IMPROVISED EXPLOSIVE DEVICES: BOOKLET OF RELATED READINGS 4

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π **59 Years of Service to the Federal Government** π
1948 – 2007

PREFACE

This booklet represents the second in a series of compilations of print and electronic articles that are relevant to the defeat of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) that insurgent and terrorist operatives use to kill and injure U.S. military forces and civilian populations. The readings are related to IED technology, social networks that may provide insight into how insurgent groups communicate and relate to their members, and other technical and cultural phenomena that will help the Joint Improvised Explosive Defeat Organization (JIEDDO) meet its mission.

The first section of the booklet contains abstracts of the articles included in the booklet in alphabetical order by author and title. The abstracts are hyperlinked to the article itself located later in the booklet. At the end of each article is a hot link to the original article on the Internet. Information of particular relevance is highlighted in yellow.

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Alhomayed, Tariq. "Is London Tora Bora?" *Asharq Al-Awsat*, December 2, 2007.

> The editor-in-chief of *Asharq Al-Awsat* laments on the volume of jihadist thought and expression emanating from London and the nearly 17,000 Internet websites that promote radical ideology.

"Collision Avoidance Technology for Mine Haul Trucks," *Physorg.com*, December 5, 2007.

> Researchers have developed a 360-degree proximity detection system using a standard Doppler radar system and adapted it with integrated signal processing for use in oversize vehicles. The technology will alert the driver if a hidden object is moving relative to the mine haul truck, what direction it is moving, what its rate of change is, and whether a collision will occur—all within one-tenth of a second.

Gartenstein-Ross, Daveed and Nick Grace. "The Bombs of Dhamma," *The Weekly Standard*, December 10, 2007.

> Pakistan musicians attempt to create music comfortable for Pakistanis that combines Western freedoms and Sufism, which is characterized by a mystical and tolerant practice of Islam. Religious extremists have issued death threats against them.

Haider, Kamran. "First Woman Suicide Bomber Strikes in Pakistan," *Reuters*, December 4, 2007.

> The first incident of a female suicide bomber executing an attack in Pakistan occurred on December 4 in Peshawar. This article describes some of the details.

Hider, James. "Power of One Has al-Qa'ida on Run," *The Australian*, December 1, 2007.

> This article provides an inside look at a former Iraqi military intelligence officer who initially supported Sunni resistance after 2003. Now he has made a major contribution in reducing violence in one of Baghdad's most volatile neighborhoods.

Jarecka, Alexandria. "German Mosque, Police Pair Up to Fight Urban Crime," *Deutsche Welle*, December 2, 2007.

> German police in the Ruhr city of Essen (population approximately 600,000) have turned to the imams in three mosques to assist them in preventing crime. Police say pressure from the imams has helped curb youth crime and pushed down delinquency rates among immigrants in the region. Their project has been copied and is being adapted by cities across Germany.

Jeena, Kushal. "Analysis: Indian Rebels Target Courts," *Middle East Times*, December 5, 2007.

> Some Indian security experts believe that the Jaish-e-Mohammed terrorist group is changing strategy, moving from civilian targets to the judiciary in the state of Uttar Predesh, India's most populous region.

Katz, Yaakov. "IDF May Install Sensors Around Gaza," *The Jerusalem Post*, December 3, 2007.

> Israel is considering the possibility of installing a system of underground sensors along the Gaza Strip border fence to enhance detection capabilities in face of growing attempts by Palestinian terrorists to infiltrate into Israel. The system' developer, Sonic Lynx Company, says the system is based on hundreds of miniature sensors that are hidden underground and can detect and identify movement within a 200-meter radius. Sonic Lynx has also recently completed development of a hand-held system that can "see through" shipping containers and trucks and detect whether a live being is inside.

Krupa, Gregg. "Islamic Leader Writes a Story for Tolerance," *The Detroit News*, December 5, 2007.

> The imam of the United States' largest mosque has recently written a book (*American Crescent*) in which he uses the story of his life to explain why Islam is ultimately good for America and why America is good for Islam. [Researcher Note: To what degree has the Human Terrain System (HTS) of the task force utilized American Muslims to gain insight on certain aspects of the endeavor?]

Lubold, Gordon. "For Marines, Fewer Bombproof Trucks," *The Christian Science Monitor*, November 30, 2007.

> This article is a discussion of the USMC decision to purchase fewer Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicles. The article summarizes that the decision was based on the Corps' own changing assessment of the vehicles' limitations, a belief in the lessening of attacks in Iraq, and an assessment that Marine forces may leave Iraq and deploy to Afghanistan.

Lufti, Manal. "Turkey: Q&A with Mufti of Istanbul Mustafa Cagrici," *Asharq Al-Awsat*, November 30, 2007.

> Dr. Mustafa Cagrici is a Turkish professor for Islamic theology. In his position as Mufti, he interprets and expounds on Islamic law and is the head cleric for Istanbul. While he supports ending Western hegemony and bringing peace to the Islamic world, he does not condone the issuing of fatwas that encourage jihad as discussed in this interview.

Naone, Erica. "Software That Organizes Intelligently," *Technology Review*, December 3, 2007.

This article describes new software that more efficiently organizes complex work projects and cuts across programs such as *Word*, *PowerPoint*, *Excel*, etc.

Schneier, Bruce. "Security in Ten Years," *Schneier on Security*, December 3, 2007.

Information technology security blogger Bruce Schneier and Marcus Ranum, Chief Security Officer of Tenable Network Security Inc., discuss the next ten years with respect to threats to the IT world.

Simonite, Tom. "Colour X-ray Machine Sees So Much More," *NewScientistTech*, November 28, 2007.

Researchers in Great Britain have demonstrated a color X-ray machine that can detect the chemical make-up as well as the structure and shape of a sample. They believe this new technique may be better at spotting smuggled substances, as well as abnormal body tissue.

Spengler. "Hirsi Ali, Atheism and Islam," *Asia Times*, December 4, 2007.

This is an opinion piece on Hirsi Ali. Born in Somalia, she was a filmmaker with Theo van Gogh who was murdered in the Netherlands for producing anti-Islam material. She subsequently renounced Islam, was branded a Muslim apostate, and now lives in the U.S. The author addresses why Muslims who renounce their faith become atheists rather than join another religion.

Stober, Dan. "Promises of Motorcycles, Cell Phones for Suicide Bombers," *Stanford News Service*, October 24, 2007.

This article discusses the research and conclusions concerning suicide bombers made by Martha Crenshaw, a senior fellow at the Center for International Security and Cooperation (CISAC). Particularly enlightening is her list (included at the end of the article) of thirteen recommended books on the subject.

"Subliminal Flag-Waving Discourages Extreme Ideas," *NewScientist*, December 5, 2007.

Psychologists at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem showed volunteers in two groups—those who strongly identified with Israeli nationalism and those who weakly identified with it—a brief image of an Israeli flag or a control image. The image appeared for long enough to be registered by the brain but not long enough for conscious awareness. Those who had viewed the flag shifted their position towards the middle ground and became less extreme.

ARTICLES

MIDDLE EAST TIMES

Analysis: Indian rebels target courts

KUSHAL JEENA (UPI Correspondent), Published: December 05, 2007

NEW DELHI, Nov. 28 (UPI) -- The court bombings last month in the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh by Islamist militants ==marks a shift in their strategy, moving from civilian targets to the judiciary==, experts say.

"The serial bomb blasts at three places in Uttar Pradesh demonstrate a change in the terror strategy," said Ajai Sahani, executive director of the Institute of Conflict Management, a nongovernmental think tank. "They are now targeting the judiciary because advocates (lawyers) are not … taking up the cases of arrested militants."

At least 13 people, including four lawyers, were killed and 60 injured when six bombs went off in three court complexes in Uttar Pradesh in late November. Planted on bicycles parked outside the lawyers' chambers in Lucknow, Faizabad and Varanasi, the bombs were synchronized to explode shortly after 1:15 p.m. Indian intelligence and security agencies linked the blasts to Islamist terrorism.

The explosions assume significance as they have come in the wake of the judgments in the Mumbai serial bombings of March 1993 and the Coimbatore serial blasts of February 1998. In both cases, many terrorists were found guilty and sentenced to various terms of imprisonment.

The attacks also came after the arrest of three suspected members of the militant Jaish-e-Mohammed in Uttar Pradesh state. These suspects were alleged to have planned to kidnap a dignitary in order to secure the release of Mohammed Afzal, who has been sentenced to death for his role in the attack on Parliament in December 2001.

Investigators received an e-mail sent minutes after the serial court bombings in Uttar Pradesh. The message said the blasts were carried out because state police arrested innocent Muslims and framed them with fake charges. It said lawyers had assaulted those arrested. The message said its senders were not foreign mujahedin and didn't have links with foreign

groups such as Lashkar-e-Toiba, Harkat-ul-Jihadi-Islami, which India regards as terrorist groups.

"This is not the war between two communities, but this is war for civilization. We want to empower the society from injustice, corruption etc., which is prevailing in the society nowadays. Only Islam has the power to establish a civilized society and this can be only possible in Islamic rule, which can be achieved by only one path, jihad," the e-mail said.

Investigating agencies are not ruling out the role of the banned Students Islamic Movement of India as similar language was used by the group at a convention in Mumbai in 2000.

The two Muslims, which the e-mail said were innocent, were arrested last month in connection with a plan to allegedly kidnap Rahul Gandhi, a ruling Congress Party lawmaker and son of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. Police said the two men were Pakistani nationals and members of Jaish-e-Mohammad.

Lawyers in the town of Faizabad, Uttar Pradesh state, denied five other suspected Jaish terrorists, alleged to have been involved in a 2005 attack, representation. Their counterparts in Varanasi refused to defend Mohammad Waliullah, a cleric charged with facilitating the 2006 bombings of the city railway station and the Sankat Mochan temple.

State intelligence agencies say the court complex bombings have provided new evidence of the resilience of Islamist networks in the state. Last year, India's Supreme Court upheld the ban on SIMI and rejected its claim it was not involved in terrorism. Despite years of legal and police efforts to contain this Islamic students group, the government said it continued to expand its network to provide fresh recruits and logistical support to Islamist terror groups operating in India.

SIMI was banned in 2001. It, however, developed close ties with the Jamaat-e-Islami in Bangladesh, as well as its student wing, the Islami Chhatra Shibir. Many SIMI members later used those links to receive training from Harkat-ul-Jihad-e-Islami, a Bangladesh-based terror outfit.

"Several of SIMI's HUJI-trained cadre are believed to have participated in recent terror strikes in Uttar Pradesh," said a Lucknow-based intelligence official.

http://www.metimes.com/Security/2007/12/05/analysis_indian_rebels_target_courts/40c7/

PHYSORG.COM
SCIENCE : PHYSICS : TECH : NANO : NEWS

Collision avoidance technology for mine haul trucks

December 5, 2007

Today's mine haul tracks are massive vehicles in which drivers have limited vision and cannot see anything within around 30 meters. If a smaller vehicle on the mine site gets in the way of one of these monsters, the consequences can be dire.

CSIRO Exploration & Mining's Dr Patrick Glynn is leading a research project to help solve this problem by developing a 360 degree proximity detection system.

"We took a standard Doppler radar system and adapted it with integrated signal processing," Dr Glynn says.

Mine haul truck. Credit: CSIRO

"The technology will alert the driver if a hidden object is moving relative to the mine haul truck, what direction it is moving, what its rate of change is, and whether a collision will occur. In all cases the system reports to the driver in one tenth of a second, far shorter than the average reaction time for a driver of about one second."

The Australian Coal Association Research Program (ACARP), which is funding this research, awarded Dr Glynn a 2007 ACARP Award for Research Excellence.

In his citation for Dr Glynn, ACARP Executive Director Mark Bennetts said, "Given the competence of the science providers engaged in the 175 current ACARP research projects, it is a real accomplishment to win this award and a strong vote of confidence in your team."

While the research is still in its development stage, a prototype has been tested at Goonyella riverside, one of the largest open cut coal mines in Australia, located in Queensland's Bowen basin south west of Mackay.

Current plans are to tie in the system with an existing reversing camera and monitor. Additional video cameras will automatically display a detected vehicle on the monitor, along with its speed and position.

"The real challenge is to provide information in a natural way so that the driver does not have to take their eyes off the road. Drivers already have a lot on their hands and should not be overloaded with information," Dr Glynn says.

"In a recent accident in South Africa, a light vehicle came between two haul trucks. Dust hid the light vehicle from the second truck which ran straight over it.

"I want to avoid a repeat of any incident such as this. If they had effective collision avoidance technology on board, they could have taken evasive action."

Source: CSIRO Australia

http://www.physorg.com/news116070563.html

NewScientistTech

Colour X-ray machine sees so much more

Tom Simonite, NewScientist.com news service, 28 November 2007

A colour X-ray machine that can detect the chemical make-up as well as the structure and shape of a sample has been demonstrated by UK researchers. They say the new technique could be better at spotting smuggled substances or abnormal body tissue.

Regular X-ray machines and CT scanners can produce images in 2 or 3D, but only in monochrome. In the same way that black-and-white film is blind to other wavelengths of light, these techniques cannot distinguish between different wavelengths of X-ray.

"We have miniaturised a detector that can differentiate those different wavelengths," says Robert Cernik, a materials scientist at Manchester University, UK, who developed the device with colleagues Kern Hauw Khor and Conny Hansson.

The detector has 256 silicon pixels that are each 50 microns wide and can pick up different X-ray frequencies. A 20 cm-thick protective tungsten filter, with 256 holes that correspond to the pixels, sits over the top of the detector.

After a sample is hit with an X-ray beam, the device collects the scattered X-rays onto the different pixels of the detector. "Each looks at one area of the sample, you move the sample through the scanner to get a full 3D image," says Cernik. The new technique is called Tomographic Energy Dispersive Diffraction Imaging, or TEDDI.

Diffraction 'fingerprint'

A previous TEDDI prototype used a single pixel to slowly build an image over about 20 hours. By using an array of X-ray sensors the prototype can do it in just two hours. With improved detectors Cernik says it should be possible to reduce this to a few minutes.

Being able to sense the colour of the X-rays scattered by the sample means much more information can be extracted, the researchers say. For example, the diffraction pattern of different wavelengths can reveal material properties or chemical make-up in more detail.
"If you were looking for abnormal tissue, you would know the particular diffraction 'fingerprint' you were looking for," says Cernik. "The pattern can also measure changes in the crystal structure of materials like aluminium, for example, to look at the strain in a weld."

Cernik and colleagues have tested their machine on pieces of polymer, bone and aluminium, but the current prototype can only examine samples to a depth of 1 to 2 millimetres. This is because its silicon detector cannot sense the high-power X-rays needed to make it through thicker or denser materials.

"We know exactly how to do that," says Cernik, who suggests that a detector made from a heavier semiconductor than silicon, like cadmium zinc telluride, would do the trick. Physicists using synchrotron particle accelerators already use such detectors, which could perhaps be modified for the job, he says.

http://technology.newscientist.com/article/dn12977-colour-xray-machine-sees-so-much-more.html

REUTERS 🌐 **AlertNet**
Foundation   Alerting humanitarians to emergencies

First woman suicide bomber strikes in Pakistan

Reuters, 4 Dec 2007

PESHAWAR, Pakistan, Dec 4 (Reuters) - A woman suicide bomber blew herself up near a military checkpost in the northwestern Pakistani city of Peshawar on Tuesday in the first suicide attack by a woman in the country, police said.

The woman, clad in an all-enveloping burqa, did not cause any casualties among troops at the checkpost when she detonated her explosives after she was challenged, an Interior Ministry spokesman said.

"She was carrying a basket over her head. She blew herself up as she came close to the checkpost," Tanvir-ul-Haq Sipra, Peshawar police chief, told Reuters.

Pakistan has seen a wave of suicide attacks blamed on Islamist militants amid rising violence in recent months.

Pakistani tribal areas along the border with Afghanistan have long been regarded as safe havens for al Qaeda and Taliban militants who fled U.S.-led forces hunting them in Afghanistan following the Sept. 11 attacks in 2001.

But in recent months, militants have spread their activities towards urban centres in the country's northwest, including Peshawar.

The army last month launched an operation in the scenic Swat Valley, also in the northwest, to flush out hundreds of pro-Taliban militants and their radical cleric leader.

The army said 230 militants have been killed during the offensive and scores captured. Twenty-five civilians and 15 soldiers have also been killed.

Meanwhile, suspected militants kidnapped six policemen on Monday after blowing up a security checkpost in the tribal region of Bajaur, near the Afghan border.

No-one has claimed responsibility for the incident but the official suspected militants linked to al Qaeda and the Taliban could be involved.

In the troubled southwestern province of Baluchistan, police arrested an Afghan man suspected of planting a bomb in an Islamic school that killed six people on Monday.

The man was caught after residents told police of a suspicious man staying with a villager near Qila Saifullah, the town where blast took place, said police officer Umar Farooqi.

(Reporting by Faris Ali and Mian Saeed-ur-Rehman; Writing by Kamran Haider; Editing by Robert Birsel)

http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/ISL86154.htm

For Marines, fewer bombproof trucks

Corps trims its request for MRAPs by nearly 40 percent. Is the need for them in Iraq still as pressing?
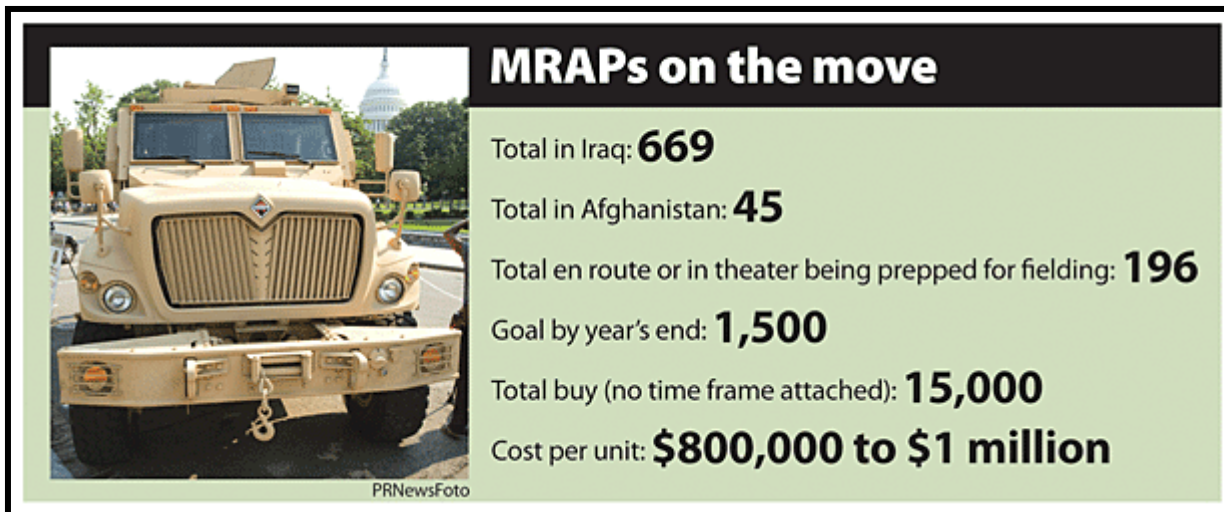
By Gordon Lubold | Staff writer of *The Christian Science Monitor*, November 30, 2007

Washington

The Marine Corps is making a major cut in the number of bombproof vehicles it is buying, a surprise move that underscores how much safer Iraq has become in recent months and the Corps' own changing assessment of the vehicles' limitations.

On Thursday, Commandant Gen. James Conway, the Corps' top officer, submitted to a Pentagon procurement body his recommendation to cut by almost 40 percent the number of Mine Resistant, Ambush Protected vehicles he will buy, from 3,700 MRAPs to about 2,225.

The decision is bound to be controversial – and to spur debate in Washington about why the United States is spending billions to buy thousands of the mammoth vehicles even as security in Iraq is looking much improved from a year ago, when the American public and Congress first rallied behind the life-saving program.

MRAPs on the move

Total in Iraq: **669**

Total in Afghanistan: **45**

Total en route or in theater being prepped for fielding: **196**

Goal by year's end: **1,500**

Total buy (no time frame attached): **15,000**

Cost per unit: **$800,000 to $1 million**

PRNewsFoto

Conway's move is not likely to affect the Army's purchase of the vehicles, at least for now, defense officials say. But it could raise questions about the kinds of MRAPs the Pentagon is buying and have reverberations within the industry that's been building the trucks at a furious pace.

Earlier this year, the Marine Corps had planned to buy 3,700 of the vehicles at nearly $1 million apiece, all to be contracted by early 2008 and sent to the field soon thereafter. The Corps already has contracted for all the MRAPs it wants, so General Conway's move in effect ends future contracting for the service.

"There have been some things that have happened since then that is causing us to rethink a little bit what the total number ought to be," Conway said during a recent trip to Iraq and Afghanistan. "You combine the reduction in attacks with the fact that we're therefore not losing as many vehicles as we thought, with the fact that we're finding them not as capable off-road as we thought ... that all leads us now to believe that the number [of MRAPs] is something less than 3,700."

The recommendation, if approved, could save about $1.7 billion in Defense Department funding, Corps officials say.

Conway is concerned that, despite the trucks' effectiveness against roadside bombs, MRAPs are too massive to be carried aboard the Navy ships on which the Corps traditionally rides and too cumbersome for all but the flattest terrain. His decision comes as the Corps looks to draw down its forces in western Iraq and is lobbying to deploy to the largely mountainous terrain of Afghanistan, where the vehicles would be harder to use.

Conway this fall has been openly raising questions about the trucks' size and effectiveness. At the same time, Marine operations in Iraq's Anbar Province slowed as the area became more peaceful. Then a Washington think tank issued a study on MRAPs that asked the same questions as Conway, giving the general some political cover from lawmakers who may fight any downsizing of the MRAP program. Members of Congress with an interest in the program could not be reached by press time.

The Pentagon in recent months has scrambled to get more of the vehicles into Iraq and a smaller number into Afghanistan. A total of 669 are in Iraq, 45 are in Afghanistan, and another 153 are being prepared for fielding in Iraq over the next month. The goal is to have 1,500 MRAPs in Iraq by the end of December. Pentagon press secretary Geoff Morrell said Wednesday the first sea-shipment of vehicles is under way.

"To get these vehicles to our troops as soon as possible, not only are they being air-lifted and sea-lifted, but once those that are sea-lifted to Kuwait arrive, they will be then flown into theater," he said.

At the behest of Defense Secretary Robert Gates, who has made the MRAP program his top priority for troop protection, the Pentagon plans to buy as many as 15,000 of the vehicles in coming years.

Conway's recommendation should not signal anything more than the new reality the Corps faces in Iraq, says a Marine official.

"We're not saying that the Army doesn't need it," says the official, who spoke anonymously because of the sensitivity of the recommendation. "But if things continue on current trend lines in Iraq, we could be walking around in soft covers and no body armor in 2008."

Earlier this year, the Corps was called on the carpet for apparent foot-dragging on buying MRAPs. Criticism mounted after documents suggested that a Marine commander recently returned from Iraq had requested the vehicles as early as 2005, but that the Corps did not respond quickly enough. Corps officials, for their part, say that the request was for a "capability," not a specific vehicle, and that the Corps honored that request, which was for up-armored Humvees, not the trucks now known as MRAPs.

By any standard, the trucks are immense. While effective at countering the deadly effects of most roadside bombs, MRAPs also insulate troops who in a modern counterinsurgency are expected to be out among the populace as much as possible. In many parts of Iraq, the trucks have been used as route-clearing vehicles, in which soldiers or marines drive down roads to check for roadside bombs – knowing that if a bomb goes off they are likely to be safe.
But by most accounts, the trucks are not effective in urban terrain or over bridges because they are so heavy. A minor incident during Conway's visit to Iraq last week is one example.

The general and his entourage were riding in several of the trucks through Haditha, in northwestern Iraq, when one got stuck on a median strip on a divided street. The truck's wheels got jammed around the concrete pad, preventing the driver from turning the large tires to drive the vehicle off the strip. After a delay, the driver maneuvered the truck down the length of the strip to get it free.

http://www.csmonitor.com/2007/1130/p01s11-usmi.html

German Mosque, Police Pair Up to Fight Urban Crime

Alexandra Jarecka

Shoplifting and extortion used to be commonplace in part of the western German city of Essen. But a partnership between local imams and the police has improved the situation.

Police in Essen have turned to religious leaders, not handcuffs, to deal with local crime

December 2, 2007 – Essen police officer Herbert Czarnyan was familiar with the unemployment, poverty and low education levels that led to youth crime in Essen's Katernberg neighborhood. But instead of cracking down on local youths himself, he turned to imams in Katernberg's three mosques for help.

Czarnyan organized a meeting that included businesspeople, the parents of children, who vandalized local property, and a Lebanese imam.

"[The imam] addressed the parents and told them that their children's behavior was a disgrace for the community, and he demanded a response from the fathers," Czarnyan said of the first time Essen's police sought religious aid in fighting crime 10 years ago.

Expanded cooperation

Since that initial meeting, the partnership between police and the religious leader has grown to include talks with at-risk youth and their parents, and the mosque has become a contact point for educational opportunities and recreational activities.

Police say pressure from the imam helped curb youth crime and push down delinquency rates among immigrants in the region.

Mosques have become a center for recreational activities

After seeing the progress made at Essen's Lebanese mosque, Halit Pismek, an imam at one of Essen's two Turkish mosques, gave his support to the project.

"Why shouldn't we work with the police?" Pismek said, adding that the mosque's religious council agreed with the decision. "We are very satisfied. Our major problem was domestic violence and crime, and the members of the community wanted to find a way to solve this problem. The police offer was perfect for us."

Shared concerns

Police and religious leaders communicate better thanks to the ongoing cooperation

The agreement has also helped police, according to Chief Commissioner Frank Matuszek. The youth in Essen-Katernberg understand that there is no more space beyond the reach of the law.

Matuszek said the cooperation has also helped break down barriers between mosque members and police officers.

"We have learned more about each other in this project and have thus been able to dispel a lot of fears," he said. "The mosque community was able to see that police officers are only citizens in uniform and are also family fathers with the same concerns."

Now 10 years old, the Essen project is being copied and adapted by cities across Germany with Czarnyan often holding lectures about his work in large German cities, and Pismek passing on his experiences to other religious leaders.

http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,2144,2972866,00.html

Hirsi Ali, atheism and Islam

By Spengler, December 4, 2007

Few public figures have done more to earn our sympathy than the Muslim apostate Ayaan Hirsi Ali, a fugitive from her native Somalia, and now a virtual exile from her adopted country, the Netherlands. Under constant threat since the 2004 murder by an Islamist of her collaborator, the Dutch filmmaker Theo van Gogh, Hirsi Ali warns the West that Islam presents a mortal threat to its freedoms.

America took her in last year when the Dutch government connived to remove her refugee status, but she remains something of an embarrassment to the George W Bush administration. This autumn the Dutch government removed her security detail, and the Americans have taken no steps to protect her. That is a stain on the honor of both countries.

Although she has the credibility of a witness as well as the moral standing of a victim, Hirsi Ali remains a bystander civilian in the great war of our times, whose broadest front is in the global South. That is, she proclaims herself to be an atheist. Millions of Muslims reportedly convert to Christianity each year, mainly in Africa. Islam is stagnant in Asia while tens of millions become Christian. Yet all the Muslim apostates whose voices we hear are atheists - not only Hirsi Ali, but also Salman Rushdie, the celebrated author of *The Satanic Verses*, the Syrian poet Adonis, and the pseudonymous Ibn Warraq, author of *Why I am not a Muslim* and several compendia of Koranic criticism.

Why do Muslim apostates gravitate towards atheism? That is not true of other religions. Many Jewish converts achieved prominence in 20th-century Christianity - for example, the recently deceased Cardinal Danielou of Paris, the martyred Carmelite nun Edith Stein (now canonized), and the great Protestant theologian Eugene Rosenstock-Huessy. But the name of no prominent Muslim convert to Christianity (much less to Judaism) comes to mind.

It is easy to change what we think, but very hard to change how we think. Contrary to superficial impressions, Islam is much closer in character to atheism than to Christianity or Judaism. Although the "what" of Muslim and atheistic thinking of course are very different, I shall endeavor below to prove that the "how" is very similar.

Hirsi Ali states that the West is at war with Islam, not with "terrorism", "Islamism", "radical Islam", or "Islamo-fascism". Here is a snippet from her November exchange with Reason [1]:

> *Reason:* The Polish Catholic Church helped defeat the [Wojciech] Jaruzelski puppet regime [1990]. Do you think Islam could bring about similar social and political changes?

> *Hirsi Ali:* Only if Islam is defeated. Because right now, the political side of Islam, the power-hungry expansionist side of Islam, has become superior to the Sufis and the Ismailis and the peace-seeking Muslims.

> *Reason:* Don't you mean defeating radical Islam?

> *Hirsi Ali:* No. Islam, period. Once it's defeated, it can mutate into something peaceful. It's very difficult to even talk about peace now. They're not interested in peace.

> *Reason:* We have to crush the world's 1.5 billion Muslims under our boot? In concrete terms, what does that mean, "defeat Islam"?

> *Hirsi Ali:* I think that we are at war with Islam. And there's no middle ground in wars.

Nonetheless Hirsi Ali has no clear idea how a war with Islam might proceed. Again, from the *Reason* interview:

> *Hirsi Ali:* Islam can be defeated in many ways. For starters, you stop the spread of the ideology itself; at present, there are native Westerners converting to Islam, and they're the most fanatical sometimes. There is infiltration of Islam in the schools and universities of the West. You stop that. You stop the symbol burning and the effigy burning, and you look them in the eye and flex your muscles and you say, "This is a warning. We won't accept this anymore." There comes a moment when you crush your enemy.

> *Reason:* Militarily?

> *Hirsi Ali:* In all forms, and if you don't do that, then you have to live with the consequence of being crushed.

The implication that the West will crush Islam by force borders on the absurd. Western armies, to be sure, could make short work of the military forces of any Muslim country, but what would they do then? Would they order Muslims to abandon their spiritual life in favor of John Locke and Thomas Hobbes, the heroes of Hirsi Ali? The West cannot stop Muslims from burning in effigy the editors of a Danish newspaper in their own countries.

Secular liberalism, the official ideology of almost all the nations of Western Europe, offers hedonism, sexual license, anomie, demoralization and gradual depopulation.

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Muslims do not want this. In Africa, Christian missionaries go to Muslims and offer them God's love and the hope of eternal life. But I am aware of no Christian missionaries active in the Muslim *banlieue* (outskirts) of the Paris suburbs or the Turkish quarters of Berlin.

By contrast, there is indeed a war with Islam, and it is being won in parts of the world where Christians wage it on spiritual grounds. No Christian army has had to march in its support. Europe, meanwhile, is losing ground to Islam because it declines to fight.

Hirsi Ali, to be sure, sympathizes with Judaism and Christianity, and allows that the two sister religions might be instrumental in countering Islam - but only because they are compatible with secular liberalism. As she told the *London Spectator* on November 28:

> Christianity is different from Islam because it allows you to question it. It probably wasn't different in the past, but it is now. Christians - at least Christians in a liberal democracy - have accepted, after Thomas Hobbes, that they must obey the secular rule of law; that there must be a separation of church and state. In Islamic doctrine such a separation has not occurred yet. This is what makes it dangerous!

I remember Hobbes as a hard-handed apologist for Oliver Cromwell's dictatorship rather than as a liberal democrat, but that is a quibble. The pressing question is why Muslim apostates cling to the secular liberalism that has failed so thoroughly in Western Europe. The trouble is that old habits of mind die slowly. That is not only true of Muslims. The sort of Eastern European Jews who hailed the false messiahs of the 17th century, for example, were attracted to the messianism of Karl Marx. Marxist intellectuals found it easy to convert to the so-called neo-Thomism colored by the Enlightenment rationalism of Francisco Suarez. Bolshevik brawlers in Germany in the 1930s often crossed the line from Red to Brown. And Muslims find it easier to be atheists than to be Christians or Jews.

Allah, as I have argued in this venue elsewhere, is a very different sort of god than YHWH and Jesus. As Benedict XVI explained in his September 2006 Regensburg address:

> For Muslim teaching, God is absolutely transcendent. His will is not bound up with any of our categories, even that of rationality. Here [Professor Theodore] Khoury quotes a work of the noted French Islamist R Arnaldez, who points out that Ibn Hazm went so far as to state that God is not bound even by his own word, and that "nothing would oblige him to reveal the truth to us. Were it God's will, we would even have to practice" idolatry.

What does it mean for God to be "absolutely transcendent"? In the normative doctrine of the 11th-century Muslim sage Abu Hamid al-Ghazali, Allah does not limit himself by ordering the world through natural law, for natural laws would impinge on his absolute freedom of action.

There are no intermediate causes, in the sense of laws of nature. Mars traverses an ellipse around the sun not because God has instituted laws of motion that require Mars to traverse an ellipse, but because Allah at every instant directs the angular velocity of Mars. Today, Allah happens to feel like pushing Mars about in an ellipse; tomorrow he might just as well do figure-eights.

Allah is everywhere doing everything at all times. He sets the spin on every electron, measures the jump of every flea, the frequency of every sneeze. That notion of a god who accepts no limitation, not even the limit of laws of nature that he created, characterizes mainstream Muslim thought since the 11th century. St Thomas Aquinas wrote of its deficiency, drawing on the critique of the 12th-century Jewish theologian and philosopher Moses Maimonides.

A century ago, the great German-Jewish theologian Franz Rosenzweig summarized the problem as follows (my translation):

> This has been the doctrine of the ruling orthodox philosophy in Islam. The whole impact of divine creative power crashes into every individual thing at every single moment. It is not so much that every thing is "renewed" at every moment; rather, it is "created" with hide and hair. Nothing can save itself from Allah's frightful, infinitesimally-split providence. The idea of "renewal" of the world [in Christian thought] maintains the connection between the individual thing and the one creation, and thereby with the unity of existence, precisely because it comprehends it within the whole, and thus grounds providence within creation.

> But this [Islamic] interpretation of providence as constant interference on the part of the creator destroys any possibility of such a connection. In the first case, Providence seen as the renewal of the act of creation through events is the fulfillment of what essentially is set into creation; in this [Islamic] case, providence - despite its intrinsic interference into creation at every moment and in every case - is a permanent competition between acts of creating and the unity of creation, in fact, a competition between God the Ruler of the World, and God the Creator. It is magic, not a sign made by God the World Ruler for God the Creator. Despite its vehement and haughtily carried-forward idea of the unity of God, Islam slides into a monistic paganism, if one might use that expression; *God competes with God at every moment, as if it were the colorfully contending gods of the pagan pantheon rolled into one* (emphasis added).

Allah is no more subject to laws of nature than the nature-spirits of the pagan world who infest every tree, rock and stream, and make magic according to their own whimsy. The "carried-forward idea of the unity of God" to which Rosenzweig refers, of course, is the monotheism carried forward in outward form from Judaism, but dashed to pieces against the competing notion of absolute transcendence.

As Rosenzweig observes, "An atheist can say, 'There is no God but God'." If God is everywhere and in all things, he is nowhere and in nothing. If there are no natural laws,

there need be no law-giver, and the world is an arbitrary and desolate place, a Hobbesian war of each aspect of nature against all. Contemplation of nature in Islam is solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short. It is not surprising that Islamic science died out a generation or two after al-Ghazali.

It is a commonplace observation that Islam is "fatalistic". Muslims typically conclude any statement about the future, e.g., "I'll see you at work tomorrow morning," with the qualifier, "Insha'Allah", "God willing". Because God is everywhere and in every action, acting without intermediate causes, the Judeo-Christian concept of divine providence is inconceivable in Muslim terms. If Allah refuses to be entangled by intermediate causes, no divine plan could possibly exist that humankind cannot understand directly, but works itself out through God's intermediaries. Rather than providence, Islam believes in the old pagan fate, the summation of the innumerable capricious acts that Allah in his absolute transcendence performs at every instant.

Allah is everywhere, which is to say that Allah is nowhere in particular. Allah's world is indistinguishable from the primeval world of paganism, in which the "colorfully contending pantheon" of nature-gods arranges a chaotic and incomprehensible show at every moment. The world without Allah would look not much different; if Allah acts in a whimsical manner without the constraint of laws of nature, we cannot tell the difference between Allah's actions and chaos.

It would be misguided to file this away as a curious relic of Medieval theology without direct bearing on the spiritual character of Islam. On the contrary, the absolute transcendence of Allah in the physical world is the cognate of his despotic character as a spiritual ruler, who demands submission and service from his creatures. The Judeo-Christian God loves his creatures and as an act of love makes them free. Humankind only can be free if nature is rational, that is, if God places self-appointed limits on his own sphere of action. In a world ordered by natural law, humankind through its faculty of reason can learn these laws and act freely. In the alternative case, the absolute freedom of Allah crowds out all human freedom of action, leaving nothing but the tyranny of caprice and fate.

The empty and arbitrary world of atheism is far closer to the Muslim universe than the Biblical world, in which God orders the world out of love for humankind, so that we may in freedom return the love that our creator bears for us. Atheism is an alternative to Islam closer to Muslim habits of mind than the love-centered world of Judaism and Christianity.

Hirsi Ali has my unqualified admiration. The courage which guided her journey from Somalia to the Netherlands still prompts her to warn of the dangers before the West at great risk to her own life. I have a similar admiration for Orhan Pamuk, now in virtual exile from his native Turkey, and Rushdie, who remains in danger of a Muslim death warrant, and other Muslim apostates who refuse to be intimidated. Courage, Winston Churchill said, is the first of the virtues, for without it, one does not have the opportunity to exercise the others. Yet it is not the only virtue, and I hope that Hirsi Ali's journey

takes her further, beyond atheism.

Note
    1. "The Trouble Is the West," *Reasononline*, November 2007.

http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Front_Page/IL04Aa01.html

IDF may install sensors around Gaza

Yaakov Katz , *THE JERUSALEM POST*, December 3, 2007

The defense establishment is considering the possibility of installing a system of underground sensors along the Gaza Strip border fence to enhance detection capabilities in face of growing attempts by Palestinian terrorists to infiltrate into Israel.

Two weeks ago, the IDF foiled two attempts by terrorists to infiltrate into Israel. In August, two terrorists, carrying weapons and explosives, succeeded in scaling the concrete border wall and attacking a nearby IDF base.

The system's developer, Rosh Ha'ayin-based Sonic Lynx Company, has proposed that the defense establishment install its early detection and decoding sensors along the Gaza perimeter, a move that would grant the IDF early-warning capabilities ahead of infiltration attempts.

A watchtower along the border with the Gaza Strip (on the right) may be soon protected by Sonic Lynx's perimeter solution based on underground sensors (bottom left).

"Our sensors can detect if the object approaching the perimeter is a human, an animal or a car based on the seismic and acoustic fluctuation," Sonic Lynx CEO Gil Pogozelich said.

Sonic Lynx's systems have already been installed in banks in South America, along gas pipelines in the Far East and in Brazil, and at Israel Chemical installations. The company is in advanced negotiations with an international airport in the southern United States to provide the system for perimeter security.

The system is based on hundreds of miniature sensors that are hidden underground and can detect and identify movement within a 200-meter radius.

Sonic Lynx plans to offer the IDF in the coming weeks a new portable model of the system - called Fortis - that would be ideal for protecting a military force camped out in enemy territory during an operation.

The system is based on rapid-deployable sensors that are connected by a cable to a command-and-control console that gathers and analyzes the readings. In the case of the portable system, the sensors would be connected to the console by cable and would not be operated wirelessly for defense against electronic-warfare systems.

"This system can be deployed wherever the force is - in an ambush or in a watchtower," Pogozelich said. "The detection will take place 20 seconds before the infiltration, which is critical time for a soldier to get ready and be prepared."

In addition to the perimeter solutions, <mark>Sonic Lynx has also recently completed the development of a hand-held system that can "see through" shipping containers and trucks and detect whether a live being is inside.</mark> The system was developed as an answer to the threat posed by terrorists who in 2004 hid inside a shipping container and committed a double suicide bombing at Ashdod Port.

The system, called HBR, has already been reviewed by the Prisons Service, which plans to install it at the entrances to its 30 installations.

"The system can detect, from outside, a human's movements within a closed container or truck," Pogozelich said. "This makes it ideal for curbing human trafficking and terrorist infiltration."

http://www.jpost.com/servlet/Satellite?cid=1195546786244&pagename=JPost%2FJPArticle%2FShowFull

Is London Tora Bora?

Sunday 02 December 2007

Tariq Alhomayed: Tariq Alhomayed is the Editor-in-Chief of *Asharq Al-Awsat*
From within the Egyptian Torah prison emerged an intellectual revision put forward by Dr Sayid Imam al Sharif, the theorist behind the fundamentalist Egyptian Islamic Jihad organization, entitled 'Initiative to Reform Jihad' in Egypt and the world so that indiscriminate killings, the targeting of civilians, the usurping of funds and the spreading of terror amongst people would be reconsidered.

Surprisingly, the reply, or rather the majority of attacks waged against these ideas, which seem to have taken place away from the eyes of the British, did not come from the caves of Tora Bora or from Al Qaeda in Iraq, or even from any Arab country. Rather, these attacks were launched from London where the ideas that call for reconsidering the rationalizing of murder and terror were deemed invalid and an act of surrender in order to improve Sharif's prison conditions or to mitigate his sentence.

How alarming and frustrating to hear such arguments emerge from London, especially since we have only just watched Osama Bin Laden's new recording in which he addresses Europe. We do not know if this tape is just another installment to his series of political speeches or if it is a coded message for his followers in Europe to carry out a terrorist act.

It is alarming because those who trade in death and destruction continue to flourish. A few days ago, Saudi security authorities announced the arrests of 208 people accused of having links to terrorism. The stated figure included those who wanted to carry out suicide attacks, others who intended to assassinate religious scholars with whom they disagreed and others who sought to mobilize public opinion via the internet.

One should never disregard the internet and the level of intellectual misguidance and the spread of terrorism that is taking place through it. It is enough to refer to

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the <mark>recent announcement made by Saudi intelligence authorities in which it stated that there are nearly 17,000 websites that adhere to the Takfir ideology.</mark> Fundamentalist websites in Europe have rushed to translate the Al Qaeda leader's recent speech into English, French, German and other languages.

The reason for such surprise towards the rejections of intellectual revisions by fundamentalist groups in Egyptian prisons is not because objection is disapproved of but rather because the objection came from London which, like many other states, is still under threat from terrorist acts, whilst the Mufti of Saudi Arabia is calling for the application of the Hirabah penalty to be carried out against terrorists.

If only this issue was limited to revisions! The truth is that we have seen parties in London that oppose and sanctify fighters in Iraq. Could we describe this as freedom of opinion or as support for Al Qaeda?

Freedom of opinion can never call for the killing of innocents. Margaret Thatcher used to say, "Deny terrorism the oxygen of publicity." In the media, we have fought and are still fighting a battle to expose terrorism, its instigators and those who justify it in the Arab world however; the problem is that we find that there is strong support for terrorism in London. Are we facing a problem of awareness or is it a result of what is taking place via the internet and the media?

http://www.asharqalawsat.com/english/news.asp?section=2&id=11057

Islamic leader writes a story for tolerance

The head of America's largest mosque tells a personal tale for greater religious acceptance.

Gregg Krupa / *The Detroit News***, Wednesday, December 5, 2007**

DEARBORN -- When Imam Sayid Hassan al-Qazwini and other religious leaders met at the White House with Bill Clinton in 1999, something the president said encouraged Qazwini's conviction that Americans needed to know more about Islam.

It was only when his daughter, Chelsea, took a class in world religions, Clinton said, that he understood how much Islam had in common with Christianity and Judaism.

"These words rang bells in my ears," Qazwini said, sitting in his office in the largest mosque in the country, the Islamic Center of America. "And I thought 'what could I do about educating a bigger number of people than I do just in the churches and the universities?' I thought: 'I need to write a book'."

Random House published "American Crescent" last month, and a group of interfaith leaders, including the Michigan Roundtable for Diversity & Inclusion, will meet at the mosque at 7 p.m. today to discuss it.

Imam Sayid Hassan al-Qazwini greets fellow Muslims after a discussion of his new book, "American Crescent." (Wayne E. Smith / *The Detroit News***)**

Qazwini cuts a prominent profile in Islam in the United States. He meets regularly with presidents and politicians, bishops and ministers of many Christian churches, rabbis and other religious leaders -- even the pope. Since Sept. 11, 2001, he has spoken more than 250 times at universities, churches and temples -- in part to explain that the terrorist attacks were affronts to the beliefs of Islam.

In "American Crescent" Qazwini uses the story of his life to explain why Islam is ultimately good for America -- and, to no small degree, why America is good for Islam. It is, as the publisher's note suggests, "At once a fascinating personal story and a heart-felt plea to integrate Islamic teachings into the tolerant traditions of America"

Leaders of other faiths call the book a bold strike against the extremists and an explanation of how Islam and American patriotism can walk hand-in-hand.

"He personally has experienced what extremists can do to people and what ideology can do to hurt people," said Rev. William Gepford, of the Littlefield Presbyterian Church in Dearborn. "My impression is that Imam Qazwini is very open about living in the United States and helping his congregation live in the United States as Muslims, accepting the rights of all."

Qazwini, the descendant of seven generations of prominent Muslim scholars, regularly tells his followers, "Remember, we are freer to practice our religion here than in most other countries in the world, including the countries we came from."

In his first moments in the United States, when an airline attendant treated him with kindness, Qazwini writes that he recalled the teaching of the Shi'a Muslim leader Imam Ali that "Your country does not belong to you more than any other country. The best country is the one that treats you well."

By and large, he believes he has been well-treated in the United States, and that Muslims are, too, despite almost daily negative publicity.

"The idea of the book was to make Islam available to the average American," Qazwini said. "I thought I would use my own story to engage the readers. If you write a dry text, an abstract text, you may not find enough people who are interested."

Qazwini takes some Muslims to task for their persecution of him and his family in Iraq and for some harshly enforced segregation of the genders. Like many religious leaders, he chides some of his followers for their secular approach, confusing culture with religion. He calls them "hummus Muslims."

"I think he got it about right," said Chuck Alawan, an American-born Muslim who is a long-time leader of the faith in Metro Detroit. "I think for someone who was not born in this country, he grasped the very essence of what it is to be an American."

http://www.detnews.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20071205/METRO/712050392/1408/LOCAL

THE AUSTRALIAN

Power of one has al-Qa'ida on run

James Hider, Baghdad | *December 01, 2007*

ONE morning in late May, a former Iraqi military intelligence officer working as a US double agent walked up to the al-Qa'ida ruler of west Baghdad. The exchange of words, then bullets, that followed has transformed Amariyah, the city's most volatile neighbourhood, into an unexpected haven of calm.

It may, according to US officers, be one of the most significant gunfights since the 2003 invasion, and its ripples are bringing local Sunni and Shia men together to fight terrorists and militia in other neighbourhoods.

The showdown went like this: "Hajji Sabah, isn't it time you stopped already?" said Abu Abed Obeidi, a diminutive 37-year-old with a drooping moustache, tired eyes and a ready smile. "You have destroyed Amariyah."

"Who are you?" Sabah, the Islamist emir, sneered. "We're al-Qa'ida. I'll kill you all and raze your homes."

"You can try," Mr Obeidi said. The emir drew his pistol, but his Glock 9mm jammed. As he turned to run, Mr Obeidi emptied his pistol into his back. His assault on al-Qa'ida had begun.

Amariyah has experienced a startling rebirth since that western-style shootout. In May its streets were filled with corpses being picked over by stray dogs. US troops ventured in rarely. When they did, they used heavily armoured vehicles, several of which were blown apart by mines.

Now the shops and cafes are open, and schoolchildren and women stroll the streets. Mr Obeidi's men patrol on foot with US troops and Iraqi soldiers.

It has been a precarious journey from al-Qa'ida fiefdom to what US commanders see as a possible model for the future of Iraq. The process has not been made clearer by the mystique surrounding the enigmatic man at the centre of the revolt.

After the 2003 invasion, Mr Obeidi, a sniper and military intelligence major in Saddam Hussein's army, briefly joined the Sunni resistance. Within a year he had grown disillusioned with al-Qa'ida, which had taken over the movement with the aim of sparking a civil war between Iraq's Shia majority and Sunni minority.

In an abrupt about-face, he offered his services as a spy to the Americans. "I have a basic principle to fight anybody who is hurting my fellow citizens," he said, surrounded by his

uniformed gunmen in his large offices in Amariyah. "That's why I co-operated in 2004 with the Americans and started to work against al-Qa'ida."

He used his skills as a secret agent and former insurgent to infiltrate extreme Islamist groups. He has also built up a network of close comrades from Saddam's sacked officer corps and the insurgency. This spring, dismayed by the failure of the Iraqi Government and its US allies to stem the bloodshed by al-Qa'ida, he decided to act directly himself.

The May gun battle was touch and go. Of the 150 men Mr Obeidi had gathered to fight, all but 15 fled when the bullets and rocket-propelled grenades started to fly. His deputy died in a shootout with Sabah's No2, Omar the Slayer. Outgunned, they retreated to a mosque and called on US troops, who arrived in force and cut down the Islamists.

The Americans had hit a goldmine in Mr Obeidi. With his intelligence skills and local gunmen, they suddenly found that they could identify an elusive enemy. The former insurgents knew exactly where to find the Islamists and their weapons. Within a month, Mr Obeidi's men had led the Americans on a series of raids that swept the Islamists from Amariyah. The turning of Sunni tribes and insurgents against al-Qa'ida in western Iraq and Baghdad has become known as the Sunni Awakening. Here, however, it is broader -- Mr Obeidi's 600 men include disillusioned Shi'ites as well as Sunnis.

The Shi'ites of Amariyah, driven out by Sunni extremists, have started to return.

A retired Shia schoolteacher, Umm Ahmed, who fled a year ago, said: "Everything we have now we owe to Abu Abed. This was the first place to be saved by a hero like Abu Abed."

He is hero-worshipped by his men, who fall over themselves to light his constant cigarettes and patrol the streets with him.

His Firsan al-Rafidan (Knights of the Two Rivers), can be a blunt instrument at times. Mr Obeidi, who still wears the Sabah's pistol on his hip, stopped al-Qa'ida using a local print shop to produce propaganda leaflets by burning it to the ground. When he finds his men -- only half of whom are paid -- stealing or extorting money, he beats them himself. Few questions are asked when al-Qa'ida suspects die in his house raids.

Aware of the dangers of creating yet another large, armed faction in a lawless city torn apart by militia, the US Army has created a special unit, the "roughnecks", to work alongside them.

There is no doubt that the bold assault on Sabah -- combined with an increase in US troops in the capital -- has calmed the chronic violence of Baghdad. Inspired by his heroics and by the lucrative contracts for local militia -- the US military has paid out $US39 million ($44 million) so far -- "concerned local citizens' groups", as they are known, now number 77,000 men.

Some Iraqis worry that the creation of more armed groups will lead to the rise of warlords across Baghdad. Mr Obeidi swats that charge aside, saying he wants to leave the country once he has secured his men jobs in the Iraqi security forces. Amariyah has no police force, partly because of

the lack of interest in Sunni areas by the Shia Government. His men want to become legitimate police.

Once that happens, he hopes to get out with his surviving family. Two of his brothers died in the Iran-Iraq war in the 1980s, two more were kidnapped, mutilated and murdered by gunmen dressed in Interior Ministry uniforms two years ago. A $US500,000 bounty has been put on his head by al-Qa'ida and Mr Obeidi cannot leave Amariyah. "I lost most of my family, I haven't had any rest for a long time. I think I'm done," he said. "I did a good thing for Iraq. I want to live a normal life now," he said.

The Times

http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,25197,22851222-2703,00.html

STANFORD NEWS SERVICE
Stanford Report, October 24, 2007

Promises of motorcycles, cell phones for suicide bombers
BY DAN STOBER

Suicide bombers are not all alike. Palestinians prepare elaborate martyr videos before their killings and become celebrities afterward, while Iraqi Sunnis kill their fellow citizens in obscurity. In Afghanistan, the suicide bombers have their own distinction: They are known for their ineptness, often blowing themselves up without killing anyone else. "They're not efficient," said Martha Crenshaw, a senior fellow at the Center for International Security and Cooperation (CISAC) at the Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies. She arrived at Stanford this summer, after several decades of studying terrorism as a professor of government at Wesleyan University in Middletown, Conn.

Martha Crenshaw

Afghan suicide bombers tend to be poorer, younger and less educated than suicide bombers elsewhere, Crenshaw said during a recent CISAC seminar. She cited a United Nations report that accused the Taliban of strapping explosives to boys, despite a commitment not to recruit those too young to have facial hair. Promises of motorcycles and cell phones have been used as inducements.

One boy whose mission failed was interviewed by U.N. workers. "He somehow thought he would survive the attack and get to spend the money they had promised him, not quite understanding that he would not be there," Crenshaw said in an interview following her talk. In Afghanistan, as elsewhere, the person wearing the explosives belt or driving the car bomb is the least valuable person in the terror group, Crenshaw said. The key people are the bomb maker and the organizer: "They never send the bomb maker with the bomb." In Israel, security officials target the bomb makers for assassination.

"It's the organization that decides who's going to be attacked and when and where and why," Crenshaw said. "Then they recruit somebody to carry it out. So the person carrying the bomb really is just a foot soldier."

Afghanistan's most famous suicide attack happened in 2001, just two days before the 9/11 assault on the United States. Al-Qaida operatives masquerading as journalists preemptively blew up tribal warlord Ahmad Shah Massoud in anticipation that he might aid U.S. troops if they eventually invaded Afghanistan in search of Osama bin Laden.

Today, al-Qaida, the Taliban and Hizb-i-Islami (the group led by Gulbuddin Hekmatyar) aim their suicide attacks at U.S. and Afghan government forces, but the victims are overwhelmingly civilian bystanders, often large numbers of children. Many of the bombers, Crenshaw said, are recruited from religious schools across the border in Pakistan.

The predominant motivation for terrorists to employ suicide attacks is strategic, not religious, according to Crenshaw. One suicide bomber kills many people, a perfect example of what the U.S. military calls asymmetric warfare. According to the United Nations, since the 1980s suicide bombers have been involved in only 4 percent of the world's terror attacks, but have caused 29 percent of the deaths.

Crenshaw gave her CISAC talk the day of the bloody suicide-bomber attack on Pakistani opposition leader Benazir Bhutto. With some 140 deaths and 500 injuries, it was the deadliest of more than 50 suicide attacks in Pakistan in recent years. Bhutto survived without injury, but if she had died, the volatile country could have come unglued, according to Crenshaw. "It shows you how one major suicide bombing could make a big difference," she said.

Her interest in terrorism began in graduate school in the late 1960s. Her first book, *Revolutionary Terrorism* (Hoover Institution Press, 1978), was on guerilla warfare against the French during the Algerian war for independence from 1954 to 1962. It still sells on Amazon, for $100. How does one research suicide bombers, since most of them, by definition, are dead? "We don't have very many studies that are based on extensive interviews," Crenshaw says. The one well-known body of work based on interviews involves failed Palestinian suicide bombers held in Israeli prisons. But the prisoners have told their stories so often that it is difficult to separate truth from imagination, according to Crenshaw.

Scholars of terrorism in general can turn to trial transcripts, databases of newspaper stories or the "Harmony Project" documents captured from al-Qaida and posted online by the U.S. Military Academy at West Point.

But less has been written specifically about suicide bombers. "In Iraq, it's very difficult to know who they were, even. They're dead and they're blown to bits, too," Crenshaw said. "You might not have a hand with fingerprints, for example. Surprisingly enough, often they do seem to find heads. But still, how do you identify someone in Iraq, where you don't have a record of who the population is to begin with? There are no identity cards, no nothing. Really, we're just guessing." Crenshaw's most recent paper, "Explaining Suicide Terrorism: A Review Essay" (*Security Studies*, Vol. 16, No. 1, January 2007), relied on the bookstore: She bought and read 13 books about suicide bombers, then produced a review of them all as a guide to other researchers.

Crenshaw's reading list on suicide terrorism
  Mia Bloom, *Dying to Kill: The Allure of Suicide Terror* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005).

  Joyce M. Davis, *Martyrs: Innocence, Vengeance and Despair in the Middle East* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003).

  Diego Gambetta, ed., *Making Sense of Suicide Missions* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).

  Mohammed M. Hafez, *Manufacturing Human Bombs: The Making of Palestinian Suicide Bombers* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2006).

Raphael Israeli, *Islamikaze: Manifestations of Islamic Martyrology* (London: Frank Cass, 2003).

Farhad Khosrokhavar, *Suicide Bombers: Allah's New Martyrs*, translated from the French by David Macey (London: Pluto Press, 2005).

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Robert A. Pape, *Dying to Win: The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism* (New York: Random House, 2005).

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Christoph Reuter, *My Life Is a Weapon: A Modern History of Suicide Bombing*, translated from the German by Helena Ragg-Kirkby (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004).

Shaul Shay, *The Shahids: Islam and Suicide Attacks* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2004).

Barbara Victor, *Army of Roses: Inside the World of Palestinian Women Suicide Bombers* (Emmaus, Pa.: Rodale [distributed by St. Martin's Press], 2003).
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Schneier on Security

A blog covering security and security technology.
December 03, 2007

Security in Ten Years

This is a conversation between myself and Marcus Ranum. It will appear in *Information Security Magazine* this month.

Bruce Schneier: Predictions are easy and difficult. Roy Amara of the Institute for the Future once said: "We tend to overestimate the effect of a technology in the short run and underestimate the effect in the long run."

Moore's Law is easy: In 10 years, computers will be 100 times more powerful. My desktop will fit into my cell phone, we'll have gigabit wireless connectivity everywhere, and personal networks will connect our computing devices and the remote services we subscribe to. Other aspects of the future are much more difficult to predict. I don't think anyone can predict what the emergent properties of 100x computing power will bring: new uses for computing, new paradigms of communication. A 100x world will be different, in ways that will be surprising.

But throughout history and into the future, the one constant is human nature. There hasn't been a new crime invented in millennia. Fraud, theft, impersonation and counterfeiting are perennial problems that have been around since the beginning of society. During the last 10 years, these crimes have migrated into cyberspace, and over the next 10, they will migrate into whatever computing, communications and commerce platforms we're using.

The nature of the attacks will be different: the targets, tactics and results. Security is both a trade-off and an arms race, a balance between attacker and defender, and changes in technology upset that balance. Technology might make one particular tactic more effective or one particular security technology cheaper and more ubiquitous. Or a new emergent application might become a favored target.

I don't see anything by 2017 that will fundamentally alter this. Do you?

Marcus Ranum: I think you're right; at a meta-level, the problems are going to stay the same. What's shocking and disappointing to me is that our responses to those problems also remain the same, in spite of the obvious fact that they aren't effective. It's 2007 and we haven't seemed to accept that:

- You can't turn shovelware into reliable software by patching it a whole lot.
- You shouldn't mix production systems with non-production systems.
- You actually have to know what's going on in your networks.

- If you run your computers with an open execution runtime model you'll always get viruses, spyware and Trojan horses.

- You can pass laws about locking barn doors after horses have left, but it won't put the horses back in the barn.

- Security has to be designed in, as part of a system plan for reliability, rather than bolted on afterward.

The list could go on for several pages, but it would be too depressing. It would be "Marcus' list of obvious stuff that everybody knows but nobody accepts."

You missed one important aspect of the problem: By 2017, computers will be even more important to our lives, economies and infrastructure.

If you're right that crime remains a constant, and I'm right that our responses to computer security remain ineffective, 2017 is going to be a lot less fun than 2007 was.

I've been pretty dismissive of the concepts of cyberwar and cyberterror. That dismissal was mostly motivated by my observation that the patchworked and kludgy nature of most computer systems acts as a form of defense in its own right, and that real-world attacks remain more cost-effective and practical for terror purposes.

I'd like to officially modify my position somewhat: I believe it's increasingly likely that we'll suffer catastrophic failures in critical infrastructure systems by 2017. It probably won't be terrorists that do it, though. More likely, we'll suffer some kind of horrible outage because a critical system was connected to a non-critical system that was connected to the Internet so someone could get to MySpace -- and that ancillary system gets a piece of malware. Or it'll be some incomprehensibly complex software, layered with Band-Aids and patches, that topples over when some "merely curious" hacker pushes the wrong e-button. We've got some bad-looking trend lines; all the indicators point toward a system that is more complex, less well-understood and more interdependent. With infrastructure like that, who needs enemies?

You're worried criminals will continue to penetrate into cyberspace, and I'm worried complexity, poor design and mismanagement will be there to meet them.

Bruce Schneier: I think we've already suffered that kind of critical systems failure. The August 2003 blackout that covered much of northeastern United States and Canada -- 50 million people -- was caused by a software bug.

I don't disagree that things will continue to get worse. Complexity is the worst enemy of security, and the Internet -- and the computers and processes connected to it -- is getting more complex all the time. So things are getting worse, even though security technology is improving. One could say those critical insecurities are another emergent property of the 100x world of 2017.

Yes, IT systems will continue to become more critical to our infrastructure -- banking, communications, utilities, defense, everything.

By 2017, the interconnections will be so critical that it will probably be cost-effective -- and low-risk -- for a terrorist organization to attack over the Internet. I also deride talk of cyberterror today, but I don't think I will in another 10 years.

While the trends of increased complexity and poor management don't look good, there is another trend that points to more security -- but neither you nor I is going to like it. That trend is IT as a service.

By 2017, people and organizations won't be buying computers and connectivity the way they are today. The world will be dominated by telcos, large ISPs and systems integration companies, and computing will look a lot like a utility. Companies will be selling services, not products: email services, application services, entertainment services. We're starting to see this trend today, and it's going to take off in the next 10 years. Where this affects security is that by 2017, people and organizations won't have a lot of control over their security. Everything will be handled at the ISPs and in the backbone. The free-wheeling days of general-use PCs will be largely over. Think of the iPhone model: You get what Apple decides to give you, and if you try to hack your phone, they can disable it remotely. We techie geeks won't like it, but it's the future. The Internet is all about commerce, and commerce won't survive any other way.

Marcus Ranum: You're right about the shift toward services -- it's the ultimate way to lock in customers.

If you can make it difficult for the customer to get his data back after you've held it for a while, you can effectively prevent the customer from ever leaving. And of course, customers will be told "trust us, your data is secure," and they'll take that for an answer. The back-end systems that will power the future of utility computing are going to be just as full of flaws as our current systems. Utility computing will also completely fail to address the problem of transitive trust unless people start shifting to a more reliable endpoint computing platform.

That's the problem with where we're heading: the endpoints are not going to get any better. People are attracted to appliances because they get around the headache of system administration (which, in today's security environment equates to "endless patching hell"), but underneath the slick surface of the appliance we'll have the same insecure nonsense we've got with general-purpose desktops. In fact, the development of appliances running general-purpose operating systems really does raise the possibility of a software monoculture. By 2017, do you think system engineering will progress to the point where we won't see a vendor release a new product and instantly create an installed base of 1 million-plus users with root privileges? I don't, and that scares me.

So if you're saying the trend is to continue putting all our eggs in one basket and blithely trusting that basket, I agree.

Another trend I see getting worse is government IT know-how. At the rate outsourcing has been brain-draining the federal workforce, by 2017 there won't be a single government employee who knows how to do anything with a computer except run PowerPoint and Web surf. Joking aside, the result is that the government's critical infrastructure will be almost entirely managed from the

outside. The strategic implications of such a shift have scared me for a long time; it amounts to a loss of control over data, resources and communications.

Bruce Schneier: You're right about the endpoints not getting any better. I've written again and again how measures like two-factor authentication aren't going to make electronic banking any more secure. The problem is if someone has stuck a Trojan on your computer, it doesn't matter how many ways you authenticate to the banking server; the Trojan is going to perform illicit transactions after you authenticate.

It's the same with a lot of our secure protocols. SSL, SSH, PGP and so on all assume the endpoints are secure, and the threat is in the communications system. But we know the real risks are the endpoints.

And a misguided attempt to solve this is going to dominate computing by 2017. I mentioned software-as-a-service, which you point out is really a trick that allows businesses to lock up their customers for the long haul. I pointed to the iPhone, whose draconian rules about who can write software for that platform accomplishes much the same thing. We could also point to Microsoft's Trusted Computing, which is being sold as a security measure but is really another lock-in mechanism designed to keep users from switching to "unauthorized" software or OSes.

I'm reminded of the post-9/11 anti-terrorist hysteria -- we've confused security with control, and instead of building systems for real security, we're building systems of control. Think of ID checks everywhere, the no-fly list, warrantless eavesdropping, broad surveillance, data mining, and all the systems to check up on scuba divers, private pilots, peace activists and other groups of people. These give us negligible security, but put a whole lot of control in the government's hands.

Computing is heading in the same direction, although this time it is industry that wants control over its users. They're going to sell it to us as a security system -- they may even have convinced themselves it will improve security -- but it's fundamentally a control system. And in the long run, it's going to hurt security.

Imagine we're living in a world of Trustworthy Computing, where no software can run on your Windows box unless Microsoft approves it. That brain drain you talk about won't be a problem, because security won't be in the hands of the user. Microsoft will tout this as the end of malware, until some hacker figures out how to get his software approved. That's the problem with any system that relies on control: Once you figure out how to hack the control system, you're pretty much golden. So instead of a zillion pesky worms, by 2017 we're going to see fewer but worse super worms that sail past our defenses.

By then, though, we'll be ready to start building real security. As you pointed out, networks will be so embedded into our critical infrastructure -- and there'll probably have been at least one real disaster by then -- that we'll have no choice. The question is how much we'll have to dismantle and build over to get it right.

Marcus Ranum: I agree regarding your gloomy view of the future. It's ironic the counterculture "hackers" have enabled (by providing an excuse) today's run-patch-run-patch-reboot software environment and tomorrow's software Stalinism.

I don't think we're going to start building real security. Because real security is not something you build -- it's something you get when you leave out all the other garbage as part of your design process. Purpose-designed and purpose-built software is more expensive to build, but cheaper to maintain. The prevailing wisdom about software return on investment doesn't factor in patching and patch-related downtime, because if it did, the numbers would stink. Meanwhile, I've seen purpose-built Internet systems run for years without patching because they didn't rely on bloated components. I doubt industry will catch on.

The future will be captive data running on purpose-built back-end systems -- and it won't be a secure future, because turning your data over always decreases your security. Few possess the understanding of complexity and good design principles necessary to build reliable or secure systems. So, effectively, outsourcing -- or other forms of making security someone else's problem -- will continue to seem attractive.

That doesn't look like a very rosy future to me. It's a shame, too, because getting this stuff correct is important. You're right that there are going to be disasters in our future.

I think they're more likely to be accidents where the system crumbles under the weight of its own complexity, rather than hostile action. Will we even be able to figure out what happened, when it happens?

Folks, the captains have illuminated the "Fasten your seat belts" sign. We predict bumpy conditions ahead.

http://www.schneier.com/blog/archives/2007/12/security_in_ten.html

Software That Organizes Intelligently

Smart Desktop automatically groups documents and communications by project.
By Erica Naone, December 3, 2007
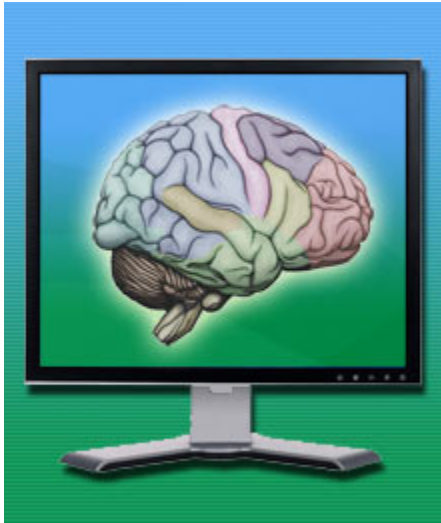
Credit: *Technology Review*

The heaps of information piling up virtually on today's computers present a major organizational problem for many people. A soon-to-be-released product called Smart Desktop, from a division of Seattle-based company Pi Corporation, aims to help people sort that information automatically and intelligently.

"People's lives are inherently complex, and so everyone, no matter what their job description, has to break their lives into a series of manageable chunks," says Jon Herlocker, vice president of engineering and CTO of Pi's Smart Desktop division. "Those chunks become the context in which things get worked on." Smart Desktop is designed, accordingly, to group information by project. But the software does far more than put all your Word and Excel documents in one folder. Normally, information is stored in separate applications: important URLs might be saved in Firefox's Web history, for example, while e-mails are stored in Outlook. Smart Desktop unifies the information into a single view. When the system understands that a user is working on a particular project, it will bring together related files and e-mails, and it will also bring related, newly arriving e-mails to the user's attention.

The system will make this information available to users in two ways, says John Forbes, president of Pi's Smart Desktop division. All materials related to a project will be visible inside Smart Desktop's user interface. The system will also tag the files so that the user can search for project tags created by Smart Desktop in Outlook, for example. "One way to think about Smart Desktop technology is automatic tagging," says Forbes.

Herlocker says that the product is designed to work with Microsoft Windows, in order to allow a user to continue working with her existing operating system at the same time that she runs Smart Desktop. In addition to supporting popular Microsoft applications, Smart Desktop will work with applications such as Adobe Acrobat, Google Docs, and Zoho Sheets.

Smart Desktop's underlying technology comes from Oregon State University's Task Tracer research project, which was a part of the CALO artificial-intelligence project. (See "Software That Learns from Users.") The Task Tracer research employed machine-learning techniques to build desktop applications that were able to learn and observe the task that a user was working

on at any given moment. But Herlocker says that Smart Desktop is being careful about how it presents its artificial-intelligence roots. "If you anthropomorphize too much, people's expectations become too high because they expect it to be as capable as a human," he says.

While the exact workings of Smart Desktop have not yet been finalized, Herlocker says that the aim is to make the intelligence as invisible as possible. For example, the system might reorder search results to bring more-relevant results closer to the top. Or, when a user goes to save a file, the default folders will have been selected based on the project the user is working on, reducing the number of clicks needed to find the right place to store the information.

"One key is having a solution that works without making users change the way they work," says Forbes.

Herlocker says that the company has tried to take into consideration how much people are willing to train a system, and how many interruptions they are willing to tolerate. "We've tried to pick the middle ground that leverages as much as possible what we know to date about machine learning and artificial intelligence, but at the same time remain very realistic about the impact of using machine-learning systems in a human context," he says.

Pi isn't the only company working on products of this type. Microsoft, through its Center for Information Work, is also developing a desktop assistant with similar capabilities. Currently in its prototype form, Microsoft's desktop assistant is designed to bring together an individual's communications, calendar, and other related information so that it creates a timeline view of her day. The system brings up relevant content based on what the user is currently doing, or what she should be doing at that time. "The software behind the desktop assistant is 'smart' in that it understands what information is important, and prioritizes communications and information, allowing the user to filter down the noise to a manageable level," says Russ Burtner, user-experience designer for the Center for Information Work.

Smart Desktop is currently available in an invitation-only preview, but Herlocker says that he expects the full product to be released in late 2008.

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http://www.technologyreview.com/Infotech/19788/?a=f

NewScientist
Subliminal flag-waving discourages extreme ideas

From *New Scientist* Print Edition, 5 December 2007

As if emotional campaign messages weren't enough, politicians now have another way to try to win over the electorate. A study in Israel shows that voters can be manipulated into changing their attitudes by being shown subliminal images of their national flag.

A team led by psychologist Ran Hassin at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem divided volunteers into two groups: those who strongly identified with Israeli nationalism and those who identified with it only weakly. They then quizzed them about their attitude to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict after showing them a brief image of an Israeli flag or a control image. The image appeared for long enough to be registered by the brain but not long enough for conscious awareness (*Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, DOI: 10.1073/pnas.0704679104).

Those who had viewed the flag shifted their position towards the middle ground: both right-wingers and left-wingers became less extreme. The researchers also found that it influenced the way participants voted in national elections. Hassin says that the Israeli flag represents a sense of national unity, and that reminding people of it draws them towards that ideology. However, the psychology involved is unclear, especially since it remains uncertain whether subliminal advertising has an effect on consumers.

http://www.newscientist.com/article/mg19626324.400-subliminal-flagwaving-discourages-extreme-ideas.html

"The Bombs of Dhamma"

Pakistan's pop music scene

by Daveed Gartenstein-Ross & Nick Grace, 12/10/2007, Volume 013, Issue 13

Singer-songwriter Imran Raza and guitarist Faraz Anwar hope to bring an unlikely revolution to Pakistan--one guided by Sufi-oriented music inspired by Led Zeppelin and Metallica. The country's music-averse extremists were quick to take notice.

Raza, 35, was born in Pakistan but raised in the United States. Sporting Dolce & Gabbana designer clothes, a shaved head, and Prada sunglasses, he reflects a Southern California sensibility. A former University of Southern California student who has been writing songs since his teenage years, Raza went back to school in 2001 to study film and poetry in pursuit of his dream of producing a rock opera.

Less than a month after classes began in August, he woke up in his penthouse apartment to the news of 9/11. In the aftermath of the attacks, Raza more than once heard bigoted remarks about Muslims; since he looked more like a rocker type than a Middle Easterner, people weren't on their guard around him. Raza says he felt more outrage at the attacks themselves and the Taliban's brutal rule in Afghanistan than anger at the comments--but both reinforced his desire to work against bigotry.

Two years later, Raza returned to Pakistan to film a short documentary as part of his studies. He discovered a vibrant music scene, for which rock musicians had one man to thank: President Pervez Musharraf, who had privatized the country's television stations the year before. Suddenly Pakistan boasted 20 channels, 3 of them dedicated to music. The result was an explosion of opportunity reminiscent of the early days of MTV: Airtime had to be filled, and a lot of stars emerged, many of them one-hit wonders.

Raza saw his chance to create a music comfortable for South Asians that would combine Western freedoms and his own commitment to Sufism, which to him is characterized by a mystical and tolerant practice of Islam. "Sufism's core message," he says, "is one of pluralistic understanding. It is very complex, and there are different aspects of how it addresses different human situations and relations with God."

Raza began looking for a musical collaborator. The search took four years, but was finally successful. Faraz Anwar, 30, had won Pakistan's national music competition at the age of 11, and

had become a full-time musician at 14, touring as a guitarist with top-tier acts. Counting his recordings as a session musician, Anwar has sold over 30 million albums--no small feat in a country where music piracy is rampant. Although popular performers had tried to form bands with Anwar, he had always turned them down.

It was President Musharraf who introduced Raza and Anwar. Raza had a family connection with the president--an uncle had gone through officer training with Musharraf. Last May, Musharraf and Raza saw each other at a Sufi musical performance at the governor's house in Karachi, and Raza struck up a conversation with the president, a fan of classic rock. Raza explained his musical project and expressed an interest in working with the legendary Anwar.

Days later, Raza found himself in Anwar's modern recording studio in Karachi. Above an impressive guitar collection hung two six-foot posters, one of Jimi Hendrix and one of Anwar. Anwar was initially dismissive--but when he flipped through Raza's lyrics, a song called "The Bombs of *Dhamma*" caught his eye. *Dhamma* is the Pali word for *dharma*, which Raza explains as "an enlightened state of purified intentions where one doesn't desire to do anyone harm." The song proclaims: "I believe in enlightened moderation, the beauty of knowing who you are." It calls for "Bombs of purity and bombs of joy / Bombs of peace and bombs of love / Bombs of harmony and bombs of compassion / The bombs of *dhamma*."

On reading this, Anwar exclaimed in Urdu, "Finally someone has come my way who is on my level!" The two musicians began recording Raza's songs. The first one they tackled was "Fly with Us," which mixes South Asian flutes and classical Sufi singing with classic rock. Speaking of the need for "a real reformation," the song contrasts religious intolerance with the fresh spirit of classic rock, inviting listeners to spurn extremism and "fly with" Led Zeppelin, Pink Floyd, and the Beatles.

Early in their recording sessions, unmixed clips of "Fly with Us" and "The Bombs of *Dhamma*" were leaked to the Pakistani media. They were played on the radio. Though other artists had released songs promoting tolerance, Raza's lyrics were especially direct. Religious extremists got the message and issued death threats against him. Provided a security detail by the government, Raza only became more outspoken. "What bothered me," Raza said, "is that the mullahs are able to muzzle speech and force others to bow through violence and retribution."

Anwar went further in a phone call with us from Karachi, challenging the extremists' theology. "They do not follow Islam," he said. "They have created something of their own. Basically, they are not educated people, and they don't even know what the Koran says."

During his most recent trip to Pakistan, Raza was afforded a glimpse of the celebrity that may be in store for him. Though his local number was unpublished, his cell phone rang incessantly with calls from journalists. One of Raza's bodyguards began fielding the calls so he could focus on his studio work.

Though Raza and Anwar haven't yet completed an album, the leaked songs have gained them plenty of attention. In addition, the youth-oriented television channel Aag played a music video of their song "Be Like the Onion"; the response promptly landed it on the channel's "flaming

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hot" rotation. Raza hopes to complete an album by the end of 2008. And he still aspires to produce his rock opera centered on the themes of liberty and pluralism.

Pakistan's music scene has declined in the past five years. Because piracy remains unfettered, musicians rely on live performances for revenue. Concertgoers generally represent the most progressive element of society, young people either hailing from liberal families or rebelling against conservative ones. Musicians tend to be influenced by MTV and Western rock in both sound and look: There are long-haired performers and glammed-up pop stars. They typically perform in venues seating between 2,000 and 10,000. Among music fans there is a sense that social change is needed, but the feeling is diffuse, not connected to any program for action.

The rise in militancy in recent years has hit musicians hard. The Taliban and al Qaeda-led campaign against music stores across northwest Pakistan saw 20 stores bombed in May and 25 attacked in June and July. In October, a bomb ripped through the large Musafir CD Centre in Peshawar. A concert would make an ideal target for a suicide bomber.

In this environment, any live musician performs in an atmosphere of threat. It is unclear, however, whether others have been personally targeted. Raza noticed that the lead singer of a band called Fuzon seemed to have a government security detail, but he too may benefit from a connection to Musharraf.

Certainly Anwar and Raza know the risks. Military affairs analyst Bill Roggio said, "Raza and Anwar show real courage, as their music strikes at the core of the extremists' message. The Taliban will stop at nothing to silence them." But Anwar and Raza are undaunted. Said Raza, "Whatever you do in life, you have to do it with sincerity. If that involves risks, so be it."

http://www.weeklystandard.com/Content/Public/Articles/000/000/014/435lzjpg.asp

Turkey: Q&A with Mufti of Istanbul Mustafa Cagrici

By Manal Lutfi, *Friday 30 November 2007*

Istanbul, *Asharq Al-Awsat-* In every government office in Turkey, one will find the portrait of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk often on a horse wearing his famous hat and with the Turkish flag draped behind him. However, in the office of Dr. Mustafa Cagrici, the Mufti of Istanbul, there are two pictures of Ataturk, one with the Turkish leader wearing the western hat and another, in which he wears a suit and tie and is surrounded by a number of Turkish religious figures in their cloaks and turbans after the establishment of the secular Republic of Turkey. Like many, Cagrici considers Ataturk a "secular Muslim" and does not see any contradiction in this description.

Dr. Mustafa Cagrici is a respected figure amongst the Turks. He hosted Pope Benedict XVI at the Blue Mosque following the controversy surrounding the Pope's citation of a Byzantine emperor that depicted Islam in a negative light during a speech he delivered in Germany. In prayer, the Pope faced Mecca behind the Mufti of Istanbul. Many considered this a symbolic apology from the Pope.

Asharq Al Awsat interviewed the Mufti of Istanbul, Mustafa Cagrici in Istanbul. The interview proceeded as follows:

Q: In your opinion, what distinguishes Turkish Islam from Islam in other countries in the region?

A: During the modernization period, Turkey was one of the first countries that began to establish strong relations at an early stage with the West. Turkey has established relations with Western countries based on the foundations of democracy and secularism. This makes Turkey different from the rest of the Islamic countries as it is still connected to its past and its values, but at the same time it is living based on modern values. Turkish society has become more conservative over recent years. The results of the last elections prove that society has become more conservative. Nonetheless, there is another fact [to take into consideration] that Turkey lies between the Islamic and the Western worlds and that it has established relations between the two sides in a correct, meaningful and effective manner. Although Turkey has some internal problems, it protects its culture and understanding of Islam. There is healthy democratic debate on Islam, modernization and culture.

Q: You mentioned that Turkish society has become more conservative over recent years, is this evident as a result of the elections or due to social indicators such as the increase in women wearing the veil, for example?

A: There are many indicators, including the victory of the Justice and Development Party [AKP] and the increase in the number of women wearing the veil. In my capacity as the Mufti of Istanbul and professor at the faculty of religious sciences, I can say that the level of interest in religious education and the teaching of the Holy Quran in Turkey is on the rise. If we look at those who finance and support these Quranic schools, we find that they are modern and educated businessmen who live a modern lifestyle and are active in today's world. Islam in Turkey took on Turkish characteristics when Turkey became a Muslim country. There are approximately 500 religious secondary schools that are called the "schools of imams and preachers". These schools teach social and cultural subjects as well as religious subjects and are affiliated to the Turkish Ministry of Education. In addition, there are 23 religious science faculties. In these schools and faculties, true knowledge about Islam is taught; consequently, it was easy for the Turks to adhere to modern values in a sound manner.

Q: What do you think of Sufism in Turkey?

A: Sufism has a special position for understanding Islam in Turkey; however in the 19th century the meaning of Sufism was distorted in Turkey and the Islamic world, where Sufi practices have a negative impact on Turkish society. Although the Turkish state abolished Sufi schools under the law, Sufi schools, in fact, continued to exist. But the negative aspects of Sufism have been eliminated because we have a healthy religious education.

Q: What are the negative aspects of Sufism that you mentioned?

A: At one point, Sufism led to negligence on part of the Turkish people whereby they were no longer interested in anything, neither in their work nor their affairs. In other words, the common understanding of Sufism at that time stopped Turks from showing interest in public affairs. However, Turkey today is home to religious institutions that adopt modern concepts including the Sufi schools. Many Sufi schools have modern institutions and a huge capital. Sufi orders such as Naqshbandi, Mawlawi and Qadirya exist at present and have political, social and cultural interests without ignoring the Sufi Islamic values. Furthermore, they are powerful and influential in Turkish society and provide people with various services. Sufi schools include many businessmen, who financially support them.

Q: What are the rules of the body that is responsible for issuing fatwas [religious rulings] in Turkey?

A: The Religious Affairs Directorate is the responsible body for issuing fatwas; however, qualified imams also can issue fatwas. At the end of the day, the fatwa is a civil rather than a legal or official matter. Generally speaking, because of this, it is issued by an authorized body, namely, the Religious Affairs Directorate, but qualified imams can also issue fatwas. For example, someone can ask an Imam that he/she knows for a religious ruling if the Imam is knowledgeable enough and there are also religious centres with male and female preachers who

issue fatwas. People go and ask them and if they cannot provide an answer, they can contact Dar al Ifta in Istanbul.

Q: Do you have female muftis?

A: Of course, and not only do they issue fatwas regarding women's affairs, they issue fatwas about all religious affairs. There are 40 female muftis in Istanbul and there are over 400 Quranic schools with over 1,000 teachers.

Q: What is your reaction towards fatwas that encourage jihad for example issued by some clerics?

A: Firstly, such fatwas cannot be issued in Turkey. There have only been a small number of cases [in Turkey] such as in Britain and the US, for instance. Turkey is not Pakistan. The Turks as a whole were amongst the biggest number of people who opposed the war against Iraq. They have peacefully expressed their opposition to this unlawful war as bloodshed only causes more bloodshed. Moreover, ending Western hegemony and bringing peace to the Islamic world should be achieved via peaceful means. I always ask our visitors from Western countries about what they expect from the Islamic world that is surrounded by Western countries in the military, political and economic senses. They are powerless and are oppressed by the West. What can you expect other than war and violence? The condemning of violence is one thing and the analysis of violence is another. What the entire West is doing is condemning violence rather than analyzing it. Consequently, it cannot find a remedy for this disease.

Q: What is your opinion on martyrdom and jihad in Iraq in your capacity as the Mufti of Istanbul?

A: It is prohibited.

Q: Why is it prohibited?

A: It is difficult to answer this question. The person who carries out such act faces Allah alone and he is the one to decide whether [he believes] it is right or wrong.

Q: But in your view is it prohibited?

A: I do not think that it is halal [religiously lawful].

Q: Why?

A: Because the Iraqis and Islam are paying the price for these acts, which are an offence perpetrated by some against Islam therefore, I do not think it is halal. Today, the Islamic world is rich; is this wealth being used for the sake of the future or to build culture? There is no university that is on the same level as Harvard in the entire Islamic world. The Islamic world has failed to contribute to modern inventions. The Islamic world always blames others and sees itself as an innocent victim. This is part of our problem.

Q: How many mosques are in Turkey?

A: There are over 80,000 mosques in Turkey.

Q: What are the most frequent questions raised by Turks in mosques?

A: When are you going to pray for rain [laughs]? The most popular questions are related to marriage and divorce and everyday issues. The number of Turks going to mosques is on the rise. In Istanbul, for example, there are 3000 mosques and we are about to build 350 new mosques in line with the increasing numbers.

Q: In your opinion, why are religious inclinations increasing in Turkey?

A: I think the reason behind this is the method with which religion is taught in Turkey. It is a modern and enlightened method, making people feel that one can be religious and part of the modern age at the same time. In that sense, Turkey is like the United States. When crises take place in America, people think that the solution is religion. It is also the case in Turkey; when internal and regional crises intensify, people turn to religious values and believe that the solution lies therein. Most unveiled women perform their five daily prayers according to the religious teachings that we follow. Religion is not a formal matter; rather it is values, behaviour and ethics. This is how the Turks understand Islam. There is a conflict in Turkey with respect to religion; nonetheless, it is not between those who want religion and those who do not want it. The truth is that those who do not want religion in Turkey are a very small minority. The conflict is between those who believe that religion must be reflected in the individual practices, behaviour and values and those who argue that religion is about outward appearances such as the veil, beard etc.

Q: What is the difference between Islam in Turkey and Islam in the Arab world from your point of view?

A: Unfortunately, I think that due to the conflicts and daily problems in the Arab world, the Arabs have failed to analyze the meaning of Islam. On the whole, this is the situation in the Arab and Islamic worlds. The real sense of jihad is to accelerate the pace of progress. Religion has two sides: belief in the heart and cultivation of the mind and each one is dependent on the other. Islam is a journey. If your heart believes and you are mindful, it is the sense of jihad, that is, the jihad of mind and knowledge, which is the greatest jihad. However, the Prophet Mohamed [PBUH] is an Arab, who was born in the Arab region that has a great history. This great history will help the region to formulate the future. I think that the Arab world's future could be great in the next fifty or one hundred years.

Q: In the Arab world, some look at the Turkish model as one that can benefit the Arab world. Do you think that the Turkish model is suitable for the Arabs and could be imported to the Arab world?

A: The term 'import' is inappropriate. What is required from Arab and Turkish societies is to strengthen dialogue on common values. They can benefit from each other as there is no party

that is better than the other. Strengthening the democratic experience is the most important thing. There is a lovely proverb by al Farabi: the state governed by philosophers is ideal, but the state governed by democracy is even better. The democratic state is in better condition than others because there is freedom in the democratic system. If the Islamic world opened the door to democracy and freedom, its problems would be resolved in the blink of an eye.

http://www.asharqalawsat.com/english/news.asp?section=3&id=11040