Can the violent *jihad* do without sympathizers?

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Summary

According to some terrorist fighters and academicians, the constituencies of Muslim extremists are vital to the persistence of the jihad. I have established that although sympathizers are indispensable for recruiting and sponsoring, they are less crucial for making foreign journeys, generating revenues, and communication. This is not only so because sympathizers refuse to help because of fear of retaliation, but also because it is unnecessary, impossible, or unfavorable for extremists to recourse to their constituencies. Therefore, sympathizers may be important for the persistence of the jihad, yet their role is not self-evident.

Introduction

Several terrorist fighters are convinced that Muslim extremism cannot do without Islamic communities tacitly or openly approving of the violent jihad. Recently an employee of the German intelligence service expressed this view as a result of the arrest of fifteen extremists who would belong to a network that was concentrated in Ulm and Neu Ulm and that would have been occupied with recruiting, counterfeiting passports, and fundraising. According to him Muslim communities had withhold certain activities from the authorities and had even actively supported some of these activities. There are also academicians who emphasize the importance of sympathizers in relation to the violent jihad. For instance, Benjamin Barber,

author of 'Jihad vs. McWorld', remarked in an interview that: 'The problem is not terrorists. There are only a few crazy terrorists. The problem is a large number of people who are not terrorists but who look the other way or support the terrorists'. Roberta Senechal de la Roche has argued that support of third parties is a necessary precondition of all kinds of terrorism, hence not only of violence committed in the name of jihad. Collective violence could not surpass the level of impulsive, incidental outbursts without this support of third parties.

These policy makers and academicians implicitly assume that intergroup struggle is a sufficient condition for group participation in violent conflict. According to Roger V. Gould most sociological explanations of group conflict are based on this presupposition. However, one can wonder whether that is justified in case of the jihad. After all, it is imaginable that sympathizers are backed down from actively supporting the preparation of the jihad because of fear of retribution. Especially in a time when Muslims run the risk of being considered a potential terrorist on the basis of a shared faith only, this fear could deter them from aiding extremists with the preparation of violence.

Therefore the assumption that sympathizers are prepared to transform their support of the jihad into concrete aid might prove problematic. This raises the question whether the constituencies of Muslim extremists really play an indispensable role in the preparation of the violence committed in name of the jihad. Moreover, if sympathizers do not play a decisive role in certain respects, is this because they are not prepared to transform their support of the jihad into action or are there other reasons responsible for this? The role of sympathizers was ascertained with respect to three preparatory activities that always precede terrorism, yet do not necessarily end up in it. The activities consist of nesting – placing extremists in countries of destination –, financing, and communication. The analysis was restricted to the activities of terrorist networks that have committed themselves to a global struggle between 'pure' Muslims and infidels and that are operational in Europe and North America. Networks that

had originally been committed to local political-religious conflicts in Arabic countries yet had subsequently become active in western countries for this global battle were counted among this category as well.⁵ Among the most important representatives of these global jihadist networks are Al-Qaeda, Ansar al-Islam, the Algerian Groupe Islamique Armé (GIA), and the Takfir wal Hijra movement.

Interviews and public publications like papers, (official) reports, newspaper articles, and scientific publications were used to answer the central questions. The interviews were held between Mai and July 2004 with eight professionals who had recently been involved in counterterrorism in the Netherlands. Respondents were asked open questions concerning Dutch criminal cases on the violent jihad they had been involved with directly or indirectly. The questions referred to how defendants had gained entrance to the Netherlands, how they managed to stay, how they generated income, and how they communicated. With respect to each of these strategies questions were posed on whether, and if so, how they resorted to governmental agencies, kin, sympathizers, and criminal organizations.

The next section deals with the theory on the role of constituencies in group conflict.

The following section presents the data analysis. Conclusions are drawn in the final section.

Solidarity and supporting terrorism

Senchal de la Roche has founded her argument that sympathizers are vital for terrorism on Donald Black's 'geometry of terrorism' theory.⁸

Black conceives terrorism as a specific kind of social control; aimed at the correction of deviance. In case of terrorism social control would be carried out by way of 'self-help'. He defines self-help as 'the expression of a grievance by unilateral aggression'. ⁹ Usually self-

help is related to societies in which individuals depend on themselves in conflicts because the state has no monopoly on the execution of violence. However, according to Black, self-help is also present in areas were it is difficult for civilians to resort to the authorities. Terrorism would refer to a specific kind of self-help: 'pure terrorism is self-help by organized civilians who covertly inflict mass violence on other civilians'. ¹⁰ In short, terrorism is about structural violence employed to more or less randomly chosen opponents by civilians who organize themselves in secret. This means that terrorism can be distinguished from smaller scale types of violence like feuding and from collective forms of violence with a more impulsive, incidental, or overtly character like riots, lynchings, and vigilantism.

Black states that terrorism can only occur when there exists a large social distance between an aggrieved group and a group that is blamed for it, while the physical distance between both groups is small. The social distance can cover different dimensions: cultural – for example with respect to differences in language, philosophy of life, and ethnicity; relational – for example the amount of mutual contacts, friendships, and marriages – and hierarchical – for example the differences in power and status. Social distance sets off a clear image of an enemy and reduces the threshold to victimize as many random victims as possible among the enemy, while the physical vicinity offers the occasion to make these victims.

According to Senechal de la Roche a large social distance between parties does indeed explain why conflicts are fought out violently instead of peacefully, 12 but not why the violence is applied recurrently and well-organized instead of incidentally and unorganized. 13 She ascribes latter to the social distance within and among third parties. Violence could only surpass the incidental and unorganized character when third parties are involved in a conflict that are very partisan, in the sense that they clearly choose one side. There is question of 'strong partisanship' when third parties support one party against the other and are solidary among themselves. Mutually solidarity especially occurs when the social distance between

parties is small, which means: participating actively in each other's lives and being culturally homogenous and interdependent. Maximal partisanship occurs when all parties involved are polarized: two sides of homogeneous groups that are at great social distance of each other. Polarization generates a 'gravitating' force attracting newcomers indirectly to one of both sides.

The violence committed in the name of the jihad is also recurrent and well-organized. The global list of insurgencies expands further everyday. These attacks are often preceded by long and profound preparations and involve extremists who contacted people in different countries. So, if Senechal de la Roche is right than third parties sympathizing with the jihad ought to play an indispensable role in the jihad. However, is this true? Are the constituencies of the jihad willing to actively support the preparation of insurgencies committed in the name of the jihad?

As mentioned before, Roger V. Gould argues that sociological theories on collective violence like those of Black and Senechal de la Roche assume too easily that solidarity automatically implies preparedness of individuals to actively contribute to collective violence. However, sympathizers can also decide not to contribute on the basis of their awareness that they can be avenged for it personally: 'Any confrontation between collections of people — whether the boundary dividing them is one of class, ethnicity, neighborhood, clan, race, gender, or religion — involves the possibility that group action will not occur because behavior is dominated by individualistic motives'. His research on feuding in nineteenth century Corsica has indeed ascertained two factors restricting the willingness of individuals to participate in collective violence on behalf of their reference group.

First, conflicts stemming from group contention were less often resolved violently than conflicts originating from one-on-one contention because the antagonists took into account the possibility that the violence would escalate. After all, group contention implied that

opponents were part of a group that could be mobilized to strike back. ¹⁶ Moreover, it occurred that kin of the perpetrators were seldom victimized when they did not contribute to the violence themselves or helped to escape the culprit. According to Gould this meant that 'avengers did not randomly choose from the offender's kin group, but rather targeted kin who declined to distance themselves from the offender or his action. Far from treating the solidarity of the rival groups as given, then, vendettas of this sort were sanctions *against* solidarity. ¹⁷ This mechanism would deter individuals to manifest solidarity with their kin: 'When retaliation is conditional on demonstrations of solidarity, a potential aggressor is disciplined ex ante by the knowledge that drawing on allies will provoke retaliation by the victim's allies, and an aggressor's allies know ex post that they are not potential targets for retaliation as long as they have refrained from helping the others'. ¹⁸

On the one hand Gould argues that his findings with respect to avenging on Corsica in the nineteenth century can not automatically be generalized to other historical and geographical contexts, but on the other hand he does not rule this out beforehand either. Indeed it is imaginable that both factors that deterred Corsicans from helping kin in case of conflicts, also restrain the constituencies of the jihad to support the preparation of terrorism.

Muslim extremists fight powerful leaders in western and Arabic countries and choose their victims because of general characteristics ascribed to the enemy (e.g., nationality, religion, or ethnicity) rather than because of wrongful conduct by specific individuals. This 'logic of collective liability' entails that a large group considers itself a potential victim of the jihad and, consequently, perceives a common interest to fight it. ¹⁹ The Establishment is motivated to take the initiative to counter the jihad because terrorism undermines their authority and because civilians hold the authorities responsible for the protection of their security. This means that sympathizers might fear the retaliation of a large group of powerful opponents when they actively support the preparation of the jihad. This can deter them from actually giving it. At

the same time it is difficult for counter terrorists to determine who belongs to the enemy. On Corsica solidarity was based primarily on kin relationships that were publicly known, ²⁰ while with respect to the jihad solidarity is based on shared faith that is much more difficult to objectify. As a result, Muslims can easily be accused falsely of contributing to the preparation of the jihad. This is more likely to happen, as the threat of insurgencies is perceived as more real. The awareness that the slightest hint can be enough to become a suspect of supporting the jihad can be yet another deterrent.

In sum, it is imaginable that individual interests prevent sympathizers from playing the decisive role in the preparation of the jihad that is assumed by Senechal de la Roche's theory on collective violence. In the next section we will analyze the role of sympathizers with respect to three preparatory activities: nesting, financing, and communication.

Nesting

Muslim extremists apply two strategies in order to nest in countries of destination. Their first strategy is to recruit people inside countries of destination. Their second one is to secure entrance to and residence in those countries. Combinations of both strategies also occur. This is so when recruiters or potential recruits attempt to get entrance to or stay in countries of destination. Both strategies will be discussed separately.

Recruiting

Extremists are being recruited in western countries. They often own the nationality of the country of destination. Therefore they attract less attention than insurgents that enter from Islamic countries or conflict areas do.²¹ Sympathy for violent goals does not have to be the

only or even main reason for new recruits to become active. Other possible reasons are the wish to belong to a group, to gain power and esteem, or to experience adventure and distraction.²² However, sympathy is of course an important breeding ground for recruitment.

Recruiters are often former jihadists.²³ They enjoy standing among radicals because they have actively contributed to the holy war. Recruiting begins in Islamic centers, coffee shops, asylum seeker centers, salafist mosques, or prisons.²⁴ Especially latter two locations are used as a starting point for recruitment. The chances are high that recruiters track potential recruits in salafist mosques²⁵ because moderate Muslims deliberately evade them.²⁶ Prisons are a hot spot for other reasons. In there, recruiters have ample time to promote an alternative lifestyle to criminals who often feel rejected by society and who posses knowledge, contacts, and capabilities that can come in handy for the preparation and execution of attacks.²⁷

Especially radical Muslims who can easily be isolated from their social environment are receptive to recruitment. According to the AIVD this concerns three categories in particular. The first category consists of autochthonous westerners who converted to Islam. They are inclined to cut through all ties with people they were engaged with before their conversion while they are not yet deeply embedded in the Islamic community. The second category consists of radical Muslims who have recently immigrated. They are usually single men who have abandoned their families in their country of origin. Their contacts with the country of origin have weakened, while they have not yet established a broad social network in the country of residence. The so-called Hamburg cell, that has played a lead role in the September 11 attacks, is illustrative of this category. This cell consisted of a group of foreign students that had gradually discontinued contacts with their families in their countries of origin. The last category consists of young second or third generation migrants originating from North Africa. They maintain fewer ties with the country of origin than their parents do,

while their contacts with the autochthonous population are often limited. They are especially likely to become potential recruits when they are marginalized even further after a crisis like an addiction, a detention, or the death of a significant other.³¹ For example, former professional football player Nizar Trabelsi was an alcoholic and a drug addict before he became involved in the preparation of an attack on the American Embassy in Paris or an American army basis in Belgium,³² and the process of radicalization of Mohammed B, the suspected assassin of Dutch filmmaker Theo van Gogh, is supposed to have accelerated after the death of his mother.³³

Recruiters attempt to isolate potential jihadists further by persuading them to visit private assemblies in places like living rooms. In there they communally pray and watch videos of radical imams, insurgencies, and Muslims victims of violence. In addition they visit propagandistic websites and chat groups. Subsequently, they are prepared for the holy war by making religious educational trips and visiting training camps. For example, in the Netherlands the convict Radoin Daoud housed illegal Muslims, organized radical sermons, showed jihadist videos, and made cassette tapes of people exalting to be prepared to die as a martyr. He bonded with these illegal immigrants by providing them identity papers (interview).

In short, sympathizers are indeed essential for successful recruitment for the violent jihad. They are particularly inclined to focus increasingly on the violent jihad and to avoid presumed dissenters as much as possible. Radical imams and sheiks that encourage the violent jihad contribute to this radicalization process.

Entrance and residence

Extremists who exclusively operate in their own country are certainly not the only ones who are involved in the violent jihad. This kind of terrorism is a transnational phenomenon par excellence.³⁴ Al-Qaeda has had a safe haven in Afghanistan between 1997 and 2001 when the

Taliban ruled this country. According to the *International Institute for Strategic Studies* at least twenty thousand recruits from all parts of the world have been trained in camps in Afghanistan.³⁵ Subsequently, these recruits have participated in battles in countries like Bosnia, Chechnya, and Iraq or they have returned to their countries of origin. Extremists have also left countries in order to follow a religious education in a Koran school, *madrassa*, or to visit radical imams in mosques. Furthermore, some have intermediated between terrorist cells in different countries. Transnationalism requires of Muslim extremists to manage the entrance to and residence in other countries. This unavoidably brings them into contact with the authorities that are responsible for the admittance, policing, and extradition of aliens.

Extremists can avoid contacts with state agencies entirely by immigrating illegally. Extremists who domiciled illegally have indeed been arrested in different countries. Additionally, there are indications that militant Muslims have been brought into countries with the help of smugglers from countries like Albania, Turkey, and Latin America. However, illegal immigration and residence have clear disadvantages for extremists. First, they make them dependent on family, friends, and co-religionists because without legal residence permit it is difficult to approach official agencies for work, housing, medical care, or social benefits. Second, illegal immigrants who help with the preparation of terrorist activities can be incarcerated and extradited because of their illegal status alone.

Extremists can also enter a country legally and try to obtain a legal residence permit. Hundreds are known to have succeeded in this.³⁷ Several insurgents of assaults in the United States and in Europe have acquired a tourist, student or business visa, while others have obtained a legal residence permit because they married a wife with the nationality of the country of destination. Still others have been granted political asylum, sometimes after several applications under different names. However, there is little evidence that they have ever received help from sympathizing officials to obtain legal residence permits.³⁸ Active assistance of cor-

rupt officials is hard to organize in practice, let alone to maintain a large scale fraud over a longer period. Therefore, extremists usually have no alternative but to try to deceive officials.

Muslim extremists need passports and identity papers in order to hoax officials. They can steal these documents, buy them from persons who declare theirs missing, or fabricate them.³⁹ Especially blank passports and visa that contain a legitimate registration number but no personal information are popular⁴⁰ because no information has to be removed from them.⁴¹ Another advantage is that the chance to be arrested with such documents is negligible. Interpol disposes of a database consisting of almost two million missing passports yet the database is consulted in just a few countries.⁴² Furthermore, passports from visa-free countries are attractive to jihadists.⁴³ Travelers with such passports are temporarily allowed to reside in a country provided they own a return ticket.⁴⁴ In the meanwhile the United States have tightened the rules of the visa-waiver-program for the majority of the countries of the European Union without abolishing it altogether.⁴⁵

In short: extremists can hardly recourse to sympathizers for international migration.

Latter can help to hide illegal immigrants and to counterfeit documents, but they are of limited use for obtaining residence permits. Active assistance of corrupt officials is hard to organize in practice. This means that extremists are forced to deceive officials in order to obtain residence permits.

Financing

Islamist networks need money to survive and to execute their activities. They use two strategies to get the necessary financial means. Either they look for sponsors or they generate revenues themselves. ⁴⁶ Both strategies will be discussed separately.

Sponsoring

Sponsors can be states or organizations. Countries that have been suspected of supporting the violent jihad financially are usually ruled by an elite of which at least a section sympathizes with the violent jihad. This applies to countries like Iran, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and Sudan.⁴⁷

Terrorists misuse the so-called *zakat* – one of the five religious duties of every Muslim – in order to receive sponsorship of organizations. Zakat is the obligation to donate a share of one's own resources to the needy. Radical imams have been arrested for passing on charity money raised in mosques to terrorist organizations⁴⁸ and radical believers have coerced moderate imams to hand over such money. Furthermore, the assets of branches of foundations like Al Aqsa, Benevolence International Foundation (BIF), Al Haramain en Muwaffaq have been frozen because they supplied money to terrorist organizations. Sometimes this happened because of extremists that had infiltrated a legitimate foundation and sometimes it happened with the approval of the executive committee.

So, extremists can profit from zakat without the knowledge of the donors. Extremists also profit unobvious from the habits of Muslims and migrants in order to transfer money. Militant Muslims employ *hawala* to do this. ⁵² There are clear indications that rich Arabs have transferred money to Al-Qaeda thru the hawala system. ⁵³ Hawala is used to transfer money from one party to the next outside the official financial circuit. ⁵⁴ It is founded on the mutual trust that all parties concerned will repay their debts. ⁵⁵ It appeals to Islamic terrorists since it leaves few traces and does not stand out because millions of migrants use it. However, this does not mean that hawala bankers do not keep accounts at all. ⁵⁶

Furthermore, Muslim extremists resort to money transfer services of businesses like *Western Union*. ⁵⁷ For example, the hijackers of the September 11 attacks received 20.000

dollar thru this company. As is true for hawala, money transferring is especially popular among migrants for providing and receiving cash money because it is also possible in countries where not everybody has a bank number. After it became known that this form of money transferring was also used for terrorist purposes, Western Union was compelled in the United States to pass on information on transfers to enforcement agencies. Nowadays, the agents of Western Union are perceived to be a larger risk with respect to financing terrorism than the customers. For this company screens these, mostly foreign, agents only marginally. 59

In short, Muslim extremists can recourse to sponsors who sympathize with the violent jihad. Besides, they resort to third parties who are secretly used by extremists. Latter parties concern Muslims who stick to the religious duty of zakat and immigrants who use hawala bankers or money transfer companies. Extremists exploit them because they are familiar with their habits. So, extremists profit from these Muslims and immigrants without their knowledge or consent.

Generating revenues

Sponsorship does certainly not cover all expenses of extremists. Only some recruiters are released from generating revenues, and occasionally elite Al-Qaeda members have provided 'seed money' to cells that enabled them to execute part of their plans. In general, extremists have to manage themselves financially largely. ⁶⁰ Consequently, certain individuals and cells are occupied predominantly or even entirely with acquiring revenues for the jihad. For this, they do not receive active support of sympathizers.

Extremists have yielded revenues by undertaking licit and illicit enterprises. Al-Qaeda has owned retail, transport, and industrial businesses that were not only used as a storefront to launder money and transport weapons but also as an independent income source. In this case they can resort to ignorant consumers. Furthermore, there are indications that jihadist groups

have made alliances with organized crime in 'failed states'. These states officially repudiate unlawful practices yet are unable to withstand them. For example, Al-Qaeda, Hezbollah, and Hamas would have been engaged in drug trade, human smuggling, and counterfeiting of American dollars, audiovisual material, perfumes, and brand clothing in the border area between Argentine, Brazil, and Paraguay. Furthermore, Al-Qaeda would have operated in diamond smuggle in western Africa. However, the 9/11 Commission Report states that there is no hard evidence that Al-Qaeda has earned money with drug or diamond trade.

Other cells have engaged in criminality themselves. The explosives that were used for the train bombings in Madrid were traded for XTC and soft drugs, for example. The 'gang of Roubaix' has robbed in order to finance a bombing during the G-7 in Lille according to the French public prosecutor. ⁶⁴ In England a gang has furnished the jihad with large sums of money through a large banking scam combined with shoplifting. The gang members bought clothes and electronics with bank checks that were based on fraudulent bank numbers and swapped these goods for cash before it became clear that the bank checks were not covered. ⁶⁵ In the Netherlands supporters of the Takfir Wal Hijra movement have been arrested and convicted for robbing, pick-pocketing, trade in counterfeited brand clothing, credit card fraud, drug trade, and telecom fraud (interview). ⁶⁶

Much of the criminality is multifunctional. For instance, criminality does not only help to finance terrorism but also victimizes the enemy.⁶⁷ In other words, criminality enables extremists to proceed their battle with other means than violence. Additionally, the trade in false documents does not only bring forth resources but also enables militant Muslims to hide their identity.⁶⁸ In the Netherlands suspects have been arrested who had used several identity documents at the same time. This enabled them to conceal that they had encountered the police previously (interview). Likewise, counterfeited identity papers have been used to obtain social security numbers. A Dutch investigation brought to light, for example, that several

suspects of facilitating terrorism had applied for a social security number with the help of counterfeited French identity cards (interview). Telecom fraud is also multi-functional because it generates both revenues and communication means. Fencing stolen cell phones and telephone cards, not paying off phone bills, hacking telephone centers, and selling hacked information to phone shops are different kinds of telecom fraud.⁶⁹

In short, the role of sympathizers is limited with respect to generating revenues. First, extremists are forced to resort to other parties like consumers and criminal organizations because the donations of sponsors fall short. Second, criminality offers the possibility to victimize the enemy by other means than violence. So, resorting to others than sympathizers can at the same time present a necessity and an opportunity to extremists.

Communication

Muslim extremists resort to all sorts of communication means for their activities: couriers, letters, cell phones and satellite telephones, short wave transmitters, e-mails, chat groups, and websites. Usually they shut out the social environment anxiously in order to keep their plans secretly. They cut themselves off the outside world, for instance, by arranging face-to-face meetings, sending encrypted messages, using voice over the Internet, or telephoning by means of 'easy room' telephone cards which could be bought and filled up from all over the world and which have been removed by now. However, extremists do use the social environment in order to mingle unobvious among a larger public. In this case it is irrelevant whether the public sympathizes with the jihad.

For example, some of the September 11 insurgents have used public libraries,⁷¹ other Al-Qaeda members have resorted to Internet cafés,⁷² and Dutch convicts mostly called from telephone boots (interview). Phone shops also play an important role in the preparation of ter-

rorism (interview).⁷³ For example, five people have been arrested in the Dutch town Schiedam for using a phone shop for conspiring and stocking chemical ingredients of explosives.⁷⁴ In September 2003 the United States have requested the Dutch government to extradite three persons who had contacted an American suspect of connections with Bin Laden in a phone shop using false telephone cards.⁷⁵

Phone shops provide facilities to phone and use the Internet. Usually these shops specialize in these services but sometimes laundries, barbershops or Islamic butchers exploit one or two telephone lines in their businesses. Most customers of phone shops are migrants who want to contact their relatives abroad. Hawala bankers also like to operate from phone shops because of this concentration of migrants. Both the background of the clientele and the presence of hawala bankers attract Muslim extremists to phone shops. In there they can communicate with foreign contacts unobvious because the majority of the customers use phone shops for this reason too and they can recourse to hawala banker to transfer money.

The Internet offers jihadists another possibility to operate unobvious. In this case sympathizers do play a significant role. The Internet contains countless chat groups, web sites, web logs, and news groups concerning the Islam that are chiefly visited by Muslims. Many of them perceive the Internet as a concrete manifestation of a global Muslim community, *ummah*. Radical Muslims who promote the jihad also mingle in these Internet environments. Muslims use these sites for recruiting, conspiring, and fundraising. Potential recruits who have been spotted in chat rooms receive surveys and are tested on- and off-line before recruiters decide whether they will be accepted as new members.

The Internet also plays an increasingly important role in the training and education of new recruits since the destruction of the training camps in Afghanistan.⁸² The Internet contains elaborate instruction manuals on abduction, guerilla tactics in cities, and military battle techniques for jihadists,⁸³ and a film has been posted on a site that explains stepwise how to

explode bombs with the help of cell phones, just as the commuter train bombings in Madrid were committed.⁸⁴ The Internet is also used for religious education. Saudi Arabic mullahs have provided Dutch radical Muslims with advice, for example.⁸⁵

The Internet is an attractive medium to extremists because it enables them to communicate with people all over the world anonymously. They can conceal and change their identity by ditching old e-mail addresses and creating new ones⁸⁶ and by stealing unguarded server space.⁸⁷ Jumping virtually from one computer to the next offers a possibility to conceal their physical location. Anonymity can also easily be preserved because hosting companies hardly check the minimal information they demand from their customers.⁸⁸

In short, militant Muslims use their social environment to mingle unobvious among an ignorant larger public that usually does not consist of sympathizers. Extremists move into public establishments like libraries, cyber cafés, phone shops, and the virtual *ummah*. The popularity of latter two locations shows that extremists prefer to immerge in a larger crowd that is dominated by migrants or Muslims. Just as we have seen with respect to financing it is true that Muslim extremists often profit from their habits independent of their views on the violent jihad.

Conclusion

We have looked into the role of the constituencies of Muslim extremists with respect to the preparation of the violent jihad. It occurred that they play an essential role in certain aspects. Sympathizers perform as sponsors, potential recruits, or propagandists of the violent jihad. However, extremists also recourse to migrants and Muslims who share several habits yet are completely unaware of the intentions of extremists. For example, they secretly use hawala

bankers to transfer money, human smugglers to cross borders, and the Islamic 'online community' to communicate. They also misuse the religious duty of Muslims to donate a share of their resources to the needy. Extremists also resort to non-Muslims. They appeal to immigration officers and steal personal documents from non-Muslims. They also use non-Muslims as consumer or make them a target of criminality.

Thus, backup of constituencies does not play an essential role in all aspects of the preparation of the jihad. We found three reasons for this; it can be unnecessary, impossible, or unfavorable. First, extremists often do not need sympathy in order to reach their goals. Extremists secretly use Muslims and migrants as a cover and as a possibility to recourse to traditions and habits that are familiar to them. Resorting to their constituencies would create unnecessary risks. Second, in some facets extremists are unable to obtain support of their constituencies. This is so when sympathizers lack the means, knowledge, and opportunities needed to prepare and execute insurgencies. For instance, it is very difficult to find sympathizers who are able to provide residence permits. In this case extremists are forced to rely on other parties. Finally, in some facets resorting to sympathizers is unfavorable. This can either be for offensive or defensive reasons. An offensive reason applies when extremists want to continue the holy war with other means than violence by resorting to the enemy instead of sympathizers. For example, criminality not only brings in revenues but also victimizes the enemy. A defensive reason for not recoursing to sympathizers is to avoid suspicion. Some extremists have behaved like westerners or have married non-Islamic women because they want to go unnoticed.⁸⁹ For this reason mastermind Khalid Sheik Mohammed commanded the hijackers of the September 11 attacks to avoid the Muslim community in the United States as much as possible. 90

Do the findings of present study support the terrorist fighters and scholars who assign a crucial role to constituencies with respect to the violent jihad? Not entirely. The analysis

demonstrated that sympathizers are indispensable to some preparative terrorist activities, yet not to other. Extremists depend less on their constituencies for making foreign journeys, generating revenues, and communication then they do for recruiting and sponsoring. The practical implication of this conclusion is that pushing back partisanship does not automatically result in the receding of the violent jihad. Do the findings support Gould's thesis that personal interests can prevent constituencies from participating in collective violence? No, but this might be true anyway. This study did not establish how often and under what conditions sympathizers refused to give help because of fear of retaliation. However, it demonstrated that fear of retaliation is not the only reason why sympathizers do not play a decisive role in all facets of the preparation of the jihad. Sometimes terrorists were responsible for this rather than sympathizers. Muslim extremists sometimes choose not to resort to their constituencies because of strategic reasons. They attempt to avoid taking unnecessary risks or to hit their enemies by other means than violence.

Therefore, although sympathizers may be important for the continuation of the jihad, their role is not self-evident. This is not only so because sympathizers might fear retaliation for helping Muslim extremists, but also because extremists do not always allow them to help. This conclusion asks for a refinement of the assumption that Muslim extremism cannot do without their constituencies.

Notes

^{1.} The jihad is certainly not violent by definition (Hashmi, Sohail H. "Jihad." In *Encyclopedia of Politics and Religion*, edited by Robert Wuthnow, 425-26. Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly, Inc., 1998). Fighting an inner spiritual struggle for pure faith, defending the Muslim faith against aggressors, and conquering the hegemony of Muslims over non-believers are all referred to as jihad. This study is restricted to latter interpretation of the jihad. However, for matters of efficiency the adjective violent will not be added anymore when referring to the jihad below.

^{2.} David Rising, "Two Provincial German Towns Emerging as Unlikely Center for Islamic Extremism," *Associated Press*, 1 February 2005 available at (http://news.findlaw.com/scripts/printer_friendly.pl?page=/ap_stories/l/0000/2-1-2005/20050201010014_01.html).

^{3.} *Agence France-Presse*, "Us Remains under Terror Threat from Al-Qaeda," *Breaking News*, 7 September 2004 available at (http://www.usatoday.com/news/washington/2004-09-09-threat-us_x.htm).

- 4. Roberta de la Roche Senechal, "Why Is Collective Violence Collective?," *Sociological Theory* 19, no. 2 July (2001), pp. 126-44.
- 5. Bruce Hoffman, "The Changing Face of Al Qaeda and the Global War on Terrorism," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 27 (2004), p. 550/1.
- 6. For a critical account of the reliability of data originating from public publications, see Marc Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), p. 64-68.
- 7. Respondents were a national prosecutor, two policy employees of the Dutch national intelligence and security service (AIVD), three analysts of the national police unit on counterterrorism and special tasks (UTBT), and two inspectors of the Rotterdam police force who lead the investigation on the preparation of an insurgency on the American embassy in Paris or an American army basis in Belgium.
 - 8. Black, Donald, "The Geometry of Terrorism." Sociological Theory 22, no. 1, March (2004): 14-25.
 - 9. Black, Donald, "Crime as Social Control." American Sociological Review 48, February (1983): 34.
 - 10. Black, "The Geometry of Terrorism," p. 16, italics originally.
 - 11. Ibid., p. 21.
- 12. Roberta Senechal de la Roche, "Collective Violence as Social Control," *Sociological Forum* 11, no. 1 (1996), pp. 97-128.
 - 13. Roberta Senechal de la Roche, "Why Is Collective Violence Collective?, pp. 126-44.
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Smuggling Rings Tied to Bin Laden's Terrorist Network," 16 February 2004 available at (http://www.worldnetdaily.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE_ID=37133).

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