and al-Qaeda, and from that they created the ideology of JI. Sungkar and Ba'asyir encapsulated JI's ideology as the divine responsibility to carry out *jihad* to create an Islamic state of Indonesia defined by strict adherence to *Shari'a* law.<sup>109</sup> It rejected the ideology and constitution of all secular states beginning with Indonesia and promoted the idea that all JI members had a responsibility to actively struggle against all forms of sin, corruption, and secular society by any and all means necessary. Discerning interpretation of the *Qur'an* and *Hadith* supported JI's ideology. When Indonesia became an Islamic state, then JI members would carry out *jihad* across Southeast Asia and establish a pan-Islamic caliphate.<sup>110</sup>

JI's ideology emphasized the need for Muslims to form a group or "jemaah" in order to "enforce Islamic law and uphold an Islamic way of life: a precursor to becoming an Islamic state."<sup>111</sup> Members of JI took an oath of allegiance and absolute obedience to both God and JI spiritual leadership, and dedicated themselves to ridding the world of corruption and secular poison as interpreted in the *Qur'an* and *Hadith*.<sup>112</sup> JI's ideologues purportedly paralleled its ideological guidelines along the same lines that the "Prophet

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<sup>109</sup> Abuza, *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror*, 127; Amitav Acharya and Arabinda Acharya, "The Myth of the Second Front: Localizing the 'War On Terror' in Southeast Asia," *The Washington Quarterly*, (2007), 77; Batley, *The Complexities of Dealing With Radical Islam in Southeast Asia: A Case Study of Jemaah Islamiyah*, 4; ICG Indonesia Briefing 2002, 18; CRS Report RL31672, 7-9; Fealy and Borgu, "Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia," 26; Gunaratna, "The Ideology of Al-Jema'ah Al-Islamiyah," 69-71; Angel Rabasa, "Radical Islamic Ideologies in Southeast Asia," in Hillel Fradkin, Husain Haqqani, and Eric Brown eds, *Current Trends in Islamist Ideology*, Washington D.C.: Hudson Institute (2005), 31; Kumar Ramakrishna, "Delegitimizing Global Jihadi Ideology in Southeast Asia," *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 27, 3 (Dec 2005), 344, 350-353; Singh, "The Challenge of Militant Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia," 54-57; and See Seng Tan and Kumar Ramakrishna, "Interstate and Intrastate Dynamics in Southeast Asia's War on Terror," *SAIS Review*, 24, 1 (Winter-Spring 2004), 101.

<sup>110</sup> Abuza, *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror*, 61-73, 125-128; Abuza, *After Bali: The Threat of Terrorism in Southeast Asia*, 136; Batley, *The Complexities of Dealing With Radical Islam in Southeast Asia: A Case Study of Jemaah Islamiyah*, 4, 13; ICG Indonesia Briefing 2002, 17; and Singh, "The Challenge of Militant Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia," 52.

<sup>111</sup> ICG Indonesia Briefing 2002, 10, 18.

<sup>112</sup> ICG Indonesia Briefing 2002, 6, 10; and Gunaratna, "The Ideology of Al-Jema'ah Al-Islamiyah," 73.

Muhammad himself was reported to have led the early Muslim generation through,” and cited preparing for and conducting armed *jihad* as the means to confront the enemies of Islam.<sup>113</sup>

In 1996, JI religious ideologues—advisors to Sungkar and Ba’asyir—authored the PUPJI, which is a declaration of beliefs, practices and procedures that “provide religious, strategic, and tactical instructions on how JI should conduct itself as a mobilizing agent for collective action.”<sup>114</sup> The PUPJI described what the organization was, what to believe, why they should believe it, how to act, and when to collectivize and take action against the enemies of their belief system.<sup>115</sup> The PUPJI declared JI was part of the “*Salafi-Jihadist*” movement, which supports violent action as part of a divine obligation to create a strict Islamic state.<sup>116</sup> The PUPJI is heavily embedded with Islamic religious text in order to guide and justify group actions under Islamic religious perspective.<sup>117</sup> As such, it is appropriate to frame the PUPJI as JI’s ideological roadmap: an organizational and operational guide for JI leaders to cultivate member behavior backed by Islamic religious interpretation in order to attain a pure Islam end state.<sup>118</sup> The PUPJI provided structured guidelines that framed how JI leaders should establish, develop and prepare the JI network and the Muslim community religiously and militarily for violent *jihad*.<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> Barton, *Indonesia’s Struggle: Jemaah Islamiyah and the Soul of Islam*, 43; Gunaratna, “The Ideology of Al-Jema’ah Al-Islamiyah,” 73; and ICG Asia Report 43, 22.

<sup>114</sup> Fealy and Borgu, “Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia,” 26. For the comprehensive analysis of the PUPJI document in its entirety, refer to Elena Pavlova, “From a Counter-Society to a Counter-State Movement: Jemaah Islamiyah According to PUPJI,” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 30 (2007): 777-800.

<sup>115</sup> Gunaratna, “The Ideology of Al-Jema’ah Al-Islamiyah,” 70; and Pavlova, “From a Counter-Society to a Counter-State Movement: Jemaah Islamiyah According to PUPJI,” 780.

<sup>116</sup> *Salafi* in this case meaning dedicated followers of the ways of the prophet Muhammad and his companions. Like Islamism, it should be noted that the term *Salafi* or *Salafist* has a number of meanings and as such is the subject of much debate amongst Islamic scholars and theologians. Pavlova, “From a Counter-Society to a Counter-State Movement: Jemaah Islamiyah According to PUPJI,” 779.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, 780.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*, 780.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*, 781.

To summarize, two DI members, specifically Sungkar and Ba'asyir, angered by the actions of the Indonesian government in the 1970s and 1980s and inspired by pan-Arab radical Islamism, al-Qaeda and the perceived success of the *mujahidin* against the Soviet Union in the late 1980s, expanded upon DI's vision, developed a dedicated following, and formed JI in 1993.<sup>120</sup> Their shared beliefs and experiences motivated this group to further develop and spread an ideology, establish an organizational structure, populate it with members, and develop operations and tactics that would support their desire to carry out violent *jihad* to achieve a SEA caliphate.

### C. LEADERSHIP

Motivated by the ideology Sungkar and Ba'asyir developed, JI's first generation leaders drove the establishment of the JI network. Tracing the character of Sungkar, Ba'asyir and JI's first-tier leaders offers perspective into the cohesive, coherent nature that became JI. As previously shown, Sungkar and Ba'asyir were "charismatic individuals who attracted and inspired supporters."<sup>121</sup> However, they needed men they could count on to form the far-reaching network required to achieve JI's objectives. Sungkar, Ba'asyir, and the men they shared *jihad* with in left Central Asia in the early 1990s were ready to lead JI and build a network capable of large-scale terrorism. Together, they formed the foundation of JI's skilled and motivated core and typified the transnational terrorist personality JI formally announced with its 2002 bombings.

#### 1. Becoming Terrorist Leaders

Prior to the founding of JI, Sungkar and Ba'asyir already had a history of being leaders within the radical Islam movement.<sup>122</sup> Twenty years prior to JI's formation, they established a pesantren, on the periphery of Solo called Pondok Ngruki, where they

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<sup>120</sup> Kumar Ramakrishna, "US Strategy in Southeast Asia: Counter-Terrorist or Counter-Terrorism?," Chapter 14 in Ramakrishna and Tan eds. *After Bali: The Threat of Terrorism in Southeast Asia* (World Scientific, Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore 2003), 312.

<sup>121</sup> Cragin and Daly, *The Dynamic Terrorist Threat: An Assessment of Group Motivations and Capabilities in a Changing World*, 32.

<sup>122</sup> ICG Asia Report 74, 1-4; and Jones, "Jemaah Islamiyah: A Short Description," 1-2.

preached radical Islam and formed a “*jemaah islamiyah*” or Islamic community.<sup>123</sup> They developed a strong following. In 1978, Sungkar and Ba’asyir were arrested and charged with membership in DI and establishment of an Islamic community—as a precursor to an Islamic state—and subsequently spent a year in prison. In 1985, after the Indonesian Supreme Court upheld the prosecution’s appeal against the two, Sungkar and Ba’asyir, facing incarceration again, fled to Malaysia along with several of their disciples.

While in Malaysia, Sungkar, Ba’asyir, and several “inner circle” Ngruki graduates were exposed to Middle Eastern, transnational, *jihadi* terrorism ideology. Inspired, they became involved in the *jihad* against the Soviets in Afghanistan.<sup>124</sup> First, Sungkar travelled to the Afghanistan/Pakistan border region where he established a close relationship with Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda’s ideologues.<sup>125</sup> Then, Sungkar and Ba’asyir led their “following of radical Indonesians” to Central Asia so they could get exposure to the *mujahidin*’s *jihad*.<sup>126</sup> Sungkar, Ba’asyir, and their men fought in combat and built personal relationships with the *mujahidin* from the late 1980s through the early 1990s. Many of these men became members of al-Qaeda.<sup>127</sup> They admired Osama bin Laden and sought to emulate what bin Laden and his followers accomplished in Afghanistan.<sup>128</sup> The author emphasizes this experience because it not only shaped Sungkar and Ba’asyir’s unique vision and the trajectory of JI, but it also helps to accurately describe how JI’s leaders built their organizational structure, training pipeline, and operational and tactical focus. Sungkar, Ba’asyir, and their disciples believed following in al-Qaeda’s footsteps would bring JI comparable success. Loyal to Sungkar and Ba’asyir, and inspired by the *mujahidin*, the group slowly returned to Southeast Asia in the early 1990s energized to wage their own *jihad*.<sup>129</sup>

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<sup>123</sup> ICG Indonesia Briefing 2002, 1.

<sup>124</sup> Barton, *Indonesia’s Struggle: Jemaah Islamiyah and the Soul of Islam*, 44-52.

<sup>125</sup> Abuza, *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror*, 127.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, 126.

<sup>127</sup> Abuza, *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror*, 144.

<sup>128</sup> ICG Asia Report 63, 1.

<sup>129</sup> Abuza, *After Bali: the Threat of Terrorism in Southeast Asia*, 136; and Fealy and Borgu, “Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia,” 27, 49.

## 2. JI's Founders at Work

When the Suharto regime fell in 1998, Sungkar and Ba'asyir returned to Ngruki and reunited with their followers to lead and develop JI.<sup>130</sup> Their efforts focused on the strategic vision of JI's ideology and organizational structure.<sup>131</sup> Sungkar, who was JI's *amir*, died of natural causes in 1999, but as Sungkar's replacement, Ba'asyir continued to get JI's message out. As the remaining founder and spiritual leader of JI, Ba'asyir preached and proselytized openly in mosques and Islamic boarding schools about Muslims obligation to participate in violent *jihad* against the un-Islamic Indonesian government so that Muslims could reestablish the caliphate.<sup>132</sup> At the same time, JI's core leaders established paramilitary cells and more pesantrens, and Ba'asyir and his leaders in Indonesia courted the Islamic community to try to expand their support base.

Emboldened by the political space that had opened up, Ba'asyir established a political organization called the Mujahidin Council of Indonesia (MMI) in 2000, which was a collection of over 100 "small radical and militant groups from across the archipelago," and ostensibly a "peaceful organization that tried to implement *Shari'a*...through the democratic process."<sup>133</sup> MMI participated in a variety of civil society efforts aimed at empowering the Muslim community and undermining the policies of the Indonesian government. Several of JI's operational leaders participated in MMI's efforts. In reality, MMI served as a mobilization mechanism in which JI members could network, recruit, extract resources and promote JI's goals.<sup>134</sup> Until his arrest following Bali 2002, Ba'asyir inspired JI leaders to develop a far-reaching administrative and operational network capable of carrying out large-scale terrorist attacks. Ba'asyir

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<sup>130</sup> Abuza, *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror*, 127; Barton, *Indonesia's Struggle: Jemaah Islamiyah and the Soul of Islam*, 13-15; John Gershman, "Is Southeast Asia the Second Front?," *Foreign Affairs* 81, 4 (Jul – Aug 2002): 60-74; and CRS Report RL31672 *Terrorism in Southeast Asia*, Emma Chanlett-Avery, Richard Cronin, Larry Niksch, Bruce Vaughn, (2004), 5.

<sup>131</sup> Abuza, *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror*, 61-73, 125-128; and Singh, "The Challenge of Militant Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia," 52.

<sup>132</sup> Cragin and Daly, *The Dynamic Terrorist Threat: An Assessment of Group Motivations and Capabilities in a Changing World*, 37.

<sup>133</sup> Abuza, *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror*, 142.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*, 142.

never admitted the existence of JI and claimed he was never a member of al-Qaeda, but acknowledged he taught *jihadi* Islam to many JI members who were arrested over the years. Evidence shows Ba'asyir has communicated with other transnational terrorist groups and encouraged JI leaders' efforts to develop the logistics and support capacity that could enable the group's operational elements to plan and execute terrorist attacks against U.S. interests.<sup>135</sup>

### 3. JI's Core Leaders

JI's first generation leaders were almost exclusively Ngruki inner-circle and *mujahidin* veterans. Most became disciples of Sungkar and Ba'asyir while at Ngruki in the late 1970s and early 1980s or while the two were exiled in Malaysia. During this period, JI's leaders developed their own followings and strong personal loyalties with Sungkar, Ba'asyir, and fellow students.<sup>136</sup> As *mujahidin* against the Soviets in the late 1980s, they became accomplished preachers, expert fighters and military trainers, and they developed confidence in these skills based on the perceived success of the *mujahidin's* victory using the same skill sets.<sup>137</sup> Lastly, JI leaders developed strong relationships with al-Qaeda and other *jihadi* organizations while fighting as *mujahidin*, and depended on those relationships to bolster their own efforts at home.<sup>138</sup>

While not an exhaustive list, there are several key JI leaders and their relationships with one another are worth describing in order to emphasize the cohesive nature of JI's leadership cadre. The first key JI leader is Hambali, the main bridge between al-Qaeda and JI. His membership in both JI and al-Qaeda allowed him to develop a strong network in Malaysia and Singapore. He acquired weapons, training, finances and logistics, and coordinated operations across Southeast Asia. Ali Gufron was a close associate of Hambali and overall operational commander of Bali 2002. Imam Samudra was the field coordinator for Bali 2002. Aris Mundanadar is a close companion

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<sup>135</sup> Barton, *Indonesia's Struggle: Jemaah Islamiyah and the Soul of Islam*, 19.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid., 52-53; and Jackson et al., *Aptitude for Destruction*, vol. 2, 60-61.

<sup>137</sup> Jones, "Jemaah Islamiyah: A Short Description," 4.

<sup>138</sup> Abuza, *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror*, 127-128.

of Ba'asyir, financier, fluent in Arabic and English, linked to al-Qaeda, and has been invaluable to JI's recruitment. Fathur Rahman al-Ghozi was a master bomb maker and was JI's lead field commander in the Philippines until his death. Zulkarnen is JI's top military trainer, leader of JI's special operations division and remains at large. Abu Rusdan is an explosives expert, accomplished preacher, same class of leaders as the Bali 2002 masterminds, and became *amir* of JI following Ba'asyir's arrest until his detainment. He still actively supports JI today, yet some evidence shows he does not support JI's anti-Western bombing campaign. Rusdan purportedly leads JI's traditionalist faction. Dulmatin was the architect of several bombings, which include JI's Christmas Eve and Bali 2002 Bombings.<sup>139</sup> This is only a partial list of JI leaders. Many more have played instrumental roles in the development of a coherent JI network and its evolution. The intent is to emphasize that these men and others knew each other well, were loyal to one another, JI's cause, were experts in religion and terrorism, and were committed to violent *jihad* as the only means to restoring the caliphate to Southeast Asia.

From 1993 to 2000, these men and their closest associates covertly established the JI network. They developed a dedicated, well-trained following, and matured their relationships with al-Qaeda and other regional terrorist organizations.<sup>140</sup> The character of this group of individuals is important to describe because it makes clear the nature of JI. They viewed al-Qaeda as the cutting edge of the global, radical Islamist movement. Loyal to JI's ideology, these leaders aspired to be the "vanguard group of the Southeast Asian *jihad*" and believed they could accomplish the task as al-Qaeda did in Central Asia.<sup>141</sup> For seven years, JI leaders dedicated themselves to developing JI's organizational structure. They patiently and quietly recruited members and resources, and built up a vast network of terrorist cells that defined the JI network.

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<sup>139</sup> ICG Asia Report 43, 30-37; ICG Asia Report 63, 7-10; and Whitmire, "Jemaah Islamiyah Remains Active and Deadly," 200-203. A comprehensive list of JI leaders is available in Whitmire's chapter on JI. His details provide further emphasis to this short section.

<sup>140</sup> Abuza, *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror*, 140; and Jackson et al., *Aptitude for Destruction*, vol. 2, 60.

<sup>141</sup> Gunaratna, "The Ideology of Al-Jema'ah Al-Islamiyah," 77.

## D. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Sungkar and Ba'asyir's ideological vision was ambitious and required a mechanism that would allow JI's leaders to build an administrative and operational network capable of carrying out large-scale terrorist attacks.<sup>142</sup> The PUPJI defined the organizational structure JI leaders employed across Southeast Asia; it was rigid and hierarchical in theory. JI's senior leadership drove the long-term attack tactics, but because Sungkar and Ba'asyir envisioned JI operating across over 3,200 miles of Southeast Asia collectively, the structure would have to permit some autonomy further down the chain.<sup>143</sup> The Ngruki inner-circle cultivated and managed the JI network and was responsible for combining their individual efforts into JI's strategic goals. Understanding Sungkar, Ba'asyir, and their inner-circle's exposure to al-Qaeda, it makes sense that they developed a structure that in many ways paralleled al-Qaeda's organizational structure.

### 1. Defining JI's Structure and Responsibilities

Ji's leaders organized the group into a well-defined, hierarchical structure. As *amir*, Sungkar and then Ba'asyir sat at the apex. Beneath the *amir* were four councils responsible for advising the *amir* and developing JI's major policies. The most important council of the four was the Governing Council because it was run by JI's Central Command and controlled the network's *mantiqis* "arranged along geographical boundaries."<sup>144</sup> The Central Command had functional component advisors in the areas of operations, security, recruitment, finances and communication, and assisted in JI's Central Command's control of the "networks of militant cells throughout their regions"

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<sup>142</sup> Cragin and Daly, *The Dynamic Terrorist Threat: An Assessment of Group Motivations and Capabilities in a Changing World*, 40.

<sup>143</sup> Whitmire, "Jemaah Islamiyah Remains Active and Deadly," 179, 192.

<sup>144</sup> Jones, *Jemaah Islamiyah: A Short Description*, 4; and Whitmire, "Jemaah Islamiyah Remains Active and Deadly," 193.

known as *mantiqis*.<sup>145</sup> Each *mantiqi* contained districts (*wakalah*) on down to the cellular level (*fiah*), which carried out the administrative and operational functions required to plan and sustain the JI vision of violent *jihad*.<sup>146</sup> Each *mantiqi* leader established their unit in a different part of Southeast Asia and had both common and unique responsibilities.

Evidence shows that beginning in 1996, but perhaps even earlier, *mantiqi* leaders began establishing their units across Southeast Asia. *Mantiqi* members were encouraged to preach *jihadi* Islam, recruit, indoctrinate and train members for operations, as well as establish resource and weapon-generating networks.<sup>147</sup> They preached at mosques, Islamic boarding schools, and any other public place where they could get access to prospective JI members with skills that would help the organization build an efficient network. *Mantiqi* leaders were compelled to look for individuals with military experience, technical skills, and those who had both participated in society and been alienated by it.<sup>148</sup> They also sought out energetic youths interested in the Muslim faith, unsure about democracy, and interested in *jihad* and *Shari'a*.<sup>149</sup> Recruitment was a major function across *mantiqis*.<sup>150</sup> *Mantiqis* recruited a wide variety of Muslims, which included members courting their own families.<sup>151</sup> Individuals were screened closely, and once selected, prospective members were enrolled in a JI pesantren for religious,

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<sup>145</sup> Abuza, *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror*, 129; Jackson et al., *Aptitude for Destruction*, vol. 2, 63; Fealy and Borgu, “Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia,” 26; and Jones, “Jemaah Islamiyah: A Short Description,” 4. Fealy and Borgu point out that there were military and special operations wings that ran parallel to the *mantiqis*—compelling evidence—that JI’s most sensitive operations were highly compartmentalized.

<sup>146</sup> Whitmire, “Jemaah Islamiyah Remains Active and Deadly,” 192-194.

<sup>147</sup> Abuza, *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror*, 129-131; Fealy and Borgu, “Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia,” 26; and Whitmire, “Jemaah Islamiyah Remains Active and Deadly,” 192-193.

<sup>148</sup> Abuza, *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror*, 129-130.

<sup>149</sup> Abuza, *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror*, 130.

<sup>150</sup> ICG Indonesia Briefing 2002, 1.

<sup>151</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.

ideological and military training.<sup>152</sup> Indoctrinated recruits often spent time at Ngruki, or trained abroad in Afghanistan or the southern Philippines. As such, JI members became dedicated assets of the JI network.<sup>153</sup>

When the political space opened in 1998, Sungkar, Ba'asyir and *Mantiqi* II leaders launched a major campaign to preach *jihad* and build a solid base of JI members across the Indonesian archipelago.<sup>154</sup> Finances and resources appeared to be a major priority for JI *mantiqis* at this time. Inside Indonesia, particularly after the fall of Suharto, Ba'asyir and *Mantiqi* II leaders established ties with sympathetic Indonesian politicians and military officers and turned them into resource providers.<sup>155</sup> In other parts of Southeast Asia, *mantiqis* worked through several front companies that financed JI recruitment and weapons procurement. Some evidence shows JI “almost certainly received direct financial support from al-Qaeda, but most fund-raising was conducted independently by JI cells.”<sup>156</sup>

*Mantiqi* leaders matured their existing relationships with al-Qaeda and other regional terrorist groups in order to build up their networks.<sup>157</sup> The space that opened in Indonesia and had already existed in other parts of Southeast Asia was recognized by al-Qaeda. Bin Laden began sending weapons and money to the area. Al-Qaeda extensively trained, funded, and armed JI members.<sup>158</sup> The relationship between *mantiqis* and other

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<sup>152</sup> Abuza, *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror*, 131; and Fealy and Borgu, “Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia,” 27.

<sup>153</sup> ICG Asia Report 43, i. 1.

<sup>154</sup> ICG Indonesia Briefing 2002, 18.

<sup>155</sup> ICG Asia Report 43, 20; and ICG Indonesia Briefing 2002, 1.

<sup>156</sup> Abuza *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror*, 132; and Barton, *Indonesia's Struggle: Jemaah Islamiyah and the Soul of Islam*, 54-57.

<sup>157</sup> Abuza, *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror*, 89-101; ICG Asia Report 43, 19; and ICG Asia Report 63, 2.

<sup>158</sup> Abuza, *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror*, 148-152; and Barton, *Indonesia's Struggle: Jemaah Islamiyah and the Soul of Islam*, 18.

terrorist groups allowed JI's leaders to develop a far-reaching network and operational capabilities that paid dividends when JI's senior leaders decided to transition to the execution of terrorist operations.<sup>159</sup>

Ba'asyir also worked independently of JI's covert organizational structure. In addition to preaching at Ngruki he worked with the MMI.<sup>160</sup> Ba'asyir's participation in the congress gave him the ability to tap into other networks and strengthen JI's links in Indonesia.<sup>161</sup> At the same time as Ba'asyir saw his participation in MMI as an opportunity to build JI slowly and strategically, younger and more radical JI leaders like Hambali, Samudra, and Ali Gufron saw Ba'asyir and *Mantiqi* II as moving too slowly, weakening the integrity of JI, and needing to focus more on violence against Western interests.<sup>162</sup> One sees this debate develop later in JI's evolution, but during this time period, lack of external pressures allowed JI leaders to avoid conflict over these differences, and thus JI's leaders remained cohesive and coherent.

## 2. *Mantiqis* and Their Responsibilities

As early as 1996, evidence shows JI had established four *mantiqis* across Southeast Asia. *Mantiqi* I covered Malaysia and Singapore. *Mantiqi* II covered most of Indonesia, and was the target of JI's *jihad* efforts. *Mantiqi* III covered the Philippines, eastern Malaysia, Kalimantan and Sulawesi, and was uniquely suited for training and resource gathering. *Mantiqi* IV was developed for recruitment and resource generation in Australia and Papua, but it never really materialized. Hambali, a staunch advocate of attacking the West and a member of al-Qaeda, directed the operations of JI's *mantiqis*.<sup>163</sup> Inside each *mantiqi* were districts or *wakalah*, and within the districts were functional JI

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<sup>159</sup> Gunaratna, "The Ideology of Al-Jema'ah Al-Islamiyah," 75.

<sup>160</sup> ICG Indonesia Briefing 2002, 17.

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.*, 18.

<sup>162</sup> ICG Asia Report 43, 3-4; ICG Asia Report 74, 1-4; and Whitmire, "Jemaah Islamiyah Remains Active and Deadly," 186.

<sup>163</sup> Abuza, *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror*, 132; ICG Asia Report 43, I; and Jones, "Jemaah Islamiyah: A Short Description," 4-5.

cells or *fiah*.<sup>164</sup> *Mantiqis* were similar to a military structure, with brigades, battalions, platoons, and squads respective to *mantiqis*, districts and cells.<sup>165</sup> Until JI's organizational structure consolidated following the foiled Singapore attack in 2001, which neutralized much of *Mantiqi I*, and the subsequent dismantling of much of *Mantiqi III*, JI was tightly structured. Each *mantiqi* was self-sufficient, but united, loyal to one another, and committed to JI's cause: widespread, violent *jihad*.<sup>166</sup>

*Mantiqi I* was the primary conduit between JI and bin Laden/al-Qaeda. *Mantiqi I* leaders moved funds around the region so that *mantiqi* leaders could send their members to Afghanistan or the Philippines for training or weapons procurement.<sup>167</sup> *Mantiqi I* leaders planned JI's first major attack against U.S. interests in Singapore in 2001. The attack was foiled prior to the execution date and Singaporean law enforcement subsequently uncovered and dismantled JI operations in Singapore, causing its remaining members to consolidate with other *mantiqis*.

*Mantiqi II* was anchored in Indonesia. It began small but grew once Suharto fell and Sungkar and Ba'asyir could return to lead JI's efforts there. Once the operational and political space opened up in 1998, Indonesia became JI's recruitment and operational center. When communal conflicts broke out a year later, Sungkar and Ba'asyir deemed Indonesia as JI's main target of *jihad* efforts.<sup>168</sup> With no government crackdown in sight, *Mantiqi II*, with support from *Mantiqi I* and III, expanded its member base and applied its paramilitary skills in a practical environment. With Sungkar and Ba'asyir's blessings, JI's *mantiqi* members became increasingly involved in violence. The communal conflicts in 1999, Christmas Eve bombings in 2000 and the Bali 2002 bombings, while internally

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<sup>164</sup> ICG Asia Report 63, 11.

<sup>165</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

<sup>166</sup> Jones, "Jemaah Islamiyah: A Short Description," 5.

<sup>167</sup> Abuza, *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror*, 132-134.

<sup>168</sup> ICG Asia Report 63, 11.

debated between members of *Mantiqi* I and *Mantiqi* II, were ultimately a collective effort and further demonstrated JI leaders' gradual operational approach towards increasing the level of violence against Indonesia.<sup>169</sup>

*Mantiqi* III was a small but important JI node. It was JI's primary weapons and training hub. Mindanao was a key area for training once hostilities in Afghanistan cooled.<sup>170</sup> *Mantiqi* III members acquired explosives, guns, and other equipment for the other *mantiqis*. *Mantiqi* III members worked closely with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and ASG in the southern Philippines, which allowed for military training and weapons access to *mantiqis* from several regions. *Mantiqi* III leaders and the MILF had a mutually supportive relationship. *Mantiqi* III leaders opened doors for the MILF into al-Qaeda training, and in turn, the MILF provided JI operatives with large amounts of explosives.<sup>171</sup> The importance of the southern Philippines to JI must be emphasized because even today, the JI network remains embedded in the southern Philippines.<sup>172</sup>

*Mantiqis* both collectively and individually ran their own operations and ensured their efforts contributed to JI's overarching goals. Policies, operations, and alliances with other organizations were all subject to the field commander's discretion.<sup>173</sup> The *mantiqis* and their various cells were extensive, autonomous and capable of sustaining operations even after the loss of members or dismantling of cells. *Mantiqi* leaders developed field coordinators who ran *wakalahs*, responsible for delivering money, explosives and for developing functional cells, with some in charge of intelligence activities and others who might carry out an attack.<sup>174</sup> Rank and file field operators had the most responsibility and risked their lives to build and deliver the bombs, but had the least understanding of the organization.<sup>175</sup> *Mantiqi* leaders understood how to compartmentalize at the district level

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<sup>169</sup> Abuza, *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror*, 140; and ICG Asia Report 74, 1-4.

<sup>170</sup> ICG Asia Report 63, 16.

<sup>171</sup> ICG Asia Report 63, 10.

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.*, 16-22.

<sup>173</sup> ICG Asia Report 16, 1.

<sup>174</sup> ICG Asia Report 43, i, 17.

<sup>175</sup> *Ibid.*, 18.

and below. *Mantiqis* worked with other like-minded groups in order to advance their aims. They generated their own resources or acquired them from other *mantiqis*, and could facilitate their delivery down to the district and cell level, thus illustrating JI's cohesive, coherent administrative/operational nature and collective commitment to JI's goals.<sup>176</sup> The investigations of the Christmas Eve bombings in 2000 further demonstrate this point. *Mantiqis* developed sophisticated networks across the archipelago that allowed them to generate funds, acquire members and equipment, and protect the integrity of the mission by compartmentalizing its various facets. This highly functioning network carried out multiple, near-simultaneous attacks across several islands without threatening the nature of the organization as a whole.<sup>177</sup>

In short, the structure developed and employed by JI leaders from the time JI was founded up through 2001, when regional authorities became informed of JI's existence and started dismantling JI cells, was efficient. It permitted the successful development of a well populated, financially, religiously and operationally sound network across Southeast Asia. JI's organizational structure, similar to al-Qaeda's functional structure, enabled its members to train and prepare for high-profile terrorist attacks.<sup>178</sup> Having examined JI's ideology, leadership and organizational structure, it is now important to explore the operations and tactics that JI operatives used to become Southeast Asia's most deadly terrorist organization.

## **E. OPERATIONS AND TACTICS**

The operations and tactics developed between 1993 and 2002 made clear JI leaders' terrorist aspirations. As noted, Sungkar, Ba'asyir, and JI's first generation leaders invested in building a rigid organizational structure, a multi-regional network, and populating the network with members, but that was not all. JI's leaders incorporated an aggressive training program to prepare their members for *jihad*. In the late 1990s, JI members participated in communal conflicts that broke out in parts of Indonesia. In late

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<sup>176</sup> ICG Asia Report 63, 12-13.

<sup>177</sup> ICG Asia Report 43, 5-19.

<sup>178</sup> Whitmire, "Jemaah Islamiyah Remains Active and Deadly," 192-198.

2000, JI operatives successfully carried out the group's first terrorist attacks on Christmas Eve 2000. JI and al-Qaeda elements planned major attacks against hardened targets in Singapore in 2001, but Singaporean and Malaysian authorities thwarted the attacks. Rattled by the dismantling of several JI cells, Hambali, still hoping to bring an al-Qaeda-style attack to Indonesia, shifted JI's target choice to soft, largely unguarded targets. On October 12, 2002, JI's Bali cell successfully carried out suicide bombing attacks against Western hotels in Bali. For analysts, this attack brought JI's operational and tactical nature into sharp focus.

## 1. Training

Training was integral to JI's operational development into a proficient terrorist group. Religious education and indoctrination into JI's ideology was built into all levels of training. It provided JI members with the enthusiasm and conviction—backed with fiery *Qur'anic* interpretation—required to ensure JI members would carry out terrorist operations without hesitation.<sup>179</sup> JI leaders taught their members that violent *jihad* was the quintessential means to carry out their obligation to the creation of the caliphate.<sup>180</sup>

Many JI rank and file had no military expertise, so JI leaders built an army of guerilla fighters and terrorists. *Mantiqis*, through their close ties with al-Qaeda and other regional terrorist groups, established dozens of small training camps throughout Indonesia, the southern Philippines and Central Asia, and they grew a broad network of competent fighters.<sup>181</sup> *Mantiqi* leaders, most of which had fought in Afghanistan, were experts in both using and procuring explosives, chemicals, and detonators. They taught these skills along with small arms, infantry tactics, and guerilla warfare.<sup>182</sup> Up through the onset of U.S. Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan in 2001, *mantiqi* leaders

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<sup>179</sup> Cragin and Daly, *The Dynamic Terrorist Threat: An Assessment of Group Motivations and Capabilities in a Changing World*, 48; Fealy and Borgu, "Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia," 27; and ICG Asia Report 63, 17.

<sup>180</sup> Barton, *Indonesia's Struggle: Jemaah Islamiyah and the Soul of Islam*, 3, 28; and Batley, *The Complexities of Dealing With Radical Islam in Southeast Asia: A Case Study of Jemaah Islamiyah*, 3.

<sup>181</sup> Fealy and Borgu, "Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia," 27; ICG Asia Report 63, 17; and ICG Asia Report 43, 1, 19.

<sup>182</sup> ICG Asia Report 63, 2, 5; and Jones, "Jemaah Islamiyah: A Short Description," 7.

sent their members to Afghanistan for inspiration— to see what a real Islamic state looked like. While abroad, JI operatives further honed their military training.<sup>183</sup> The training pipeline JI leaders created established a vast network of inspired, well-rounded guerilla fighters and terrorists.

*Mantiqi* leaders also trained their members to operate clandestinely. They were taught about compartmentalization, intelligence, and operational security.<sup>184</sup> They were also taught to deny the existence of JI and its activities.<sup>185</sup> JI members were taught to trust other JI members and their familial ties only. This mechanism was put in place to ensure group secrecy, and so that JI's ideology would continue to be passed on from generation to generation.<sup>186</sup> Most JI members were activated just prior to attacks being carried out. This kept the true nature of the organization protected in case JI members were arrested. In many cases, even cell or district heads were unaware of terrorist operations being planned or carried out in their area. The district head was only responsible for providing resources.

A small core of JI members sometimes referred to as JI's special operations division was utilized for JI's terrorist attacks. It kept its "membership limited," bringing in reserves only when necessary.<sup>187</sup> Oftentimes, the only concrete ties that linked terrorists to JI were Ngruki or another JI pesantren. This practice allowed JI terrorist cells to develop attack plans independently, which permitted operatives to carry out multiple, near-simultaneous attacks without threatening the nature of the organization as a whole.<sup>188</sup> In short, JI's training program was designed to prepare its members for the

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<sup>183</sup> Abuza, *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror*, 89-101, 132-134, 152; ICG Indonesia Briefing 2002, 2, 12; ICG Asia Report 63, 18; ICG Asia Report 43, 1, 17; Jones, "The Changing Nature of Jemaah Islamiyah," 173; Jones, "Jemaah Islamiyah: A Short Description," 7; and Whitmire, "Jemaah Islamiyah Remains Active and Deadly," 197.

<sup>184</sup> ICG Asia Report 43, 17; and ICG Indonesia Briefing 2002, 2.

<sup>185</sup> Abuza, *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror*, 163; Gunaratna, "The Ideology of Al-Jema'ah Al-Islamiyah," 73-74; and Jones, "Jemaah Islamiyah: A Short Description," 1. Many senior JI leaders to include Ba'asyir have historically denied the existence of JI.

<sup>186</sup> ICG Asia Report 63, 26.

<sup>187</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.

<sup>188</sup> ICG Asia Report 43, i, 5-19.

full-spectrum of violence in support of JI's ideology. Its patient and specific training agenda taught JI operatives how to build bombs, fight in combat, and organize and manage sophisticated attack operations clandestinely.<sup>189</sup>

## 2. JI's Role in Indonesia's Communal Conflicts

In 1999, communal conflicts broke out in Maluku and Central Sulawesi between Christians and Muslims. These conflicts were not sparked or led by JI, but many JI members participated for several reasons. These conflicts provided JI leaders the opportunity to expose their members to operational activity, gain valuable combat experience, and recruit Muslims who might be inclined to expand their view of *jihad*. JI members were eager to participate because they were motivated by the idea of exacting revenge and creating terror among Christians, but that was not the main incentive of JI leaders.<sup>190</sup> JI leaders utilized the anti-Christian feelings resulting from the communal violence to recruit, establish paramilitary cells, forge deeper relationships with other *jihadist* organizations, and participate in *jihad*, but more importantly, senior leadership saw the communal conflicts as an opportunity to put operational skills to practice.<sup>191</sup>

Al-Qaeda leadership shared this vision. As such, they “provided significant funding, financial infrastructure, training, and arming of JI militants” which improved JI's sustainment capacity.<sup>192</sup> The communal conflicts afforded a number of benefits to JI, but applying their training in preparation for future terrorist attacks was what drove JI leaders to participate in the communal conflicts.<sup>193</sup> At the same time, it is important to point out that the communal conflicts also defined the identity of many JI leaders in

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<sup>189</sup> Abuza, *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror*, 152; and ICG Asia Report 63, 2.

<sup>190</sup> Fealy and Borgu, “Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia,” 27; and ICG Asia Report 43, 5.

<sup>191</sup> Abuza, *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror*, 145-148; Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 89, 96; ICG Asia Report 43, ii, 2, 21; and Pavlova, “From Counter-Society to a Counter-State Movement: Jemaah Islamiyah According to PUPJI,” 794.

<sup>192</sup> Abuza, *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror*, 148.

<sup>193</sup> ICG Asia Report 43, 19.

Indonesia, especially those that had not had exposure to Afghanistan. Many of these JI leaders felt more comfortable waging *jihad* against “domestic political issues like the communal conflicts more than on international ones.”<sup>194</sup>

### 3. Christmas Eve Bombings 2000

Bolstered by al-Qaeda and emboldened by communal conflicts, JI leaders set out to lead their own campaign of violence in 2000. JI operatives executed several small, confidence-building attacks in 2000 dismissed by authorities as local violence. Later that year, operatives carried out sophisticated bombing attacks on Christmas Eve where they delivered “more than 30 bombs to churches or priests in eleven Indonesian cities across six provinces, all wired to explode around the same time.” Nineteen people were killed and over 120 people injured.<sup>195</sup> The bombs were small and carried in bags, which allowed for a significant amount of control of whom and what would be damaged.<sup>196</sup> This attack was a great opportunity for JI members to execute and learn from a terrorist attack.<sup>197</sup> The attack also demonstrated JI leaders had developed a far-reaching, well-trained network capable of carrying out multiple bombings at once, although at the time the bombings were not recognized as the work of JI.<sup>198</sup> Indonesian authorities wrote the attack off as sectarian violence as well. It would not be until *Mantiqi* I became exposed in 2001 that the true nature of JI’s network would become apparent.<sup>199</sup> Most importantly, these attacks provided JI members with practical training and operational experience, and had impressed al-Qaeda. This is not to say that JI was subservient to al-Qaeda, rather there was a relationship of “mutual advantage and reciprocal assistance.”<sup>200</sup> JI leaders

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<sup>194</sup> Jones, “The Changing Nature of Jemaah Islamiyah,” 173.

<sup>195</sup> Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 98; Fealy and Borgu, “Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia,” 27; ICG Asia Report 43, i, 5-6; and ICG Indonesia Briefing 2002, 2.

<sup>196</sup> ICG Asia Report 43, 17.

<sup>197</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

<sup>198</sup> *Ibid.*, i, 5.

<sup>199</sup> ICG Asia Report 43, i; and ICG Asia Report 63, 30.

<sup>200</sup> Jones, “Jemaah Islamiyah: A Short Description,” 8.

and members respected what al-Qaeda had accomplished and saw al-Qaeda-like actions paying similar dividends in JI's own *jihad*. Moreover, JI's Christmas Eve bombings drove al-Qaeda to finance future JI attack plans.

#### 4. The Singapore Attack 2001

It should not be surprising that JI's first attempt at a major terrorist attack bared all the characteristics of an al-Qaeda-style attack. In 2001, Hambali chose to make targets in Singapore *Mantiqi* I's focus of effort. Hambali gave the order to plan and bomb multiple targets, which included the U.S. Embassy, Israeli Embassy, naval facilities in Singapore, and other Western interests. JI's Singapore cell planned for six truck bombs—a total of seventeen tons of ammonium nitrate—to attack their targets with.<sup>201</sup> Al-Qaeda provided the bulk of the financing for the operation and was going to supply the suicide bombers to carry out the attack. Just prior to the attack date, Singaporean authorities foiled the plan. Singaporean authorities arrested several Muslim militants “suspected of working with al-Qaeda.” Their interrogations exposed the JI network, the desire of its leaders to “focus on Western targets and mass-casualty bombings of public places,” and their ties to al-Qaeda.<sup>202</sup> The information from these interrogations led to the unraveling of JI's Malaysia and Singapore cells and links to Hambali and Ba'asyir.<sup>203</sup> Malaysia and Singapore cracked down on JI *mantiqis* in their countries in late 2001.<sup>204</sup> Subsequent information led to the arrests of key JI leaders in the Philippines in raids that seized sizable amounts of suspected JI military materiel and an outline of key JI operational commanders suspected of planning future terrorist attacks.<sup>205</sup> Singapore, Malaysia, and Philippines eradicated the JI presence in their countries, but Indonesia was not yet

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<sup>201</sup> ICG Indonesia Briefing 2002, 2; and White Paper, *The Jemaah Islamiyah Arrests and the Threat of Terrorism* (Singapore: Ministry of Home Affairs 2003), 12-13, 27.

<sup>202</sup> Fealy and Borgu, “Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia,” 28; and ICG Indonesia Briefing 2002, 2.

<sup>203</sup> Abuza, *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror*, 155-157; and ICG Indonesia Briefing 2002, 2.

<sup>204</sup> Jones, “The Changing Nature of Jemaah Islamiyah,” 169.

<sup>205</sup> Abuza, *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror*, 158; and ICG Indonesia Briefing 2002, 2.

following suit.<sup>206</sup> Since 2001, much of *Mantiqi* I and III's ability to operate has been constrained.<sup>207</sup> Singapore, Malaysia and the Philippines investigative efforts exposed JI's complex network and its intent to carry out terrorist attacks.<sup>208</sup> Alerted to JI's presence, the operating environment became restrictive but JI's leaders showed resilience.<sup>209</sup>

## 5. Bali 2002

Despite losses in late 2001 and early 2002, al-Qaeda encouraged Hambali and his followers to move forward with attacks. Some *Mantiqi* II leaders were reluctant to proceed with more attacks, but the group pressed forward. Hambali and his pro-violence militants, along with administrative support from *Mantiqi* II, showed resilience, cohesion, and an ability to shift their target selection to accommodate the changing CT environment.<sup>210</sup> Remaining *Mantiqi* I leaders underneath Hambali held a "more internationalist outlook," were closer to al-Qaeda, were Afghan-Soviet war veterans, demonstrated a willingness to engage in *jihad*, and wanted to plan another attack against Western interests.<sup>211</sup> *Mantiqi* II leaders were domestically focused and committed to JI's ideology, but were reluctant to transition to suicide bombings against targets they did not see as direct enemies. They were particularly unsure about al-Qaeda-style attacks against Western interests where Muslims could get killed.<sup>212</sup> A split emerged, with an internal division between al-Qaeda-inspired JI leaders and JI leaders more comfortable supporting Indonesia's sectarian violence.

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<sup>206</sup> Abuza, *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror*, 161; and Fealy and Borgu, "Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia," 37.

<sup>207</sup> Fealy and Borgu, "Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia," 53.

<sup>208</sup> ICG Indonesia Briefing 2002, 2.

<sup>209</sup> ICG Asia Report 43, 1.

<sup>210</sup> Fealy and Borgu, "Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia," 34.

<sup>211</sup> Jones, "The Changing Nature of Jemaah Islamiyah," 170.

<sup>212</sup> Jones, "The Changing Nature of Jemaah Islamiyah," 170, 174; and ICG Asia Report 74, 1-4.

Nonetheless, Hambali, loyal to al-Qaeda's desires, pressed forward and shifted JI's target focus. Hambali determined JI operatives would attack "soft" economic targets frequented by Westerners.<sup>213</sup> Some evidence states that Ba'asyir and *Mantiqi* II leaders stressed the need to hold off on high-profile attacks because the pressure on JI was mounting, and they feared that any attack at that time would do more harm than good.<sup>214</sup> However, that did not stop Hambali's followers from pressing forward with plans for Bali 2002. Once they had given their opinion, Ba'asyir and the leaders of *Mantiqi* II now referred to as JI "traditionalists" transitioned their efforts to the "tumultuous events in their own country," where they focused on religious outreach, recruitment, indoctrination into JI, and military training.<sup>215</sup> Ba'asyir and *Mantiqi* II leaders were "by no means opposed to using violence...but they believed that mass-casualty terrorism would be more counterproductive for JI."<sup>216</sup>

This is where the analytical debate originated over changes in JI's organizational structure and differences in opinion over tactics. One interpretation suggests that this internal debate led to much less internal cohesion and factions developing, while the other interpretation argues that while differences existed, JI leaders and their factions saw their separate approaches as "all part of the same struggle."<sup>217</sup>

Despite the internal debate, Hambali, *Mantiqi* I leaders and to a lesser extent *Mantiqi* III leaders, now referred to as "pro-violence" leaders, pressed forward with plans to target Bali.<sup>218</sup> Hambali wanted to carry out attacks on U.S. interests and allies, but JI operatives would have to attack "soft economic targets," "small bombings in bars, cafes or nightclubs frequented by Westerners in Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Philippines

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<sup>213</sup> Gunaratna, "The Ideology of Al-Jema'ah Al-Islamiyah," 78.

<sup>214</sup> ICG Asia Report 43, 1-4.

<sup>215</sup> ICG Asia Report 43, 5; and Jones, "The Changing Nature of Jemaah Islamiyah," 170.

<sup>216</sup> Fealy and Borgu, "Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia," 34.

<sup>217</sup> Abuza, *Political Islam and Violence in Indonesia*, 40; and Fealy and Borgu, "Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia," 34.

<sup>218</sup> ICG Asia Report 43, 4.

and Indonesia.”<sup>219</sup> On October 12, 2002, JI elements attacked Bali nightclubs and killed over 200 people. The attack was the largest and most sophisticated JI leaders had put together, and was the most deadly the region had seen.<sup>220</sup> It clearly demonstrated how parts of JI had embraced al-Qaeda’s ideology, incorporated it into its own ideology, and employed an al-Qaeda-style operation with al-Qaeda tactics. This attack also showed that despite its losses, JI leaders could adapt the organization to its environment so members could continue to carry out attacks. With the culmination of the Bali 2002 bombing, it was clear that JI was largely a cohesive, capable terrorist network inspired to wage violent *jihād*, and it was the formal announcement of JI as the paramount terrorist group in Indonesia.<sup>221</sup>

## F. CONCLUSION

There was little doubt that after the “devastating triple-suicide Bali attack of October 12, 2002, where 202 people perished and another 330 were wounded” analysts would coin JI “as Southeast Asia’s largest and most deadly militant Islamist terrorist network.”<sup>222</sup> Analysts only guessed at what JI’s next move was. What was certain was that Indonesia, SEA nations and the West were staring at a coherent, motivated, far-reaching, highly capable terrorist network whose most charismatic leaders were affiliated with and wanted to emulate al-Qaeda, undermine the region’s governments, and establish an Islamic state.

As this chapter demonstrated, JI’s founders and core leaders developed a motivating ideology, committed and capable leadership cadre, a functioning organizational structure, and through their accomplished training pipeline, developed an

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<sup>219</sup> Rohan Gunaratna, “Understanding Al Qaeda and its Network in Southeast Asia,” Chapter 5 in Ramakrishna and Tan eds. *After Bali: The Threat of Terrorism in Southeast Asia* (World Scientific, Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore 2003), 129; and ICG Asia Report 63, 1.

<sup>220</sup> Fealy and Borgu, “Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia,” 28.

<sup>221</sup> Abuza, *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror*, 158-164; Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 98; Gunaratna, *After Bali: The Threat of Terrorism in Southeast Asia*, 130-132; Jones, “Jemaah Islamiyah and New Splinter Groups,” 11; and Jones, “The Changing Nature of Jemaah Islamiyah,” 169.

<sup>222</sup> Whitmire, “Jemaah Islamiyah Remains Active and Deadly,” 179-180.

operational and tactical capacity to carry out sophisticated, al-Qaeda-style terrorist attacks. This chapter showed that despite a changing CT environment and internal conflict over the cost/benefit of suicide bombings, the resolute belief in violent *jihād* to achieve their goals saw JI through to Bali 2002. Indeed, JI was capable, committed, and coherent enough to carry out Bali 2002, and could likely execute additional attack plans against the interests they felt stood in the way of their end state. Analysts surmised the success of Bali 2002 had only whetted JI leaders' appetites to carry out additional mass casualty attacks. Southeast Asia and the West had to respond. The aftermath of Bali 2002 marked the beginning of Southeast Asia's war on terrorism, and the reactions of the governments and the Muslim majority public would spark the evolution of JI.

### III. ADAPTATION AND EVOLUTION: DIVERSE AND DANGEROUS

#### A. INTRODUCTION

JI's Bali cell demonstrated their organization's impressive capabilities and the intentions of JI's leaders who advocated an anti-Western *jihad* attack campaign through Bali 2002.<sup>223</sup> They carried out a large-scale terrorist attack against Western and Indonesian interests—symbols—that represented suppression of their Islamic state ideals. The bombings also revealed JI's ability to evolve, as its members could adapt in order to ensure execution of terrorism operations in pursuit of their goals. Bali 2002 was a wakeup call to Southeast Asia; a transnational *jihadi* organization was actively threatening the region.

SEA governments and their Muslim publics responded to JI in a variety of ways but primarily with a heavy hand. These responses compelled JI's leaders to evolve the group. JI members learned and adapted so that they could not only survive, but also function well, retaining and improving their ability to wage *jihad*. From October 2002 through July 2009, SEA governments and their publics answered JI, and JI elements countered. SEA government CT crackdowns led to the arrest or death of several hundred JI members.<sup>224</sup> Muslims, angered by JI's attacks, gradually withdrew support for the organization. Some JI leaders were influenced by these changes and adjusted their commands and tactics, while other leaders were undeterred and thus continued to carry out terrorist attacks. Despite various changes within JI during this period, JI operatives were able to execute four more suicide bombings, which killed dozens and wounded hundreds, many of whom were innocent Muslims.<sup>225</sup>

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<sup>223</sup> Stuart Koschade, "A Social Network Analysis of Jemaah Islamiyah: The Applications to Counterterrorism and Intelligence," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 29 (2006), 559-560.

<sup>224</sup> Whitmire, "Jemaah Islamiyah Remains Active and Deadly," 198.

<sup>225</sup> *Ibid.*, 181.

As discussed earlier, if terrorist groups do not “adapt over time into more-effective organizations,” the distinct possibility exists that they will end.<sup>226</sup> JI did not end. Its members learned from their experiences and adapted to a new CT and public environment. JI leaders drove their members to “develop, improve, and employ new skills that enabled them to change their capabilities over time,” which allowed the movement to regenerate, expand, and sustain a campaign of terrorist attacks.<sup>227</sup> JI survived because its members “acted systematically to fulfill their needs, strengthen their capabilities, and advance their strategic agenda.”<sup>228</sup> In short, JI evolved into a more effective organization and increasingly dangerous threat.

This chapter discusses JI’s evolution post-Bali 2002 to the Jakarta bombings in 2009. The purpose of this chapter is to describe how JI evolved during this period. The chapter identifies, describes and assesses the changes in JI’s ideology, leadership, organizational structure, and operations and tactics. Continuity through a shared ideology and changes made by leaders in structure as well as operational and tactical responsibilities allowed the bulk of the movement to regenerate resources and develop a largely non-violent, social service-providing persona. This permitted its members to operate more openly because it was difficult for the government to pressure Islamist groups that did not have concrete links to terrorism. Moreover, these changes allowed JI members to provide clandestine JI militants with administrative support as necessary so that JI could “remain the single greatest security threat to Indonesia” and possibly to Southeast Asia as well.<sup>229</sup> Culminating with the Jakarta bombings in 2009, this chapter concludes by having clearly identified and described the key aspects of JI’s evolution and the nature of the JI threat at that time. By examining how JI’s ideology, leadership, structure, and operations and tactics changed during this period, the author continues to improve upon the understanding of the nature of the JI threat.

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<sup>226</sup> Jones and Libicki, *How Terrorist Groups End: Lessons for Countering Al Qaeda*, 9-15, 26. Jones and Libicki note the ways and reasons why terrorist groups usually end.

<sup>227</sup> Abuza, *Political Islam and Violence in Indonesia*, 37; and Jackson et al., *Aptitude for Destruction*, vol. 1, ix, xiii.

<sup>228</sup> Jackson et al., *Aptitude for Destruction*, vol. 1, ix.

<sup>229</sup> Abuza, *Political Islam and Violence in Indonesia*, 37.

The author argues that despite external and internal pressures, JI's membership largely remained cohesive and evolved into a more complicated and sophisticated movement. JI's core did not deviate from its overarching ideology. Instead, JI's leaders changed the organization's structure and enhanced their capabilities by adapting and expanding their operations and tactics in large part in response to the pressures that were impacting JI's cause. These shifts permitted JI's leaders to create a more effective organization—two divisions—traditionalists and radicals divided by administrative and operational functions respectively. Together, they continued to carry out bombings against Indonesian and Western interests. They also helped JI leaders rehabilitate JI's damaged reputation and reach. Despite setbacks, JI members carried out major attacks in 2003, 2004, 2005 and 2009. These bombings, coupled with other dangerous activities, reiterate the author's assessment: JI was and is the most serious, lethal threat to Indonesia, SEA nations, and U.S. interests in the region.<sup>230</sup>

## **B. RESPONSES TO JI**

Bali 2002 evoked numerous responses from SEA governments. Malaysia, the Philippines, and Singapore acknowledged JI as a clear and immediate terrorist threat to the region. Malaysia, the Philippines and Singapore's investigative efforts coupled with Indonesia's post-Bali inquiries revealed JI's sophisticated, multi-regional network and its links to al-Qaeda and other *jihadi* organizations. The region's intelligence and security agencies deduced that over the course of nearly a decade, JI's leaders had acquired resources, personnel, and materiel from all over Southeast Asia and trained their members to engage in violence across the region to create a pan-Islamic state. These

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<sup>230</sup> These changes are described by most experts as factionalism or splintering and suggest JI became divided and weaker. The author's hypothesis suggests this might be overstating the case. JI's factions seem to be divided into administrative and operational divisions. They are mostly separate, but they are mutually supportive when required. This relationship allows for the survival and improvement of the network as a whole, and execution of near and long-term strategies with only minimal threat to the strategic intentions and focus of the group.

discoveries resulted in concerted initiatives to counter the JI threat. The efforts of Malaysia, the Philippines, and Singapore led to the capture of key JI leaders and dozens of JI operatives, effectively dismantling JI *mantiqis* in their countries.<sup>231</sup>

Reluctant, but no longer denying the existence of a problem, Indonesia had launched its own CT campaign by 2003. Indonesia, with help from the United States and Australia, developed additional security agencies, most notably Detachment 88, which was an elite law enforcement entity designed to execute CT intelligence and operations. With a nascent CT apparatus in place, Indonesia launched a crackdown on JI and has produced favorable results. Since 2003, Indonesian and other SEA authorities have killed or detained between 200 and 450 JI operatives, and their CT raids have consistently disrupted JI's attack operations. Several of JI's lynchpin leaders were caught or neutralized. Moreover, JI senior leadership has had to replace arrested leaders and experts at the Central Command as well as *mantiqi* and *wakalah* levels, which has resulted in episodic leadership vacuums and an inability to coordinate operational and tactical guidance across the region.<sup>232</sup>

The public responded as well. Bali 2002 and subsequent JI bombings "provoked Indonesian public anger and denouncement by political parties including the Muslim political parties."<sup>233</sup> The Indonesian government's transparent, rule-of-law approach to the JI threat gradually won the favor of some of Indonesia's Muslim majority. To

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<sup>231</sup> Barton, *Indonesia's Struggle: Jemaah Islamiyah and the Soul of Islam*, 7; Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 87; ICG Asia Report 43, 25; and Jones, "The Changing Nature of Jemaah Islamiyah," 170. At Singapore's request, "JI was formally added to the United Nations list of terrorist organizations."

<sup>232</sup> Abuza "Indonesian Counter-Terrorism: The Great Leap Forward," 6-7; Abuza, *Political Islam and Violence in Indonesia*, 37; Barton, *Indonesia's Struggle: Jemaah Islamiyah and the Soul of Islam*, 53; Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 94, 99; Conboy, *The Second Front: Inside Asia's Most Dangerous Terrorist Network*, 196-197, 204-205, 223; Fealy and Borgu, "Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia," 26, 34; and Jones, "The Changing Nature of Jemaah Islamiyah," 170. Detachment 88 has almost exclusively targeted JI elements. JI's spiritual leader and founder Ba'asyir was incarcerated through 2006; Hambali, JI's operations chief and advocate of mass casualty attacks against Western targets and a main link to al-Qaeda, was captured in Thailand in 2003; Dr. Azahari, JI's top bomb maker, was killed in 2005, just to name a few.

<sup>233</sup> Barton, *Indonesia's Struggle: Jemaah Islamiyah and the Soul of Islam*, 23; Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 84-85; Jackson et al., *Aptitude for Destruction*, vol. 2, 82; and Sidney Jones, "Briefing for the New President: The Terrorist Threat in Indonesia and Southeast Asia," *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 618:1 (2008), 70.

summarize, government responses weakened JI and were “instrumental in turning public opinion against JI.”<sup>234</sup> Analysts concluded JI was “damaged but still dangerous.”<sup>235</sup> Despite a generally united commitment to JI’s ideology, ongoing internal debate amongst JI’s leaders intensified. Without conceding JI’s principles and goals, JI’s leaders realized their structure needed change and new tactics had to be employed.<sup>236</sup> JI had to evolve, and it did quite creatively and successfully.

### C. JI RESPONDS TO THE PRESSURE

Prior to the crackdown, JI was a well-resourced, organized, transnational *jihadi* network capable of carrying out simultaneous terrorist attacks. Analysts estimated JI had nearly 2,000 operatives and possibly an additional 5,000 affiliated with the group. It had strong links with al-Qaeda, DI and several other regional *jihadi* networks. JI was the predominant threat in Southeast Asia, but it had taken a decade in an environment naive to its existence to get to that point.<sup>237</sup>

Commitment to JI’s ideology drove its leaders and their movement forward. JI leaders consolidated and modified their organizational structure and repertoire of operations and tactics so that they could reorganize and regenerate the network, and continued to conduct activities that would advance their aims. In other words, JI leaders adjusted the movement in response to “internal needs, external shocks, and demographic changes” and thus became a more effective movement.<sup>238</sup> During this time period, JI countered with “considerable resilience and capacity to adapt to the changing environment,” which allowed it to learn, evolve, and remain the top security threat to the

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<sup>234</sup> Barton, *Indonesia’s Struggle: Jemaah Islamiyah and the Soul of Islam*, 23; and Conboy, *The Second Front: Inside Asia’s Most Dangerous Terrorist Network*, 196

<sup>235</sup> ICG Asia Report 63.

<sup>236</sup> Barton, *Indonesia’s Struggle: Jemaah Islamiyah and the Soul of Islam*, 23. Fealy and Borgu suggest many Indonesians remained ambivalent about the terrorism threat. They acknowledged some terrorists operate in Indonesia, but Indonesians were skeptical of the comprehensive threat that is the JI network. See Fealy and Borgu, “Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia,” 36 for more.

<sup>237</sup> Barton, *Indonesia’s Struggle: Jemaah Islamiyah and the Soul of Islam*, 7; Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 93; Fealy and Borgu, “Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia,” 25; and ICG Asia Report 43, 25.

<sup>238</sup> Jones, “The Changing Nature of Jemaah Islamiyah,” 170.

region.<sup>239</sup> In summary, JI's ideology sustained group cohesion and drove its leaders to alter JI's organizational structure and improve its capabilities by expanding and enhancing their operations and tactical repertoire.

### **1. JI's Unwavering Ideology**

The JI network remained committed to its ideology: waging *jihad* to establish an Islamic state. This section describes how JI's ideology survived and how it impacted JI's evolution. JI's ideology kept the organization united and focused on rebuilding capabilities and maintaining the capacity to carry out operations in support of its near and long-term goals. The noted changes in leadership, organizational structure, and operations and tactics to be discussed later show how JI evolved. Analyzing JI's ideology helps determine the accuracy of descriptions that interpret how JI has managed to remain cohesive and coherent, not the fractured state many have described.<sup>240</sup>

The fused DI/al-Qaeda ideology developed by JI's core leaders in the decade prior to Bali 2002 had driven the establishment of the regional terrorist network. Their vision brought like-minded individuals together from all over Southeast Asia and inspired them to dedicate their lives to JI's goals. Sungkar, Ba'asyir and their inner-circle's ideology justified their intent to wage *jihad*, and it was manifested in sectarian violence, Christmas Eve bombings in 2000, thwarted attacks in 2001, and the triple suicide bombings in Bali 2002.<sup>241</sup>

Ideology was a key aspect of JI's evolution. It did not change per se, but JI's ideology helped drive the movement to adapt collectively. Throughout this period, JI's ideology kept the organization alive, together, relevant and moving forward. JI members "remained firmly rooted in their founding precepts and extremist political vision," resulting in noteworthy cohesion.<sup>242</sup> It had inspired and bonded the group initially and

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<sup>239</sup> Jones, "The Changing Nature of Jemaah Islamiyah," 170; and Fealy and Borgu, "Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia," 34.

<sup>240</sup> Jones, "The Changing Nature of Jemaah Islamiyah," 170.

<sup>241</sup> Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 88-89.

<sup>242</sup> Rohan Gunaratna, "The Ideology of Al-Jama'ah Al-Islamiya," in Hillel Fradkin, Husain Haqqani, and Eric Brown eds. *Current Trends in Islamist Ideology*, Washington D.C.: Hudson Institute (2005), 68.

JI's leaders used it to keep the group united and focused. It served as the primary recruiting mechanism to regenerate the diminished network. JI's ideology inspired existing members and motivated new ones to work towards the organization's goals, and finally, JI's *jihadi* aspirations permitted its membership to forge alliances with other like-minded *jihadists* in order to rebuild its capabilities, improve upon them and continue their struggle.<sup>243</sup> Describing the continuity JI's ideology provided helps to understand how JI evolved so successfully and why it remains a united threat.

JI's religiously justified goals sustained a deep sense of loyalty, obedience, determination, and cohesion throughout the group. It motivated and empowered its core to carry out any activity that supported the aims of the organization. JI's ideology encouraged the continuation of preemptive violence whenever the opportunity presented itself, for only through *jihad* could a "truly Islamic consciousness be brought to society."<sup>244</sup> JI's losses no doubt impacted the movement, but its ideology "carried strong religious conviction," thereby creating a faithful, obligated network who could continue to rely on one another.<sup>245</sup> JI members did not often deny other members' requests for help, and because of this JI militants like Top who relied on "teachers at JI schools and their students, to provide hiding places or logistical aid as needed," were able to sustain their campaign of violence throughout this period despite CT pressure.<sup>246</sup>

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<sup>243</sup> Abuza, *Political Islam and Violence in Indonesia*, 37; Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 90; and Cragin and Daly, *The Dynamic Terrorist Threat: An Assessment of Group Motivations and Capabilities in a Changing World*, 29. Cragin and Daly define ideology as "the consensus of grievances and objectives that a terrorist group is trying to address through violence." For more see Cragin and Daly, 29.

<sup>244</sup> Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 91; Conboy, *The Second Front: Inside Asia's Most Dangerous Terrorist Network*, 228; Fealy and Borgu, "Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia," 32; Gunaratna, "The Ideology of Al-Jama'ah Al-Islamiya," 68; ICG Asia Briefing 63, 4-5, 8; and Pavlova, "From a Counter-Society to a Counter-State Movement: Jemaah Islamiyah According to PUPJI," 796. JI operatives carried out high-profile attacks annually between 2003 and 2005, and again in 2009. JI also participated in sectarian violence in Sulawesi, Maluku, Sumatra and other areas.

<sup>245</sup> Fealy and Borgu, "Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia," 26.

<sup>246</sup> ICG Asia Briefing 63, 4; and ICG Asia Briefing 95, 1.

JI's diminished yet dedicated membership was not enough though. The PUPJI called for a strong, secure base of people "pious in their devotions" and willing to carry out the requirements of the organization.<sup>247</sup> JI leaders had to reconstitute a sizable, committed, membership/support base and leadership cadre. To regenerate the network, JI members preached JI's ideology "at every opportunity."<sup>248</sup> Analyses of JI's membership strength do not indicate a return to their pre-crackdown numbers. Conservative estimates put JI's numbers at about 900 devoted members as of 2009, compared to well over a thousand operatives not to mention hundreds more sympathizers during its peak prior to Bali 2002. However, JI's ideology brought new Muslims into the JI fold, bolstering the damaged movement's numbers and breathing life back into JI's long-term strategy.<sup>249</sup>

In the years since Bali 2002, JI's leaders have continued to preach their ideology in their *pesantrens* and they established new schools that advocated *Shari'a* law and obligation to *jihad*. Where there was a predisposition to strict Islam, JI members targeted young, pious Muslims and brought them into JI's support structure. JI's leaders aimed to expand existing and create new, pure Islamic communities. As envisioned, these *jemaah* would later serve as "beachheads" in their struggle and strengthen into the resistance needed to establish the caliphate.<sup>250</sup> During this period, thousands of students attended JI *pesantrens*, and at least 60 to 100 other *pesantrens* were suspected of being exposed to JI's ideology. This pool of students likely served as an excellent group of recruits to be brought into JI's web.<sup>251</sup> Moreover, JI's ideology was spread to family, kinship networks,

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<sup>247</sup> Fealy and Borgu, "Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia," 27.

<sup>248</sup> Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 90-91; and Fealy and Borgu, "Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia," 27.

<sup>249</sup> Whitmire, "Jemaah Islamiyah Remains Active and Deadly," 183-185.

<sup>250</sup> Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 102-103; and Fealy and Borgu, "Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia," 32.

<sup>251</sup> Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 100-101; Fealy and Borgu, "Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia," 34; and Jones, "Briefing for the New President: The Terrorist Threat in Indonesia and Southeast Asia," 70.

and through marriage, which further replenished ranks and reinforced support for the movement. JI's family/kinship network bound teacher, student and blood together, which facilitated the evolution that JI's leaders desired and protected their efforts.<sup>252</sup>

Ji's Islamic scholars preached *jihad* across the Indonesian archipelago. They blamed the West and Indonesia's government for the decay and injustices of Islamic society. The narrative appealed to a variety of radical Islam sympathizers and flourished in areas where Muslims had existing grievances against the "Islamophobic" Indonesian state.<sup>253</sup> DI advocates and proponents of *jihad* responded by contributing personnel and resources to the damaged JI. Simply put, JI's ideology helped replenish ranks and drum up support for the cause by embracing freedom in society.<sup>254</sup>

Finally, JI's ideology allowed its leaders to strengthen existing alliances and foster new ties with like-minded organizations. Relying on shared ideologies, JI members worked with other Islamist movements to rebuild and improve capabilities and continue their *jihad*. The PUPJI stated alliances could be formed as long they supported JI's principles and goals. As such, JI members formed networks that helped the organization to recruit, acquire resources, train, plan, and carry out operations. In short, JI's ideology provided "incentives and opportunities to leverage other militant Islamic groups...to enhance its own knowledge and capabilities for undertaking violent acts."<sup>255</sup> It is fair to say that JI's ideology was responsible for the rehabilitation of the "intricate web of

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<sup>252</sup> Abuza, *Political Islam and Violence in Indonesia*, 46; Conboy, *The Second Front: Inside Asia's Most Dangerous Terrorist Network*, 232; ICG Asia Briefing 63, 8; and ICG Asia Report 63, 12-13, 26.

<sup>253</sup> Abuza, "Indonesian Counter-Terrorism: The Great Leap Forward," 7; Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment* 93, 96-97, 100; Fealy and Borgu, "Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia," 26; and Jones, "The Changing Nature of Jemaah Islamiyah," 175.

<sup>254</sup> Abuza, *Political Islam and Violence in Indonesia*, 37-38, 53-54; Fealy and Borgu, "Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia," 26, 57; "Indonesia: Jemaah Islamiyah's Publishing Industry," *ICG Asia Report* 147, (February 2008), 1-3; and Jones, "Briefing for the New President: The Terrorist Threat in Indonesia and Southeast Asia," 70, 75. Islamic schools, universities, mosques, and even the prison system were all exposed to JI's ideology. Prisons in particular have been proving grounds for the proliferation of *jihadi* ideology. Jones notes there has been "uncontrolled radical discussion and study groups," and may have been a source for some JI recruitment and indoctrination.

<sup>255</sup> Fealy and Borgu, "Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia," 27-29; ICG Asia Report 63, 12-13; Jackson et al., *Aptitude for Destruction*, vol. 2, 59-60, 64, 77; and Whitmire, "Jemaah Islamiyah Remains Active and Deadly," 189.

kinship, friendship, school, military training, and business ties” that is JI.<sup>256</sup> JI’s ideology drove its core to survive, recuperate, and carry out violence in spite of an increasingly constrained CT environment and wary public.<sup>257</sup>

Indeed, JI’s ideology underpinned JI’s evolution. Its message compelled and committed its members to the cause. It not only permitted JI to survive, but it drove JI’s members to adapt into a more effective organization and remain an equally, if not increasingly, dangerous threat. JI’s ideology continued to “frame its organizational structure, leadership and membership motivation, recruitment and support, and strategy and tactics.”<sup>258</sup> JI’s ideology provided continuity, and understanding that helps describe an accurate interpretation of how JI evolved.

## **2. Leadership Divided?**

Much of accurately determining how JI evolved surfaces through analysis of JI’s leadership during this period. Faithful to the struggle but reeling from the effects of regional CT efforts, JI’s leaders recognized the organization needed to adapt. Before Bali 2002, there were signs that JI’s leaders wanted change. Once the Bali cell carried out JI’s first attack against a Western target, the repercussions that followed accelerated an evolution that had already begun. JI’s leaders had been debating viewpoints that might improve JI’s survivability and efforts to advance towards its Islamic state goal. Increasing external and internal pressures drove this debate into marked changes. This section examines JI’s leaders and their role in JI’s evolution. This section describes the debate between JI’s leaders. It goes on to discuss JI’s leaders and their actions up to the Jakarta bombings in 2009. JI’s leaders evolved the group in ways analysts still cannot conclusively determine, but by breaking down how JI’s leaders adapted, the author begins offering new insights regarding JI’s evolution and the nature of the JI threat.

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<sup>256</sup> Jones, “Briefing for the New President: The Terrorist Threat in Indonesia and Southeast Asia,” 71.

<sup>257</sup> Abuza, *Political Islam and Violence in Indonesia*, 39; Abuza, “The State of Jemaah Islamiyah: Terrorism and Insurgency in Southeast Asia Five Years After Bali,” 4-6; Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 100-101; and ICG Asia Briefing 63, 5, 8.

<sup>258</sup> Gunaratna, “The Ideology of Al-Jama’ah Al-Islamiya,” 68; and ICG Asia Briefing 63, 8.

JI's leadership evolution is complicated. It began as an internal debate between the core leaders as early as 1999.<sup>259</sup> Ba'asyir and many of *Mantiqi II*'s leaders agreed that JI was responsible for the establishment and defense of Islamic communities against the injustices of the Indonesian government until their "counter-society" was ready to become a "counter-state" movement.<sup>260</sup> However, the CT crackdown following JI's Singapore debacle in 2001 compelled JI's leaders to rethink their tactics. Ba'asyir and many *Mantiqi II* leaders were worried a major anti-Western attack in Indonesia might be counterproductive to JI's grand strategy.<sup>261</sup> Yet, Hambali and *Mantiqi I* leaders following his lead were not phased by JI's losses abroad. The debate over the efficacy of suicide bombings against Western targets went unresolved. JI elements, under Hambali's direction, carried out the Bali bombings as planned. Government CT crackdown and outrage from the Muslim public followed, intensifying this debate and forcing JI's leaders to make shifts in the organization.<sup>262</sup>

The regional crackdown targeted JI's leadership and its rank and file. Hundreds of JI members and much of the group's leaders were detained or were on the run. Ba'asyir left his position as JI's *amir* in 2000 to develop the MMI, but he was arrested in 2002 due to his purported involvement in JI's attack operations. Abu Rusdan was elevated to *amir* and occupied the position until his arrest in 2003. Next, Abu Dujana served as *amir* until

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<sup>259</sup> Jones, "The Changing Nature of Jemaah Islamiyah," 169, 174; and Pavlova, "From a Counter-Society to a Counter-State Movement: Jemaah Islamiyah According to PUPJI," 779. As previously discussed, *Mantiqi I* and *Mantiqi II* leaders argued the cost/benefit of JI's transition from sectarian violence to "al-Qaeda-style" terrorist attacks.

<sup>260</sup> Fealy and Borgu, "Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia," 34; and Pavlova, "From a Counter-Society to a Counter-State Movement: Jemaah Islamiyah According to PUPJI," 781. As outlined in the PUPJI, religious outreach, education, proselytization, indoctrination, military preparation, and preemptive use of violence were how JI would fight. The ideology was not in question, nor was the debate over the use of violence. JI's core leadership was not opposed to violence and certainly had no beef over the communal conflicts of the late 90s. The dispute was over the strategic benefit of major attacks.

<sup>261</sup> ICG Asia Report 74, 1-4; and Jones, "Briefing for the New President: The Terrorist Threat in Indonesia and Southeast Asia," 70. *Mantiqi II* leaders were concerned that Indonesia and Southeast Asia were not ready for *jihad* on a grand scale and that major attacks would do more harm than good. *Mantiqi I* was ready and willing to wage *jihad* against the West and the Indonesian government.

<sup>262</sup> Ba'asyir became increasingly involved in political Islam, but was arrested following Bali 2002. With Ba'asyir out of the picture, JI was without a founder to pass judgment. For more see Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 91; ICG Asia Report 74, 1-4; Jackson et al., *Aptitude for Destruction*, vol. 2, 62; Jones, "The Changing Nature of Jemaah Islamiyah," 169, 174, 176-177; and Pavlova, "From a Counter-Society to a Counter-State Movement: Jemaah Islamiyah According to PUPJI," 779, 781.

he was caught in 2007. Hambali, who was JI's operational chief, and the vanguard of JI's suicide bombing campaign, was captured in Thailand in 2003. In short, JI's leaders and their commands were under threat throughout this period. JI's losses were impacting the group's continued ability to function. If JI was to survive the crackdown and remain a viable organization, JI's leaders would have to make changes.<sup>263</sup>

Following Bali 2002, JI's leaders embraced new roles—in line with JI's ideology—for themselves and their commands. *Mantiqi* II leaders or mainstream JI became known as “traditionalists.”<sup>264</sup> They continued to believe in JI's *jihad* but claimed Bali 2002 was premature and counterproductive. Traditionalists felt JI lacked the capacity to carry out counter-state *jihad*. Violence was still condoned, but traditionalists did not want mainstream JI associated with anti-Western suicide bombings. Abu Rusdan was quoted as saying “the Bali attacks have hurt the group by bringing its activities and operations under the now-constant scrutiny of the police and security authorities.”<sup>265</sup> To alleviate this pressure, traditionalist leaders ostensibly condemned suicide bombings and focused on recruitment, regeneration of resources and capabilities, and the spread of JI's ideology, and they fought where Muslims were directly under attack.<sup>266</sup> This response

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<sup>263</sup> Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 91, 93; and Fealy and Borgu, “Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia,” 34. CT raids led to seizures of JI equipment, weapons and disruption of operations. Ba'asyir was released from prison in 2006. He worked with the MMI until 2008, then left to start up his own religious group. He has never acknowledged the existence of JI or admitted participation in any terrorist group. ICG Asia Report 74, 1-4; Jackson et al., *Aptitude for Destruction*, vol. 2, 62; and Jones, “The Changing Nature of Jemaah Islamiyah,” 174-177.

<sup>264</sup> Fealy and Borgu, “Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia,” 24-26; ICG Asia Report 63, 12; ICG Asia Briefing 63, 5-14; and Jones, “Briefing for the New President: The Terrorist Threat in Indonesia and Southeast Asia,” 70. Traditionalists claimed Bali 2002 taxed the network unnecessarily, and subsequent suicide bombings would compromise its remaining numbers and stretch the organization beyond its resource capacity.

<sup>265</sup> Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 99; ICG Asia Report 189, 14; and Ismail and Ungerer, “Jemaah Islamiyah: A Renewed Struggle,” 2.

<sup>266</sup> Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 91; Conboy, *The Second Front: Inside Asia's Most Dangerous Terrorist Network*, 216. Fealy and Borgu, “Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia,” 28-34; ICG Asia Briefing 63, 4; and Jones, “Briefing for the New President: The Terrorist Threat in Indonesia and Southeast Asia,” 70. JI traditionalist leaders openly proclaimed *jihad* should be focused on fighting for Muslims under attack in places like Ambon and Poso, not executing attacks where Muslims could be collateral damage. JI traditionalist leaders endorsed the sectarian flare up in the mid 2000s.

was logical and made strategic sense. Reflecting on the recent damage to their network, traditionalist leaders shifted to protecting and rebuilding the network. At the same time, new “pro-violence” leaders emerged as well.

Hambali’s followers embraced new roles in accordance with JI’s ideology. In 2003, Noordin Top and Dr. Azahari became the leaders of JI’s pro-violence movement. Top led the movement, and Azahari—JI’s top bomb-making expert—was Top’s right-hand man. They felt the Bali bombings and additional attacks against Western interests were religiously justified and beneficial to JI’s goals. These two led a division of *jihadists* that participated in sectarian violence, and carried out suicide bombings in 2003, 2004, and 2005. Indonesian security forces killed Azahari in a raid in late 2005. The raid also seized almost three-dozen suicide vests, which set back Top’s operations considerably. Undeterred, Top regrouped. Despite periodic operational disruptions that led to reduced attack capabilities from 2006 to 2008, JI operatives led by Top carried out a double suicide bombing in Jakarta in 2009. A few months later, Top was killed in a shootout with Indonesian CT. Although both groups shared the same ideology, experts concluded traditionalist and pro-violence leaders had separated and could no longer be viewed as one movement. Top’s bombings were symbolic, but traditionalists purportedly opposed them.<sup>267</sup> Most analysts believed JI’s leadership schism left the organization as two competing factions.

Interpretations of how JI’s leaders split vary. The first interpretation claims internal debate became “less internal cohesion,” then a “deepening rift,” and eventually “fracturing and splintering” into two competing factions divided over tactics.<sup>268</sup> JI traditionalist leaders did not endorse Bali 2002 and did not condone subsequent

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<sup>267</sup> Many *Mantiqi I* members felt Hambali, the overall operational commander of JI and *Mantiqi I* commander, was the individual who truly “put together and administered JI.” They felt his direction was both ideologically and religiously justified. Suicide bombings may have been seen as symbolic, international attention getters and lucrative fundraisers. For more see Abuza, *Political Islam and Violence in Indonesia*, 37-39; Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 99; Conboy, 196-197, 215; Fealy and Borgu, “Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia,” 34; ICG Asia Report 189, 14; and Jones, “Briefing for the New President: The Terrorist Threat in Indonesia and Southeast Asia,” 71.

<sup>268</sup> Fealy and Borgu, “Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia,” 34; Jones, “Briefing for the New President: The Terrorist Threat in Indonesia and Southeast Asia,” 70; and Jones, “The Changing Nature of Jemaah Islamiyah,” 169.

bombings. Pro-violence militants and traditionalists went their separate ways. Traditionalist leaders' statements like that of Abu Rusdan show this line of thinking deserves credit. The lull in attacks after 2005 also supports claims that Top was no longer supported by mainstream JI. At the same time, the bombs recovered when Azahari was killed in 2005, along with major raids in 2007 and 2008, indicate Top was still getting help from mainstream JI. Specifically, Top-led bombings in 2009 had links to JI traditionalists. He tapped into traditionalist-affiliated schools for foot soldiers and received both logistical support and safe haven from traditionalist members throughout the attack planning phases. On the one hand, evidence shows that since 2003-2004, traditionalist leaders have focused their efforts on religious outreach, preaching JI's ideology, consolidating and regenerating the organization, and publically distancing themselves from direct ties to terrorism. JI traditionalist leaders clearly shifted their priorities towards JI's long-term strategic goals.<sup>269</sup> On the other hand, evidence from investigations of JI's bombings shows how divided traditionalist and pro-violence elements actually were, and how they remained far from clear.

Alternative interpretations of how JI has evolved describe JI's leadership schism as less profound. Rather, JI's evolution should be described as its leaders' creative efforts to adapt and organizational learning by its members in response to existing security efforts. The alternative admits JI leaders' debate tactics and methodology, but argues a sophisticated metamorphosis has taken place. Experts have noted loyalty to JI's cause exceeds tactical and methodological differences of opinion.<sup>270</sup> Alternatives claim JI members remain largely united.

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<sup>269</sup> Abuza, *Political Islam and Violence in Indonesia*, 51-54; Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 99; Jones, "Briefing for the New President: The Terrorist Threat in Indonesia and Southeast Asia," 70, 71; ICG Asia Briefing 63, 8; and ICG Asia Briefing, 3. In 2007 and 2008, raids on stash sites netted large caches of weapons and explosives that were in the final stages of preparation for attacks on soft targets. See Zachary Abuza, "Fall of the Teflon Terrorist," *Australia / Israel and Jewish Affairs Council* (August 2010), 3.

<sup>270</sup> ICG Asia Briefing 63, 4.

There are many reasons to believe JI's leadership is still cohesive. Traditionalist and pro-violence leaders are bound to one another through JI's ideology. Neither faction leaders' actions nor rhetoric indicates denouncement of JI membership or its ideology.<sup>271</sup> Many traditionalist and pro-violence leaders shared Ngruki and the *mujahidin* experience, which created nearly unbreakable bonds. Evidence shows loyalty amongst JI leaders is stronger than their public rhetoric might suggest. A good example of this loyalty can be observed in the relationship between Noordin Top and the man some experts believe was JI's *amir* from 2003 to 2007, namely Abu Dujana. The two were both part of JI's inner circle and shared similar views on *jihād*. Dujana was a *Mantiqi* II leader but was also a close associate of Hambali. Dujana was among the Bali 2002 planners and certainly aware of the 2003 bombing because he met with Top just prior to the attack. He also "gave highest priority to protecting JI members...he tried to mobilize the JI network to protect the perpetrators."<sup>272</sup> Moreover, as a member of the Central Command, he was unquestionably mainstream JI.<sup>273</sup> No one can determine how frequently Dujana and Top met or what they discussed, but evidence shows JI's leadership was coordinated and the administrative/operations "fracture" helped the organization survive.<sup>274</sup> JI's leaders understood the organization was under fire, but the Indonesian government was only going after direct ties to terrorism. JI's leaders led their commands on separate trajectories but coordinated as necessary. Up through JI's 2009 bombing, "at least 15 first generation leaders" had not been captured or killed.<sup>275</sup> The distinct paths traditionalist and pro-violence leaders have taken make understanding JI's evolution difficult because

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<sup>271</sup> ICG Asia Briefing 114, Executive Summary.

<sup>272</sup> ICG Asia Briefing 114, 5.

<sup>273</sup> Zachary Abuza, "Abu Dujana: Jemaah Islamiyah's New al-Qaeda Linked Leader," *Terrorism Focus* 3, 13 (2006).

<sup>274</sup> Conboy, *The Second Front: Inside Asia's Most Dangerous Terrorist Network*, 197; and ICG Asia Report 63, 1. ICG refutes claims Abu Dujana became JI's *amir*. See ICG Asia Briefing 63, 2; and Jones, "Briefing for the New President: The Terrorist Threat in Indonesia and Southeast Asia," 71.

<sup>275</sup> Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 95.

traditionalists have become less linked directly to terrorism. Without concrete links to terrorism, the government has been reluctant to apply pressure, which appears to be exactly what JI leaders have hoped for.<sup>276</sup>

Analysis of Ba'asyir offers additional perspective regarding why one should question the extent of JI's leadership rift. Considered by most to be JI's spiritual leader, Ba'asyir is most often associated with traditionalists, but he has defended the actions of the pro-violence movement. This is the view of JI's founder and the view of Abu Dujana, JI's purported *amir* from 2003 until his arrest in 2007. JI's leadership schism distances traditionalists from direct ties to terrorism, which in effect protects mainstream efforts. Since his release in 2006, Ba'asyir has returned to Islamic politics, condemnation of the Indonesian government and the West, and fiery, *jihadi* sermons. He recently established his own overt Islamist organization known as Jama'ah Anshorut Tauhid (JAT). Several JI traditionalists and pro-violence members are reportedly members of JAT and have met under the same roof.<sup>277</sup>

In any case, one is left with two competing interpretations of how JI's leadership evolved. The first interpretation suggests JI's leaders splintered into two factions, "including one which opposes the current bombing campaign."<sup>278</sup> The factions both advocate *jihad* to establish an Islamic state. Traditionalists view JI's *jihad* in the long-term and do not endorse suicide bombings.<sup>279</sup> They believe "the personnel and strength to carry out *jihad* are both lacking," and suicide bombings exacerbate the situation.<sup>280</sup> The second faction coined "radicals," "pro-bombers," or what the author refers to as pro-violence, wage *jihad* by mounting terrorist attacks on U.S. and Indonesian interests

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<sup>276</sup> Abuza, *Political Islam and Violence in Indonesia*, 62-65; and Singh, *The Talibanization of Southeast Asia*, 110-111.

<sup>277</sup> Whitmire, "Jemaah Islamiyah Remains Active and Deadly," 186-187.

<sup>278</sup> Abuza, *Political Islam and Violence in Indonesia*, 37-39.

<sup>279</sup> Abuza, *Political Islam and Violence in Indonesia*, 37-39; ICG Asia Report 189, 14; and ICG Asia Report 74, 1-4. Traditionalists believe JI should be preparing Indonesia and Southeast Asia for *jihad* through religious outreach and military preparation.

<sup>280</sup> ICG Asia Report 189, 14. Traditionalists believe they should be reaching out to Muslims and bringing them into "a more conservative religious order" and "*jihad* will be waged when the time is right." See Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 91.

now.<sup>281</sup> The alternative does not dismiss internal friction, but argues the splintering is overstated. It suggests JI remains cohesive and its leaders have simply learned and adapted to their environment in order to survive and advance the goals of the movement.<sup>282</sup> Based on evidence provided thus far, the first interpretation rightly describes JI's leaders as separating the organization, but the second interpretation appears more accurate. Available evidence presented already shows traditionalist members and leaders continued to coordinate and support pro-violence actors at the highest and lowest levels. JI's leaders were running separate divisions, but the organization itself was not divided.

In summary, JI's leaders evolved the organization into traditionalist (administrative) and pro-violence (operations) sections in response to regional CT efforts. Their efforts have allowed JI's leaders to adapt the organization into an increasingly difficult threat to counter. This division of responsibility allows traditionalists to sustain and improve upon JI's capabilities and support pro-violence actors without sacrificing strategic efforts or exposing traditionalists to CT measures.<sup>283</sup> Next, the author examines changes to JI's organizational structure because it further helps in understanding the conventional wisdom and how alternatives might better describe JI's evolution.

### **3. Consolidating the Organizational Structure**

During this period, JI's organizational structure also evolved. This section describes how JI's organizational structure changed. It shows that mainstream JI elements across Southeast Asia merged into an "Indonesia-centric" organization and pro-violence elements seemed to break off and for the most part operated autonomously. These adjustments enabled each group to survive independently, function well around CT

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<sup>281</sup> ICG Asia Report 189, 14; and Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 91. Author's note: he argues mass-casualty terrorist attacks are a critical function essential to a terrorist group's success. In JI's case, they are theatrics to reach the international audience, recruit like-minded individuals and elicit external financial support, particularly Middle Eastern sympathizers.

<sup>282</sup> Abuza, *Political Islam and Violence in Indonesia*, 40.

<sup>283</sup> Abuza, *Political Islam and Violence in Indonesia*, 46-49; ICG Asia Briefing 63, 1,4; Jackson et al., *Aptitude for Destruction*, vol. 2, 61; and Whitmire, "Jemaah Islamiyah Remains Active and Deadly," 181.

efforts, and yet remain connected and mutually supportive when needed.<sup>284</sup> This section first briefly reviews the main features of JI's organizational structure. Then, it highlights the key changes that allowed JI's factions to separately and collectively advance towards the broader JI objectives. This section suggests that mainstream JI's consolidation and condemnation of JI's pro-violence elements gave traditionalists the resources to rebuild the organization and it broke their visible ties with JI's terrorist nodes. As such, traditionalists developed an ability to function openly because there were no longer noticeable ties to terrorism.<sup>285</sup> Pro-violence elements fell outside the JI construct but retained linkages to mainstream JI, thus allowing for some success for both units.

Once SEA authorities cracked down on JI members linked to terrorist attacks, the organization became unraveled. JI's *mantiqi* structure was weakened and its command authority broken down. JI's finances were exhausted, and their methods of communication were exposed and under heavy surveillance. The ability for JI elements to generate resources in a timely manner was severely degraded. The group was numerically diminished. In short, JI's ability to function effectively was reduced. However, JI members were resilient and committed to the cause.<sup>286</sup> In response, JI's leaders evolved their organizational structure.

Prior to the crackdown that began in Singapore, Malaysia, and the Philippines in 2001 and gradually in Indonesia following Bali 2002, JI's structure was formal, hierarchical and well administered. At the top of the pyramid was the *amir*. Beneath him sat four councils: governing, religious advisory, religious law, and religious discipline. The governing council included the Central Command, which controlled the *mantiqis*. Beneath it sat the four transnational *mantiqis* and their respective units. Some evidence also indicates the existence of a military wing and special operations units that ran

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<sup>284</sup> Abuza, "The State of Jemaah Islamiyah: Terrorism and Insurgency in Southeast Asia Five Years After Bali," 2.

<sup>285</sup> Singh, *The Talibanization of Southeast Asia*, 110-111.

<sup>286</sup> As noted previously, "over 400 individuals associated with JI were apprehended... Indonesia alone has prosecuted over 250 militants, including many of its top leaders and operatives." As discussed in the previous chapter, *Mantiqis* I and III were largely dismantled. *Mantiqi* IV never really materialized. Estimates of numbers at its peak were only around 20. Abuza, "The State of Jemaah Islamiyah: Terrorism and Insurgency in Southeast Asia Five Years After Bali," 2; Fealy and Borgu, "Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia," 26; and Whitmire, "Jemaah Islamiyah Remains Active and Deadly," 194.

parallel with the *mantiqis*. JI's organizational structure functioned well as evidenced in the success of the 2000 Christmas Eve bombings and Bali bombings in 2002. However, JI members met hard times, which kept them from continuing to function smoothly. Despite diminished near-term offensive capacity, key decision makers still met and communicated. They determined JI would evolve its tattered organizational structure.<sup>287</sup>

Mainstream JI leaders consolidated the network. They merged the remaining pieces of JI's transnational *mantiqi* structure, reconfigured the structure to be more horizontal, and became "Indonesia-centric."<sup>288</sup> This change allowed JI's strategic leadership to continue to meet and communicate frequently. At the tactical level, getting closer mitigated risks associated with long-range communications, allowing JI elements to coordinate around the new CT environment.<sup>289</sup>

Despite consistent leadership losses, JI's hierarchical structure remained in place.<sup>290</sup> This is because a strong pool of individuals with *jihad* experience and expertise, religious credentials, and personal connections have continued to step up, enabling JI strategic command and control. At the same time, several of JI's most accomplished leaders, although still at large, fled Indonesia and regrouped in areas that are more permissive. How they factor into JI's consolidated structure cannot be conclusively determined.<sup>291</sup> JI's *amir* still holds the top-level position. The aforementioned councils advise the *amir*, and the Central Command communicates strategic direction and functional expertise down to the operational and tactical level.

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<sup>287</sup> Conboy, *The Second Front: Inside Asia's Most Dangerous Terrorist Group*, 226; and Fealy and Borgu, "Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia," 26. The author cannot find analysis that ties JI's special operations/military wing to Top's pro-violence division, and reports that suggest Top split certainly do not support him being part of the JI construct. That being said, the operations envisioned for JI's special forces wing seem to parallel Top's actions.

<sup>288</sup> Abuza, "The State of Jemaah Islamiyah: Terrorism and Insurgency in Southeast Asia Five Years After Bali," 2; Conboy, *The Second Front: Inside Asia's Most Dangerous Terrorist Group*, 226; and Fealy and Borgu, "Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia," 34.

<sup>289</sup> Fealy and Borgu, "Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia," 26.

<sup>290</sup> This is despite the fact that the *amirship* has changed multiple times, at times been vacant, and JI senior leaders have frequently been detained creating periodic leadership gaps.

<sup>291</sup> Abuza, "The State of Jemaah Islamiyah: Terrorism and Insurgency in Southeast Asia Five Years After Bali," 2; ICG Asia Briefing 63, 4; and Jackson et al., *Aptitude for Destruction*, vol. 2, 61.

It is not clear when these changes began taking shape, but evidence seized in 2007 shows that at the operational and tactical level, JI had morphed into a “flatter and more segmented” organization “comprised of many autonomous and compartmentalized cells.”<sup>292</sup> The former regional *mantiqi* structure was confined to Indonesia and reflected the merger between *Mantiqi* II and what was left of *Mantiqi* III. Beneath the Central Command were four functions: religious training, education, logistics, and military operations. *Mantiqis* carry out activities that support these functions. *Mantiqi* I was decimated but not completely destroyed. Top and Azahari took control of its remaining members. They did not reconstitute the *Mantiqi* I network in Singapore/Malaysia nor do experts suggest it became part of the consolidated structure. Experts believe JI elements still populate Singapore/Malaysia and may report to JI traditionalists, but their numbers are too small to constitute a separate *mantiqi*. Of note, Top and Azahari did relocate to Indonesia but ostensibly did not fold in with the other *mantiqis*. *Mantiqi* I had always operated autonomously and continued to do so, with some evidence indicating it was by design.<sup>293</sup>

Traditionalists have continued to adjust their organization. Based on the evidence seized in 2007, yet as early as 2004, JI consisted of one *mantiqi* spread across Indonesia divided into several *wakalahs* or districts. *Wakalahs* have approximately eighty members. Each *wakalah* handles its own operations, security, religious affairs, fundraising, and communications. Approximately twenty men are assigned to each function with four to five cells per function. Cells are compartmentalized from one another, as are functions. This structure makes JI units extremely tough to penetrate and mitigates the potential of more than one cell being directly linked to terrorism.<sup>294</sup> What this conveys—importantly—is that traditionalists are committed to operational security.

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<sup>292</sup> Abuza, “The State of Jemaah Islamiyah: Terrorism and Insurgency in Southeast Asia Five Years After Bali,” 2; and Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 95.

<sup>293</sup> JI’s *mantiqis* covered Java West, East and Poso, and to a limited extent certain areas of the southern Philippines. Abuza, “The State of Jemaah Islamiyah: Terrorism and Insurgency in Southeast Asia Five Years After Bali,” 3; Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 95; Jones, “Briefing for the New President: The Terrorist Threat in Indonesia and Southeast Asia,” 70; and Whitmire, “Jemaah Islamiyah Remains Active and Deadly,” 193-194.

<sup>294</sup> Abuza, *Political Islam and Violence in Indonesia*, 40; ICG Asia Briefing 63, 2; and Whitmire, “Jemaah Islamiyah Remains Active and Deadly,” 193-196.

Mainstream JI's consolidation and the pro-violence division's splintering have allowed the organization to pursue near- and long-term strategies in keeping with JI's ideology. Traditionalists focus on the long term. They control and populate the *mantiqi* and carry out administrative functions vital to regeneration and preparation of the network for future *jihad* against the Indonesian state. They appear detached from terrorism and function outside the purview of security dragnets. Traditionalists generate resources and allocate them sensibly towards the strategic efforts of the group. In short, traditionalists are rebuilding JI's influence and membership. Their consolidated, compartmentalized nature is efficient. They minimize mass compromise and make it much harder to understand how JI functions collectively or what its true nature is. Discerning where ideological mobilization ends and where terrorism begins has become more difficult.<sup>295</sup>

No evidence shows that JI's pro-violence division is a separate *mantiqi*, but rather that it is a handful of unambiguously anti-Western terrorist cells that tap into the *mantiqi* as necessary. Investigations into the pro-violence division's bombings show its members formed alliances outside the JI construct, which support the Top-led splintering, but the splintering also appears to be a mechanism to protect mainstream JI from direct ties to violence. JI's pro-violence division did not lead but participated in communal violence in the mid-2000s and carried out the suicide bombings of this time period.<sup>296</sup> Top's division looks like JI's attack branch, but there is no evidence of whom he reported to following

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<sup>295</sup> Abuza, "The State of Jemaah Islamiyah: Terrorism and Insurgency in Southeast Asia Five Years After Bali," 1-3; Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 93. Conboy, *The Second Front: Inside Asia's Most Dangerous Terrorist Network*, 197, 228; Fealy and Borgu, "Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia," 34; ICG Asia Briefing 63, 5; Jackson et al., *Aptitude for Destruction*, vol. 2, 63, 77; Jones, "Briefing for the New President: The Terrorist Threat in Indonesia and Southeast Asia," 71; and Whitmire, "Jemaah Islamiyah Remains Active and Deadly," 193-196. Areas outside of Jakarta, particularly areas of past sectarian conflict (where radical Islam is strong), are still paying dividends to JI. They are abundant with resources and personnel susceptible to recruitment, and freedom of movement is greater.

<sup>296</sup> Fealy and Borgu, "Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia," 28; and ICG Asia Report 63, 12-13, 26. Communal violence took place in the mid 2000s.

his 2003 meeting with Abu Dujana. On more than one occasion though, pro-violence elements ostensibly operating outside JI's structure coordinated efforts with traditionalists.<sup>297</sup>

Jl's structure has evolved in ways analysts still grapple with today. Its consolidated and compartmentalized nature suggests a more complex evolution than splintering adequately describes. This section showed the changes to JI's organizational structure is more than just a fracturing of the network. JI leaders divided their responsibilities in order to create breathing room to regenerate the movement and protect their limited resources, and at the same time still coordinate attacks. Evidence shows traditionalists have vocally separated themselves from terrorism, but traditionalist support for pro-violence actors is equally apparent.<sup>298</sup> This relationship reflects mutual support and is protective in nature.

An accurate description of the consolidated network reflects two divisions traveling separate paths that both work towards the same goal. Conventional wisdom assumes traditionalists and pro-violence elements compete from the same pool of resources, not use them in concert. Admittedly, traditionalists distanced themselves from being affiliated with JI pro-violence division's bombing attacks, but the aforementioned sharing of personnel, logistic coordination, and providing of safe havens between

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<sup>297</sup> In 2005, "Top announced the formation of a new group, Tandzim Qoedatal Jihad (TQJ)." Whether or not this was a formal splintering of Top's crew from JI or whether it might be JI's militant/special operations wing always believed to be outside the formal structure remains heavily debated. This too could be part of a conscious decision by JI leadership to confuse security authorities and analysts. Abuza specifically ties TQJ to JI traditionalists. For more see Abuza, "The State of Jemaah Islamiyah: Terrorism and Insurgency in Southeast Asia Five Years After Bali," 2. For debate details, also see Conboy, *The Second Front: Inside Asia's Most Dangerous Terrorist Network*, 232; Jones, "Briefing for the New President: The Terrorist Threat in Indonesia and Southeast Asia," 71; Pavlova, "From a Counter-Society to a Counter-State Movement: Jemaah Islamiyah According to PUPJI," 795; and Whitmire, "Jemaah Islamiyah Remains Active and Deadly," 196.

<sup>298</sup> Abuza, *Political Islam and Violence in Indonesia*, 40, 45; Fealy and Borgu, "Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia," 34; Pavlova, "From a Counter-Society to a Counter-State Movement: Jemaah Islamiyah According to PUPJI," 796; and Whitmire, "Jemaah Islamiyah Remains Active and Deadly," 187-188. There is consensus among experts that JI has always been a secretive organization. Protecting the integrity of the organization requires extreme measures. The author believes experts underestimate JI's understanding of the CT environment and how they adapted to protect the integrity of the organization without having to abandon attack operations entirely. A select few leaders likely only know JI's true nature, many of which are likely the ones who keep getting killed.

traditionalists and pro-violence elements casts doubt on the conventional wisdom.<sup>299</sup> JI's divisions appear to be two halves of a whole. Now, the author turns to analysis of JI's operational and tactical evolution, which further suggests JI evolved collectively in order to adapt and adjust to the new CT environment.

#### **4. Operations and Tactics**

JI's traditionalist and pro-violence divisions effectively evolved their operations and tactics during this time period. This section identifies and describes how JI modified its operational and tactical repertoire and illustrates how these activities changed, which appears to have benefited JI's administrative and operational efforts and the organization's aims collectively. These shifts further demonstrate JI's intent to learn and adapt in response to the CT environment. JI's evolution permitted traditionalists to regenerate the organization, expand their activities safely, and support pro-violence terrorist cells surreptitiously as they maintained their campaign of symbolic suicide bombings. These efforts kept the movement moving forward, and allowed JI to remain Southeast Asia's largest and deadliest Islamist terrorist network.<sup>300</sup>

As should be understood by now, the CT crackdown throughout this period substantially impacted JI members. JI's leaders recognized they needed to adapt around the new environment in order to overcome new challenges. Accordingly, traditionalists

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<sup>299</sup> Abuza, "Making Sense of the Jakarta Bombings: The Shades of Grey;" Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 91, 95-96, 99; Ismail and Ungerer, "Jemaah Islamiyah: A Renewed Struggle," 2; and Pavlova, "From a Counter-Society to a Counter-State Movement: Jemaah Islamiyah According to PUPJI," 779.

<sup>300</sup> Abuza, *Political Islam and Violence in Indonesia*, 37; Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 91, 96; Jones, "The Changing Nature of Jemaah Islamiyah," 170; Peter Chalk and Carl Ungerer, "Neighbourhood Watch: The Evolving Terrorist Threat in Southeast Asia," *Australian Strategic Policy Institute* (2008), 15; Jackson et al., *Aptitude for Destruction*, vol. 1, iii; and Jones and Libicki, xiii.

and pro-violence divisions evolved their operations and tactics in an effort to restore their near- and long-term capabilities and maintain a diverse campaign of non-violent and lethal operations to Islamize Indonesia.<sup>301</sup>

*a. Traditionalist Operations and Tactics*

Traditionalist operations and how they evolved reflect mainstream JI's long-term focus and suggest one should not assume traditionalists have abandoned *jihad* or Top's division despite their overt condemning of Top's tactics. Since 2004, evidence shows traditionalist operations have been mostly non-violent in nature and focused on rebuilding, expanding, and preparing the movement to "transform Indonesia into an Islamic state."<sup>302</sup> Traditionalists have resiliently recruited and prepared new members for *jihad*. Moreover, traditionalists participated in communal conflict and provided support to pro-violence elements, indicating traditionalists remained advocates of violence at multiple levels.<sup>303</sup>

Traditionalists worked within political and socio-economic channels to rebuild their base of support. They have provided social services and charity work in areas struck by natural disaster and where there were existing grievances against the government. They have received donations in return, which are applied towards religious outreach and education—direct lines—into JI's recruitment pipeline. These efforts were

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<sup>301</sup> Abuza, *Political Islam and Violence in Indonesia*, 40; Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 91, 99; Fealy and Borgu, "Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia," 26, 34; and Jones, "Briefing for the New President: The Terrorist Threat in Indonesia and Southeast Asia," 70. By 2003, JI was low on funds and communications were compromised, which made coordination difficult. The crackdown on JI decreased their footprint numerically and geographically. Al-Qaeda and other external links whose funds largely established JI decreased in part due to international collaboration associated with the Global War on Terror.

<sup>302</sup> Abuza, *Political Islam and Violence in Indonesia*, 40; Abuza, "Indonesian Counter-Terrorism: The Great Leap Forward," 7; Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 93, 96-97, 100; and Jones, "The Changing Nature of Jemaah Islamiyah," 175.

<sup>303</sup> Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 102-103; Fealy and Borgu, "Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia," 27, 34; Jones, "Briefing for the New President: The Terrorist Threat in Indonesia and Southeast Asia," 70; and ICG Asia Report 63, 12. Traditionalists ran JI *pesantren* and preached *jihadi* ideology wherever and whenever the opportunity presented itself. JI leaders have sought out areas where radical Islam is strong, and they have indoctrinated and trained young Muslims in *jihad*. These are also areas where law enforcement and intelligence collection tend to be more limited.

cheap and effective ways to recruit and generate resources out in the open. These operations were also particularly beneficial because they have been difficult to investigate or break up due to their sensitive nature and ties to the greater Muslim community. They have no doubt been vital to the continued survival and long-term vision of mainstream JI's leadership.<sup>304</sup>

Traditionalists evolved their fund-generating schemes and ways to get the message out in other ways as well. Mainstream JI members sold Islamic medicine and garments, and evidence from 2008 shows they have become increasingly involved in Islamic publishing. Islamic publishing companies owned by JI members print and distribute *jihadi* propaganda inside Islamic publications. This venture serves two valuable functions. Sale of the literature profits the owners who reportedly donate the money to JI, and the *jihadi* propaganda helps JI's ideologues get their message out. This vicious cycle espouses hatred, provokes violence, generates resources and demonstrates one facet of the traditionalist's commitment to *jihad*. It is insightful to reflect on Ba'asyir's words as a connection is made that links JI's divisions: "I make many knives and I sell many knives, but I'm not responsible for what happens to them."<sup>305</sup> Traditionalists seem to be distancing themselves from actual violence and turning to new ways of mobilizing Muslims and regenerating JI's ranks. However, these ventures have clear links to pro-violence operations. Evidence shows "several of the suspects in the 2009

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<sup>304</sup> Abuza, *Political Islam and Violence in Indonesia*, 46, 58-64; Abuza, "Indonesian Counter-Terrorism: The Great Leap Forward," 7-8; Abuza, "The State of Jemaah Islamiyah: Terrorism and Insurgency in Southeast Asia Five Years After Bali," 4; Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 89, 100-101; Fealy and Borgu, "Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia," 24, 26, 28-29, 32, 57; ICG Asia Briefing 63, 5; ICG Report 63, 12-13, 26; Jackson et al., *Aptitude for Destruction*, vol. 2, 64, 67, 77, 79; and Whitmire, "Jemaah Islamiyah Remains Active and Deadly," 186-189. These activities include fundraising, social welfare, and humanitarian relief. The Indonesian government remains sensitive of its image with respect to issues tied to Islamist ideologies and the greater Muslim community.

<sup>305</sup> Jackson et al., *Aptitude for Destruction*, vol. 2, 62.

bombings...sold Islamic remedies,” and another was a JI-affiliated “owner of a *jihadi* publishing company.”<sup>306</sup> Perhaps, traditionalists embraced Ba’asyir’s way of thinking. Pro-violence operatives simply buy and use the knives traditionalists are making.<sup>307</sup>

Traditionalists energized communal violence in Maluku and Sulawesi in the mid-2000s as JI elements had in 1999, and they have tried to keep those conflicts burning because they strengthened JI’s support base and helped recruitment efforts in the past. During these endeavors, traditionalists linked up with like-minded organizations, restored some capacity and carried out violent acts by justifying them as “avenging Muslim deaths and to shock the government into addressing unresolved issues...but also to keep a local *jihad* going so as to aid recruitment.”<sup>308</sup> These efforts were cheaper, simpler, and less scrutinized by the Indonesian government and international community than suicide bombings. These activities masked by claims of “avenging Muslim deaths” really showed an intent to survive, grow back capabilities, expand the network, and carry out low-level acts of violent activities that are really designed to support short- and long-term *jihad* strategies.<sup>309</sup>

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<sup>306</sup> ICG Asia Briefing 95, 3, 12.

<sup>307</sup> For details on JI’s publishing and its links to Top and pro-violence elements see “Indonesia Jemaah Islamiyah’s Publishing Industry,” *ICG Asia Report* 147 (February 2008); Abuza, *Political Islam and Violence in Indonesia*, 60; Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 102-103; ICG Asia Briefing 63, 7; and Whitmire, “Jemaah Islamiyah Remains Active and Deadly,” 197.

<sup>308</sup> Abuza, *Political Islam and Violence in Indonesia*, 46, 58-60; Abuza, “Indonesian Counter-Terrorism: The Great Leap Forward,” 8; Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 89, 100-101; Fealy and Borgu, “Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia,” 28, 29, 32; Jackson et al., *Aptitude for Destruction*, vol. 2, 64, 77, 79; ICG Asia Briefing 63, 8; ICG Asia Report 63, 12-13, 26; Jones, “Jemaah Islamiyah and New Splinter Groups,” 14; and Whitmire, “Jemaah Islamiyah Remains Active and Deadly,” 186-189. JI elements worked with a number of Islamist organizations to exchange ideas and expand their networks. For a list of organizations JI coordinated with during this time period see Whitmire, 189.

<sup>309</sup> Fealy and Borgu, “Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia,” 57; and ICG Asia Report 63, 1. State response to communal conflict improved once authorities learned Poso, Sulawesi was considered a JI main effort. Also see Abuza, “The State of Jemaah Islamiyah: Terrorism and Insurgency in Southeast Asia Five Years After Bali,” 4; Abuza, “Indonesian Counter-Terrorism: The Great Leap Forward,” 7; ICG Asia Briefing 63, 3, 4; and Jackson et al., *Aptitude for Destruction*, vol. 2, 58. For details on the violence in 2004 and 2005 see “Weakening Indonesia Mujahidin Networks: Lessons for Maluku and Poso,” *ICG Asia Report* 103 (October 2005); “Indonesia: Violence Erupts Again in Ambon,” *ICG Asia Briefing* 32 (May 2005); and ICG Asia Report 74.

**b. Pro-violence Operations and Tactics**

JI's pro-violence division proved it too remained committed to *jihad*.<sup>310</sup> Largely operating autonomously, Top, Azahari, and their terrorist cells mounted a single, well-planned attack against Western targets each year between 2003 and 2005. The 2003 and 2004 attacks utilized car bombs with large amounts of explosives. In 2005, Top's operatives returned to Bali and they utilized three backpack bombers. Shortly after the 2005 bombings, Indonesian CT authorities caught up with Azahari, killed him and seized several suicide vests and other materiel in a raid. Discovery of this equipment revealed Top's intent to step up the bombing campaign, and the change in equipment confirmed the 2005 shift in tactics. The loss of materiel set JI's pro-violence division back considerably. Top and his crew disappeared. Indonesian authorities maintained pressure on JI's leadership and netted two senior leaders in 2007, one of which was Abu Dujana, and they executed a number of successful raids on suspected JI weapons and equipment caches. Seemingly, Top and his pro-violence division were put down.

The years of 2006 through 2008 were devoid of major bombings, which led observers into a false sense of security in regards to the JI threat. Traditionalists had vocally condemned the large-scale bombings between 2003 and 2005 and had become considerably nonviolent. They had ostensibly withdrawn support to Top by encouraging him to splinter off reportedly in 2004, and Indonesia's success in killing and detaining many of JI's top leaders coupled with the major seizures of pro-violence bombing equipment had badly damaged both of JI's divisions' capacity to function.<sup>311</sup> However, there is no compelling evidence to support leadership clashes over tactics continued between 2006 and 2008, indicating the leadership split described by some analysts is not an accurate interpretation of how JI evolved.

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<sup>310</sup> Abuza, *Political Islam and Violence in Indonesia*, 38; Conboy, *The Second Front: Inside Asia's Most Dangerous Terrorist Network*, 196-197, 228; and Jones, "Briefing for the New President: The Terrorist Threat in Indonesia and Southeast Asia," 70. They engaged in communal violence and they mounted annual suicide bombing attacks against Western targets to demonstrate their continued commitment to the movement and get the message out to the international audience.

<sup>311</sup> Abuza, "Indonesian Counter-Terrorism: The Great Leap Forward," 6-8; Chalk and Ungerer, "Neighbourhood Watch: The Evolving Terrorist Threat in Southeast Asia," 5; Fealy and Borgu, "Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia," 51; Jane's World Insurgency and Terrorism page on "Jemaah Islamiyah; and Jones, "The Changing Nature of Jemaah Islamiyah," 175.

Top and his division were down but not out, and his support networks within JI were more sophisticated than many had thought. He returned to the international terrorism stage when his operatives bombed two U.S. hotels in Jakarta in 2009. These bombings demonstrated JI's pro-violence division had been unable to carry out attacks between 2006 and 2008 because their capacity had been reduced. However, they had obviously recovered. Top's division's attacks, supported by traditionalist elements who provided logistical support and safe haven, suggest JI's fracturing might be overstated. At an unforeseen level, JI had evolved. This latest attack demanded analysts reexamine pro-violence links to traditionalists and reconsider JI as the most serious terrorist threat in Southeast Asia.<sup>312</sup>

Shortly following Hambali's arrest in 2003, Top and Azahari took charge of JI's pro-violence efforts and have consistently evolved their operations and tactics since. Like the traditionalists, Top's cells rekindled relationships with past allies and developed new ones so that they could carry out their goals.<sup>313</sup> Top and Azahari successfully mounted suicide car bombings in 2003 and 2004. Technologically, the bombs improved steadily, which indicated a desire for maximum casualties and greater reliability. However, the technique was repetitive and expensive, and the pre-mature detonation outside the Australian embassy in Jakarta in 2004 prompted Top and Azahari to sideline the technique. Moreover, participants in the 2003 and 2004 operations came from both within and outside JI traditionalist circles. Pro-violence operatives also sought and received logistical support and protection from traditionalists. This is peculiar

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<sup>312</sup> Abuza, *Political Islam and Violence in Indonesia*, 37; Aglionby, "Al-Qaeda Link Is Suspected in Jakarta Blasts;" Arnaz, "Terrorist Plotting Attack on President, Foreigners;" and Whitmire, "Jemaah Islamiyah Remains Active and Deadly," 179.

<sup>313</sup> Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 91, 95; Conboy, *The Second Front: Inside Asia's Most Dangerous Terrorist Network*, 196, 215, 234; and Fealy and Borgu, "Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia," 28. Hambali kept some lines of external financial support open, although they appeared to be insufficient to fund suicide bombings beyond 2003. It appears the 2003 bombing was funded by al-Qaeda. Top's division funded the bombings in 2004 and 2005 internally. Since 2003, most reports indicate Top operated autonomously, seeking support only when necessary. Top was reportedly shunned by mainstream JI as traditionalists voiced their opposition to Bali and any subsequent suicide bombings, although other evidence refutes those claims.

because ostensibly, these attacks were planned and executed without resources or blessing from JI's traditionalist leadership. As noted previously, evidence shows varying levels of support from within traditionalist circles.<sup>314</sup>

Top and Azahari shelved car bombings after the 2004 attack and employed backpack bombs in their triple suicide bombings in Bali in 2005. This tactical shift had many implications. At a minimum, it allowed the bombers to get into the intended position for maximum desired effect—a major improvement—over the 2003 and 2004 attacks. They were cheaper, easier to develop, manage and execute without suspicion, and even suggest an agreed upon technique between Top and traditionalists because bag bombs could better control collateral damage. The introduction of bag bombs also indicated a desire to step up the pace of attacks, but in late 2005, Indonesian authorities raided a pro-violence safe house, killing Azahari and seizing a sizable cache of suicide bombs and equipment. Top fled the scene, but recovered, adjusted and prepared for his next strike with help from traditionalists.<sup>315</sup>

At the time Top's cells went to ground, it appeared they could carry out one “major anti-Western bombing” attack per year.<sup>316</sup> The attacks were designed to be symbolic, inflict mass casualties, and an effective response to improved awareness and

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<sup>314</sup> Abuza, *Political Islam and Violence in Indonesia*, 40; Conboy, *The Second Front: Inside Asia's Most Dangerous Terrorist Network*, 232-234; Fealy and Borgu, “Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia,” 28, 54; Jackson et al., *Aptitude for Destruction*, vol. 2, 71; and Jones, “Briefing for the New President: The Terrorist Threat in Indonesia and Southeast Asia,” 71. Technologically, the bombs improved between 2002 and 2004. They were more reliable and detonated with greater destructive qualities. They did not kill or injure as many as the Bali bombings because car bombs carrying large amounts of homemade explosives became too conspicuous. They proved too difficult to get into the intended position in both 2003 and 2004.

<sup>315</sup> Abuza, “Indonesian Counter-Terrorism: The Great Leap Forward,” 6, 7; Abuza, *Political Islam and Violence in Indonesia*, 39, 51-52; Abuza, “The State of Jemaah Islamiyah: Terrorism and Insurgency in Southeast Asia Five Years After Bali,” 3; Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 93-95; Ismail and Ungerer, “Jemaah Islamiyah: A Renewed Struggle?,” 2-3; Jackson et al., *Aptitude for Destruction*, vol. 2, 79-80; Jones, “The Changing Nature of Jemaah Islamiyah,” 170; and Singh, *The Talibanization of Southeast Asia*, 68, 80-85. Much of the coordination between Top and Azahari was from different cities, indicating a sophisticated network.

<sup>316</sup> Abuza, “The State of Jemaah Islamiyah: Terrorism and Insurgency in Southeast Asia Five Years After Bali,” 1; Barton, *Indonesia's Struggle: Jemaah Islamiyah and the Soul of Islam*, 58; Fealy and Borgu, “Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia,” 60; Jones, “The Changing Nature of Jemaah Islamiyah,” 169; Jones, “Briefing for the New President: The Terrorist Threat in Indonesia and Southeast Asia,” 69-78; and Pavlova, “From a Counter-Society to a Counter-State Movement: Jemaah Islamiyah According to PUPJI,” 794.

security measures. Some evidence reflected the notion that Top and his division were a separate, loose collection of cells functioning without help or endorsement from mainstream JI, but still other reporting presented showed this description was not entirely accurate.

#### **D. CONCLUSION—SPLINTERED OR NOT?**

JI was indeed in divisions, but not necessarily fractured. Fracturing assumes its parts compete from the same pool of resources, not create capabilities that both divisions utilize collectively. Based on evidence that describes traditionalist and pro-violence activities during this period, it is not conclusive that JI's leaders were completely at odds. The author acknowledges that traditionalists openly condemned pro-violence bombings, but the evidence that dismisses traditionalist and pro-violence links is no more convincing than the evidence that shows coordination between the factions continued to take place.<sup>317</sup> One must consider that JI's factions might be resilient and cohesive, its evolution explained as leadership decisions manifested in organizational and tactical shifts to achieve its goals in response to the CT environment.

Consider some closing observations. First, JI's major terrorist attacks have invited chase. Pursuing Top's cells has been the main effort for Indonesian authorities since Bali 2002. Far less has been done to counter traditionalists because they do not pose an immediate threat or draw international pressure. This has given traditionalists the room to rebuild capabilities and improve prospects for the long term, because the separation keeps traditionalists off the radar of CT officials. Second, recall how traditionalist and pro-violence operations and tactics have continued to support one another. Traditionalists

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<sup>317</sup> Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 95; Conboy, *The Second Front: Inside Asia's Most Dangerous Terrorist Network*, 216; Fealy and Borgu, "Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia," 34; ICG Asia Report 63, 1; and Jones, "Briefing for the New President: The Terrorist Threat in Indonesia and Southeast Asia," 70. ICG Asia Briefing 63 discusses documents seized in a raid by Det 88 in 2007, which revealed JI's new organizational structure and long-term strategy for consolidation and regeneration of the network. Also discovered was the existence of small units designed to employ advanced military skills. Whose authority they fell under could not be determined. Significant amounts of explosives and weapons were also seized in the raid. Common explanations linking traditionalists and pro-violence operatives are loyalty, obligation and sanctuary in exchange for a cessation of attacks. Traditionalists do not want to help pro-violence elements, but they feel obligated to provide temporary protection.

develop capabilities that not only strengthen the movement but they also create support networks that pro-violence operatives tap into to carry out symbolic attacks. Symbolic attacks garner the attention of the international community and generate large amounts of cash from abroad because mainstream JI can only generate enough resources domestically to keep the movement afloat.<sup>318</sup> Third, reflect on the documented contact between pro-violence and traditionalist division leadership. If they were competing factions, traditionalist leaders would have given up pro-violence elements to authorities, but this has not happened.<sup>319</sup> Analysts dismiss their interaction as loyalty and obligation but not active support.<sup>320</sup> This is not completely accurate.<sup>321</sup> How much coordination takes place when Top and traditionalists have met cannot be determined with any certainty. There exists an unambiguous level of loyalty and coordination between traditionalists and pro-violence operatives.<sup>322</sup> Perhaps JI has not changed in the ways most experts think.<sup>323</sup>

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<sup>318</sup> Abuza, *Political Islam and Violence in Indonesia*, 64-65; Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 91, 99; Fealy and Borgu, "Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia," 34; ICG Asia Briefing 63, 4-5; and Pavlova, "From a Counter-Society to a Counter-State Movement: Jemaah Islamiyah According to PUPJI," 795-796. Suicide bombings perpetuate the conflict, require an immediate response, demonstrate the Indonesian government's inability to protect its interests, and may provoke a heavy-handed, Western-style response. Pavlova notes that much of JI's role as stated in the PUPJI is to create the conditions, society and resources necessary to carry out *jihad*.

<sup>319</sup> Abuza, "Making Sense of the Jakarta Bombings: The Shades of Grey;" Abuza, *Political Islam and Violence in Indonesia*, 48; Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 102-103; Conboy, *The Second Front: Inside Asia's Most Dangerous Terrorist Network*, 232-235; Fealy and Borgu, "Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia," 28, 54; ICG Asia Briefing 63, 10; ICG Asia Report 114, 1-11, 18; and Jones, "Briefing for the New President: The Terrorist Threat in Indonesia and Southeast Asia," 71.

<sup>320</sup> Jones, "Briefing for the New President: The Terrorist Threat in Indonesia and Southeast Asia," 71. She believes, "although individual members provided logistical help...most JI leaders considered Noordin and his men as a separate group, they have generally been willing to offer him protection."

<sup>321</sup> Fealy and Borgu, "Local Jihad: Radical Islam and Terrorism in Indonesia," 27; ICG Asia Briefing 63, 14; Jackson et al., *Aptitude for Destruction*, vol. 2, 76; and Jones, "Briefing for the New President: The Terrorist Threat in Indonesia and Southeast Asia," 72. Compartmentalization indicates JI members became aware authorities were monitoring them. Since Bali 2002, JI members have used more face-to-face communications, increased their usage of Internet websites and used complex text messaging heavily coded.

<sup>322</sup> Ismail and Ungerer, "Jemaah Islamiyah: A Renewed Struggle?," 1-4.

<sup>323</sup> Conboy, *The Second Front: Inside Asia's Most Dangerous Terrorist Network*, 232; ICG Asia Report 114, 17; ICG Asia Briefing 63, 5-14; and Jackson et al., *Aptitude for Destruction*, vol. 2, 72.

The leading interpretation describing JI's evolution reflects the notion that JI split into two factions on separate paths, both trying to achieve their goal of Islamizing Indonesia. However, as the author has demonstrated here, the analyses are inconclusive. The author shows that traditionalists became a largely nonviolent, administrative movement that surreptitiously supported pro-violence activities and operated openly because it was difficult for the government to pressure groups that did not have concrete violent links to it. Pro-violence elements carried out major bombing attacks with low-level support from traditionalists, which shows JI's factions are closer to functional divisions than competing organizations.<sup>324</sup> The conventional wisdom is persuasive, but the alternatives deserve due credit. Tactical and organizational shifts should not be dismissed as splintering. They appear to be far more complicated and well planned out.

It seems increasingly accurate to argue that JI's traditionalist and pro-violence divisions "are not mutually exclusive, but rather mutually reinforcing."<sup>325</sup> Analysts have compared JI's evolution to Hamas and Hezbollah and that makes sense. Most of JI's work has become overt and charitable, while only a "small component of the organization remains the clandestine terrorist cell" needed to achieve effects in pursuit of their goal.<sup>326</sup> Indeed, JI members evolved. They survived, regenerated, and carried out major attacks, which has allowed them to morph into a more diverse, dangerous threat.

Despite Indonesia's efforts during this period, and the possibility of a divided JI, on July 17, 2009, JI members carried out suicide bombings on Western hotels in downtown Jakarta. JI's pro-violence faction, who was responsible for the attack, sought

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<sup>324</sup> Abuza, "The State of Jemaah Islamiyah: Terrorism and Insurgency in Southeast Asia Five Years After Bali," 2; Chalk et al., *The Evolving Terrorist Threat to Southeast Asia: A Net Assessment*, 91, 96, 99, 103; Ismail and Ungerer, "Jemaah Islamiyah: A Renewed Struggle?," 2; Jones, "The Changing Nature of Jemaah Islamiyah," 170; Pavlova, "From a Counter-Society to a Counter-State Movement: Jemaah Islamiyah According to PUPJI," 777, 779, 794; and Singh, *The Talibanization of Southeast Asia*, 100, 110-111, 135-136.

<sup>325</sup> Abuza, *Political Islam and Violence in Indonesia*, 54.

<sup>326</sup> Abuza, "The State of Jemaah Islamiyah: Terrorism and Insurgency in Southeast Asia Five Years After Bali," 4-6.

personnel, resources, and safe haven from traditionalists, suggesting there remains some degree of cooperation between the factions. Moreover, Top may have acquired significant financial backing for the attacks from abroad.<sup>327</sup>

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<sup>327</sup> Abuza, “Making Sense of the Jakarta Bombings: The Shades of Grey;” Abuza, “Indonesian Counter-Terrorism: The Great Leap Forward,” 6; Abuza, “The State of Jemaah Islamiyah: Terrorism and Insurgency in Southeast Asia Five Years After Bali,” 2; and Aglionby, “Al-Qaeda Link Is Suspected in Jakarta Blasts.”

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## IV. JEMAAH ISLAMIYAH: BRIDGING THE GAP

### A. INTRODUCTION

Ending a four-year lull in major attacks on July 17, 2009, Noordin Top's network carried out suicide bombings on Western hotels in Jakarta. Several people were killed and dozens more injured. The hotels targeted demonstrated that a clandestine group of JI members remained committed to undermining Indonesian and Western governments by attacking their socio-economic interests. The damage was minor compared to other bombings carried out by JI elements, but the symbolic attacks served as a reminder that JI was still the most capable, deadliest terrorist network in Southeast Asia.

The attacks and subsequent discoveries jolted intelligence and security communities. Investigations revealed Top was in fact responsible for the bombings, indicating his group remained capable and motivated to execute lethal attacks. Together with recent reports that Top's group again sought and received personnel, resources, and safe haven from traditionalist sources, describing JI's traditionalist and pro-violence units as cooperative factions has become a very real possibility. Thus, debate reignited over the accuracy of interpretations regarding how JI has changed over time.<sup>328</sup>

A few months later, Indonesian authorities made another startling discovery. They uncovered a terrorist coalition of pro-violence, traditionalists, and other *jihadi* elements with a purported new approach to *jihad* in the region. Further investigations exposed extensive ties between JI's founder Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, his JAT organization, and the new coalition. These recent developments strongly indicate JI's leadership, organization, and tactics are evolving in ways that few observers had predicted. Thus, the need to

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<sup>328</sup> Greg Fealy, "The Usual Suspects Moved from JI to the Noordin Network," *The Sydney Morning Herald*, July 21, 2009, <http://www.smh.com.au/opinion/the-usual-terrorism-suspects-moved-from-ji-to-the-noordin-network-20090720-dqq5.html?page=1>; Noor Huda Ismail and Carl Ungerer, "Jemaah Islamiyah: A Renewed Struggle?," *Australian Strategic Policy Institute* (July 2009), 1; ICG Asia Briefing 94, 1; ICG Asia Briefing 95, 1; Noor Huda Ismail, "The July 17 Jakarta Suicide Attacks and the Death of Noordin Top," *CTC Sentinel* 2, 9 (September 2009), 20-22; and Jones, "Briefing for the New President: The Terrorist Threat in Indonesia and Southeast Asia," 77. Some observers concluded JI was resurging, while others, unconvinced of Top's place in JI, were reluctant to tie this attack to the damaged JI movement.

accurately describe how JI has evolved remains relevant.<sup>329</sup> Despite some observers concluding that the group was no longer cohesive or capable, these developments show JI's members remain committed to *jihad* and its leaders continue to evolve their networks and tactics to achieve their goals. In short, the puzzle of how JI has evolved remains unsolved.

This chapter examines JI's evolution from the 2009 bombings through present day. The purpose is to describe how JI has evolved during this time period. This chapter analyzes recent reporting and discusses the major changes tied to JI. The author explores the state of JI's ideology, leadership, organizational structure, and recent operations and tactics carried out by JI elements. JI's leaders remain committed to *jihad* but they continue to struggle internally over tactics, which supports analyses that JI is fractured. However, evidence also shows traditionalists and pro-violence camps continue to work together, calling into question the accuracy of splintering as an adequate description of how JI has evolved. Moreover, JI elements in concert with other *jihadi* organizations have consolidated their operational and tactical capabilities in an attempt to maximize their efforts around Indonesia's CT strategy. Concluding with the implications of Ba'asyir's arrest and his involvement in recent events, this chapter closes having offered new insights regarding JI's evolution, thus improving upon the understanding of the current nature of the JI threat and how its members are responding to Indonesian and foreign CT policies.

The author argues that during this time period, JI's factions functioned as administrative and operational divisions. They continued to debate tactics but remained mutually supportive. Traditionalist leaders continued to condemn bombings and major attacks in hopes it would provide breathing room while they continued to rebuild their capabilities and prepare for *jihad*. At the same time, traditionalist elements provided pro-violence militants the assistance needed to carry out the 2009 bombings without exposing mainstream JI to CT measures. In other words, the JI network continues to evolve and conduct operations that support both their near- and long-term objectives.

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<sup>329</sup> Arnaz, "Terrorist Plotting Attack on President, Foreigners"; ICG Asia Briefing 107, 1-7; ICG Asia Report 189, 1; and Whitmire, "Jemaah Islamiyah Remains Active and Deadly," 179.

## B. INDONESIA RESPONDS, JI EVOLVES

Indonesian authorities applied strong CT pressure to JI's members for seven years, and their response to Jakarta 2009 was no different. Shortly after the bombings, Indonesia CT operatives neutralized Top and some of his inner circle. In September 2009, Detachment 88 killed the leader of JI's pro-violence division.<sup>330</sup> Around the same time, several members of Top's crew were also captured or killed. Importantly, discoveries surrounding these events caused analysts to reconsider Top's networks. They were more extensive than previously assessed and had strong links to JI traditionalists.<sup>331</sup>

Although there were indications of cohesion, experts still considered JI fractured. JI leaders had debated tactics since Bali 2002 and most observers believed major splits within the organization existed. Ideologically, the JI network was "strong, indeed, unbreakable. But as a political organization, it is divided, cash strapped, and to some degree rudderless."<sup>332</sup> Despite Indonesia's successes and the optimistic analyses associated with them, a JI-affiliated attack was carried out, and several members of JI's pro-violence division, with help from traditionalists, were responsible.<sup>333</sup> At some level, JI's leaders had addressed their shortfalls and adapted to them.

As has been seen in the past, when CT authorities apply pressure to JI members, they evolve. If history provides any indication, the remaining members of Top's cells would regroup and adapt around their losses and begin planning their next operation. In the latter half of this decade, traditionalists suffered their own setbacks, which may have driven them to reconsider their tactics as well. They consistently fell short in their attempts to find or retain a suitable leader, and their efforts to rebuild the organization

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<sup>330</sup> Abuza, "Indonesian Counter-Terrorism: The Great Leap Forward," 7; and Ismail, "The July 17 Jakarta Suicide Attacks and the Death of Noordin Top," 20. Top's death was the "culmination of a bloody nine-hour siege in Central Java."

<sup>331</sup> ICG Asia Briefing 94, 3. This report concludes Noordin's group is not the same as JI. It is a splinter group that includes some JI members but others as well. The same analysis suggests JI is "lost, loose...and no one is sure who the commander or *amir* is today."

<sup>332</sup> Jones, "Jemaah Islamiyah and New Splinter Groups," 11.

<sup>333</sup> Allard, "Hotel Bombing Suspect Goes On Trial;" Andriyanto, "I Plotted to Kill SBY, Admits Jakarta Hotel Bombing Suspect;" Agencies, "Jakarta Hotel Bombing Trial Begins;" ICG Asia Briefing 95, 1; and Ismail, "The July 17 Jakarta Suicide Attacks and the Death of Noordin Top," 20.

had not materialized as hoped. Despite the continued commitment of many members to “defend Muslims under attack,” and traditionalist leaders’ organizational shifts to consolidate and focus on “fomenting sectarian conflict in Sulawesi and Maluku as a way to regroup and indoctrinate a new generation of JI,” mainstream JI’s plan did not shake out.<sup>334</sup> Indonesian authorities put the local violence down. The areas became quiet. In February 2007, traditionalist leaders met to discuss retaliatory operations in response to Indonesia’s police operations in Poso, Sulawesi. Purportedly, traditionalist leaders at the time determined the group would focus on rebuilding, not carrying out operations. This attitude might have caused disaffected members to join Top if the group really was split. However, that assumes traditionalists were not supporting Top secretly. Analysts observed, “major new fault lines emerging within the organization as a whole.”<sup>335</sup> These observations combined with recent events warrant discussion and illuminate how JI evolved during this period of JI’s history.

### **1. JI and Its Parts – The Ideologies**

JI’s ostensibly disparate parts continued to advocate *jihād* to restore the caliphate. This section describes the continuity JI’s ideology provided its factions, the recently dismantled AQA coalition, and JAT, which in part were populated by JI members. The ideologies are strikingly similar with slight differences, which shows JI’s divisions and new *jihadi* mutations are more alike than different. Traditionalists prepare for *jihād* through *dakwah*, pro-violence elements carry out attacks now, and the AQA coalition and JAT believe the right blend of both approaches is required to be successful. These observations imply JI’s evolution is less about factionalism and more about tactics. Comparing the ideologies of these entities adds value to how one can accurately describe JI’s evolution.

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<sup>334</sup> Abuza, “Fall of the Teflon Terrorist?” 3-4; Ismail and Ungerer, “Jemaah Islamiyah: A Renewed Struggle?,” 1; and Jones, “Jemaah Islamiyah and New Splinter Groups,” 11-13. In fact, there were indications JI had lost its organizational advantage, and many members were seeking out nascent, overt movements to work towards *Shari’ a* implementation.

<sup>335</sup> ICG Asia Briefing 95, 8; and Jones, “Jemaah Islamiyah and New Splinter Groups,” 11.

Not surprisingly, Abu Rusdan, the former JI *amir* and purported traditionalist leader, openly condoned *jihad* but condemned the 2009 bombings as unwise and counterproductive. Following Jakarta 2009, traditionalists officially opposed the bombings, JI's pro-violence division's prior attacks, and encouraged members to refrain from participating in major terrorist attacks. A year prior, reporting indicated traditionalists believed violence was "only justified as a way to defend Muslims in conflict areas. 'The time isn't yet ripe to wage *jihad* in Indonesia' said Rusdan."<sup>336</sup> Following the discovery of AQA's camp on Aceh in early 2010, experts summarized the ideology of JI traditionalists as

focused on religious outreach and education...and state JI leaders argue that in Indonesia today, there is no possibility of a secure base. The personnel and the strength to carry out *jihad* are both lacking. As a result, JI leaders, while acknowledging the need for *jihad*, believe it should be delayed until a critical mass can be built through *dakwah*.<sup>337</sup>

Traditionalists opposed Top's bombings, yet illustrated the desire for *jihad* if they could prepare traditionalists properly. JI's leaders were not at odds over principles and goals, but over timing of tactics. Condemning the bombings was Rusdan's effort to keep terrorism (and a CT response) at a distance from traditionalists and discourage mainstream members from participating haphazardly. Traditionalists are simply trying to keep their members out of jail and focused more on rebuilding the network. There is no evidence traditionalists abandoned *jihad*.<sup>338</sup>

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<sup>336</sup> ICG Asia Report 189, 2; ICG Asia Briefing 95, 8; Ismail and Ungerer, "Jemaah Islamiyah: A Renewed Struggle?," 2; and Ismail, "The July 17 Jakarta Suicide Attacks and the Death of Noordin Top," 21.

<sup>337</sup> ICG Asia Report 189, 14.

<sup>338</sup> Abuza, "Making Sense of the Jakarta Bombings: The Shades of Grey; ICG Asia Report 189, 1; Ismail and Ungerer, "Jemaah Islamiyah: A Renewed Struggle?," 1; and Ismail, "The July 17 Jakarta Suicide Attacks and the Death of Noordin Top," 21.

The 2009 bombings showed pro-violence terrorists remained committed to *jihad* as well. However, they showed it through symbolic attacks and criticized Rusdan's hesitancy towards attacks.<sup>339</sup> One can see that ideologically, JI's divisions are aligned but remain divided over tactics and methodology. A few months after the bombings "a new coalition...that rejected both JI...and Top's more violent splinter group" and with a shared *jihadi* ideology emerged.<sup>340</sup>

The AQA coalition materialized as a separate organization, but its ideology mirrors that of JI. Thus far, evidence shows that AQA's leaders felt a more rational strategy for *jihad* in Indonesia was required. AQA's ideology reflects JI's PUPJI: "create the secure base from which to operate and an organization that could control the base, apply Islamic law and serve as a proto-government."<sup>341</sup> Critical to this strategy was a combination of religious outreach and *jihad*. The big difference between this outlook and that of JI's factions is that it was the merging of JI's two approaches. In theory, it focused on *jihad* to win the space to establish the secure base, and utilized *dakwah* to build and expand the base for the future struggle. Analyzing AQA's ideology reveals that some JI leaders were attempting to bridge the gap between traditionalists and pro-violence members under JI's ideological umbrella.<sup>342</sup>

Ba'asyir's JAT movement also started receiving attention around the same time the AQA coalition was uncovered in early 2010. JAT's ideology shares JI's and other *jihadi* organizations' objectives. Based on recent reports, "Islamic teachings, according to JAT...must be applied in full...Islamic law must be the source of all justice," and *jihad* is

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<sup>339</sup> Ismail and Ungerer, "Jemaah Islamiyah: A Renewed Struggle?," 2; and ICG Asia Briefing 95, 2. In Top's statement claiming responsibility for the 2009 bombings, he referred to his group as the "al-Qaeda *jihad* organization for the Malay archipelago." Despite the difference in name, his statement reflects the tenets of JI's ideology. Pro-violence terrorists state it is only they who are actively carrying out *jihad* to establish the caliphate. If traditionalists were supporting pro-violence elements, it is likely only a select few would be aware of it for operational security reasons of which Top was an expert in.

<sup>340</sup> ICG Asia Report 189, i.

<sup>341</sup> ICG Asia Report 189, 1. This new group felt traditionalists had sidelined *jihad* for non-violent activities, but also felt bombings, while symbolic, were counterproductive.

<sup>342</sup> Abuza, "Fall of the Teflon Terrorist?," 4. According to Abuza, the coalition called itself "al-Qaeda in Aceh" among other names.

the means to achieve this end.<sup>343</sup> JAT religious scholars quote the same influences that inspired JI's leaders and press the same principles of loyalty and obligation to gather Muslims under its banner. JAT operated openly and conducted religious outreach and education. Importantly, JAT drew supporters from across the *jihadi* spectrum to include traditionalists and pro-violence members. Although reports claim many who joined JAT fell out quickly, JAT, like AQA, was consolidating JI's extremes, but JAT had not yet been linked to terrorism.<sup>344</sup> In summary, the ideologies of these seemingly disparate movements share an ideology. It is only their tactical strategies that separate them. The latest *jihadi* movements are some of JI's most influential leaders' latest attempts to bring further coherence in order to adapt to Indonesia's CT policies.

## 2. JI's Leaders – A Reunion of Sorts

Evidence of the activities of JI leaders in the context of Jakarta 2009, the AQA coalition, and Ba'asyir's JAT also offer insight regarding JI's evolution. This section examines some of JI's leaders and their interaction during this time period. It shows that Top and his inner circle have remained closely connected to mainstream JI. In fact, pro-violence operatives relied on traditionalist support to successfully carry out Jakarta 2009. This section also traces the return of JI senior operative Dulmatin, who purportedly developed and led the AQA coalition and their terrorist training camp on Aceh. Lastly, the author continues to elaborate on the role of JI's founder, Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, and his intimate involvement in the AQA coalition. The aforementioned developments surrounding JI leaders startled analysts because the relative peace between 2006 and 2009 led many experts to believe JI was fractured and damaged beyond repair. Describing how some of JI's most influential traditionalist and pro-violence leaders interacted with one another continues to strengthen the case that factionalism is not the whole story behind JI's evolution.

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<sup>343</sup> ICG Asia Briefing 107, 3-4. JAT is "rooted in the ideology of *salafi jihadism*...and was designed to 'revitalize the Islamic movement in support of full victory for the struggle of the Indonesian faithful'."

<sup>344</sup> Abuza, "Fall of the Teflon Terrorist?," 4; and ICG Asia Briefing 104, 3-4. *Dakwah and jihad* made up the tenets of JAT's ideology.

Noordin Top was a key, yet controversial leader in the JI movement. He was responsible for all of JI's major attacks since 2003. His tactics and methodology underpinned JI's purported fractured state, but he was also responsible for bringing significant resources and international attention to the organization as a whole. Both traditionalists and pro-violence members will surely miss Top. He was a charismatic leader, manager, and expert recruiter. Top was operationally successful, which allowed JI's message to garner international attention, and he managed to stay one step ahead of authorities because he "enjoyed protection from hardcore members of the JI community and other individuals who shared his ideology."<sup>345</sup> JI and the *jihadi* movement writ large undoubtedly felt Top's demise, but his inner circle of leaders was equally close to mainstream JI members. Furthermore, based on previous evidence presented showing that mainstream JI was supporting pro-violence attacks, it would make sense that traditionalist leaders would need an operational commander of similar caliber to replace Top in order to maintain JI's attack campaign.

Despite their criticism of Abu Rusdan, Top's leaders are deeply tied to mainstream JI. They are alumni of JI schools and maintained close relationships with traditionalists and key leaders, and some are members of organizations like Ba'asyir's JAT, which created a broad, sophisticated network of support. These ties have provided pro-violence leaders a mechanism to tap into the mainstream JI support structure in order to mount attacks. Traditionalists reject pro-violence on the surface, but reporting shows traditionalists grew *jihadists* at JI schools and allowed them to be recruited into Top's ranks by his leaders. Top's leaders do not seem to be disenchanted with mainstream JI; rather, they carry out a covert aspect of the movement's tactical repertoire. Evidence of the activities of Top's leaders does not reflect outright factionalism; they indicate a sophisticated division of labor. In short, Top's leaders were crucial to the success of

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<sup>345</sup> Abuza, "Making Sense of the Jakarta Bombings: The Shades of Grey." Abuza notes "Top relied considerably on JI social networks and JI-linked madrassas for support and recruitment. While mainstream JI members may have disagreed with Noordin, no one has ever turned him in." Ismail, "The July 17 Jakarta Suicide Attacks and the Death of Noordin Top," 21.

Jakarta 2009 and their operational role within JI's administrative/operational division construct allowed remaining leaders to evade arrests, adapt to membership losses, and accordingly fall in with Dulmatin following the post-Jakarta 2009 crackdown.<sup>346</sup>

Evidence of some of the latest attempts by JI's leaders to evolve the movement began surfacing in early 2010. A terrorist training camp was discovered in Aceh in February 2010, and preliminary investigations strongly indicate the Aceh camp was the base of the AQA coalition led by JI senior operational leader Dulmatin. Top's latest bombings, followed by his death and coupled with traditionalist shortfalls, influenced JI's leaders to evolve the movement significantly. Interestingly, the camp appeared to be a conglomerate of "virtually every known *jihadi* organization in Indonesia."<sup>347</sup>

It is unclear when Dulmatin returned to Indonesia, but some evidence shows the AQA coalition formed in late 2009. The timing of Top's most recent bombings, his death, and Dulmatin's appearance indicate Dulmatin was brought in to replace Top or at least rein him in and combine JI's efforts on a broader scale.<sup>348</sup> As noted, Top was resourceful, perhaps JI's top financier and recruiter. ICG notes, "in some cases militant *jihadis* who want more action than their leaders may seek him out, rather than vice versa."<sup>349</sup> This of course, is indicative of the administrative, operational relationship that describes JI's evolution. Dulmatin, a well-respected JI commander, Bali 2002 operative and guerilla warfare expert—arguably a legend among *jihadi* circles—was brought in to lead JI's clandestine operations. Evidence shows Dulmatin was "given protection by JI's

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<sup>346</sup> Abuza, "Fall of the Teflon Terrorist?," 4; and ICG Asia Briefing 95, 3-4, 8, 10, 11. Accordingly, Rusdan and traditionalist leaders have maintained a low profile, which indicates one of two things: traditionalists are in fact passive at this time or they continue to support efforts surreptitiously. Ismail, "The July 17 Jakarta Suicide Attacks and the Death of Noordin Top," 20. Ismail believes senior JI traditionalist leaders have matured and became complacent with other aspects of life, and thus are no longer energized in their dedication to JI's cause. This however, is only a reflection of traditionalist leaders at the senior level.

<sup>347</sup> Andriyanto and Hasan, "Aceh Seen as a 'Safe Haven' for Terror Group Jemaah Islamiyah;" Allard, "Training Camp Raid Sparks Fears Over Terrorist Resurgence;" Peter Gelling, "Police Kill Bali Nightclub Bombing Suspect," *The New York Times*, March 09, 2010, Jakarta, Indonesia; and ICG Asia Report 189, 1.

<sup>348</sup> Greg Fealy, "Terrorism Today: Jemaah Islamiyah, Dulmatin and the Aceh Cell," *East Asia Forum*, June 23, 2010, <http://www.eastasiaforum.org/2010/06/23/terrorism-today-jemaah-islamiyah-dulmatin-and-the-aceh-cell/>.

<sup>349</sup> Abuza, "Making Sense of the Jakarta Bombings: The Shades of Grey;" ICG Asia Briefing 95, 1; and ICG Asia Report 189, 1-3.

central leadership to initiate new *jihadist* operations in Indonesia.”<sup>350</sup> Moreover, he was reportedly in touch with individuals, “all of whom had been close to Noordin before,” and they were interested in Dulmatin’s coalition.<sup>351</sup> Like Top, Dulmatin’s inner circle was made up of respected JI members with close connections to traditionalists and pro-violence elements. Additionally, some of Dulmatin’s core leaders had links to Ba’asyir’s JAT. Dulmatin’s role is clearly evidence of efforts to reinvigorate the JI movement, bridge the gap between traditionalists and pro-violence operators formally, and make best use of their capabilities. In any case, Dulmatin met his demise in March 2010. Following up on a lead from the AQA Aceh camp investigation, Detachment 88 tracked down Dulmatin and killed him during a firefight in Jakarta. Additionally, at least 48 members of the coalition were arrested and seven killed.<sup>352</sup>

Surprisingly, Abu Bakar Ba’asyir, the ostensible spiritual leader of JI and most often associated with traditionalists, emerged shortly after Dulmatin was killed. His JAT movement, defense of Top’s attacks, and involvement in the AQA coalition together provide further evidence of the united, coherent nature of JI’s evolution. On August 9, 2010, Indonesian authorities arrested Ba’asyir “as part of their ongoing investigations” into the Aceh camp. Indonesian authorities had proof that Ba’asyir financed the camp, AQA, and was personally involved in the appointment of its leaders and planning of the coalition’s terrorist operations.<sup>353</sup> Despite evidence that traditionalists and hardliners had both eschewed Ba’asyir for not being militant enough, the latest evidence surrounding Ba’asyir, Dulmatin and AQA indicate he, along with Dulmatin, led the efforts to bridge the gap between JI’s two factions to create a *jihadi* enterprise with JI as its heart.<sup>354</sup>

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<sup>350</sup> Fealy, “Terrorism Today: Jemaah Islamiyah, Dulmatin and the Aceh Cell.”

<sup>351</sup> ICG Asia Report 189, 4-5.

<sup>352</sup> Abuza, “Fall of the Teflon Terrorist?,” 5.

<sup>353</sup> Greg Fealy, “Changing Convictions on Bashir,” *The Wall Street Journal*, August 12, 2010, <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704901104575424420112992784.html>.

<sup>354</sup> Abuza, “Fall of the Teflon Terrorist?,” 5; Andriyanto, “Man Gets Eight Years for Sheltering Hotel Bombers;” Fealy, “Changing Convictions on Bashir;” Fealy, “Terrorism Today: Jemaah Islamiyah, Dulmatin and the Aceh Cell;” Malik and Arnaz, “Bashir Quizzed by Clerics Over Jakarta Raids;” and Malik and Arnaz, “Bashir Links to Aceh Group Emerge.”

Ba'asyir has been a central yet controversial figure in JI and the *jihadi* movement as a whole. Ba'asyir is considered the "elder statesman of Indonesia's radical movement," but some experts do not believe Ba'asyir is the lynchpin of the movement today.<sup>355</sup> As was the case earlier this decade, some JI leaders viewed Ba'asyir as a poor manager and strategist. At the same time, Ba'asyir's recent involvements beg analysts to reconsider his role in JI. Prior to his involvement in the coalition, Ba'asyir led the JI-affiliated MMI, but he left it in 2008 in order to start up JAT. JAT is both populated and rejected by JI members. Ba'asyir's JAT could be a splinter, but its goals are analogous with JI, so it should also be equally considered a mutually supportive movement. Ba'asyir has remained distanced from overt links to terrorism, but he has also retained his fiery *jihadi* rhetoric. While certain traditionalist leaders have condemned Noordin's attacks publically, Ba'asyir has historically defended Top, arguing his tactics were misplaced but his intentions righteous. Considering Ba'asyir is mainstream JI, it appears traditionalist rhetoric supports two views. On the one hand, Abu Rusdan rejected major bombings, but on the other, Ba'asyir, JI's founder, endorsed Top's operations and provided him rhetorical support. Ba'asyir recent actions coupled with his rhetoric over time showed JI's ostensible divisions had not abandoned violence or each other, and confirmed an interpretation that describes traditionalists and pro-violence terrorists as two halves of a whole.<sup>356</sup>

Now that Indonesian authorities have arrested Ba'asyir and charged him as the *amir* and spiritual leader of the AQA coalition, the author's argument that JI's divisions are closer than experts have given them credit for becomes stronger.<sup>357</sup> Ba'asyir was attempting to consolidate JI's factions in a more formal way and combine their efforts with that of the larger *jihadi* movement. The links between Top, his leaders, Dulmatin, Ba'asyir, and traditionalists reflect efforts by Dulmatin and Ba'asyir to overcome the

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<sup>355</sup> ICG Asia Briefing 107, 1.

<sup>356</sup> Abuza, "Fall of the Teflon Terrorist?," 2; Abuza, "Making Sense of the Jakarta Bombings: The Shades of Grey;" and ICG Asia Briefing 94, 3-4. JAT is considered "a radical but above-ground and non-violent group that rejects democracy and seeks the immediate application of Islamic law." JAT's opposition sees it as a competitor and clings to JI's nature vice JAT's openness.

<sup>357</sup> Zachary Abuza, "New Directions for Indonesian Militants after Successful Counterterrorist Operations," *Terrorism Monitor*, vol. VIII, 41 (November 2010), 6-7.

tactical differences of Rusdan and Top. Indeed, the actions of JI's leaders say a lot about JI's evolution. Ba'asyir, one of the few leaders left standing, denies allegations he is involved in AQA or terrorism, and he still denies the existence of JI. Recent events clearly call into question Ba'asyir's credibility. Perhaps, one should be just as suspicious of Rusdan.<sup>358</sup>

### 3. Consolidated and Aligned – The New JI?

Recent developments and reporting reveal significant changes within the organizational structure of the Indonesian *jihadi* movement. This section describes these changes and how they impact one's understanding of JI's evolution. As to be expected, traditionalists remained vocally firm in their commitment to *jihad*, but purportedly refrained from participating in AQA because they did not agree with the coalition's approach to actively engage the enemy through attacks. Traditionalists stated, "the faithful currently lack the resources to take on the enemy and therefore should focus on building up their ranks through *dakwah* (religious outreach)."<sup>359</sup> Ba'asyir, some of Top's inner-circle, and some more militant traditionalists and followers of Ba'asyir developed JAT. Moreover, remaining members of Top's division, members of JAT, and several other organizations consolidated elements of their membership into the AQA coalition.<sup>360</sup> At a minimum, the merger of these groups indicates that JI's leaders and their vast network remain connected and motivated to adapt JI's existing organizational structure and that of the *jihadi* movement in order to wage *jihad* "as the means to the end of

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<sup>358</sup> Put another way, the existence of this coalition might allow JI traditionalists increased freedom to recruit. Malik, "I'm Real Target of Raid, Bashir Claims."

<sup>359</sup> ICG Asia Report, 189, i.

<sup>360</sup> *Ibid.*, 1, 14. Based on interviews of JI traditionalists, Indonesia is not ready for *jihad*, thus, no perceived traditionalist participation in major *jihad* activities. As long as traditionalists maintain this line of rhetoric, some experts will continue to evaluate JI traditionalists as innocent until proven guilty. Much of how experts characterize mainstream JI also stems from Rusdan's rhetoric and may not be an accurate representation of how mainstream JI really feels about the state of *jihad* or what tactical direction is needed. ICG Asia Briefing 94, 2, 6. Of note, Top has used "different names at different times." Since 2005, Top has referred to his group as "al-Qaeda for the Malay Archipelago." The author submits that in part, changing names demonstrated Noordin's commitment to confuse intelligence and CT agency efforts and keep the attention on him, not on mainstream JI. At the same time, as ICG notes, these different names could all be different cells that are autonomous, compartmentalized, and working towards the same goal very much in the same fashion as the author argues traditionalists and Top have worked. Only a few key people represent the links between cells and the larger movement.

applying Islamic law in full.”<sup>361</sup> It is clear that JI’s leaders have not seen eye to eye on all tactical and strategic viewpoints. However, merging and aligning their structures coupled with some leaders denying overt support—only to be contradicted by evidence—suggests support is taking place and are indications that JI’s parts do support each other’s activities and may be trying to improve the state of JI without making its membership base vulnerable to charges of terrorism.

Despite Rusdan’s claims that traditionalists abstained from participation in the coalition, there are reasons to believe traditionalists to some degree supported AQA’s efforts. Evidence shows mainstream JI is suffering. Its “geographical reach, leadership, resources, and message” are limited and ineffective.<sup>362</sup> Rather than end, mainstream JI leaders like Ba’asyir and Dulmatin saw the need for change. They developed AQA and incorporated mainstream JI members for resources and logistical support, which developed new capacity and placed JI at the heart of the coalition even if traditionalists did not formally attend the training. Providing administrative support to AQA bolsters mainstream JI’s suffering capabilities and reinvigorates support for leaders representing JI, even if Rusdan denies traditionalist involvement in the group. As the ostensible voice of mainstream JI, but clearly not in control of many mainstream JI members, Rusdan’s rhetoric remains nothing more than a tactic to keep traditionalists protected from being charged with terrorism. Aside from Dulmatin and Ba’asyir, evidence shows several JI members from traditionalist-led schools are involved in AQA, which suggests one of two things. Either traditionalist leaders like Rusdan function in name only and decisions are made at other levels, or traditionalist rhetoric like that of Rusdan’s regarding AQA is further evidence of a secret, mutually supportive relationship between traditionalists and terrorists designed to regenerate the movement and stay off the radar of Indonesian authorities.<sup>363</sup> Either way, some traditionalists are no doubt involved in a consolidation process with both pro-violence elements, and other *jihadi* movements and mainstream JI leaders are at the center of its development.

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<sup>361</sup> ICG Asia Report 189, i-ii.

<sup>362</sup> Jones, “Jemaah Islamiyah and New Splinter Groups,” 12.

<sup>363</sup> Abuza, “Fall of the Teflon Terrorist?,” 4; and ICG Asia Report 189, i, 14.

JAT, Ba'asyir's overt radical Islamist movement, is evidence of efforts to more formally consolidate traditionalists and pro-violence elements. Ba'asyir, apparently unhappy with JI's current state, resigned from MMI in 2008 and developed JAT. The creation of JAT shows Ba'asyir wanted to reradicalize mainstream JI in an attempt to bolster its struggling efforts. MMI, an organization Ba'asyir brought to life and thought by many to be JI's overt "civil-society arm," became unacceptable to him, which led to his resignation. He felt MMI's leadership structure was "un-Islamic."<sup>364</sup> Generally speaking, Ba'asyir believed MMI had become too democratic, and not enough authority was placed in the hands of the *amir*.<sup>365</sup> Ba'asyir disagreed with the increasingly secular nature of MMI and its efforts to work with the Indonesian government. Preferring a more traditional Islamic leadership structure, Ba'asyir left and took several influential MMI leaders with him and established JAT.<sup>366</sup> JAT and AQA was his answer to a withering JI and MMI. JAT is similar to MMI in that it is an overt political organization, which "recruits through mass rallies and smaller religious instruction," advocating *Shari'a* and *jihad* as the means to achieve their goals, and like JI in its not so distant past, it clandestinely supports terrorism to achieve their goals.<sup>367</sup> When approached this way, JAT and AQA were developed by Ba'asyir to be a resurgence of JI.

Further analysis of JAT's organizational structure helps make the case for accurately describing how JI has evolved. Thanks to Ba'asyir's connections and status, JAT became a sizable group in just a few years. It is a well-organized, nationwide organization. Its leaders built a strong core of members, to include members of Top's organization, traditionalists, and other components of the *jihadi* movement.<sup>368</sup> Despite arbitrary differences in ideology and tactics, Ba'asyir developed JAT to be structured as a moniker replacement for JI. It is a sophisticated, well-administered, hierarchical organization from its advisory councils down to its functional specialties. Ba'asyir denies

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<sup>364</sup> ICG Asia Briefing 107, 2-3.

<sup>365</sup> *Ibid.*, 2-3.

<sup>366</sup> Abuza, "Fall of the Teflon Terrorist?," 2; and ICG Asia Briefing 107, 2. Several experts have assessed MMI to be JI's overt political wing.

<sup>367</sup> ICG Asia Briefing 107, 1.

<sup>368</sup> ICG Asia Briefing 107, 5. Experts believe support for JAT is not widespread.

allegations of his or JAT's involvement in planning violence, yet Indonesian authorities have evidence that JAT funded AQA, an organization that is in part composed of JI's remaining pro-violence militants.<sup>369</sup> With Ba'asyir as *amir* of both organizations, it is clear AQA was designed in part as JAT's military wing, which parallels JI's structure even more.<sup>370</sup>

At first glance, it may appear that Ba'asyir's JAT is competing with Rusdan's JI, but that is not necessarily the case. Admittedly, the activities that JAT has involved itself in, coupled with the almost identical organizational structure, could easily lead analysts to suspect competition, even question if Ba'asyir still is a part of JI. Indeed, some experts have concluded that JAT and Rusdan's reactions to JAT illustrate JI's fractured state. However, reflecting on JAT's organizational structure—who it consists of and how it functions—it becomes clearer that JAT is not a splinter. JAT and its AQA action arm are what JI is evolving into. Many within mainstream JI felt the JI moniker was old, tarnished and hampering their efforts to achieve JI's goals. They saw JAT as a new package to carry out JI's vision of *jihad* so they joined.<sup>371</sup> JAT may not be JI in name, but its members have taken on JI's form and vision because association with JI has constrained its members too much and they can no longer operate actively without taking heavy losses. This is known because JAT has been critical of traditionalist inactivity and its leaders' tendencies to only wage *jihad* through rhetoric.<sup>372</sup> In short, this section described how some of mainstream JI's core leaders consolidated JI's existing structure and developed a new organization with JI's vision at the center in the hopes that it could maximize JI's existing capabilities in order to continue its struggle to achieve its goals.

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<sup>369</sup> Abuza, "New Directions for Indonesian Militants after Successful Counterterrorist Operations," 6-7.

<sup>370</sup> Abuza, "Fall of the Teflon Terrorist?," 5; ICG Asia Report 189, 11; and ICG Asia Briefing 107, 1, 6, 10. Purportedly, JAT and JI leaders clash. For example, JAT is overt and has nationwide membership while JI operates in secret. Furthermore, JI leaders viewed JAT as a competitor and thus demanded JI members could not hold membership in both organizations.

<sup>371</sup> ICG Asia Briefing 107, 6, 10. Some JI commands went over to JAT wholesale while others following Rusdan's lead, kept their distance from both Ba'asyir and JAT.

<sup>372</sup> ICG Asia Briefing 107, 8.

#### **4. Operations and Tactics – The Future JI**

Jakarta 2009 and the events that have occurred since add useful detail to the understanding of how JI has evolved and where its members are taking the organization. This section describes the operations and tactics employed by JI's pro-violence division, its future plans, and the operations and tactics of JAT and AQA. They are further evidence that JI's members continue to evolve collectively in order to remain a relevant and increasingly dangerous terrorist movement.

Examining evidence from the 2009 bombings helps to accurately describe how JI's members continue to evolve the group. The targets were two Western hotels utilized almost exclusively by foreigners and businessmen, and the attacks took place around the time of Indonesia's presidential elections. The bombings did not impact the political or economic situation in the country significantly, but did devastate the business community and brought international attention back to JI's struggle. The choice of targets reflects JI's pro-violence division's commitment to carry out attacks against the West and the international community. As discussed previously, these attacks and Top's bombing campaign as a whole have been deemed counterproductive by mainstream JI and were ostensibly not endorsed by the movement, yet they occurred.<sup>373</sup> Thus, their purpose warrants further discussion.

Attacks that garner international attention have been lucrative ventures for JI. Up through the 2003 bombings, Attacks by JI elements were largely funded by al-Qaeda. Investigations into Jakarta 2009 indicate the latest bombings were funded externally, by al-Qaeda or an affiliate. Reflecting on how al-Qaeda responded to JI's bombings earlier this decade, it is likely that Top and his pro-violence division's symbolic bombings were JI's mechanism to elicit external resources for the struggling movement. Reporting shows pro-violence operatives wanted to carry out more attacks, but severe losses and operational disruptions forced Top's division to go to ground.<sup>374</sup> Once CT pressure

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<sup>373</sup> ICG Asia Briefing 94, 1-4.

<sup>374</sup> ICG Asia Briefing 94, 1-6. The success of the Christmas Eve bombings in 2000 and Bali 2002 bombings led al-Qaeda to invest additional funds in JI until Hambali's arrest in 2003. Some reporting suggests leftover money from the 2003 attack funded the Australian embassy bombing in 2004.

lessened, JI pro-violence elements resumed their campaign. Considering the setbacks discussed with respect to both traditionalist and pro-violence camps in the latter half of this decade, it becomes clear that Top planned and had his division execute Jakarta 2009 for not only symbolic value, but also for practical and financial reasons.

The 2009 bombings were efficient, sophisticated, innovative, and symbolically effective. Top and his cells were meticulous in their surveillance, operational security, planning, preparing, and execution efforts. Operatives blended in to the hotels, were acutely aware of the surroundings, and they evolved their bomb preparation and employment to ensure desired effects. The bomb-making material was brought into the hotels in pieces and the bombs were constructed inside instead of bringing in the weapons on the day of execution, thus allowing for maximum concealment. This attack indicates pro-violence elements were truly determined to carry out major attacks on Western targets.<sup>375</sup>

Investigations into Top and his division since the bombings provide evidence of additional attack plans and how he was resourced. Top was planning a car bomb assassination against Indonesia's President Yudhoyono, and he had elicited and received external funding. Moreover, administrative/operational relationships between traditionalists and Top's pro-violence elements persist yet remain debated. It is clear Top and his division relied on "JI social networks and JI-linked madrassas for support and recruitment," but some experts continue to understate the level of cooperation between the two factions.<sup>376</sup> They assert Top's support comes from disaffected members of JI and other *jihadi* organizations and do not reflect endorsement of mainstream JI, although the same experts admit evidence shows Top could depend on the larger JI movement for logistic support and protection as required.<sup>377</sup> It is simply not accurate to conclude that

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<sup>375</sup> Abuza, "Making Sense of the Jakarta Bombings: The Shades of Grey;" and ICG Asia Briefing 94, 5-6.

<sup>376</sup> Abuza, "Making Sense of the Jakarta Bombings: The Shades of Grey;" and ICG Asia Briefing 95, 1-2.

<sup>377</sup> Abuza, "Making Sense of the Jakarta Bombings: The Shades of Grey;" and ICG Asia Briefing 95, 1-3. Following the 2009 bombings, "police arrested Mohamad Jibril, owner of a *jihadi* publishing company, on suspicion of having helped arrange funding for the 17 July bombings." Jibril's affiliation with mainstream JI is not clear, but *jihadi* publishing clearly falls in the mainstream JI repertoire of activities, proving links of support between mainstream JI and pro-violence elements persist.

traditionalists condemn Top and his activities because at a sub-level, mainstream JI elements clearly support his survival and success. As described previously, traditionalists coordinated with pro-violence terrorists to carry out Jakarta 2009 despite rhetoric from traditionalist leaders suggesting otherwise. As events have unfolded, it becomes accurate to argue that traditionalists and pro-violence elements continue to evolve and perform mutually supportive functions to achieve the same goal. As the description of JI's evolution continues, particularly the operations and tactics of the AQA coalition, it becomes more apparent JI members continue to adapt and the two factions are not nearly as divided as some experts have interpreted them to be.

The AQA coalition, which came to rise after Top's death, is led by mainstream JI leaders and is a blend of traditionalist and pro-violence approaches to *jihad* as the means to achieve their end. AQA members embrace classic guerilla tactics: assassination and coordinated, precision small arms attacks. The coalition intends to carry out these types of attacks to win territory, establish a pure Islamic community, and slowly expand it until it becomes strong enough to take on the Indonesian government. Future targets include both Indonesian and U.S./Western government officials to include one exposed plan to assassinate President Yudhoyono and for "Mumbai-style attacks in Jakarta."<sup>378</sup> These types of tactics, if planned right, will be much more difficult to counter post-attack, and they also reflect a desire to minimize Muslim collateral damage.<sup>379</sup> In short, AQA was the product of lessons learned by JI leaders over the past decade of *jihad* and merging traditionalist and pro-violence operations and tactics in a concerted fashion.

Not surprisingly, JAT members, who include traditionalists and pro-violence members, conduct similar operations as traditionalists have since 2004 with a few slight differences. JAT conducts religious outreach, education, and social services, which are designed to win support for *Shari'a* implementation, as well as radicalize and recruit support for *jihad* against the Indonesian government. Different from JI though, JAT does not operate in secret. Its leaders hold mass rallies to protest and win support, which shows it is willing to participate in the political process. This has led to controversy

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<sup>378</sup> Abuza, "Fall of the Teflon Terrorist?," 1.

<sup>379</sup> Arnaz, "Terrorist Plotting Attack on President, Foreigners;" and ICG Asia Report 189, 1-2, 7.

across the *jihadi* movement spectrum, but may be more beneficial than costly. Participating in the political process has alienated JAT from some devout Muslim groups who do not see the Indonesian government as legitimate.<sup>380</sup> That being said, JAT operating within the law gives itself legitimacy with more moderate Muslims and far more cover than rhetorical condemnation of bombings has given traditionalists. JAT's tactics are the definition of evolved traditionalist tactics.

Despite JAT and its AQA military wing's operational tactics, which attempted to bridge the gap between JI's factions, ongoing debate between Rusdan and Ba'asyir over tactics shows JI's senior leadership remains committed to exploring how JI can be cohesive, coherent and simultaneously survive CT efforts to dismantle the group. Rusdan claims traditionalist operations remain detached from anti-Western violence, and he warns *jihadists* not to be hasty in their decisions to carry out major attacks. Ba'asyir defended AQA's initiative advocating *jihad* in all forms as an obligation, as preparing for *jihad* and carrying out attacks were both noble efforts. Rusdan and Ba'asyir's interaction provide some hints of mutual support, but clearly Rusdan remains overly cautious of implicating traditionalists in a fight he believes brings costly CT pressure. He believes more religious outreach is required and a larger community established before traditionalists can take openly aggressive steps towards *jihadi* violence. Rusdan and Ba'asyir's views do not reflect direct opposition; rather, they show JI senior leaders are the heart of the *jihadi* movement and are actively working through the current problems within the *jihadi* movement. As mainstream JI's *amir* Rusdan and JAT/AQA's *amir* Ba'asyir, their words demonstrate a relationship and desire to evolve that *jihadists* and experts may not see. Rusdan reaffirmed JI was supporting *jihad* in ways most did not realize, and Ba'asyir's thoughts ultimately support JI's *dakwah* efforts as well as the coalition's, thus showing mainstream the efforts of JI and JAT/AQA are inextricably linked.<sup>381</sup>

Regardless of Ba'asyir and Dulmatin's efforts to bring large portions of mainstream JI, JI pro-violence militants and the *jihadi* movement as a whole together

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<sup>380</sup> ICG Asia Briefing 107, 9.

<sup>381</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

choosing Aceh as their base was a catastrophic mistake. AQA's leaders picked Aceh for several reasons. It had served the Free Aceh Movement (GAM) well in their guerrilla struggle and Aceh could apply *shari'a* already, so AQA's leaders thought Aceh's religious leaders would be receptive to their presence. Furthermore, a number of Islamist organizations already populated Aceh, so AQA's leaders suspected their support base might be able to expand quickly. This however was not the case. The Acehnese were not receptive to AQA and had no interest getting into another conflict unless it was blessed by Aceh's *ulamas*. Nonetheless, AQA's leaders decided to base their operation in Aceh in 2008. In late 2009, plans progressed and by early 2010, the coalition was up running and providing training. Soon though, a local man fell upon the camp and reported it to the local authorities. Several CT operations followed in February and March of 2010. Arrests, investigations, and discoveries exposed the nature of the organization and its leaders. From these discoveries, Indonesian authorities were able to dismantle the organization, killing Dulmatin and other key AQA leaders. CT pressure has continued with the latest development being the discovery of Ba'asyir and JAT's role in AQA.<sup>382</sup> Whether the charges against Ba'asyir will stick and what the future holds for JAT is not clear, for now, Ba'asyir and Dulmatin's attempt to consolidate JI's divisions in a more formal manner and create a larger *jihadi* movement with JI leaders as its heads has been defeated.

The operations and tactics discussed above demonstrate how JI's leaders continue to evolve the movement. The 2009 bombings illustrate Top's evolution, and the events following suggest some traditionalists, Ba'asyir's JAT, and Ba'asyir and Dulmatin's AQA attempted to merge their tactics to maximize their limited capabilities in the interest of advancing JI's cause. The separate tactics of JI's leaders already had overlap, but mainstream JI members like Ba'asyir and Dulmatin believed more coordination was a

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<sup>382</sup> ICG Asia Report 189, 6-14. The key steps in Dulmatin's agenda were "development of a secure base that could become a place of refuge as well as a base for operations; military training, the backbone of the movement, so that those trained would have the capacity to guard the secure base from enemy attacks; and *dakwah*, focused on the area within the secure base, to increase community support." With these efforts in place, the coalition could carry out attacks on authorities impeding their efforts to institute *shari'a* or seen as supporters of Western ideals. Assassinations, not bombings were considered the preferred method of attack as envisioned by the coalition.

fitting solution to adapting to the CT environment.<sup>383</sup> While well intended, the Aceh debacle did more harm than good for JI and the *jihadi* movement because some its most creative and charismatic leaders are behind bars or met their demise.<sup>384</sup> How JI members will evolve from here is anyone's guess.

### C. CONCLUSION

The AQA coalition—JI's latest evolution—failed. Since its discovery, over 100 people have been arrested, and over a dozen killed to include members of Top and Dulmatin's inner circles. Ba'asyir is behind bars and Indonesian authorities believe they have a strong case against him. Observers of the aftermath see overwhelming evidence that the *jihadi* movement has suffered. Now more than ever, JI and the *jihadi* movement writ large "is a weak and divided movement, and there is no indication that it is growing."<sup>385</sup> That being said, these same experts believe the group will bounce back, mutate, and strike again. The attempt by Ba'asyir and Dulmatin to morph JI's divisions and bolster its capabilities by developing AQA was "the same old faces finding new packages for old goods."<sup>386</sup> If that is the case, the author's hypothesis accurately describes how JI has evolved. AQA was the clearest sign that JI's administrative/operational partnership existed and Ba'asyir and Dulmatin wanted to take it to a new level. Despite AQA's failure, remaining JI members and their *jihadi* partners will learn from these events and will continue to evolve and carry out some form of *jihad* to achieve their goal. History shows that traditionalists, pro-violence terrorists, and other like-minded organizations will adapt and work together whenever and wherever they can because the *jihadi* ideology JI members believe in continues to provide continuity and cohesion.<sup>387</sup> To be sure, traditionalists and the terrorists they support, along with other *jihadi* groups like JI, will learn from the mistakes made by Ba'asyir and Dulmatin and adapt creatively in order to continue to advance towards their goals.

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<sup>383</sup> ICG Asia Briefing 107, 7.

<sup>384</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

<sup>385</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>386</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>387</sup> Abuza, "Fall of the Teflon Terrorist?," 3.

To summarize, this chapter analyzed recent developments that help to accurately describe JI's evolution. It captured key changes in the strains that make up the JI network today. The author examined JI's ideology, leadership, organizational structure, and operations and tactics, and showed how they illustrated JI as a coherent, cohesive network attempting to adapt to its environment. These changes have allowed JI members and their cause to survive, and while they continue to experience significant setbacks, JI members are resilient and will find a way to reemerge and fight another day. AQA might not have called itself JI, but traditionalist and pro-violence involvement in the coalition strongly indicates some of JI's most instrumental leaders were adapting their structure and tactics to strengthen JI and lead the *jihadi* movement in Indonesia.

The true nature of how JI's members coordinate remains muddy. Some evidence supports interpretations that JI exists as two separate factions: traditionalists and pro-violence. Traditionalists remain a separate movement, and pro-violence elements may revert back to Top's loose cellular structure and carry out bombings as opportunities present themselves. Alternative interpretations do not dismiss this relationship, but it lacks thorough accuracy. JI's parts may be separate, but they are mutually supportive. This chapter advocates the latter explanation's line of thinking. This separate but mutually beneficial relationship is the one that has allowed JI to endure, and it will allow JI's message and members to not only survive but also adapt into a new and diverse threat in the future.<sup>388</sup> There is already evidence that violence will continue, and the guerilla-style assassination tactics utilized thus far are a clear indication the vision and tactics JI's leaders espoused through AQA have taken root.<sup>389</sup>

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<sup>388</sup> Singh, *The Talibanization of Southeast Asia*, 126, 131, 152-153.

<sup>389</sup> Farouk Arnaz, "Terrorist on the Move to Java Prison," *The Jakarta Globe*, October 27, 2010, <http://www.thejakartaglobe.com/home/terrorist-on-the-move-to-java-prison/403614>.

## V. CONCLUSION

### A. INTRODUCTION

While some terrorist movements decline and even disappear, JI has evolved in ways that enable it to remain Southeast Asia's most dangerous Islamist terrorist threat. As this thesis has shown, JI clearly has not disappeared. To the contrary, its members have not only survived but have adapted, making the JI threat today a more diverse and progressively difficult one to counter. Yet until just a couple years ago, the conventional wisdom was that JI was internally divided and its capacity for violence sharply diminished. JI's unexpected adaptation and survival presents a puzzle that this thesis has sought to resolve by tracing JI's evolution from its inception through the present day.

Part of the reason why JI's members have been able to adapt successfully is because Southeast Asian governments and their allies have developed CT policies based on a particular interpretation of JI. They have tended to see JI as composed of two factions, traditionalists and pro-violence militants, and have focused their CT policies on reducing the terrorist activities carried out by the pro-violence militants. However, as this thesis has shown, there is much more cooperation between the two factions than commonly thought. In fact, JI's leaders have been able to evolve the group in creative and successful ways, in large part because the traditionalist wing has continued to regenerate membership, resources, and thus facilitate acts of violence in pursuit of the entire group's ideological objectives. Reliance on inaccurate interpretations has failed to sufficiently address the true nature of the JI threat. Far too little time and space has been given to analyzing traditionalists and their partnership with pro-violence militants leading to an enduring JI movement.

This thesis shows that describing as accurately as possible how JI has changed over the past two decades remains a challenge because much of what is known about JI has been overshadowed by analysis of their attack elements. This thesis introduces

findings that challenge the conventional wisdom, and which the author hopes will influence future CT policies so that JI and the transnational *jihadi* movement writ large will not be able to continue to survive, adapt, and perpetuate their struggle.

In order to accurately describe what JI is and how it has changed over time, this thesis examined JI's ideology, leadership, organizational structure, and operations and tactics over the course of the group's nearly 20-year existence in order to trace important kinds of variation and continuity. Describing variation and continuity has enabled the author to show how the two competing interpretations emerged, and assess the relative accuracy of these two competing interpretations.

This chapter briefly summarizes the findings of this thesis, which have allowed the author to develop a detailed description and reach a solid conclusion about the accuracy of interpretations describing how JI has evolved and the true nature of the JI threat. It reflects on how JI's members created and developed the organization into a cohesive terrorist organization capable of carrying out lethal terrorist attacks. It highlights how JI's members evolved the group after Bali 2002 in order to remain Southeast Asia's most dangerous terrorist threat. It then reviews how JI leaders evolved the group yet again following Jakarta 2009 in an effort to remain a coherent terrorist movement capable of advancing towards its objectives.

This description of JI's ideology, leadership, organizational structure, and operations and tactics demonstrates that JI began as a united organization. It changed over time into two separate, yet mutually supportive administrative and operational divisions: traditionalists and pro-violence militants respectively. Evidence shows JI's divisions continue to work in this way today, but recent events indicate JI members are making efforts to unite the group more formally and bolster their resources in the form of the AQA coalition, which looks to place JI leadership at its center. Describing how JI has evolved in this manner shows that alternative interpretations of how JI has evolved are in fact more accurate descriptions. JI's members are largely united and actively coordinating to operate collectively and effectively around Southeast Asian governments and their allies' CT efforts. This is the current nature of the JI threat. It is a sophisticated, dangerous, and enduring threat.

By understanding the true nature of the JI threat, the author's findings become increasingly important because they are relevant to how Southeast Asia and its allies should counter JI and groups like it. Now that it is known how JI members have evolved, one can properly evaluate the threat it poses to U.S. and Indonesian interests, develop and broaden the understanding of how terrorist groups might evolve, and offer suggestions for how Indonesia and its allies might improve their CT policy for the future.

## **B. CONCLUSIONS ON JI'S INCEPTION THROUGH BALI 2002**

The author's analysis and description of JI's origins, formal inception in 1993, and formative years culminating in Bali 2002 established a clear picture that in this first period of JI's history, its members became an organized, coherent, terrorist organization dedicated to their ideology, obedient to their leaders, and unswervingly loyal to one another. The author showed how Sungkar, Ba'asyir and the tightly knit following they developed formed and cultivated JI's ideology, organizational structure, and operations and tactics with the sole purpose of creating a united, counter-state movement capable of carrying out violent *jihad* as the means to establishing an Islamic state in Indonesia as the foundation to a pan-Islamic caliphate across Southeast Asia.

Important to understanding why the author's description is accurate, Chapter II showed that from its beginnings through Bali 2002, JI's members were very much a united organization. Despite the rise of internal debate over tactics between JI leaders sparked by serious losses in personnel and resources as a result of new, external-CT pressure, JI's leaders and members remained largely cohesive and their actions coherent. Evidence presented showed they continued to support one another's activities to the greatest extent possible, and demonstrated an aptitude to learn, adapt, and evolve their structure and tactics in order to become a more effective organization and continue to carry out acts of violence against Indonesian and Western interests. JI's ideology provided continuity despite internal friction. It reinforced their united nature, thus enabling JI elements to resiliently adjust to their environment, maintain cohesion across the region, and operate collectively. As such, their efforts culminated in the suicide bombings of two Western hotels and the U.S. Consulate in Bali on October 12, 2002.

These attacks confirmed JI was the most serious, lethal threat to the United States, Indonesia, and other Southeast Asian countries. More importantly, the collective effort of JI's members epitomized in these attacks show that despite both external and internal pressures on the group, its members could and would operate coherently to carry out major terrorist attacks in order to advance towards their objectives. By the time the Bali cell carried out its attacks in 2002, it was clear that JI's members were a capable, committed, and coherent terrorist group.

### C. CONCLUSIONS ON POST-BALI 2002 TO JAKARTA 2009

In response to the most coordinated, sophisticated attack JI elements had carried out to date, Southeast Asian governments and Indonesia's Muslim majority public applied significant pressure to JI's members and leadership. Throughout this period, SEA governments cracked down on JI elements, which led to the arrest or death of several hundred JI members. Muslims, outraged by the Bali cell's attacks and subsequent JI bombings, withdrew support for JI's cause. These pressures weighed down on JI's leaders, some of which exacerbated their existing internal debate over the efficacy of attack tactics.<sup>390</sup>

Still committed to JI's ideology, external and internal pressures compelled JI's leaders to evolve JI's organizational structure and operations and tactics so that the group could continue their struggle. Evidence capturing these changes led analysts to develop interpretations to account for how JI was changing. The first and leading interpretation concluded that JI had become fractured. Two JI factions emerged, each one commanded by influential JI leaders who embraced different approaches of how JI's members should wage *jihad*. Traditionalists or mainstream JI represented the consolidated JI movement. Their operations and tactics became largely administrative in nature. They worked to regenerate lost membership and resources primarily through religious outreach and engagement with civil society. Their efforts were aimed at preparing their members and the environment for a future, large-scale *jihad* at the right time. A much smaller pro-violence division operated clandestinely, largely autonomously, and carried out annual

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<sup>390</sup> Whitmire, "Jemaah Islamiyah Remains Active and Deadly," 181, 198.

symbolic bombings under JI's banner throughout 2005. They went to ground following heavy CT pressure in 2005, but regrouped and executed successful suicide bombings in 2009. Evidence shows mainstream JI members throughout this period condemned pro-violence bombings, but they did not condemn the pro-violence division per se, leading experts to believe that JI was no longer a cohesive, coherent organization. In summary, the conventional wisdom that JI had developed into two competing factions emerged.

Alternative interpretations describing how JI was changing also surfaced. These interpretations recognized the friction between JI's leaders, but claimed that describing JI as fractured was overlooking telling evidence. JI's factions still shared an ideology, and there were clear indications JI's divisions were coordinating their efforts at multiple levels.

The author's analysis of JI's ideology, leadership, organizational structure, and operations and tactics captured in Chapter III of this thesis showed that the conventional wisdom was inaccurate. Indeed, JI had morphed into two divisions, but it was not divided. United through ideology, which provided needed continuity to the damaged movement, JI's leaders had actually evolved the organization in creative and sophisticated ways. In response to various pressures, JI's leaders changed JI's structure, thus allowing members to "develop, improve, and employ new skills that enabled them to change their capabilities over time," which in turn, allowed the movement to regenerate, expand and sustain a campaign of terrorist attacks.<sup>391</sup> In truth, JI became mutually supportive administrative and operational divisions, namely traditionalists and pro-violence militants respectively. This division of labor and duties allowed the movement to "act systematically to fulfill its needs, strengthen its capabilities, and advance its strategic agenda."<sup>392</sup> The author's description shows JI evolved into a more effective organization, which allowed it to remain the single greatest security threat to Indonesia and possibly to Southeast Asia.<sup>393</sup>

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<sup>391</sup> Abuza, *Political Islam and Violence in Indonesia*, 37; and Jackson et al., *Aptitude for Destruction*, vol. 1, ix, xiii.

<sup>392</sup> Jackson et al., *Aptitude for Destruction*, vol. 1, ix.

<sup>393</sup> Abuza, *Political Islam and Violence in Indonesia*, 37.

The evidence the author presented showed JI's divisions at both the senior leadership and rank and file levels remained united, and they operated coherently through coordination and support of one another's activities. Having traced variation and continuity in key JI characteristics, it is more accurate to describe JI's divisions as mutually reinforcing, not mutually exclusive.<sup>394</sup> Overtly, the two divisions were factions, but in fact, traditionalist activities both directly and indirectly supported pro-violence militant operations and vice versa. As the author showed, in arguably every one of JI's pro-violence attacks during this period, pro-violence elements sought and received logistical, personnel, and safe haven from traditionalist sources, demonstrating clearly that JI's divisions have continued to work in concert. JI did not split; it evolved coherently. As such, throughout this period JI remained the most lethal threat to Indonesia, SEA nations and U.S. interests in the region.

#### **D. CONCLUSIONS ON POST-JAKARTA 2009 TO PRESENT**

The suicide bombings that JI's pro-violence elements carried out in Jakarta in 2009 and the evidence surrounding them jolted intelligence and security communities and puzzled experts. Several successful CT raids on pro-violence caches and safe houses and four years of relative peace in Indonesia led experts to believe the JI movement was fractured, damaged beyond near-term repair, and unlikely to mount coordinated, sophisticated attacks. This was clearly not the case. Evidence from investigations following Jakarta 2009 showed that Top and his pro-violence division supported by traditionalists who provided manpower, logistics, and safe haven were actively cooperating and operating coherently to launch attacks aimed at undermining Indonesian and Western governments in order to advance towards their shared ideological objectives. Top and some of his pro-violence operators were neutralized shortly after the attack. However, that did not signal the end of JI's pro-violence division or the coordination of administrative and operational efforts between mainstream JI and JI pro-violence militants.

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<sup>394</sup> Abuza, *Political Islam and Violence in Indonesia*, 54.

As presented in Chapter IV of this thesis, the conventional wisdom's description of how JI's leaders evolved the group was inaccurate. The author's description of JI's evolution from Jakarta 2009 through present day showed that despite continued debate between senior JI leadership, JI's traditionalist and pro-violence camps continued to carry out administrative and operational duties, respectively, and functioned as a coherent terrorist organization as demonstrated in JI's latest bombings. Its members remained committed to their shared ideology, and they evolved their divisions in such a way that they could remain cohesive and operate effectively largely under the radar of intelligence, security experts, and regional CT authorities. Moreover, recent evidence the author presented, specifically the development of JAT and the AQA coalition, shows that influential mainstream JI leaders continue to learn and adapt. The aftermath of both Jakarta 2009 and mainstream JI's shortcomings led JI leaders' Ba'asyir and Dulmatin to make more overt moves to consolidate JI's functional divisions under one leader. They recently joined forces with JI pro-violence militants and also with substantial elements of the *jihadi* movement writ large in an attempt to consolidate their operational and tactical capabilities to create an even more effective, diverse terrorist threat and place JI at its decision-making center. JI leaders' latest evolution of the group failed. The aftermath of AQA's dismantling has led to a "weak and divided" JI and *jihadi* movement.<sup>395</sup> However, if JI's history can provide any hints of its future, it is likely that JI's remaining members at large will bounce back, mutate, and strike again.

#### **E. AN ACCURATE DESCRIPTION OF HOW JI HAS EVOLVED**

Having reviewed this thesis's findings, it is now clearly accurate to describe JI's evolution as one united terrorist group compelled to evolve into two separate but mutually supportive administrative and operational divisions, which jointly execute near- and long-term tactical strategies in order to advance their shared ideological objectives. This evolution has allowed JI's members to survive and maintain their struggle without sacrificing the long-term strategy of the group or exposing traditionalists to heavy CT pressure. While they continue to experience setbacks, JI's evolution has allowed the

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<sup>395</sup> ICG Asia Briefing 107, 1.

movement to be resilient and find ways to reemerge and fight another day. JI's traditionalist and pro-violence divisions working both separately and in concert represent a progressively more lethal and difficult threat for American and Indonesian authorities to combat.

The author's description of JI's evolution showed how traditionalists and pro-violence elements supported, not detracted from, one another's activities. Recent events indicate JI's leaders remain united through ideology, and they continue to evolve their networks, converging and diverging as necessary in order to advance towards their objectives. So despite the failure of JAT and AQA, there are reasons to believe JI will adapt and evolve again because traditionalists continue to grow the capabilities the JI movement needs to not only survive but more importantly, to carry out terrorist attacks.

#### **F. THE IMPORTANCE OF HAVING AN ACCURATE DESCRIPTION**

Describing accurately how JI has evolved is extremely important for a number of reasons. At the broadest level, JI represents yet another case in which a terrorist group refuses to end, so its leaders and members evolve in creative and successful ways in response to external and internal pressures. This type of evolution allows a group to regenerate and sustain activities that support their objectives, despite considerable losses and changes to their CT and public environment. More importantly, understanding now that JI's divisions work in far more coherent ways than previously thought, one can revise the conventional wisdom and develop new approaches to dealing with JI and terrorist groups like it.

#### **G. COUNTERTERRORISM POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS**

The author's description of how JI has evolved impacts Indonesia and its allies' CT policies in one major way: it means observers of the region have to understand that while Indonesian and Southeast Asia's counterterrorism operations and capabilities have had great success at combating pro-violence attack nodes, many are still not seeing

the whole picture. Traditionalists are far more important to JI's struggle than they have been given credit for. Understanding that, regional authorities must adjust current CT responses accordingly.

While Indonesia and their allies' CT efforts have curtailed JI's terrorist activities in commendable ways, they continue to fall short of adequately addressing the problem of defeating the JI movement's ability to regenerate itself. Killing or detaining terrorist operatives alone does not reduce the ability of JI's religious ideologues to preach JI's insidious yet seductive *salafi jihadi* ideology and recruit new blood and generate new resources with it.<sup>396</sup> CT authorities must counter JI differently than they have been. If CT authorities do not, history and recent events show that remaining traditionalists and pro-violence militants—or the latest mutation—will not only retain the capacity for violence but they also retain the ability to regenerate. Regional CT policies have to change in order to combat the JI/*jihadi* threat more thoroughly. As should be clear by now, JI's ideology taught by traditionalists, espoused in traditionalist publications and preached during religious outreach and social service activities' is the root of JI's continued survival. Traditionalists use JI's ideology to continue to grow new generations of *jihadists* and generate resources, and JI's ideology motivates pro-violence militants to continue to mount and carry out acts of massive, lethal violence.

Security experts with influence in the region need to emphasize to regional authorities that traditionalists are the heart of the JI movement. Comprehensive intelligence describing links between traditionalists and pro-violence militants remains insufficient.<sup>397</sup> Authorities should closely monitor traditionalist efforts because it is they who enable JI pro-violence operatives to carry out attacks and allow the JI and *jihadi* movement to continue to recover. It is no doubt a slippery slope because “the lines between violent and non-violent organizations” are muddy and pressuring them haphazardly could lead to more harm than good.<sup>398</sup> It is clear that Indonesia's counterterrorism success thus far has been perceived as “politically legitimate because it

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<sup>396</sup> ICG Asia Report 189, 15.

<sup>397</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

<sup>398</sup> ICG Asia Briefing 107, 12.

has not come at the expense of rule of law or democracy.”<sup>399</sup> That being said, since 2004, JI traditionalists have been “active in fundraising, social-welfare activities, humanitarian relief and *dakwah*.”<sup>400</sup> It is known that these efforts “facilitate recruitment and not infrequently provide shelter” to JI pro-violent militants, yet Indonesian authorities remain unequipped to crackdown on all facets of JI’s sophisticated network.<sup>401</sup> Indonesia and its allies must find effective ways of continuing to investigate and prosecute direct acts of terrorism, and at the same time develop and institutionalize a program to combat traditionalists effectively or else the region will continue to only treat the symptoms, not cure the disease.

Creating enduring partnerships with an increase in information sharing; monitoring of suspected terrorists and their support networks; and tactics, techniques and procedures exchanges between U.S. Australian, South and Southeast Asian intelligence, security, and CT authorities is a first and important step. By doing so, the probability of developing a better idea of what the danger signs of terrorist radicalization and “inciting violence” look like and stronger evidence of enduring links between pro-violence terrorists and traditionalists will increase. This will begin to provide regional law enforcement with the tools they need to not only prosecute terrorist actors but also disable the proliferation of JI’s ideology and defeat the movement once and for all in a transparent, legitimate, lasting way.<sup>402</sup>

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<sup>399</sup> Abuza, “Indonesian Counter-Terrorism: The Great Leap Forward,” 7.

<sup>400</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

<sup>401</sup> ICG Asia Briefing 107, 12.

<sup>402</sup> ICG Asia Briefing 95, 13; and Jones, “Briefing for the New President: The Terrorist Threat in Indonesia and Southeast Asia,” 78.

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