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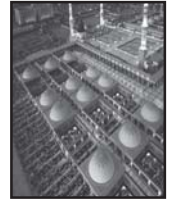
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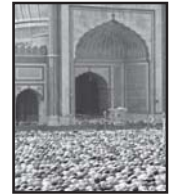
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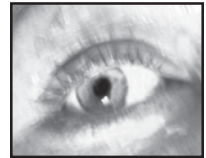
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Our Say

Historically the ante has never favoured the survival of tiny city-states like Singapore, let alone evolving into a thriving first world country. Against a backdrop of communal unrest and regional security uncertainty of the 50s and 60s, Singapore's socio-economic achievements in the last 40 years and the relative peace and stability it has enjoyed during that time are quite astounding to say the least. Indeed Singapore success story has not only been recounted time and again, it has also been touted and developed as an economic development model. The remarkable thing is not only that it has succeeded against the odds; rather, it is that the country has actually become one of the most successful developing nations in the world.

The economic success of Singapore is impressive. Its economy has grown by more than 7 percent per annum since independence in 1965, and its per-capita income among the highest in the world. Arguably Singapore has the most efficient port, airport, airline and civil service in the world. It also has the third largest oil refining capability and one of the largest financial centres. Its total trade is three times the size of its GNP. The policy prescriptions created to achieve this were relatively simple: sustain a free and open economy, avoid any subsidy, welcome foreign investment and aim for budgetary surpluses. The values of hard work and thrift, and the virtues of increasing worker productivity were always underlined.

What is little known behind this economic marvel, however, is a further noteworthy feat. Societies should be appraised at the end of the day on their capability to bring to their populace most of their human needs: food, shelter, health, education, a clean environment, a sense of community and a sense of purpose in life. There is no doubt Singapore has succeeded in meeting the most stringent benchmarks of these broad life value indicators.

The socio-economic policy considerations are factored along the unique multi-racial, multi-cultural make-up of its citizenry. Resource starved and with only its people to count on, few choices were opened to the post-independence leadership. They had to take a pragmatic stance from day one which was chiefly driven by an acute survival instinct. They negotiated and changed course rapidly to ensure the smooth forward march of the Singapore economy, and to meet the ever-increasing socio-economic expectations of Singaporeans. The experience in itself makes a compelling study of how a small society prevails over adversity and scarcity to come out triumphant.

Regardless of all its accomplishments, survival must still remain its top priority.

The British colonial policy mainly influenced the diverse racial make up of Singapore. An independent Singapore at once realised the challenge of turning this diversity of race, religion and language into a workable socio-political solution which would later evolve a semblance of national identity. It proved to be one of the trickiest and arduous political assignments the post-independence leadership had to confront. It is clear from the outset that the forging of an understanding and tolerance among the races is central to peace and stability, a strategic function of economic development, future prosperity and survival of Singapore. The Government upholds multiracialism, meritocracy and social justice against a backdrop of democratic political process as the catalytic ideals which forge a bond of fellowship between races. At the same time, it encourages each community to retain its characteristics, and more recently the promotion of inter-racial and inter-religious relations and understanding to eliminate stereotyping and misperceptions in the wake of September 11 terrorist attack on the U.S.

The management of multi-racial, multi-religious society is politically complex and sensitive. Deep down all Singaporeans are aware of the need to not only not to rock the boat but also to consciously put in the effort at strengthening their social bond as much as enriching their respective cultural heritage.

Race and ethnic diversity characterises the great majority of the countries in the world, and that with changing international political landscape and globalisation, xenophobic assertions of ethnic, religious and cultural varieties are becoming stronger. Such developments, which sometimes lead to conflicts and tragedies such as in Sudan, Bosnia, Kosovo, Rwanda, Nigeria etc. seriously challenge the states. The ethnic crises in these countries have demonstrated how real and sensitive these problems can be. Race, religion, language and ethnic nationalism are still sensitive issues and forces operating in Southeast Asia today. Every generation has to relive these issues as they seek to come to terms with their identities, in the face of westernisation and globalisation.

The management of multi-racial, multi-religious society is politically complex and sensitive. Deep down all Singaporeans are aware of the need to not only not to rock the boat but also to consciously put in the effort at strengthening their social bond as much as enriching their respective cultural heritage. The fact that Singapore has benefited from peace, stability and prosperity for the past 40

years is testament to the success of its approach towards multiracialism and meritocracy. However, building a superior structure of national identity is work in progress and we cannot take anything for granted.

The study of world history would show that Islam and terrorism are extreme opposites. There is no meeting point between Islam and terrorism as practiced by terrorist groups in different parts of the world. Terrorism involves the indiscriminate use of force to achieve certain objectives. Whereas, the basis of national and international relations in Islam is **peace** and not war as falsely claimed by some people.

In Islam, the use of force is allowed only in special situations, particularly when the Muslim community is threatened by hostile forces. This is natural and logical for any other community indeed. Then again, the use of force in a campaign of Jihad is determined by the leader of the Muslim community in a very orderly way.

One of the distinctive characteristics of the times we live in is the overwhelming presence of violence in our societies. Whether it is a bomb going off in a market place, or the hijacking of an aircraft where innocent people are held at ransom to achieve political ends, we live in an age, where the manipulation and loss of innocent lives has become commonplace. Such is the all-pervasive nature of indiscriminate violence, that “terrorism” is considered as one of the prime threats to peace and security in our societies.

The word “terrorism” came into wide usage only a few decades ago. One of the unfortunate results of this new terminology is that it limits the definition of terrorism to that perpetrated by small groups or individuals. Terrorism, in fact, spans the entire world, and manifests itself in various forms. Its perpetrators do not fit any stereotype. Those who hold human lives cheap, and have the power to expend human lives, appear at different levels in our societies. The frustrated employee who kills his colleagues in cold-blood is a terrorist who provokes our anger and revulsion. Ironically however, the politician who uses age-old ethnic animosities between peoples to consolidate his position, the head of state who orders “carpet bombing” of entire cities, the exalted councils that choke millions of civilians to death by wielding the insidious weapon of sanctions, are rarely punished for their crimes against humanity.

It is this narrow definition of terrorism that implicates only individuals and groups, that has



caused Muslims to be associated with acts of destruction and terror, and as a result, to become victims of hate violence and terror themselves. Sometimes the religion of Islam is held responsible for the acts of a handful of Muslims, and often for the acts of non-Muslims.

Could it be possible that Islam, whose light ended the Dark Ages in Europe, now propound the advent of an age of terror? Could a faith that has over 1.2 billion followers the world over, actually advocate the killing and maiming of innocent people? Could Islam, whose name itself stands for “peace” and “submission to God”, encourage its adherents to work for death and destruction?

The Glorious Quran says: (...**take not life, which God hath made sacred, except by way of justice and law: thus doth He command you, that ye may learn wisdom.**) (Al-An'am 6: 151).

Islam considers all life forms as sacred. However, the sanctity of human life is accorded a special place. The first and the foremost basic right of a human being is the right to live. Allah says in the Quran says: (... **if any one slew a person - unless it be for murder or for spreading mischief in the land - it would be as if he slew the whole people: and if any one saved a life, it would be as if he saved the life of the whole people.**) (Al-Maidah 5: 32)

Such is the value of a single human life, that the Quran equates the taking of even one human life unjustly, with killing all of humanity. Thus, the Quran prohibits homicide in clear terms. The taking of a criminal's life by the state in order to administer justice is required to uphold the rule of law, and the peace and security of the society. Only a proper and competent court can decide whether an individual has forfeited his right to life by

disregarding the right to life and peace of other human beings.

Even in a state of war, Islam enjoins that one deals with the enemy nobly in the battlefield. Islam has drawn a clear line of distinction between the combatants and the non-combatants of the enemy country. As far as the non-combatant population is concerned such as women, children, the old and the infirm, etc., the instructions of the Prophet are as follows: **“Do not kill any old person, any child or any woman.”** (Reported by Abu Dawud) **“Do not kill the monks in monasteries”** (*Musnad Ahmad ibn Hanbal*). During a war, the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) saw the corpse of a woman lying on the ground and observed: **“She was not fighting. How then she came to be killed?”** Thus non-combatants are guaranteed security of life even if their state is at war with an Islamic state.

Perhaps no other Islamic term evokes such strong reactions as the word ‘Jihad’. The term ‘Jihad’ has been much abused, to conjure up bizarre images of violent Muslims, forcing people to submit at the point of the sword.

The word Jihad comes from the root word *jahada*, which means to struggle. So Jihad is literally an act of struggling. Jihad primarily refers to the inner struggle of being a person of virtue and submission to God in all aspects of life. Secondly, Jihad refers to struggle against injustice. Islam, like many other religions, allows for armed self-defense, or retribution against tyranny, exploitation, and oppression.

The Glorious Quran says: **(And why should ye not fight in the cause of God and of those who, being weak, are ill-treated (and oppressed)? Men, women, and children, whose cry is: ‘Our Lord! Rescue us from this town, whose people are oppressors; and raise for us from thee one who will protect; and raise for us from thee one who will help!)** (Al-Imran 3: 75)

Thus, Islam enjoins upon its believers to strive their utmost in purifying themselves, as well as in establishing peace and justice in the society. A Muslim can never be at rest when he sees injustice and oppression around him. As Martin Luther King Jr. said: “We will have to repent in this generation not merely for the hateful words and actions of the bad people but for the appalling silence of the good people.”

Islam enjoins upon all Muslims to work actively to maintain the balance in which God created

everything. However, regardless of how legitimate the cause may be, the Glorious Quran never condones the killing of innocent people. Terrorizing the civilian population can never be termed as Jihad, and can never be reconciled with the teachings of Islam.

Even Western scholars have repudiated the myth of Muslims coercing others to convert. The great historian De Lacy O’Leary wrote: “History makes it clear, however, that the legend of fanatical Muslims, sweeping through the world and forcing Islam at the point of sword upon conquered races is one of the most fantastically absurd myths that historians have ever repeated.” (*Islam At Crossroads*, London, 1923, page 8)

Muslims ruled Spain for roughly 800 years. During this time, and up until they were finally forced out, the non-Muslims there were alive and flourishing. Additionally, Christian and Jewish minorities have survived in the Muslim lands of the Middle East for centuries. Countries such as Egypt, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, and Jordan all have significant Christian and/or Jewish populations.

While our Government is responsible for ensuring the security of Singapore, we as a people have a role to play in strengthening communal relations.

The Muslim community especially must take up the challenge of correcting the misinterpretations of Islam by terrorist groups such as Al Qaeda and Jemaah Islamiyah (JI).

In 2003, a group of volunteer asatizah (Muslim clerics) took it upon themselves to form a Religious Rehabilitation Group (RRG). The primary aim of the RRG was to provide religious counselling and advice to the detained JI members, and to mend their misinterpretations of Islamic principles and values specifically in the precepts of jihad and relations with non-Muslims.

This is not surprising to a Muslim, for his faith prohibits him from forcing others to see his point of view. The Glorious Quran says: **(Let there be no compulsion in religion: Truth stands out clear from Error: whoever rejects evil and believes in God hath grasped the most trustworthy hand-hold, that never breaks. And God heareth and knoweth all things.)** (Al-Baqarah 2: 256)

Far from being a militant dogma, Islam is a way of life that transcends race and ethnicity. The Quran repeatedly reminds us of our common origin: **(O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other (not that ye may despise (each other). Verily the most honored of you in the sight of God is (he who is) the most righteous of you. And God has full knowledge and is well acquainted (with all things).)** (Al-Hujrat 49: 13)

Thus, it is the universality of its teachings that makes Islam the fastest growing religion in the world. In a world full of conflicts and deep schisms between human beings, a world that is threatened with terrorism, perpetrated by individuals and states, Islam is a beacon of light that offers hope for the future.

In the light of the above, it becomes crystal clear that Islam, the true religion of Allah, doesn't permit aggression, violence, or oppression. At the same time, it calls to morality, justice, tolerance, and peace.

The war against the twisted and perverted interpretations of Islam that promote the ideology of violence against humanity in the name of Islam must be based on the premises as enlightened earlier.

While our Government is responsible for ensuring the security of Singapore, we as a people have a role to play in strengthening communal relations. The Muslim community especially must take up the challenge of correcting the misinterpretations of Islam by terrorist groups such as Al Qaeda and Jemaah Islamiyah (JI). We need to leave behind any lingering thought that there is a conspiracy to undermine our loyalty in the wake of the arrests

In the light of the above, it becomes crystal clear that Islam, the true religion of Allah, doesn't permit aggression, violence, injustice, or oppression. At the same time, it calls to morality, justice, tolerance, and peace.



of the members of the JI. We now know for sure that the local JI cell exists in isolation and is not representative of the Singapore Muslim community.

In 2003, a group of volunteer *asatizah* (Muslim clerics) took it upon themselves to form a Religious Rehabilitation Group (RRG). The primary aim of the RRG was to provide religious counselling and advice to the detained JI members, and to mend their misinterpretations of Islamic principles and values specifically in the precepts of jihad and relations with non-Muslims. The RRG also adopts a holistic approach by providing counselling and morale support to the wives of the detainees. The idea is not only to seek their help in convincing their husbands to forsake their ideology, but also to see to the basic economic and educational needs of the wives and children so that they would not feel isolated. Eventually, the RRG hopes to prepare the detainees for their re-integration into society once they have been reformed.

As an extension of its agenda the RRG has started to engage the Muslim public through public forum at mosques and other public venues on current issues, which include the

correct interpretations of Islam and to raise their level of awareness on the misleading reading of jihad which is used as a premise for the ideology of hate, violence and extremism.

To combat the current strains of terrorism we require a number of antidotes. We have to fuse together the security approach with the demystification of the ideology of violence, the immunization of the Muslim community against such breeding as well as informing the other communities about what Islam stands for.



Speech by Mr Goh Chok Tong,
Senior Minister of Singapore
16th November 2005 in
Barcelona, Spain

After Amman : Uniting To Defeat Terrorism

New challenges have changed and also sharpened the focus of East-West Dialogue.

During the Cold War, such a dialogue would have focused on nuclear arms control. The peril of atomic warfare held the world's attention. However, the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 changed the strategic picture. Without a clear, common threat, pundits predicted the end of history and the world reaping dividends of peace. But the events of September 11 surfaced an insidious, growing threat. The attacks on the US hastened a new post-Cold War battle against global radical Islamic terrorism. In essence, this terrorism is a war waged by fanatical Islamists against civilisation itself. Their goal is to replace secular or moderate Muslim states with a caliphate based on their narrow, distorted interpretation of Islam and an imaginary ideal vision of 7th Century Arabia. Their enemies are both Muslims and non-Muslims - Muslims who do not agree with their goal and non-Muslims whose way of life they reject.

This transnational threat confronts all civilised nations today. The "Alliance of Civilisations" is therefore a timely initiative. I commend the Dialogue's broad themes. However, for the

East-West Dialogue to have real impact, we must be clear what exactly we are discussing. Our objective for meeting cannot just be to promote greater cultural awareness between East and West.

While East and West may have different political, cultural and social values, they are not enemies. Putting aside diplomatic niceties, I believe that to have real meaning, the Dialogue must focus on the threat of transnational terrorism to human civilisation, including to Islam. The "Alliance of Civilisations" must unite to defeat this global scourge, whose latest victims were innocent Jordanians. I feel deeply for the Jordanians because I have visited their beautiful country twice and I know King Abdullah II well. However, my own perspective of terrorism is shaped primarily by our experience in Southeast Asia. Post 9/11, my region has emerged as a key theatre for operations by the global *jihadi* network. In Southeast Asia, we face a trans-regional coalition of terrorist groups. Most prominent amongst them is the *Jemaah Islamiyah* (JI) network which has links with *Al-Qaeda*. These groups are all linked by the same radical and militant ideology of *Al-Qaeda*.

Understanding the Threat

I spoke on this growing challenge at the Council on Foreign Relations in Washington DC in May last year. My speech was entitled “Beyond Madrid: Winning Against Terrorism”. It addressed the ideological aspect of the war against terrorism. From our own Southeast Asian experience, I drew three major conclusions that I believed contained wider relevance.

First, I pointed out that to the *jihadists*, the struggle was zero-sum. They sought to bring about their goal of an ideal Islamic world through violent means, confident that they would triumph eventually.

Second, I highlighted that we must distinguish militant Islamic terrorism from mainstream Islam. I had warned that if we failed to make this distinction, we risked alienating all Muslims.

Third, and most importantly, I urged that the war against terrorism must be waged ideologically as well as with armies and security forces. Like the Cold War, it was both a struggle of geopolitics and ideologies. Unless the entire civilised world united and fought terrorism ideologically, we would not be free of terrorists for a long time. A steady stream of so-called martyrs would set off more bombs and cause more damage. However, I also noted that today’s struggle was more complex than the Cold War. The ideology we were up against was based on religion. The battle of ideas must therefore be fought primarily by and in the Muslim world. But the international community could help. We must gain the confidence of the moderates to engage the extremists vigorously. If not, this battle would be difficult to win.

Over the past year, the spate of terrorist attacks in Riyadh, London, Sharm El Sheikh, Bali, New Delhi and now, Amman, tragically confirms these conclusions. The latest attacks also revealed two dangerous trends that complicate security actions in the war on terror. First, global terrorist groups are becoming increasingly decentralized and dispersed. Second, terrorist leaders are able to continue recruiting new operatives worldwide. Of particular concern is their ability to convince ‘clean-skins’, or fresh, home-grown recruits, to mount suicide attacks. In the Amman attacks, the terrorists even used a husband-and-wife suicide team. They were deployed to detonate themselves at a wedding party.

Spread of Suicide Ideology

For Southeast Asia, suicide terror is a relatively new phenomenon. The Bali attacks of October 2002 had seriously escalated the violent tactics used by the extremists. More suicide bombers in Indonesia have since joined the first Bali bombers. The recruits are typically about 20 years of age. They come mostly from the working class. They have little education and only a shallow understanding of Islam. Indonesian authorities have also discovered that many prospective recruits were drug addicts. Glorifying “martyrdom” inspires these suicide bombers to give up their lives for the terrorist cause. Their weaknesses are easily exploited by terrorist leaders. It took the JI’s top strategist, Noordin Mohamed Top, only two days to recruit the suicide bomber for last year’s bomb blast outside the Australian Embassy in Jakarta. These leaders are usually better educated than their recruits. But they are equally willing to die for the cause. Azahari Husin, Noordin’s compatriot, was about to detonate himself when he was shot in a gun battle with Indonesian security forces. Azahari received his PhD from Reading University in the UK and lectured at Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, before he disappeared to become the JI’s bomb-maker.

Along with their zeal, the region’s militants are becoming increasingly skilled and sophisticated. After the first Bali attacks, the Indonesian authorities stepped up security measures. However, the terrorists adapted to the new conditions to launch last month’s repeat attacks on Bali. Instead of traceable vehicle bombs used in previous attacks, they deployed three walk-in suicide bombers with explosives in their backpacks. The bombers are suspected to be ‘clean-skins’. They were unknown to existing terrorist detainees and had not surfaced on the radar screens of security services in the region.

This was also the case in the Amman bomb blasts. In fact, only recently a Jordanian Minister recounted to me the hot-housing of young Iraqi suicide bombers. Iraqi youths aged between 15 and 18 years were brainwashed to undertake suicide missions, after being recruited by the militants for only one or two weeks. On an assigned day, they were told not to take lunch as they would be eating with the Prophet Muhammad after their supposed martyrdom.

“I and thousands like me are forsaking everything for what we believe. Our driving motivation doesn’t come from tangible commodities that this world has to offer ... We are at war and I am a soldier”.

The 7/7 London bombings also confirmed the spread of this fanatical and cruel ideology. After the London attacks, television audiences heard a chilling message recorded by one of four home-grown London bombers. Speaking with an English accent, he declared:

“I and thousands like me are forsaking everything for what we believe. Our driving motivation doesn’t come from tangible commodities that this world has to offer ... We are at war and I am a soldier”.

The 30-year old bomber graduated from a British university. He had worked with primary school children and left behind a baby and a pregnant wife. But he also considered himself a holy warrior fighting in the name of religion.

For the terrorists, the desire for an idealised, Islamic community, the *ummah*, is so strong that they are even prepared to forsake their lives, families and friends. The concept of the *ummah* potentially links Muslims of every race and creed. More so today than at any time in history, global forces of technology and communication create the potential for a living, dynamic *ummah*. With simple and powerful slogans, the terrorist ideologues seek to rouse Muslim feeling and mobilise Muslim outrage to secure support for their deeds.

Let me be clear. Terrorism is not inherent in Islam. That is what Muslim scholars and religious leaders tell us. That is what my Muslim friends tell me. That is my own experience with our Muslims. Fifteen percent of Singapore’s population are Muslims. They live harmoniously with Singaporeans of other races and religions.

The Mufti of Singapore, the highest religious authority on Islam, has strongly condemned terrorism and terrorist acts. He emphasised that the actions of JI suicide bomb-maker Azahari Husin were a complete deviation from the teachings of Islam, which forbid anyone from committing suicide. He added that the teachings of the Koran call for peace in multi-religious societies. If only more Muslim scholars (*ulemas*) and religious teachers (*asatizah*) all over the world would state their positions so openly and courageously.

To recruit for their violent cause, terrorists exploit the vulnerability of those in search of the meaning of life and Islam. They interpret Islam in a manner which feeds the anger and frustration of Muslim youths. They exploit and stoke Muslim anger over grievances like the Israel-Palestine conflict and other historical legacies. Their ideology is infused with hatred for what they perceive as a secular and decadent West, in particular the US. But their hatred is not confined to the West. In 2001, despite an international outcry, the Taliban blew up two 3rd Century gigantic Buddhist sculptures in Bamiyan, Afghanistan, as they were deemed by these extremists to be offensive to Islam. These terrorists even turn on innocent Muslims. They use the concept of *takfir*, that is, condemning other Muslims for apostasy, to advocate violence against anyone whom they believe is not a devout Muslim.

Defusing this complex of deviant ideas is a key challenge. But the real and practical problem we face is how to isolate the extremists from the moderates. Mainstream Muslim communities around the world must themselves do so. Non-Muslim communities can help by giving them support and resources.

Positive Developments

There are grounds for optimism that we have reached a turning point in this war. Some Middle East governments are taking the battle for the soul of Islam to the terrorists. Among the Muslim leaders, King Abdullah II of Jordan has spearheaded a key initiative in the ideological struggle. Just before the London bombings, he hosted the First International Islamic Conference in Amman. The Conference achieved a historic, mutual recognition agreement between the eight major schools of Islamic thought. 180 religious leaders affirmed the Amman Message, which shows the true



essence of Islam as a moderate, inclusive and tolerant faith. It also constrains the militants' religious justification for violence, forbidding the practice of *takfir*. I have no doubt that King Abdullah II will follow up on this initiative with renewed vigour and determination after the recent savage attacks in Amman. Indeed, after the recent bombings, His Majesty underlined that terrorism was a global threat and stressed the need for global cooperation to fight this menace. King Abdullah II also declared:

"Terrorists will not prevent us from carrying our Message and defending Islam."

A recent Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) Islamic Scholars' Conference also recognised the primacy of the ideological battle. Held in September in Makkah, Saudi Arabia, at the behest of Saudi Arabia's King Abdullah, the Conference gathered over 80 Islamic intellectuals and scholars worldwide. The Conference called for the urgent re-structuring of the OIC so as to revitalise it for the struggle against extremism.

A Growing Backlash

These initiatives are timely. There are already signs of a backlash against Muslims in the US, UK, France, Australia and elsewhere. The International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights reported that Europe's 20 million Muslims have faced increasing discrimination and distrust since 9/11 and the Madrid bombings. After the 7/7 bombings, hate crimes in London soared. If non-Muslim communities

routinely and increasingly view Muslim communities with suspicion, we will see the beginning of a clash of civilisations between the Muslim and the non-Muslim world. This is what the extremists seek. This is what we must deny them.

In Southeast Asia, terrorists also seek to divide communities. One likely reason for the repeat attack on Bali is to inflame communal tensions. Bali is an island with a majority Hindu population. The repeat bombings were aimed to drive a wedge between the Hindu and Muslim communities. Some signs of discord emerged after the attacks. Fortunately, Balinese people have shown deep restraint. They were determined not to play into the hands of terrorists. Just three days after the attacks, Balinese Muslims and Hindus held an interfaith procession to show their solidarity. Bali's Muslims leaders and other Indonesian leaders also condemned the bombings. They made clear that the island's Muslims hold moderate views.

In Europe, the problem of disharmony between Muslims and non-Muslims is growing. Second and third generation European Muslims are caught between their Islamic and secular worlds, and the country they came from and the country that adopted them. The gulf of misunderstanding is widening. Extremists can exploit these weaknesses. They will seek out opportunities to create further divisions within multicultural societies. The recent large-scale Paris riots arose because of social alienation and economic frustration. They can be easily exploited by more sinister minds. They underline the importance of building strong community relations and integration in diverse societies.

Sharing the Singapore Experience

Singapore has a multi-religious, multi-racial society. We do not take racial and religious harmony for granted. We work hard at it, knowing the fragility of race relations and religious harmony. In the 1960s, we had experienced serious racial riots. As a result, we laid strong foundations for managing racial and religious harmony. Ours is not a melting-pot approach in nation building. Instead, we adopt what I call an overlapping circles approach. Each community is like a circle with its own values, beliefs and culture. Where the circles overlap is the common space where we interact freely.

**"Terrorists will not
prevent us from
carrying our
Message and
defending Islam."**

King Abdullah II, Jordan

We try to expand and maximise this space. The space which does not overlap is the community's own space where they are free to speak their own language, practise their own religion and have their own way of life. This way, each community retains its separate identity and yet is bonded to each other through common national values.

We also foster tolerance and trust between our Malay/Muslim, Chinese and Indian communities. We have a Presidential Council for Minority Rights to protect the rights of minorities and ensure that they do not suffer discrimination. We also have a Maintenance of Religious Harmony Act to nip any inter-faith problems in the bud.

We have a special body, the Islamic Religious Council of Singapore (MUIS), and a Muslim Minister, to administer Muslim affairs. More than half of the Council is made up of influential social and business leaders. The rest are clerics who provide religious guidance. This body builds and manages Singapore's mosques and oversees Muslim education. It regularly reviews the curriculum of our *madrasahs* or Islamic religious schools. Our *madrasahs* teach both religious and secular subjects. We require them to meet national standards for secular subjects like English, Science and Mathematics. A recent revamp of the *madrasah* curriculum introduced critical thinking skills and Information Technology.

In Singapore, education has long been used to promote social cohesion and integrate our communities. The vast majority of Singaporean students attend national schools where English is the teaching medium. There are no special schools for any one race other than the handful of *madrasahs* whose annual intake of students is capped at 400. Our public housing policy guards against formation of racial enclaves. In the past, there were distinct Malay and Chinese, and to a lesser extent, Indian areas. Our regulations cap the maximum proportion of each ethnic group in any single public housing estate. This ensures that every public housing estate reflects the national racial composition. On the ground, there are grassroots organisations to facilitate interaction between different groups and to promote community cohesion.

We have pro-actively tackled the specific concerns of our individual communities. Minority communities like Singaporean Muslims are therefore not isolated from the

wider society. Far from it, our Muslim community is a key pillar of multi-racial and multi-religious Singapore and has contributed significantly to our nation-building efforts. But Singapore is an open society. Our Muslims are also exposed to wider currents in the Islamic world, which has seen growing religiosity since the 1970s. No country is immune from extremist teachings and the terrorist threat. A tiny minority of our Muslims has imbibed the radical teachings and was prepared to mount terrorist attacks.

In January 2002, we foiled a plot by Singaporean members of the JI group to carry out attacks against Western and Singapore assets in our country. Their plan was to set off seven ammonium nitrate bombs simultaneously at seven different targets. The combined force of the bombs would have packed a punch several times that of the Oklahoma bombings. In foiling the planned attacks in Singapore, we were the first country to draw attention to the JI threat in Southeast Asia. But the JI security challenge had to be handled sensitively to maintain our social harmony. As the Prime Minister then, I was concerned that revelation of Singaporean Muslim involvement in the JI could affect the confidence and attitude of our non-Muslims towards our Muslims. Together with key members of the Cabinet, I held several dialogue sessions with leaders from the various communities and religions to explain why the Government had made the JI arrests. We stressed that they were not targeted against Muslims. We also urged non-Muslims to reach out to Muslims, and for the Muslim community to integrate more with the other communities.

Policies which we put in place to promote racial and religious harmony have over the years contributed to building a foundation of mutual trust and understanding between the communities. Sensitive issues could also be discussed openly because of the trust built up between the government and our Muslim community and between our Muslim and other communities.

After the JI arrests, we also took other measures to ensure that our Muslim community did not feel besieged. At the community level, in schools and work places, we implemented initiatives to promote better inter-racial and inter-religious understanding. Various ethnic and religious groups reached out to each other and enhanced their interactions. There were



mutual visits to places of worship and small group discussions on religious practices and values.

Fortunately, our Muslim community understands the threat posed by extremist ideas. It openly denounced the JI terrorists and their plot. It has been working with the Government to root out extremists and radical teaching. To combat this deviant ideology, a group of Muslim clerics took the initiative to study the JI ideology, focusing on their distortion of core concepts like *bai'ah* (oath of allegiance), the *ummah* and *jihad*. In April 2003, they formed a Religious Rehabilitation Group (RRG) to help counsel the detained JI members. This Group has developed its own model for countering extremist ideas. Beyond rehabilitating extremists, it also counsels the detainees' families and educates the wider Muslim community on the true meaning of *jihad* and the terrorist threat. Several key members of the Group spoke at a recent public forum attended by 3000 Singaporean Muslims on "The Meaning of Jihad in Islam". After the forum, one participant remarked:

"Before I came here tonight, I thought jihad means fighting for Islam. However, what we observe today is not jihad because from what I see now, the victims are children, innocent people, women and those earning a living."

Asia-Middle East Dialogue

During my travels to several Middle East countries over the past two years, I was encouraged by their progress and aspirations. A thought came to me that the world would benefit from a dialogue between the Middle East and Asia. I therefore initiated the Asia-Middle East Dialogue (AMED) to serve as a bridge to promote greater understanding between Asia and the Middle East. The inaugural session was held in Singapore this June. It was a first step towards increasing awareness and interaction between the two regions. The Dialogue also offered a wider platform for moderate Muslims to speak up and challenge extremist interpretations of Islam. AMED is not a one-off exercise but will be a long-term process. Egypt will host the second AMED in 2007, followed by Thailand in 2009. Saudi Arabia will organise the fourth AMED in 2011, with Bahrain following after.

A United Front

Cross-regional linkages can help in the fight against terrorism. But the biggest fight must be mounted by moderate Muslim communities in the East and West. They must take responsibility for what is going on in the Islamic world. They are stake-holders of Islam. They must deepen their internal dialogue to help win the battle against extremism. They must debunk the religious underpinning of radical ideology and terrorism. This is part of the struggle for the soul of Islam. Waging this war successfully will minimise the number of new recruits for the terrorists. The small, extremist *jihadist* minority claims to speak for an entire faith and uses Islam to foment divisions within societies and civilisations. The moderates must counter them and seize back the agenda.

This is not just a theological or ideological struggle, but one with wider political implications. Currently, Iraq is a major front in the global struggle. The terrorists seek to achieve a demonstration effect there. If the American-led coalition and the democratically-elected Iraqi Government are defeated, terrorists around the world will be emboldened. They will redouble efforts to overthrow secular or moderate Muslim governments all over the world. They will chase after the US and its allies. They will explode more bombs, whether in the Muslim or non-Muslim world.

Let me conclude. In our globalised world, people of all faiths and races must live alongside each other harmoniously. A terrorist attack in one city should be considered an attack on all humanity. Both Muslims and non-Muslims have to wage this battle together, and the theological battle must be fought by the Muslims themselves. Winning against the terrorists will take a long time. The terrorists will create many difficulties for us. They have shown a capacity to adapt their strategies and tactics. But they cannot win. They can be a menace but they cannot win, certainly not when we unite to defeat them.

Excerpt from

FORUM JIHAD

Saturday, 24th September 2005
@ Tampines Stadium



Many people understood that Jihad means war. What are the forms of Jihad that parallels with the teachings of the Prophet? Could you explain please Ustaz?
(Question for Ustaz Mohd Hasbi Hassan)

1. Islam is a religion of Mercy
2. Allah says in Surah Al Anbiya, verse 107

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ

"We have sent you but as a mercy to the worlds".

3. Allah says in Surah Al Ahzab, verse 21

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا

"In the messenger of Allah you have a good example for him who hopes in Allah and the Last Day, and remembers Allah much."

4. How should one carry out JIHAD according to the sayings of Prophet Muhammad PBUH?

5. From Abu Musa r.a. who said:

"There was a Bedouin who came to the Prophet and asked, "Oh Prophet,

- i) A man who goes to war due to wealth;
- ii) A man who goes to war so that he will be famous;
- iii) A man who goes to war so that he will be respected;

Who is among them that have achieved what they are doing *Fi Sabilillah* (because of the path to Allah?)

Answered the Prophet:

مَنْ قَاتَلَ لِتَكُونَ كَلِمَةَ اللَّهِ هِيَ الْعُلْيَا، فَهُوَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ

“Whoever fight to uphold the words of God, then he is traveling in the path of God.” Narrated from Bukhari & Muslim.

10. The word **قِتَال** (Qital) when translated, means **WAR**, and **NOT** restricted to **KILLINGS** only

11. **JIHAD** is divided into 2 sections:-

- Internal Jihad (Jihad Bathin)
- External Jihad (Jihad Zahir)

Internal Jihad (Jihad Bathin)

• Internal Jihad (Jihad Bathin) is to conquer one’s desires until one submits to the requirements of Allah’s religion.

• This is what the Prophet named as *Jihad Ahbar* (The Biggest Jihad)

• As said by the Prophet when he returned from the Tabuk expedition during the hot month of Ramadan:

رَجَعْنَا مِنَ الْجِهَادِ الْأَصْغَرِ إِلَى الْجِهَادِ الْأَكْبَرِ، قِيلَ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ! وَمَا الْجِهَادُ الْأَكْبَرُ؟ قَالَ: الْجِهَادُ فِي النَّفْسِ،

“We have just returned from a small Jihad to a greater Jihad.”

Then, the prophet was asked: “Oh Prophet. What is the greater Jihad?” The Prophet replied: “Jihad against one’s desires.” (Narrated by Baihaqi from Jabir r.a – in a dhaifi sanad)

• The Prophet said: -

الْمُجَاهِدُ مَنْ جَاهَدَ نَفْسَهُ

A Mujahid is someone that carries out Jihad (waging war) against his desires. (Narrated by Imam Tarmizi)

External Jihad (Jihad Zahir)

- ♦ Verbal
- ♦ Wealth
- ♦ Writing
- ♦ Service
- ♦ Weapon

Verbal Jihad

♦ Said the Prophet:-

أَفْضَلُ الْجِهَادِ كَلِمَةٌ عَدْلٍ عِنْدَ سُلْطَانٍ جَائِرٍ

“The most appropriate Jihad is the true and correct utterance to a tyrannical Sultan.” Narrated by Tirmizi

♦ Preachers, religious teachers, leaders of communal prayers (imam) and mosque preachers (khatib) in preaching Islam are carrying out the acts of Jihad by propagating the religion of Allah.

Jihad with Wealth

♦ Allah says:

وَجَاهِدُوا بِأَمْوَالِكُمْ وَأَنْفُسِكُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ

“And carry out Jihad with your wealth and yourself in the path of Allah.” Al-Quran, Surah At Taubah, Verse 41

Jihad with Writing

Jihad with Service

♦ Service towards parents.

There was a young man who wished to enlist himself to fight the war in Allah’s path (Fi Sabilillah). Then the Prophet (pbuh) asked him:-

أَحَىٰ وَالِدَاكَ؟ قَالَ نَعَمْ قَالَ فَفِيهِمَا فَجَاهِدْ

“Are both of your parents still alive?” The young man replied “Yes!” The Prophet continued, “Then does your **JIHAD** unto the both of them.” Narrated Imam Bukhari.

- ◆ Service towards Family members by finding an honest source of income.

Physical Jihad

- With Violence, Torture or Weapon
 - For Defence
 - Attacker

- For Defence

ضُرُورِيَّاتِ الْخَمْسِ

5 Emergency Factors

The meaning of Emergency or Dharurat

“Something which must be defended for the benefit of mankind in this world and the hereafter.”

The 5 Emergency Factors

- Life
- Wealth
- Honour
- Mind
- Religion

The Prophet said:-

وَمَنْ قُتِلَ دُونَ مَالِهِ فَهُوَ شَهِيدٌ

“Whoever is killed for defending his wealth, he attains syahid upon death.” Narrated by Tirmizi and Abu Daud.

The Prophet said:

وَمَنْ قُتِلَ دُونَ دَمِهِ فَهُوَ شَهِيدٌ

“And whoever is killed for defending his life, he attains syahid upon death.” Narrated by Tirmizi and Abu Daud.

The Prophet said:

وَمَنْ قُتِلَ دُونَ دِينِهِ فَهُوَ شَهِيدٌ

“And whoever is killed for defending his religion then he attains syahid upon death.” Narrated by Tirmizi and Abu Daud

The Prophet said:

وَمَنْ قُتِلَ دُونَ أَهْلِهِ فَهُوَ شَهِيدٌ

“And whoever is killed for defending his family then he attains syahid upon death.” Narrated Tirmizi dan Abu Daud.

After learning the meaning of Jihad as said by the Prophet and Jihad as carried out by the Prophet and its misunderstandings and applications; how would you be able to continue with Jihad as mentioned by the Prophet and at the same time maintain relations among Muslims and non-Muslims especially in this country of Singapore?

- Part of it is: Allah says in verse 8 & 9 of Surah Al Mumtahaanah:

لَا يَنْهَىٰكُمْ اللَّهُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يُقَاتِلُوا فِي الدِّينِ وَلَا يُضِرُّوكُمْ مِنْ دِينِكُمْ أَنْ تَبَرُّوهُمْ وَتُقْسِطُوا إِلَيْهِمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ

“Allah does not forbid you to be benevolent and equitable to those who have neither made war on your religion nor driven you from your homes. Allah loves the equitable. Allah only forbids you to make friends with those who have fought against you on account of your religion and driven you from homes, or abetted others to do so. Those who make friends with them are unjust.”

- The story of the Prophet (pbuh) with a Jewish man.

- Good Moral Behaviour (Akhlaq Karimah)

Saying of the Prophet

إِنَّمَا بُعِثْتُ لِأَتَمِّمَ مَكَارِمَ الْأَخْلَاقِ

“I am made to perfect great morals.”

- History proofs that conversion to Islam was not made with force:-

- Moral values of youth
- Drugs
- Divorce
- Employability
- Imprisonment
- Economy

- Exemplary citizens.



We have listened to Ustaz Hasbi's explanation on how Islam as a beautiful religion places JIHAD as a protector to the community. However, terrorist acts being carried out by individuals in the name of Jihad is sufficient to label them as terrorist which nullify the real meaning of Jihad.

Why and how could this happen?

•But they too, based their resources from the Al Quran and Sunnah.

1. There are a lot of Quranic verses and Hadith that talked of Jihad.

2. REFUSAL IN ACCEPTANCE OF THE EXPLANATIONS OF AHLUS SUNNAH WAL JAMA'AH SCHOLARS is the reason why their actions are inclined towards terrorism.

3. Therefore they state that we ought to adhere to the Quran and the Hadith. This is the order of Jihad, therefore it is incumbent of us to wage Jihad.

4. Explanations, It is true that there are numerous verses and hadith that supports jihad.

5. The reason for this support is:
i) Especially for the community of Makkah and those around it, which is the Hijaz.

6. As stated in the Qur'an, 5th verse of Surah At Taubah:

فَإِذَا انْسَلَخَ الْأَشْهُرُ الْحُرْمُ فَاقْتُلُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ حَيْثُ وَجَدْتُمُوهُمْ

"But when the sacred months are over, slay the polytheists wherever you find them..."

7. From the Qur'an, Surah At Taubah, verse 36.

وَقَاتِلُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ كَافَّةً كَمَا يُقَاتِلُونَكُمْ كَافَّةً

"...And fight the polytheists altogether just as they themselves fight against you altogether..."

8. JIHAD is allowed with the revelation of Surah Al Haj, verse 39 – 40 from the Quran.

ii) For defence or counter attack, as stated in the Quran, Surah Alhaj ayat 39-40.

أُذِنَ لِلَّذِينَ يُقَاتَلُونَ بِأَنَّهُمْ ظَلِمُوا وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ لِّظَالِمِيهِمْ لَقَدِيرٌ

"Permission [to fight] is given to those who are attacked, because they were wronged; and Allah is indeed Able to give them victory."

9. Causes of confusion:- The verses and hadith are used for:

- i) All non-Muslims are Harbi
- ii) Anywhere
- iii) In all conditions – peace, war, strong and weak.

10. The History of Jihad

11. Rasulullah SAW lead the Muslim community in two era:

12. MAKKAH ERA – Jihad is forbidden. The Muslims were patient towards all oppression and tyranny. As stated in Surah Alkaafirun.

لَكُمْ دِينُكُمْ وَلِيَ دِينٌ

"To you unto your religion and to me onto mine."

13. MADINIAN ERA – State City of the Prophet

14. The Muslim community in a strong and stable condition.

15. This was the time where verses on Jihad and its benefits were revealed. The same goes for the sayings of the Prophet on the benefits of Jihad. It is apt as the Muslim Community is living in Daulah Islamiah, under the guidance and leadership of the Prophet.

16. Causes of confusion:-

- i) Sympathy towards the state of murdered Muslims
- ii) Feelings of Islamic Brotherhood
- iii) Revenge (The Story of Saiyidina Ali RA)
- iv) Hatred towards the Non-Muslims

REQUIREMENTS OF CONDITIONS FOR CARRYING OUT

Not allowed to kill those not carrying any arms.

Sabda Nabi SAW memesan pada bala tentera:

لَا تَعْلُوا وَلَا تَعْدُوا وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا
وَلِيدًا وَلَا امْرَأَةً وَلَا شَيْحًا كَبِيرًا،

“Do not steal looted properties, do not run, do not abuse (corpses), do not kill children, women and the aged – Narrated from Abu Daud and Tabarani.”

Not allowed to destroy properties. Not allowed to burn houses, places of worships, chopping off trees and killings of animals because these are acts of aggressors.

The Quran states in Surah Al Baqarah ayat 190:

وَقَاتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ الَّذِينَ يُقَاتِلُونَكُمْ وَلَا تَعْدُوا
إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ

“Fight for the sake of Allah those that fight against you, but do not attack them first. Allah does not love the aggressors.”

The Story Of Islamic Warrior, Salahuddin Al Ayyubi When He Recapture Baitul Maqdis From The Christians

Lives & Propeties are GOD’S COMMISSION, therefore JIHAD till sacrificing lives and propeties are not allowed to be carried out by anyone.

The only authority that are able to declare JIHAD is an Islamic Khalifah or Islamic Leader.

Said Ibnu Quddamah r.h. in his book, *Alkafi – 2nd Chapter, page 234* : It is **not** a must for someone to carry out the Hudud Law except if he is the Leader of the Country or its deputy, because Hudud Law is ALLAH’S Property and it requires Ijtihad, therefore it is feared that the conditions for it are not met if not given to the rightful person. Hence, it is incumbent that this task is handed over to the proper authority which is the Khalifah (Leader)

There is no Jihad from an individual, group or community.

ISLAM prohibits **Killings without any rights.**

The Quran states:

أَنَّهُ مَنْ قَتَلَ نَفْسًا بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ أَوْ فَسَادٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ
فَكَيْفَ أَنْمَا قَتَلَ النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا

“...That whosoever kills a human being for other than [the crimes of] manslaughter or corruption in the earth, it shall be as if he had killed all mankind; and whoever saves the life of one, it shall be as if he had saved the life of all mankind...” (Al Maidah ayat 32)

30. The Quran states that:

وَمَنْ يَقْتُلْ مُؤْمِنًا مُتَعَمِّدًا فَجَزَاؤُهُ
جَهَنَّمُ خَالِدًا فِيهَا وَغَضِبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَلَعَنَهُ
وَأَعَدَّ لَهُ عَذَابًا عَظِيمًا

“He who slays a believer intentionally, his reward is perpetual Hell, and the wrath and curse of Allah are upon him, and for him He has prepared a dreadful torment.” (Surah An Nisa’ ayat 93)

- He will banish in hell
- And Allah will be angry towards him
- And Allah will curse him
- And Allah will subject him to the Biggest Torment and it is FORBIDDEN to kill oneself

Narrated from Bukhari and Muslim from Abu Hurairah, said the Prophet:

مَنْ تَرَدَّى مِنْ جَبَلٍ فَقَتَلَ نَفْسَهُ فَهُوَ فِي نَارِ
جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدًا مُخَلَّدًا فِيهَا أَبَدًا،

“Whosoever throws himself from a hill and kill himself, then he will land in hell. Perished forever in the abyss of hell.”

History proves that the propagation of Islam in this region was not due to force but because of Good Moral Values.

- (i) The morals of our youth
- (ii) Drugs
- (iii) Divorce
- (iv) Employability
- (v) Economy

Now we are facing the Jihad to improve.





We have seen the serious negative implications involved for misunderstanding Jihad. Could you, Ustaz, please explain on how this Terrorists' Ideology is formed and what is understanding?

1. One should not be hard and dangerous at once.

2. Said the Prophet:-

كُلُّ مَوْلُودٍ يُوَلَّدُ عَلَى الْفِطْرَةِ

Every child is born pure and clean

This child will travel in steps with good intentions but he will be taken advantage of by those with bad intentions.

Step 1: Interest in religious knowledge

Step 2: Ideology Refers back to the Quran and Sunnah only, don't have to consult religious scholars

Step 3: Ideology Do not have to hold on to any school of thought – Despises those that follows the Mazhab

Step 4: Ideology Old time scholars are conservative. Despising old time scholars and practices which are labelled as Syirik, Bid'ah with reason as wanting to maintain Aqidah

Step 5: Usrah, Jemaah, Amir, Ta'at, Bai'ah, Wala' wal Bara' Only their perception are right, the rest are wrong.

Step 6: The Aqidah of Takfir (to nullify one's religious stature) apart from what they conform to in terms of Aqidah, the rest are syirik and kafir. The Muslim community which adheres to the Non-Muslims also becomes Non Muslims. Their blood and property can be destroyed

Step 7: DAULAH ISLAM Have to be carried out anywhere with force. All Non-Muslims are Kafir Harbi (yang di perangi) has to be fought, incumbent to destroy the infrastructures of the Non-Muslims. MUST JIHAD

Islam is a religion of peace. In its literal meaning itself, there is a message of peace in Islam. God carries the name of the Most Peaceful (As-Salam). A religion based on the message of peace can never attract acts of terrorism in it.

Terrorist attacks which inevitably affected the innocents was due to the misunderstanding of the meaning of Jihad by extremists and Muslim fanatics.

What are your comments on:-

(1) Their despicable actions under the banner of Islam and Jihad Fisabilillah; and (2) What are global and local implications on Islam and its adherents?

Let us first, return to the Quran to find within its revelation, guidance for us, in our efforts to counter such terrorist attacks. Acts of terrorism are condemned in Islam. Allah swt mention in Ar-Rum : 41

ظَهَرَ الْفَسَادُ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ مَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِي النَّاسِ
لِيُدْخِلَهُمُ بَعْضَ الَّذِي عَمِلُوا لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ

“Mischiefs has appeared on land and sea because of (the meed) that the hands of men have earned, that (Allah) may give them a taste of some of their deeds: in order that they may turn back (from Evil).”

Acts of terrorism based on injuring and hurting other beliefs are prohibited in Islam. Allah swt sends His message to mankind that no Muslims are allowed to revile other beliefs so as not to allow any sort of retaliation to Islam by others. This concept of respecting each other

belief is inherent within the Quran as Allah swt mention in the Quran in Surah Al-An’aaam, verse 108:

وَلَا تَسُبُّوا الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ
فَيَسُبُّوا اللَّهَ عَدْوًا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ

“Revile not ye those whom they call upon besides Allah, lest they out of spite revile Allah in their ignorance.”

THE MEANING OF ISLAM CONTRADICTS THE GOALS OF TERRORISM

Islam is a religion of peace. In its literal meaning itself, there is a message of peace in Islam. God carries the name of the Most Peaceful (As-Salam). A religion based on the message of peace can never attract acts of terrorism in it.

Terrorism is an embodiment of fanaticism and extremist coupled with violence. There is no place for Islam to harbour terrorist’s beliefs and ideologies. The peaceful spirit of Islam can never condone acts of terrorism. The message of Islam moulds Muslims to be the Torch of Mercy for Mankind. Those that carry out acts of killing in the name of jihad (bombings in Iraq, America, London, Indonesia, Egypt, Spain and others), those that sacrifices the lives of others (Muslim or non-Muslims) due to their own **POLITICAL** reasons, and **NOT** due to a mutual agreement by all Muslims of the world, then their actions are not due to religion as Islam does not preach as such. Lives and



property are God's Amanah (trust), therefore carrying out JIHAD which causes destruction of lives and properties is forbidden in Islam.

Islam even forbids cruelty to animals. Prophet Muhammad p.b.u.h. has said:

"A prostitute was forgiven by Allah, because, passing by a panting dog near a well and seeing that the dog was about to die of thirst, she took off her shoe, and tying it with her head-cover she drew out some water for it. So, Allah forgave her because of that."
(Narrated by Abu Huraira from Al Bukhari)

عَنْ ابْنِ عُمَرَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ عَذِيبَتْ امْرَأَةٌ فِي هِرَّةٍ سَجَنَتْهَا حَتَّى مَاتَتْ فَدَخَلَتْ فِيهَا النَّارَ لِأَنَّهُ لَمْ يَأْطَعْهَا وَلَا اسْتَسْقَاهَا إِذْ حَبَسَتْهَا وَلَا يَهِي تَرْكُهَا تَأْكُلُ مِنَ حَشَائِشِ الْأَرْضِ .

"Allah's Apostle said, "A woman was tortured and was put in Hell because of a cat which she had kept locked till it died of hunger." Allah's Apostle further said, (Allah knows better) Allah said (to the woman), 'You neither fed it nor watered when you locked it up, nor did you set it free to eat the insects of the earth.'" (Narrated by 'Abdullah bin 'Umar from Al Bukhari)

If animals are highly appreciated, the status of man, of Adam's descendant are sacred. Allah swt says in *Surah Al Isra' verse 70* :

وَلَقَدْ كَرَّمْنَا بَنِي آدَمَ

We have honoured the children of Adam

GLOBAL IMPACT TOWARDS ISLAM & MUSLIMS

Their misunderstandings OF Islamic concepts and ideologies have caused great calamity to the Muslims today. Their violent acts are continuously affecting Muslims globally. Let us look at several incidences that have affected Muslims since the episode of Sept 11.

1. The state of Muslims in America after 9/11:

- Islam being accused as religion of terrorist
- Mosques in Texas were shot at
- Businesses of the Arabs were destroyed

- Muslims were threatened, small scale bombs were directed at Muslims, they were humiliated

2.The state of Muslims in Spain after the **Madrid Bombing** on 3 April 2004:

- Prayers time were shortened, not everyone was allowed to enter mosques due to security concerns
- After 9/11, eggs were thrown into mosques
- Muslims were sacked from their jobs
- Businessess were threatened, Arabs and Islam were villified

3. The state of Muslims in London, after **London Bus Bombings** on 7 July 2005;

- Muslims in Britain faced prejudice
- Racial issues were raised with anti Islam messages.
- Increase in number of Asian men being checked by the Police
- Mosques were attacked
- faith hate crimes increase as much as 566%

These examples portray fear, uncertainties, and worries. Disturbances disturb everyday lives and religion is being scrutinised. These are the result of a small minority that uses Islam for their own distorted agendas, not only disrupting the real image of Islam but also to the lives of Muslims. Muslim's progress disturbed - uncertainties and doubts have arisen.

IMPLICATIONS TO SINGAPORE

If these cruel actions were allowed to happen in Singapore, it will affect Singapore in 2 aspects:

1) Singapore as a small country needs to constantly compete to stay relevant. Such endeavour could be hampered. Singapore's economy will suffer, foreign investors will stay clear from our coast, and chaos will erupt.

2)The status of Muslims as a minority could be threatened. Muslims will be looked at suspiciously. Trust and friendship could be affected and lost. Muslims will find difficulties in seeking jobs

Muslims must accept the fact that we are a MINORITY COMMUNITY, we will be at a lost if the non-Muslims community would take us



lightly and retaliate against us, if such incidents happen.

We Muslims are still lagging in many aspects of life such as:

- **EDUCATION**
- **ECONOMY**
- **RELIGIOUS UNDERSTANDING**
- **THOUGHTS**
- **SOCIAL LIFE** (High divorce rate, juvenile delinquencies and others.)

We must understand that Islam does not allow a Muslim to land themselves in sufferings. The Prophet said:

لَا ضَرَرَ وَلَا ضِرَارَ فِي الْإِسْلَامِ

“In Islam, it is not permissible to engage ourselves in difficulties and it is not permissible that we cause difficulty to others.” (Narration of Ibnu Majah)

We should join hands in improving our lives in all areas that life can offer. We should live together and appreciate one another as one people. The most important thing is that we must understand Islam in its proper context

and return back to the teachings of the real Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jamaah.

Allah says:-

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا
وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتَقْوَاهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ
عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ

“O mankind! We have created you from a male and female, and then rendered you nations and tribes so that you might know one another. The most hounourable among you in the sight of Allah is he who is the most pious. Allah is indeed Knowing, Aware.” (Surah Al Hujarat, verse 13)

How could we solve this problem of Jihad whcih has been widely misunderstood?

We must firstly grasp Islam with its spirit of universalism. Islam is based on the revelations in the form of the Quran and the words, actions and agreement of the Prophet Muhammad s.a.w. brought to us by scholars famously known as al-Hadith. Islam has a rich tradition and civilisation. Mainstream Islam has been moulded under the banner of the Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jamaah. We need to return to the true

understanding of the Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jamaah.

According to Syekh Abu Mansur Abdul Qahir Bin Tahir Bin Muhammad Al-Baghdadi Al-Isfaraini At-Tamimi, in his book entitled 'Al-Farq Bayn Al-Firaq' (passed away on 429H/1073M, Al-Baghdadi is a knowledgeable person, mastering 17 types of learning fields) the meaning of the real **AHLUS SUNNAH WAL JAMAAH** is divided into 8 categories. They are :

1) Islamic Scholars who possesses a thorough knowledge of the problems of Unity, Prohpecy, Dogmas of Promises and warnings, Rewards and Retribution and the necessary pre-requisites for *Ijtihad*, the imamate and the exercise of Authority. They declare themselves free from anthropomorphism as well as from divesting God of His attributes. (Tauhid)

2) Chief Jurists of both systems: Those who apply the method of analogy and those who adhere to traditions. (Fiqh)

3) Scholars of Tasauf

4) Scholars of Hadith

5) Scholars of Adab, Nahu & Saraf

6) Scholars of Qiraat, Tafsir & Ta'wil

7) People who take care of Muslim frontiers.

8) General Population of the cities which practises the teachings of the Scholars of Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jamaah.

EQUIPPED WITH GOOD MORALS

Muslims must also embrace good moral qualities. In our zest to acquire greater heights in our lives, we need to emulate the Prophet's conduct. We must be equipped with good moral qualities. Let us portray to the world our excellent qualities. Let us portray the beauty of Islam. The Prophet said: :-

وَحَيَارُكُمْ أَكْمَلُكُمْ إِيمَانًا أَحْسَنُكُمْ خُلُقًا
حَيَارُكُمْ لِأَهْلِهِ وَأَنَا حَيَارُكُمْ لِأَهْلِي

Those possessing perfect faith are those having best conduct. Those possessing good conduct are those who is best to his family, and I am best towards my family.

LOVE TOWARDS ONE'S COUNTRY

Another important quality that we as Muslims need to understand and embrace is towards inculcating love towards our own country and nation. We must understand that God has ordained where we are born and where we will die. Thus appreciating our place of birth, the nation that has become the means of providence of our lives, our family's lives. This is the abode where we find a source of income, procreate and also for the world to prosper, it needs peaceful messages. This is the place, the abode where our generations and children will strive to build a better future. We must inculcate this feeling of love in ourselves and our children towards our own country.

Loving one's country is a responsibility demanded by religion. Allah swt mention in Surah Saba' verse 15 :

بَلَدَةٌ طَيِّبَةٌ وَرَبٌّ غَفُورٌ

(Your country) is a good abode and (Your God) is The Most Merciful."

Our beloved Prophet Muhammad p.b.u.h said when he was on his Hijrah out of Medina to Mecca. He exclaimed :

مَا أَطْيَبَ مِنْ بَلَدٍ وَأَحَبَّ إِلَيَّ وَ لَوْلَا
أَنْ قَوْمِي أَخْرَجُونِي مِنْكَ مَا سَكَنْتُ غَيْرَكَ

"There's no land better than yours (for me) and you are dearest to me. And if not for my tribe ousting me out from you, surely I will never choose an abode other than you." (Narrated by Tirmizi).

If we allow instability in our homeland, it will result in failure of our dreams and aspirations. Everyone is responsible for the peace and harmony of our multi-racial and religious society.

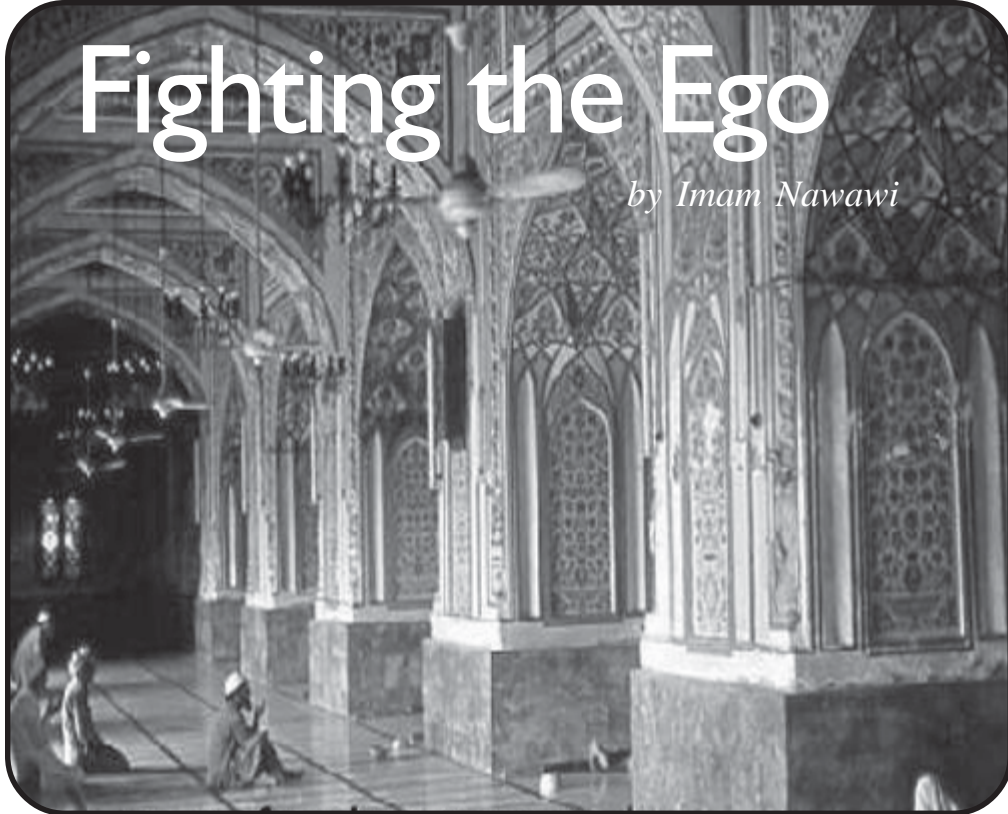
Imam Shafi'i said, may God have mercy on him: "Only the sincere one (mukhlis) knows hypocrisy (riya')." This means that it is impossible to know the reality of hypocrisy and see its hidden shades except for one who resolutely seeks sincerity. That one strives for a long time (yajtahidu azmanan) searching and meditating and examining at length within himself until he knows or knows something of what hypocrisy is. This does not happen for everyone. Indeed, this happens only with the special ones (*al-khawass*). But for a given individual to claim that he knows what hypocrisy is, this is real ignorance on his part.

I shall mention in this book a chapter, God willing, in which you will see a type of wonder that will cool your eyes. To illustrate the great extent of the concealment of hypocrisy we only need relate the following from the Teacher and Imam Abu al-Qasim al-Qushayri [the sufi shaykh], may God have mercy on him, from his 'Risala' with our isnad previously mentioned.

He said: "I heard Muhammad ibn al-Husayn say: I heard Ahmad ibn 'Ali ibn Ja'far say: I heard al-Hasan ibn 'Alawiyya say: Abu Yazid [al-

Bistami], may God be well pleased with him, said: I was for twelve years the blacksmith of my ego, then for five years I became the mirror of my heart (mir'atu qalbi), then for a year I looked at what lay between the two of them and I saw around me a visible belt [i.e. of kufr]. So I strove to cut it for twelve years and then looked again, and I saw around me a hidden belt. So I worked to cut it for five years, looking to see how to cut. Then it was unveiled for me and I looked at creation and saw that they were all dead. So I recited the funeral prayer over them."

I (Imam Nawawi) say: That hypocrisy should be as inscrutable as this to the peerless master in this path [i.e. tasawwuf] is enough to show how greatly hidden it lies. His phrase: "I saw them dead" is the apex of worth and beauty, and seldom do other than the Prophet's words, Blessings and Peace be upon him, gather up such wealth of meanings. I shall touch upon its meaning briefly. It means that after he had struggled long and hard and his ego had been disciplined and his heart illumined, and when he had conquered his ego and subdued it and achieved complete mastery over it, and it had



Fighting the Ego

by Imam Nawawi

Imam Shafi'i said,
 May God have
 mercy on him:
 "Only the sincere one
 (*mukhlis*) knows
 hypocrisy (*riya'*)."
 This means that it is
 impossible to know
 the reality of
 hypocrisy and see its
 hidden shades except
 for one who resolutely
 seeks sincerity

subjected himself to him totally, at that time he looked at all created beings and found that they were dead and completely powerless:

- they cannot harm nor can they benefit;
- they cannot give nor can they keep back;
- they cannot give life nor can they give death;
- they cannot convey nor can they cut off;
- they cannot bring near nor can they take away;
- they cannot make happy nor can they make sad;
- they cannot bestow nor can they deprive;
- they possess for themselves neither benefit nor harm,
- nor death, nor life, nor resurrection.

This, then, characterizes human beings as dead: they are considered dead in all of the above respects, they are neither feared nor entreated, what they have is not coveted, they are not shown off to nor fawned upon, one does not concern oneself with them, they are not envied nor disparaged, their defects are not mentioned nor their faults pursued and exposed, one is not jealous of them nor thinks much of whatever God-given favors they have received, and they are forgiven and excused for their shortcomings, although the legal punishments (*al-hudud*) are applied to them according to the Law. But the application of such punishment does not preclude what we have mentioned before, nor does it preclude our endeavoring to cover up their faults without disparaging them in the least.

This then is how the dead are viewed. And if someone mentions human beings in a dishonorable manner we forbid him from entering into that subject in the same way that we would if he were going to examine a person who died. We do not do anything for their sake nor do we leave Him for them. And we no more stop ourselves from fulfilling an act of obedience to God on their account than we do on account of a dead person, and we do not over-praise them. And we neither love their own praise for us nor hate their insults, and we do not reciprocate them.

In sum, they are as it were non-existent in all the respects we have mentioned. They are under God's complete care and jurisdiction. Whoever deals with them in such a way, he has combined the good of the next world with that of the lower world. May God the Generous grant us success towards achieving this. These few words are enough to touch upon an explanation for his [Abu Yazid al-Bistami's] saying — May God be well pleased with him.

Blessings and Peace upon the Purified Prophet, his Family, and his Companions

Imam Nawawi's 'Bustan al-'arifin' (The Garden of Gnostics), Beirut: Dar al-kitab al-'arabi, 1405/1985 p. 53-54.

Jl ideology exhibited a remarkable ability to adapt itself to changing circumstances, to incorporate new ideas, and to apply itself to new strategic and political ends.

The Ideology of Al-Jama'ah Al-Islamiya

by Rohan Gunaratna

IDEOLOGY - not poverty or illiteracy - is the key driver of Islamist terrorism. Ideology frames a terrorist group's organizational structure, leadership and membership motivation, recruitment and support, and strategies and tactics. To counter the threat posed by a terrorist group, its operational infrastructure must be dismantled and its ideological appeal must be reduced. Failure to do so will result in the group replenishing its human losses and material resources and rising again only to continue the fight.

One example of this is Al-Jama'ah Al-Islamiyah (Jama'ah Islamiyah-JI), the Southeast Asian associate of Al Qaeda. JI has evolved through three phases. In the first phase, the predecessor of JI, Darul Islam (DI), campaigned for an Islamic state in Indonesia, and attacked several local Indonesian targets. After the DI leadership was forced to relocate from Indonesia to Malaysia, it came into contact with other foreign jihad groups. In the second phase, JI was transformed into a regional jihad group, and carried out attacks throughout Southeast Asia to advance its original mission. Later, after participating in the multinational anti-Soviet jihad in Afghanistan, JI came into contact with Al Qaeda. In the third phase of development, JI came to share Al Qaeda's global vision of jihad, and began to directly target the U.S., its allies and its friends either in partnership with Al Qaeda or by acting alone.

During each of these phases, JI ideology exhibited a remarkable ability to adapt itself to changing circumstances, to incorporate new ideas, and to apply itself to new strategic and political ends. At the same time, JI ideology remained firmly rooted in its founding precepts and extremist political vision of the world. This, in turn, provided JI with a surprising level of ideological and organizational cohesion, even as it evolved from a local to a global jihad group.

The Birth of JI

JI'S roots can be traced back to the Indonesian rebellion in the 1950s led by Darul Islam (DI). At its founding, the DI movement opposed the secular nature of the Sukarno regime, and from 1948 to 1962, fought the regime to establish an Islamic state in its place. Motivated primarily by politics, the DI rebellion in West Java was led by Sekarmadji Maridjan Kartosuwirjo. Before the Second World War, Kartosuwirjo was active in Muslim nationalist

politics in the then Dutch East Indies. He eventually grew unhappy with the political maneuvering and slow-pace of nationalist leaders like Masyumi, and, in 1947 began assembling a militia in West Java.

In 1948, Kartosuwirjo announced the establishment of the Islamic Army of Indonesia (Tentera Islam Indonesia- TII) and proceeded to fight the newly formed Indonesian republic. For the next thirteen years he continued his struggle to establish an Islamic state. When Kartosuwirjo was arrested in 1962, the rebellion was finally crushed. However, when Suharto came to power in 1966, General Ali Moertopo reactivated DI to protect Indonesia against the danger of Communist infiltration across the Indonesian-Malaysian border in Borneo. In order to discredit the Islamists before the 1977 elections, some 185 people believed to be members of Komando Jihad, a group sharing Kartosuwirjo's ideals, were arrested by the government in mid-1977.

The founders of JI, Abdullah Sungkar and Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, were among those detained by the government. Both of them were deeply involved in Islamic proselytizing (*dakwah*) activities. Although they were never a part of the original Darul Islam, they fully endorsed DI's political agenda. Due to their meetings with Haji Ismail Pranoto (Hispran for short), who was accused of leading the Komando Jihad, they were both charged with having been inducted into DI by Hispran. Whatever the truth of the charges was, it is no secret that both of them were known for making statements urging disobedience to secular authorities and questioning the validity of the Indonesian constitution. Sungkar and Ba'asyir rejected the state ideology of Pancasila, and dared to criticize the Suharto government. They were tried in 1982 and sentenced to nine years in prison for subversion. Subsequently, their sentences were reduced on appeal to three years and ten months. Facing imminent re-arrest, they fled to Malaysia. In exile, Sungkar became the Suharto regime's number one enemy.

In Malaysia, Sungkar identified a number of sympathetic Malaysian businessmen who supported the establishment of an Islamic state in Indonesia. In an effort to seek additional funding for their cause, Sungkar and Ba'asyir went to Saudi Arabia. They also established contacts with the mujahideen in Afghanistan, who were then waging war against the Soviet



Union. This opened the gateway for JI members to become ever more politicized and radicalized, and they received military training and were exposed to the ideology of armed jihad. With Malaysian financial backing, Sungkar and Ba'asyir were able to form their own organization. After a dispute with the Indonesian-based DI leader named Ajengan Masduki, Sungkar formed JI in 1993. Sungkar's new group did not initially have a name but by 1995 Sungkar's followers were formed into small groups consisting of 8 to 10 members, and they were known as Al Jemaah Al Islamiyah¹. Members of his first small group or cell included Riduan Isamuddin alias Hambali, Abdul Ghani, Jamsari, Suhauime, Matsah, and Adnan and Faiz Bafana². The weekly meetings of the JI cells included highly selective readings of the Quran as well as other studies to prepare members for jihad. Compared to DI, JI was a more tightly structured organization, but it retained DI's vision of establishing an Islamic state in Indonesia. Only later did their ambition grow into creating a pan-Islamic state in Southeast Asia.

Jama'ah Islamiyah's Worldview

In general, JI ideology refers to the comprehensive set of ideas by which the group makes sense of itself and the world. It is an attempt by them to provide some explanation of how things have come to be as they are and to provide some indication of where they are heading as a basis to guide their action. It also provides criteria for rigorously distinguishing between what, in their perspective, are to be considered valid and invalid ways of thinking. Finally, JI ideology provides an overriding justification for their violent actions to which they may make a final appeal when challenged by outsiders.

Although much of JI ideology relies on the Quran, the Sunnah and the interpretation of the venerable forefathers (*Salafush-Sholih*), it must be stressed that it is by no means representative of the views held by all Muslim scholars.³ This is to say that JI ideology has its limits, that it is just one set of interpretation among others, and that in reality it can be quite inconsistent with the general principles of Islam.⁴

In their understanding of Islam, JI preaches the need to practise Islam in its totality, which is referred to as “Islam Kaffah.”⁵ Within this all-encompassing framework, they hope to achieve peace in the worship of God in the widest sense of the word by accepting the Quranic guidance not only towards the spiritual good of the hereafter but also towards the good life-spiritual, physical and social-attainable in this world.

Al-Jama’ah Al-Islamiyah’s founding charter-The *Pedoman Umum Perjuangan Al-Jama’ah Al-Islamiyah*, translated as “The General Guide for Islamic Groups” and commonly known as the “PUPJI”-offers insights into the basic concepts of JI ideology.⁶ In the introduction of the PUPJI, the Central Leadership Council of JI wrote that God has outlined a number of set principles by which men should lead their lives.

Firstly, the aim of man’s creation is to worship God alone.⁷ Consequently, all worldly possessions, time, energy and thought must be channeled toward this end.

Secondly, human beings are to serve as God’s vicegerent on earth. In this view, man is responsible for ensuring that the earth is managed and developed in accordance with God’s laws. He thus is required to prevent, eliminate and fight all acts of earthly corruption, which is seen as the product of a way of life which falls outside the domain of the Shariah.

Thirdly, life on earth is a contest between good and evil, and a person will be judged by his good deeds. Good deeds are measured by the fulfillment of two fundamental requirements-namely, sincerity toward God and emulating the Prophet in all of life’s endeavors.

Fourthly, the apostles of God were sent by Him to establish the *dien*. The meaning of “establishing the *dien*” or “*Iqomatid Dien*,” according to the exegetes (*Mufasssiron*), is to establish a way of life based on the unity of God (*Tawhid*). This means to establish Islam in all its aspects as revealed by Abdullah bin Umar, the companion of the Prophet Muhammad, in his commentary of the *Surah Al-Fatehah*. This includes following *aqidah* (the Islamic creed), *ibadah* (performing acts of worship) and accepting Islam as a total *manhajul-hayah* (way of life).

The Prophet Muhammad, in discharging his duties as the messenger of God, had successfully shown all of this, integrating both the physical and spiritual duties of life in total submission to the worship of God. His example

This is to say that JI ideology has its limits, that it is just one set of interpretation among others, and that in reality it can be quite inconsistent with the general principles of Islam.⁴

was then emulated by the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, the other companions of the Prophet, and also by later generations with varying degrees of success.

In JI’s view, however, Muslims gradually began to lose their way, and for sake their duties to God. After the fall of the Ottoman Caliphate in 1924, the Muslim Nation grew increasingly weak, and was exposed to the secularist ideologies of the modern world that wrought further moral decadence and decay. Since the Muslim Nation was no longer a world leader in the religious, political, and military realms, the JI proposed setting up a new state based on the holistic teachings of Islam. The establishment of such a state would restore the unity of religion and politics, thereby counterbalance the

secular forces that had caused the enervation and decline of the Islamic Nation.⁹

What Motivated Them?

Religion is perhaps the most important motivating factor for JI operatives. According to psychological reports, many JI members joined the group because they wanted a “no fuss” path to heaven; others were altruistic and wanted sincerely to help the Muslim Nation.¹⁰ In JI, they wanted to be convinced that they had discovered “true Islam:” and that they could be freed from endless searching, as they found it too stressful to be critical, evaluative and rational. They believed they could not do wrong in the eyes of God, as JI’s leaders legitimated the group’s agenda and actions through their readings of holy scripture. The psychological profile of the JI’s members (e.g. high compliance, low assertiveness, low in the questioning of religious values, and high level of guilt and loneliness) suggested that they were predisposed to indoctrination and control and needed a sense of belonging without close attachments.

Religious texts were quoted selectively to educate and motivate JI’s members. In the hands of JI ideologues, Islam became a weapon. It incited many to the call of jihad. It also ensured a measure of solidarity over the course of JI’s development, even as JI came into contact with other ideas and groups. The PUPJI, though its written in the Indonesian language, makes extensive use of Arabic words and religious concepts, leaving little room for doubt that distinctively Arab ideas and theology lay at its core. The ideology is, in short, drawn primarily from various religious sources.¹¹

Fear of divine retribution and hope for the rewards of the hereafter were instilled by charismatic lecturers causing members to view JI’s struggle as synonymous with Islam’s.¹² The end result was a group driven by the belief that its actions were legitimized by God, hence the need to support it with undivided loyalty and uncompromising devotion. This is evident in Abu Bakar Ba’asyir’s address during the Mujahideen II Congress, held in Surakarta, Jawa Tengah on August 10-12, 2003. In speaking about Indonesia’s struggle for independence from the Netherlands, he underscored that the underlying intention of that struggle is to practise Shariah so that the obligation to worship God is fully realized. He reasoned that the

freedom to practise Shariah in its totality was inhibited during Dutch, English and Japanese rule.¹³ This same line of reasoning can also be traced to Said Qutb or to Egypt’s *Gamaa Islamia*, who believed that it is an Islamic obligation to fight against political regimes that limit the implementation of Shariah.¹⁴ Having different parties speaking about the same thing, all quoting from Islam’s rich sources certainly gave JI the extra religious mileage and superficial correctness to fuel their struggle.

To reinforce their struggle in pursuit of the caliphate, the JI adopted the concept of *Al Wala’ Wal Bara*. It believed that his concept, which specifies how to distinguish between friends and enemies, was woven into the fabric of the Islamic creed (*Aqidah*). This in turn served as a constant reminder of the divine justification and legitimacy for their actions. In pursuing their aim, JI stressed the need for individual Muslims to be in a group (*Al-Jamaah*)-a necessary precursor to the establishment of an Islamic state. The individual Muslim is required to pledge allegiance (*Al-Bai’ah*) in order to become a member of JI. Through their loyalty, JI members felt the obligation to God to ‘rid the world of polytheism, falsehood and oppression.¹⁶ With this pledge, JI members become obligated to listen (*Al-Sa’mu*) and obey (*Al-Ta’ah*) to the best of their ability the *Amir*, the leader of the group, and other appointed leaders (*Ma’sul*). When these conditions are not satisfied, the person is charged with having committed a sin against God.¹⁷

Those that fulfilled their pledge walked a divine path. JI ideology supplied for its recruits various milestones on the road toward the Islamic state- *Iman* (belief), *Hijrah* (emigration in the way of God), *Idad* (preparation for the struggle in the way of God) and *Jihad* (struggle in the way of God). These were all stages that the Prophet Muhammad himself was reported to have led the early Muslim generation through. By appealing to jihad, JI constantly, urged Muslims to go to war against the enemies of Islam who resisted the application of Islamic law. Initially, their target was the Indonesian government, but JI later came to include Malaysia, Singapore and the Philippines. A key figure in promoting this ideology was Abu Jibril, who, in his lectures, called for the setting up of a “Nusantara Islamic State” (*Daulah Islamiyah Nusantara*), together with preaching *jihad* and the desirability of dying as martyr.¹⁸





Strategic Flexibility

The *Al-Manhaj Al-Harakiy Li Iqomatid Dien (The Progressive Methodology In Establishing The Religion)* reveals that JI conceived of their struggle in three stages—namely, the preparation to establish the *Daulah* (Islamic State), the setting up of the *Daulah* itself, and finally, the establishment of the caliphate. To ensure the overall cohesion and long-term survivability of JI in this struggle, the PUPJI laid out a broad set of operational guidelines for all JI operatives to follow during each successive stage of the revolutionary struggle.

During the first, preparatory stage, founding a *jama'ah*, or party, supersedes all other activities for JI. All of this, however, is veiled in secrecy; all JI members operate on a need-to-know basis. An investigation by Singapore's Internal Security Department (ISD) of JI members revealed that they operate as a clandestine organization, complete with code names and "JI-speak."¹⁹ To date, most of the 2000 JI operatives that have been arrested have been more or less foot soldiers with no knowledge of JI's overall operations or organization.²⁰ An integral part of founding the

party is the formation of a core group or righteous leadership that lays the groundwork and designs the future course of development of the group as a whole. A rigid, military-style command and control structure is developed and enforced. Instilling discipline and obedience amongst new recruits is of paramount concern - a central part of the religious imperative to establish the faith. Listening and obeying the leadership is also inculcated through *Amar ma'ruf, nahi munkar* (the code of enjoining good and forbidding evil) and enforced by various internal review mechanisms such as *hisbah*, which serves more or less as a thermostat in controlling fluctuation in the members' commitment. Members are obligated to collectively ensure the compliance of all and to refrain from any deviation from the directives of the leadership.

After the core group is established, the next step is the recruitment and education of new members. *Dakwah* or missionary work is an attempt by JI to reach out to the masses, to communicate their ideology and popularize their version of *Islam Kaffah*. The intent of this activity was to promote and exploit feelings of guilt within

The Prophet Muhammad, in discharging his duties as the messenger of God, had successfully shown all of this, integrating both the physical and spiritual duties of life in total submission to the worship of God. His example was then emulated by the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, the other companions of the Prophet, and also by later generations with varying degrees of success.

the Muslim community for failing to live up to JI's version of "true Islam" The effort was effective, and provided a platform not only for recruitment but also for neutralizing the public's general animosity toward and distrust of JI's radical agenda. Another emphasis of JI is

on ideological education, which seeks to systematically instill, expand and change the worldview, emotion, desire and practice of all new recruits} *Tansiq bainal jama'at* is another feature of JI ideology that allows it, and perhaps even compels it, to collaborate with other Islamic groups that share their worldview. Various studies on JI have shown that JI is willing to forge alliances domestically, regionally and globally to remain potent and able to achieve their aim.

JI and Al Qaeda Meet

As is well-known, the mujahideen's victory over the Soviet Union in Afghanistan was a watershed event for radical Islam. The Afghan Jihad increased JI's military capabilities, their access to new financial and other resource networks, and perhaps most significantly, their sense of belonging to an international Islamic brotherhood²⁴ JI's desire for jihad became more concrete, their motivation grew stronger, and their strategies more refined. Unlike other Southeast Asian Islamist groups, JI at this stage was an ideological hybrid. Though its roots were in Southeast Asia, JI's ideological outlook became increasingly "Arabized" and developed a strong orientation toward the Middle East, most notably toward Saudi Arabia and Egypt. More specifically, JI began to incorporate the ideologies of *At Gamaa At Istamiyah at Masri* (The Islamic Group of Egypt) and, to a lesser extent, the *At Istamiyah At Jihad at Masri* (Egyptian Islamic Jihad) into its own thinking.

In the mid 1990s, Dr Ayman Al Zawahiri visited and spent time engaging the JI leadership in Malaysia. In the second half of the 1990s, Sungkar and Bashir visited Pakistan. Sungkar met with bin Laden on three occasions. The relationship was forged by Hambali, an Indonesian cleric, who as a child aspired to be an astronaut. During the early 1980s, while living in Malaysia, Hambali became a follower of Sungkar. Through his contact with Sungkar, Hambali was invited in 1986 to go to Afghanistan for training and to support the mujahideen in Afghanistan. While Hambali spent the next two months in Karachi awaiting further instructions, he met a number of individuals from Indonesia including Zulkarnaen who also became close to Al Qaeda.²⁵ In early 1987, Hambali and his colleagues underwent two months of military training with AK47s, MAC-Is, handguns, 60MM mortars and RPGs.²⁶ After Hambali returned to Malaysia in mid-1988, he



traveled to the Philip pines (Tawi-tawi) as a missionary and lived with a local Muslim family in 1991. During this time, he met Samsuddin, an Indonesian who subsequently brought him to the MILF Camp Abubakar. He also met the then MILF leader Salamat Hashim at the camp at that time. After 9 months in the Philippines, he returned to Malaysia via Sabah and proceeded to Selangor.

In 1994-1995, Hambali came into contact with Khalid Sheikh Mohommed, who later masterminded the 9/11 attack, and several other important Al Qaeda members, including Wali Amin Khan Shah, who worked with Ramzi Ahmed Yousef to destroy 12 U.S. airliners over the Pacific. As Hambali's involvement with Al Qaeda deepened, he rose through the ranks of JI's leadership. JI at the time was divided into several regional groups known as "Mantiqi"²⁷ Hambali was tapped to lead Mantiqi I, which covered Malaysia and Singapore. Mantiqi II was led by Indonesian national Fati and covered Indonesia, Sabah and the Philippines. Nasir Abas headed Mantiqi III, which covered Kalimantan, Mindanao in the Southern Philippines and Sulawesi. There was also a Mantiqi IV in Australia; however, this Mantiqi consisted of only about 20 members, all of whom were Indonesian nationals residing in Australia.

The Mantiqis were all overseen by the Markaz, a central governing body that consisted of Sungkar, Ba'asyir, Zulkarnaen, Rushdan and Mukhlas. In addition to serving on the Markaz, these individuals served in JI's *Shura Majelis* (consultative council), which influenced the JI activities from a Koranic perspective. In the mid-1990s, JI primarily focused its activities on funneling money to the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) in the Philippines. But this changed in 1998 when the Markaz decided to start sending members and military equipment to Southern Philippines. From Mantiqi I, groups of Malaysians were sent to MILF camps for training and to support their Muslim brothers. Indonesian JI operative al-Ghozi was the JI's primary contact in the Philippines and Zulkarnaen was responsible for sending groups of Malaysian and Singapore members to the Philippines. Almost all of the key decision makers were Afghan trained.

After the fall of Suharto in 1998, Sungkar and Ba'asyir returned to Indonesia to continue their struggle. When Sungkar, the charismatic leader of JI, died in 1999, Ba'asyir succeeded him²⁸ This caused some unhappiness within JI.

Together with Irfan Awwas Suryahardi, Ba'asyir founded the Majelis Mujahideen Indonesia (MMI) in August 2000²⁹ MMI was an umbrella group of Islamist groups campaigning for the enforcement of Shariah. The younger members of JI-Hambali, Abdul Aziz alias Imam Samudra, Ali Gufron alias Muchlas saw Ba'asyir as too weak, too accommodating, and too easily influenced by others. These JI hardliners led by Hambali saw the formation of MMI as a betrayal of Abdullah Sungkar's original plan for JI to remain underground in its struggle to set up an Islamic state. In contrast to Ba'asyir, the Hambali-led group was of the opinion that accommodation with a non-Islamic political system could contaminate the faithful and was forbidden. As to Ba'asyir, he had relocated to the village of Ngruki, where he headed the Pondok Al Mukmeen pesantren in Solo, Central Java. While he had no objection to the conduct of terrorist operations, he also saw the merits of investing in the political struggle. While meeting prominent leaders of the Indonesian government, Ba'asyir continued to admire and follow bin Laden. He repeated his rhetoric, and offered his support to Al Qaeda operations in Southeast Asia.

What more or less emerged from this was three JI factions-the political faction (Yogyakarta-centric) that believed in political struggle, the radical faction led by Ba'asyir (Solo-centric) that combined political struggle with militant tactics, and the terrorist faction led by Hambali (Malaysia-centric). The bulk of the latter faction were Afghan trained and were the closest to Al Qaeda. Despite these differences in tactics and methodology, JI continued to function as a network of Islamic radicals extending across Southeast Asia. At times, the three factions cooperated and even collaborated with each other. In 2000, JI created Rabitat-ul-Mujahideen (Legion of Mujahideen), an umbrella organization of Southeast Asian Islamist and nationalist groups engaged in armed struggle. Its members included Moro Islamic Liberation Front, Free Aceh Movement (GAM), Rohingya Solidarity Organisation, Araken Rohingya Nationalist Organisation, and Jemmah Salafiya (Thailand). Like Al Qaeda, the vanguard of the global Islamic movement, JI aspired to be the vanguard group of the Southeast Asian Jihad.

What facilitated this solidarity among the factions was the extremist political ideology that they all shared in common. Most of the JI leaders

who serve on the highest rung of the organizational ladder are proteges of Abdullah Sungkar and Abu Bakar Ba'asyir. Many of them were alumni of the Pondok Al Mukmeen in the village of Ngruki, one of the most famous pesantren (Islamic boarding schools) in Central Java. A trusted second tier of leaders appear to have been assigned as field coordinators, responsible for delivering money and explosives and for choosing a local subordinate who can effectively act as team leader of the foot soldiers. The bottom rung—the people who drive the cars, survey targets, deliver bombs, and most often risk arrest, physical injury, or death—are selected shortly before the attack is scheduled. They are mostly young men from pesantrens or Islamic boarding schools. Importantly, the schools that provide the recruits are often led by religious teachers with ties to the Darul Islam rebellions of the 1950's or to Ba'asyir's Pondok Al Mukmeen in the village of Ngruki.

Ideological Extremism and International Terrorism

During the period of a decade, a significant component of JI had become ideologically and organizationally linked with Al Qaeda. Today, a significant portion of JI members still believe in the Al Qaeda ideology and continue to actively participate in Al Qaeda's avowed mission of global jihad. As a direct result of Al Qaeda contact, many JI members began to think and act like Al Qaeda, directing their animosity toward "Crusader" and "Zionist" targets. For instance, the JI terrorist faction leader Hambali recruited Jack Roche, an Australian convert, who was tasked by the Al Qaeda leadership to attack Jewish and Israeli targets in Melbourne, Sydney and Canberra. Similarly, JI hosted the Al Qaeda members that planned the *USS Cole* attack and two 9/11 pilots including its deputy operational commander Nawaf Al Hazmi in Kuala Lumpur in January 2000. Furthermore, JI hosted Zacariya Moussoui, an Al Qaeda suicide pilot in U.S. custody. Both the pre-and post 9/11 JI target selection included U.S., British, Australian and Israeli targets. Like it has done on several other occasions, Al Qaeda's overarching dominant ideology was successful in "hijacking" JI's parochial ideology.

Today, JI is driven more by its newly acquired ideology of global jihad than by its original, more local agenda. After Al Qaeda's attack on America's most iconic landmarks on September

11, 2001, JI is credited with having conducted the second worst terrorist attack. Emulating Al Qaeda, JI carried out simultaneous suicide bombings of the Sari Club and Paddy's cafe in Bali on October 12, 2002, killing 202 persons. The bombings were followed by several other attacks including suicide bombings of the JW Marriot hotel and the Australian Embassy both in Jakarta, Indonesia. As the JI training camp Jabal Kuba around Mount Kararo in Mindanao, Philippines is still active, JI still retains significant capabilities to conduct terrorist attacks in Southeast Asia.

And yet, despite its initial setbacks, its period in exile, its linking with Al Qaeda, and its eventual breaking apart into several factions, the JI ideology has remained generally coherent. This has allowed various JI factions to pool together both men and materiel. This would suggest that a military strike on JI's terrorist faction would be in itself an insufficient strategy to defeat terrorism in Southeast Asia. Instead, terrorism must be snuffed out at its ideological sources, one of the most significant of them being within the radical *pesantren*. This link between ideological extremism and terrorism must be understood. Without defeating ideological extremism, the threat of terrorism cannot be managed. Instead, the ideology will adapt, even as groups are dismantled, scattered, or as factions emerge in the leadership.

Until now, there has been no concerted effort to ideologically target JI and other comparable groups that employ religious justifications and arguments to legitimate terrorist activities.³⁰ An effective strategy to defeat JI includes, above all, mobilizing moderate Muslims and giving them the freedom to express themselves and to empower those who advocate cooperation and nonviolent solutions to conflict. Moderate Muslims must be made to realize that they are strategic partners in this struggle with radical Islam and to recognize that they have more to lose than gain. The aim here must be to marginalize the militants and promote efforts to isolate and reduce the influence of extremist ideology and its advocacy of intolerance and violence. To have a united voice against terrorism the moderate Muslim majority must remain well organized and single minded on this issue. The challenge here is to build and maintain political institutions for Muslims to resolve their differences democratically, and



assume more responsibility for the future direction of their religion. Effective policies for engaging moderate Muslims and neutralizing extremism must be developed. Educating the public on extremist ideologies, organizations and tactics must be done both formally and informally so that the Muslim public is prepared to play its part in the collective struggle of civilization against terror.

NOTES

- ¹ Debriefing of Hambali, Central Intelligence Agency, August 2003.
- ² Debriefing of Hambali, Central Intelligence Agency, August 2003.
- ³ The phrase, *Jama'atun minal-Muslimin* which appears in the PUPIL, Chapter 1, Article 2, p. 14 is a clear admission of this.
- ⁴ Martin van Bruinessen, ISIM, Netherlands in his 'Traditionalist and Islamist pesantren in con-temporary Indonesia' a paper presented at the ISIM workshop on 'The Madrasa in Asia; 23-24 May 2004.
- ⁵ PUPIL, p. 13 and 'Pidato Amanah Amirul Mujahideen Ust. Abu Bakar Ba'asyir' read during the Mujahideen II Congress, 10-12 August 2003, published by Wihdah Press, Jogjakarta.
- ⁶ 'Pedoman Umum Perjuangan Al-Jama'ah Al-Islamiyah' ('The General Guide For Al-Jama'ah Al-Islamiyah'), International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research, Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies, Singapore, 2004. ICPVTR was the first institution to recover, fully translate, and analyze the JI guide.
- ⁷ The meaning of the Quranic verse in Arabic, "And (tell them that) I have not created the invisible beings (jinn) and men to any end other than that they may (know and) worship me"; Q.S. 51: 56 in the PUPIL, Nidhom Asasi Muqaddimah, p. 13.
- ⁸ "And lo! Thy Sustainer said unto the angels: "Behold, I am about to establish upon earth one who shall inherit it (khalifah)": Q.S. 2:30.
- ⁹ PUPIL, Muqaddimah, pp. 3-4 and Chapter 2, Article 4 of the Nidhom Asasi, p.14.
- ¹⁰ White Paper, p. 17.
- ¹¹ PUPIL, pp. 5-6.
- ¹² 'The Jemaah Islamiyah Arrests and The Threat of Terrorism,' White Paper published by Ministry of Home Affairs, Republic of Singapore, 2003, pp. 15-17.
- ¹³ 'Pidato Amanah Amirul Mujahideen Ust. Abu Bakar Ba'asyir; pp. 5-6.
- ¹⁴ Dr. Ahmad Mosuli. *Al-Ushuliah Al-Islamiah Dirasah Fi Al-Khitab Al-deoloji Wa Al-Siyasi Jnda Sayyid Qutb*. Egypt: Al-Tiba'ah WaAl-Nasyr Wa Al-Tauzee' WaAl-nan, 1993, pp. 202-215. 'Ishom Darbalah and Ashim Abd al-Maajid. *Al-Qaul Al-Qayfi Fi Man /mtanaa An Al-Syara' i*.
- ¹⁵ See Ushulul Manhaj Al-Harakii Li Iqomatid Dien, seventh principle, PUPIL, p. 5 and Muhammad Saeed al-Qahtani, 'Al Wala' Wal Bara;' according to *The Aqeedah of the Salaf*, translated by Omar Johnstone available at www.isiamworld.net/wal.html. Muhamad Nursalim's *Faksi Abdul-lah Sungkar Dalam Gerakan Nil Era Orde Baru*, cites this book as one of the two books which shaped Abdullah Sungkar's Tauhid Paradigm. (Master's thesis, Universitas Muhammadiyah Solo, 2001, p. 22.)
- ¹⁶ PUPIL.
- ¹⁷ PUPIL, Chapter 10, Article 30-33, p.18.
- ¹⁸ *Al-Qaeda in Southeast Asia: The case of the "Ngruki Network" in Indonesia*, ICG Indonesia Briefing, 8 August 2002, p. 3. 19 White Paper, p. 15.
- ¹⁹ Dr. Zachary Abuza, "The State of Jemaah Islamiya and U.S. Counter-Terror Efforts in Southeast; 2003. Available: http://www.house.gov/international_relations/108/abuz1029.htm (October 12, 2004).
- ²⁰ White Paper, p. 15.
- ²¹ White Paper, p. 15.
- ²² Dr. Zachary Abuza, "The State of Jemaah Islamiya and U.S. Counter-Terror Efforts in Southeast; 2003. Available: http://www.house.gov/international_relations/108/abuz1029.htm (October 12, 2004).
- ²³ White Paper, pp. 4-5 & 10.
- ²⁴ Debriefing of Hambali, Central Intelligence Agency, August 2003. Zulkarnaen is the current military commander of JI.
- ²⁵ Debriefing of Hambali, Central Intelligence Agency, August 2003.

²⁷ Indonesia Backgrounder, "How The Jemaah Islamiyah Terrorist Network Operates; ICG Asia Report No. 43 Jakarta/Brussels, December 11, 2002, p.1.

²⁸ Prior to his death, Sungkar sent Hambali to Karachi to meet with Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, the mastermind of the 9/11 operation. The purpose of the meeting was to deepen the already established ties with Al Qaeda and arrange for JI members to travel to Afghanistan to receive training. Hambali made two trips to Pakistan in 1999-the first trip alone and the second he was accompanied by JI senior operative Faiz Bafana. From 1998-2001, Hambali funneled some US\$12,000 to the MILF and some US\$18,000 to Muslim fighters in Ambon, Indonesia. JI operated a Malaysian government sanctioned/registered NGO called Jamah Al Ehsan, which raised money to be directly sent to Ambon. JI directly participated in the Christmas Eve Church bombings in Indonesia in 2000 and the attack against the Philippine Ambassador to Indonesia. JI also provided US\$4,000 to the MILF to carry out the bombing of a train in Manila in 2000. Although coordinated by Al Ghazi, the actual bombing was carried by Philippine JI member Mucklis, who later participated in the Bali bombing. The attack against the Philippine ambassador to Indonesia was also a JI operation. Al Ghazi was primarily responsible for this operation and JI provided some US\$4,000 for it. Because of ongoing investigations in Indonesia and Malaysia, Hambali and his wife left Malaysia and traveled to Afghanistan via Bangkok using his true name Malaysian passport and with \$5,000 cash. After arriving in Karachi, they proceeded to Kandahar where they stayed for one month. While in Afghanistan, Hambali's primary contacts included Mohammed Atef alias Abu Hafis, the military commander of Al Qaeda (killed in November 2001) and Khalid Sheikh Mohammed. Increasingly Al Qaeda relied on 11 and specifically Hambali who held both Al Qaeda and 11 appointments. Hambali became a major link between Al Qaeda and 11. To assist Al Qaeda's Anthrax program, Hambali recruited Yazid Sufaat, a U.S.-trained biochemist and a former Army Captain from Malaysia, who came to Afghanistan in June 2001. Yazid participated in a one-month training course and then began working with Hambali supporting the anthrax program in Kandahar. When the U.S.-led bombing campaign started in Afghanistan in October 2001, Hambali briefly met with Yazid in Karachi before his return to Malaysia and they discussed the continuing anthrax program in Indonesia. While Yazid was arrested by the Malaysian Special Branch upon his return to visit with his wife in Malaysia, Hambali who was living with his wife was arrested in Thailand by the Thai Special Branch. During this period, Hambali had provided Al Qaeda funds to cells in Indonesia to bomb Bali and other targets. With Al Qaeda assistance, close interaction, and dual membership, 11 had almost become an appendage of Al Qaeda.

²⁹ In his inaugural statement Amirul Mujahideen Ustadz Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, called for complete application of Islamic law in Southeast Asia. He said: "We still believe that if the application of Islam law is not obstructed, there will be peaceful life in this nation. Everyone will get justice from Allah and get great benefit from the teachings of Muhammad. However, if the application of Islamic law is obstructed, and the aspiration of Muslims are unfairly blocked, Muslims have the right to fight. For MMI, there are only two alternatives: the application of Islamic law or death in the way of jihad:

³⁰ Most security measures-such as the ASEAN extradition treaty, the creation of financial intelligence units; the criminalization of terrorist financing; increased cooperation between intelligence services and law enforcement agencies; and the provision of incentives for job creation-emphasize targeting the organizational structures of terrorism. Seldom do they target the ideology of terrorism. Dr. Zachary Abuza, "The State of lemaah Islamiya and U.S. Counter-Terror Efforts in Southeast Asia; 2003. Available: http://www.house.gov/international_relations/108/abuz1029.htm (October 12, 2004).

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Habib Ali is a young master of tasawwuf and a scholar in Shafi fiqh. His noble lineage extends

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Jihad In The Way of Allah

by *As-Sayyid Al-Habib Ali' Al-Jifry*
Translated and edited by *:Hasan Sidky & Khalil Abu Asmaa*

All praise belongs to Allah, for the blessing of gathering us upon the service of His *deen* and the seeking of His pleasure. I bear witness that there is nothing worthy of worship except Allah; a witnessing through which Allah makes firm in our hearts the light of certainty. And I bear witness that our Master Muhammad is His slave and Messenger; a witnessing through which we are tied to his presence—a tying that will prepare us for his service and victory. May Allah's peace and blessings be upon him, his family, companions, and all those who follow them in righteousness until the last day.

As for what proceeds (*wa ba'ad*): I sincerely thank Allah, for you and for myself, that He has blessed us to reach this sacred month, and that He has allowed us to reach the beginning of the last 10 days, all the while we are upon the belief of "*La Ilaha Ila-Allah, Muhammad Rasul-Allah*".

It may be that you are from amongst those who taste this blessing and bounty the most,

because there are from among you those who were blessed with Islam after having experienced what it means to be outside of Islam. And there are amongst you those who grew up and were raised between those who don't know Islam. Therefore, since Allah has prepared you to be able to taste Islam (after not knowing it) it is necessary that when you come to the land of the Muslims, and find that those who are around you are living without this taste of Islam, then you should not let this affair (your Islam) become "habitual" for you, just as it has become habitual for them

This is why it is incumbent upon you to be a means towards reminding them of the blessings of Islam—for they have been afflicted with the disease of becoming familiar with and complacent concerning these blessings. As the Arabs say, "Familiarity is blessing's disease." Thus it is obligatory that you remind yourself of this each and every day, saying, "All praise is



due to Allah for the blessing of Islam, and sufficient is it as a blessing.”

The second issue pertains to the approach of the last ten days of this blessed month of Ramadan; the days in which your Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, used to roll up his sleeves, worship by night, and wake up his family for prayer. Therefore, it is absolutely necessary that you increase your aspiration to draw nearer to Allah in these last ten days, because Allah, the Mighty, the Sublime, has hidden in these days some of His special divine gifts, which necessitates that you should desire that Allah blesses you with a great portion of these gifts. If one is sincere in drawing closer to his Lord, he will be prepared in these ten days to reap the lasting benefits of Ramadan until the next year, and then for the rest of his life.

Multiply your daily recitation of the Qur'an, whilst trying to ponder its meanings. However, if you are not able to truly ponder its meanings, due to a linguistic deficiency, then ponder the essential meaning, which is the magnificence of being able to recite the words of your Lord. For indeed, if you approach the Qur'an in this

manner and from this doorway, subtle meanings will become apparent to you; meanings that even scholars of the Arabic language, even those who profess excellence in it, have been deprived of due to the fact that they have not entered upon the Qur'an from this blessed doorway. You should seek in your recitation of the Qur'an for what it means to be in the company of your great Lord. And if your hearts get acquainted with and taste this meaning, then the world that encompasses you will no longer have an impact on your hearts, rather, you will become of those who impact the world.

It is human nature to esteem and honor those who sit in the company of kings and rulers. It is also the nature of this world, nay, the whole of existence, whether it perceives it or not, to be naturally disposed and compelled to esteem and honor those deeply attached to being in the company of their Creator. The meaning of “esteem” here is to benefit from and through them. *This* is the type of relationship and connection that we must now establish between us and this world, all in preparation for the affair that is dawning upon the *Ummah*.



We feel pain for what has befallen the *Ummah*, we beg Allah, we weep to Allah, we turn to Allah, we repent to Allah, and we seek His forgiveness, in order that we aren't held accountable as being a cause for what has befallen the *Ummah*.

We are people with a mission in this existence. We weren't created in vain. Nor were we blessed with Islam in vain. Nor have we been put in touch with the great scholars in vain. Nor were you brought to this illustrious land (Tarim, Yemen) which has in it a great secret from amongst the secrets of inheritance from the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, in vain. Nor were you tied to the connected chain leading back to the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, in serving the *Ummah*, in vain. Rather, Allah has given all this to you and has prepared all this for you so that you may become ready to take on the mission that is approaching you in this world.

And when people hear talk about "a mission that is approaching" the intellects are distracted into thinking only about the outward affairs that are taking place around us now. And this is not what is exclusively intended. It is necessary that the affairs that are encompassing us now in the

world (those that bring happiness, those that bring sadness, the painful and difficult matters) should have no place of magnitude in your hearts. It is inappropriate for those who have been chosen by Allah for the rectification of the world, to praise and magnify the world (*'alam*), rather, their magnification and esteem should be directed to the Omniscient (*Al-'Aleem*) Knower (*Al-'Alim*), the Mighty, the Sublime.

We feel pain for what has befallen the *Ummah*, we beg Allah, we weep to Allah, we turn to Allah, we repent to Allah, and we seek His forgiveness, in order that we aren't held accountable as being a cause for what has befallen the *Ummah*. We beg Allah in our supplications that He rectifies the *Ummah*, at the same time we struggle in using the means that assist in this rectification by using what Allah has given us. With this in mind, we must never be distracted from the root and essence of our mission.

You must constantly remember that there is a foundational purpose to your creation: "*And We have not created the Jinn and Mankind except that they should worship Me.*" Allah created us solely for His worship. If a negation ("*And We have NOT created...*") is followed by an exception ("*EXCEPT for My worship*"), then that is one of the strongest ways of affirming and restricting (*hasr*) something in the Arabic language. So Allah, the Mighty, the Sublime, affirms that the sole purpose of our creation is His worship. That is why there should be no greater mission for us in our existence than this mission. This is the foundation...

This foundation branches off into our interaction with the creation surrounding us. "Our Lord! You created us to worship You ONLY... However, You haven't created each one of us in a separate place to worship you, rather, You have surrounded us with Your creation. So what is the reason behind this our Lord?" Allah, the Almighty, said, "*I am placing on the earth a vicegerent (khalifah).*" So our goal on this earth is to establish what Allah, *azza wa jall*, wanted to be established on this earth. And from this is seeking knowledge, calling to Allah, and *jihad* in the way of Allah.

Please note that *jihad* is not translated as "fighting," for fighting is only one manifestation of *jihad*. *Jihad* comes from the root word "*al-jahd*" (meaning exertion or struggle). It means that one fully exerts himself and struggles with himself to serve his Lord, as well as to perfect his interaction with others. This is the general

and comprehensive meaning of *jihad*, which we must understand. We must also clearly understand that fighting is only one of its manifestations and only one of its meanings.

All of our interactions with the creation, from seeking knowledge, to calling to Allah, to *jihad* in the way of Allah, are but branches originating from the foundation, which is establishing the worship of Allah. Hence, this is why it is of the utmost importance that as we do these things we don't get preoccupied by them and forget the purpose for which they were established. The scholars of the heart say that it is from the greatest obstacles that befall a person traveling to Allah that his *means* become his *goals*.

Seeking Sacred Knowledge

From amongst the means to the goal is seeking sacred knowledge. You are now in this state. Your understanding of the meanings behind seeking knowledge should be to establish the worship of Allah. So, therefore, your esteem (*ta'theem*) for the seeking of knowledge is commensurate with establishing the worship of Allah.

From this esteem (*ta'theem*) come many benefits:

- Having high *adab* (courtesy and moral character) in seeking knowledge.
- Honoring your time, so that not one moment is spent in other than that which you came here for.
- That you fully understand what you are being taught, while having full confidence in those teaching you. (I say this because a student of knowledge may become confused as to what he is really seeking during his initial quest for knowledge).
- That you preserve, through your knowledge, those elements that will protect for you the "light" of knowledge. This is done primarily by guarding your heart and limbs from falling into the disobedience of Allah.
- Quickly acting upon that which you are taught.

That you esteem all that is associated with knowledge; your books, the authors of those books, your teachers who are teaching with a connected chain of transmission back to the

Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, the place that you study in, and even the clothes that you wear during study.

Esteeming and respecting what was mentioned will have a great impact on your actual benefit from the realities of knowledge. So don't become preoccupied with the *outward* of knowledge in exclusion to the *reality* of knowledge, all the while doing your utmost to perfect the outward seeking of knowledge and its sciences.

Calling to Allah (Da'wah)

The proper way to obtain the real rank of calling to Allah is to not specify a time for *da'wah*, by saying, "Now I will begin *da'wah*," or "Now I will stop doing *da'wah*." Your calling to Allah began the moment you said, "I bear witness that there is nothing worthy of worship except Allah, and I bear witness that our master Muhammad is His slave and Messenger." The end of your *outward* calling to Allah is when your soul leaves your body. Therefore, the time for *da'wah* is from the first time you say the *Shahadah*, to the last time you can possibly say it. The only difference is that in every phase that you move through you will use different means and methods.

The phase that you are in right now (the actual seeking of knowledge, acting upon this knowledge, and rectifying your character and inner state) is *da'wah*. Not one week should pass by except that you weep to Allah, either by night or by day, that Allah alleviates what has befallen the *Ummah*, and that Allah guides the *Ummah* back to the best of paths. You must establish amongst yourselves the *sunnah* of consultation and advice. You must train yourselves so that it is not heavy on your hearts to advise a brother with gentleness and love, if he needs advise and guidance. You should also train yourselves how to readily accept advice from others without the slightest agitation in your hearts, if you are mistaken. Indeed, finding it difficult to advise others and to accept advice is a sign that there is a deficiency in your sincerity in seeking knowledge and drawing closer to Allah.

You must establish with every type of person around you a relationship based on *da'wah*, regardless whether he is the salesman in the market, the taxi driver on the street, the janitor of the building, or the one who sits next to you in the mosque. Your concern for calling them

to Allah MUST be greater than your desire to receive any benefit from them. Then, if the time comes for you to go back to your respective countries, or if you go out for *da'wah* in the local villages, the meanings and methods of *da'wah* will open ever wider for you. However, the one who is not calling to Allah in this phase will never be a true caller to Allah in the next phase. This is so because if the heart is able to delay the concern for *da'wah* now, then the heart is empty from the reality of *da'wah* in the first place, this reality being a *deep concern*. And this *deep concern* is an action of the heart, and actions of the heart can never be delayed. It is possible to delay buying a piece of clothing, delay reading a book, delay having lunch till dinner time, and delay the Dhuhr payer until 'Asr time (for the traveler). Hence, the outward affairs of the world (like buying and selling) and the afterlife (i.e. prayer) can be delayed, under certain circumstances. However, the acts of the heart, whether they are worldly or of the afterlife, can never be delayed. It is not possible for a person who loves someone, to say, "I will delay my love for you." Likewise, *da'wah* is a *deep concern*, and is an act of the heart. So if you are able to delay the *da'wah*, then you were capable of delaying this *deep concern*, and if you are able to delay this, then you are not a true person of *da'wah*, you only have the outward form of a *da'i* (a person of *da'wah*).

From amongst the innovations of the Arabs was that if a person died, the women of the household would be heard wailing, lamenting, and mourning. If the women of the household were few in number, women would be hired to assist in the wailing and lamenting (*nawwahah* in Arabic). One time, three of these women were hired and brought to the house of the deceased. When they arrived they began their wailing and crying, and the people of the house told them to delay their wailing until the funeral procession passed in front of their house. So when the funeral procession passed by they were told to begin. This was so because they were hired, however, the mother of the one who passed away can never be told to delay her lamenting and crying, because her crying began the moment her son passed away. This is why the Arabs say, "The one rented to wail and lament is not like the one whose only son perished in her lap." This is why it is necessary that the one calling to Allah must be more concerned, and cry about the *deen* more

intensely, than the mother whose only child perished in her lap. Without this, you will never become a true *da'i* (caller to Allah).

Our societies and the communities of the Muslims in the West are not lacking people who can give speeches and admonitions. In every *masjid* you will find those who can give the *Khutbah* and public speeches, yet we do not find the desired results. Societies are not transformed through these admonitions and speeches, because most of these speeches are like the *nawwahah* (lamentation of the aforementioned hired women), and very, very, very, very few in the *Ummah* can speak like the mother whose only son perished in her lap. So do not accept to delay the *da'wah*. This does not mean to neglect your studies, rather, make your studies from your *da'wah*.

Jihad and the Middle Way

Anyone who makes the claim that he wants to serve the *Deen* yet is not thinking about *jihad* in the way of Allah, either has no understanding or he is not a truthful and sincere person. However, concerning the issue of *jihad*, people have gone to two extremes, both of which are mistaken. One group understood from the concept of *jihad* that it is necessary to view all the *kuffar* as those whom we must raise the sword or rifle to kill. The other group understands from the concept of *jihad* that we must be gentle, affectionate, and love all of them, and by doing such we would be "struggling" (i.e. making "*jihad*") with them to bring them back to Allah and His *Deen*. Obviously, both groups have fallen into error. In reality, we are not a people whose mission is to kill the *kuffar*, nor are we a people who love the *kuffar* unrestrictedly. When it is time for fighting, we do not fight except those who, by doing so, we would be serving Allah alone (not our passions or personal agendas).

Sayyidina Ali (may Allah honor his face) was fighting a *kafir* in one of the battles. During the battle Sayyidna Ali knocked him down and raised his sword to kill him. As soon as the *kafir* knew that he was going to be killed he spat in Sayyidna Ali's face, so immediately Sayyidna Ali left him and went on his way. He was later asked, "Why did you leave him when Allah clearly gave you power over him?!" Sayyidna Ali replied, "I was fighting him for the sake of Allah, and when he spat in my face I feared that



“You will not find people
who believe in Allah and
the Last Day having love
for anyone who opposes
Allah and His Messenger”
(Qur’an 58-21)

if I killed him it would have been out of personal revenge and spite.”

From this we understand that it is obligatory that we differentiate between fighting people who are our own personal enemies and others whom we fight because they are the enemies of Allah. If a believer is forced to fight a *kafir*, he fights him not because the *kafir* hates him, because the *kafir* is conspiring against him, because the *kafir* wants to overcome him, rather, he fights him only because he is an enemy to Allah, the time to fight has come, and the command from Allah has been given.

On the other hand, we have those who say, “We must love the *kuffar*, be kind with them, and esteem them. They are nice people and they have a lot of good in them.” People who say this have mixed truth with falsehood, just as those who say they want to kill all the *kuffar*, without understanding or differentiation, have also mixed truth with falsehood.

It is impossible for a true believer to love a *kafir*: “You will not find people who believe in Allah and the Last Day having love for anyone who opposes Allah and His Messenger” (Qur’an 58-21). With this said, we do love goodness for them. There is a clear difference between loving them and loving goodness for them. If you say you love them then you are claiming that you love their essence (*thaat*) that you interact with in front of you, yet the believer doesn’t love any essence except the essence of Allah (*Thaatullah*), the Mighty and Majestic. If you love the good qualities in them while desiring that the

possessor of these qualities is saved from the fire, and uses them in the service of Allah, while looking at them with the eye of mercy and the eye of desiring salvation for them, because you know that this pleases Allah, then in this case you have understood how to interact with them.

So we view all the *kuffar* as being, firstly, the creation of Allah. And as Muslims, we love Allah’s creation. Therefore, we do not love the *kafir*, rather, we love Allah’s creation (*suna’ Allah*). We view them as being a means for our spiritual transaction with Allah; a means for our drawing nearer to Allah. The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, said, “For Allah to guide one person (to Islam) through you is greater than the whole world and all that is in it.” Hence, through this balance do we interact with them upon the foundation of having mercy for them, compassion for them, and a desire to try to save them from the fire. This is the only way we should view our interaction with them. We do not esteem the influential one amongst them because he can benefit us in our *da’wah* (as a *kafir*), nor are we generous with the needy amongst them because we love them in themselves, rather, we deal with the influential, the poor, the sick, and the young amongst them with mercy, and through mercy, because this is the way that Allah loves.

The way we enter discourse with them should be in ways that their intellects can understand, using means that they like and are familiar with, as long as it is not prohibited in the Sacred Law. This is not because those means are the *only* means, but rather, because they are means that Allah loves. So if the time comes that it is more pleasing to Allah that we use another type of means, with some of them, then we do not hesitate for even one second to abandon the old method and to use the new method. The principle is that we are expansive and inclusive of everyone, merciful with everyone, loving and wanting goodness for everyone, from societies to leaders, from Muslims to *kafirs*. Then if a situation arose that calls us to deal with sternness, even if it reached the level of fighting, then we do not allow our previous ways of mercy and gentleness to delay that which Allah has commanded.

One of the sons of Abu Bakr As-Siddiq, may Allah be pleased with him, did not become a Muslim while they were in Mecca, and as you know, the affection of a father to his son is much greater than the affection of a son to his father.

In Mecca, Sayyidina Abu Bakr tried with love and gentleness to convince his son as to the veracity of Islam. He used the best and loftiest means to try to bring him over to Islam, yet Allah had not decreed for him to become a Muslim just yet. Sayyidina Abu Bakr made *Hijrah* and later went to fight in the battle of Badr. This son of his also went out on the day of Badr, yet he was with the *kuffar*. The son was trying his best to avoid his father so they would not have to fight each other. Later, when his son accepted Islam, he said to his father, "Oh my father, on the day of Badr (when I was a *kafir*) I was avoiding you so we wouldn't have to fight." Sayyidina Abu Bakr replied to him, "As for me, if I met you on that day I would have killed you."

What is the reason behind this? This intricate point is necessary for us to understand. When the action of the son wasn't based on servitude to Allah, but rather, was based on compassion (for his father), and his going out to battle was only for glory, honor, and nationalistic goals, this was how he acted. His actions were a slave to his emotions. On the other hand, the actions of Sayyidina Abu Bakr (in Mecca) and his love and compassion were not for himself, but for the sake of his Lord. So when the time came that he had to serve Allah by fighting against his son, he didn't waiver, even if it meant his own son's death. We are in need of this criterion in establishing the correct concept of *jihad* with the *kuffar*.

Therefore, the understanding of *jihad* is to establish the means for the guidance and salvation of the *kuffar*, not merely to just fight them. Fighting them happens in a few cases, and the goal behind it is to save others from the oppression of the ones who are preventing the guidance from spreading. We do not fight out of revenge and spite. The Muslim doesn't fight because the *kafir* is my (personal) enemy, because the *kafir* is conspiring against me, because the *kafir* has killed and slaughtered other Muslims. The Muslim fights the *kafir* because he has prevented and has become a barrier for the guidance to reach others. Again, the Muslim doesn't fight out of revenge and only because the enemy has killed other Muslims. Think about what is being said deeply!

The Prophet, may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, when he entered Mecca, didn't avenge for the killings of the Muslims on the day of Uhud, even though Allah established

him over the *kuffar* on that day of the great Conquest (the *Fath*). These disbelievers in Mecca were the same ones who killed his companions and members of his own family! These were the same people who barred the guidance from reaching others. These were the same people who ripped open the chest and stomach of Sayyidina Hamza (the uncle and companion of the Blessed Prophet, peace be upon him). These were the same people who ate from the liver of Sayyidina Hamza, may Allah be blessed with him. And what is more amazing is that those who actually conspired to kill Hamza (Hind and Wahshi), their Islam was accepted by the Prophet, peace and blessing be upon him, and he didn't kill either of them even after their accepting of the faith.

If we were to understand that the purpose of fighting against the *kuffar* is to avenge for spilt Muslim blood then it would have been befitting for the Prophet, peace be upon him, to command the killing of Wahshi and Hind right when he entered Mecca. But the issue with the Muslims is not one of revenge, it is an issue of guidance and the spreading of its light. The Muslim is the "letter of guidance" sent to humanity from Allah (*al-Muslim bareed hidayat-illah ila al-khalq*). So when the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, saw that there was hope in them being guided he said, "Go, for verily you are free." And this is how our interaction must be. The day I meet with an enemy soldier off the battle field, who killed Muslims in Afghanistan, and I sense that he may want guidance, then I will treat him with the utmost of mercy. This is what we MUST understand. So our ultimate and primary mission in *jihad* is their guidance, even while we might be (physically) fighting them!

All this is clearly understood in the beautiful story where our Blessed Messenger, peace and blessings be upon him, got upset with Usamah ibn Zaid, the beloved, the son of the beloved (he was named this because the Prophet, peace be upon him, loved him greatly). Usamah was out on the battle field fighting the enemy. During the heat of the battle one of the enemies slipped and fell, so Usamah lifted his sword to strike him. Immediately the enemy shouted out "*La ilaha illa Allah, Muhammad Rasul-lullah,*" yet, Usamah struck and killed the man anyway. The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, heard of this and began to greatly blame and censure Usamah saying, "Did you kill him after



he said it (the *Shahadah*)!?” Usamah replied, “Oh Messenger of Allah, he only said it out of fear of the sword.” “Did you look into his heart?! Oh Usamah,” replied the Prophet, peace and blessing be upon him.

This same *kafir* may have killed many Muslims on that day, and he was in the act of fighting against the Muslims, yet, as soon as he said the *Shahadah*, even if it was in hypocrisy, and Usamah didn't refrain himself and killed him, the Prophet, peace and blessing be upon him, became very upset. The Prophet, peace and blessing be upon him, continued to blame Usamah about what he did for the rest of the day, until Usamah said, “I wish that I became a Muslim after this day” (meaning that he wished that the event never even happened and that he could have a fresh start in Islam).

This incident is not mentioned to put blame on Sayyidina Usamah, may Allah be pleased with him. Rather, there is an important principle that we must understand here. The mishaps of the individual companion of the Prophet, peace be upon him, are looked at as a further perfection in the society of the companions. This is so because the goal behind the community of the companions is that we may emulate them, so if no mishaps occurred by individual companions, then we would not know how to deal with a person who falls into error in our time and the times to come. Therefore, the mishap of one of the companions is in reality a perfection on the societal level. All this was so that the realities of what it really means to learn may fully manifest themselves for us.

In this incident, the Prophet, peace and blessing be upon him, made firm in our hearts the understanding that even while fighting, our goal is their guidance. So if the enemy shows the signs of being guided, then the fighting between us and them ceases, even if it was an outward form without any true reality. That is why the meaning of the statement, “Did you kill him after he said it, Oh Usamah?!” is that we should not let our drive to fight blind us from the real cause of fighting, which is their guidance.

This is why they mention about our master Al-Hussein, the son of Ali (may Allah be pleased with them both), when his army met the army of the mistaken and fugitive Muslims who wanted to kill him, he looked at them and began to weep. The number of Al-Hussein's men, including the women (non-combatants), did not

exceed 80, while the number of the opposition was greater than 3,000. Remember, Al-Hussein is the son of the daughter of the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessing be upon him, the beautiful scent of the Messenger (*rayhanat Rasulillah*, a title given to him by the Messenger himself, peace be upon him), the master of the youth of paradise, the one whom the Messenger made supplication to Allah for saying, “Oh Allah, love the one who loves him (Al-Hussein).”

The army had risen against Al-Hussein after pledging allegiance to him. They gathered 17,000 signatures from the people of their land and called Al-Hussein out to them saying “come and lead us to goodness.” So when he went to them they met him with an army of 3,000 men wanting to kill him, most of them being from amongst those who signed the allegiance. These were people who wanted to commit one of the greatest crimes on the face of the earth: killing a member of the family of the Prophet, peace and blessing be upon him!

As Al-Hussein stood looking at his deceptive opponents he began to weep. His sister, Zaynab, saw him weeping so she asked him, “What is it that makes you weep, Oh Hussein? Are you afraid of death? For verily you are heading for your martyred brother Al-Hasan, your martyred father Ali, your mother Fatima, and your grandfather the Messenger of Allah!” Al-Hussein turned to her and said “Woe to you, Oh Zaynab! Al-Hussein is not one to be afraid of death!” “Then what is this that I see upon your face?” she asked. He replied, “Oh Zaynab, I looked at these men who were treacherous to the covenant of Allah that we made, and I see that they will kill me and enter the fire if they have no right for doing so, while I wish that they will go to paradise instead.”

This is the meaning that is incumbent upon you to understand concerning *jihad*. If you understand this while removing from your hearts the delusional power of “physical means,” and “people of means” (*ahlul-asbab*), while adding to this the realities of *da'wah* and seeking sacred knowledge, and you take these as means to the foundational purpose of your creation, which is your worship of Allah, you will be from amongst those chosen and elevated by Allah, to the levels of closeness, in this age that we live in. And this is the mission that you came for, if you but understood. This is what you must ask Allah for in these days that end Ramadan, and for the rest of your lives.

The Diffusion of Ideas in The War On Terror

by Ustaz Hj Mohamed Hj Ali

The term “war on terror” was first used by US President George W Bush just days after the September 11 2001 terrorist attack on US soil.¹ Since then, the Bush administration has realized that the war is not a conventional one to be fought solely on a military battleground; rather it is a war of ideas against a global, diffused and radical Islamic insurgency driven by religious ideology. President George W. Bush has said *“We actually misnamed the war on terror. It ought to be [called] the struggle against ideological extremists who do not believe in free societies and who happen to use terror as a weapon to try to shake the conscience of the free world.”* As a religious ideology, Al-Qaeda and its affiliates have attained a surprisingly wide base of support throughout the Muslim world. Hence, to win this war entails not just winning on the ground or in the air but more importantly, to successfully engage a free flow and exchange of ideas and information to refute the dogma of these radical Islamic clerics. This paper examines the various theories of diffusion of ideas and norms through the international system in an attempt to answer the following questions: How do terrorist norms/ideas emerge and become institutionalized? In this war on

ideas, how do we effectively compete with these ideas and norms presented by the terrorists? Once these norms are identified, how do we sustain norm compliance?

Diffusion of Norms in International Politics

For the (neo) realist, the diffusion of norms throughout the international system is due to the dominance of powerful democracies that force weaker countries to adopt their own domestic standards. In the absence of overriding security or economic motives, realists conclude that any change within the issue area “is a function of the extent to which more powerful states in the system are willing to enforce the principles and norms of the regime.”² The stronger and the more assertive the democratic camp of states within the international system, the more likely it is that the norms become established. For the realist, coercive practices such as sanctions are the preferred means of enforcement.

Liberal international relations theory places an emphasis on the domestic sources of state preferences as the determinant of outcomes in international politics.³ Hence, it accepts a limited independent role for international institutions in promoting norms and cooperation previously

agreed upon by state actors. The diffusion of norms is expected to be strongest within the context of a liberal community of states, rather than between liberal and non-liberal states. The success of diffusion is built into the definition of the participating units. In the later case, liberal theory takes a more traditional view of sovereign states negotiating to maximize their self-interests.

While some constructivists hold a worldview dominated by state actors, others have introduced non-state actors along with norms and ideas into the study of international relations. Differences between the state-centric and non-state centric worldview is also reflected in each preferred process of norms diffusion. While state-centrists have broadly adopted the language of sociological institutionalism⁴, non-state centric perspectives have sought to show a process of normative socialization.⁵

Al-Qaeda: The Spread of a Poisonous Worldview

Terrorists' networks like Al-Qaeda represents a shift in the way terrorists operate, a shift made largely possible by the changing rules of the New World Order. Al-Qaeda leader, Osama bin Laden once claimed that the collapse of the Soviet Union has led the US to assume the role of "a master of this world and establishing what it calls the New World Order."⁶ Ironically, it is precisely the end of the Cold War that brought more open borders, thus enabling al-Qaeda to flourish.

Al-Qaeda successfully disseminated its ideas by capitalizing on the open, global society in the post Cold War era. Over the last ten years, a sophisticated public relations and media communication campaign was conducted using a series of faxed statements, audio recordings, video appearances, and internet postings.⁷ These ideas in the form of hate speech and conspiracy theories directed at America and its allies spread globally throughout innumerable newspaper articles, books and publications, websites and homepages, cartoons, crossword puzzles, TV news items, educational broadcasts and music videos. The ideas were not only communicated through certain mosques or Islamic schools but also via independent satellite television networks like Al-Jazeera. In an increasingly globalized culture, Osama's ideas are influencing the beliefs and actions of militants from Yemen to Kenya to England with

a speed and reach unimaginable two decades ago.

These messages have been well-designed to elicit desired psychological impact and to communicate complex political messages to a global audience as well as to specific populations in the Islamic world, the United States and Asia. Bin Laden has personally stated his belief in the importance of harnessing the power of international and regional media for Al-Qaeda's benefit, and Al-Qaeda's central leadership structure has featured a dedicated media and communications committee tasked with issuing reports and statements in support of the group's operations. Analysts believe that Al-Qaeda's messages contain signals that inform and instruct operatives to prepare for and carry out new attacks. Bin Laden has referred to his public statements as important primary sources for parties seeking to understand Al-Qaeda's ideology and political demands. Through his public statements over the last ten years, Bin Laden has portrayed himself both as the leader of a consistent ideological program and a strategic commander willing to tailor his violent messages and acts to specific circumstances and audiences.⁸

Al-Qaeda is also believed to have more sophisticated communication and transfer technology than the US, according to the head of US National Security.⁹ The Saudi militant's followers communicate by fax, satellite phone and e-mail. Al-Qaeda members have taught individuals from other groups how to use the internet to send messages and how to encrypt those communications to avoid detection. Bomb and chemical-making techniques have been passed around. Investigators have found the same kind of fuse being used on different continents. In the mid 1990s, members of Al-Qaeda made a CD-ROM containing hundreds of pages of information about various kind of weaponry, as well as instructions on how to build bombs and conduct terrorist and paramilitary operations.

Countering Terror Ideas and Norms

Norms are generally defined as "a standard of appropriate behaviour for actors with a given identity. In the context of the war on terrorism, norms are not simply moral guidelines but powerful ordering principles with very practical implications."¹⁰ A consensus among states is emerging that terrorism is of universal concern

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and in direct violation of the principles of international community. This convergence in strategic interests has helped to bridge the divide between the west and the developing world. In the war of ideas, it is equally important to understand the terrorists' other target audience; that of the group of aggrieved populations they claim to represent. This group extends to a broader, less radicalized population that has the power to confer a degree of legitimacy on the terrorists, simply by responding positively to their tactics. In the case of al-Qaeda, this group consists of diffuse or loosely aligned supporters who welcome the news of a terrorist attack or do not object to al-Qaeda's claim to represent them. One of the main strategies to deny the terrorists these supporters is to marshal international norms that would stigmatize terrorism and push the terrorists further towards the fringes of community. In effect, acts of terrorism violate two fundamental prohibitions. Firstly, violence is not a legitimate means of solving political disputes particularly when the actors are non-state actors. This is antagonistic to Max Weber's well known formulation that states have a monopoly over the legitimate use of force. A critical legitimizing condition when considering the use of force is that the agent in question is a sovereign power. Even in the language of those who assert Muslims' fundamental right to military jihad, historical precedents suggest that the resorting to force requires authorization from some higher authority.

The second norm essential to delegitimize the strategy of terrorism is the belief that non-combatants are entitled to immunity and should not be subject to attack. Islamic tradition has a parallel definition of just war. In the Koran, overriding themes emerge regulating force based on obligations both to God and to fellow men, Muslims or otherwise. There are examples of injunctions not only against killing women, children and other non-combatants during war but also to not destroy trees and pollute the environment. A search for a mechanism to institutionalize these restrictions at the state and community level would significantly undermine popular support for terrorist organizations.

It should be understood that while many analysts on terrorism and political violence have discovered that Bin Laden is attacking the U.S.

because of a specific set of US policies, al-Qaeda's real war is not primarily against America, but a struggle for the soul of Islam within the Muslim world. Hence, the battle for the hearts and minds of Muslims is paramount to dry up the pool of potential recruits to extremism. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld's said in an interview with *The Washington Times* that to win the war on terror, we must also win the war of ideas – the battle for the minds of those who are being recruited by terrorist networks across the globe. The task is to stop terrorists before they can terrorize. And even better, we must lean forward and stop them from becoming terrorists in the first place.¹¹

Winning the hearts and minds of the Muslims cannot be achieved by western-style television or radio stations, which appeal to only tiny, secular, westernized minorities. It can only be done through the authority and legitimacy of Islam itself. In that respect, The International Islamic Conference held in Amman in July this year was a historic event and a step in the right direction.¹² In the final statement issued by the conference, it seeks to reinforce the traditional checks and balances on the interpretation of the Koran and other texts which in effect interpret it. The Amman initiative also nullified all fatwas or religious rulings permitting or commending terror acts. This will be of utmost importance to the war on terrorism.

Enforcing Norm Compliance

Once the norms are defined and recognized, the second step is to enforce adherence to a norm. In essence, the propagation of a norm is not an exercise in consensus building; rather it is a state-driven initiative that utilizes the coercion of weak states to follow the norms of stronger states. Washington has sought to enforce international norms by publishing its list of active state sponsors of terrorism while the Financial Aid Task Force (FATF), published a list of Non-Cooperative Countries and Territories against money laundering and terrorist financiers.

However, while enforcing the norm against state-supported terrorism has been largely successful, the top down approach questions the extent to which these norms have diffused to the general population. This is critical as al-Qaeda and its affiliates have attained a surprisingly wide base of support throughout the Muslim world. Indeed, a study by the Pew



research Institute in June 2003 found that “solid majorities in the Palestinian Authority, Indonesia and Jordan and nearly half of those in Morocco and Pakistan say they have some confidence in Osama “to do the right thing regarding world affairs.”¹³

To tackle violence at the grassroots level, a parallel bottoms-up approach should compliment the state-driven initiatives. This is necessary as top down initiatives are limited because state diplomacy is often at odds with the value systems of a states’ citizenry. For instance, while a number of states have chartered a decidedly pro-Western course (Egypt, Jordan, and Turkey), significant segments of their populations hold very different political and cultural sensibilities. In addition, bottoms up approach will circumvent the assumptions of complete state sovereignty as well as states unhindered ability to project their authority. However, the bottoms-up approach is more difficult to implement compared to the state-driven initiatives. This is because while a process of coercion whereby the strong can compel the weak state to submit to their will can expedite the propagation of norms in the international system, norm creation at the subnational level will have to appeal to the community’s self interest or to the inherent legitimacy of the norms themselves. Hence, to expedite the emergence of norms against violence at the community level, the US should find creative means to support the effort of local norm entrepreneurs. For instance, the US could contribute to the development of local institutions that promote norm convergence with Western values. Another way is to bring scholars and students to the West to be groomed as norm entrepreneurs in the form of intellectuals and activists. The US also needs to improve its public diplomacy, specifically by communicating the compatibility of US policy and values with the aspirations of those living in the Muslim world.¹⁴ This does not imply a foreign policy based on popular global opinion but the United States should clearly explain the rationale behind its decision, which in turn, should be carried out in a manner that demonstrates respect for the sensibilities and cultural sensitivities of others. The goal is not so much to indoctrinate but rather to engage dissenters and provoke introspection among those prone to supporting terrorism.

Finally, a corresponding effort must be made to address the material conditions like poverty, lack of social mobility, poor educational infrastructure and the denial of basic human rights that terrorists exploit. Attempting to win hearts and minds while skirting the root causes will lead to failure. Progress in addressing these root causes will help pave the way for broader acceptance of norms against terrorism at the subnational level.

Conclusion

Al-Qaeda’s ideology has taken on a life of its own. What is unknown is the extent to which Al-Qaeda’s radicalism has taken hold throughout the Muslim world, but certainly the U.S. preoccupation with Iraq for more than three years after the September 11 attacks has given time and space for the ‘cancer’ to spread, as well as rallying cry to recruit more Muslims to Al-Qaeda’s radical cause. In this war of ideas, the independent roles of norms are seen to affect international and domestic policy outcomes, a belief adopted by the constructivists’ school of thought in international relations. The US should realize that the war of ideas is largely a struggle within the Muslim world and the best chances for winning the war lies in supporting and aligning with the true religious authority and legitimacy of Islam itself.

Coping with the threat of Jemaah Islamiah the Singapore Experience

by Ustaz Mohamed Hj Ali

The Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) terrorist organization has a long history since Darul Islam, which was formerly headed by the late Abdullah Sungkar. With connections to Al-Qaeda and its affiliated groups worldwide, JI has become the largest and most dangerous terrorist organization in South-East Asia. Based in Indonesia, its network is regional, with cells in Malaysia, Philippines, Australia and Singapore. Though many of its members have been arrested and its network crippled, JI remains



resilient. Effective counter measures against them demand firstly, an accurate understanding of the threats, secondly reappraisals of existing counter terrorism strategies and thirdly, if necessary, the formulation of new ones to meet the evolving threat. This paper will focus on Singapore's experience with Jemaah Islamiyah in an attempt to analyze the threat and to discuss the effectiveness of counter terrorism measures used to meet the threat.

Nature of Threat

Jemaah Islamiyah belongs to a new group of religiously motivated terrorist organizations. Unlike their more conventional counterparts, these terrorist organisations use violence not just to achieve worldly aims, but also as a fulfillment of "a sacred duty in direct response to a theological demand or imperative." Jemaah Islamiyah shares its religious ideology with Al-Qaeda and its affiliated groups worldwide, forming a global network. This ideology, which is based upon a gross misreading of Islamic religious texts, aims to destroy the US and its Western allies and to establish pan-Islamic caliphates. As former Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong said in his speech to the Council of

Foreign Affairs in Washington on the 6th of May 2004, "...Terrorist organizations such as the Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka or ETA in Spain are only of local concern. The virulent strain of Islamic terrorism is another matter altogether. It is driven by religion. Its ideological vision is global. It is most dangerous. The communists fought to live, whereas the jihadi terrorists fight to die and live in the next world."

Another feature of the new religiously motivated terrorist groups is its sophisticated operational and technical capabilities, amounting to increasingly lethal attacks with catastrophic outcomes. Al-Qaeda and its subsidiary groups, have repeatedly shown this capacity by being able to mount multiple, well-coordinated strikes, while inflicting maximum casualties. There is also growing concern that the terrorist groups will employ weapons of mass destruction. In a recent speech, Singapore's Defence Minister, Teo Chee Hean warned, "The threat of terrorism is amplified by the risk of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction."

How Southeast Asian Countries Respond to JI

In general, there has been increased regional cooperation in the fight against terrorism. In

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Prime Minister, Mr Lee Hsien Loong
in his National Day Message on
Monday, 8th August 2005

the July 2002 ministerial meeting, ASEAN Ministers agreed on a new anti-terror pact to share intelligence, increase police cooperation in order to "prevent, disrupt and combat international terrorism and to cooperate in stemming the flow of funds to terrorist groups. South East Asian states have also signed an agreement with the United States on ways to curb terrorist activity in the region.

Australia has signed Memorandums of Understanding with several Southeast Asian countries. The most recent with Thailand builds on the existing strong links between Australian and Thai law enforcement, defence and security agencies. The increasing evidence of the terrorist activities in Thailand, particularly in the south, has forced the Thai government to acknowledge the gravity of this issue. Thailand has been instrumental in the capture of Hambali, JI's top link to Al-Qaeda. Trial proceedings for the Thai JI suspects are in progress.

Indonesia has enforced new terrorism laws to counter the terrorism threat and at a national level, there is the anti-terrorism desk at the office of the Coordinating Minister for Politics and Security. In August 2003, suggestions from

the Minister of Defence, Matori Abdul Djilil to enact an Internal Security Act has been roundly criticised by Indonesian parliamentarians and academics who argue that the spread of terrorism was not due to weak legislation but to weak intelligence.

On inter-state cooperation and intelligence sharing, Singapore Defence Minister said that Thailand and Singapore will continue to pursue cooperation as terrorism is a trans-national problem that cannot be tackled by any one country. He also mentioned that Singapore works very well with Malaysia and with Thailand on the matter. Already, Singapore and Australia have struck an agreement for armed marshals on flights. They have already been deployed on selected SIA and Silk Air flights.

Under Malaysia's Internal Security Act, the authorities have arrested at least 69 alleged JI members. Some of them were arrested even before the attacks of September 11, 2001. In February 2002, the Malaysian government announced that it is drafting a law to prevent private religious schools from being used as training grounds for religious extremism. In 2003, Malaysian authorities announced the suspension of state-funding for more than 500 religious schools in the country, accusing the schools' authorities of breeding hatred of the government among the students.

JI in Singapore - A Case Study

Singapore, which has been virtually free of domestic terrorist threats until recently, no longer has that immunity. Singapore made its first arrest of the 13 JI members in December 2001 and a second arrest was made on another 18 JI members in August 2002. At the time of arrests, members of this group had been planning a series of bomb attacks in Singapore that would have had catastrophic consequences.

Management of the JI threat

Although the Singapore JI branch has been neutralized, the external threat remains significant. Furthermore, with the arrests of its Singapore members and Singapore's strong support for the U.S, JI has a strong motive to retaliate and attack Singapore. To deal effectively with the new face of terrorism, the Singapore government has adopted an integrated approach to its national security programme, structured around the Prevention, Protection and Response domains.

In the prevention domain, measures involve an integration of effective diplomacy, good intelligence work and strong border controls. Among the border control introduced include sophisticated screening facilities at border points and at ports and airports, use of x-ray machines to scan containers; deployment of 'sniffer' dogs; naval escorts for tankers and other high value vulnerable vessels; new laws to forbid dealing in terrorists' funding and property. A Singapore biometric passport will be issued from October 2005 onwards. In the region, an intelligence liaison network between ASEAN countries was formalized during the Special ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Terrorism in May 2002.

Singapore also established the Inter-Ministerial Task Force on Anti-Terrorism under the authority of the Attorney General and the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Law. The task force brings together senior officials from various ministries, the Attorney-General's Office, the Monetary Authority of Singapore (MAS), and the Commercial Affairs Department of the Police Force to update existing law so that it implements international legal instruments and to improve coordination between the various national government authorities in the fight against terrorism.

Singapore responded to the UN Security Council Resolution 1373 of 2001, which, according to the former Minister for Foreign Affairs Prof S.Jayakumar, was "a landmark resolution which dealt comprehensively with counter- terrorism", providing "a legal basis for all states to take action against terrorists and their supporters." It also signed the UN convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism in December 2001, ratifying it the following year.

With the hardening of military and diplomatic targets, terrorists are expected to shift to economic and religious targets and population centres. To reassure the public and deter terrorists, heavily armed officers have been patrolling public areas since 1st November 2004. There are plans to extend the patrol units to MRT stations and trains, to complement the security measures implemented by train operators like the enhanced use of CCTV's and unarmed security guards at MRT stations. Police are also exploring to enhance their CCTV with intelligent software capable of automatically identifying pre-defined suspicious behaviour and

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Addressing in parliament on 14 March 2003,
Minister for Home Affairs Mr Wong Kan Seng

to expand the usage of CCTV to other parts of Singapore.

Protective Measures

Among the more significant protective measures taken include protection against sabotage or contamination of water supplies; plans to protect Singapore's IT, telecommunications and financial sectors; measures to maintain morale and racial harmony; increased protection for key installations; public education to help people remain alert and look out for suspicious parcels and behaviour. At the policy and regulatory level, Singapore is developing a Building Protection Network as a target hardening measure in all buildings in Singapore.

Response

The Homefront Crisis Management System (HCMS) was formed to coordinate between government agencies, forming a structure flexible and scalable to meet the full spectrum of threats Singapore is likely to face. At the operational level, all government agencies work together to prepare contingency plans to address various threat scenarios, and run emergency preparedness exercises to ensure smooth inter-agency coordination and operational readiness.

The Home team, SCDF and Police have also enhanced their ability to handle a wider spectrum of emergencies. SCDF officers and vehicles have been fully equipped with decontamination



capabilities to handle chemical, biological and other hazardous agents. All Police cars are equipped with Bomb Suppression Blankets. Police have also developed a post blast investigation capability to handle investigations into bombing incidents.

Counter Ideological Measures

Terrorism occurs when ideological motivation meets with operational capability. The way in which a terrorist group shapes its radical worldview and disseminates it to audiences worldwide plays an important role in the public interface between the group and its target audience. Using terrorist propaganda, a group can successfully indoctrinate public into terrorist sympathizers, mobilize terrorist supporters, and recruit terrorist members.

To counter terrorism effectively, a multi-pronged approach is needed. Any effective blueprint for an ideological response to the "war on terrorism" should conceptualize counter terrorism not only as a military "shooting war" or law enforcement operation, but as a "war of ideas" as well. Measures to disrupt and degrade a terrorist group's military and economic infrastructure should be supplemented with measures targeting the terrorist group's political apparatus. If left unchecked, this apparatus will continue to harvest political support, transform it into logistical assistance, and eventually generate a new pool of terrorist recruits.

Singapore's Unique Counter Ideological Programme

At the Committee of Supply Debate on the Ministry of Home Affairs, 3rd March 2005, Minister for Home Affairs, Mr Wong Kan Seng was also asked about efforts made on the ideological front to deal with terrorism. He said that the Government's approach has been to encourage the Muslim community to police itself against ideological attacks by terrorist groups such as JI as they are in the best position to ensure that its own members are ideologically inoculated against wrong and dangerous religious teachings.

There is also a dedicated group of Islamic leaders and teachers, who are providing religious counseling for JI and MILF members detained or put on Restriction Orders under the ISA. It is part of ISD's overall religious rehabilitation programme instituted for the JI

detainees and their families. This group of Muslim organizations and a few local mosques have also extended their contributions towards the welfare of the detainees' families. Apart from the house visits made, educational assistance for the children, upgrading courses were offered to the families to ensure that they are able to cope with the situation emotionally, socially and economically.

Generally, there are 4 types of rehabilitation that was carried out for the detainees namely:

1- Family Support - By keeping their families informed and in contact with them. This is also done through family integration and emotional support.

2- Financial Support - For the spouses and children of the detained JI members

3- Psychological Counseling

4- Religious Counseling - This is mainly aimed to explain the true concept of Jihad (struggle), Ummah (Islamic Community), Bai'ah (Pledge of Allegiance), Daulah Islamiah (Islamic State) etc.

Religious Counseling for the Detained JI Members

With the arrest of the JI detainees and investigations by the Internal Security Department (ISD), it was found that JI's terrorist plans were the result of their religious ideology. Religion was being used by the JI members as a tool for terrorism while Jihad is actively promoted as a religious duty for the purpose of committing acts of terror. JI's misinterpretation and misunderstanding of certain religious concepts has led them to believe that they are actually in the right path even though their actions would lead to the destruction of public properties and infrastructures; causing disturbance, anarchy and even loss of human lives. This would then lead to the socio-economic instability of the country. These misunderstandings have culminated to a dangerous level and it has to be addressed in order to save our country from any upheavals. The actual meaning of Jihad needs to be defined and put to its proper perspective and a religious rehabilitation plan needs to be developed for its intended audience.

Religious counseling will assist the JI detainees to uncover misinterpretations and areas where the JI had gone wrong in its religious doctrine which shaped the detainees' belief system. Failure to correct their

misconceptions especially their belief that "Jihad" is war and that it is "Fardu Ain" or compulsory for all Muslims, will render them a potential time bomb when released. The JI detainees' belief system needed to be addressed as part of their rehabilitation to ensure that they do not return to their violent ways and pose a future threat to Islam and Singapore in general. To achieve this, it is critical that Jihad needs to be defined and placed in its proper perspective. Thus, the detainees must be inoculated and this can be achieved by sharing with them a better perspective and understanding of Islam, a religion of peace and harmony.

Religious counseling sessions in Singapore were conducted for 3 groups of people, which are the detained JI member, JI members placed under Restriction Order (ROs) and their family members. Under a new condition laid out by ISD, the detainees and the ROs are required to undergo a programme of religious counseling by a group of local volunteer religious counselors. The counselors provide the detainees with a clear understanding of the religious concepts which they had misinterpreted. The counseling sessions conducted had helped these detainees to realize the destructive path they had undertaken and also overcome their feeling of betrayal to fellow JI members when they opened up to ISD during the investigation.

Assessing the Success of Counter Measures

In view of the transnational nature of the JI threat and limited resources, the cornerstone of Singapore's National Security strategy lies in a strong and robust inter-agency network. Terrorism expert, Dr Rohan Gunaratna, believes that "unprecedented cooperation, coordination and collaboration between different branches of government, between the government and other sectors, private security industry, hotelier, other businesses, transportation industry and ports" provide a way to reduce the threat. The current organizational challenge of national security will be to mobilize, coordinate and lead government agencies, business community and the general public to make Singapore better prepared, more secure and more responsive to an array of threats.

The public in particular needs to be engaged in the fight against terrorism. While there is evidence that Singaporeans take the threat of terrorism seriously, as implied by the increase in the number of calls about suspicious activities, 513 calls in 2004 compared to 212 calls in 2003, there is also a tendency to be complacent. In a recent Feedback Unit poll done after the London blasts, more than one third of the respondents felt that the task of safeguarding Singapore from possible terrorist attacks should be left to



security agencies and personnel. Fewer than half of the respondents were familiar with the emergency procedures in the event of a terrorist bomb. The public has to be made to realize the importance of heightening their vigilance reducing the threat, says Dr Rohan Gunaratna, as an alert public will make it very difficult for terrorists to mount especially a big attack, as it involves a higher risk of exposing their significant number of terrorists operatives and resources, to the public eye. While the current government's strategy of targeting selected sections of the community, like grassroot members, taxi drivers or hotel industry personnel can be seen as a step in this direction they also need to aggressively assert the importance of constant vigilance in each and every Singaporean individual. The momentum and level of anti-terrorist activity should be sustainable over the long run as the threat is a prolonged one.

Singapore's resilience as a nation has been successfully tested especially during the SARS period. This resilience needs to be nurtured and improved as a preparation to prepare for future disasters. Addressing parliament on 14 March 2003, Minister for Home Affairs Mr Wong Kan Seng said, "...no one can guarantee that a terrorist attack will not happen here. Our approach must be to make it difficult for the terrorists to carry out its evil deeds while at the same time, be well prepared and ready to deal with the repercussions if such attack does happen." His views are echoed by Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong in his National Day message on Monday, 8 August 2005, "...The bombings in London and in Egypt remind us that the war on terror continues, and despite the tightest precautions, the terrorists sometimes get through. We must be psychologically prepared for this, so that if they ever strike here we will be resolute and indomitable, refusing to be cowed by the terrorists and staying one united people.

Law enforcement and intelligence officers should "proactively target not only terrorist cells but also supporter cells that carry out the propaganda, fund raising, recruitment drive and indoctrination..." . In view of this, the law should be constantly reviewed to ensure their relevance. There have been calls to do away with Singapore's Internal Security Act (ISA) but the Singapore government feels that it has been instrumental in uncovering and dismantling a Singapore JI cell in 2001. In fact, Singapore's Minister

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Mentor, Mr Lee Kuan Yew believes that Indonesia's ability to fight terrorism is hampered by the lack of a Singapore-style Internal Security Act. He said, "The Indonesians are saying that we don't have the Internal Security Act, we can't do anything. They wait for the bomb to go off, then they investigate the crime and they capture the people who did the crime and they prosecute them. And then there's the next bomb and the next bomb." Indonesia's lack of political will and effective security legislation is a concern for the region, as it enables JI and its infrastructure to thrive. While the Indonesian police are continuing to pursue JI members, there is no formal ban on JI; hence it will be difficult to convict anyone solely on the grounds



of belonging to it or holding a leadership role in it. Ms Sidney Jones, the Southeast Asia Project Director, International Crisis Group, said "JI still has many fertile recruiting grounds in the region, including Indonesia, retains a strong support network in parts of Indonesia and still have access to training camps like Mindanao where it continues to train the next generation of terrorists." She added that, "As long as Azhari

remains at large with some of the leftover explosives from the Marriott bombing, the threat of another bomb attack remains very real."

JI operational tactics are constantly evolving hence the constant need to upgrade research and intelligence capabilities. For instance, there is now an emerging trend among terrorist organizations to decentralize its operations by linking up with other terrorist groups in the

region. This shift towards a more network oriented structure is a concern for those tasked to manage threats as they are dealing with a loose network of terrorist organizations, which operate independently but share a common ideology. Hence, disrupting one terrorist organization is not likely to impact on the operational capabilities of the others. In particular, counter-leadership strikes would be less effective against organizations lacking centralized command and control procedures. Sharing doctrines, strategies and technologies have also enabled allied militant groups to carry out attacks with a high level of coordination, like in the case of the attacks in Manila and two cities in the southern Philippines, resulting in the death of 11 people and injured nearly 130 people.

The Religious Rehabilitation Program should be a continuous & ongoing effort, with a view towards sharing it with other nations in the region. This is because unlike an ordinary detainment procedure, the religious counseling component of the programme strikes at the core of the problem, that is the religious ideology of the JI members. These sessions aim to eradicate the radical ideology based on a gross misunderstanding of Islam and to replace it with correct Islamic teachings. It is partly due to the success of these counseling sessions that ISD had the confidence to release several detainees and RO members. Extension of the counseling sessions to their families is hoped to break the cycle of indoctrination and prevent JI regeneration processes. It is also important that the Muslim community proactively focus on providing the future generation with the correct understanding of Islam, so that they would not fall victim to a deviant understanding of Islam and terrorists agendas.

There is also an urgent need to engage the Singaporean Muslims in the war against terrorism. One of the government concerns should the build-up of resentment even among moderate Muslim communities everywhere over US invasion. This resentment, could be easily tapped by the terrorist camp to campaign for funds and recruits among the Singaporean Muslims. The Singapore government has to realize these sensitivities and address their concerns accordingly.

Conclusion

As the face of terrorism is changing and with new threats and new technology, we need to

adopt a multi-pronged response, multi dimensional, multi-national and multi agency response to fight this kind of new terrorism. To reduce the threat effectively, Singapore needs to work overseas, unilaterally and with partners to develop a comprehensive counter-terrorism strategy. This strategy must be one that disrupts the support base, ideology and appeal of the terrorist group. It is therefore important to be aware of the threat and to take intelligent and reasonable steps to protect government facilities and the people.

Its Singapore network may have been crippled but JI will continue to present a long-term security threat to Singapore. Though Singapore has put into place multiple anti-terrorism measures, the real challenge is to sustain the momentum and level of activity in the long run. Furthermore, the evolutionary nature of some of these security measures means that it will need time before their effectiveness can be proven. There is a pressing need to engage the public to reduce their complacency and heighten their vigilance capabilities. Finally, there is an arsenal of increasingly sophisticated technologies to aid counter terrorism work but we also need to employ good common sense and logic to counter the threat.

(Footnotes)

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Let's rescue a once-beautiful word from its captors

by Anisa Mehdi

I'm picky about words. Maybe it's because I'm the daughter of an English teacher. Maybe because I went to journalism school. Or maybe it's because I've always wanted to show Henry Higgins he doesn't have a corner on the English language. Words are powerful. They can save lives or destroy them; make truth of falsehood and weave tapestries about our society, our safety (remember weapons of mass destruction?) and who our enemies are. Words can hurt, too. Almost as badly as sticks and stones.

I remember in 11th grade an English teacher at the High School of Music and Art in New

York began shouting hysterically in the hallway at a Jewish friend and me: "She's an Arab! An Arab!" The message was to my friend: Get away from her. We both exited. Shocked. Stung. My heart hurt for a long while after that.

Years later I worked on a CBS News magazine team looking at American involvement in Lebanon in the 1980s and the attack on the Marine barracks in 83. One version of the script called it a "terrorist attack." I argued that the attack was against soldiers, not civilians. As journalists, it's our job to clarify, and we must distinguish terrorism from acts of war. Besides, Arab American kids had it tough enough

already, with the words “terrorist” and Arab virtually synonymous in our media. It wasn’t fair that an attack on the military should be called terrorism just because Arabs committed it. Eventually the script line was changed to “surprise attack.” But 20 years later not much else has changed. Except now we abuse even more words, foreign words, that we don’t understand.

As a Muslim of Arab descent, I feel the wrath of one particularly abused word every day: jihad. News reports about “jihad” or “holy war,” bear the unspoken insinuation that because of my background I am connected with the terrorism that abounds; that my way of worshipping God is a threat to our national security; that it’s okay to go after others with my background — before they come after us. So let me clarify. I’m not. It isn’t. And it’s not okay. For me growing up, “jihad” was a beautiful word. Jihad was the effort you made to do your best in school; your struggle to polish the talents God gave you; how you strived to live up to your parents and your own highest expectations; to lead a life acceptable to the Almighty.

Someday, I hope, “jihad” will find its way back into our lexicon, used properly, in sentences like “she’s on a jihad to achieve the American dream.”

In the meantime, people like me, performing jihad in our own ways — being patient with our kids, volunteering in our communities, practising our professions to the best of our abilities, can walk free of guilt by association with those engaged in hiraba.

So, people flying planes into buildings, beheading hostages in Iraq and fomenting hatred against people of other religions — that’s not jihad!

According to the Quran, the holy text of Islam, the Almighty does not reward the murder of innocent people. Nor does the Creator condone suicide — as in suicide bombings. Terrorism is sociopathic. In secular terms, it is criminal behavior. In religious terms, it is blasphemy to claim cold-blooded murder in the name of God. It is not jihad.

What’s a journalist to do? The good news is we can call a spade a spade. There is an Arabic word for these crimes against individuals and crimes against humanity, and the word is “hiraba.” War against society.

People who are following God or practising jihad do not join war against society. Terrorists serve Satan, if anything. They are bad people, criminals in a secular sense and blasphemers in the sacred. Just because they think they’re on God’s side doesn’t mean the American media and our government PR folks need to concur! But by parroting their misuse of the word “jihad,” that’s just what we’re doing.

There is nothing “holy” about war. There is no jihad in terrorism. Only hiraba.

So what happens if we call a spade a spade? Think of the disincentive to young, hungry, cynical Muslims — angry at their own governments and angry at ours for bolstering theirs. If they heard “hiraba” instead of “jihad,” if they heard “murder” instead of “martyr,” if they heard they were bound for hell not heaven, they might not be so quick to sign up to kill themselves and a handful of so-called “infidels” along the way.

We know words are powerful. After all, we attacked Iraq for a mere acronym: WMD. So those of us concerned with accuracy should use our mightier-than- the-sword pens and keyboards and get the word “hiraba” out there.

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Simplicity, Tolerance, Gentleness & Peace In Islam / Robbery In Name of Jihad

by Ustaz Mohd Haniff Hassan

While it is true that not all extremists are terrorists but extremism is the hallmark of terrorism and terrorism is a form of extremism.

This writing seeks to clarify the inherent characteristics of simplicity, tolerance, gentleness and peace in Islam in contrast to extremism and terrorism embraced by some Muslims. The objective is to highlight the virtue of moderation and the abhorrence of extremism.

While the arguments put forth in this writing may not convince the hardcore among the extremists and the terrorists because they will always have their version of interpretation, the arguments will help to instill guiding principles in the general of Muslim community which will protect them from the influence of the extremists and terrorists.

Simplicity & Moderation

Allah made simplicity and moderation as hallmarks of the Muslim *ummah*, as mentioned in the Holy Quran:

"Thus, have We made you an Ummah justly balanced, that you might be witnesses over the nations, and the Messenger a witness over yourselves..." (The Holy Quran 2:143)

The *ulama* interpret the phrase *Ummatan Wasatan* as the just (*Al-'Adl*) and chosen (*Al-Khiyar*) people. These two interpretations do not contradict each other, as *justness* is a criterion for being *chosen* by Allah. This definition is also in line with the meaning of simplicity, tolerance and moderation as opposed to extremism, as something is said to be *just*, when it is balanced away from extremes.

Moderation in Islam is characterised as follows:

1. Islam is a religion which is easy to practise, and simplicity is preferred in practising it.

Allah says in the Holy Quran:

"... and has not laid upon you any hardship in religion." (The Holy Quran 22: 78)

In commanding fasting, Allah says:

"Allah intends every facility for you; He does not want to put you to difficulties." (The Holy Quran 2:185)

In commanding ablution, Allah says:

"Allah does not wish to place you in a difficulty, but to purify you, and to complete his favour on you, that you may be grateful." (The Holy Quran 5: 6)

Prophet Muhammad warned against complicating the practise of Islam, as it was meant to be easy;

"Indeed this religion is easy and it will defeat anyone who makes it difficult." (Related by Al-Bukhari)



Here, 'defeat' means that someone who tries to make the practise of Islam difficult will find himself unable to continue practising it.

The Prophet also said:

"Indeed the religion most favoured by Allah is one which is convenient and tolerant." (Related by Al-Bukhari)

In sending off his messenger on a mission, the Prophet advised as follows:

"Make it convenient and do not make it difficult, tell them the good news and do not make them run away" (Related by Al-Bukhari)

In addition, the Prophet also reminded as follows:

"Indeed, you have been sent to make things easy (for the people), not to make things difficult for them." (Related by Al-Bukhari)

Aisyah said:

"When the Prophet is given two choices, he will choose the one that is more convenient between the two, so long as it is not sinful." (Related by Al-Bukhari)

Among the hallmarks of convenience in practising Islam as a faith, is the provision of *rukhsah* (exemptions), when one faces difficulty in fulfilling certain requirements.

2. Tolerance is a characteristic that cannot be isolated from Islam.

This characteristic is based on the commandment that there is to be no compulsion to accept Islam. Allah says,

"Let there be no compulsion in religion." (The Holy Quran 2: 256)

"Will you then compel mankind, against their will, to believe?" (The Holy Quran 10: 99)

Islam encourages respect for other faiths, and does not interfere in other faiths' acts of worship. Allah says in the Holy Quran:

"Say: O you who reject Faith! I worship not that which you worship. Nor do you worship that which I worship. And I will not worship that which you have been worshipping. Nor will you worship that which I worship. To you be your way, and to me, mine." (The Holy Quran 109: 1-6)

Another Islamic injunction which aims to inculcate respect for others, is the prohibition against rebuking or insulting other faiths. This is mentioned in the Holy Quran;

"Do not revile those whom they call upon besides Allah, lest they out of spite, revile Allah in their ignorance. Thus have We made alluring to each people its doings. In the end will they return to their Lord, and We shall then tell them the truth of all they did." (The Holy Quran 6: 108)

In the effort to foster tolerance, Muslims are encouraged to counter wrongdoing with good deeds.

"Nor can Goodness and Evil be equal. Repel (Evil) with what is better: then will he between whom and you were hatred, become as it were, your friend and intimate!" (The Holy Quran 41: 34)

"Repel evil with which that which is best: well are We acquainted with the things they say." (The Holy Quran 23: 96)

In addition, Islam enjoins forgiveness both within the *ummah* and to others. Even in the extreme injustice of murder, the family of a murder victim is encouraged to forgive and in so doing, spare the murderer from capital punishment.¹ Allah says,

"O you who believe! The law of equality is prescribed to you in cases of murder...But if any remission is made by the brother of the slain, then grant any reasonable demand, and compensate him with handsome gratitude." (The Holy Quran 2: 178)

Allah also says

"But if you forgive and overlook, and cover up (their faults), verily, Allah is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful." (The Holy Quran 64: 14)

Allah describes forgiveness as a characteristic of the dwellers of heaven; this is mentioned in the Holy Quran:

"Be quick in the race for forgiveness from your Lord, and for a Garden whose width is that (of the whole) of the heavens and of the earth, prepared for the righteous - those who spend (freely), whether in prosperity, or in adversity; who restrain anger, and pardon (all) men; for Allah loves those who do good; (The Holy Quran 3: 133 - 134)

Allah Himself is Most Forgiving. Prophet Muhammad said that Allah declared:

"O, son of Adam, as long as you call upon Me and ask of Me, I shall forgive you for whatever you have done, and I shall not mind. O, son of Adam, were your sins to reach the clouds of the sky and were you to ask forgiveness of Me, I would forgive you. O, son of Adam, were you to come to Me with sins nearly as great as the earth, and were you then to face Me, ascribing no partner to Me (syirik) I would bring you forgiveness nearly as great as the earth is." (Related by At-Tarmizi)

Tolerance in Islam may also be seen in the manner Prophet Muhammad treated those who committed offences; surely his behaviour is the best example and reference for the Muslim *ummah*.

“Verily,
 Allah is kind and
 gentle, loves the
 kind and gentle,
 and confers upon
 the kind and gentle
 that which he does
 not confer upon
 the harsh.”
 (Related by Muslim)

Abu Hurairah related an occasion when a Bedouin urinated in the mosque, and the people angrily went to ask Prophet Muhammad to reprimand him. The Prophet calmly replied:

“Let him be. Pour over his urine a dipper of water. Indeed, you have been sent to make things easy and not to make them difficult.” (Related by Al-Bukhari & Muslim)

A man sneezed during a prayer led by Prophet Muhammad. Muawiyah b. Al-Hakam As-Salami, who was in the congregation, narrated as follows:

I then said, “May Allah bless you”. People around me looked at me with disapproval. I asked, “Why are you all looking at me like that?”. They then slapped their thighs with their hands. When I realised that they were trying to quieten me, I kept quiet. Prophet Muhammad completed his prayers. Indeed, I have never before or after this, seen a teacher who showed such a good

example. By Allah, he did not scold, hit or reprimand me, but said :

“Indeed, no word from man is suitable in solat (prayers). Solat is tasbih, takbir, and recitation of Al-Quran.” (Related by Muslim & Abu Daud)

Muslims are not allowed to converse with others during their prayers, and so the rest of the congregation tried to signal to Muawiyah to keep quiet. Yet, Prophet Muhammad kept his patience till prayers were over, before explaining it to Muawiyah.

Gentleness and Graciousness

3. Islam favours gentleness, promotes refined etiquette, and denounces character bashing.²

Islam is a gentle and noble religion. Among the manifestations of gentleness and nobleness in Islam are in *da'wah* (preaching) for spreading the faith, and in *muamalah* (compassionate dealing) with people, even those who commit vice or act against norms.³

Prophet Muhammad said:

“Indeed, kindness and gentleness does not exist in anything, without beautifying it; and it is not withdrawn from anything, without ruining it.” (Related by Muslim)

“Verily, Allah is kind and gentle, loves the kind and gentle, and confers upon the kind and gentle that which he does not confer upon the harsh.” (Related by Muslim)

Islam expects gentleness in *da'wah*. Indeed, the very basis of *da'wah* is gracious words, even when the one being preached to is a cruel tyrant. For example, when Allah sent the prophets Musa (Moses) and Harun (Aaron) a.s. on His mission to Pharaoh, He commanded : *“So speak (O Moses & Aaron) to him (Pharaoh) gently; perchance he may take warning or fear (God).”* (The Holy Quran 20: 44)

Similarly, Allah commanded Prophet Muhammad pbuh and all the preachers after him; *“Invite (all) to the Way of your Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching; and argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious: for your Lord knows best, who has strayed from His Path, and who receive guidance.”* (The Holy Quran 16: 125)

In this verse, Allah teaches man to preach in one of three ways:

1. Using wisdom
2. Being a good example
3. Debating in the best and most gracious manner



In this verse, Allah specifies that to *invite* others to Islam, gentle and gracious means of preaching are to be employed, in line with the nature of Islam itself.

Allah expects dialogue with the People of the Book to be conducted amicably. Allah says,

“And dispute you not with the People of the Book, except with means better (than mere disputation), unless it be with those of them who inflict wrong (and injury).” (The Holy Quran 29: 46)

There is no contradiction between the gentle means advocated for *da'wah*, and the command for *jihad* to remove hindrances in the path of *da'wah*. This is because *jihad* can only be applied when all peaceful initiatives to overcome those hindrances had been rejected.

This is borne out in Prophet Muhammad's example. For the first 13 years of his mission, he was commanded to be patient and to conduct his *da'wah* in a gentle manner, even though he and the Muslims were severely abused and oppressed. He did not retaliate, nor allowed any of his followers to do so. Seeking a peaceful solution, he accepted the offer to migrate to Medina. Yet the attacks against him and Islam continued, eventually escalating into attacks against Medina. It was only after that, did he use *jihad* to ensure the freedom to preach.⁴

Even after *jihad* was allowed, Prophet Muhammad continued to prefer a peaceful approach to *da'wah*. It was for this reason that he signed the Hudaibiah Accord whose terms were unfavourable to Muslims, even though by then, Muslims already had the upper hand.

When Prophet Muhammad pbuh sent out his army on a military mission, he always reminded them as follows:

“Wage war in the name of Allah and in the way of Allah. Slay those who disbelieve in Allah. Wage war, but do not be excessive; do not be treacherous, do not mutilate (the dead) bodies and do not kill the children.” (Related by Muslim)

In another *hadith* (Prophet's saying), Prophet Muhammad pbuh said:

“Do not kill the old, the children, babies nor women, and do not be excessive. Gather the spoils of war, do good, and be virtuous. Indeed, Allah loves those who do good.” (Related by Abu Daud)

It is obvious from these *hadith* (Prophet's sayings), that Islam expects gracious conduct even in *jihad*. Allah says,

“And fight in the cause of Allah those who fight you, but do not transgress limits.” (The Holy Quran 2: 190)

In Islam, war should only be waged based on lofty and noble aims – for defence, and to remove impediments to the spread of faith – not because of anger or hatred, nor conducted excessively. That is why Prophet Muhammad pbuh prohibited the mutilation of dead bodies (killed during war) and the killing of women and children.

In conducting *jihad*, Muslims are exhorted to fulfill their promises to those with whom they have an accord; treachery is not accepted as a means of securing the upper hand, even in battle. Allah Almighty says:

“O you who believe! Fulfill (all) obligations.” (The Holy Quran 5 : 1)

“... (but the treaties are) not dissolved with those Unbelievers with whom you have entered into alliance and who have not subsequently failed you in aught, nor aided any one against you. So fulfill your engagements with them to the end of their term: for Allah loves the righteous.” (The Holy Quran 9: 4)

In the Holy Quran, Allah also commands Muslims to be good to those who do not wage war against them,

“God forbids you not, with regards to those who fight you not for (your) Faith nor drive you out of your homes, from dealing kindly and justly with them: for Allah loves those who are just. Allah only forbids you, with regard to those who fight you for (your) Faith, and drive you out of your homes, and support (others) in driving you out, from turning to them (for friendship and protection). It is such as turn to them (in these circumstances), that do wrong.” (The Holy Quran 60: 8 – 9)

Allah even favours being forgiving in war. A good example of this was when Prophet Muhammad pbuh forgave and spared the people of Mecca upon taking over the city, even though they had caused Muslims much pain before.

Islam acknowledges the weakness of Man who, by nature, will make mistakes, is forgetful, and prone to commit sins. Prophet Muhammad pbuh said: *“If you do not commit sin, then Allah will bring forth a group that will commit sin until they begged for forgiveness from Allah, and Allah will forgive them” (Related by Muslim)*

Prophet Muhammad pbuh also taught that vice has various levels. A person should not be



completely condemned, instead he should be judged on the type of wrongdoing committed.

Islam rejects the practice of generally labelling every sin as *kufur* (infidels), especially when accompanied by physical, verbal or emotional abuse, as these inhibit repentance and keep Man away from religion.

In this respect, Allah says:

"It is part of the Mercy of Allah that you do deal gently with them. Were you severe or harsh-hearted, they would have broken away from about you; so pass over (their faults), and ask for (Allah's) forgiveness for them; and consult them in affairs (of the moment)." (The Holy Quran 3: 159)

The attitude of Islam towards those who commit vice is not to scold or label them as *kufur* (disbeliever), but to explain their errors, and encourage them to repent and improve their way of life.

The above are just some of the illustrations of Islam's gentleness in dealing with various types of people, whether Muslims or non-Muslims.

History has recorded many episodes where people embraced Islam in hordes, as demonstrated in the Malay Archipelago; not because they had been threatened, or because of the might of the sword. There were even nations which once opposed Islam, but later embraced it without being coerced, as in the case of the Mongols.

Islam favours gentleness and graciousness as much as it rejects harshness.

Peace is Preferred

4. Islam prefers peaceful rather than violent approaches.⁵

The emphasis on peace and harmony in Islam may be seen from the following⁶:

a. By virtue of its name, Islam means peace and harmony. Violence is not in line with such a name.

b. Prophet Muhammad was appointed as a blessing for the entire universe.

In the Holy Quran, Allah says,

"We sent you not, but as a Mercy for all the Universe." (The Holy Quran 21: 107)

Violence is not concordant with his mission of mercy.⁷

c. Allah Almighty commanded Prophet Muhammad to prioritise peace, as in the Holy Quran; "And if the enemy inclines towards peace, do you (also) incline towards peace, and trust in Allah." (The Holy Quran 8: 61)

d. Violence does not appeal to the nature of man.

During the Battle of Uhud, the disobedience of some of his followers resulted in a near tragedy. What is significant is firstly, Prophet Muhammad pbuh did not act harshly against those who were guilty, and secondly, Allah actually commended him for that in the Holy Quran,

"It is part of the Mercy of Allah that you do deal gently with them. Were you severe or harsh-hearted, they would have broken away from you; so pass over (their faults), and ask for (Allah's) forgiveness for them; and consult them in affairs (of the moment)" (The Holy Quran 3: 159)

Prophet Muhammad pbuh also reminded his followers similarly when he said: *"Convey the good news and do not make them run away, make it easy and do not make it difficult."* (Related by Muslim)

e. Muslims are taught to counter wickedness with good deeds. Violence contradicts this teaching. Allah says:

"Nor can Goodness and Evil be equal. Repel (Evil) with what is better: then will he between whom and you were hatred become as it were, your friend and intimate!" (The Holy Quran 41: 34)

f. Violence gives rise to a lot of difficulties, and will only inconvenience oneself.

Prophet Muhammad pbuh said:

"Indeed this religion is easy and it will defeat anyone who makes it difficult" (Related by Al-Bukhari)

g. Prophet Muhammad himself established Medina through peaceful *da'wah*.

h. Islam is more easily spread in a peaceful environment.

The Hudaibiyah Accord serves as a powerful demonstration of this: record numbers of people came into Islam in the consequent 2 peaceful years, so much that it was almost the same as the total for the preceding 19 years of Prophet Muhammad's pbuh mission.

i. History has shown that Islam has the potential to spread rapidly via peaceful methods as it did in the Malay Archipelago and in China.⁸

Therefore, peaceful ways of spreading the faith should be preferred in place of force and violence.

Robbery In The Name Of Jihad

by *Ustaz Mohd Haniff Hassan*

IN recent years, elements of Darnl Islam and Jemaah Islamiyah have committed acts of robbery in Indonesia which they justified in the name of the idea of Al-Fai. Their interpretation - or rather misinterpretation of Al-Fai - is a classic example of the distortions of Islamic teachings that some jihadis resort to in the pursuit of what they regard as jihad.

Terrorist groups have long been associated with various criminal acts such as robbery, drug trafficking and counterfeiting. What sets Muslim terrorist groups apart from the rest is the ideological motivation that drives them, as

manifested in their resort to Al-Fai - the confiscation or permissible transgression of enemy-owned property.

Kumpulan Militan Malaysia (KMM) broke into the Hong Leong Bank in Petaling Jaya in December 2000 and the Southern Bank in Jalan Gasing on 18 Maya year later. Perpetrators of the Bali bombing reportedly committed robbery on the Elita Gold Shop in Serang, West Java. In 1999, a former member of Darul Islam robbed Bank Central Asia in Jakarta, justifying it as a legitimate target because the bank was an unIslamic institution.

Indeed, the extremists argue that all goods and assets belonging to non-Muslims can be considered as Al-Fai and therefore can be confiscated — so long as they are to be used for the general interest of the Muslim public and not for personal gain. Banks, to them, can additionally be robbed because interest-based institutions are prohibited in Islam, regardless whether they are owned by Muslims or non-Muslims. Causing their destruction, either through bombing or robbery, is therefore acceptable — as manifested in the bombing of the HSBC building in Istanbul. Those who work in such institutions are also legitimate targets as they are regarded as accomplices in evil deeds.

There is one serious problem with this warped thinking: There is no justification in Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh) for robbing corporations which are run by non-Muslims or on “unIslamic principles” such as *riba* (interest). On the contrary, classical Islam recognised non-Muslims in Muslim states as a protected people (*zimmis*) who not only had property and commercial rights but also the freedom to practise their religion provided that they paid a poll tax, in lieu of military services.

As such, KMM, Darul Islam and the Bali bombers had all violated the property rights of the minority-owned corporations as well as their right to practise their own way of life. Indeed, given that Hong Leong Bank and Southern Bank had Islamic banking counters, it could

be argued that the jihadis might have gone far beyond the pale in robbing these banks.

What is Al-Fai

In fiqh, *Al-Fai* means booty taken from the enemy through means other than combat, or without formal war. Booty acquired through combat or formal war is called *Ghanimah*, or war booty. Examples of *Al-Fai* are assets that a host country confiscates from its enemies, or ships with economic goods belonging to a country at war seized in international waters.

Al-Fai originally referred to booty taken from the enemy. It was however usually taken from non-Muslims considered harbi (enemy at war). It was first mentioned in the Holy Quran, in Chapter 59, verses 6-9. Al-Fai is considered as part of the state's treasury and is to be used for public interest.

However, non-Muslims living in a Muslim country as citizens cannot be considered as harbi. In traditional fiqh, they are usually referred to as zimmi or people who are under the protection of the Muslim state. As citizens, the safety of their lives and properties are guaranteed by the state.

The same rule applies to non-Muslims who enter a Muslim country with proper permits such as visas and work permits. Even a citizen of a hostile country who enters a Muslim state with proper documents and permits is not to be harmed. Such people are usually termed *musta'man* or *mu'ahid*. It is obligatory on all Muslims in that country to honour the security and protection guaranteed to the non-Muslims, whether they are citizens or non-citizens, as stated in the Quran, 9:6.

Rights of Zimmis

Islam provides the zimmi with the freedom to practise their own laws and religious beliefs once they have pledged allegiance to the country and have agreed to serve in the military in defence of the country or, alternatively, pay a poll tax. This freedom extends to all their affairs such as civil, penal and other matters. They are allowed to solemnise marriages according to their own customs and religion. They are also

If Islam prohibits
extra-judicial
treatment of the
harbis, how can it
allow such treatment
on the zimmi?
Committing robbery
against a zimmi
because the victim is a
non-Muslim clearly
contradicts the
teachings of Prophet
Muhammad pbuh who
has said: "He who
hurts a zimmi hurts
me, and he who
hurts me
annoys Allah."

permitted to do what Muslims are not allowed to, such as the consumption and sale of alcohol and pork. A small minority of Islamic scholars also view that contracts entailing *riba* or interest are permissible if they involve non-Muslims only. In the case of formal war between a Muslim and non-Muslim country, Islam has rules in dealing with citizens of the hostile non-Muslim country (*harbi*). Messengers and officials who enter the Muslim country officially are protected. So are the businessmen who have legal business with citizens of the Muslim country. As long as any citizen of the hostile country has been granted protection by any





Muslim, it is prohibited to transgress his life and property.

If Islam prohibits extra-judicial treatment of the *harbis*, how can it allow such treatment on the *zimmi*? Committing robbery against a *zimmi* because the victim is a non-Muslim clearly contradicts the teachings of Prophet Muhammad who has said: “He who hurts a *zimmi* hurts me, and he who hurts me annoys Allah.”

Al-Fai is part of the law of war in Islam. Islamic scholars have ruled that laws of war can only be administered and executed by the *Ulil Amri*, or persons of appropriate authority. No individual or groups are allowed to declare and wage war or *jihad* in the name of Islam or the community. As war will always affect the public at large, the declaration of war requires a proper mandate. The best people to hold such a mandate are those who are appointed by the government. A serious matter such as the waging of war, if left to the public domain for Muslim groups to decide, will only create chaos and injustice — which is against the principle of any religion.

Only in a situation where the government has collapsed are Muslims allowed to organise

themselves collectively to fight against any aggression and implement the law of war accordingly — as had happened in Afghanistan during the Soviet invasion.

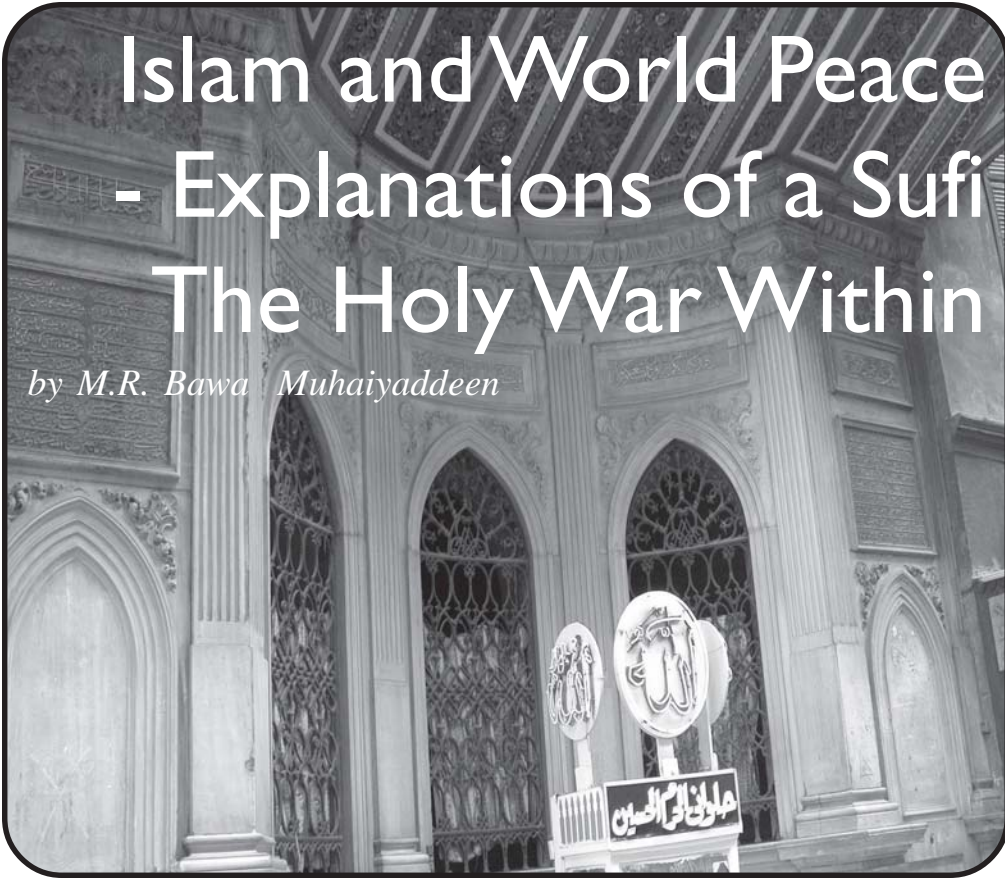
The *jihadi* might argue that since the Muslim nation is under attack, Muslims have a personal obligation (*fardu ain*) to take up arms in self-defence, even without sanction from a lawful ruler. This argument is false because the idea of defensive wars applies only to Muslim lands which have come under attack. Muslim-majority countries like Indonesia and Malaysia have not come under any direct attack and so do not fall under this category.

While Islamic scholars may differ on the permissibility of interest-based transactions by non-Muslims in a Muslim country, none of them have suggested that robbery or bombing such institutions is allowed in Islam as a means of eradicating evil.

In the two cases of robbery by the KMM and the Bali bombers in Malaysia and Indonesia, both groups are clearly not in a position to decide on matters pertaining to *Al-Fai*. Thus, their controversial robberies are criminal acts pure and simple that cannot be justified under *Al-Fai* or any other aspect of Islamic jurisprudence.

Islam and World Peace - Explanations of a Sufi The Holy War Within

by M.R. Bawa Muhaiyaddeen



I seek refuge in Allah from the evils of the accursed satan. In the name of Allah, Most Merciful, Most Compassionate.

God is Most Great. God is Most Great. *Allah Akbar. Allah Akbar.* There is no god other than God, and Muhammad is His Messenger. *La ilaha illa Allah Muhammad Rasul Allah.*

My brothers and sisters in *Iman-Islam*,¹ we have affirmed this *kalimah*.² We trust in God and have faith in Him alone, and with that determined faith we accept the revelations brought by the Prophet Muhammad. This is justice and truth, and truth is the silent witness in our life and in the hereafter.³ To accept this truth and establish it is *Iman-Islam*. To recite the *kalimah* to Allah with absolute faith, certitude, and determination, and to accept His representatives is *Iman-Islam*. To pay obeisance to Him, to worship Him alone without the slightest doubt, to become His slave,⁴ and to put His actions into practice in our lives is *Iman-*

Islam. From out of the beauty of Islam emerges Allah's power⁵ and His wealth.

My brothers and sisters, before we consider the meaning of *jihad*, let us think about the straight path and the oneness of Allah. This Unique, Almighty Power has no comparison; nothing is equal to Him, nothing can be likened to Him. That is why He is called the Incomparable One, and that is why we must accept Him.

The Qur'an, the traditions of the Prophet,⁶ and the *kalimah* are His signs. They provide explanations about His representatives and about His power. The entire Quran is an explanation of the oneness of Allah, and the *kalimah* verifies this oneness. The Quran tells us with certainty that we are all the children of Adam and the slaves of Allah, our Creator. He is the One who gives according to the needs of each. He shows no differences among His creations; He creates, protects, and sustains us all. He is the Unique One who will call us all

back and question us later. The Quran states this with certainty, and we must understand this with our seven states of wisdom. We who are the children of Adam must fully accept Him within our hearts. We must bow down ⁷ and prostrate ⁸ before Him. That is the meaning of the *kalimah* and the meaning of *Iman-Islam*.

My brethren, let me tell you a story so that you may better understand the meaning of *jihad*, or holy war. When God formed Adam out of earth, He placed the great trust of the light of *Nur Muhammad* on Adam's forehead and decreed that man would know things that the angels and other beings could never know. The leader of the jinns was watching and listening. He became filled with jealousy, pride, and vengeance, and these qualities changed him into Satan. At once he began to speak against God, boasting to Adam, "I am more exalted than you. Allah said that He created you to be most exalted, but you are only made of earth. I am made of fire. If you bow down to me I will help you, but if you attempt to rise above me, then I will do many evil things to you and made you suffer greatly." Then that light on Adam's forehead looked closely at Satan, and when Satan saw the radiance, there arose within him an even greater fear, jealousy, and vengeance. Once again he sneered at Adam, "You are created out of mere earth, and yet you dare to look at me like this! Because you were given a higher place than I was, I will create sorrow and suffering for you until the very end." Then Satan spat on him, and the moment that spit landed on Adam, satan's poisonous qualities entered him and spread throughout his entire body. Those qualities became the darkness of the mind and the veils within the innermost heart.

Upon seeing what had happened, Allah commanded the Angel Gabriel to pinch out that spot of hell where satan's spit had landed. The hollow that remained became the navel. Even though the spit itself was cleared away, some of the poison of those evil, envious qualities had already entered Adam and in that way were passed on to his descendants, causing all of mankind endless trouble. Because of satan's actions, Allah commanded that he and his followers be cast out of heaven. Then He elevated Adam to the high position decreed for him.

This is a very great matter. I have related only a small part of it to show you that the most important *jihad*, that each one of us must fight,

is the war against these qualities. Just as Satan was thrown out of heaven because he opposed the Almighty, Unique One, we too must cast out all that is evil within us, everything that opposes God. Those evil qualities of jealousy and vengeance are the qualities that ruin us and take us on the path to hell.

To help us fight this war, Allah sent us the *kalimah* and commanded us, "Recite this *kalimah* and cut away the enemy that is within you. Who is that enemy? Satan's evil qualities. They are an enemy to your body and to My unity and truth. Cut your connection to the evil one and cast out his qualities. Those qualities are the very fire of hell."

Therefore, with the *kalimah* and with Allah's qualities we must destroy the seven hells inside of us, and embrace instead the purity of the oneness of Allah. One who with wisdom and a pure heart accepts that oneness completely, also accepts the first *kalimah*. That is the affirmation of the unity of Allah, ⁹ and that is the first thing we have to do on the path of *Iman-Islam*. We must accept this reality of the oneness of Allah without any doubt. This means that we must also accept everyone, all of Adam's children, as our brothers and sisters. We must think about this deeply, within our hearts.

The meaning of this is very, very profound. The purity we speak of is very deep. The state of absolute faith, certitude, and determination ¹⁰ is also deep, and from it comes the wisdom which will help us to understand these mysteries.

My brothers, the holy wars that the children of Adam are waging today are not true holy wars. Taking other lives is not true *jihad*. We will have to answer for that kind of war when we are questioned in the grave. That *jihad* is fought for the sake of men, for the sake of earth and wealth, for the sake of one's children, one's wife, and one's possessions. Selfish intentions are intermingled within it.

True *jihad* is to praise God and cut away the inner satanic enemies. When wisdom and clarity come to us, we will understand that the enemies of truth are within our own hearts. There are four hundred trillion, ten thousand spiritual opponents within the body: satan and his qualities of backbiting, deceit, jealousy, envy, treachery, the separations of I and you, mine and yours, intoxicants, theft, lust, murder, falsehood, arrogance, karma, illusion, mantras and magics, and the desire for earth, sensual pleasures, and gold. These are the enemies

which separate us from Allah, from truth, from worship, from good actions and good thoughts, and from faith, certitude, and determination. These are the enemies which create divisions among the children of Adam and prevent us from attaining a state of peace.

Among the seventy-three groups of man, there are only a few who understand and fight the war against the enemy within themselves, the enemy who stands between them and Allah, the enemy who does not accept Allah and will not bow down and prostrate before Him. To cut our connection to this enemy who is leading us to hell is the true holy war.

Brothers, once we realize who is the foremost enemy of this treasure of truth which we have accepted, then we can begin our battle against that enemy. That is the holy war of faith, of the *kalimah*, and of Islam. That is the one holy war which Allah accepts.

We must not kill each other. Instead, we must wage war against the evil qualities within ourselves. When a child has bad qualities, what does the mother do? She tries to teach him and help him to develop good qualities. Does she

call him an evil child? No. If he steals the belongings of another because he wants to play with them, that is a bad quality no doubt, but the child is not evil. Does the mother strike down the child just because he has some bad qualities? No, the mother explains things to him and tries to expel the bad qualities and teach him good qualities. That is her duty, is it not?

Likewise, Allah, who created us, does not strike down His creations for the evil they have committed. It would not make sense if He did that. They are all His children, the children of the Lord of all creation. As their Father and Mother, He helps them to dispel their evil ways and tries to bring them to the straight path. He seeks to make His children happy and good. That is the way God is. And just as God does not kill His children because they have evil qualities, we must not murder others or cut them down. Instead, we must try to improve them by showing wisdom, love, compassion, and God's qualities, just as a mother teaches her mischievous child to change. That is our duty.

No good can come from cutting a person down. If a mother constantly shows unity and



love to her child, that will get rid of the child's bad tendencies. In the same way, we must help others to remove the evil qualities, teach them good qualities, and lead them to the state where they can become the princes of God.

My brothers, if we act with love and unity, we can dispel all our evil qualities and live as one family, as one race, as children bowing to one Lord.¹¹ Once we understand this truth, we will become good children. But as long as we do not understand and do not cast off the evil, then we are bad children.

Of course, when you cut these qualities, it might hurt. It might cause difficulty and suffering. When a child is cut, the pain makes him cry. He may scream and fight or maybe even bite you. He may shout, "I will kill you!" But you must embrace him with love and patiently explain things to him, always remembering that the qualities within the child are the enemy, not the child himself.

My brothers, man has two forms, each with its own set of qualities. The war is between these two forms. One is composed of the five elements and is ruled by the mind; it lives in the kingdom of illusion, creation, and hell. The other is a pure form made of Allah's light, of His splendence and purity. That form lives in the kingdom of heaven, in the world of pure souls. When man dwells within this good form, he speaks and acts in good ways. When he moves into the form of the elements, he speaks and acts in evil ways. One body exists within him in a formless state; the other exists outside as his form and shadow. These two bodies have opposite qualities and duties.

The heart also has two sections: one is the innermost heart¹² and the other is the mind. The mind is connected to the fifteen worlds, which are ruled by the energies of earth, fire, water, air, and ether. Just as these five elements are mixed together in the earth and in the sky, they are also mingled within the body.

The fifteen worlds are connected to all of creation, to all forms. Seven of the worlds are above, seven are below, and the fifteenth world, which is the center, is the mind. It is there, in the world ruled by the mind, that the holy war must be waged. The mind and the energies of the elements roam up and down throughout the fifteen worlds, manifesting as the four hundred trillion, ten thousand miracles that create differences and divisions among men. We have to fight against all these energies in all

These prophets came to teach us how to wage holy war against the inner enemy. This battle within should be fought with faith, certitude, and determination, with the *kalimah*, and with the Quran. No blood is shed in this war. Holding the sword of wisdom, faith, certitude, and justice, we must cut away the evil forces that keep charging at us in different forms. This is the inner *jihad*.

fifteen worlds. This is the major battle. Once we complete this war, then we are ready to begin our work within the innermost heart.



The innermost heart is the kingdom of Allah. That is where His essence ¹³ can be found. The secret ¹⁴ of the eighteen thousand universes and the secret of this world are contained within that heart. Allah's messengers, His representatives Es, the angels, prophets, saints, the resplendently pure souls, and His light within the soul are all to be found in a tiny point within the heart. Within that atom is contained His entire kingdom, the kingdom of truth and justice and purity, the kingdom of heaven, the kingdom of enlightened wisdom. ¹⁵

The eighteen thousand universes are within ¹⁶ that kingdom of light and divine knowledge, and Allah is the ruler of all those universes. His infinite power, His three thousand gracious qualities, His ninety-nine attributes, ¹⁷ His compassion, peace, unity, and equality are all found within those universes. That is the innermost heart, His kingdom of true faith and justice, where one can find peace.

Until we reach that kingdom, we have to wage a holy war within ourselves. To show us how to cut away this enemy within and to teach us how to establish the connection with Him, Allah sent down 124,000 prophets, twenty-five of whom are described thoroughly in the Quran. These prophets came to teach us how to wage holy war against the inner enemy. This battle within should be fought with faith, certitude, and determination, with the *kalimah*, and with the Quran. No blood is shed in this war. Holding the sword of wisdom, faith, certitude, and justice, we must cut away the evil forces that keep charging at us in different forms. This is the inner *jihad*.

My brothers in *Iman-Islam*, we must cut away the qualities which oppose Allah. There are no other enemies. Allah has no enemies. If anyone were to oppose Allah, the All-Powerful, Unique One, that person could never be victorious. You cannot raise or lower Allah.

He does not accept praise or blame. Praising Allah and then destroying others is not *jihad*. Some groups wage war against the children of Adam and call it holy war. But for man to raise his sword against man, for man to kill man, is not holy war. There is no point in that. There can be no benefit from killing a man in the name of God. Allah has no thought of killing or going to war. Why would Allah have sent His prophets if He had such thoughts? It was not to destroy men that Muhammad came; he was sent down as the wisdom that could show man how to destroy his own evil.

Once we have completely severed those qualities of satan within us, there will be no more enmity among human beings. All will live as brothers and sisters. That is true Islam, the affirmation of the unity of Allah, the oneness of Allah. Once we accept this, Allah accepts us. Once we fight and conquer these enemies of our faith, these enemies of our prayers, we will find peace within ourselves. And once we have found peace within, we will find peace everywhere. This world will be heaven, and we will have a direct connection to Allah, just as Adam had that original connection. Then we will understand the connection between ourselves and all the children of Adam.

Every child must know this and fight the enemy within. We must fight the battle between that which is permissible ¹⁸ under God's law and that which is forbidden. ¹⁹ If we do not do this, then the qualities of evil ²⁰ will kill that which is good, ²¹ and the truth will be destroyed. But if we can win this huge battle, we will receive Allah's grace, ²² and that will enable us to know His eighteen thousand universes. If we can conquer the world of the mind, we will see the kingdom of the soul, His kingdom.

May every one of us think about this and wage our own holy war. Only when we finish the battle and progress beyond will we realize that we are all children of Adam, that we are all one race, that there is only one prayer, and that there is only One who is worthy of worship, one God, one Lord. He is the Compassionate One, ²³ He is the Merciful One. ²⁴ He creates and sustains all lives, He does not cut them down. Once we realize this, we will stop the fighting, the spilling of blood, the murder.

We will never attain peace and equality within our hearts until we finish this war, until we conquer the armies that arise from the thoughts and differences within ourselves, until we attack these enemies with faith, certitude,

and determination and with patience, contentment, trust in God, and praise of God. ²⁵ With divine knowledge, with justice and conscience, we must fight and win this inner *jihad*.

May the peace of God be with you. ²⁶ Allah is sufficient for all. Amen.

Footnotes

1. Iman: absolute faith, certitude, and determination. Islam: the state of absolute purity. See [glossary](#).
2. La ilah illa Allah Muhammad Rasul Allah
3. al-akhirah
4. 'abd
5. qudrah
6. ahadith
7. ruku'
8. sajdah
9. tawhid
10. iman
11. Rabb
12. qalb
13. dhat
14. sirr
15. gnanam
16. 'ilm
17. wilayat
18. halal
19. haram
20. sharr
21. khayr and al-hamdu lillah
22. rahmah
23. al-Rahman
24. al-Rahim
25. sabr, shukr, tawakkul 'ala Allah,
26. al-salam 'alaykum

About The Author

Muhammad Raheem Bawa Muhaiyaddeen, may Allah be pleased with him, was an Islamic Sufi from Sri Lanka who dedicated much of his lifetime to instructing people on the true meaning of Islam and the path of Sufism. Though he himself was unlettered, the depth of his understanding of the Qur'an and the

JIHAD Through the Eyes of Mainstream Ulama

by Premarani Somasundram

THOSE responsible for the London attacks are criminals who do not represent Islam or even truly understand [its message].” So thundered Muhammed Syed Tantawi, the Grand Sheikh of Egypt’s Al-Azhar mosque-cum-university, Sunni Islam’s epic entre of knowledge. His condemnation of the July 7 London bombings was echoed by Sheikh Yusuf Qaradawi, the Qatar-based cleric whose political independence gives him an edge over Tantawi in the eyes of many Muslims.

Yet, one oft-heard refrain since September 11 is that Islamic leaders are ambivalent about the use of violence in the name of jihad. They are said to be inconsistent in their condemnations of the notion. Indeed, protests are mounting among Britons for Qaradawi to be barred from London for supporting the use of violence in Israel. Such complaints about Islamic leaders are based on a lack of understanding of the nuances in the classical discourse on jihad.

We repeatedly hear mantras that jihad does not mean holy war - or even war - but rather effort or struggle and that the greater jihad is the inner battle against one’s own weaknesses. But classical Islamic teachings do also permit

armed jihad. And, this is precisely why, even as they reject the September 11 or July 7 attacks, the mainstream *ulama* or Islamic scholars often resist efforts to gloss over the concept of jihad or even excise teachings on jihad from *madrasah* curricula. However, the mainstream Muslim notion of armed jihad is a limited one and far from the kind of global jihadism espoused by the likes of Al-Qaeda.

The juristic discourse on armed jihad

Because of the indeterminate nature of the holy texts - the Quran and Hadith (the Prophet’s Traditions) - their interpretations by the recognised schools of law form an integral part of the *Shari’ah* or Islamic law. By the late 8th and early 9th centuries, the classical Islamic jurists had derived from the texts an elaborate corpus of rules on war and peace. Chief among these was the forbidding of all forms of primordial warfare except that intended to enforce God’s law or to check violations of God’s law - *jihadfisabilillah*, which literally means struggle in the path of Allah. This is why even groups fighting for secular goals, such as some among

the Thai separatists, occasionally wave the jihad banner.

The classical teachings conceived of two forms of armed jihad: defensive and offensive jihad. A defensive jihad was one fought when the realm of Islam (*dar al-Islam*) was invaded or occupied by the realm of war or non-Muslim realm (*dar al-harb*). It was considered a personal obligation of every able Muslim to fight such a war. Defensive jihad is somewhat analogous to the Judaeo-Christian notion of just war and the UN Charter's principle of self-defence. However, it is deemed an individual duty that does not require a legitimate sanctioning authority. An offensive jihad, on the other hand, was an expansionist war to extend the *dar al-Islam* into the *dar al-harb*. It was considered a collective obligation and could only be declared by a legitimate Muslim ruler. By the 10th and 11th centuries, however, the notion of offensive war fell dormant and many jurists categorically stated that unbelief was an insufficient condition for attacking the *dar al-harb*; the *dar al-Islam* had to be under clear threat from the *dar al-harb*.

It is because conflicts like the Palestinian struggle for statehood and the resistance to the US-led attack and occupation of Iraq fall well within the classical definition of defensive jihad that the mainstream *ulama* today cannot bring themselves to categorically denounce the use of violence by groups within these theatres. Tantawi himself has in the past supported the use of violence in both the Palestinian and Iraq theatres.

In addition to the notion of just war, classical Islamic teachings also included the notion of justice in war. This was encapsulated in rules of engagement such as the prohibition on the killing of women and children. Furthermore, in a related theological discourse from the earliest days of Islam, the practice of *hirabah* — what the eminent law professor Khaled Abou el-Fadl defines as the terrorising of defenceless victims “by stealth” — was regarded an offence against society and God. Thus, a number of Islamic scholars today conscientiously draw a distinction between jihad and *hirabah*, considering whether the targets of attack are military or civilian. For instance, Qaradawi has condemned hostage-taking by Iraqi insurgents and the Abu Sayyaf group in the Philippines, although he supports both the Iraqi resistance and the Moro cause.

Suicide Bombing

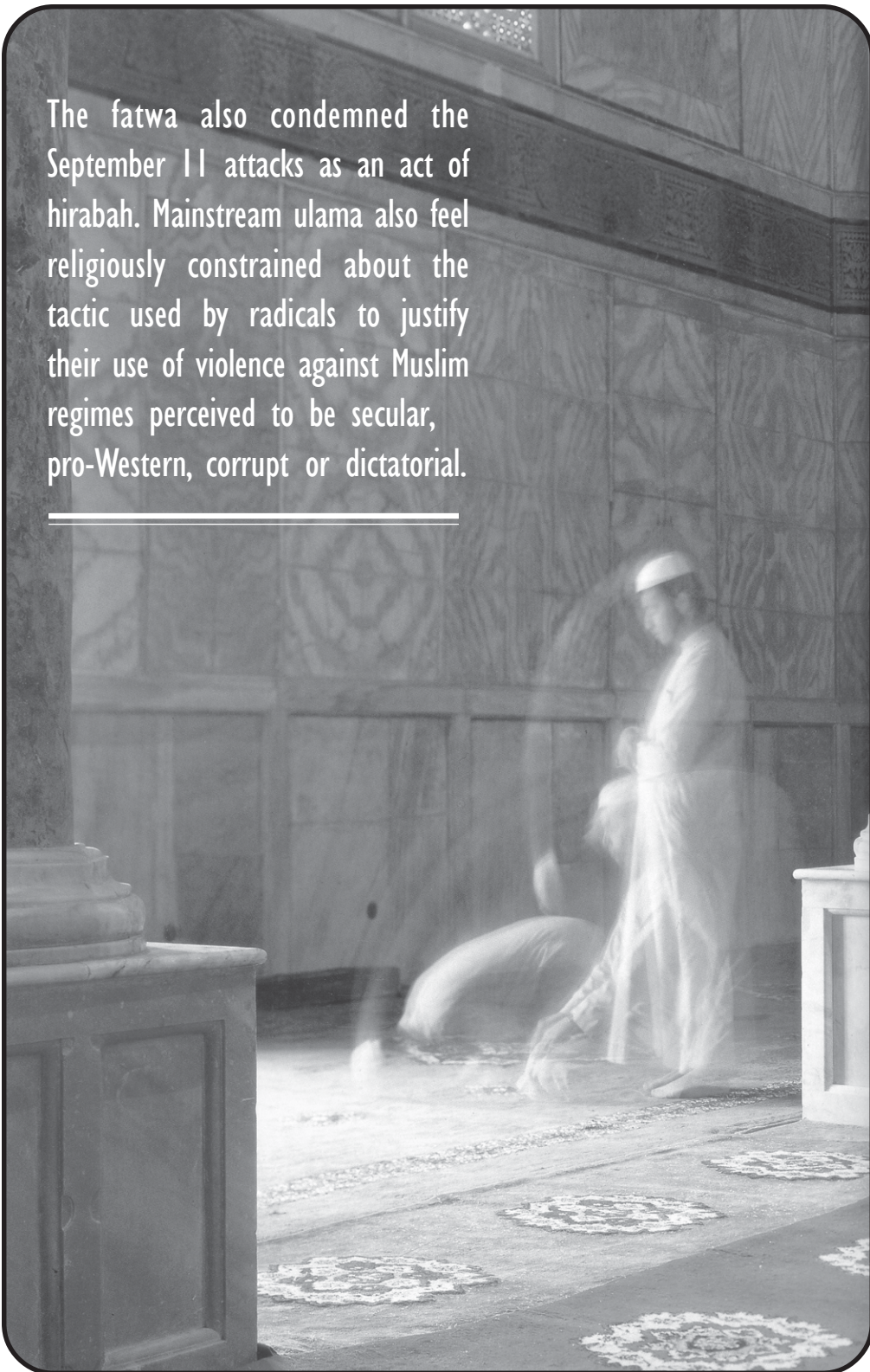
Discussing the rules of engagement requires close scrutiny of what appears to be the weapon of choice in armed jihad today - suicide bombing. Backers of suicide bombing are able to distinguish between suicide in the sense of a desperate withdrawal from the hardships of life, which is prohibited in Islam, and suicide as self-sacrifice in the defence of Islam, or martyrdom. And, in view of the clear imbalance of power between the Palestinians and Israel, many mainstream *ulama* consider suicide bombing in the Israeli theatre to be the only weapon available. Even the traditionalist Nahdlatul Ulama, Indonesia's largest Muslim organisation, has in the past expressed support for Palestinian suicide bombings.

However, because the Palestinian question is such an emotional one for Muslims, the mainstream *ulama* have turned a blind eye to suicide bombings within Israel that deliberately target civilians. They even condone civilian deaths as part of the “collateral damage” incurred in attacking military targets, which they define very broadly. Tantawi has included Jewish settlers in the Palestinian territories in his definition of Israeli combatants while Qaradawi considers everyone in Israel a combatant because of Israeli conscription.

This is where the mainstream *ulama* lose the moral high ground. Outrage against the Israelis' deployment of fighter aircraft into

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The fatwa also condemned the September 11 attacks as an act of hirabah. Mainstream ulama also feel religiously constrained about the tactic used by radicals to justify their use of violence against Muslim regimes perceived to be secular, pro-Western, corrupt or dictatorial.



populated Palestinian neighbours or other such dramatic attacks cannot justify retaliatory suicide bombings deliberately directed at civilian rather than military targets. .

Point of departure

Notwithstanding this Palestinian-related blind spot, the mainstream Muslim discourse on armed jihad is limited and radically different from that of the Al-Qaeda types in significant ways. The mainstream *ulama* generally accept the evolution in the classical juristic discourse on jihad. Only defensive jihads are considered justifiable today. Indeed, most *ulama* today rarely use absolutist terms such as *dar al-Islam* and *dar al-harb*. The radicals, however, characteristically reject the classical jurisprudential tradition. They insist on selective and literalist interpretations of the holy texts, arguing that the so-called sword verses in the Quran were meant to be normative ones that abrogated the more restrained verses preceding them. Many radicals today contend that jihad was meant to be eternal, almost another article of faith, until the entire world became *dar al-Islam*. Mainstream Muslims - and many non-Muslims too - may share Osama bin Laden's resentment of America's global military, economic and cultural domination. But they do not buy into his conveniently loose definition of defensive jihad that considers the entire Muslim community as being under American aggression and therefore entitled to attack Americans, including civilians, any place where it is possible to do so. The mainstream *ulama* also have no illusions of resurrecting a pan-Islamic state under a caliphate.

Even though they have permitted Muslims to 'cross national borders to assist their embattled brethren fighting defensive jihads, as did Tantawi himself at the start of the invasion of Iraq, most mainstream *ulama* nevertheless believe in containing attacks within jihad theatres. Indeed, even the militant Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad do confine their attacks to Israeli soil. In condemning the April 2002 bombing of a synagogue in Tunisia, believed to have been perpetrated by Al-Qaeda-linked elements, Qaradawi articulated the mainstream view that the Muslim community's quarrel with the Jews centred around the latter's occupation of Palestinian land, not their faith.

More interestingly, as the US was poised to attack Afghanistan after the events of

September 11, Qaradawi and a number of other *ulama* obliged the US army's Muslim chaplain with a *fatwa* (religious ruling) that gave a qualified go-ahead for American Muslim soldiers to participate in the US attack. Even though Qaradawi subsequently criticised the US attack itself as a disproportionate response, the *fatwa* implicitly acknowledged that citizenship of a state entailed certain obligations even if the state in question was not a Muslim one or it required attacking fellow Muslims - so long as there was a just cause. The *fatwa* also condemned the September 11 attacks as an act of *hirabah*. Mainstream *ulama* also feel religiously constrained about the tactic used by radicals to justify their use of violence against Muslim regimes perceived to be secular, pro-Western, corrupt or dictatorial. This is the practice of *takfir* or branding one's political opponent or someone perceived to be insufficiently Islamic as an apostate. The radicals charge that such apostate leaders have reverted their countries to the state of pre-Islamic paganism and project themselves as fighting defensive jihads to restore the *dar al-Islam*. Today, even the mainstream clerics in Wahhabist Saudi Arabia reject the practice of *takfir*. At a recent international conference in Jordan, a number of prominent *ulama*, including Saudi Arabia's highest clerical body, issued a *fatwa* making it forbidden to declare as an apostate any Muslim who believed in Allah and did not deny the five pillars of the faith.

In sum, although the mainstream *ulama* uphold the notion of defensive jihad in the event of invasion or occupation of Muslim land, theirs is a territorially restricted view. They reject the radicals attempt to deliberately expand the definition of defensive jihad to justify a global jihad. Most mainstream *ulama* accept the irrelevance of the terms *dar al-Islam* and *dar al-harb*. Even those among them who hold an exclusivist worldview look only to non-violent means for achieving their millennial goal of the *dar al-Islam* subsuming the *dar al-harb*. The mainstream *ulama* also distinguish between armed jihad and *hirabah* (although they are less scrupulous about the distinction in the sensitive Palestinian theatre).

Unless these nuances are understood, the West may not be able to win over the mainstream Muslim *ulama*, who are the only ones with the credibility to battle the abuse of the concept of jihad.

Being a youth in this postmodern time is a real challenge. In the period where each of our youths hedge profusely to find and mould their own identities, what is in store for them is a hill of information, ideologies and meanderings. How could we be rest assured that they will be able to choose truthfulness against falsehood? How could we be certain that they'll be engaged with all the goodness that life could offer and not be swayed with the atrocities in it? How could we equip our youths with the necessary tools for them to succeed when encountering uncertainties and difficult times?

gathering through the internet allows unfiltered understanding of issues and concepts such as Jihad. Each posting suggests rightful interpretation, yet such interpretation could be detrimental if taken fully.

As a practical example, let us look at different interpretation of Jihad which could be found from the internet. A certain Abuz Zubair ascertains that "*Jihaad*" is a *shara'ee* term which implies *al-Qitaal* (physical fight), even though linguistically it may mean *Jihaad* with the parents, like the statement of the Prophet SAW "*Fa Feehima Fajaahid*" meaning "*strive in them (your parents)*" or "*Thumma Jahadaha fa qad wajab al-Ghusl*"

Let's Embrace The Beauty of Islam

by Ustaz Mohd Feisal Md Hassan

Every parent hopes to see their children succeed in life. Natural parental instinct will push them to nurture their children to be successful, and at the same time, to worry for their uncertain futures. How deep a role should a parent play in this present time? Which model could a parent follow to ascertain that their children will be led righteously?

We are not here to try and answer all these questions. What we are concerned here is more on how we could assist our youths in their appreciation of the message and beauty of Islam.

In their search for identity, our youths are bombarded with exorbitant flow of information in this digital age. For example, in the internet, various issues are discussed extensively. Globalization has surely impacted upon our search for meaning in this life. One such issue that has much been discussed in blogs, cyber forums, and have appeared in various media exorbitantly, is the concept of Jihad in Islam. If one is not equipped with the correct guide to Jihad, one will succumb to different extremes in trying to catch its meaning. Information

meaning "...then he strove on her, Ghusl becomes *wajib*". 'Abdullah 'Azzam mentions that "*Indeed whenever the word 'Jihaad' is spoken then verily it means al-Qitaal (fighting), and the phrase 'Fee Sabeelillah' (in the way of Allah) is spoken then surely it means al-Jihaad.*"¹

The United States Department of Justice defines Jihad as follows: "*'jihad' is the Arabic word for 'holy war.' In this context, jihad refers to the use of violence, including paramilitary action against persons, property or governments deemed to be enemies of a fundamentalist version of Islam.*² *Violent jihad or Jihad include planning, preparing for, and engaging in, acts of physical violence, including murder, maiming, kidnapping, and hostage-taking.*"³

From another writer, Dr. Muzammil H. Siddiqi, "*The word Jihad does not mean 'Holy War'. It means 'struggle' or 'striving'. The word for war in the Qur'an is 'Harb' or 'Qital'. Jihad means serious and sincere struggle on the personal as well as on the social level. It is a struggle to do good and to remove injustice, oppression and evil*



*from the society. This struggle should be spiritual as well as social, economic and political.*²⁴

There are many more interpretations as mentioned. But what is necessary for us to dwell here is our ability to ascertain that our youths would not be entangled with variant divergent conceptions of a particular issue, but most importantly, they become good exemplary individuals who are enriched and enlightened with Islamic concepts and values. What is the criterion that could be used to determine correct understanding of a particular concept?

Among others, all Muslims believe that Islam is the religion of Salam, a religion of peace. All Muslims ascertain that Allah is Ar-Rahman (Most Gracious) and Ar-Rahim (Most Merciful). All Muslims hold that Prophet Muhammad is the Beloved of Almighty God. There is no coercion in Islam. Islam is a religion that promotes love and affection, is universal and proactive in nature, elevates humanity above the rungs of angels, and bestow upon mankind supervisory abilities above all of creation. Islam encourages mankind to strive to achieve excellence now and forever.

But sadly, Islamic understanding has been tainted by over zealous individuals who strive to proof that Islam is the religion of the sword. They believe that Islam must be coerced on all humanity. Their political ambitions and agendas have clouded the beauty of the Islam. Dead bodies of civilians, women and children become evidences for their so-called heavenly goals.

Our youths need to be exposed both on the literal and contextual understanding of major Islamic concepts. Alongside this exposure, they need to be presented with real understanding of our present day upheavals. The relevant Muslim authorities need to rally the teaching of Islamic knowledge alongside present day applications. What we urgently need is in depth practical application of the universal message of Islam which will assist our youths to become beautiful beings and be able to embrace the beauty of Islam.

Among others, these practical applications could be filled with the richness of the Islamic civilization, and the excellence of the Islamic masters of past years and centuries. Islam is never short of excellent individuals who excel both in their worldly and otherworldly pursuits. A point that should not be missed is that the Islamic civilization has produced great number of pioneers, sages, entrepreneurs, scientists,

Syekhs, scholars, writers, architects, Imams, poets, warriors, chefs, doctors and thinkers. In every continent that the scent of Islam was felt, it has been able to give birth to excellent individuals who not only enrich Islamic tradition but also enriches the progress of mankind and humanity.

Our youths need to be exposed to such tradition. They need guidance to the light and soul of Islam that have molded those past achievers. Our parents need to immerse the universalism of Islam, and pour guidance to their children. Our religious authorities, both individuals and organizations, need to embrace the beauty of Islam with its treasures of richness in values and applications, to guide the community towards excellence.

We need to engage our ears and minds towards unity in applying truth in the best manner and stride. Let us ponder upon these verses of the Quran which says : *“So announce the Good News to My Servants, those who listen to Al-Qaul (the Word), and follow the best (meaning) in it. Those are the ones whom Allah has guided, and those are the ones endued with understanding.”*²⁵

Let us engage in every forms of communication, and learn to be among those who listen and follow the best that we could muster. Let us perform jihad towards flowering this earth with beautiful conduct of a real servant.

(Endnotes)

¹ <http://www.islamicawakening.com/viewarticle.php?articleID=685&>

² <http://www.milnet.com/2nd-indictment-hayat-dist-court.pdf>

³ <http://news.findlaw.com/hdocs/docs/padilla/uspada111705ind.pdf>

⁴ <http://64.233.167.104/search?q=cache:hZtnyxd12R8J:www.isna.net/services/library/khutbahs/Jihad.html+an-nawawi+and+jihad&hl=en>

⁵ Al-Quran 39:18-19. It would be useful for the reader to read the commentaries by scholars on the term *al-qaul* in this context, as it can carry the meaning of either revelation or other forms of verbal discourse or communication.

On Violence and Muslims

by Asghar Ali

“The Prophet loved peace so much that at Hudaibiyah he accepted peace even on what others thought as ‘humiliating’ conditions.”

Needless to say violence and Muslims have become inalienable concepts for media, particularly western media. However, this will not stand any scrutiny or critical inquiry. The media does not care to investigate things in depth. It adopts very superficial approach based on prejudices rather than facts. It is therefore very necessary to put things in proper perspective through critical inquiry.

Like Muslims, Islam is also associated with violence. It is not only the western scholars and media but also Muslims themselves who are responsible for spreading such view. They often talk about *jihad* very loosely without knowing the Quranic position about it or its situational context. So Muslims also have to do lot of re-thinking about *jihad* and its true concept. Loose talk about it harms the image of Islam.

I have often emphasised that peace is central to Islam and war (*harb or qital*, not *jihad*) incidental but this has been reversed in popular public imagination and war (*harb, qital*) has become central and peace incidental. Partly Muslim (not Islamic) history is responsible for it. Islam, in fact, appeared in the midst of inter-tribal war in the Arab society and so peace became its main mission. The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) went to Madina from Mecca as peace -maker.

The people of Madina belonging to tribes of Khazraj and Aus were tired of inter-tribal war, which had gone on for forty years. They found a ray of hope in the Prophet of Islam and invited him to Madina to establish peace between the two tribes. The Prophet gladly accepted the role of peace -maker as it also allowed him to escape from violence against him and his followers in Mecca. Prophet did not want his followers to continue to suffer as they had stood severe persecution for last a decade. He wanted peace for all. Peace and security were very central for him.

The Prophet was so concerned with peace that he drew up a covenant between Muslims, Jews and pagans to coexist pursuing their respective religions. The Quran stood for freedom of conscience (2:256) and so the Prophet allowed all in Madina to follow their respective religions and coexist with each other. The Quran also says that diversity is Allah's will (5:48). Thus Islam stands for inter-religious harmony. The main concern of the Quran is

truth (*haq*), justice (*'adl*), compassion (*rahmah*) and wisdom (*hikma*).

The Prophet loved peace so much that at Hudaibiyah he accepted peace even on what others thought as 'humiliating' conditions. The Prophet had gone with the intention of performing Hajj accompanied by 10,000 followers who were armed as he feared attack by the Meccan unbelievers. But when he was met with resistance by the Meccans he readily agreed to negotiate peace instead of fighting and shedding blood. The Prophet did not make it a matter of prestige and returned from Hudaibiyah after negotiating peace without performing Hajj.

This even clearly shows how central peace was for the Prophet. He silently tolerated persecution for years and migrated to Madina when it became unbearable. Even when he entered Mecca finally triumphant he pardoned all his worst enemies including Hindon who had chewed his uncle Hamza's liver after killing him in the battle of Badr. *Qisas* (retaliation) was the well -established practice of Arabs. But the Prophet transcended that Arab social practices

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so as to establish a society based on higher spirituality and morality. He set an example before Arabs to pardon the enemy rather than seek revenge. Retaliation may satisfy our raw emotions but pardoning results in inner cleansing and spiritual purity.

It is true that the Quran, in one of its verses says there is life in retaliation (*al-hayat fi' al qisas*) but it refers to existing Arab social reality rather than asking Muslims to practise retaliation. Allah desires Muslims to transcend such practices and desist from retaliation as Allah is *Ghafur al-Rahim* i.e. a pardoner and compassionate and a true worshipper of Allah must also develop these qualities in himself/herself.

One has to properly understand the Quranic methodology and comprehend its exhortations on different levels. First the Quran refers to existing realities and then requires believers to transcend the given situation and accept higher morality. The Quran adopts first a practical approach and then wants its followers to try to establish what is ideal and desirable. It adopts same approach as regards war. War may become necessary but is certainly not desirable. One should transcend war and establish peace.

Some Muslims refer to certain verses, which permit war and ignore the Quranic emphasis on ideal of peace. Even paradise according to the Quran is place of peace and security as the Quran says enter it (the Paradise *be salamin aaminin* i.e. in peace and security 15:46). Thus the earth can become paradise only when there is peace and security for all. It will become hell if there is violence and insecurity. Thus the Quran clearly aims at higher level of existence and not at animal level of revenge and retaliation.

In Quranic text one finds this tension between what is given and what is desirable. Without understanding this tension one cannot begin to understand the true spirit of Quran. The Muslim youth who are lured by powerful vested interests to declare "jihad" and court martyrdom are totally unaware of the higher level of Quranic teachings. In all situations one cannot simply talk of courting martyrdom. It could be done after exhausting all other alternatives and with minimum use of violence, even where very necessary.

But what we witness is abhorant use of indiscriminate violence killing scores of innocent people. In fact violence is being used

to terrorise rather than fighting for justice. Also, who can decide whether all other avenues to solve the matter have been exhausted? Not a self appointed group but concerned people at large through given democratic institutions. However, various *jihadi* outfits have become self-appointed guardians of whole community and anyone who opposes them is eliminated. They readily kill for personal revenge or motives, totally ignoring Quranic morality.

Here I would like to give one example. When Ali, the son-in-law of the Prophet defeated an Arab wrestler in a duel in the battle he was about to behead him and the wrestler spat upon him. Ali, instead of beheading him, got off his chest and let him go. He was very surprised as he thought that since he spat upon Ali, he will kill him with more brutality. He asked Ali why did he get off his body instead of killing him greater severity? Ali coolly replied if he had killed him after he spat upon him it would have been for personal revenge rather than for the sake of Allah.

Thus it will be seen that Islam, even in the situation of war, does not give up higher morality. Any war or killing for personal revenge or motive is totally unacceptable. One also has to go into ideological as well as empirical causes of violence. Ideologically speaking, Islam, as pointed out above, does not reconcile with violence. It is therefore necessary go into empirical causes of violence. Only where it is ideological, one can relate it to Islam or Quran but if there it is empirical, one cannot hitch it to Islamic wagon.

In most cases one will find that violence in Muslim society is empirically related. One can well argue how can one convincingly distinguish between ideological and empirical as people often invoke ideology to cover up their motives. It is a very valid objection and it is this invocation of ideological for extra-ideological motives that causes all the confusion. The only answer to this is rigorously critical examination of use of violence. There is bound to be a grey area and there can be differences about defining this grey area. But nevertheless some acceptable criteria can be laid down. There is no escape from grey areas in such matters.

Also, violence is more often related to political situation rather than to religious teachings. Violence is thought to be necessary in certain situations: where there is complete breakdown of law and order for whatever reason and in an

authoritarian society where any dissent is not permissible at all. In early Muslim society anarchy broke out after the murder of the third Caliph Uthman and it took proportion of civil war. More than 70,000 people were killed.

Thus Muslims fought against Muslims and some battles which were part of power struggle were fought. The battle of Camel and battle of Siffin were fought among Muslims themselves and had nothing to do with ideological reasons. In these battles important companions of the Prophet (PBUH) were involved on both the sides of battle lines. Such battles of interest also contributed to the impression that Islam and violence are two sides of a coin.

Thus one must distinguish between what are religious teachings and what are historical developments. What happened in history cannot be ascribed to religion or in other words religion cannot be held responsible for historical developments. But even scholars often confuse between the two. It is also necessary to read religious text in proper context. Normally no religion ever prescribes violence; it stresses peace. So is with Islam. The core teaching of Islam is peace, not violence. However, violence is prescribed only in certain situation for defence and Quran strictly prohibits violence for aggressive purposes.

It is true that certain groups like Al-Qaida are using violence and invoke the concept of jihad and martyrdom for the purpose. It is highly misleading, to say the least. Young Muslims, often unemployed and without any thorough Islamic background can be easily induced in the name of Islam, jihad and martyrdom to kill and to die. Those who induce them to do so have their own motives.

Jihad, as already pointed out, is related more to spreading good and fighting evil (read peace for good i.e. *ma'ruf* and evil for violence and injustice i.e. *nahi*) and not fighting with weapons. Jihad has been grossly misunderstood in Islamic society and ignorance about real meaning of jihad is used by powerful vested interests. In the past also many monarchs waged territorial wars and invoked the concept of jihad to motivate their soldiers to fight.

Similarly the concept of martyrdom has equally been grossly misused. In fact jihad and martyrdom are integrally related in popular Islam and it receives re-inforcement from the ulama. In fact the Quran does not encourage giving up ones life without a serious purpose.

Thus the Quran says,
and cast not yourselves
to perdition with your
own hands and do good
(to others). Surely
Allah loves the doers of
good. (2:195)

The Quran, on the contrary warns believers not to throw themselves in *tahlukat* (to perish needlessly). Thus the Quran says, “ and cast not yourselves to perdition with your own hands and do good (to others). Surely Allah loves the doers of good. (2:195)

Thus the concept of martyrdom must be read in conjunction with this verse. Often perishing needlessly is glorified as martyrdom i.e. what is in fact *tahlukat* is taken as *shahadat*. There is great difference between *shahadat* (martyrdom) and *tahlukat* (perishing). The above verse also talks of doing good to others (*ahsinu*). If suicide bombing is examined in the light of this verse - not to throw oneself into perdition on one hand, and to do good to others, on the other, it (suicide bombing) appears to be contrary to Quranic teachings.

A suicide bomber is doubly guilty according to this Quranic verse: he throws himself/herself into perdition and kills others with him/her. So he/she kills himself and kills others whereas the Quranic verse prescribes doing good to others. Here one is killing innocent people instead of doing good to them. In suicide bombing which is today an important means of killing in ongoing terrorism, only innocent people are killed including women, children and old, something strictly prohibited by the rules of jihad prescribed by the Shari'ah law.

It is surprising that many 'ulama justify suicide bombing as part of jihad and describe those killed by becoming suicide bomber as 'martyrs'. It is nothing but their emotional

response to what USA and Israel are doing rather than the Quranic teachings. Through such emotional response they bring bad name to Islam and Muslims as then Islam is equated with violence and fanaticism.

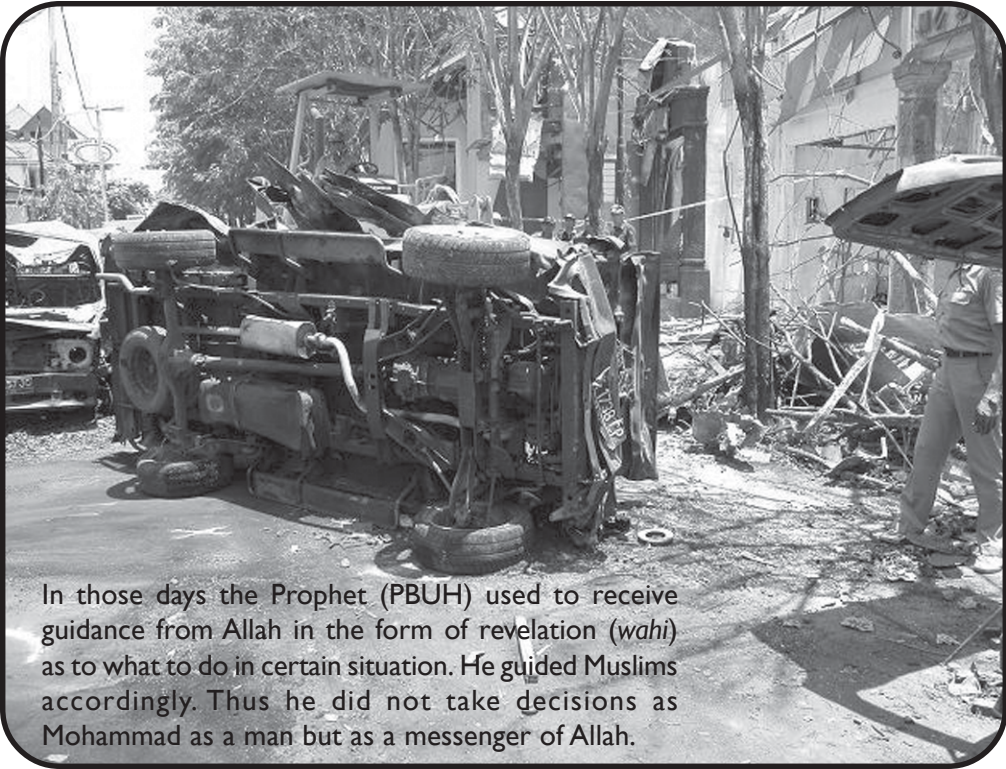
Also, we should not mechanically transplant 7th century Arabic situation to contemporary situation. Islam and Muslims were faced with enemies from their own society and tribes. Muslims also belonged to the tribe of Quraysh and kafirs (unbelievers) too belonged to that tribe. They were even blood-related and did not belong to enemy nations. The Jews were also part of Medinan society and with whom the Prophet (PBUH) had entered into a covenant giving them full freedom to practice their faith and in return help Muslims defend Medina in the event of attack from outside (i.e. Mecca).

The unbelievers of Mecca attacked Muslims of Medina and hence the Quran urged upon them to defend and court martyrdom in the battle field (it never included killing civilians who were not in the battle field). There is no precedent in early Islamic history of the time of the Prophet (PBUH) or during the time of the Caliphs in which innocent civilians were ever targeted as in suicide bombing.

Martyrdom was praised as the Muslim community as a whole was in danger through wars of aggressions launched by Meccan unbelievers. And it was fledgling Muslim community and whole community was in danger. It was thus highly necessary to fight for defending the Muslim community as a whole. Today the situation is very different. Muslims are spread all over the world and are divided into separate nations and communities. Those who are courting 'martyrdom' are not saving even few; let alone, entire Muslim community. In many cases they are killing Muslims themselves.

Thus it is difficult to call suicide bombers as martyrs at all. The Quranic concepts must be applied on the Quranic grounds only. We cannot stretch these terms on our own conditions as the modern day suicide bombers do or those who induce them to do so. And no Islamic country as a whole is in mortal danger as the early Islamic community was. In fact many Muslim countries have conflicting interests and are far from unanimous on the question of war against any non-Muslim country like the USA.





In those days the Prophet (PBUH) used to receive guidance from Allah in the form of revelation (*wahi*) as to what to do in certain situation. He guided Muslims accordingly. Thus he did not take decisions as Mohammad as a man but as a messenger of Allah.

In those days the Prophet (PBUH) used to receive guidance from Allah in the form of revelation (*wahi*) as to what to do in certain situation. He guided Muslims accordingly. Thus he did not take decisions as Mohammad as a man but as a messenger of Allah. We have this guidance today in the form of Quran and Quran is very clear on such issues which it calls *muhkamat* i.e. clear and firm in meaning (3:7). We have to obtain guidance strictly on Quranic grounds and not interpret them in arbitrary manner to fulfil our worldly desires. This is how the Quran is unfortunately being interpreted by those who invoke it for waging 'jihad and courting martyrdom.

Thus we should not only bear the context in which the Quranic *ahkamat* (injunctions) were revealed but also apply them with great sense of responsibility so that arbitrary interpretation should not bring harm to anyone. Today's context should be borne in mind while applying these injunctions. Since the key Quranic values are justice ('adl), benevolence (ihsan), compassion (rahmah) and wisdom (hikmah) any interpretation should not injure these values. Any arbitrary use of violence will greatly

harm these values and needless to say killing innocent people through suicide bombing does injure these values. Such killings are against justice, benevolence, compassion and wisdom. We should not mechanically invoke the verses on use of violence in the Quran or on concept of martyrdom to justify what results in gross violation of these values. If one carefully considers Quranic injunctions it is permissible to use violence for defence but never for revenge and all terrorist killings are either for revenge or for terrorising others. A violence, which terrorises cannot be *jihad fi sabilillah* (war in the way of Allah). All terrorist killings are totally in violation of the Quranic spirit. The young people who are induced to become human bombs are often lured through the concept of martyrdom - i.e. if they die for the 'cause of Allah, they will go to paradise as mentioned in the Quran. This appears to be a very attractive proposition for them and they easily accepted the self-destructive assignment. As pointed out above such death is destruction (*halakah*) rather than martyrdom. What is martyrdom and how to define it? A martyr is one who dies in a just war, a war which is fought in defence of human lives and in defence of *deen of Allah*. All

the wars fought during the Prophet's time were the wars fought for these purposes and it is the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) who himself decided to fight these wars in consultation with his important companions. As far as these wars or battles were concerned neither there was any trace of personal revenge or anger or

destruction of any innocent life. Only the combatants were killed. Also, such wars were not motivated by any political considerations. They were motivated only by defence of *deen* (religion) and defence of values Islam stood for.

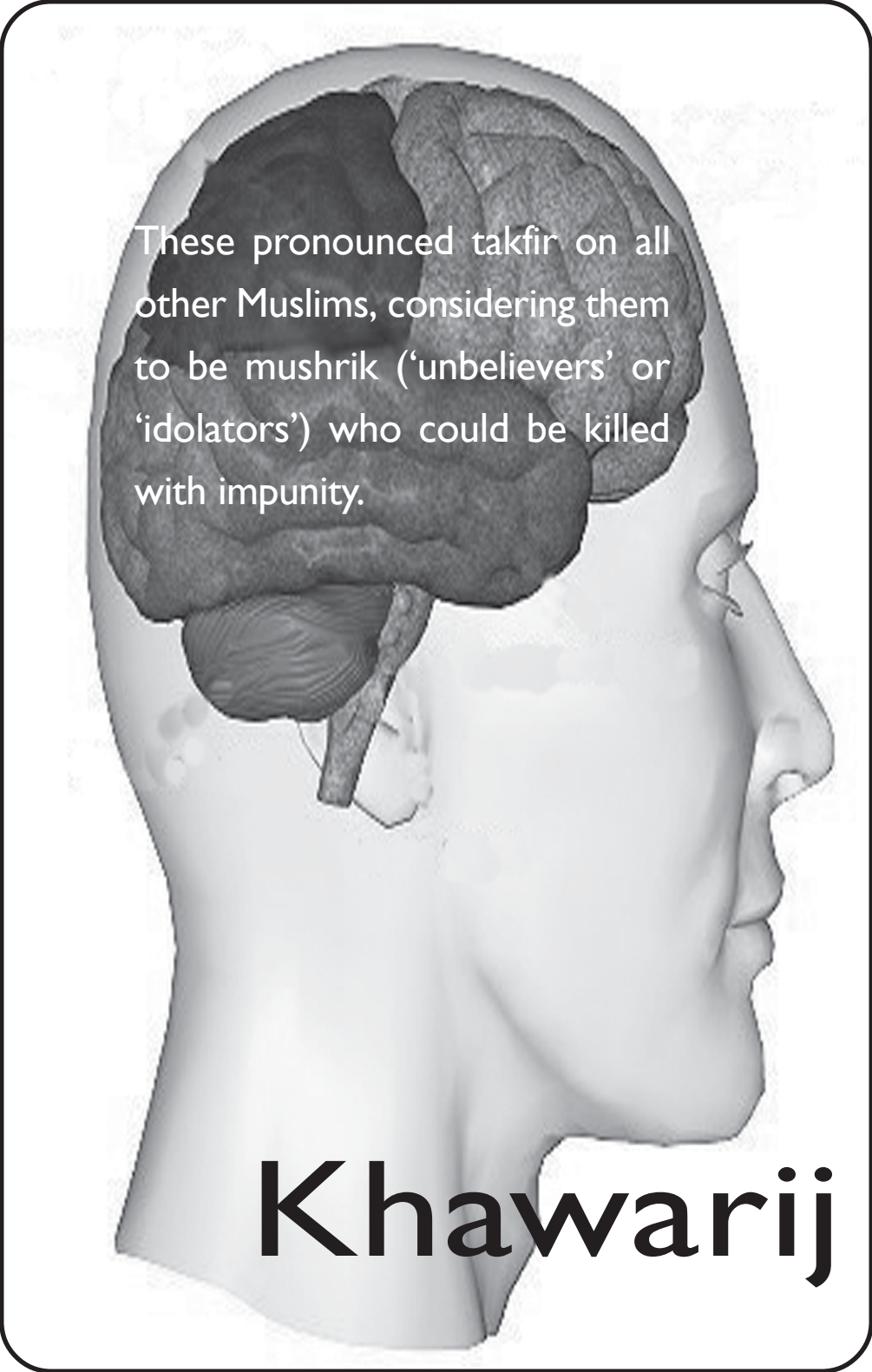
Thus it is necessary to define the concept of martyrdom rigorously. All violent deaths or deaths courted in any attack cannot be termed as martyrdom. The Muslims in those days were highly oppressed and defenceless community. In Mecca they silently bore all conceivable persecution. When the Prophet (PBUH) migrated to Madina along with his companions who slowly joined him there, were not left in peace. The Meccan leaders of unbelievers attacked them and it was in those circumstances that the Prophet (PBUH) took decision to defend innocent lives and the Quran described those killed in these battles as *shuhadah* (Martyrs) and observed that "And speak not of those who are slain in Allah's way as dead. Nay, (they are) alive, but you perceive not." (2:154)

Thus those who die in Allah's way never die but are ever alive. Their bodies die but their spirits remain ever alive. A suicide bomber perceives he is dying for a cause but even if it is true he is killing innocent people who are non-combatant and are not responsible for persecution or exploitation. In many cases those killed are themselves victims of the system rather than running the system. Those who order these young men to become suicide bombers themselves are not struggling for a cause but responding to political games. Islam stresses *haq* and *sabr* i.e. truth and patience (as well as persistence) and only those who die for these are entitled to be called martyr.

Seen in this light suicide bomber may not be entitled to be called a martyr. It is the prime duty of every Muslim to see that no innocent life is harmed and what can be achieved through peace (*salam*) should never be sought to be achieved through war. War should be the last weapon of a *mu'min* (a true believer) and what can be achieved through peaceful struggle should never be achieved through violent means. A martyr is one who dies rather than kills.

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These pronounced takfir on all other Muslims, considering them to be mushrik ('unbelievers' or 'idolators') who could be killed with impunity.

Khawarij

Kharijites (Arabic Khawarij) is a general term embracing a variety of Islamic sects which reject the caliphate of Ali as invalid. They first emerged in the late 7th century AD, concentrated in today's southern Iraq, and are distinct from the Sunni and Shiites. The only surviving Kharijite sect is Ibadism, concentrated principally in Oman.

Origin

The origin of Kharijism lies in the first Islamic civil war: a struggle for political supremacy over the Muslim community in the years following the death of Muhammad.

The third Caliph, Uthman ibn Affan, was killed by mutineers in 656 AD, and a struggle for succession ensued between Ali, the cousin and son-in-law of Muhammad, and Muawiya, governor of Damascus. (The core of Ali's followers later became Shiites.)

In 658, Ali's forces met Muawiya's at the Battle of Siffin; at first, the battle went against Muawiya, but then he hit upon the idea of having his army hoist Qurans on their lances, proclaiming that he wanted to have the decision of who should be caliph arbitrated using it.

Most of Ali's army was favorable to the idea, and he agreed to have the question decided by two arbiters. Some in his army, however, regarded this as a betrayal; a large group of them (traditionally 12,000, mainly from the Banu Tamim tribe) repudiated his cause, leaving to fight both sides. They became known as Kharijites (in Arabic Khawârij, singular Khârijî, meaning 'those that seceded'). In their opinion, the right of arbitration was God's alone, and the choice of caliph should not be questioned by mere mortals. Thus they opposed both Muawiya, for his rebellion, and Ali, for submitting to the arbitration. This belief they based on the following verse of the Quran:

If two parties among the Believers fall into a quarrel, make ye peace between them: but if one of them transgresses beyond bounds against the other, then fight ye (all) against the one that transgresses until it complies with the command of Allah; but if it complies, then make peace between them with justice, and be fair: for Allah loves those who are fair (and just).

—Quran 49:9 (Yusuf Ali's translation)

Abdullah ibn Abbas managed to persuade a large number of them to return to Ali. Ali defeated the remaining military rebellion in the battle of Naharwan in 658, but the Kharijites

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survived and, in 661, assassinated Ali. They had supposedly organized simultaneous attempts against Muawiya and 'Amrû (one of the arbitrators at Siffin), in their view the other main sources of strife within the Muslim community, but the credibility of this story is uncertain.

Beliefs and Practices

Kharijite theology was a form of radical fundamentalism, preaching uncompromising observance of the teachings of the Quran in defiance of corrupt authorities. They preached absolute equality of the faithful, in opposition to the aristocracy of the Quraish which had grown more pronounced under the Umayyads. **They spread by violent jihad (the sixth pillar of Islam to some) their radical anti-authoritarian ideals:** only the most pious should be caliph, they believed, even if he were an Abyssinian slave (the lowest social class of the era). For some a caliph was not even necessary; they insisted only that if one were chosen, he should be elected by the entire community of believers. Their communities expelled from their midst those who committed 'grave sins', defined as any action contrary to the Quran.





Perhaps not surprisingly, the various Kharijite communities were constantly divided (sources enumerate up to fifteen separate sects) and the movement remained politically fragmented throughout its existence.

The Kharijites' relations with other Muslims were generally hostile, though this tendency waned with time. The most extreme were the Azraqis, founded in Persia in 685 by Nâfi' Ben Al-Azraq. **These pronounced takfir on all other Muslims, considering them to be mushrik ('unbelievers' or 'idolators') who could be killed with impunity.** Their distinctive and terrifying practices included:

- A test of sincerity required of each new recruit, in which the neophyte was required to cut the throat of a captive enemy.
- Religious murder not only of men, but also of their wives and children

They regarded the territory occupied by other Muslims as part of Dar al-Kufr, the territory of unbelief where it was licit to attack both people and goods—but also a territory from which one must exile oneself, as Muhammad had exiled himself from Mecca to escape the unbelievers there.

Less brutal was the Sufri sect, founded by Ziyâd Ben Al-Asfar in an environment hostile to Kharijism. These condemned political murder, admitted the practice of taqiyya (dissimulation of one's faith in order to escape danger), and rejected the massacre of the unbelievers' children. They considered Sura 12 to be not truly part of the Quran.

A third sect, the Ibadis, developed further than the others. Founded by 'Abd Allah Ben Ibâd, they maintained attitudes of political intransigence and moral rigorism. They were, however, more flexible in their dealings with other Muslims; for example, they would not attack without first extending an invitation to join.

The branch founded by Chabib Ben Yazid Al-Harûri held that it was permissible to entrust the imamate to a woman if she was able to carry out the required duties. The founder's wife, Ghazala Al-Harûriya, commanded troops; in this she followed the example of Juwayriya, the daughter of Abu Sufyan, at the battle of Yarmuk. In one battle, she put the famous Ummayyad general Al-Hajjâj Ben Yûsuf to flight.

Three of the main Kharijite sects were named by color: the "white" Ibadis, the "blue" Azraqis, and the "yellow" Sufris. However, this is probably a coincidence, as they are said to be named after their respective founders.

History

The high point of the Kharijites' influence was in the years 690 to 730, when their main city, Basra, became a center of Islamic theology. Kharijite ideology was a popular creed for rebels against the officially Sunni Caliphate, inspiring breakaway states and rebellions (like Maysara's) throughout the Maghreb and sometimes elsewhere.

The Azraqis revolted against the caliphate in 685, after separating from the Ibadis at Basra and departing for Fars. They were suppressed by Abd al-Malik's armies, under the command of the emir al-Hajjaj; their leader was killed, and by 699 they had vanished. Another revolt occurred in 695; Sunni traditions underline the massacre of Muslims at a mosque in Kufa as an example of Kharijite fury and brutality. Agitations such as these fatally weakened the Ummayyad caliphate and paved the way for its overthrow by the Abbasids.

From the beginning of the Arab conquest of the Maghreb, the Kharijites sent representatives to join the local Berber population. The Berbers, used to a communal system of government and opposed to Arab domination, found in Kharijism an ideological framework for rebellion. In the last years of the Umayyad dynasty, the western part of the Islamic empire escaped from the central authority; Spain came under the rule of the Umayyad emirs of Cordoba, while several independent states were founded in the Maghreb.

A Sufri community from southern Tunisia captured Kairouan in 755, at the price of fearful massacres. The Ibadis of Djebel Nafusa, outraged by the excesses of their rival sect, took the city and wiped out its Sufri population. They

proclaimed an imamate c. 757, founding a state which would cover parts of Tripolitania and Ifriqiya before it was conquered by Abbasid armies in 761. Among the leaders of this state was Abd ar-Rahman ibn Rustam, a Persian convert who would later found the Rustamid dynasty at Tahert.

Around the same time, a Sufri kingdom was founded in Tlemcen (western Algeria). Berber Sufris from the tribe of Meknasa established the Midrarid state at Sijilmassa on the eastern slope of the Atlas Mountains in Morocco. Abû Qurra, a Sufri of the Ifren tribe of Tlemcen, reconquered Ifriqiya from the Arabs in 771.

The region stabilized in 778, when ibn Rustam made a peace treaty with the Abbasid governor of Kairouan, and remained so until the arrival of the Fatimids in 909.

Modern times

The Ibadis have survived into the present day, though they now reject the designation "Kharijite". They form a significant part of the population of Oman (where they first settled in 686), and there are smaller concentrations of them in the Mzab of Algeria, Jerba in Tunisia, Djebel Nafusa in Libya, and Zanzibar.

In modern times, Islamist writers have sometimes branded terrorist groups which emphasize the practice of takfir as neo-Kharijites; notable examples of groups described as such include the Groupe Islamique Armée of Algeria and the Takfir wal-Hijra group of Egypt.



Extraction from

Amman Declaration :

27 - 29 1 Jumada 1426H./4-6 Tammuz (July)2005 C.E

“True Islam and its Role in Modern Society”

In accordance with the fatwas issued by the Honourable and Respectable Grand Imam Shaykh al-Azhar, the Grand Ayatollah Al-Sayyid Ali Al-Sistani, the Honourable and Respectable Grand Mufti of Egypt, the Honourable and Respectable Shi'i clerics (both Ja'fari and Zaydi), the Honourable and Respectable Grand Mufti of the Sultanate of Oman, the Islamic Fiqh Academy in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Grand Council for Religious Affairs of Turkey, the Honourable and Respectable Grand Mufti of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the Respectable Members of its National Fatwa Committee, and the Honourable and Respectable Shaykh Dr. Yusuf Al-Qaradawi;

And in accordance with what was mentioned in the speech of His Hashemite Majesty King Abdullah II bin Al-Hussein, King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan during the opening session of our conference;

And in accordance with our own knowledge in sincerity to Allah the Bounteous;

And in accordance with what was presented in this our conference by way of research papers and studies, and by way of the discussions that transpired in it;

We, the undersigned, hereby express our approval and affirmation of what appears below:

1) Whosoever is an adherent of one of the four Sunni Schools of Jurisprudence (Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i and Hanbali), the Ja'fari (Shi'i)

“The believers are naught else than brothers. Therefore make peace between your brethren and observe your duty to Allah that haply ye may obtain mercy.”
(Al-Hujurat, 49:10)

School of Jurisprudence, the Zaydi School of Jurisprudence, the Ibadi School of Jurisprudence, or the Thahiri School of Jurisprudence is a Muslim. Declaring that person an apostate is impossible. Verily his (or her) blood, honour, and property are sacrosanct. Moreover, in accordance with what appeared in the fatwa of the Honourable and Respectable Shaykh al-Azhar, it is not possible to declare whosoever subscribes to the Ash'ari creed or whoever practices true Sufism an apostate. Likewise, it is not possible to declare whosoever subscribes to true Salafi thought an apostate. Equally, it is not possible to declare as apostates any group of Muslims who believes in Allah the Mighty and Sublime and His Messenger (may Peace and Blessings be upon him) and the pillars of faith, and respects the pillars of Islam and does not deny any necessary article of religion.

2) There exists more in common between the various Schools of Jurisprudence than there is difference. The adherents to the eight Schools of Jurisprudence are in agreement as regards the basic Islamic principles. All believe in Allah the Mighty and Sublime, the One and the Unique; that the Noble Quran is the Revealed Word of Allah; and that our master Muhammad, may Blessings and Peace be upon him, is a Prophet and Messenger unto all mankind. All are in agreement about the five pillars of Islam: the two testaments of faith (shahadatayn), the ritual prayer (salat), almsgiving (zakat), fasting the month of Ramadan (sawm), and the Hajj to the Sacred House of Allah. All are also in agreement about the foundations of belief: belief in Allah, His Angels, His Scriptures, His Messengers, and in the Day of Judgement, in Divine providence — good and evil. Disagreement between the 'ulama' is only with respect to the ancillary branches of religion

(furu') and not the principles and fundamentals (usul). Disagreement with respect to the ancillary branches of religion (furu') is a mercy. Long ago it was said that variance in opinion among 'ulama' "is a good affair".

3) Acknowledgement of the Schools of Jurisprudence within Islam means adhering to a fundamental methodology in the issuance of fatwas. No one may issue a fatwa without the requisite personal qualifications which each School of Jurisprudence defines. No one may issue a fatwa without adhering to the methodology of the Schools of Jurisprudence. No one may claim to do absolute Ijtihad and create a new School of Jurisprudence or to issue unacceptable fatwas that take Muslims out of the principles and certainties of the Shari'ah and what has been established in respect of its Schools of Jurisprudence.

4) The essence of the Amman Message, which was issued on the Blessed Night of Power in the year 1425 H. and which was read aloud in Masjid al-Hashimiyyin, is adherence to the Schools of Jurisprudence and their fundamental methodology. Acknowledging the Schools of Jurisprudence and affirming discussion and engagement between them ensures fairness, moderation, mutual forgiveness, compassion, and engaging in dialogue with others.

5) We call for casting aside disagreement between Muslims and unifying their words and stances; reaffirming their mutual respect for each other; fortifying mutual affinity among their peoples and states; strengthening the ties of brotherhood which unite them in the mutual love of Allah.

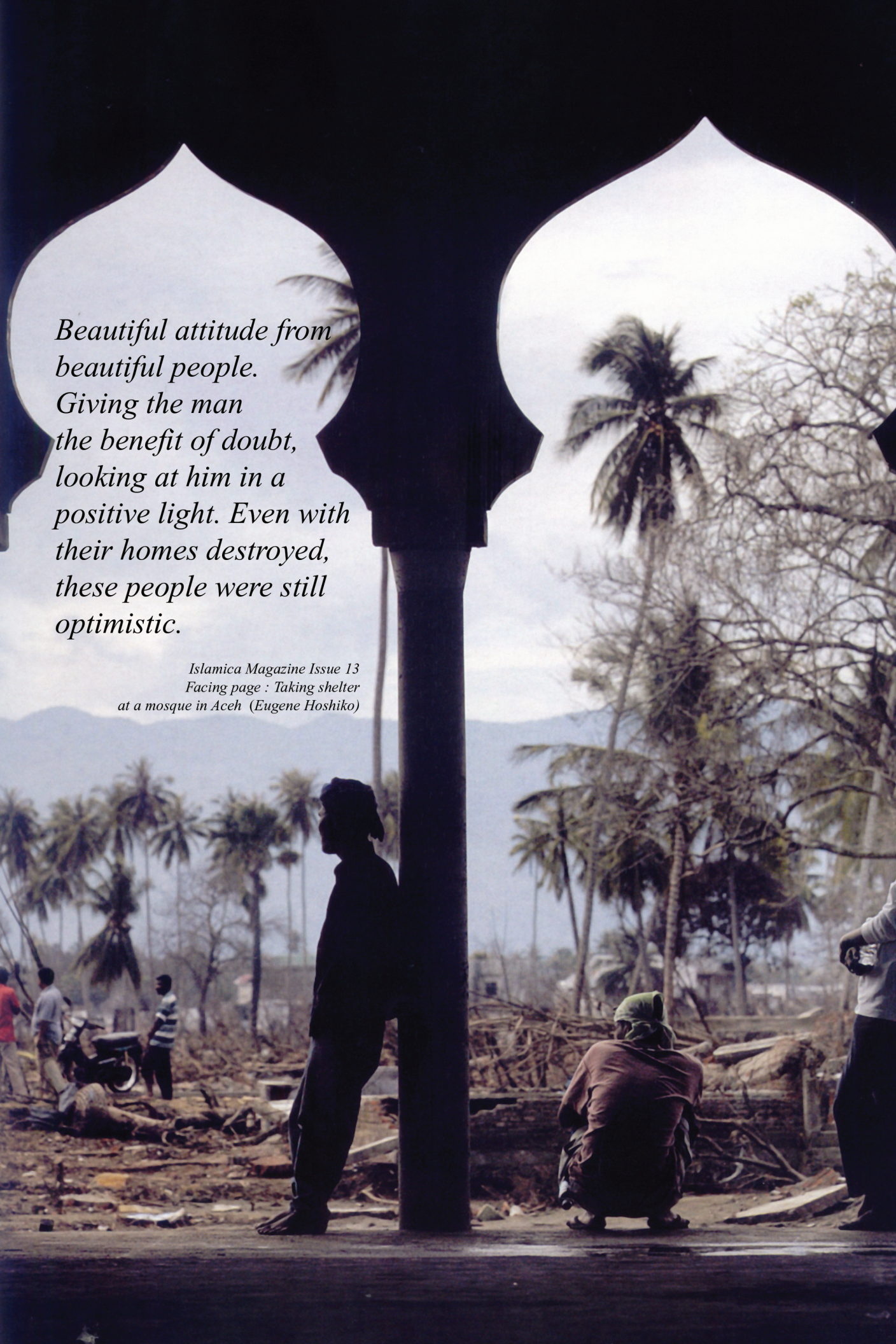
And we call upon Muslims to not permit discord and outside interference between them. Allah the Sublime says:

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ أَخَوَيْكُمْ
وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ

“The believers are naught else than brothers. Therefore make peace between your brethren and observe your duty to Allah that haply ye may obtain mercy.” (Al-Hujurat, 49:10)


Praise be to Allah alone.

*Extraction from Amman Declaration : Statement issued by the International Islamic Conference held in Amman, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

A photograph of a mosque in Aceh, Indonesia, with people in the foreground and a destroyed landscape in the background. The mosque's arches are prominent in the foreground, framing the scene. In the background, there are palm trees and a landscape that appears to be the aftermath of a disaster, with debris and damaged structures visible. The sky is overcast.

*Beautiful attitude from
beautiful people.
Giving the man
the benefit of doubt,
looking at him in a
positive light. Even with
their homes destroyed,
these people were still
optimistic.*

*Islamica Magazine Issue 13
Facing page : Taking shelter
at a mosque in Aceh (Eugene Hoshiko)*

A person wearing a white garment is kneeling in prayer on a patterned rug. In front of them, an open book with Arabic text is visible. The scene is dimly lit, with a blueish tint. The text is overlaid on the upper left portion of the image.

Islam is religious of peace. In its literal meaning itself, there is a message of peace in Islam.

God carries the name of the Most Peaceful (As Salam). A religion based on the message of peace can never attract acts of terrorism in it. Terrorism is an embodiment of fanaticism and extremist coupled with violence. There is no place for Islam to harbour terrorist's beliefs and ideologies.

The peaceful spirit of Islam can never condone acts of terrorism.....