# COUNTERING THE IDEOLOGICAL SUPPORT FOR TERRORISM

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*The struggle with revolutionary Islam will only be won when the West begins to methodically analyze the ideological religion that empowers it and forms its basis". [1]*

*Unless Muslims make a stand and reclaim Islam from Islamists, then future generations of Muslims will adopt a political ideology as their religion.[2]*

## INTRODUCTION

International terrorism is a symptom of a deeper malaise. It is often a weapon in the hands of an ideological movement that has specific doctrines and goals. While it involves insurgency and criminality, it is the expression of a political war of ideas carried on in numerous fields such as psychology, communication, economics, etc. While experts might argue on whether it is a criminal activity or a military act of war, they often forget that it is an ideological war with much wider implications.

Active terrorism is but the tip of the iceberg of the greater ideological movement that sustains it and manipulates it to further its goals of reshaping the world order in its own image.

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[1] Stephen P. Lambert, "The Sources of Islamic Revolutionary Conduct", Washington DC: Center for Strategic Intelligence Research, Joint Military Intelligence College, 2005, p.171.

[2] "Pulling together to defeat terror", Quilliam Foundation, April 2008, http://www.quilliamfoundation.org/images/stories/pdfs/pulling-together-to-defeat-terror.pdf, viewed 10 November 2008.

**ISLAMIC INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM LINKED TO ISLAMIST IDEOLOGY**

International terrorism carried out by Muslims is a small visible part of a much larger ideological movement, Islamism (political Islam, fundamentalist Islam), that has a specific agenda and that operates across all areas of human existence and society. Limiting counter-terrorism to the military, judicial and criminal spheres fails to recognise the reality of the ideological universe of Islamism and its global totalitarian claims to hegemony in all spheres of human existence and in all geographical regions.

While we must distinguish between the majority of ordinary peaceful Muslims and the Islamists, we must also recognise the deep roots of Islamism in classical and traditional Islam. It is this link to the sources of Islam and its early history that maintains its vitality and enables it to propagate itself and gain recruits and resources wherever Muslims are found.

While there are more irenic forms of Islam that seek to spiritualise the violence found in Islamic source texts, it is Islamism, a totalitarian ideology, that since the 1970s is gaining dominance both in the Muslim street and in the Muslim power centres all over the world, fuelled by the general dissatisfaction in the Muslim world with the existing order and by generous funding from Muslim oil wealth.

Islamism emerged as a branch of the Islamic reform movement demanding a return to the source texts and the model of the Islamic state under Muhammad and his Companions. Islamists demanded the reintegration of politics within a total Islamic system in which implementation of shari'a is the crucial element. They aim at transforming Muslim society and acquiring power so as to set up true Islamic states under shari'a. Radicals diverged from the gradualist mainstream by justifying the immediate use of force to achieve their aims. They used reinterpreted traditional concepts and ancient classical Muslim paradigms to justify indiscriminate violence against all perceived enemies, both Muslims and non-Muslims. The borderline between mainline gradualist Islamists and the violent radicals is not clear cut and defined, but flexible and permeable in both directions. While there is agreement on the ultimate goals, there is constant argument over the means of how best to achieve them.

The war against Islamist terrorism is a war of ideas, ideologies and worldviews. However, it is important to clarify that the war on terror is not a "war on Islam", as Islamists are quick to label it. Islamists have "politicised Islam and religionised politics".[3] While the Islamist concept of jihad is rooted in its classical doctrine, it goes beyond it in rejecting the limits imposed by the classical *ulama*, such as that only the ruler can proclaim and lead a jihad. In this sense it is a modern and post-modern phenomenon that draws on Fascist, Marxist and anarchist concepts to complement its Islamic core. The talk of revolution, liberation, the oppressed, and violence as a purifying element is part of the process of Islamising modern totalitarian ideologies undertaken by Hassan al Banna (1906-1949), Sayyid Qutb (1906-1966), Abu'l A'la Mawdudi (1903-1979) and Ali Shariati (1933-1977) among others.

On the practical level it is important to realise that there is a linkage between the universal Islamist agenda and local and regional aspects and concerns. Islamists are masters at manipulating local Muslim grievances to further their own global ideology.

Islamists have revived the classical concept of jihad which includes, but is much more than, the aspect of military violence. Western academic attempts at apologetics for Islamic jihad, spiritualising it and downplaying its imperative nature grounded in Muhammad's example and commands, merely help camouflage the real intentions of Islamists and dull the perception of the threat of their commitment to the furtherance of their goal of Islamic hegemony by all means. It plays into the hands of well established classical rules of jihad, which claim among others that "war is deceit" and that dissimulation and breaking of treaties are part of the arsenal of war in Islamic jihad.[4]

While tactical imperatives may require some negotiation with Islamists, the false hopes aroused by some in the West that Islamist movements are committed to

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[3] Bassam Tibi, "Countering Ideological Terrorism", *Defence Against Terrorism Review,* Vol. 1, No. 1, Spring 2008, pp. 101-136.
[4] Raymond Ibrahim, "Comments Islam's war doctrines ignored", *Middle East Strategy at Harvard,* 29 May 2008, http://blogs.law.harvard.edu/mesh/2008/05/islams_war_doctrines_ignored/, viewed 7 November 2008.

democracy, tolerance and peace are a mirage. As Mahdi 'Akef, the Supreme Guide of the Muslim Brotherhood has stated, Islam is the real democracy and "the shari'a is the solution" to all problems. [5] Democracy is simply one path among many to achieve power in the state and then impose the Islamist version of the totalitarian Islamic state under shari'a.

## A DEFINITION OF ISLAMISM

Contemporary Islamism is an umbrella term for a wide variety of movements and discourses committed to Islam as a political ideology, a total system and way of life, and as a viable alternative to Western secular ideologies.[6] Islamism is committed to a return to the original scriptures of Islam, both Qur'an and Sunna, seen as divine and inerrant, as their ultimate sole authority for all spheres of life, interpreting them in a literalist manner. Islamism aims at bringing all of contemporary society under God's sovereignty, rule and law as revealed in their literalist interpretations of the Islamic scriptures. Islamists are radical and rigorous in terms of the contemporary application of these scriptures, extremist in terms of their methods, and exclusivist in their views of competing ideologies.[7]

Islamists are united in their pan-Islamic view of the global *umma* as the locus of their loyalty. They reject modern states as a temporary evil that will give way to their utopian global Islamic state under shari'a. Islamists reject Western cultural, political and economic systems as detrimental to the Muslim world. They hold

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[5] Mahdi 'Akef in an interview with *al-karama* newspaper, 17 September 2007, quoted in Jonathan D. Halevi, "The Muslim Brotherhood: A Moderate Islamic Alternative to al-Qaeda or a Partner in Global Jihad?", Institute for Contemporary Affairs*, Jerusalem Viewpoints*, No. 558, 1 November 2007, http://www.jcpa.org/JCPA/Templates/ShowPage.asp?DBID=1&TMID=111&LNGID=1&FID=379 &PID=0&IID=1920, viewed 7 November 2008.

[6] Mumtaz Ahmad, ed., *State Politics and Islam,* Indianapolis, IN: American Trust Publications, 1986. p. 507.

[7] Gabriel Ben-Dor. T"he Uniqueness of Islamic Fundamentalism", in Maddy-Weitzman & Inbar, ed., *Islamic Radicalism in the Greater Middle East*, London: Frank Cass, 1997, pp. 239-240; see also: Gabriel Almond, Emmanuel Sivan, & R. Scott Appleby, "Fundamentalism: Genus and Species", in Martin Marty & R. Scott Appleby, eds., *Fundamentalisms Compared*, 1995. p. 405.

that these systems were forcibly imposed by the imperial and colonial powers and they must be rejected and replaced.

Their radicalism is expressed in their commitment and effort to achieve a thorough reordering of society in order to bring it in line with their ideal vision of what they believe Islamic scripture demands of a society. Their extremism refers to their readiness for sacrifice and their willingness to engage in aggressive action in pursuit of their goals. This may be achieved by saving individuals and adding them to alternative Islamist pure societies, by erecting walls of separation to protect the community from the pollution of the outside world, by entering the democratic process in order to influence society and majority culture so as to effect constitutional changes in line with their ideology, or by legitimising violence in order to take over power in the state and impose reforms from above. Radicalism and extremism imply a degree of intensity and a commitment to political activism and/or the legitimisation of violence.

For Islamists, the restoration of Islamic glory is to be achieved by purifying society from un-Islamic practices and teachings, by a politically binding reinstatement of Islam's original divine sources (Qur'an and Sunna) as the ultimate authority which, as expressed in shari'a, must be applied to modern contexts, and by the establishment of an ideal Islamic state modelled on that of Muhammad, the Rashidun (the four Rightly Guided Caliphs), and Muhammad's Companions. This threefold programme demands political activism, and will inevitably result in the transformation of both individual Muslims and of society in a comprehensive Islamic system (*nizam Islami*) adapted to the modern world, which will usher in a unified worldwide "Islamic state" (*khilafa*) in which shari'a is the basis and sole source of all legislation.[8]

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[8] Ben-Dor. 1997. p. 241; John L. Esposito. 1992. *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality?*, New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 22-23.

## WHAT ARE THE ISLAMIST GOALS?

Islamism is a religio-political ideological, global, transnational, extremist movement with defined grievances and goals.[9] Muslim weakness, humiliation and shame at the hands of the hegemonic West are its main grievance and the restoration of Muslim power and glory its main goal. The goal of Islamism can be summarised as the re-establishment of a revived and authentic "true" Islam as defined by their ideology, and its implementation in all areas of life.[10] (More detailed goals are listed below.) Islamist movements are united in their goal of the Islamisation of the total social and political system of their societies, states, of the whole Muslim world and ultimately of the entire globe. There is some diversity among them arising from the variety of local circumstances in which they emerged and in which they operate.[11]

The best known ideologue of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, Sayyid Qutb, defined the goal of Islamism as:

The restoration of Islamic life in an Islamic society governed by the Islamic creed and the Islamic conception as well as by the Islamic Shari'ah and the Islamic system (*nizam*).[12]

Islamists contrast sharply with traditionalists especially in their ideological emphasis on the state. The state is seen as the main instrument for implementing the Islamist vision of a God-pleasing society under shari'a and as the guarantor of its survival. Because Islamists perceive the modern state as the most efficient tool for establishing their vision, they concentrate their efforts, everywhere and at all times, on capturing the state and its centres of power. They are thus permanently involved in the effort of taking over the state and its

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[9] Jacquelyn K. Davis and Charles M. Perry, "Rethinking the War on Terror, Developing a Strategy to Counter Extremist Ideologies: A Workshop Report", March 2007, organized for U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) with the support of The Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA) under contract HDTRA1-06-F-0054.
[10] Ben-Dor. 1997. "p. 241.
[11] Abdel Salam Sidahmed & Anoushirvan Ehteshami, eds., *Islamic Fundamentalism*, Boulder, CO: Westview press, 1996. p. 1.
[12] Sayyid Qutb. "Social Justice in Islam" in William Shepard, ed., *Sayyid Qutb and Islamic Activism: A Translation and Critical Analysis*, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1966, p. 277.

instruments of violence – either legally within the democratic framework, or violently by revolution or coup d'état.[13]

Islamist goals include:

- The restoration of Muslim glory and power; the erasure of the shame of Muslim weakness and decline

- The re-creation an Islamic Caliphate that includes all Muslim states, Muslim majority regions in non-Muslim states, and eventually the whole world

- The overthrow and replacement regimes in Muslim states by legitimate means or by force, the purification of Muslim space by establishing Islamic states under shari'a

- The weakening of the West by all possible means so as to further Islamist goals

- The withdrawal of all Western and non-Muslim forces from Muslim lands

- The construction of a Muslim infrastructure in the West which will gradually expand and enable Islamist dominance.[14]

- The establishment of a global Islamist alternative world order (the Caliphate under shari'a) to replace the present Western-influenced system of independent nation-states. In this sense, the clash of civilisations was invented by Islamists long before Huntington offered his controversial thesis.

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[13] Laura Guazzone, "Islamism and Islamists in the Contemporary Arab World", in Laura Guazzone, ed., *The Islamist Dilemma: The Political Role of Islamist Movements in the Contemporary Arab World,* (Reading: Ithaca Press,1995), pp. 10-12.
[14] Jonathan D. Halevi, "The Muslim Brotherhood: A Moderate Islamic Alternative to al-Qaeda or a Partner in Global Jihad?", *Institute for Contemporary Affairs,* Jerusalem Viewpoints, No. 558, 1 November 2007, http://www.jcpa.org/JCPA/Templates/ShowPage.asp?DBID=1&TMID=111&LNGID=1&FID=379 &PID=0&IID=1920, viewed 7 November 2008.

## WHAT DRIVES THE ISLAMISTS? [15]

- A view of the global Islamic *umma* as the main locus of Muslim identity and loyalty. National entities and borders are un-Islamic, temporal and not to be respected.

- A sense of shame and humiliation at Muslim weakness and at Western strength and hegemony. The deep-seated grievances against the West are coupled to a desire for revenge to restore the lost honour.

- An "Islam under siege" and "Muslims are victims" mentality coupled to a sense of inherent Muslim superiority and God-given right to rule

- A desire to restore Islamic glory, power and dominion in the world, to restore the "golden age" of Islam in a modern context

- The failure of contemporary Muslim regimes and all alternative ideologies and systems to solve the deep problems of Muslim societies and to deliver development and prosperity.

- Islam as a totalitarian unitary and universal system under shariʻa is the only answer to the problems of Muslim states and societies

- Islamist doctrines of daʻwa and jihad based on the early and classical sources and reinterpreted and applied to modern contexts.

- Opposition to Western secularism, "corrupt" cultural invasion and hegemony, and deep-seated hostility to the "Christian" West, Judaism and Zionism. The real aim of these enemies, it is believed, is to annihilate Islam, rob Muslim states of their resources and dominate the world. Secularism is seen as part of the sinister Western plot to undermine Islam. Secularised Muslims are viewed as anti-Islamic foreign agents.[16]

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[15] Jacquelyn K. Davis and Charles M. Perry, "Rethinking the War on Terror, Developing a Strategy to Counter Extremist Ideologies: A Workshop Report", March 2007, organized for U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) with the support of The Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA) under contract HDTRA1-06-F-0054.

[16] Kate Zebiri, "Muslim Anti-Secularist Discourse in the Context of Muslim-Christian Relations", *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations,* Vol. 9, No. 1 (1998), p. 3.

- A view that rulers in Muslim states friendly to the West are puppets of these enemies, betraying their countries into dependence and secularisation.[17] They must be removed and replaces with Islamists.

## ISLAMIST METHODS

1. **The nourishing of a culture of victimhood, alienation and despair**coupled to a rabid anti-Westernism in all Muslim states and societies; the spread of anti-Christian and anti-Semitic propaganda and conspiracy theories; the manipulation of local grievances as a stepping stone to the global Islamist worldview.

2. **The full Islamisation of Muslim-majority states**, destabilising secular regimes and replacing them with an Islamic state based on shari'a is the goal of all Islamists. Some seek to further this goal by legitimate use of democratic avenues, while others engage in violent means to hurry the process along. Iran, Sudan, Algeria, Egypt are but a few examples of this process.

- **Destabilisation of states with large Muslim minorities, especially on the fringes of Islam (the "bloody borders of Islam").** This is happening in states like Nigeria, Ivory Coast, Kenya, the Philippines and India. It takes several forms including the demand for the implementation of shari'a in Muslim–majority regions even when Muslims are a minority in the country as a whole; support for Muslim demands for independence or autonomy as well as for outright rebellions against central governments.

3. **Demographic changes**. The population explosion in Muslim countries as compared to the West, coupled to the growth in the number of Muslims immigrating into Western states, is seen as being in God's providence, tilting the demographic balance decisively in favour of Islam, and giving Muslims a more effective political lobby worldwide and within the Western democracies. The hope is that this will effect legal changes

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[17] Ruhollah Khomeini, "Islamic Government," in Donohue & Esposito, eds., *Islam in Transition: Muslim Perspectives,* Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 1982, pp. 314-315.

in favour of Muslims; increased Islamic education; and the introduction of shari'a laws within the state framework that are binding on Muslim citizens as part of a state-recognised Muslim community.

4. **Infiltration of all Western systems.**[18] This effort is subsidised by vast sums of money from Muslim oil-rich states, businessmen and charities. Islamic lobbying groups are founded to put pressure on state ministries and bureaucracies, the media and political parties. Huge investments in the West underpin demands for the introduction of Islamic financial tools. Governments are put under pressure to follow Muslim-friendly internal and external policies or forego economic benefits. In education school textbooks, especially those teaching history and Islam, are being rewritten so as to present a sanitised view of Islam and its history as always non-violent, peaceful, tolerant and equitable. "Politically correct" views on Islam are fostered and any critique of Islam is attacked as Islamophobic. Legal action is taken against those criticising aspects of Islam, alleging they are inciting religious hatred.

5. **Weakening the West economically.** Economic jihad is seen as part of the greater jihad, a religious obligation on all Muslims. It includes the diversion of *zakat* charitable funds to support active jihad, the furtherance of Islamic finance, and the boycott of American, Israeli and Western goods.[19] Accordingto Yusuf al Qaradawi, jihad is to be "financed from the money of Zakah".[20] Hussein Shihata, Professor of Islamic Economy at the faculty of Commerce, al-Azhar University, Cairo, states that: the primary aim of the economic jihad is "to weaken the economy of the Zionists, the Crusaders and their allies, while at the same time it strengthens the Arabs and Islamic economy in a way that makes it a self-dependent economy . . . destroying the economic interests of the

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[18] "Strategy of Islamic Cultural Action in the West", adopted at the Ninth Islamic Summit Conference held in Doha -  State of Qatar, 2000, Rabat, Morocco: Publications of the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO), 2001.

[19] Hussein Shihata, fatwa on "Economic Jihad: A legal Obligation and Religious Necessity", *IslamOnline*,      http://www.islamonline.net/servlet/Satellite?pagename=IslamOnline-English-ask_Scholar/FatwaE/FatwaE&cid=1119503545254, viewed 7 November 2008.

[20] Yusuf al-Qaradawi, fatwa on "Spending Zakah Money on Jihad", *IslamOnline*, http://www.islamonline.net/servlet/Satellite?pagename=IslamOnline-English-Ask_Scholar/FatwaE/FatwaE&cid=1119503543548, viewed 7 November 2008.

enemy". [21] Thus the recent radical rise in oil prices, as well as the impressive growth of global Islamic finance, is part of the economic jihad. Both weaken the West and transfer wealth to Muslims.

6. **Alliances with anti-American, anti-globalisation forces in the West and in the developing world.** Western far-left movements and individuals, opposed to US and capitalist hegemony and globalisation and supportive of all so-called liberation movements of the "oppressed", are happy to ally themselves to Islamist movements and support their causes. They justify and legitimise Islamist use of violence as a legitimate response to Western capitalist oppression.[22]

7. **The Islamisation of knowledge**. This is a drive to change basic Western categories of knowledge bringing them into an Islamic framework. Funding academic chairs and encouraging and funding Islamist academics to take up lecturing posts in Western universities is one method used with the goal of influencing students and the teaching of academic subjects by Islamist concepts of science, knowledge and religion. Another method is the founding of Islamic think-tanks, research and academic institutions, particularly in the West, using them to disseminate Islamic views on the integration of all human knowledge into an Islamic system based on alleged unique scientific and philosophical principles of Qur'an and Sunna and on the legacy of Islamic civilisation. Some of these institutions are linked to Islamist movements while presenting a moderate face to their Western audiences. They develop links to Western academia and liberal Christian institutions that tend to co-operate with them because of their academic credentials, ignoring their hidden agendas.

8. **Active *da'wa*** (Islamic mission) in the non-Muslim world, leading to the conversion of an ever growing number of non-Muslims to Islam. The conversion of celebrities is especially effective as a tool to further encourage this trend and make it acceptable to the Western media and public opinion. The production and distribution of Muslim missionary

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[21] Hussein Shihata, fatwa on "Economic Jihad: A legal Obligation and Religious Necessity.
[22] Pierre Conesa, "Background to Washington's War on Terror", *Le Monde Diplomatique,* January 2002.

material – print, audio-visual, and internet – is being pushed by a well-funded and extensive network of *da'wa* organizations. However, the ultimate goal of Islamist *da'wa* is the establishment of Muslim dominion – Islamic states – in every country of the world.

## WHICH ARE THE MOVEMENTS INVOLVED?

While lists of individual terrorist leaders and violent groups proliferate, it is important to recognise the wider mainline Islamist movements which are their seedbed, out of which they originate, and with which they continue to exist in a symbiotic relationship. These are:

- The Wahhabi-Salafi movement

- The Muslim Brotherhood

- The Jama'at-i-Islami

- The Deobandi movement

- Ahl-i-Hadith

- The Shi'a revolutionary Islamist movement founded by Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr, Ayatollah Khomeini and Ali Shariati

While the violent groups push the military aspect of classical jihad, the mainline movements push the comprehensive multi-faceted system of jihad which includes struggle on all fronts (economic, cultural, political) in order to mobilise Muslims and prepare Islamic strength for the final struggle which might include the use of force.

These movements are involved in a process of building worldwide alliances and networks at every level: international (for example the Organisation of the Islamic Conference, the Muslim World League and their manifold sub-institutions), regional, and national. They are active in every sphere: religious, political, economic, cultural, and social. As they Islamise Muslim states and regimes, they also infiltrate non-Muslim states strengthening isolationist trends of Muslim minority communities, taking over Muslim institutions, engendering a

victim mentality, and increasing their influence in politics, media, culture and economics.

## TRENDS IN WESTERN COUNTER-TERRORIST EFFORTS

Recent Western trends by governments and security services to marginalise and limit the fight against terrorism so as to counter only its most violent aspects are merely buying time. The idea is to placate Muslim societies worldwide and in the West so as to ensure security and peaceful relations, especially in an age of increased Western dependence on Muslim oil and gas resources. It is also hoped that Muslim states will be valuable allies in any potential confrontation with a resurgent Russia or a belligerent China. Politically correct language is employed to lessen any perceived provocation of Muslims. This includes platitudes and clichés such as: "Islam is a religion of peace"; or "there are no Islamic terrorists"; or "Islam has nothing to do with terrorism". These are soothing sound bites and may be tactically useful for buying social cohesion, but if used as a basis for counter-terrorism strategy they will eventually backfire. For the totalitarian Islamist ideological camp will continue quietly but inexorably to further its control of Muslim states and societies, while infiltrating Western centres of power – political, cultural and economic – under the veil afforded it by naive Western media, academia and governments.

Well meaning suggestions that radical Islamists should be called "un-Islamic extremists" so as not to pander to their sense of aggrandisement as the vanguard of true Islam are at best laughable, at worst dangerous, because they blur the true identity of the enemy. [23] Nor is the alleged danger of ordinary Muslims failing to understand the difference between Islam and Islamists, thus feeling accused, resentful and alienated, valid. Ordinary Muslims need to be reminded of the affinity between Islamism and classical Islam and unite in denouncing it and drawing a clear line between Islamists and themselves. [24] Otherwise Islamism is granted legitimacy by Western governments and media, and ordinary Muslims are left defenceless before its blandishments. Islamist

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[23] Julian Lewis, "Double-I, Double-N: A Framework for Counter-Insurgency", *RUSI Journal,* February 2008.
[24] "Pulling together to defeat terror", Quilliam Foundation, April 2008.

extremists are enemies of Western civilisation and combine the worst elements of totalitarian ideological movements:

The theocratic intolerance of the inquisition, the fifth-column potential of revolutionary Communism, the implacable racialism of the Nazis, and the readiness of each to deny justice, human rights and life itself to any perceived adversary. [25]

Islamists have a specific doctrine:

Aiming as it does to impose extreme theocratic rule upon the existing Muslim world, and eventually beyond its borders. The views and values of extreme theocracies are implacably opposed to those of a West currently engaged – whether realising it or not – in fighting to preserve its own civilisation,[26]

Leftist or post-modern attempts at defending Islam from any perception of a linkage to violence and to nefarious schemes are also dangerous. Advocates of this position argue that accusations of a linkage between Islam and violence label all Muslims in the West as potential terrorists. Such theories are depicted as emanating from the extreme right (xenophobic, neo-Fascist and racist) and thus unworthy of serious deliberation. This position falsely accuses those concerned about Islamist ideology that they see Islam itself and all Muslims as a threat.[27] Such writers simply ignore Islamist ideology and documents and consistently accuse opponents of Islamism of hating Islam. Acceptance of their viewpoint by government and security elements would again deflect the focus from the real source of danger, allowing Islamists to continue advancing their programme. The reality of the Islamist threat can readily be seen in any region or state falling under Islamist dominion – Iran, Sudan, Afghanistan under the Taliban, and Gaza under Hamas among others. Their consistent drive for the Islamisation of the state is clearly seen in such countries as Pakistan and Egypt.

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[25] Lewis, February 2008.
[26] Lewis, February 2008.
[27] Toby Archer, "Countering the 'counter-jihad' ", *RUSI Monitor,* September 2008.

## WHAT IS TO BE DONE? HOW TO COUNTER THE ISLAMISTS' APPEAL

- Realise the linkage between Islamism and early and classical Islam which is so important to its influence on ordinary Muslims. Islamism has inherited the expansionist imperative of early Islam, and sees itself as the vanguard of a revived revolutionary true Islam.[28]

- Realise that this is a long-term ideological warfare based on religious dogma that can last decades or more. It has affinities to the ideological wars against Fascism-Nazism and Communism.

- Realise that the Islamist master plan is to reshape the world in its image on every front and in every sphere. The Islamist strategy is to subvert the will of the Western world and promote instability throughout the non-Muslim world so as to establish its own hegemony.

- Realise that Islamism has succeeded in making its main concepts become accepted Islamic tenets in most Muslim states and societies, while its operatives have largely taken control of many important Muslim institutions and organisations, including powerful positions in state and military

- Be determined to win the war of ideas against this multifaceted enemy of the West.[29]

- Carefully study and analyse Islamist ideology, history and practice, and the reasons for its wide appeal to ordinary Muslims. Devise strategies to counter its appeal. Develop a sophisticated strategic communications strategy to challenge Islamist assertions about ideology, Islam, and U.S. policies.[30]

- Identify, isolate, neutralise and negotiate (double-I, double-N strategy).[31] While this strategy is often applied to counter-terrorism, it needs to be applied to the wider sphere of global Islamism and its multifaceted jihad.

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[28] Lambert, 2005, pp.155-157.
[29] Lambert, 2005, pp.159-163.
[30] Jacquelyn K. Davis and Charles M. Perry, "Rethinking the War on Terror, Developing a Strategy to Counter Extremist Ideologies: A Workshop Report", March 2007, organized for U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) with the support of The Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA) under contract HDTRA1-06-F-0054.
[31] Lewis, February 2008.

Islamists must be identified and isolated wherever they are and in whatever form they masquerade. They must be isolated from the ordinary Muslims and prevented from penetrating their institutions and Western centres of power, as well as from broadcasting their propaganda in all its forms. Effective counter-propaganda is an important ingredient in this venture. "Systematic use against one's opponents of their own words, promises and predictions has always been a most effective propaganda tool." [32] Finally, as they weaken, negotiation might be helpful in separating those willing to get out in order to get the best deal they can. However negotiations must always be held from a position of strength so as to manipulate fissures and create division amongst the Islamists. [33]

- Discredit arguments that Islam is under attack from the West. Winning hearts and minds in the Muslim world is essential, but must be coupled to a strategy of discrediting and delegitimising Islamism (and its offshoots) as a totalitarian political ideology detrimental to Muslims. Expose the weakness of Islamist ideas and broadcast Islamist failures and brutalities. Seek to isolate Islamists and to subvert some of their more moderate elements. To discredit the Islamists it is vital that "all who need to resist them be made aware of what they believe, declare and intend to do". [34]

- Carefully study and analyse the radicalisation process in Muslim societies that recruits many into the Islamist (not just the terrorist) fold. Devise effective measures to counter it.

- Counter Islamist control and exploitation of the many modern media and communication channels. Develop sophisticated, flexible and targeted communications strategies. Expose Islamist duplicity and double talk. Intensify anti-Islamist propaganda war and make it more sophisticated and efficient. As Julian Lewis asks: "Where is the Western response to the extensive output of the [Islamist] message via the Arab media and the Internet?" Islamists must also be neutralised by sophisticated

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[32] Lewis, February 2008.
[33] Lewis, February 2008.
[34] Lewis, February 2008.

measures which deny them any propaganda victories and popular sympathy. [35]

- Continue the active war on Islamist terrorism. "The military must protect the population from terrorists and insurgents, deny jihadists freedom of movement, and isolate insurgents from the population".[36]

- Realise that Western public sympathy for terrorist causes, such as stating that terror is the only weapon of the "oppressed" and of the "wretched of the earth" who have no other choice, only serves to legitimise their immoral and criminal acts and to strengthen their cause.

- Delegitimise all Western groups, individuals and movements that support and sustain Islamist discourse and power

- Counter literal interpretation of sources, especially on jihad, the Caliphate and non-Muslims. Support Muslim groups that seek to weaken the authority of the Sunna, to limit violent passages to their immediate historical contexts, to spiritualise jihad to its moral aspects only, and to deny the validity of its military and violent aspects for today.

- Support a reform of the Muslim view of Muhammad so as to accept the fact of his fallibility and sin in the violent episodes of his life, which are not to be emulated.

- Seek for credible allies within Islam. Encourage movements, whether Sufi or reform-oriented, that are moderate and peaceful. Encourage progressive, and secular groups among Muslims helping them become a powerful force within global Islam. Support and fund movements, organisations, NGOs, and political parties that fit these requirements.

- Detect, monitor and help stabilise any Muslim region in danger of destabilisation, failure and conflict. Monitor ungovernable regions and failed states that can serve as potential safe havens for Islamists.

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[35] Lewis, February 2008.

[36] Peter Bergen and Laurence Footer, "Defeating the Attempted Global Jihadist Insurgency: Forty Steps for the Next President to Pursue against al Qaeda, Like-Minded Groups, Unhelpful State Actors, and Radicalized Sympathizers", *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science,* 2008, 618:1, 232-247.

- Support good governance and fight against corruption in allied Muslim states. Keep pressure on allied Muslim governments to improve their democratic practice and their supply of real social welfare to the masses. Support infra-structure development, economic development and social welfare projects by allied Muslim states and moderate/secular NGOs to counter success of Islamist social welfare provision.

Zaragoza 24th of November 2008
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