When New Terrorism Met the New Media

Dr. Gabriel Weimann

12 May 2014 Last updated at 14:28 ET

Share

Nigeria kidnapped girls 'shown in Boko Haram video'

In the video, released by Boko Haram, its leader says the girls will be freed only if imprisoned militants are released

Boko Haram leader Abubakar Shekau uses the video to call for the group's imprisoned fighters to be freed

Boko Haram

- Founded in 2002, name means "Western education is forbidden" in the Hausa language
- Launched violent struggle in 2009, ostensibly to create Islamic state
- Thousands killed, three million affected, mostly in north-east
- Declared terrorist group by US in 2013

Always Online: Terrorists and Laptops

Keeping in Touch

Always Online: Terrorists and Laptops

Uzbeki Jihadist Leader

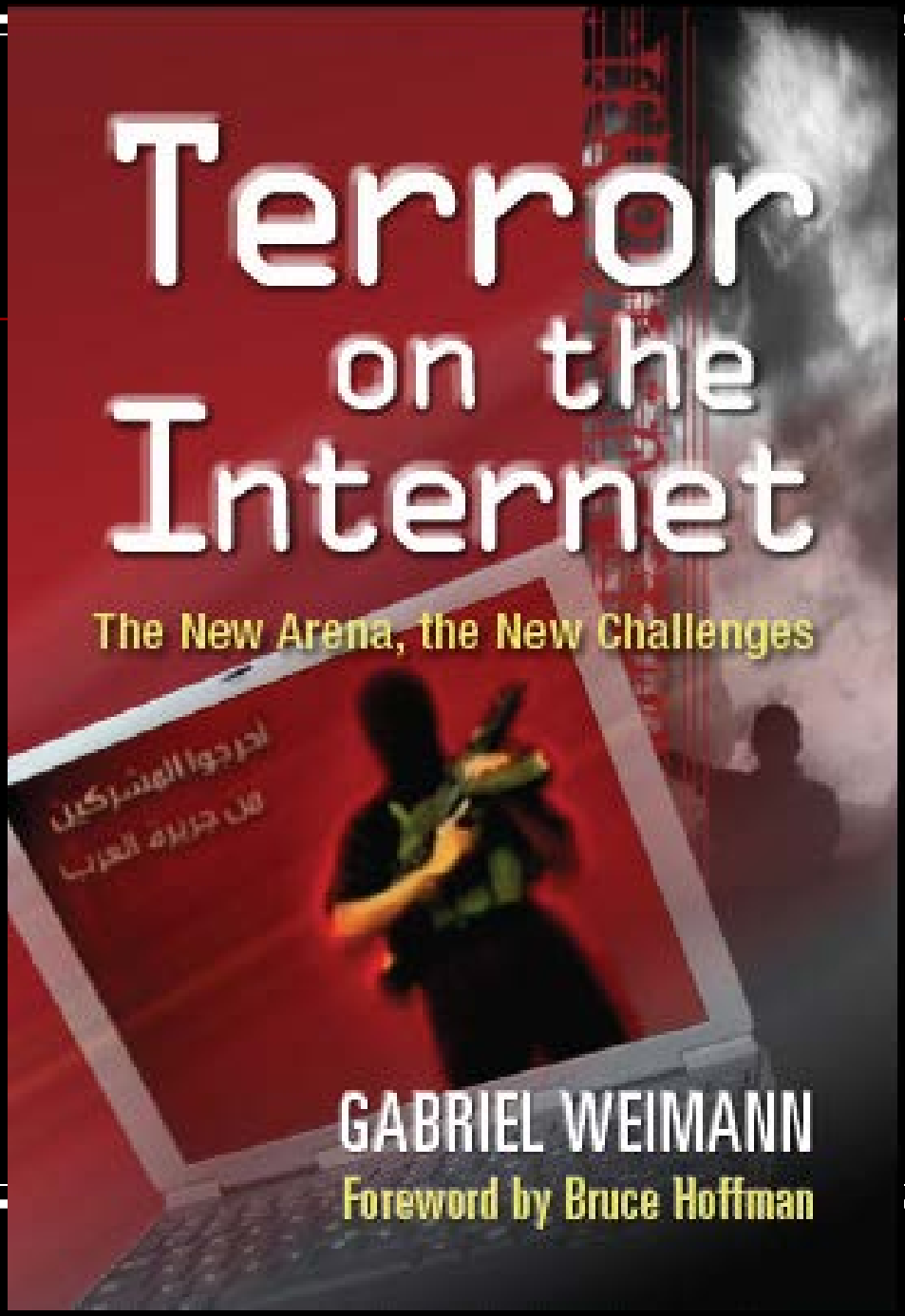
Adam Yahiye Gadahn "Azzam"
May Allah Protect Him

Hezbollah bunker captured in August 2006 by the Israeli Army

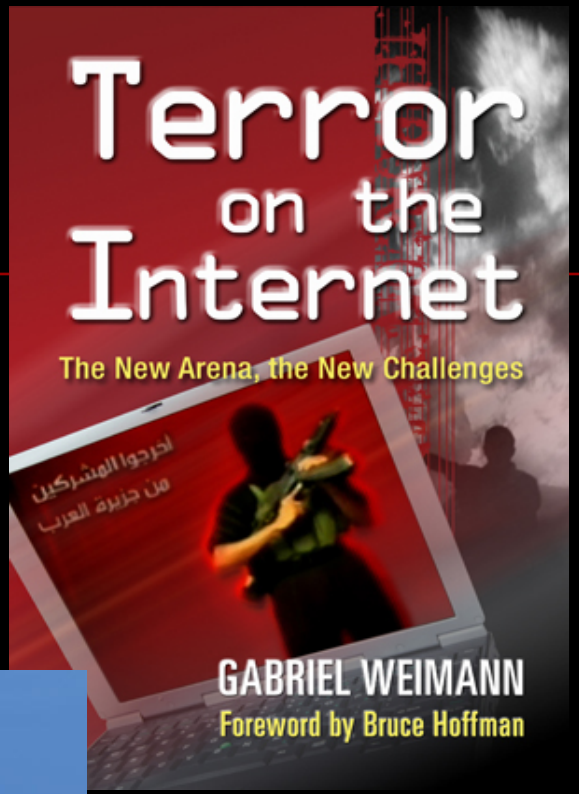
Afghan Cyber Army (ACA)

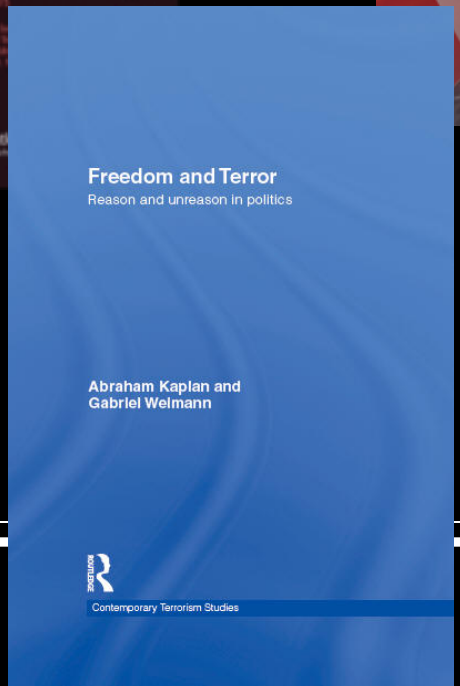
Our Project: Monitoring Terror in Cyberpace

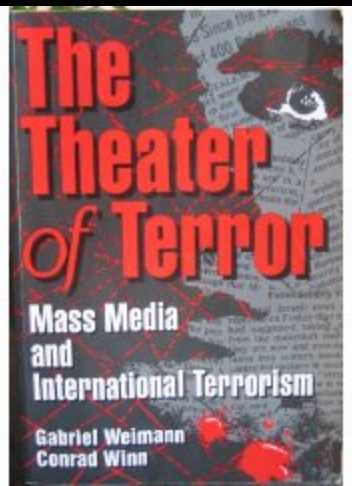
- Study is now in its 16th year
- Monitoring every terrorist website (n=9,800+)
- Archiving, coding and analysis of the websites' contents (visual and textual)
- Research funded by USIP (United States Institute of Peace), NIJ (National Institute of Justice), Woodrow Wilson Center, and other grants


Terror
on the
Internet
The New Arena, the New Challenges
GABRIEL WEIMANN
Foreword by Bruce Hoffman

Reporting the findings:







…and Al Qaeda's review

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Surprising Post

Professor Gabriel Weimann Photo: Elad Gershgorn

www.
legacyheritage.
org

Al-Qaeda site posts Israeli book

Jihad website refers to book written by Haifa University professor discussing role net plays in terrorism

Eitan Glickman
Published: 02.05.07, 09:51 / Israel News

A book written by an Israeli professor has been posted on an al-Qaeda affiliated website.

Professor Gabriel Weimann of Haifa University's Communications Department was surprised to find a picture of the cover of his book, 'Terror on the Internet: The New Arena, the New Challenges,' and links to its summaries, on a global Jihad organization's website.

"At first it seemed quite strange to me that they would publish my book," Weimann said Sunday, "but then when I read the text in Arabic I understood their motivation."

TERRORIST PPRESENCE ON THE NET:

In 1998: 12 terrorist websites

Tsfati & Weimann, *Terror on the Internet*, *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism,* 2002)

In 2003: 2,650 terrorist websites

Weimann, *WWW.Terror.Net: How Modern Terrorism Uses the Internet*, Special Report, Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace.

In January 2014: 9,800+ terrorist websites

Weimann, *Terror on the Internet*, Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace.

WHO ARE THE ONLINE TERRORISTS?

Hamas (the Islamic Resistance Movement), the Lebanese Hizbollah (Party of God), the Egyptian Al-Gama'a al Islamiyya (Islamic Group, IG), the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PLFP), the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, Boko Haram (Nigeria), the Peruvian Tupak-Amaru (MRTA) and 'The Shining Path' (Sendero Luminoso), the Kahane Lives movement, the Basque ETA movement, the Real IRA (RIRA), Supreme Truth (Aum Shinrikyo), the Colombian National Liberation Army (ELN-Colombia), the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), the Armed Revolutionary Forces of Colombia (FARC), the Popular Democratic Liberation Front Party in Turkey (DHKP/C), the Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK), the Zapatista National Liberation Army (ELNZ), the Japanese Red Army (JRA), the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), the Mujahedin, the Chechens, Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba and Al-Qaeda.

Why is the Net so useful for terrorists?

The Advantages of the Internet for Terrorists:

- Easy access
- No control, no regulations, no laws
- Huge audiences, worldwide
- Anonymity
- Fast flow of information
- Interactive medium
- Cheap to establish and maintain
- Multi media environment (print; sound; photos; video;)
- The Internet as a source for journalists

Uses of the Internet by Terrorists:

- Psychological warfare
- Propaganda
- Networking terrorists
- Recruitment and mobilization
- Fund raising
- Datamining, information gathering
- Instructions
- Inner debates
- Cyber-war, cyberterrorism

The Emerging Trends:

1. Migration to New Media
2. “Virtual Interactivity”
3. “Narrowcasting”
4. Lone Wolf Terrorism

The New Trends:

New Terrorism Meets the New Media

New Technologies Applied by Terrorists

3 stages in terrorist use of the Net:

Stage 1: Websites only

Stage 2: Websites + Interactive

(forums, chatrooms)

Stage 3: Websites + Interactive + Social Media

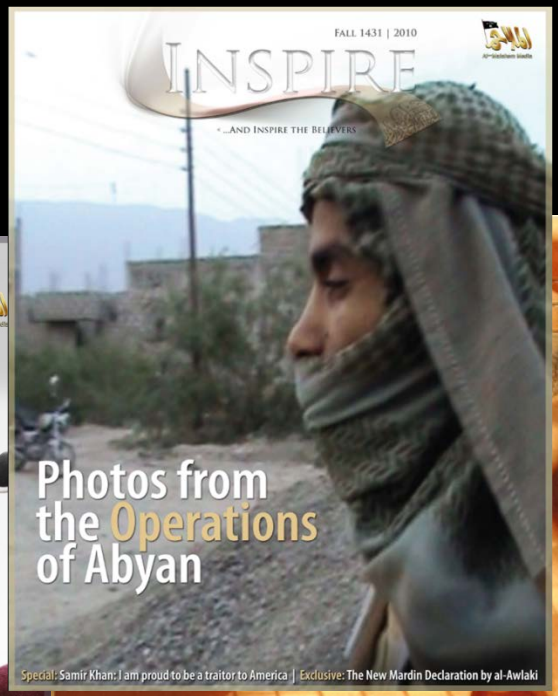
(YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, etc.)

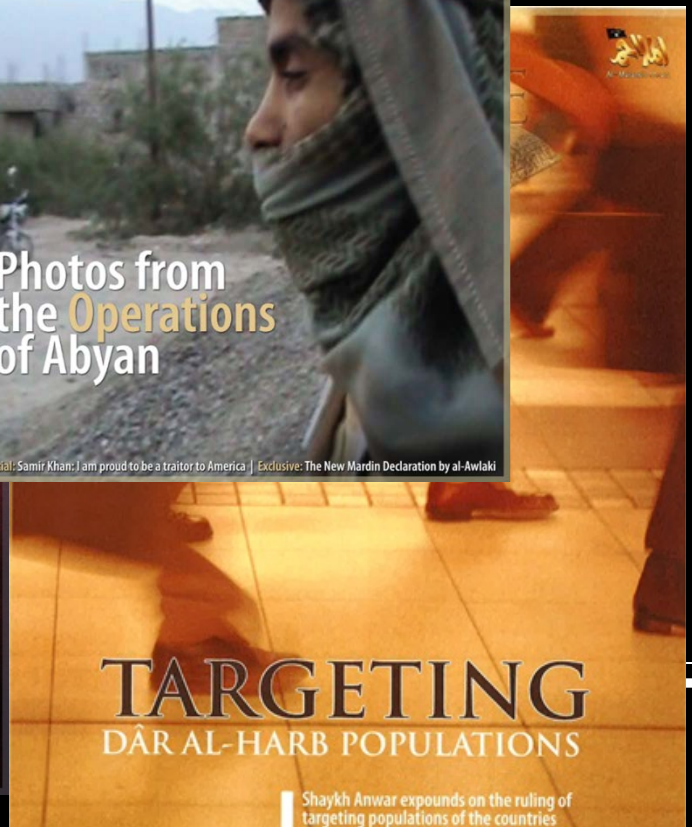
Al Qaeda's "early" site
(1998-2002)

Al Qaeda's new site:

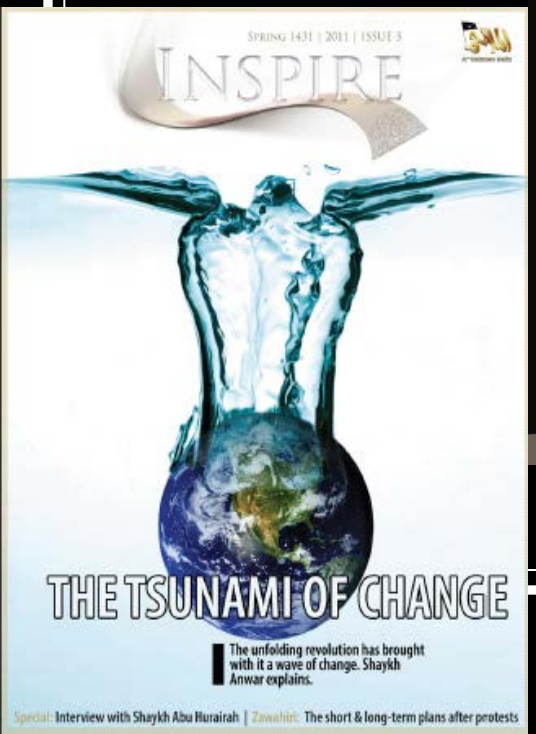
Al Qaeda's new site:

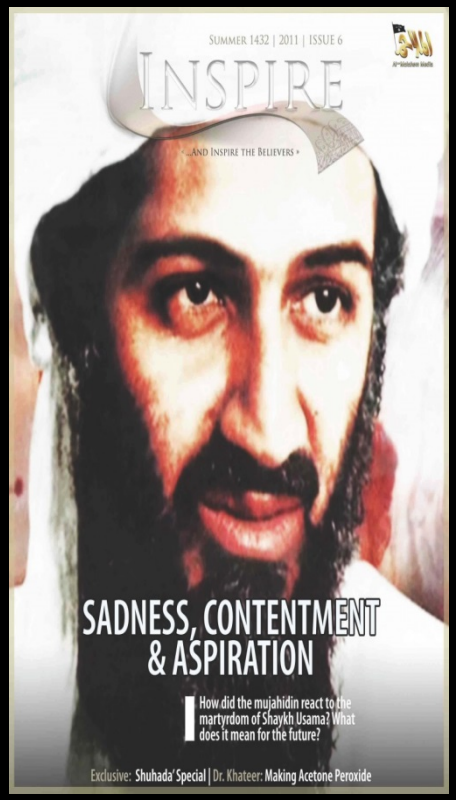
Inspire Magazine





Inspire is an English language online magazine published by al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP).





INSPIRE 12
March 2014

From *Inspire* 12: Car Bombs in America

Multimedia:
Hezbollah's Al-Manar Television Online:

Hizbollah's Al-Nour Radio Online

Dar al-Hadi: Hezbollah's publishing house Online

Download Nasrallah's posters…

Jihad Academy online:
A Film Production by the Global Islamic Media Front (GIMF)

Terrorist Migration to Social Media

Why social media?

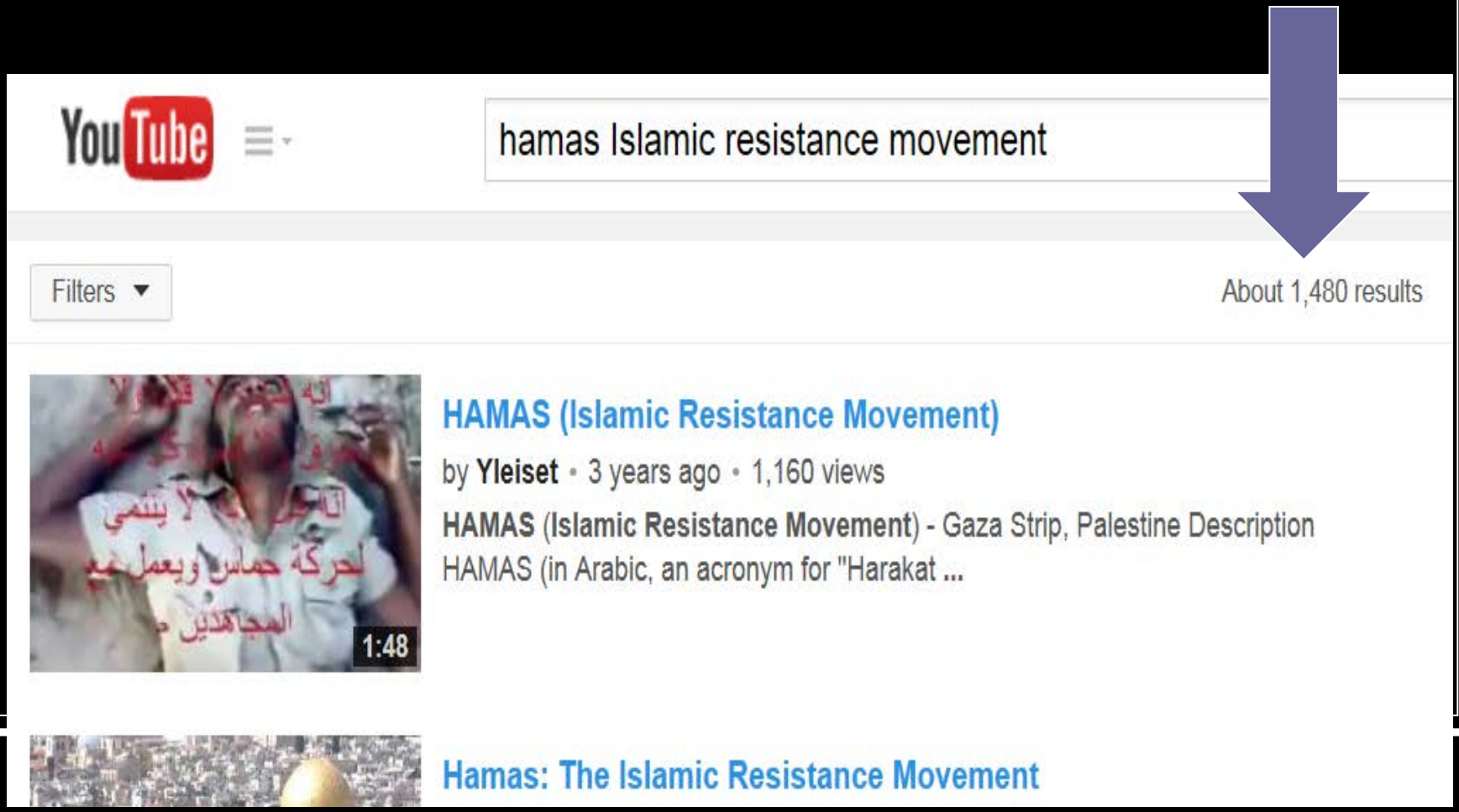
1. Interactive
2. Trendy, popular
3. Young demographics
4. “knock on their doors”

YouTube, They Tube…

Importance of YouTube

- Attractive, visual, moving images
- much easier to locate (no Arabic or high level of Internet literacy necessary)
- Appealing to young people
- Easy copying and dissemination (e-mail links, but also copy to VHS, CDs, DVDs, mobile phones)

If you put the words “Hamas Islamic Resistance Movement ” in YouTube search…



YouTube

tribute to anwar al-awlaki

Filters

About 4,580 re

NEW: Anwar Al Awlaki - Tribute Video (EMOTIONAL)

by **Companions4Deen** • 2 years ago • 33,701 views

A short beautiful clip on Sheikh **Anwar Al Awlaki**. The Prophet said, "The Hour (La
Day) will not be established until (religious) ...

HD

[New] Tribute to Imam Anwar Al Awlaki (RA)

by **Abu Musa** • 2 years ago • 30,538 views

The Messenger of Allah (SAW) said: "The 'ulamaa are inheritors of the Prophets."
There are three kinds of ulama today 1.

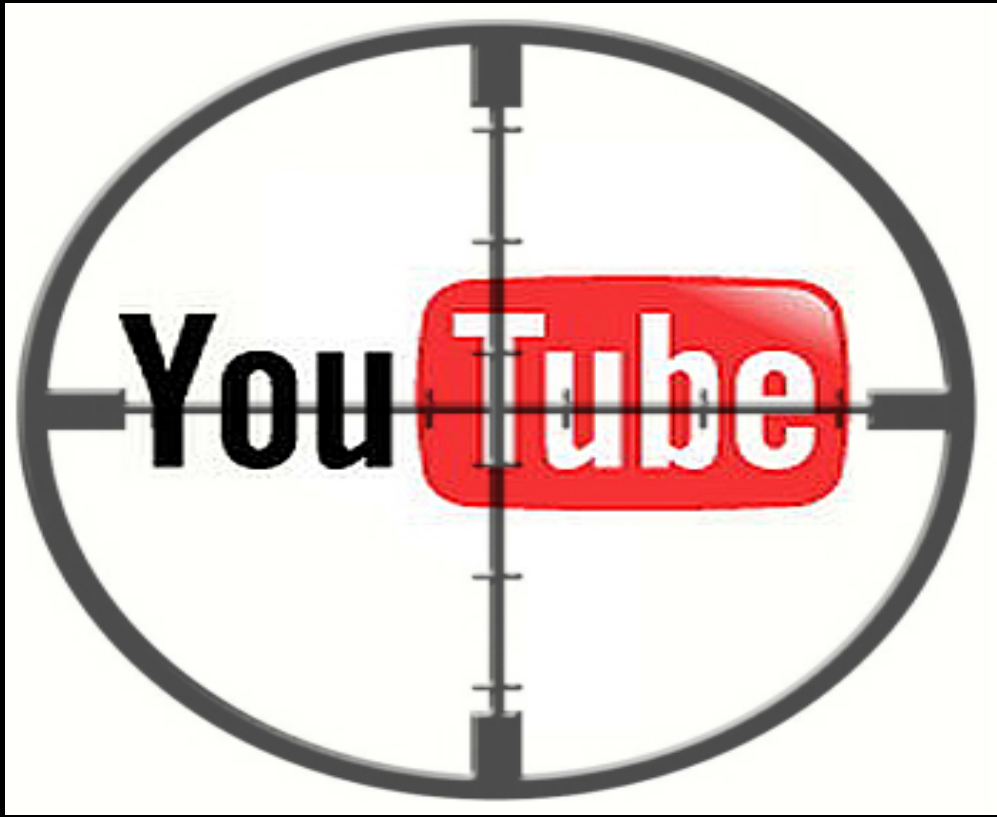
Anwar Al Awlaki The True Muslims MUST SEE

by **theummahnews** • 3 years ago • 2,219 views

Hamas Launches AqsaTube, Inspired by YouTube (October 2008)

Hamas Launches Pal Tube (2011)

All terrorist groups are now on YouTube

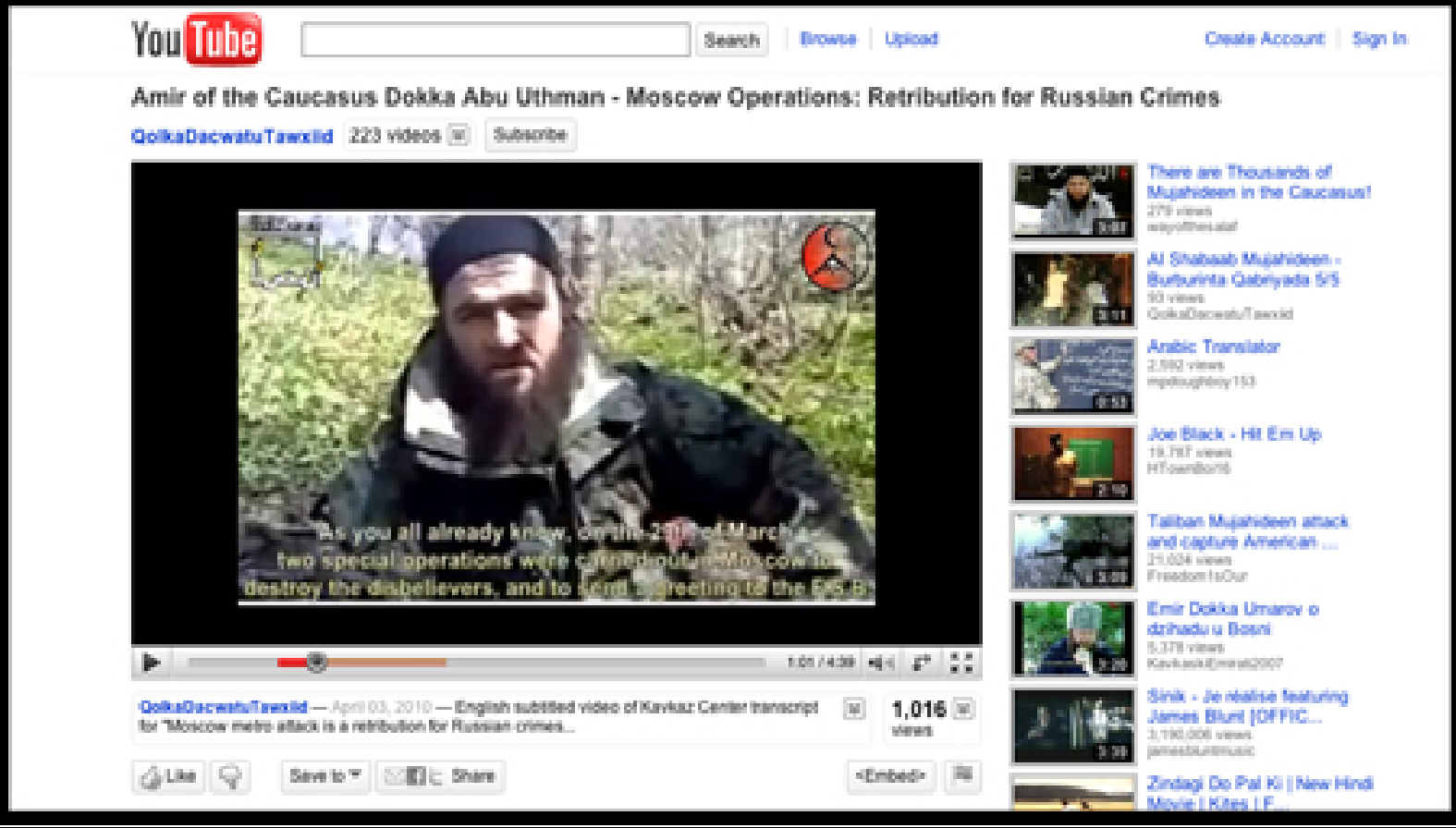


Hezbollah's YouTube

Al Qaeda's YouTube

Al Qaeda's YouTube

Chechen Jihadists Claim Responsibility for Moscow Subway Bombings (March 2010) on YouTube



PKK on YouTube

“Istiqlal Media”
Taliban’s YouTube channel

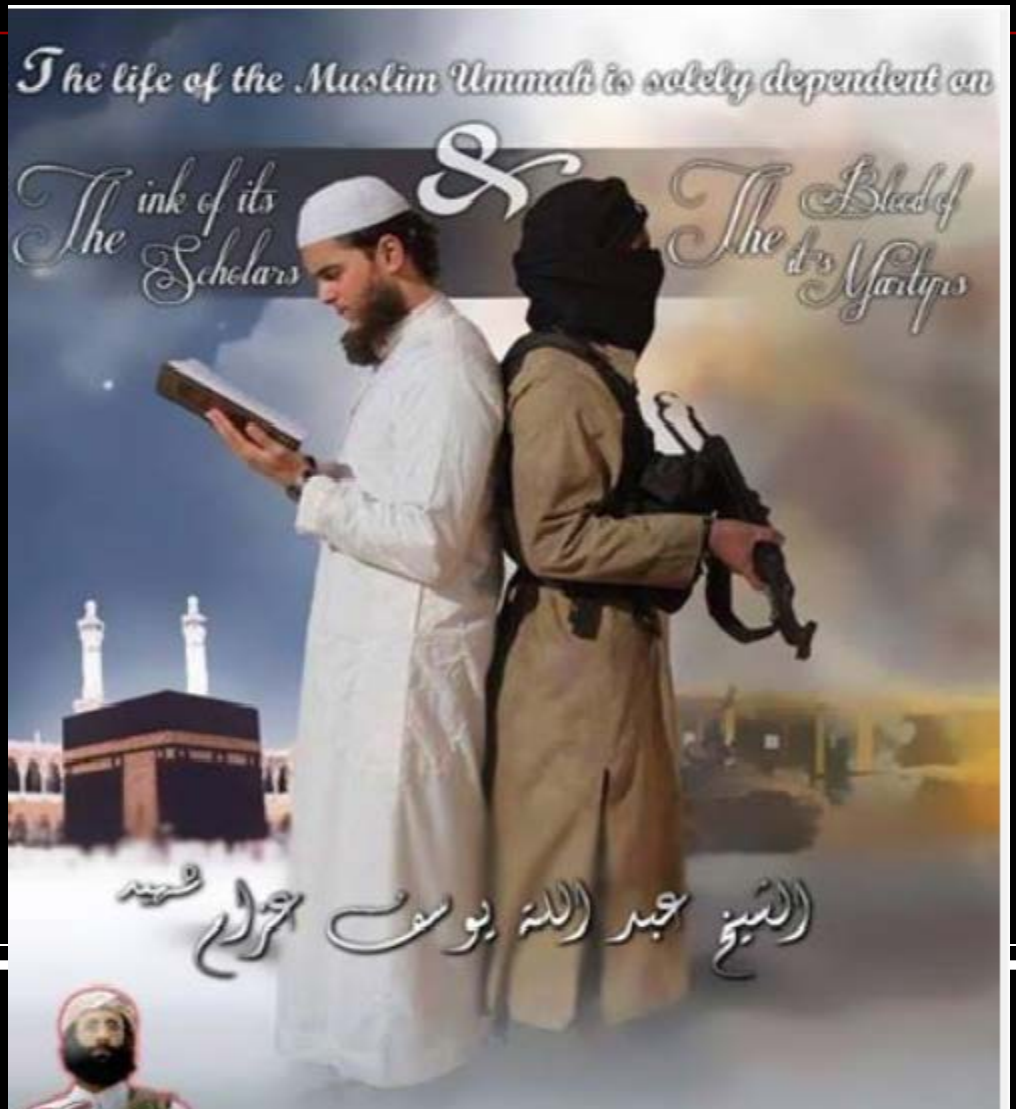
Taliban's YouTube video

Terror on Facebook

“Generation Awlaki” on Facebook

“Generation Awlaki” on Facebook

“The ink of the Scholars, the blood of the Martyrs”



Generation Awlaki
7 hours ago

Like · Comment · Share 23

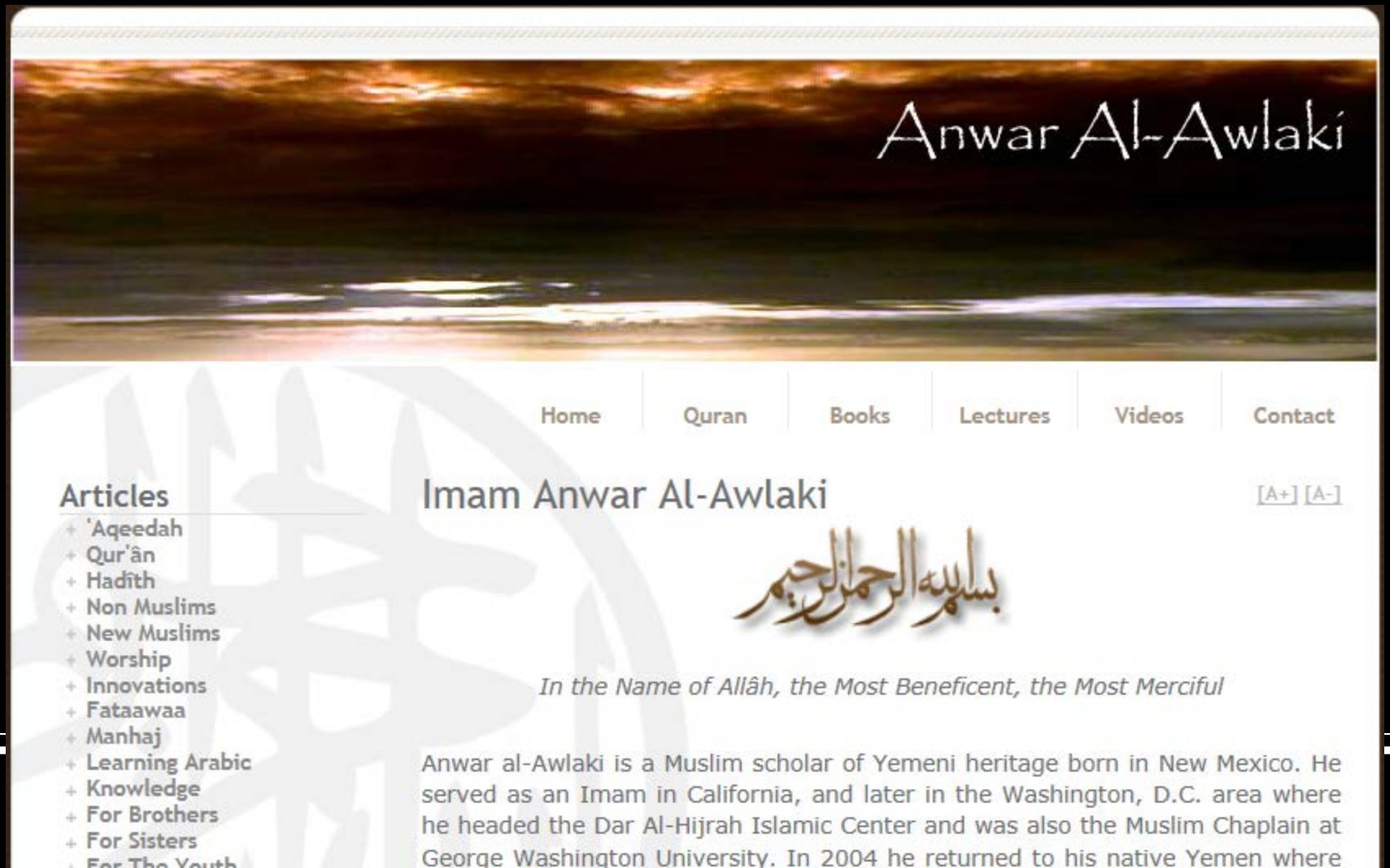
138 people like this. Top Comments

Write a comment...

Press Enter to post.

Asadullah Alkhurasaani beautiful smile of our beloeved sheikh.
Like · Reply · 2 · 3 hours ago

“Download Awlaki’s Lectures”



Mohammed al Zawahiri's Facebook page
(brother of Ayman)

Three video clips posted on his Facebook page show Mohammed al Zawahiri encouraging would-be jihadists to support:

The mujahideen in Mali

The Al Nusrah Front in Syria

The Islamic State of Iraq

Twitter: Tweets of Terror

The al Shabaab Attack on Westgate Mall, Nairobi, Kenya

September 2013

HSM Press Office
@HSM_Press
المكتب الصحفي لحركة الشباب المجاهدين
الحساب الرسمي
39
TWEETS
0
FOLLOWING
1,960
FOLLOWERS
Following

HSM Press Office @HSM_... 44m
For long we have waged war against the Kenyans in our land, now it's time to shift the battleground and take the war to their land #Westgate
Details

HSM Press Office @HSM_PR 3h

Here are 2 of the Mujahideen inside #Westgate mall, unruffled and strolling around the mall in such sangfroid manner pic.twitter.com/bMG87AQOon

View photo

HSM Press Office @HSM_PR 3h

The hostages who were being held by the Mujahideen inside #Westgate are still alive, looking quite disconcerted but, nevertheless, alive

Expand

HSM Press Office @HSM_PR 3h

The incoherent ramblings of Kenyan officials and the blatant discrepancies with regards to the Mujahideen at #Westgate betrays their fears

Expand

Al-Qaeda on Twitter

Under the guise of its Shamukh al-Islam website, the official website of al Qaeda, the terror group has now its own Twitter feed
@shomokhalislam

Al-Qaeda affiliate in Syria ISIL: Online Executions

Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL)

ISIL's prisoners crucified

ISIL took responsibility for the crucifixtion on Twitter

Syrian Electronic Army (SEA)

SEA is a collection of computer hackers who support the government of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad. Using denial of service attacks, defacement, and other methods, it mainly targets political opposition groups and western websites, including US news organizations and US banks

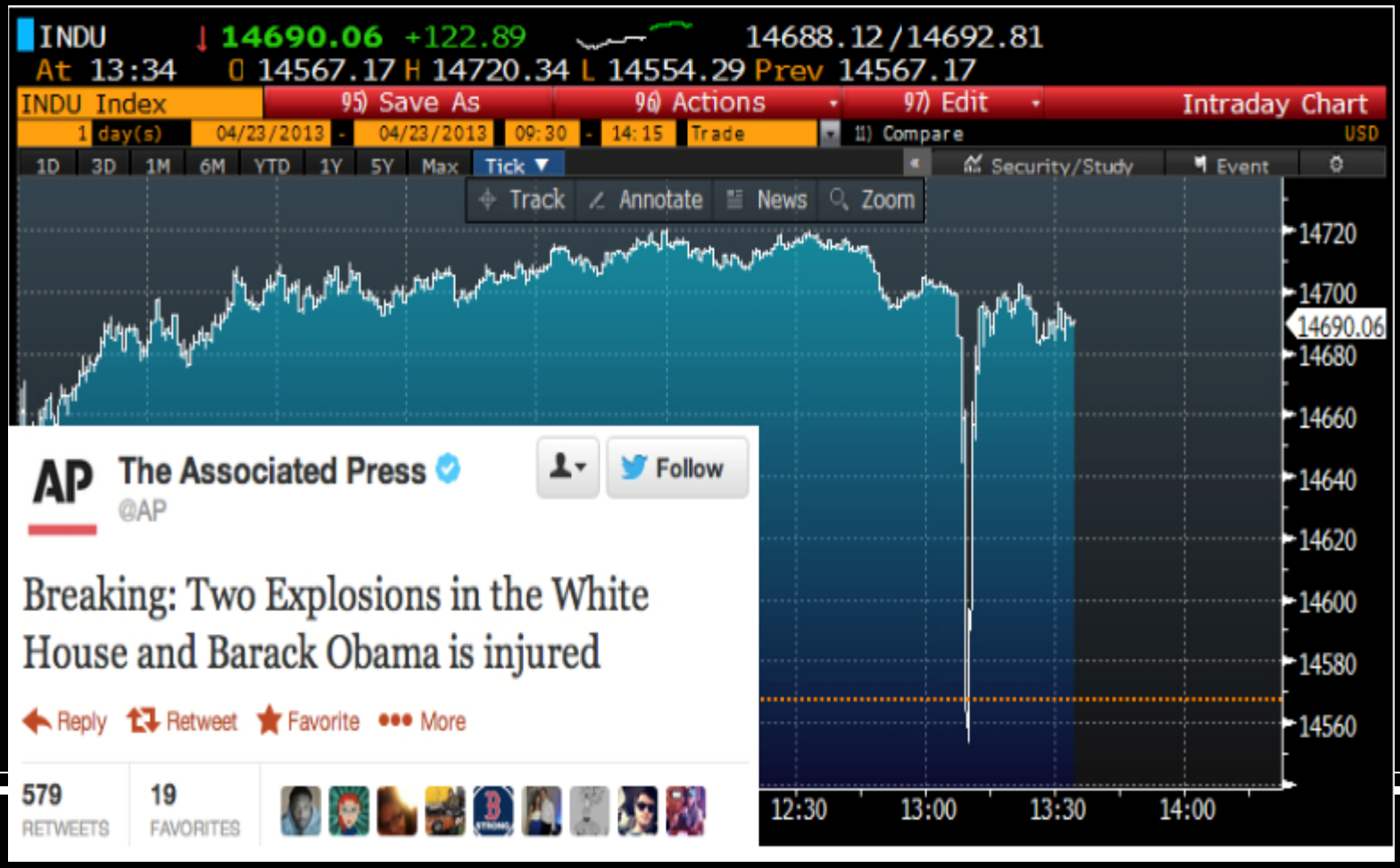
SEA Attacking Twitter:

In 2013 The Syrian Electronic Army hacked a number of high-profile Twitter accounts and websites, including those of *The New York Times*, the Associated Press, and the *Guardian*.

SEA

Hacked by Syrian Electronic Army

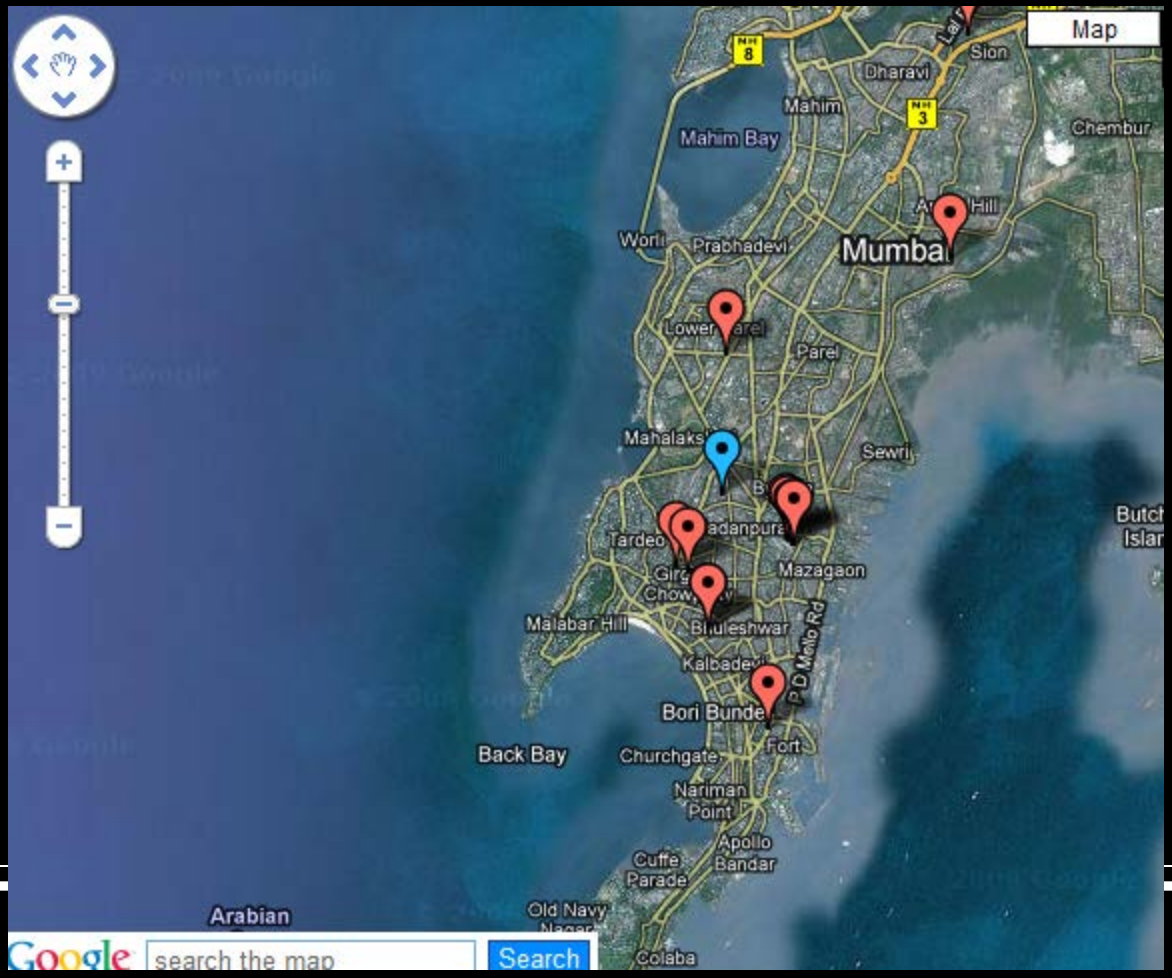
April 2013: SEA hacks AP causing stock market drop of $136 billion



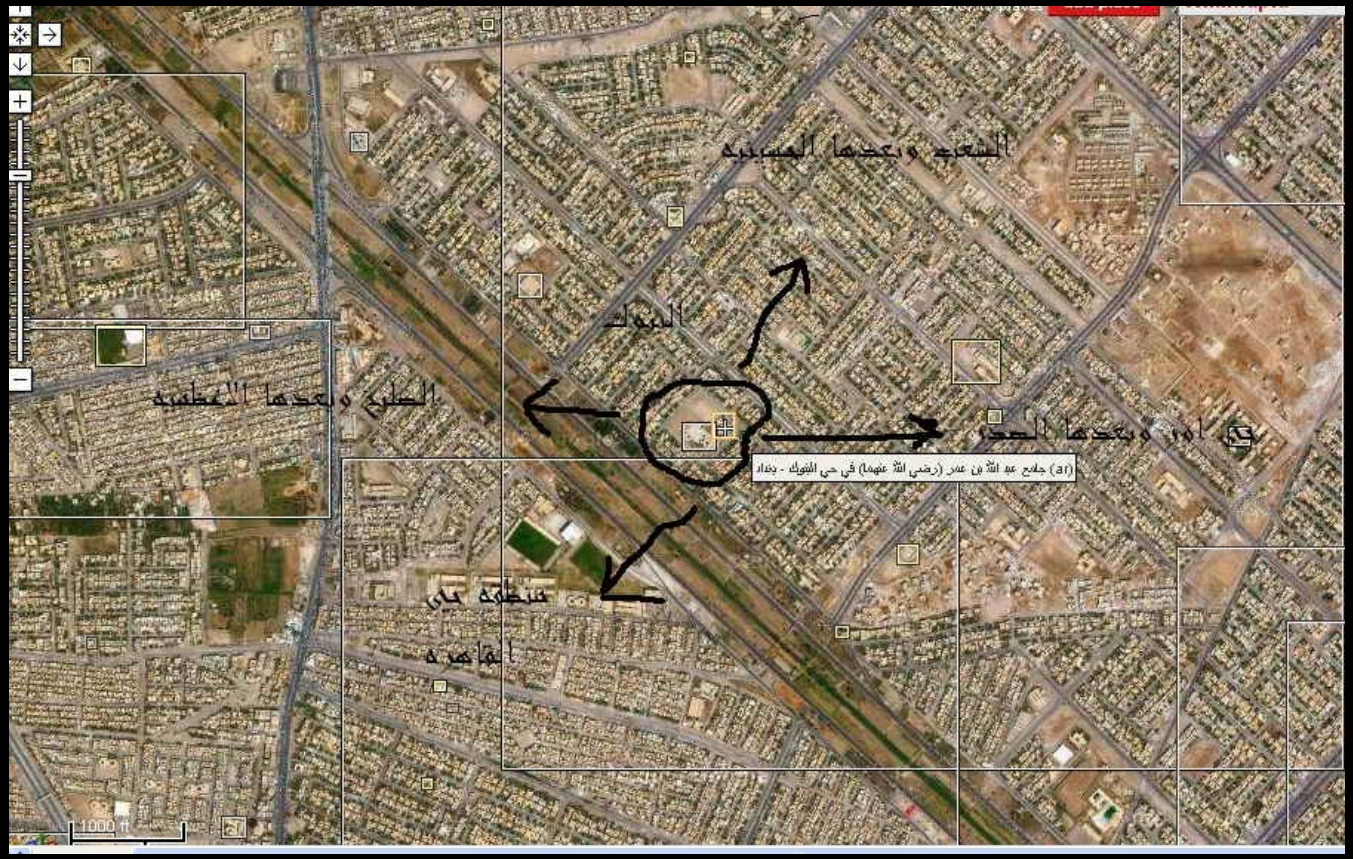
A Terrorist's Dream Comes True..

Mumbai attacks (2008) were planned with Google Earth

LeT in Mumbai attacks (2008) used Google Earth



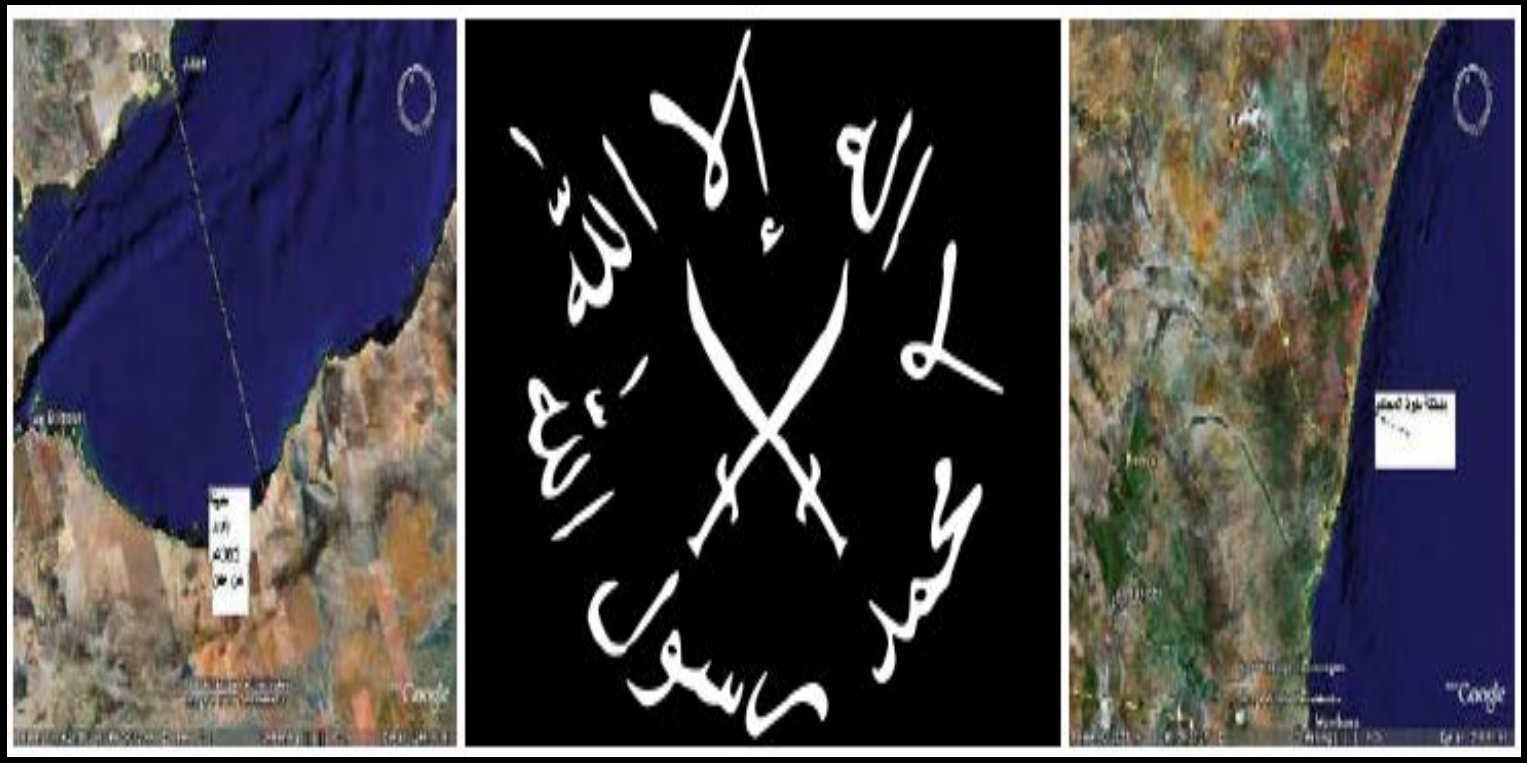
Using Google Earth website to pinpoint attacks (in Basra, Iraq)



Google Earth Map of Abu Ghraib Prison posted on Jihadi website

The above examples of Nokia Map Functions are displayed in a Pro Islamic State of Iraq (al Qaida) Discussion thread at http://www.muslm.net/vb/showthread.php?p=1797473 with software description and download instructions. Posting date March 24, 2008.

Maps and Suggested Routes for Traveling to Somalia for Jihad



Google Earth used to target Israel

PIJ Announces Use of Google Earth to Target Sderot

image of the CIA headquarters in Langley, posted on Jihadi sites

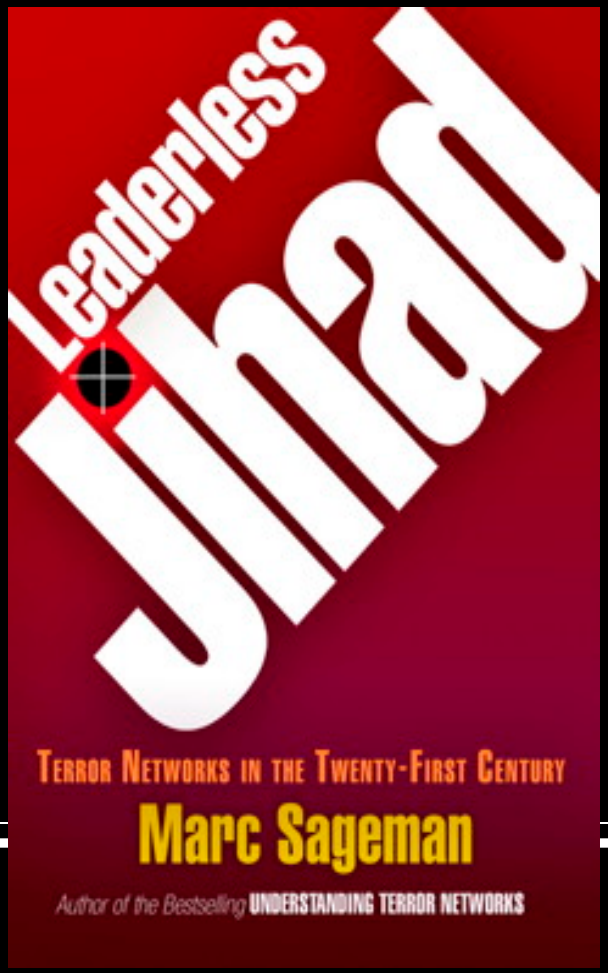
The Impact of Terrorist Use of New Media:

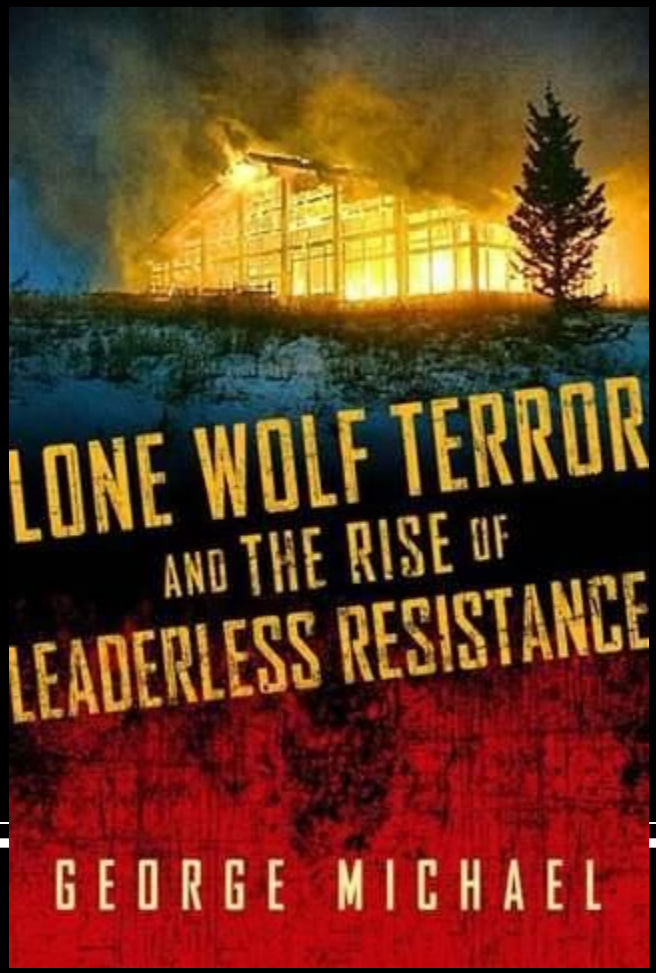
Lone Wolves in Cyberspace

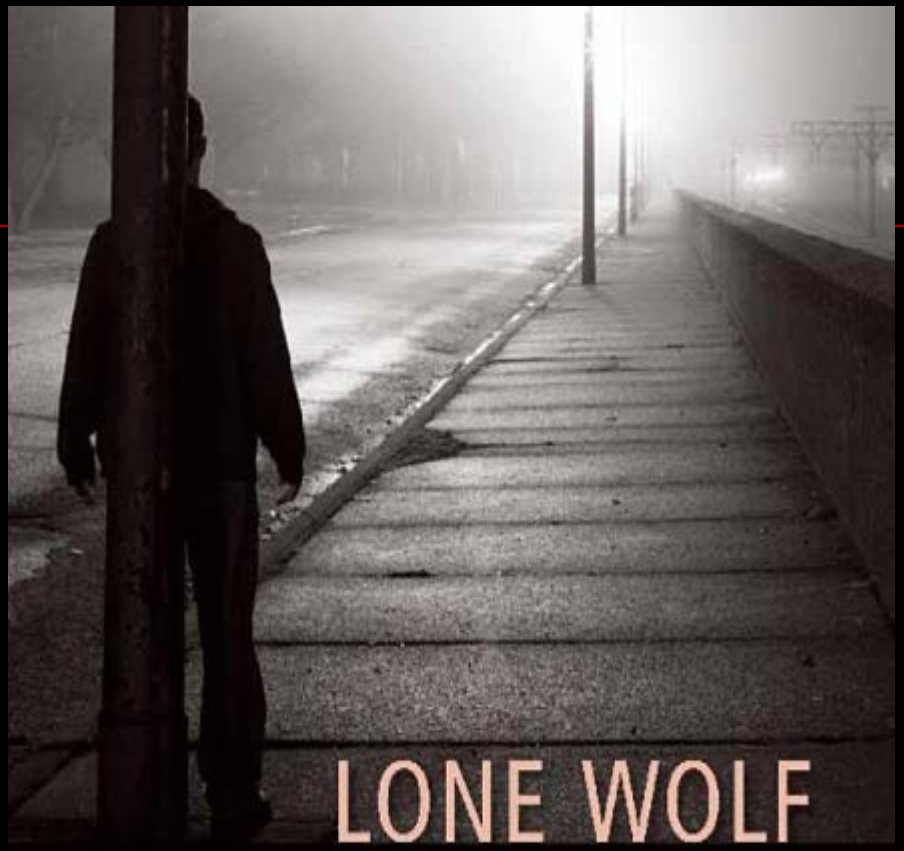
by Gabriel Weimann
VIRTUAL
PACKS OF
LONE WOLVES

A lone wolf terrorist is someone who commits or prepares for, or is suspected of committing or preparing for, violent acts in support of some group, movement, or ideology, but who does so alone, outside of any command structure and without material assistance from any group.

The Shift Toward Leaderless Terrorism






LONE WOLF
TERRORISM
UNDERSTANDING THE GROWING THREAT

"The most likely scenario that we have to guard against right now ends up being more of a lone wolf operation than a large, well-coordinated terrorist attack“

President Obama
August 16, 2011

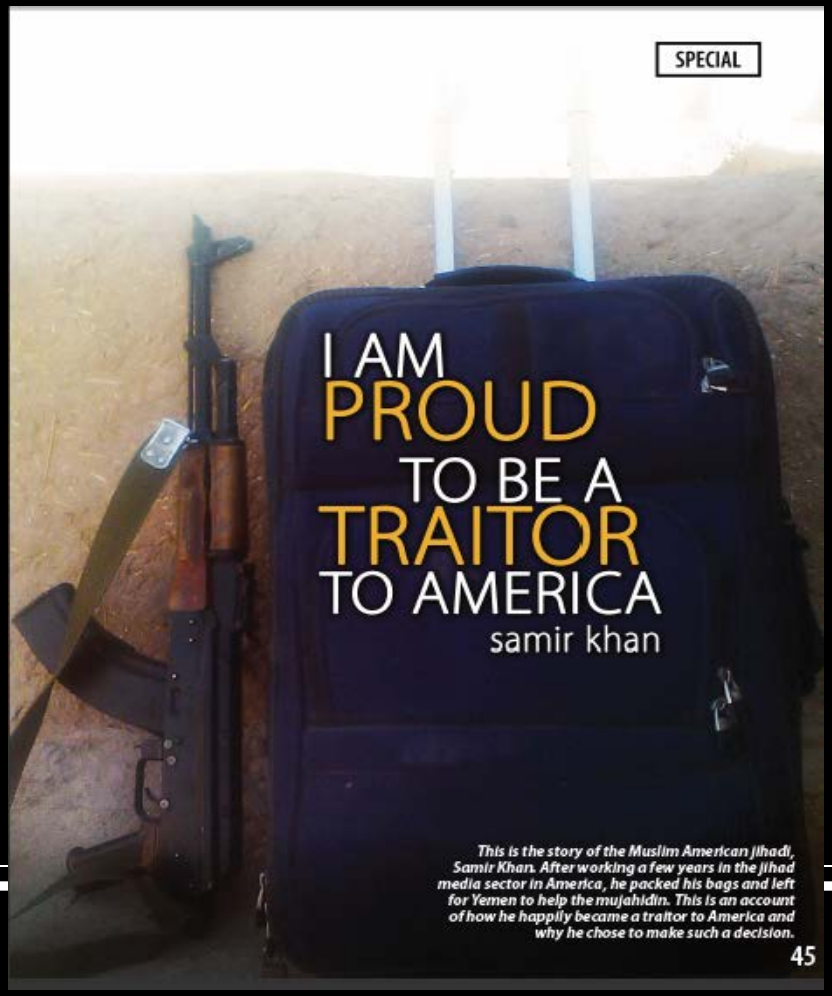
Jose Pimentel
(arrested November 2011)

Army Major Nidal Hasan has been charged with killing 13 people at Fort Hood in 2009

Britain's "Lone Wolf": Terrorist Isa Ibrahim

DAILY Mirror
Thursday May 23, 2013
Support helpforheroes.org.uk
50p
THE EVIL FACE OF TERROR
Picture: ITV NEWS
SMEARED with blood and carrying a cleaver and knife, a crazed terrorist delivers a hate-filled video message to Britain yesterday after beheading an innocent soldier on a London street.
FULL COVERAGE: PAGES 4,5,6,7
BEHEADED
..ON A BRITISH STREET
Ranting fanatic butchers soldier in Help for Heroes shirt

Calling the “wolves”:



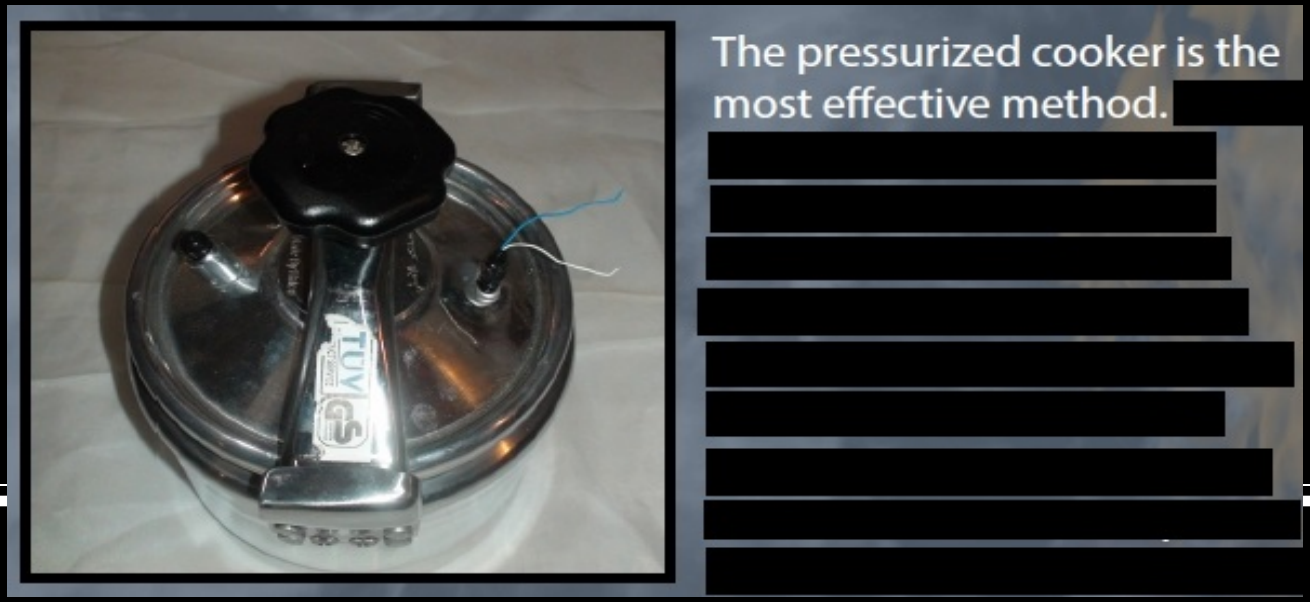
Video By Al-Qaeda Media Company Al-Sahab Uses Image Of Nidal Hasan To Underline Call For Lone Wolf Operations

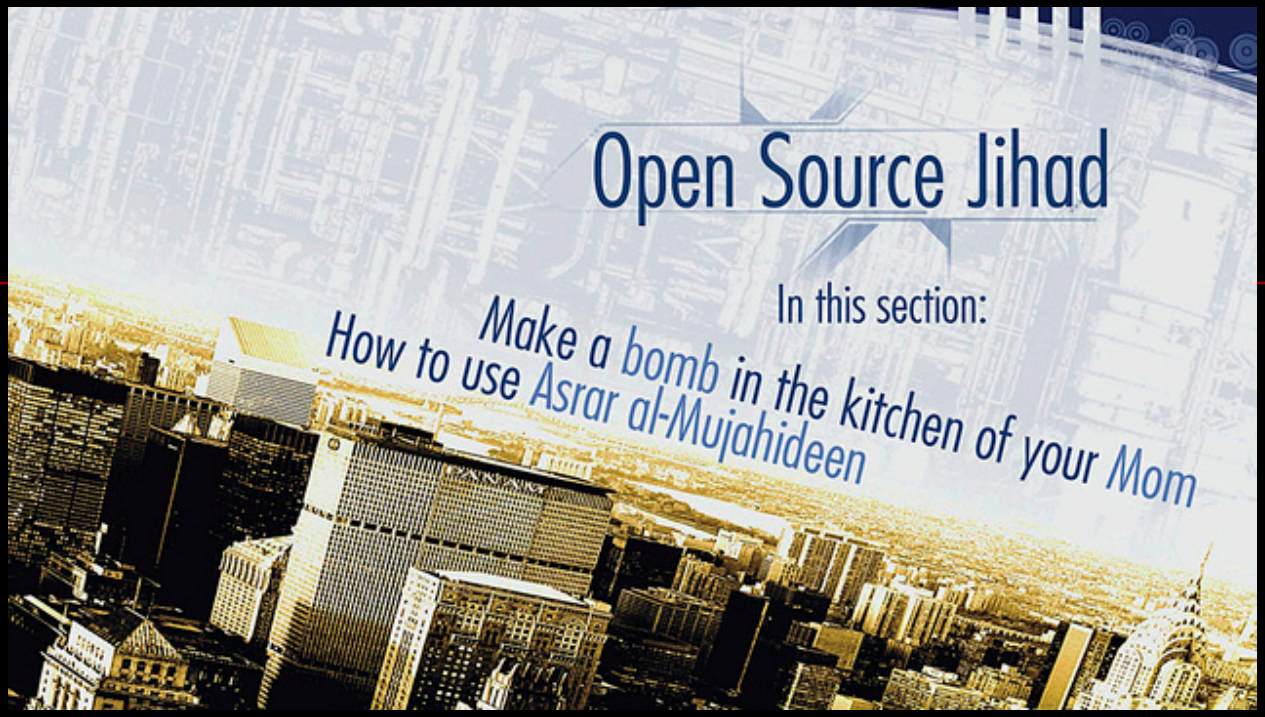
The Boston Marathon attack
April 15, 2013

The Tsarnaev brothers

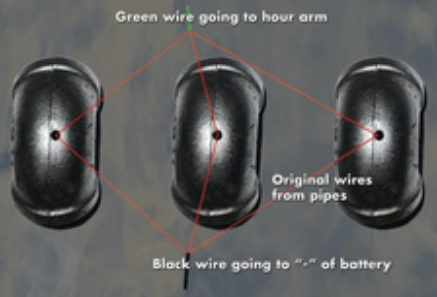
The Tsarnaev brothers

Federal law enforcement officials have confirmed that Dzhokhar Tsarnaev and his brother got bomb-making instructions from *Inspire* magazine.





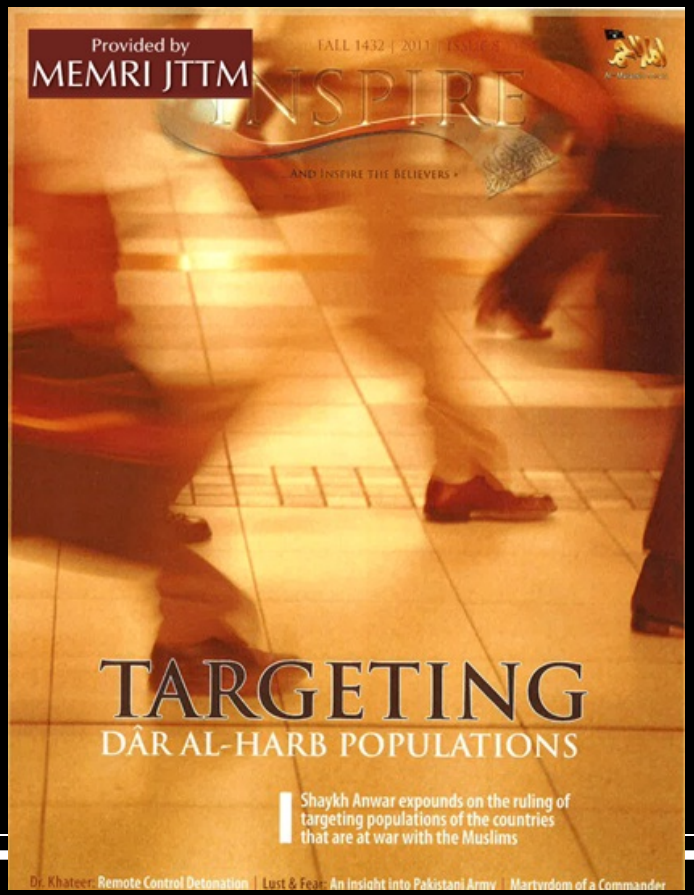
The pressurized cooker is the most effective method. Glue the shrapnel to the inside of the pressurized cooker then fill in the cooker with the inflammable material. Insert the prepared lamp into the inflammable material gently in order not to break the filament of the lamp. Then have the wires sticking out of the hole in the lid of the cooker. Wrap some tape around the hole to seal any openings and connect the wires to the electric source in the same way as we did with the iron pipe.



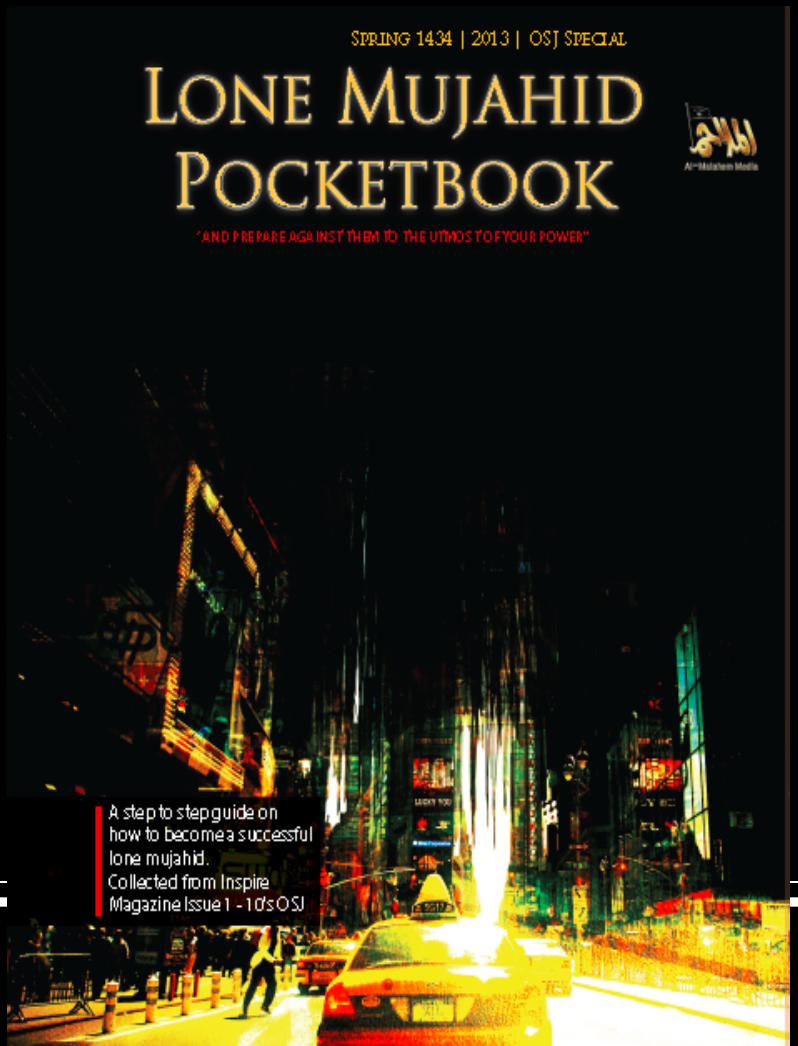
The following are a few safety precautions:

1. Put you trust in Allāh and pray for the success of your operation. This is the most important rule.
2. Wear gloves throughout the preparation of the explosive to avoid leaving behind fingerprints.
3. This is an explosive device so take care during preparation and handling.

Teaching the “Wolves”



In 2013 al Qaeda presents a new online booklet :



Glorifying the “Wolves”

Glorifying the “Wolves”

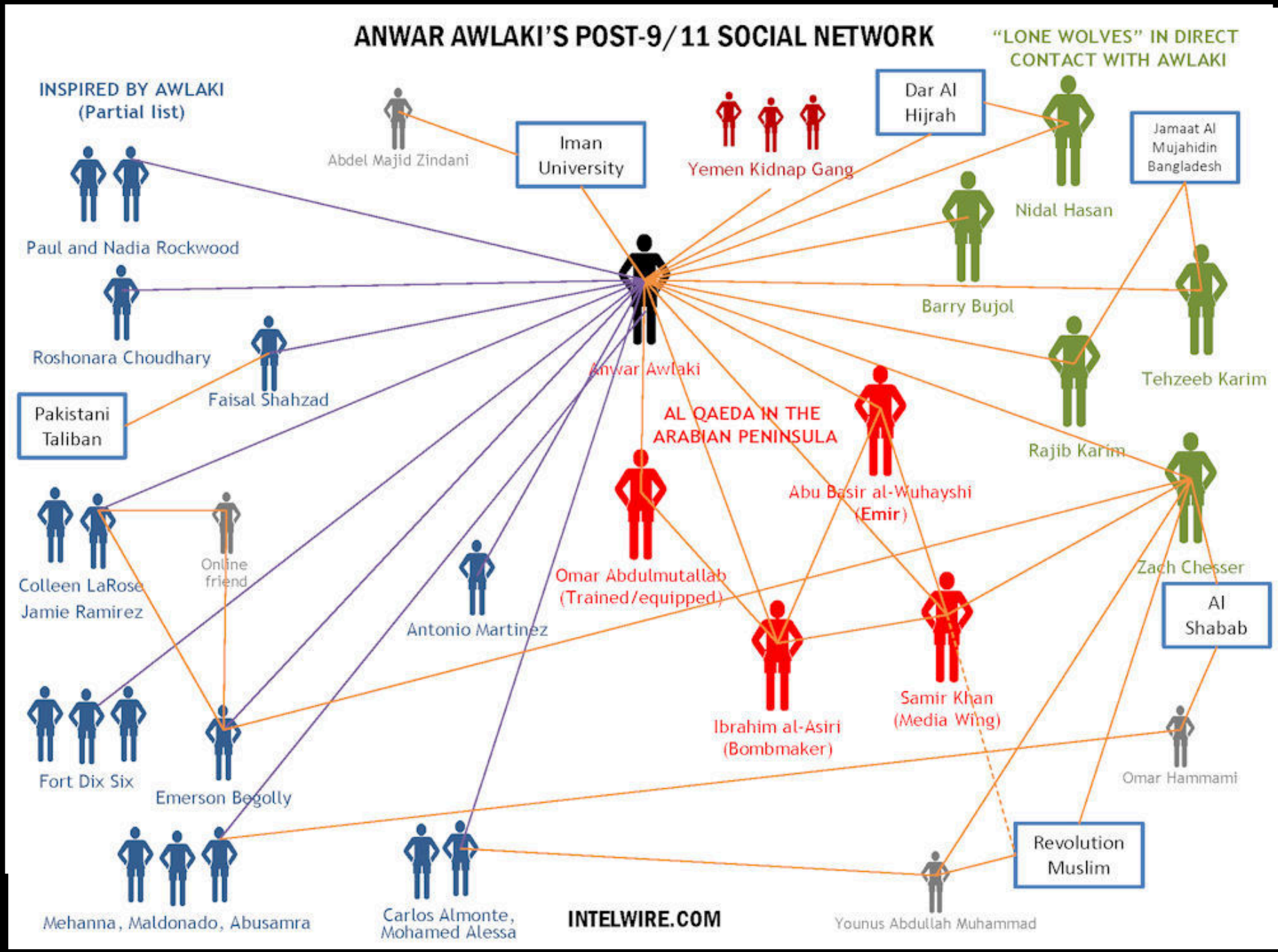
A graphic from *Inspire* 11, imagining an angelic Tamerlan Tzarnaev texting his mother

Jihad Jane – Over a Dozen YouTube Pages

In March 2010, an American woman, Colleen LaRose aka "Jihad Jane," had been arrested for alleged ties to Al-Qaeda. LaRose maintained over a dozen YouTube pages devoted to violent jihad. Her activities included alleged involvement in an plot to kill the Swedish cartoonish Lars Vilks.

Lone Wolf Jihadists Arrested in the West and in Possession of *Inspire*

- 1. **Jose Pimentel, arrested November 19, 2011. A Manhattan resident, Pimentel planned to target U.S. servicemen, post offices, and police.**
- **2. Naser Jason Abdo, a Muslim U.S. in the Army, arrested in July 2011. Abdo was planning an attack on Fort Hood military personnel, similar to the shooting by Major Nidal Hasan. He was found in possession of an article from *Inspire* titled "How to Make a Bomb in the Kitchen of Your Mom," which he used to make the bombs he planned to use in his attack.**
- **3. Nine suspects in the U.K.: British officials conducted coordinated raids in three separate cities after concluding that the suspects were "researching, discussing, carrying out reconnaissance, and agreeing on potential targets," and "igniting and testing incendiary material"; one target was the U.S. Embassy in London. They were using *Inspire.***
- **4. Hakan Ertarkan, arrested April 12, 2011. Ertakan, 21, from the Edmonton neighborhood of London, was found to be in possession of a CD issue of *Inspire*. He was charged with "possessing a record of information of a kind likely to be useful to a person committing or preparing an act of terrorism."**
- **5. Christian Emde and Robert Baum, arrested July 15, 2011. German citizens Emde, 28, and Baum, 24, were arrested when they tried to enter Britain in possession of electronic copes of *Inspire.***
- **6. Zahid Iqbal, Mohammed Sharfaraz Ahmed, Umar Arshad, and Syed Farhan Hussain, arrested in Britain on April 24, 2012. The four, all aged 21 to 30, are suspected of plotting to drive a toy car loaded with explosives under the gates of a military base. Iqbal is accused of leading a terror network under the instruction of Al-Qaeda masterminds in Pakistan; all are accused of working to recruit others, of taking their lead from *Inspire*, and of possessing copies of it.**


ANWAR AWLAKI'S POST-9/11 SOCIAL NETWORK
"LONE WOLVES" IN DIRECT CONTACT WITH AWLAKI
INSPIRED BY AWLAKI (Partial list)
Abdel Majid Zindani
Iman University
Yemen Kidnap Gang
Dar Al Hijrah
Jamaat Al Mujahidin Bangladesh
Nidal Hasan
Paul and Nadia Rockwood
Barry Bujol
Roshonara Choudhary
Faisal Shahzad
Anwar Awlaki
Tehzeeb Karim
Pakistani Taliban
AL QAEDA IN THE ARABIAN PENINSULA
Rajib Karim
Abu Basir al-Wuhayshi (Emir)
Online friend
Colleen LaRose
Jamie Ramirez
Omar Abdulmutallab (Trained/equipped)
Zach Chesser
Antonio Martinez
Al Shabab
Ibrahim al-Asiri (Bombmaker)
Samir Khan (Media Wing)
Fort Dix Six
Omar Hammami
Emerson Begolly
Revolution Muslim
Mehanna, Maldonado, Abusamra
Carlos Almonte, Mohamed Alessa
INTELWIRE.COM
Younus Abdullah Muhammad

Migration to Social Media Correlates With:

1. “Virtual Interactivity”
2. “Narrowcasting”

Online Counterterrorism:

New Arena, New Challenges

1. The new digital arena requires

new warriors, new weapons and new defenses (including NSA monitoring, counter-campaigns).

2.The new “war on terrorism” requires new regulations so that we will not pay heavier prices in terms of our civil liberties.

3. Preemptive: Prepare for future challenges (e.g., next generation's platforms) instead of response-only

Thanks

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