DECISION SUPPORT SYSTEMS, inc.

DSSI

METATEMPO: SURVIVING GLOBALIZATION

AL-QAIDA THREAT BRIEF

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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MOTIVATION

To restore Islamic ‘purity’ and expand the territory governed by its interpretation to the historical borders of Islam, and beyond.

INTENTIONS

Overthrow ‘corrupt regimes’ of Islam, replacing them with ‘acceptable’ Islamic systems (Shari’ah; theocratic); remove the U.S. as an obstruction to these goals, as a ‘destabilizing element’ and occupying power, and a key source of ‘corruption.’

MISSION

Infiltrate ‘corrupt’ countries and prepare to overthrow the government; perform strategic attacks on the U.S. to prevent or remove its interference.

SANCTUARY—SAFETY, SECURITY, SECRECY

Rely on physical protection in ungovernable, ungoverned, or friendly countries; rely on operational security and the nature of targeted countries to infiltrate and hide ‘sleepers’ and covert operatives.

SUPPORT

Receive active support from ‘fundamentalist’ Islam, ‘grassroots’ Islam as interpreted by a significant population percentage of targeted countries, key religious figures; receive coerced support from wealthy supporters and countries through blackmail, protection rackets, kidnapping. Engage in drug trade and other illegal activity that weakens target countries and ‘barbarians’ (non-Moslems or apostate Moslems).

RESOURCES

Strength of will, ‘gnostic’ Islam, ‘grassroots’ Islam, financial assets, products of the strength of the West (armaments, communications, etc.), vulnerability of the West and Western-influenced countries, percentage of Islamic or repressed peoples that can be converted and exploited as soldiers and operatives.

INTELLIGENCE

Human intelligence and open source intelligence—well-placed sources or cheap, public information that can be utilized for operations.

COUNTER-INTELLIGENCE

Rely on operations security, intelligence tradecraft for protection. Minimal human penetration of organization because of the nature of the organization and Western intelligence failure to create, cultivate, or obtain essential human resources.

COMMUNICATIONS

Use of advanced technology when necessary; reliance on human messengers for critical, secure communication. Knowledge and application of modern cryptography and coding systems.

COMMAND, CONTROL, COORDINATION

Core cadre and command network hierarchical; support and operational cells largely autonomous—operations planned, trained for, the ‘fire-and-forget.’

RECRUITING, ENROLLMENT, INITIATION

Recruits ‘self-selecting’ (voluntarist) with command accepting or rejecting, or opportunistic to acquire skills and contacts from ‘vulnerable’ potential recruits. Nature of membership is that operators are ‘married’ to organization, but organization tests operators for trustworthiness, reliability, and capabilities.

TRAINING

Regional standard (Near-/Far-East military discipline), emphasis on unconventional warfare. Training used to test recruits, enroll them into organization, and bond them to leadership. Specialized skills obtained through cross-training with other non-State actors or targeted recruiting of necessary skillsets.

ORGANIZATION

‘Core’ outward or ‘base’ of pillar of Islamic organization. Mixed positive and negative control. Cadre and command structures hierarchical; asynchronous communication and operations security impose negative control for operational cells.

DECISION CYCLE

Management of complexity by command; detailed and evolved decisional capacity, utilization of modern management and decision approaches. Mostly-autonomous operational cells handle local decisions based on mission objectives, planning, training, tradecraft, and organizational strategy.

STRUCTURE

Topology of nested rings or pillar—core leadership, core cadre, command hierarchy, support cells, operational cells. Core has internal complete connectedness; cells have internal continual connectedness.

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

By any means necessary. Minimal restrictions against ‘brother Moslems,’ no restrictions otherwise.

STRATEGY

Use ‘strengths’ of opponent against itself—technology, openness, etc. Opportunistic exploitation of vulnerabilities. Rigid goals, flexible operations.

TACTICS

Moving target—mobility physically and in approach to operations. Improvise, adapt, overcome. Target leveraged weak-points. Fetish for dramatic. Certainty through redundancy, scale of attack.

MEANS, METHODS, TRADECRAFT, TOOLS

Adopt, improve, and repurpose the knowledge and capabilities used by others. Rely on human-centric systems and approaches rather than technology. Any technology is ‘commercial off-the-shelf’ (COTS).

PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS, PERCEPTION MANAGEMENT

Skilled at PSYOP and PM internal to organization and in Islamic countries, minimal non-Islamic impact. Exploitation of media outlets to carry message, poorly targeted. ‘Operation is the statement.’

PLANNING, FLEXIBILITY

Long planning horizon. Patient, skilled, intelligent, complex, parallel/simultaneous operations. Synchronization an issue, requiring some communication for coordination. Cells locally flexible.

RESOURCEFULNESS

Highly resourceful. Organizational learning through addition, ‘churn’ (turnover) of membership. Adaptation through survival—members persist against severe ‘predatory’ impact (military and intelligence organization operations; internal power struggles).

EXECUTION

Skilled—if the organization wishes to do something, it will find a way. Operations chosen by choice—preparedness, impact, timing, synchronization with other plans, etc. Opposition has little impact because operations exploit vulnerabilities, lack of attention.

CONCLUSION

Al-Qaida is a skilled, highly motivated, purposeful organization determined to spread a severe, fundamentalist interpretation of Islam and reduce/destroy Western influence.

See further:

An Analysis of Al-Qaida Tradecraft at: http://www.metatempo.com/analysis-alqaida-tradecraft.html

Hunting the Sleepers at: http://www.metatempo.com/huntingthesleepers.pdf