# The Fundamentals of Islamic Extremism:

## Psychological Considerations for Developing & Managing Counterterrorism Sources

**Michael G. Gelles, Psy.D.**
**Psychological Services Unit**
**Naval Criminal Investigative Service**

**Randy Borum, Psy.D.**
**University of South Florida**

**Russell Palarea, Ph,D.**
**Psychological Services Unit**
**Naval Criminal Investigative Service**

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# Introduction

Following the events of September 11, 2001, the US intelligence and law enforcement communities began a fundamental shift in counterterrorism strategy to enhance national safety and security by changing from a reactive to a proactive posture. The communities have actively moved to identify potential threats and develop intelligence on specific terrorist targets. The core objective of these newly concentrated efforts is to reduce risks and manage potential threats by interrupting forward motion *before* an attack (Borum, 2004a). The ongoing Global Struggle Against Violent Extremism intensified the need for persons and agencies with counterterrorism responsibilities to understand the commitment, connections, capability, and intentions of Islamic extremists – including the Al-Qa'ida affiliated network – so that viable operations targeting terrorist cells can be developed. Ideally, these efforts involve source operations in which someone willing to provide information to US authorities penetrates an operational cell, or where someone with access to the cell is recruited to work for US authorities. In either case, the goal of a source operation is to collect information related to the cell's recruitment practices, capability, and plans for attack. Counterterrorism operations are difficult, complex, and aggressive but, when successful, they produce vital information. They reflect a proactive emphasis in strategic response to an ongoing and ambiguous threat.

In the counterterrorism community, the Global Struggle Against Violent Extremism has led to a surge in threat warnings, investigations, arrests, and interrogations. As a result, the community has collected significant intelligence and gained greater insight into the Al-Qa'ida affiliated network and their known practices and methodologies. An opportunity exists to apply this knowledge in initiating proactive operations. Proactive operations that lead to strategic, preventive interventions are a far better use of resources than responding to threat alerts and conducting post-attack investigations. There is no substitute for the invaluable information derived by a source embedded in the daily activities of a targeted group. The source becomes the eyes and ears of the law enforcement and intelligence community.



In this paper, we identify and describe several psychological considerations that may affect source development and management. While a host of factors will influence any operation, we focus here only on the psychological factors that we believe may be useful to Special Agents engaged in counterterrorism operations. This is but one portion of the larger operational structure. For a more expert view of the Islamic extremist adversary and the contexts in which they operate, we recommend seeking input from counterterrorism intelligence analysts.

# Understanding Jihad:
# The Path to Commitment[1]

**T**he concept of jihad is central to many Islamic extremist ideologies and justifications for violence (Euben, 2002). The meaning of that term, however, has been a matter of considerable debate (Gould, February, 2005). The term "jihad" has its roots in the Arabic verb "j-h-d," whose meaning generally is interpreted as "to endeavor, strive, labor, take great pains." The noun form generally refers to a struggle. According to some, it typically connotes a great effort in the struggle to maintain the straight path of Islam. However, Bernard Lewis (2003), eminent historian of Islam and the Middle East, notes that the concept of jihad in the great majority of the Arabic language and Islamic writings refers to a religious duty to take action against infidels or non-believers, for the sake of God Almighty (*Allah*). Other Islamic scholars also support Lewis' contention that in orthodox –not even extremist – usage, jihad almost always refers to the duty to fight against "the enemies of Islam."

Modern day Islamic extremists such as Usama bin Ladin have been profoundly influenced by the notion that jihad is a "neglected duty" (i.e., *jihad al-farida algha'iba*); an idea inherited from earlier Egyptian Islamist philosophers of the 1950-60s, such as Sayyid Qutb and Muhammad Al-Farraj (Jansen, 1986). Qutb and Al-Farraj asserted that after faith in God (*iman*) and the belief in only one true God (*tawhid*), there is no more important duty for *all* Muslims than jihad against the unbelievers (Lewis, 2003). It is important to note here that this principle (i.e., that there is a duty mandated by God to kill or destroy all "unbelievers"), which is the centerpiece of Islamic extremist doctrine, is a relatively new development in Islamic history. While the faith of Islam has existed for more than 14 centuries, this violent strain of Islamist ideology has only held a sizable audience for less than a century. Jihadism is a modern phenomenon (Pipes, September 23, 2004).



In the current international security environment, there is consensus among US counterterrorism experts and policymakers that Sunni extremism – driving a call to wage jihad – currently poses the greatest threat to Western interests (National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States, 2004). The voice of these extremists is most aptly represented in the words and deeds of Al-Qa'ida and its affiliated network, and of men such as Usama bin Ladin, Ayman al-Zawahiri, and number of lesser known extremist shaykhs. These groups, and the men behind them, have a rigid, narrow view of Islam and lack any tolerance for those whose beliefs diverge from them. They oppose Jews, Christians, and even less strident Muslims (Borum & Gelles, 2005). Their exclusive rigidity and fundamentalism alone, however, are not sufficient to give rise to a security threat. Rather, the threat arises from the belief that they have a duty to wage holy war against, and violently exterminate, all persons who do not share their beliefs.

The world of the Islamic extremist is starkly divided between "us" and "them." The progenitors of this ideology, including Sayyid Qutb, Muhammad 'Abd Al-Salam Al-Farraj, and 'Abdallah Azzam, as well as their contemporary counterparts such as Usama bin Ladin, believe two competing forces seek to dominate the condition of the world. Since the time the Qur'an was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad, the states of *Dar Al-Islam* (the abode of Islam) and *Dar Al-Harb* (abode of war or conflict) have been in conflict, and will remain so until the end of time (Lewis, 2003).

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[1] Derived from Gelles, M., McFadden, R., Borum, R., & Vossekuil, B. (In Press). An approach to the interrogation of subjects of Al-Qa'ida-related investigations: A perspective for law enforcement personnel. In T. Williamson (Ed). *Investigative Interviewing: Developments in Research, Rights and Regulation*. Cullomtpon, Devon, England: Willan Publishing.

Islamic extremists believe that the world currently exists in the state of *Dar Al-Harb*. In this condition, true believers of Islam are ostensibly impelled to wage defensive jihad in order to reclaim lands once under the control of pious Muslims. These territories include parts of Spain and other areas of Europe "up to the gates of Rome," and, of course, Israel. Once Muslims reclaim the land, then the struggle (*jihad*) moves to an offensive mode of conquest to ensure that the remainder of the world is safe for Islam. In recent times, the US has been viewed as the primary villain within the *Dar Al-Harb* because Al-Qa'ida and recognized Sunni religious leaders believe the US has sided and conspired "against Muslims" in numerous conflicts around the world (e.g., Israel, East Timor, Serbia, South Philippines, etc.; Lewis, 2003).

We explain these issues here because in source operations targeting Islamic extremists, Special Agents will benefit from understanding the source's mindset and the history associated with his thinking, commitments, and beliefs. This will empower the Special Agent to better manage the source and understand the intentions of the target. Without knowing the history embedded in the adversary and source's mindset, it becomes more difficult to interpret and manage his behavior, motivation, and intentions during the operation.

It is also important to understand the source's cultural identification and adaptation. We have found that individuals who have lived in the West for a considerable period of time have a more in-depth understanding of Western culture. However, they still retain a strong affiliation and identification with their country of origin. Cultural differences may affect mutual expectations and modes of interaction (Saraswati, 2004). Sources of Middle Eastern descent who have been "Westernized" may have adapted to a more linear way of thinking (at least in comparison to their foreign national counterparts). In some cases, these adaptations will make their tasking, debriefing, and overall management easier, but in other cases more difficult, depending on the source's relationship with the Special Agent, target, and overall motivation to participate in the operation.

# Understanding Cultural Contexts & Mindset[2]

U nderstanding the cultural history and pathways through which individuals commit to radical Islamist ideology is pivotal to successful source operations against Islamic extremist networks. While the demographic composition of the Al-Qa'ida affiliated network has become more diverse, it remains true that that the majority of Al-Qa'ida members are of Arab ethnicity or Middle Eastern descent. In assessing potential sources, the more closely one examines an individual, the greater the apparent differences will be between that person and others in their culture. However, there are certain cultural norms and generalizations inherent to the "Middle Eastern mindset" that Special Agents should consider when assessing a potential source's motivation and interpreting his behavior. In the following section, we outline, from a psychological perspective, some of these key concepts and their operational relevance.

*Pawns of Fate*: While many Westerners see themselves as being in control of their own destiny, many Middle Easterners believe that much of what happens to them (and others) in life is predestined and controlled by fate (Cohen-Mor, 2001). The prevailing belief is that an individual's behavior has very little effect on outcomes. Nothing is "probable" or "likely," rather events are anticipated or hoped for with the proviso: "*insh'allah*" (God Willing). Also embedded within the Arabic culture is a normative acceptance of conspiracy theories as a means of explaining the reasons behind certain events. Usama bin Laden has capitalized on these phenomena by reiterating long-standing conspiracy beliefs that Americans, Jews, and Western Allies are seeking to attack the faith of Islam, oppress and kill Muslims, and control and dominate the Middle East. Knowledge of these factors and mindset may help the Special Agent to assess a source or target and to elicit accurate information during operational debriefs.

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[2] For further readings on the Middle Eastern mindset, see Nydell, M. (1996). *Understanding Arabs: A Guide for Westerners*. Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press and Patai, R. (2002). *The Arab Mind*. Long Island City, NY: Hatherleigh Press.

*Collective Identity*:  The culture of most Middle Eastern and many Asian countries is oriented more toward collectivism than individualism.  People in individualistic cultures pride themselves on individual accomplishment and what makes them unique, special, or different from others.  People from collectivist cultures, however, believe personal value comes not from individual deeds, but from social standing and group affiliation.  They value most about themselves not what is unique, but rather what makes them part of a larger group or collective.  Ethics of responsibility are not as much centered on the individual as on the greater benefit of the collective.  Their identification with the larger collective or group membership (what social psychologists would call "social identity;" Tajfel & Turner, 1986) is more important in understanding and defining who they are than their personal traits or what they have accomplished.  The individual's identity is based on his family or tribe/clan roots and the group with whom he currently affiliates.  This phenomenon is captured in the saying:  "Who I am is who I am a part of, and whom I am with."

*Importance of Relationships*: Arab culture is built on relationships and connectedness to others. Relationships are incredibly important as a source of power, comfort, and worth.  Persons from collectivist cultures rarely value "alone time" and they are rarely alone.  As with identity, perceptions of self-worth are influenced strongly by the perceived status and value of their social network.  Seeking connections is critical in a world where one's value is defined by whom you know and who is in your network (referred to in Arabic as "*Wasta*[3]").  These priorities are distinctly different from traditional Western values that emphasize individual achievement and self-worth (Nydell, 1996).

Without a sense of belonging, people from collectivist cultures often feel that their lives lack meaning or direction (Matsumoto, 2001).  A person is fundamentally defined by, and valued for, belonging.  Without it, he is lost.  This means that the group holds great power over the individual's behavior.  Assimilation is good; difference is bad.  Conformity is good; dissent is bad.

Thus, in his quest for personal meaning, direction, and structure (particularly in an environment where extremist ideologies are prevalent), a man will often suspend critical thinking and commit to a particular mosque, leader, or collective "bunch of guys" (and their ideology) that advocates militant Islam.  By making that commitment, he develops the capabilities and connections to participate in attacks against Western interests (Borum & Gelles, 2005).

*Good Impressions*:  Because it is so important to be accepted by, and connected to, others, persons from Middle Eastern and Arabic cultures often prioritize their social image and the harmony of relationships over directness or sincerity. For example, it is considered impolite to disagree with someone or to refuse a request. Thus, the Middle Eastern person may express insincere sentiments in order to avoid conflict in the relationship.  This is not regarded as an attempt to deceive, but rather appropriate behavior to preserve the relationship.  The consequence is that individuals develop hidden agendas to ensure connectivity to others and enhance their value to their collective (Adler & Rodman, 2002).  As a result, it is difficult to establish trust, as is expected in the West.  For the intelligence operation, this means that Special Agents must monitor the image their sources project and anticipate how that may influence the way in which sources report information.

*Good Intentions*:  In the West, it is important to "make good" on one's promises. Merit is earned through action, and in Western culture, it is said that "actions speak louder than words."  Conversely, in the Middle East, intentions matter more than actions.  If a person attests that they will do something that they subsequently fail to do, it is not considered a transgression, so long as the person sincerely *wanted* to do it or *intended* to do it at the time it was promised (Patai, 2002).  Thus, well-intended promises and anticipated actions may not carry the same weight for the source as for the Special Agent.

*Shame, not Guilt*:  In the West, experiences associated with guilt and the anticipation of feelings of guilt influence the individual's overt behavior and decision-making processes. Guilt is personal; it is distress experienced by the individual.  Its mitigation usually requires "owning up" by confessing to someone, taking responsibility for one's actions, and possibly taking further action to correct or compensate for the offending behavior. In Middle Eastern culture, however, guilt is a much less significant factor than shame (Triandis, 1995). Conversely, collectivist

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[3] See Cunningham, R. & Sarayrah, Y. (1993).  *Wasta: The hidden force in Middle Eastern society*. Westport, CT: Praeger.

societies are more driven by the phenomenon of shame. Shame is the distressing emotion one seeks to avoid or has to bear for wrongful behavior. Shame is social; it is a reaction to the responses of others. Confession acknowledges or makes others aware of the undesirable behavior, and therefore, is generally avoided. It is others' awareness that brings about the sanction of shame. For operational considerations, it is essential to monitor the possibility of social sanction, and to treat the source with respect and validate him. It is also important to recognize that treating the source in a positive manner can result in distortions of information in either a positive or negative direction. Thus, it is necessary that Special Agents assess the sources' underlying motivations in order to account for their direction and degree of distortion.

*Associative Thinking*: Another important cultural difference found among Middle Eastern persons is that most are raised and acculturated to think associatively, rather than in the linear, goal-oriented, structured, sequential way that is typical of Westerners (Nydell, 1996). For example, a Westerner telling a story about a life experience would likely do so chronologically, in a way that created a beginning, middle, and end. Alternately, associative thinkers are not bound by these conventions. They may "go off on tangents" or relate segments out of sequence. It may make sense in their "big picture" of what they are trying to communicate, but it can be difficult for linear thinkers to follow. In an effort to compensate for this style of thinking, education in the Middle East is based on rote memorization techniques. From the Western Special Agent's perspective, the source's thinking may appear to jump from point-to-point throughout the conversation. Understanding the manner in which information is communicated is critical in analyzing the reliability and usefulness of the source's reporting. Additionally, it has tremendous implications for how the Special Agent tasks the source. Sources who are associative thinkers should be tasked using a well-rehearsed, rote-memorized, sequential template in order to ensure efficiency and reliability.

*Emotional Information Processing*: Finally, individuals from the Middle East tend to be emotional processors of information. As they take in information and experiences, they tend to organize data and events around the context of relationships and collective value, rather than by topic or category (Patai, 2002). The information tends to have enhanced value and is communicated in more dramatic terms with enhanced texture and emotion. The information, however, may also be distorted in an attempt to increase the communicator's value to the listener.

# Understanding Recruitment Vulnerability

**P**ersons most vulnerable to recruitment are typically those actively seeking meaning, direction, structure, and connection in their lives. This is particularly the case in collectivist Middle Eastern or Southeast Asian countries. They typically are more open to extremist rhetoric that offers clear rules, a righteous in-group affiliation, and unambiguous truths (Borum, 2004b; Borum & Gelles, 2005). The core tenets of Islamic extremist ideology provide guidance, meaning, and identity (Monroe & Kreidie, 1997). Islamic law *(Sharia)* and the teachings of the imam impart needed structure for living, offering unequivocal rules as defined by the Qur'an and Hadith. Status is achieved through rote memorization of the Qur'an, not by scholarly analysis of ambiguities and nuances.

The connection to others is also rewarding. The radical collective fosters and maintains an unquestioning adherence to its tenets and to one another as "brothers." These individuals learn quickly that questioning beliefs leads to rejection, while embracing them reinforces the primary motive of affiliation and connectivity (Marsella, 2003). Those who question may be marginalized or even shunned by others.

It is not uncommon to hear stories among Al-Qa'ida affiliated detainees of how they were drawn to jihad through others in their social network. Social networks and relationships are particularly powerful in collectivist societies where the presence of Islamic extremism also tend to be most prevalent. People raised with collectivist values quite naturally
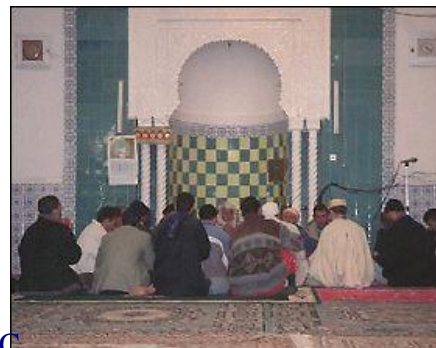
see themselves (and individuals in general) as being part of a larger collective.

The extremist mosque or congregation is generally small, private, and in many cases, found by happenstance by the potential recruit. For example, one Islamic extremist told an interviewer that the mosque where he was first exposed to radical ideology just happened to be in his "patch." Once connected, however, these religious/social affiliations can become powerful vehicles of extremist ideology and impetus to action. The congregation may provide a refuge from the turmoil of inner psychological conflicts and crisis. Being around others and working cooperatively with other members of the group also meets an initial need for affiliation and belonging, particularly for those who have failed to affiliate and be validated elsewhere, or who have not lived up to expectations of their family or tribe/clan (Luckabaugh, Fuqua, Cangemi, & Kowalski, 1997). Some have met their needs for connection and affiliation in study groups (*halqas*), Islamic bookstores, and more recently, in chat rooms on the Internet. Understanding the motivations and dynamics involved in these contexts is critical when developing operational proposals and identifying potential sources.

# CT Sources:
# Spotting, Vetting, & Assessing

**D**eveloping source operations against Islamic extremist groups requires either recruiting an existing member to defect or inserting a confederate into a cell or network. Either can be productive, but neither is easily accomplished. Source operations are high maintenance endeavors that carry high risks, but offer high potential yield.

The stages of the operational cycle include *spotting, assessment, investigation, vetting*, and *validation*. For the purposes of this paper, we will focus on the spotting and vetting stages. This assessment process is ongoing and continuous. Because of the potential risks and the dynamic nature of human behavior and influence, careful assessment and monitoring are perhaps the most important elements of a successful operation. In the following sections, we will offer – from a psychological perspective – some observations and preliminary recommendations for running source operations against Islamic extremist targets. We will begin by addressing some general considerations for spotting a source, and then offer a more detailed analysis of issues to address in vetting and assessment. Finally, we will describe the general contours of recruitment efforts of several well-established groups, in order to provide some general guidance for credible source insertion. Although we do not provide examples of past CT operations in this paper (due to the level of classification), we have found that case studies of CT operations can be valuable to developing future successful operations and encourage the reader to study past operations.

## *Spotting*

In the intelligence arena, the selection of sources and double agents for use against foreign intelligence services has historically been based on shared interests and similar ethnic roots. Sources were often born and raised in the target country and shared cultural affiliation with the target. The source's relationship with the target country may be based on positive feelings for his "homeland," or conversely, on shared feelings of anger, resentment, or disappointment toward occupying forces. For example, a source born in Yemen who later immigrates to the US may still identify with his country of origin. Shared common values and cultural experiences between the source and the target will facilitate the development of the relationship and can later be exploited during the operation.

In targeting Islamic extremists, the source's ideology is likely to be equally or more important than links through his nationality or ethnicity. For some operations, it is ideal to recruit a source who was born and raised in the Middle East to penetrate a radical congregation. For others, having a source of non-Arabic ethnicity will be advantageous. In fact, recent intelligence and information acquired from interrogations suggest that some groups have a strong interest in recruiting individuals who are non-Arabic, and/or who have Western nationality, due to their ability to travel to the US or Western countries under less scrutiny from security and intelligence services. Most recently, some second generation US citizens have been known to have connections to radical relatives and friends

in their families' countries of origin.  While this does not exclude Middle Easterners, it certainly broadens the pool of potential sources.

The increasing number of converts to Islam – who prefer to call themselves "new Muslims" (Jimenez, January 19, 2002) – in the US and Europe continues to provide an advantageous condition for recruitment by the Al-Qa'ida affiliated network.  The Westerner, in many ways, has become a more attractive recruit than an individual of Middle Eastern descent, due to his ability to naturally assimilate into the Western world without drawing suspicion. The use of Western converts as sources has strong potential for success.  Recently, there have been a number of successful operations using converts of Western ethnicity. At the same time, for a source to be viable and productive, he must be identified with Islam and able to dissimulate, if not possess, an extremist view. Perhaps most important is that the source convey that Islam is a part of his identity which brings meaning and direction to his life. The source should possess certain characteristics most similar to an individual with an Islamic extremist ideology and way of life.

There are a number of key characteristics for Special Agents to keep in mind when spotting ideal counterterrorism sources. Appendix A provides a comprehensive list of source selection questions for Special Agents.

## *Vetting*

Source selection must be thoughtful and discerning. This process requires more than just judging a book by its cover. The main challenge is that the characteristics that make the source most attractive and credible to the target also pose the greatest liability to the Special Agent.  Special Agents want the source to "fit in" with the target group, but not to actually identify with them.  Special Agents want sources to skillfully use deception against the target, but not against the Special Agent.   This is precisely why the vetting and continuous assessment process is so critical.

It is advised to proceed cautiously and incrementally with a potential source before recruiting and activating him in a collection operation.  An important, but often vexing issue lies in understanding the complexities of a source's motivation to cooperate.  The Special Agent must be confident that an initial foundation of rapport and trust has been developed, paradoxically, with a person who is knowingly double-dealing. Prior experience suggests that the best sources often possess some degree of ambivalence about subversively collecting information on fellow Muslim brothers.  That ambivalence is often best managed by developing a strong relationship with the source by activating his core motivation to "stop the killing" and bring peace to the world, including the Muslim world.   Further management can be achieved by leveraging the needs the source is satisfying via his participation in the operation (i.e., enhancing his *Wasta*).

The extent of a source's sympathies and identification with the target is likely to fluctuate over the course of the operation. After all, for the source to be successful, he will be making commitments to the target group as he becomes a more trusted brother.  The source will feel the pull of the fundamental human need to be valued and validated.  This is understandable and expected, but it *must* be managed.  In some circumstances, it is best to directly and preemptively address these conflicts with the source.  This allows him to anticipate his own reactions, establish strategies for self-monitoring, and know that there is an open line of communication with the Special Agent to discuss this issue.  The Special Agent must always have in mind the issue of competing loyalties and the way in which they may affect the source's commitment to (or reflect through his behavior during) the operation.

Careful background investigation is also necessary to thoroughly understand the manner in which the source has come to choose Islam as his religion.  It is critical to know the degree to which he is committed to Islam and the brand of ideology that dictates his beliefs and lifestyle. Many of the extremists who have been successfully recruited for jihad were (prior to making a commitment to a group) searching for meaning, direction, and structure in their lives.  During periods when the balance of ambivalence begins to lean more toward the target group, the

Special Agent may need to increase the frequency of meetings and the intensity of their relationship and motivational reinforcement to counteract the attention and validation the source feels from the brothers in the group.

## *Assessing*

*Islamic Extremist Assessment Model:*  Through experience in counterterrorism investigations, we have identified four factors common to known Islamic extremists: Commitment, Capability, Connection, and Intent. This model was initially developed to assess risk for future violence with the detainees being held at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba[4].  The model has since been applied to NCIS counterterrorism investigations and is now demonstrating utility in counterterrorism operations.  When applied to sources, the assessment model questions are:

- To what extent is the source able to make a *commitment* to radical Islam and jihad?
- What *capability* has the source developed (or made efforts to develop) to participate in or facilitate jihad? What skill sets does he possess that would be attractive to a target?
- How *connected* is the source to associates or to other members of extremist groups?  What characteristics does the source possess to help the cause?
- To what extent is the source able to demonstrate *intent* to attack the US, its interests, or its allies?

This model provides Special Agents a brief and useful tool for spotting potential sources and assessing their goodness of fit for recruitment into Islamic extremist networks.

# Islamic Extremist Recruitment & Source Insertion

Once a source has been spotted and vetted (assessment will be ongoing and continuous), the Special Agent must strategize how and where to best insert the source to access the target.  One strategy is to assess the source from the perspective of a potential recruiter.  What would he be looking for as desirable traits or warning flags?  How might the recruiter assess the source's fit with others in the target group?  How might he assess the source's genuineness?  Just as the source's story of his motivation must make sense to the Special Agent, so must his story make sense to others in the target group.  To that end, it can be helpful to know the characteristics of desirable recruits, their typical motivations and pathways, and the mechanics of how the target group conducts assessment and recruitment activity.

Two preliminary points should be noted before entering into an in-depth discussion on recruitment.  These points have previously been addressed through a study of radicalization and recruitment into extremist groups conducted jointly by DoD's Counterintelligence Field Activity (CIFA) and the US Secret Service's National Threat Assessment Center (USSS-NTAC), and in a study by the NCIS Counterterrorism Department (NCIS-CTD).  First, recruitment into an extremist network is most productively viewed as a process rather than as an event.  Recruitment occurs through a series of commitments made by the individual as he becomes part of a larger network.  After examining the lives of numerous terrorists from a variety of groups, Horgan and Taylor (2001) concluded that: "What we know of actual terrorists suggests that there is rarely a conscious decision made to become a terrorist. Most involvement in terrorism results from gradual exposure and socialization towards extreme behavior."

Second, adopting an extremist ideology and affiliating with an extremist or terrorist faction can occur through a variety of pathways.  While some paths are more common than others, there is no single path in which these transformations occur.  Psychologist Albert Bandura (1990) has similarly concluded that "the path to terrorism can be shaped by fortuitous factors as well as by the conjoint influence of personal predilections and social

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[4] Gelles, M. G., Vossekuil, B., & Fein, R. A. (May 13, 2004).  CITF-BSCT Risk Assessment Process, Criteria, and Methodology.  Memo to SA Mark Fallon, Deputy Commander, Criminal Investigations Task Force, US Department of Defense.

inducements" (p. 186).  With those points in mind, we will now elucidate some strategic considerations for inserting sources into operations against Islamic extremist targets.

## *Common and Desirable Characteristics*

It is critical to note that the ideal recruit does not fit a particular profile or set of demographic characteristics. He may come from any walk of life. He may be rich or poor, educated or illiterate, first- or last-born, married or single, outgoing or introverted. This does not suggest that recruitment is indiscriminate.  It is not.  The personal characteristics sought by Al-Qa'ida's recruiters, and adapted by other Islamic extremist groups, have been well documented.  Appendix B provides the "recruitment chapter" from Al-Qa'ida's "Declaration of Jihad Against the Country's Tyrants Military Series: Military Studies in Jihad Against the Tyrants" (aka the "Al-Qa'ida Training Manual" or the "Manchester Documents").  The chapter, titled "Second Lesson: Necessary Qualifications and Characteristics for the Organization's Member," outlines key characteristics of the ideal recruit.  First and foremost is a belief in Islam.  The chapter explains that the recruit must be Muslim because, "How can an unbeliever, someone from a revealed religion [Christian, Jew], a secular person, a communist, etc. protect Islam and Muslims and defend their goals and secrets when he does not believe in that religion [Islam]?"  Therefore, belief in Islam is a necessary condition for a source being inserted into the recruitment process.  Commitment to an extremist ideology, ultimately, will also be a precursor to being mobilized for jihad.  Simply stated, one typically becomes an extremist before becoming a terrorist.
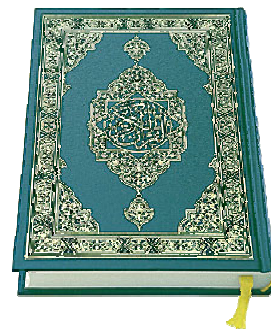
A review of the remaining thirteen characteristics indicates that Al-Qa'ida seeks many of the same skills that law enforcement and intelligence agencies look for in recruiting effective operators (e.g., intelligence, patience, maturity, Operational Security skills, clandestine skills).   This chapter from the training manual and other similar documents, both classified and unclassified, provide a window into the adversary's commitment to screening and assessment.  Attending to what the adversary looks for in a potential recruit can give Special Agents some guidance in assessing potential sources and the likelihood of them attracting the attentive eye of the adversary.

Another perspective on "common characteristics" of the ideal recruit can be deduced from observations of those who have been captured and detained.  Examining the demographics and psychological make up of known members can help highlight the characteristics and mindset of the successfully recruited and committed member.  The following are some descriptive themes of psychological characteristics collected from multiple sources based on assessments of arrested and detained terrorist cell members.  This is not a profile, but rather a collection of characteristics that have a certain level of *bona fides* because they reflect known recruited and radicalized persons.

- Nearly all were male.
- They ranged in age from 16 to 50 years old (most common age range was 23-27).
- Socioeconomic status was variable. It generally ranged from low-middle to middle class.
- Many were married and had children.
- Many were from large families. Mothers were described to have had a steady influence on the family.
- Almost all were raised as Muslims and educated in religious practices as children. The degree of continued religious training in adolescence was less consistent.  Religious activity typically increased during adulthood and was related to joining the organization.
- Most were educated in secular schools. Several attended an Islamic curriculum (*madrassah*) after their basic education.  In some instances, attendance at a *madrassah* was part of the commitment process.  Levels of educational attainment varied from those with poor literacy skills to those with graduate degrees.
- Most members were considered to be underachievers in school. This may have affected their self-concept (poor self-efficacy) and degree of intellectual curiosity. It also may have caused some to be more likely to seek structure and guidance, act to avoid criticism, and have more difficulty with social relationships.
- Academic difficulties often were related to troubled family relationships and childhood problems.
- Many espoused a general view that it is easier to look to others for direction.
- One source reported that a majority of the members in his collective were bullied in school as kids.

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- Later in adulthood, many sought affiliation and acceptance through religion. They achieved some recognition and status by studying the Qur'an and being viewed as superior in religion. Most reported that religion was their predominant value.
- Some evaluators speculated that a lack of consistent, in-depth religious education, religious interest, and enlightenment before joining the group left many increasingly vulnerable to manipulative and distorted religious interpretations offered by the group leaders.
- There were a number of turning points or triggers that led them "back to Islam" as a source of strength, comfort, and identity. It appears that they were all at a "crossroad" in their individual lives, trying to establish an identity, seek approval and validation, or secure some direction in life. Some of the more common precipitating crises included:
  - The death of a family member.
  - The search for direction in life as a result of poverty, release from prison, or social or religious persecution.
  - A feeling of dissatisfaction and unhappiness in life.
  - The influence of others: imam, speeches by religious leaders, books, or other forms of media.
  - Becoming a husband or father, divorce, or unstable family life.
- Most reported that they longed to be part of a group. Some sought a group that would take action. Most yearned to achieve an identity through Islam and Islamic extremism.
- Some viewed religion as a solution to a troubled life and a means to lessen disappointment from other aspects of life with which they were dissatisfied. Many were told after re-engaging with Islam, and committing to the group, that the pursuit of jihad was a means to cleanse and atone for past transgressions.

Additional descriptions and characterizations may be deduced from other international populations of Islamic extremists who have recently been detained. This group is quite diverse. Some are known to be deeply embedded Al-Qa'ida operatives, while others have questionable or limited ties to extremist networks. They may not be typical or representative of any larger collective of Islamic extremists. Nevertheless, a description of their common characteristics may provide some additional insights to use for source insertion strategies. The following is an encapsulated, mainly anecdotal, summary of selected psychological characteristics of persons currently and recently detained around the world. These data are derived from case studies and may not completely capture the full spectrum of behavior and characteristics of known Islamic extremists:

- Many of the detainees were estimated to function in the Average to Above Average range of intelligence. A majority demonstrated a low level of intellectual curiosity.
- A majority of detainees were assessed as being anxious. The situation of their confinement and uncertain disposition certainly could have affected their responses. However, the assessment was oriented toward general functioning and trait anxiety, rather than situation-specific state anxiety.
- Their coping resources were limited. Most were unable to cope effectively with stress or anxiety without considerable structure. For all, prayers were a main source of comfort. Religion and prayer provided a sense of structure, predictability, and control.
- Many detainees had some depressive characteristics. This was mainly attributed to low self-esteem and feelings of dejection.
- Most reported having close attachments to others. Most saw their connection to other members as meeting a need for belonging/affiliation. The advantages of the extremist collective over other relationships was that it permitted connection without the need for affection and had more clearly defined rules and parameters (and therefore was less stressful). It was clear that the group leadership sought others who needed a sense of belonging without close attachments.
- Most detainees were not overly trusting of others in relationships.
- Most were relatively low in their level of assertiveness. In the context of their collective, they avoided dissent or raising questions to avoid rejection by others in the group. The best they felt they could do was to put up some passive resistance.
- Some considered themselves disorganized and undisciplined.
- Many perceived themselves as incapable, lackadaisical, and unreliable. Many had a casual attitude about their own ethical principles.

- Many held a low opinion of their own competence. This may be due to the impact of low self-esteem and a lack of a sense of control in their lives.
- It appeared that most found it stressful to be critical, evaluative, and rational in their thinking. They appeared to prefer to leave thinking to the more capable members and just follow tried and true ways.
- Many tended to interpret events through a narrow worldview.
- It was noted that many tended to obsess when tasked to conduct operational activity. Their anticipation and apprehension often caused delays in completing assignments. One group was aware of this dynamic amongst its members and compensated by assigning similar tasks to several people to increase the probability of success.
- Overall, there appeared to be two distinct categories of members: "strategists" and "tacticians." Strategists tended to have high intellectual ability and were considered to be emotionally stable and purposeful in behavior. The majority were tacticians. They tended to have average intelligence and were considered to be more susceptible to stress. They lacked aspirations and relied on others for direction.

## *Common Motivational Pathways*

Previously, we discussed some prominent issues regarding vulnerability to Islamic extremist recruitment. Building on this theme, a study of the psychology of terrorism by Borum (2004b) found that three of the most consistent motivational themes found among extremist and terrorist recruits were: uncertain personal identity, a need for belonging, and perceived injustice.  In many reviewed cases of captured, arrested, and detained Al-Qa'ida members, these young men of the Muslim faith sought meaning, direction, and structure in their lives. They sought connectedness with others to avoid the painful experience of isolation (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). The search for meaning, as it relates to their identity, is generally the result of some personal crisis. The crisis may result from a lack of opportunity or poverty, a personal failure, or a lack of recognition.  It may also be a search for some direction in life as a result of an emotionally impoverished development that has not resulted in a feeling of connectedness to a larger whole.

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    Common
  Motivational
  Themes Among
   Terrorist
    Recruits

➢ Uncertain
  personal
  identity
➢ Need for
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The needs, vulnerabilities, and searches themselves are not deviant, pathological, malicious, nor uncommon.  Those who feel isolated or need to belong seek others who provide affirmation and inclusiveness.  Those who feel lost, lacking in personal direction or meaning in life, seek structure, answers, and opportunities for action (to make a difference).  Those in distress or crisis seek havens and sanctuary.  These are common motives, and extremist ideologies and groups often appear to provide attractive solutions.  But the opportunities available and the choices the individuals make to meet their own needs can often lead them not only to a rigid or narrow system of beliefs, but also to violent actions.

In a common scenario, a young man feeling alienated or disenfranchised may, "by chance," find a *connection* in the mosque closest to his home or befriend another Muslim man who facilitates the connection to a local mosque or group. This is the first step in a larger process that leads to developing a *commitment* to jihad, *capability* as an extremist, and eventually, an *intention* to carry out a violent act in the service of jihad.  Although the end result is a violent and a destructive act that leaves much tragedy in its wake, the process of recruitment is a very genuine and personal process.  Many who eventually join Islamic extremist groups view this as a solution to the more painful and intolerable psychological state of isolation.

## *Common Spotting Grounds*

It appears that screening and recruitment take place quite often in private mosques or informal congregations. Because a belief in Islam is a pre-requisite for recruitment, it is not surprising to find that Islamic extremist groups spot and recruit in places of worship and study. In many cases, young men find a local mosque through a friend or relative, or in several cases, just by chance because it is their neighborhood.  Those who find their way into a private Mosque are almost always welcomed and warmly greeted. They are invited to join in prayer and quickly assessed through conversation and interaction with the imam and congregation members with regard to

their family, background, skills, education, and religious beliefs.  They are often encouraged to return to the mosque, join in prayer, and listen to teachings.

University-based Islamic study groups, Muslim advocacy groups, and Muslim social organizations have also been identified as points of recruitment, or at least exposure to, extremist ideology.  The university is a convenient place to find young individuals who are searching for meaning and direction in their lives, and who may be open to new ideas (Schwartz, May 26, 2003).

Although it appears as if many individuals volunteer for recruitment, this process may be better described as individuals who seek affiliation, identity, and connection, and are vulnerable to being influenced by radical preaching.  It is important to emphasize that despite a wish to volunteer, the recruiters conduct a considerable assessment of all who seek to join.

Those who seek meaning and connection make a series of commitments: from participation with their new friends in prayer, to helping around the mosque, to taking on special tasks from the imam, with the end result of becoming more deeply embedded in this collective group. With each new opportunity for connection and contact comes exposure to an extremist ideology and radical interpretation of Islam. The recruit is told and readily accepts the words, teachings, and new ways in which he must live his life, especially if he is to remain with the group. He is taught the Qur'an and encouraged to memorize its teachings. For those who memorize the Qur'an, there is status and recognition. Although the words "teaching" and "study" are used, the process more closely reflects that of *indoctrination*.  There is no room for critical thinking, scrutiny, or questioning. Their ideas are presented as the law, and the new recruit must adjust his life accordingly.

# Examples of Islamic Extremist Group Recruitment

E xamining the recruitment patterns and practices of known Islamic groups, such as Tablighi Jamat (TJ) and Jemaah Islamyia (JI), may provide some insight into platforms for source operation planning.  Given that Muslim men are often recruited into extremist cells through a personal search for meaning, direction, and structure, many times the path begins with participation in a religious group that seeks to bring wayward Muslims back to Islam. There have been several prosecuted cases of significant extremists who have who have identified connections to TJ, JI, and other similar groups, and were subsequently recruited into extremist cells to carry out attacks.  It may be useful to examine the potential for using these groups as a mechanism through which to penetrate the Islamic extremist network.

## *Tablighi Jamat*

Although the Tablighi Jamat (TJ) has no direct relationship with terrorist groups, it has been used as a vehicle by Islamic extremists for spotting potential recruits.  TJ was founded in the 1920's in India.  From there, its influence and membership spread across South Asia, Africa, and Europe. It is best known as a fraternity of traveling Muslim preachers who proselytize in an attempt to bring wayward Muslims back to Islam. They operate in smaller collectives (missionary bands), reaching out worldwide to mosques and college campuses.  Their stated focus is da'wa, which translates to "call" or "invitation," but generally refers to Muslim missionary work (Sageman, 2004).  TJ is currently believed to be the most widespread conservative Islamic movement in the world (Ali, 2003), and has been characterized as "the mother of all the Pakistan-based jihadi organizations active not only in the CARs, Chechnya and Dagestan, but also in other parts of the world" (Raman, September 15, 1999).
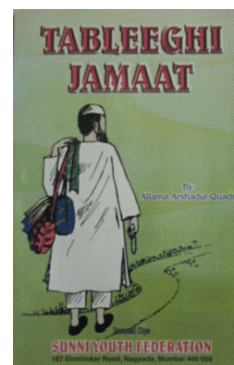
TJ seeks to unite Muslims from different localities by encouraging them to revert to the ways of the Prophet Muhammad.   They zealously promulgate the message that breaking from worldliness in favor of piety and

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spirituality is a means for salvation and success in both realms. They seek to remove the strains of materialism from the hearts and minds of Muslims, inculcate in them a high moral ethic, and guide them toward righteousness and Islamic spirituality.  Thorough *tablighi* (preaching), they believe that this new Muslim identity and solidarity will be forged (Ali, 2003).

TJ's missionary activity includes evangelizing door-to-door and attempting to return young men to Islam. Their target focus is promoting change within an individual astray from society, particularly among young Muslim men who have wandered from the Muslim faith or adherence to its tenets.  Their message can be particularly attractive to those who feel lost or that something in their lives is "missing."  The six principles of TJ help provide guidance to daily living and maximize the inclusiveness of their outreach. For example, simple dress eliminates visible status barriers, putting all on equal footing.  TJ members also use simple and polite language to cultivate modesty and humbleness in themselves, which also makes their preaching more effective and globally appealing to the general Muslim population (Alexiev, 2005).

Like many Islamic organizations (especially those with radical, militant ties), TJ has a graded, sequential progression for group involvement, affiliation, and access.  The public face of TJ offers a welcome introduction to all, and an entry portal for those who show "zeal" and "interest" in going beyond the entry phase.  One of the main vehicles for further assessment is participation (by special invitation) in a small, intensive study group (*halqa*). After joining a Tablighi group at a local mosque or Islamic center – and completing a few local missions – TJ officials invite star recruits to the TJ center in Raiwind, Pakistan for four months of additional "missionary training." Representatives with connections to terrorist organizations approach the students at the Raiwind center and invite them to undertake military training.  Most who are approached agree to do so (Alexiev, 2005).

Because of its size and structure, TJ provides a potential entry platform for source insertion.  At a minimum, it facilitates connection to individuals who may seek or be associated with extremist factions.  The graded sequence of involvement also gives the Special Agent a venue for source assessment, and the rubric of TJ affiliation can provide cover for action. The source may begin with receptive interest, then gradually build on their experience, increase their involvement and activity, and ultimately be accepted as one who is enthusiastically committed and seeking greater opportunities to travel around the world in support of jihad.

The connection between Tablighi Jamat and the arrest and convictions of several terrorists in the United States has demonstrated a connection to transnational terrorism.  These arrests include Iyman Faris, John Walker-Lindh, and the Lackawanna Six. In each of these cases, the TJ was a vehicle that led to their radicalization and their subsequent commitment to extremism, and/or was used as cover for their jihad activities. As a result, Faris, Walker-Lindh, and the men from Lackawanna traveled to Pakistan and Afghanistan in pursuit of their religious study, made a commitment to jihad, and received training at organized terrorist training camps.

Similarly, while there has been no direct connection to the TJ, the recent arrest of Hamid Hayat in Lodi, California illustrates a connection between the study of Islam, the path to extremism, and the commitment to jihad. Hayat allegedly admitted to traveling to Pakistan where he studied in a *madrassah* before entering a terrorist training camp in 2004. Upon the completion of his training, he returned to the US. This case is similar to Faris, Lackawanna, and others who have also been arrested on terrorism charges and who have followed a similar path for recruitment and radicalization. It is this pathway that Special Agents need to be most familiar with when running operations. Appendix C provides in-depth case studies of these individuals.

## *Jemaah Islamiya*[5]

The origins of Jemaah Islamiya ("Islamic Community", JI) were born out of a radical movement in the 1940's, called Darul Islam (DI).  DI was involved in several Islamic conflicts in the region, including the fight for Indonesian independence from Dutch colonial rule and subsequent efforts to establish an Islamic state.  Under the leadership of Abu Bakar Bashir and Abdullah Sungkar, DI grew as a radical Islamic movement, targeting the poorest, most disenfranchised segments of society (which were abundant).  Over the ensuing decades, JI's influence spread across the region into Malaysia and the Philippines.  JI was further energized by the training, support, and

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[5] Jemaah Islamiyah in South East Asia: Damaged but Still Dangerous. ICG Asia Report No. 63. August 26, 2003. International Crisis Group.

new alliances it formed while fighting alongside of the Afghan *mujahidin*.   There, the seeds of a relationship were sown with leaders of the Taliban and other key figures (including Usama bin Laden) in what ultimately would become Al-Qa'ida.

Ideology, training, and an intricate network of marriages hold the JI network together.  Marriages are arranged between subordinates and JI family members.  JI also relies on a small circle of *pesantenes* (Muslim boarding schools, similar to the Islamic curriculum *madrassahs*) to propagate extremist teachings and provide a steady stream of new recruits and supporters.  JI shares a great deal with Al-Qa'ida, including its origins in the Afghan conflict and a core violent and virulent anti-Western ideology.  JI has even been characterized as "the Al-Qa'ida of Southeast Asia" (Erickson, February 6, 2002). Therefore, it is not surprising to see some similarities in recruitment methodology.

JI takes a very systematic approach to recruitment for operations.  Like TJ, they have a progressive, staged procedure of assessment. Individuals are initially invited to join a religious group meeting, then encouraged to begin attending regularly. During the course of their attendance, they are slowly assessed with regard to their demonstrated zeal for the presented teachings and ideas.  Additionally, their commitment to Islam and their specific commitment to the group are also assessed.  Spotters will probe and observe a new member's interest in religious topics, as well as his adherence to the rules and practices of the group.  Finally, among those who seem to connect to the ideology, there is further assessment of specific aptitudes, talents, and skills. Spotters will assess the individual's strengths and weaknesses, as well as their life experiences.

Once a person has become connected to the group and shows commitment to its members and ideals, JI members will attempt to retain and reinforce the person's interest by sending him for further teaching in areas most consistent with his interests and skills. These courses are often conducted in a seminar format and are held after regular religious meetings or on weekends. There is a deliberate attempt – particularly for the better candidates – to match them with training and deployment opportunities that best utilize their strengths and unique capabilities. They have even been known to confer titles as a reward for increased commitment.

Particularly in the early scouting stages, JI makes an effort to create opportunities for connection and commitment that will be enjoyable or rewarding, not onerous or demanding. Invitations to group activities (e.g., speeches, study group, etc.) are common initial points of contact.  Over time, demands for obedience, deference, and adherence to rules are increased. Obedience and conformity are critical to JI recruits.  The group typically will dictate the manner of one's appearance and behavior, as well as the books and magazines that a member should read, and jihad-promotion videos that should be viewed.

# Conclusion

**T**his paper has outlined some psychological considerations for planning and running a source operation against Islamic extremist targets.  The objective is simply to provide information for Special Agents to ponder as they develop operational scenarios and spot potential sources.  As is true with successful interrogations, it is critical to understand the culture and mindset of the both source and target.  Additionally, it is important to understand the adversary's recruitment and radicalization processes, as well as the contexts in which screening and recruitment occur. Detailed descriptions of known Islamic extremists are offered, so that potential sources can be selected or shaped to provide a good fit with others in the target group.  Finally, detailed source assessment questions, recruitment criteria used by the adversary, and several case studies are provided in the appendices.

Source operations provide a window to the mind of the adversary. Penetrating a network of known extremist cells offers clues to the adversary's capability and intention that routine physical and technical surveillance cannot.  Under the new operational mandate of preemption and proaction, the goal is to interrupt forward motion and prevent attacks before they occur.  These objectives can be advanced more efficiently by learning about the inner-working of attack plans and preparation than by any post-attack investigation, with use of far fewer resources and no tragic loss.

# Acknowledgements

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# Appendix A:
## Source Assessment Questions

The following is a series of questions for Special Agents to consider with potential counterterrorism sources.

## *Competing Identities Issues*

- Is the individual someone who was born and raised as a Muslim, but since immigrating to the US, has not been observant for many years?
- Is the individual a recent immigrant who retains strong ties to his country of origin and remains strongly identified with other Middle Eastern immigrants, thus demonstrating resistance to assimilating into US culture?
- Has the individual expressed opinions on the duty for Muslims to maintain loyalty to other Muslims?
- Does the individual exhibit any conflict with the idea that living a pious Muslim life is completely compatible with being loyal to the US?
- Does he live in a closed community of other Middle Eastern immigrants and demonstrate little assimilation to the US and US culture?
- Does he pray at a Mosque where only foreigners attend?
- How was the individual identified as a potential source?
- How has the individual become associated with the US government? Is he in the military or a contract employee?

## *Converts*

- If the individual is a US citizen by birth, what were the circumstances that led him to become a Muslim?
- Is the individual someone who was born in the US and converted to Islam while seeking a solution to a crisis in his life?
- Where was he converted?
- What influenced his conversion?
- What was his motive for seeking conversion?
- What has sustained his conversion?
- How did he become known to the Special Agent?  To what degree is he vulnerable to influence by others in authority?
- If the individual was born and raised in the US, but has since adopt an extremist and anti-Western view, how did he come to be radicalized?  What does that tell us about this individual's identity and his ability to make a commitment as a trusted source?

## *Target Accessibility – Commitment*

- Many of the Islamic extremist operatives who have been successfully recruited were searching for meaning, direction, and structure in their lives, and sought a return to Islam as a solution. How does this apply to the source?  Why has he returned to Islam, and how well can he dissimulate?
- Can he demonstrate zeal and excitement that leads him to appear captivated?
- Is he compliant and does he have a low level of assertiveness?
- How does searching for meaning and direction in life become a visible vulnerability to the target?   How does it suggest to the target that the source will make a commitment to the group?
- How will the individual make a commitment to a group that holds an extremist view? How will he handle participating with a group that preaches and adheres to a brand of Islam that must go unquestioned?

- It appears that affiliative needs may be more powerful than just the need to find a solution to a self-perceived crisis. How well does this fit the source's personality and behavior?
- How vulnerable is the individual to identifying with the target group who welcomes him, validates him, and brings him into their collective?
- How much of a role does "suspension of critical thinking" play in the targeted group, and how will the source adhere to that position and incorporate an extremist ideology?

## *Motivation*

- What are the individual's psychological needs?
- What is it that he may need from the Special Agent that keeps him motivated to continue?
- What factors should be monitored to assess his shifting loyalties?
- To what degree can the individual be trusted and for how long?
- What will the influence of the adversary have on the source over time in an environment that meets significant psychological needs for the source?
- How will the operation end? What criteria must be established to end an operation in a timely or premature fashion before the source's commitment to Islam and the group exceeds his commitment to the US?
- Why does the individual want to participate in collecting information on other Muslims?
- Is his motivation patriotic and nationalistic?
- Is the individual angered by 9/11, and does he believe that good Muslims and the Islamic religion do not call for the killing of innocents?
- Is his motivation based on the excitement of being affiliated with law enforcement?

## *Source Management*

- What impression is the individual trying to project and sustain toward the Special Agent?
- Based on impression management, what does the individual want and expect, and how does it influence how he reports collected information?
- Can a trusting dialogue and relationship be developed with the source?
- How does the source reconcile his beliefs with his religion and the actions of extremists while praying, socializing, and learning with the group?
- To what degree is the individual a linear thinker?
- To what degree is the individual an emotional processor?
- How emotionally reactive is he?
- How much of a risk-taker is he?

# Appendix B:
## Recruitment Chapter from the Al-Qa'ida Training Manual[6]

**UK/BM-14 TRANSLATION**

SECOND LESSON

NECESSARY QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS
FOR THE ORGANIZATION'S MEMBER

**1. Islam:**
> The member of the Organization must be Moslem. How can an unbeliever, someone from a revealed religion [Christian, Jew], a secular person, a communist, etc. protect Islam and Moslems and defend their goals and secrets when he does not believe in that religion [Islam]? The Israeli Army requires that a fighter be of the Jewish religion. Likewise, the command leadership in the Afghan and Russian armies requires anyone with an officer's position to be a member of the communist party.

**2. Commitment to the Organization's Ideology:**
> This commitment frees the Organization's members from conceptional problems.

**3. Maturity:**
> The requirements of military work are numerous, and a minor cannot perform them. The nature of hard and continuous work in dangerous conditions requires a great deal of psychological, mental, and intellectual fitness, which are not usually found in a minor. It is reported that Ibn Omar - may Allah be pleased with him - said, "During Ahad [battle] when I was fourteen years of age, I was submitted [as a volunteer] to the prophet - God bless and keep him. He refused me and did not throw me in the battle. During Khandak [trench] Day [battle] when I was fifteen years of age, I was also submitted to him, and he permitted me [to fight]."

**4. Sacrifice:**
> He [the member] has to be willing to do the work and undergo martyrdom for the purpose of achieving the goal and establishing the religion of majestic Allah on earth.

**5. Listening and Obedience**
> In the military, this is known today as discipline. It is expressed by how the member obeys the orders given to him. That is what our religion urges. The Glorious says, "O, ye who believe! Obey Allah and obey the messenger and those charged with authority among you." In the story of Hazifa Ben Al-Yaman - may Allah have mercy on him - who was exemplary in his obedience to Allah's messenger - Allah bless and keep him. When he [Mohammed] - Allah bless and keep him - sent him to spy on the Kureish and their allies during their siege of Madina, Hazifa said, "As he [Mohammed] called me by name to stand, he said, 'Go get me information about those people and do not alarm them about me.' As I departed, I saw Abou Soufian, and I placed an arrow in the bow. I [then] remembered the words of the messenger - Allah bless and keep him - 'do not alarm them about me.' If I had shot I would have hit him."

**6. Keeping Secrets and Concealing Information**
> [This secrecy should be used] even with the closest people, for deceiving the enemies is not easy. Allah says, "Even though their plots were such that as to shake the hills! [Koranic verse]." Allah's messenger -

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[6] From The Declaration of Jihad Against the Country's Tyrants Military Series: Military Studies in the Jihad Against the Tyrants

God bless and keep him - says, "Seek Allah's help in doing your affairs in secrecy." It was said in the proverbs, "The hearts of freemen are the tombs of secrets" and "Moslems' secrecy is faithfulness, and talking about it is faithlessness." [Mohammed] - God bless and keep him - used to keep work secrets from the closest people, even from his wife A'isha- may Allah's grace be on her.

## 7. Free of Illness

The Military Organization's member must fulfill this important requirement. Allah says, "There is no blame for those who are infirm, or ill, or who have no resources to spend."

## 8. Patience

[The member] should have plenty of patience for [enduring] afflictions if he is overcome by the enemies. He should not abandon this great path and sell himself and his religion to the enemies for his freedom. He should be patient in performing the work, even if it lasts a long time.

## 9. Tranquility and "Unflappability"

[The member] should have a calm personality that allows him to endure psychological traumas such as those involving bloodshed, murder, arrest, imprisonment, and reverse psychological traumas such as killing one or all of his Organization's comrades. [He should be able] to carry out the work.

## 10. Intelligence and Insight

When the prophet - Allah bless and keep him - sent Hazifa Ben Al-Yaman to spy on the polytheist and [Hafiza] sat among them, Abou Soufian said, "Let each one of you look at his companion." Hazifa said to his companion, "Who are you?" The companion replied, "So-and-so son of so-and-so."

In World War I, the German spy, Julius Seelber [PH] managed to enter Britain and work as a mail examiner due to the many languages he had mastered. From the letters, he succeeded in obtaining important information and sent it to the Germans. One of the letters that he checked was from a lady who had written to her brother's friend in the fleet. She mentioned that her brother used to live with her until he was transferred to a secret project that involved commercial ships. When Seelber read that letter, he went to meet that young woman and blamed her for her loose tongue in talking about military secrets. He, skillfully, managed to draw out of her that her brother worked in a secret project for arming old commercial ships. These ships were to be used as decoys in the submarine war in such a way that they could come close to the submarines, as they appeared innocent. Suddenly, cannonballs would be fired from the ship's hidden cannons on top of the ships, which would destroy the submarines. 48 hours later that secret was handed to the Germans.

## 11. Caution and Prudence

A. In his battle against the king of Tomedia [PH], the Roman general Speer [PH] sent an emissary to discuss with that king the matter of truce between the two armies. In reality, he had sent him to learn about the Tomedians' ability to fight. The general picked, Lilius [PH], one of his top commanders, for that task and sent with him some of his officers, disguised as slaves. During that mission, one of the king's officers, Sifax [PH] pointed to one of the [disguised] slaves and yelled, "That slave is a Roman officer I had met in a neighboring city. He was wearing a Roman uniform." At that point, Lilius used a clever trick and managed to divert the attention of the Tomedians from that by turning to the disguised officer and quickly slapping him on the face a number of times. He reprimanded him for wearing a Roman officer's uniform when he was a slave and for claiming a status that he did not deserve.

The officer accepted the slaps quietly. He bowed his head in humility and shame, as slaves do. Thus, Sifax men thought that officer was really a slave because they could not imagine that a Roman officer would accept these hits without defending himself.

King Sifax prepared a big feast for Lilius and his entourage and placed them in a house far away from his camp so they could not learn about his fortifications. They [the Romans] made another clever trick on top of the first one. They freed one of their horses and started chasing him in and around the camp. After they

learned about the extent of the fortifications they caught the horse and, as planned, managed to abort their mission about the truce agreement. Shortly after their return, the Roman general attacked King Sifax' camp and burned the fortifications. Sifax was forced to seek reconciliation.

B. There was a secret agent who disguised himself as an American fur merchant. As the agent was playing cards aboard a boat with some passengers, one of the players asked him about his profession. He replied that he was a "fur merchant." The women showed interest [in him] and began asking the agent - the disguised fur merchant - many questions about the types and prices of fur. He mentioned fur price figures that amazed the women. They started avoiding and regarding him with suspicion, as though he were a thief, or crazy.

## 12. Truthfulness and Counsel

The Commander of the faithful, Omar Ibn Al-Khattab - may Allah be pleased with him - asserted that this characteristic was vital in those who gather information and work as spies against the Moslems' enemies. He [Omar] sent a letter to Saad Ibn Abou Wakkas - may Allah be pleased with him - saying, "If you step foot on your enemies' land, get spies on them. Choose those whom you count on for their truthfulness and advice, whether Arabs or inhabitants of that land. Liars' accounts would not benefit you, even if some of them were true; the deceiver is a spy against you and not for you.

## 13. Ability to Observe and Analyze

The Israeli Mossad received news that some Palestinians were going to attack an Israeli El Al airplane. That plane was going to Rome with Golda Meir - Allah's curse upon her - the Prime Minister at the time, on board. The Palestinians had managed to use a clever trick that allowed them to wait for the arrival of the plane without being questioned by anyone. They had beaten a man who sold potatoes, kidnapped him, and hidden him. They made two holes in the top of that peddler's cart and placed two tubes next to the chimney through which two Russian-made "Strella" [PH] missiles could be launched. The Mossad officers traveled the airport back and forth looking for that led them to the Palestinians. One officer passed the potato cart twice without noticing anything. On his third time, he noticed three chimneys, but only one of them was working with smoke coming out of it. He quickly steered toward the cart and hit it hard. The cart overturned, and the Palestinians were captured.

## 14. Ability to Act, Change Positions and Conceal Oneself

A. [An example] is what Noaim Ibn Masoud had done in his mission to cause agitation among the tribes of Koraish, those of Ghatfan, and the Jews of Koreitha. He would control his reactions and managed to skillfully play his role. Without showing signs of inconsistency, he would show his interest and zeal towards the Jews one time and show his concern about the Koraish at another.

B. In 1960, a car driven by an American colonel collided with a truck. The colonel lost consciousness, and while unconscious at the hospital, he started speaking Russian fluently. It was later discovered that the colonel was a Soviet spy who was planted in the United States. He had fought in Korea in order to conceal his true identity and to gather information and critical secrets. If not for the collision, no one would have suspected or confronted him.

# Appendix C:
## Case Studies in Islamic Extremist Recruitment

## Iyman Faris

Iyman Faris plead guilty to helping plot simultaneous terrorist attacks to collapse the Brooklyn Bridge and aid in another unspecified attack in Washington, DC. The attacks, planned for sometime in 2002, were never carried out, though Faris had inspected the target and agreed to buy materials for cutting its cables and derailing a train. Faris' first links to Al-Qa'ida came in late 2000, when he traveled with a long-time friend, who was an operative for the group, from Pakistan to Afghanistan. It is believed that his first contact with Al-Qa'ida members was in Pakistan. It is also believed that he met with Usama bin Laden and Khailid Shaykh Muhammad in Afghanistan a year before the 9/11 attack.

Iyman Faris (aka Mohammad Rauf) was born in June 1969, in the disputed Himalayan region of Kashmir.  He arrived in the US in May 1994, and became a US citizen in December 1999. Faris came to the US on a student visa, but failed to enroll in school. He was married to Geneva Bowling from 1995 to 2000.  They lived together in a small home in Columbus, Ohio, where he worked as a truck driver (Arena, 2003a, 2003b).

Some who interacted with Faris indicated that he had a very good sense of humor and liked to laugh.  Others recalled a man who sometimes lost his temper and seemed unapproachable and temperamental. He reportedly struggling with suicidal ideation and was once hospitalized for attempting to jump off a bridge in downtown Columbus (Thomas, Walsh, & Ryan, September 8, 2003).

On any given day, Faris appeared to be a hard-working, independent truck driver. However, according to the investigation, Faris led a secret second life. As a commercial truck driver, Faris was licensed to haul flammable and poisonous chemicals.  Additionally, he was able to make deliveries to cargo planes at airports and businesses "without raising suspicion."  In court documents, Faris said his Al-Qa'ida contact was interested in cargo planes because "they would hold more weight and more fuel" (CBS News, June 20, 2003).

In 2000, Faris made a pilgrimage to Mecca, Saudi Arabia, and traveled to Pakistan and Afghanistan, where he was introduced to Usama bin Laden. At that time, his life was unraveling, his marriage was failing, and his father had died. It is believed that he became involved with the Tablighi Jamat, who facilitated some of his travel abroad through religious missionary work. However, upon returning to Columbus, Faris didn't even hint at his newfound radical connections. His neighbors in Columbus were shocked to learn he was an Al-Qa'ida operative (Thomas, Walsh, & Ryan, 2003).

Court documents report that before working in the US for Al-Qa'ida, Faris completed a number of Al-Qa'ida jobs in Pakistan. In his first visit to Al-Qa'ida camps, one of bin Laden's men asked him about ultra light planes and said Al-Qa'ida was seeking to buy an "escape airplane."  About two months later, Faris went to an Internet cafe in Karachi where he looked up information on ultra lights and provided it to an Al-Qa'ida representative (Department of Justice, October 28, 2003). In Pakistan, Faris helped procure 2,000 sleeping bags for use by Al-Qa'ida and delivered cash and cell phones to an Al-Qa'ida operative. In late December 2001, he bought several airline tickets to Yemen for use by Al-Qa'ida operatives. A few months later – less than a year after the 9/11 attacks – he was introduced to an Al-Qa'ida operational planner and told of the new planned attacks on New York and Washington. The leader also said that Al-Qa'ida planned to derail trains and asked Faris to procure the tools for that plot as well.

Faris was tasked by Al-Qa'ida to assess the possibility of bringing down the Brooklyn Bridge by cutting the suspension cables with gas cutters. He was ordered to buy equipment for the bridge plot and for the second arm of the simultaneous attack, derailing a train in Washington, D.C. In communications to Al-Qa'ida, Faris was told to refer to the gas cutters as "gas stations" and tools for the derailing as "mechanic shops." Faris researched the bridge on the Internet and asked a friend about obtaining the gas cutters. He also traveled to New York to scout the bridge and evaluate the chances of a successful attack. In coded messages sent to his Al-Qa'ida handlers via a third party in the US, Faris said he was still trying to obtain "gas stations" and "mechanic shops." Between April 2002 and March 2003, he sent several coded messages through another individual to his longtime friend in Pakistan, indicating he had been unsuccessful in his attempts to obtain the necessary equipment. Faris admitted to traveling to New York City in late 2002 to examine the bridge and concluded that the plot to destroy the bridge by severing cables was unlikely to succeed due to the bridge's security and structure. In early 2003, he sent an email to Khalid Shaykh Muhammad stating that "the weather is too hot" – a coded message indicating that the bridge plot was unlikely to succeed. Law enforcement credited the posting of police in marked cars at the ends of the Brooklyn Bridge, where suspension cables are considered most vulnerable to attack, for helping to foil the plot.

# Hamid & Umer Hayat

Hamid and Umer Hayat were arrested in Lodi, California in June 2005 and charged with lying to FBI agents regarding their terrorist activities. Hamid Hayat admitted that he had attended a terrorist training camp in Pakistan. A review of the affidavit filed in the United States District Court - Eastern District of California (United States of America vs. Hamid Hayat & Umer Hayat, June 7, 2005) reveals valuable information about the Hayat's commitment to jihad.

Hamid Hayat's pathway to jihad mirrors the recruitment and radicalization process evident throughout the world. Hayat is a US citizen and second generation Pakistani. He attended a mosque in his community that is known to preach extremist ideology and to have hosted imams who are veterans of jihad and who advocate the liberation of Muslim lands occupied by non-believers. His travel to Pakistan to attend a *madrasah* was facilitated by family members. He subsequently attended the training camp in Pakistan and returned to the US. Despite being screened through the "no fly" list, he was allowed to return to the US. Hamid returned to a moderate sized community in California where other US citizens had also traveled to Pakistan to attend terrorist training camps.

Hamid Hayat admitted to attending training camp for approximately six months in 2003-2004. He stated that Al-Qa'ida supported, ran, and provided instructors for the camp. Hamid described the camp as providing structured paramilitary training, including training in weapons, explosives, interior room tactics, hand-to-hand combat, and strenuous exercise. Classroom instruction included ideological rhetoric detailing opposition towards the US and other non-Muslim countries. Hamid stated that during the weapons training, photos of various high ranking US political figures, including President Bush, would be pasted on their targets. He added that he and others at the camp were being trained to kill Americans.

Hamid Hayat maintained numerous connections to Islamic Extremism that influenced his radicalization. Hamid attended a mosque in Lodi, California that held extremist views. The mosque's imam, Adil Kahn, was a known extremist with connections to Al-Qa'ida. Hamid's father supported his son's commitment to jihad by facilitating travel and providing a monthly allowance during the time his son attended the training camp. Hamid's grandfather (Umer's father-in-law), Qazi Saeed Ur Rehman, ran the Rawalpindi, Pakistani *madrassah* that Hamid attended; he would send students to the training camps after completing their *madrassah* education. According to Umer, Hamid was first interested in attending a training camp during his early teenage years and was influenced by a classmate at the *madrassah*. Additionally, Hamid's uncle is veteran of the Afghan jihad and is noted as a direct influence on Hamid's desire to wage jihad. Hamid specifically requested to come to the US to carry out his jihadi mission.

# Jose Padilla

Jose Padilla was 31 at the time of his arrest. Born in Brooklyn, New York and raised in the northwest side of Chicago since age five, he was described as a "normal child who spent time playing and studying." However, Padilla changed as he grew older. During his teenage years, he became a street gang member and began perpetrating violent crimes. According to Cook County, Illinois documents, Padilla spent time in juvenile detention for a 1985 armed robbery that left one victim dead as a result of stab wounds. He subsequently spent another stint in prison for opening fire on a motorist. Padilla also spent time in an alternative high school in Chicago for his involvement in the crime (Fox News, June 11, 2002).

Padilla lived in Florida through much of the 1990s and converted to Islam after serving time in a South Florida jail. Following a one-year jail sentence, he was placed on probation and reportedly completed a substance abuse program. A calm seemed to settle over Padilla at this time. It is unclear if he had outgrown committing crimes or if his girlfriend, Cherie Maria Stullz, helped him control his temper. Padilla and Stultz found jobs at a Taco Bell in Davie, Florida. The restaurant's manager, Mohammad Javed, was a Pakistani immigrant and mentored the young man. According to reports by Javed, the couple was poor but trying to make something of their lives. They wanted to buy a car and establish a good credit rating. However, Javed insisted he did not proselytize his young employees. When Padilla, who had heard about Islam in prison, began asking him about the conversion process, Javed reportedly told Padilla to find a mosque on his own (Ripley, June 24, 2002).

Padilla began a 10-year odyssey, moving closer to radical elements within Islam. In South Florida, as many as 60,000 Muslims attended two-dozen mosques and religious sites. While they spanned the spectrum of ideology, a subculture of extremism took hold in certain pockets. For example, a community leader, who requested anonymity, described a growing radicalized cadre of mostly Middle Eastern men who aggressively recruited young Muslims. These men often drove BMWs and Mercedes, and lured followers with money.

Padilla attended at least two mosques in the Broward County area that have since been linked to extremist activity and anti-US sentiment. Those who had been radicalized through these mosques were primarily less educated and felt oppressed. In 1994, Padilla converted formally to Islam at the al-Hnan mosque in Sunrise, Florida. Around the time of his conversion, Padilla legally changed his name to Ibrahim. Stultz, whom he married in 1996, also converted. Despite being unemployed for much of this time, he started wearing expensive watches and clothes, along with a red-and-white *kaffiyeh* (head dress). In 1998, Padilla suddenly left his wife and moved to Egypt, telling acquaintances at al-Iman mosque that he was going to learn Arabic. Padilla has since told investigators that his travels were sponsored by "friends" who were interested in his education. Using the name Abdullah al-Muhajir, he moved to a suburb of Cairo. However, he was reportedly frustrated by the secular, state-controlled brand of Islam taught in mainstream schools. In response, he immersed himself into the extremist underground, where he was advised to study in Pakistan and Afghanistan (BBC News, 2002).

Padilla eventually moved to Pakistan in 2001, where, like many militants, he married the widow whose husband died while waging jihad. He then traveled to Afghanistan, where he met with Al-Qa'ida officials (including Abu Zubaydah) and trained in the camps. His training included studying how to wire explosive devices and researching radiological dispersion devices. According to the Department of Justice, Padilla wanted to detonate a nuclear bomb that he thought he could make using instructions from the Internet or a radiological dispersal device ("dirty bomb"). However, his handlers did not think the plot was feasible and instead asked him to focus on exploding apartment buildings in New York using natural gas lines (Fox News, June 1, 2004). On May 8, 2002, he was arrested after flying into Chicago's O'Hare airport from Pakistan, for what US authorities described as a reconnaissance mission.

# The Lackawanna Six

A review of the FBI's "Summary of the Debriefings of the " (Britten, Needham, & Leary, 2004) provides a rare view into Al-Qa'ida's attempt to establish an operational cell in the US. Overall, this case reflects a very thoughtful, tactical, and patient recruitment methodology.



The main recruiter for the cell was Kamal Derwish. Derwish was born in Lackawanna, New York in 1973 and moved to Saudi Arabia at age six. He eventually moved to Yemen in 1997 following an arrest in Saudi Arabia for "radical activities." Derwish returned to Lackawanna in 1998 and gained a position at the Lackawanna mosque teaching Arabic and the Qur'an to the Lackawanna youth.

Around Ramadan 2000, a Tablighi Jamat group from Toronto made regular visits to the Lackawanna mosque. They offered religious training (*dawa*) to the Lackawanna youth and encouraged the youth to volunteer for this training. It was at this time that the Lackawanna Six and several other congregation members began attending evening meetings at one of the member's (Yahya Goba) apartments, where Derwish lectured and told religious stories. By February 2001, the discussions about jihad had become more serious. This reflected movement toward introducing the recruits to jihad by isolating them from the rest of the congregation, and at times, from each other.

In April 2001, the recruits were introduced to Juma Aldosari. Aldosari, a Saudi who held Bahraini citizenship, was initially introduced as a friend of Derwish and an imam from Indiana. Some of the subjects reported during debriefing that they believed Aldosari was brought in to "close the deal," to convince the recruits to attend jihad training.

The recruiters employed a gradual approach to jihad indoctrination. Derwish's lectures initially discussed proper Islamic lifestyles (e.g., how to treat women, how to dress, and how to pray). The topic of jihad was gradually introduced into the sessions by discussing the atrocities committed against Muslims in Bosnia, Chechneya, and Palestine by the Americans, Serbians, and Israelis. Derwish and Aldosari told the recruits that "jihad was a form of worship and a Muslim duty" and that "it was mandatory for every young man to prepare for jihad."

Eventually, Derwish moved to ridiculing and shaming the prospective cell members. He criticized them during individual meetings with the recruits on aspects of their lives, including their dress, prayer habits, lack of knowledge of Islam, marriage of non-Muslim Caucasian women, watching TV, and "living the good life." He further individually coerced the recruits, telling them that they "were on thin ice with Allah," that they would "go to hell if they did not train for jihad," and that since they had lived this extravagant US lifestyle, they "should be able to give four months to jihad training for Allah." He then promoted the virtues of jihad, telling them "the reward for jihad was the highest reward in heaven" and "one did not have to endure the torment of the grave and the day of judgment if he participated in jihad."

Another technique used in the recruitment process was modeling by the recruiters. Derwish eventually disclosed that he attended a basic training camp in Afghanistan, describing the camp as a beautiful place, with green trees and a waterfall nearby. He also told stories of the heroic efforts of the fighters in Bosnia and their heroic efforts to defend Muslim women. Aldosari later disclosed that he met Derwish while fighting in Bosnia and spoke of their jihad experiences. Derwish told the group that he was going to move his family to Yemen, finish his training in Afghanistan, and possibly fight with the Taliban.

During some of the evening sessions, Derwish conducted operational assessments of the recruits by playing "spin the bottle." In this game, the recruits would spin a bottle, then talk about the good and bad qualities of the person the bottle pointed towards.

Once the recruits had committed to traveling to Afghanistan for jihad training, they received specific instructions from their recruiters. Both Derwish and Aldosari instructed their recruits on supplies to bring to Afghanistan. Several weeks prior to their departure, the recruits purchased a variety of items, including certain books, diarrhea medication, boots, medicine, and flashlights. Additionally, Derwish instructed the recruits to use the

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Tablighi Jamat as a cover story.  They were advised to "tell everyone they were traveling to Pakistan to study Islam or for *dawa*."  In order to lend credibility to this cover story, three of the recruits traveled on at least one occasion to the Tablighi Jamat's mosque in Toronto.  Upon re-entering the US following their Afghanistan jihad training, the recruits told Customs officials that they were in Pakistan for Tablighi Jamat training.

In June 2001, the FBI received an anonymous letter identifying the cell members.  Following an exhaustive investigation by the Buffalo JTTF, the six cell members were arrested.  Each of them pled guilty to terrorism-related charges.  A $5 million reward had been issued for a seventh member, Jaber Elbaneh.  Derwish and several other Al-Qa'ida members were killed in Yemen in the fall of 2002, when a US Predator drone fired a Hellfire missile at their SUV.