

The Terrorism Industry”: An Al-Qaeda Course in Security and Intelligence Part Four

Part Four

This is the fourth segment in the series “The Terrorism Industry” by Sheikh Abu Ubaydah Abdallah al-Adam, who was until his death a prominent leader of Al-Qaeda responsible for its intelligence and security operations. The series was published by the Al-Fajr Media Institution, which is responsible for disseminating the written, audio and visual materials of Al-Qaeda and its affiliates.

Continuation –General Security Principles; Ways of Breaching [the Group]

The Eighth Principle: Do not be a Prisoner of Routine

Most people become accustomed to fixed behavior patterns during the course of their lives in terms of clothing, food, travel and other areas in which one carries out set behaviors without even noticing. A jihad fighter following God’s path must rid himself of such habits and avoid adopting fixed behavior patterns, such as patronizing the same coffee shop or traveling a set route to work, since routine is a fighter’s worst enemy and is liable to put him at risk. Intelligence agencies often use fighters’ routine behaviors and weak points to gain access to them and cause them harm. Therefore, it is important to frequently change one’s habits. Intelligence agencies even try to recruit people who are close to jihad fighters in order to study their habits, and then use the information to attack them and extract information during their interrogations.

These are the eight fundamental security principles.

National Security

The term “national security” refers to a country’s security outside of its borders and the protection of its interests throughout the world. Countries such as the United States have many interests all over the world, and in order to protect those interests they stockpile large arsenals that enable them to wage wars far from their borders. For organizations and groups, the term “national security” refers to the red lines that the enemy cannot cross without having to bear a difficult and painful response. For example, one possible red line is the assassination of a senior leader in a group, which would elicit a severe response against the assassin state. Red lines such as these are crucial to an organization’s success, as can be seen in the case of Hamas: When Israel assassinated Ahmed Yassin, the founder of Hamas, everyone expected an act of revenge, which did not happen, and so Israel went on to assassinate Abd al-Aziz al-Rantissi, Yassin’s deputy. Had Hamas responded harshly following Yassin’s assassination, Israel would have understood that it had crossed a red line.

International Institute for Counter Terrorism (ICT)

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The national security of any country is composed of several government offices and security agencies whose job it is to protect the country. This includes a country's armed forces such as the army, whose main purpose is to defend the country from external threats but in Arab states the army also serves to protect the regime from citizens who want to replace it. Another armed group is the police force, which serves to protect the country from internal threats.

Intelligence – Types and Functions

Intelligence is divided into several types:

- Military Intelligence - Reports to the Ministry of Defense, and is designed to protect the military and its secrets from espionage.
- National Security Intelligence – Reports to the Ministry of Interior, and is designed to protect the government from internal uprising and opposition.
- External Intelligence – Reports to the Prime Minister, and is designed to gather information and spy outside of the country's borders. Examples of external intelligence agencies are the Israeli Mossad, the Pakistani ISI, the American CIA, the British M16, the former Russian KGB and the former Iranian SAVAK.

Intelligence agencies have several "stations" throughout the world, where agency commanders are stationed and from where they run an undercover network of spies that prevents the local government from identifying them. In addition, many countries make use of their embassies around the world to spy on foreign countries. Intelligence agencies also utilize economic projects, such as the establishment of schools or hospitals in an Arab country, to gather information about the mujahideen in that country.

News agencies and newspapers collaborate with intelligence agencies. For example, the British BBC news agency reports to the British Foreign Ministry and openly collaborates with British intelligence agencies. Another example is the American journalist who interviewed Sheikh Osama bin Laden at the end of the 1990's and was appointed Deputy Director of the FBI several years later, when it became clear that his role as a journalist had only been a cover for his activities as an FBI agent.

When intelligence agencies recruit spies, they do not recruit just anyone but rather they choose their spies carefully. Political prisoners, especially those who were arrested for the first time, are suitable for recruitment because they are able to remain in their organizations and collect information for the intelligence agency. In addition, many criminals become spies who collect information on behalf of the government, which in exchange turns a blind eye to their crimes. Intelligence agencies also recruit certain professionals who, in the framework of their jobs, can gather useful information, such as taxi drivers, restaurant owners and store owners; in certain countries even schoolteachers are recruited as spies in order to gather information on

opponents of the regime via their children.

Personal Security

Every group needs an internal security mechanism in order to protect the security of its members as well as the secrets of the group. This is necessary because countries are always trying to gather information about jihadist groups in two ways: by planting a spy within the group or recruiting a spy from among the group's ranks, and by spying on organizational activities via secret searches and information gathering using advanced and covert methods. The enemy tracks members of the group, conducts searches in their homes, interrogates prisoners who have connections to the group, and sometimes even openly spies on a person known to be a jihad activist.

In order to avoid being tracked by the enemy, the group must conceal the identity of its members and take preventative measures against espionage – organizational and personal security. Remember that war against intelligence agencies is a “war of the minds” and it is important to closely examine the background of each and every person who is recruited to the group's ranks in order to guarantee that he is not a potential spy.

ABOUT THE ICT

Founded in 1996, the International Institute for Counter-Terrorism (ICT) is one of the leading academic institutes for counter-terrorism in the world, facilitating international cooperation in the global struggle against terrorism. ICT is an independent think tank providing expertise in terrorism, counter-terrorism, homeland security, threat vulnerability and risk assessment, intelligence analysis and national security and defense policy. ICT is a non-profit organization located at the Interdisciplinary Center (IDC), Herzliya, Israel which relies exclusively on private donations and revenue from events, projects and programs.

ABOUT THE JIHADI MONITORING GROUP

The Jihadi Websites Monitoring Group (JWMG) is a specialized research and analysis team at the International Institute for Counter-Terrorism (ICT). Composed of researchers fluent in Arabic, the JWMG monitors websites that support and serve the Global Jihad organizations. The unique characteristic of JWMG publications is the team's integration of diverse materials from a wide variety of Arabic sources. JWMG connects each source to larger trends, providing a complete understanding of events on both a local and a global scale.

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