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Routes into "Islamic" Terrorism: Dead Ends and Spaghetti Junctions[1]

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Abstract

Explanations for the development of groups associated with terrorism generally and "Islamic" terrorism, in particular, tend to concentrate upon materialism and forms of brainwashing. Despite considerable evidence to the contrary, the uneducated poor and unemployed graduates are most commonly profiled as Muslim terrorists. To address the over-reliance on economic factors and weak personalities, a broader approach is adopted that examines political opportunities, socialising processes and historical and contemporary experiences. It is argued that if "Islamic" terrorism is to be fully understood and ultimately defeated, then it has to be acknowledged as a multi-faceted phenomenon that is caused by varying combinations of economic, political, social, cultural and psychological factors.

Introduction

Analysis of "Islamic" national and international terrorism tends to emphasise the significance of economic deprivation and schooling and mosques as agents of brainwashing. However it is argued that this only provides a partial account of the diverse routes into terrorism. In order to provide a broader picture, a range of economic, political, cultural and psycho-social explanations provided for people joining militant groups associated with al-Qa'ida[2] and in some instances Islamic nationalist groups in the Palestinian territories will be explored.

To this end, it is important to objectively examine the structural processes and events that are seen to be transforming peoples' lives and their perceptions of these changes. As Crenshaw (1998: 250) comments, 'terrorism is not the direct result of social conditions but of individual perceptions of those conditions.' But it must be added, these perceptions are developed through social processes and interaction. Consequently this research examines international, national and local processes and activities and their impact upon individuals. A range of academic research and militant sources including political discourse and biographical details are explored to help outline factors behind the radicalisation of people into terrorism. As Tilly (2004:12) remarked, in respect to the work of Stern (2003), 'no single set of cause-effect propositions can explain terrorism as a whole'. Yet this over emphasis upon single causal analysis remains prominent, particularly within accounts that examine the relationship between militancy and materialism.

To begin it is important to establish the subject matter under investigation. Studies of terrorism are problematic because there is no definition that is universally acceptable. Definitions are rooted within the definers' values and the historical location and associated relations of domination and the power to define (Oliverio 1998). Despite these difficulties it is important that some parameters are established to enable the application of the concept to a range of behaviour to be consistent and understandable. In this research terrorism is defined as the targeted and intentional use of violence for political purposes. Militant Islam refers to radical interpretations that demand the imposition of religious law and whose supporters are willing to use violence to help achieve this. Terrorism is a method chosen by some militants towards this end. Describing acts of terrorism associated with Muslims as "Islamic" terrorism is also controversial. There is considerable debate about the extent to which the perpetrators' beliefs and in particular attacks on civilians are against the teachings of the religion. In this research, W.I. Thomas's (1928) famous maxim that if people think something is real then it is real in its consequences is adopted. Consequently "Islamic" terrorism will be applied within quotation marks to describe actions undertaken by groups in the name of Islam because those involved think they are Muslims yet their opinion is widely challenged. Ultimately it is felt this is a matter for theologians to resolve.

Economic Development and Materialism

"Islamic" terrorism is most widely perceived to be a consequence of poverty, absolute or relative, that results from modernisation and development. Li and Schaub

(2004: 236) exemplify this perspective when arguing that 'a primary cause of transnational terrorism is underdevelopment and poverty…. Poor economic conditions create "terrorist breeding" grounds, where disaffected populations turn to transnational terrorist activities as a solution to their problems.' At a broader political level, the War against Poverty is strongly associated with addressing the conditions that are believed to contribute towards terrorism. In support, the former British Prime Minister Tony Blair argued that a combination of poverty, brutal dictatorship and fanatical extremism has resulted in terrorism.[3] Earlier President G.W. Bush (2002) stated that 'we fight against poverty because hope is an answer to terror'.

There is considerable academic analysis that provides support for the causal relationship between poverty, modernisation and militancy. For example, Mortimer (1982) analysed groups during an early stage in the formation of contemporary Islamic militancy and argued that people were attracted 'whose lives are in one way or another disorientated by rapid change: merchants and manufacturers being edged out by foreign competition or by the growth of a new capitalist class.' Roy (1994: 52) claimed, over a decade later, that Islamic movements were composed of 'the oppressed of all countries…[who] dream of access to the world of development and consumption from which they feel excluded.' Sivan (1997: 11) argues on similar lines, that Islamic fundamentalism 'is a reaction against a modernity that does not deliver even on its material promises. It creates a gap between Western style consumerist expectations and "Fourth world" production and per capita income.' And twenty years after Mortimer's observation, Paz (2002: 73) believes that the origins of "Islamic" terrorism can be located 'in the inability of many individual Muslims to cope with the technological, cultural, social or economic aspects of Western modernization'. Finally Butko (2004: 33) suggests that political Islamic 'movements have arisen in reaction to attempts at rapid development and modernization which have not fulfilled the expectations of a majority of their populations. Urbanization, higher education and the perception of relative material deprivation have led to feelings of alienation, frustration, and hence, a growing sense of powerlessness'. Throughout the 1990s, the rise of Islamists in places like Algeria and the subsequent civil war has been attributed to a mismanaged economy, declining hydrocarbon prices, rising population and unemployment (Maddy-Weitzman and Litvak 2003). Similar issues can be identified in the rise of militancy in Saudi Arabia (Hiro 2002) and across the Persian Gulf. Many Muslim nation-states were simultaneously encountering both developmental crises and militancy with Islam considered, in an adaptation of one of Marx' famous sayings, to not be 'the opium of the people, but the vitamin of the weak' (Debray 1994: 15).

But as Hafez (2004) observes in his comparative analysis of Islamic militancy, there is no correlation between levels of economic deprivation, demographics and insurgency. There is not a quantifiable relationship between level of national wealth and the extent of militancy. Instead the issues extend beyond financial resources to incorporate political, cultural, social, legal and moral concerns. Yet there is, as the Egyptian militant, Montasser al-Zayyat (2004) relates, a popular misconception that membership of radical groups is a result of poverty and lack of economic opportunity. This is not to argue that poor people are not engaged in acts of terrorism. Uneducated or unemployed people have been heavily involved. For instance, Kalpakian (2005) and Kepel (2004b) have both identified the number of people belonging to poor backgrounds who were involved in the Madrid bombings. In the Palestinian

territories poverty is endemic and services severely curtailed. However Krueger and Malečková (2003) report on opinion polls in the West Bank and Gaza Strip which identified that there was no evidence to suggest that more highly educated people were less likely to support violence against Israeli targets. By comparison, the unemployed were less likely to be in support. Studies[4] of the socio-economic background of Palestinian suicide bombers indicate that people with higher levels of education and less experience of poverty are more likely to undertake attacks than the impoverished and uneducated. And crucially, while poverty and development are important factors for many people who become radical, they are not new phenomena. In many instances, the processes have pre-dated terrorism by generations. The most prominent Muslim nation-states in relation to "Islamic" terrorism like Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Egypt and Indonesia have been undergoing modernisation for generations. In addition, the 'poor' argument cannot account for the appeal of militant Islam across different socio economic groupings, ethnicities, nationalities and gender, including educated, wealthy people. If, for example, the social backgrounds of suicide/martyrdom attackers are analysed[5] it is apparent that they have been organised and carried out by a wide range of Muslims from different countries, occupations, levels of educational achievement and gender.

Some explanations for militancy and acts of terrorism have acknowledged the diversity of socio-economic backgrounds but have tended to over concentrate upon the exclusionary criteria noted above. The identification of educated supporters and members has also been noted across religious movements and terror groups and has led to a re-evaluation of the poverty thesis (Ayubi 1991, Kepel 2004a, Roy 1994). However after acknowledging the existence of educated militants, the tendency has been to extend the poverty and frustration rationale to the better qualified, exemplified by Roy's (1994) description of the group as 'lumpen intelligentsia'. Emphasis is placed upon the tremendous expansion of educational opportunities and the inadequate job opportunities for graduates. People are seen to be reacting to nation-states' 'failure to fulfil the promise of increased employment and status' (Butko 2004: 34). Consequently as the United Nations Development Programme (2002: 2) declared, in respect to Arab countries, 'there is a mismatch between aspirations and their fulfilment'. For many academics and government officials, the unemployed or underemployed graduates become radicalised. Gurr's (1970) theory of relative deprivation exemplifies this perspective, associating rebellious behaviour with economic deprivation. Certainly there are people who have joined militant groups as a result of these experiences but crucially others have developed successful careers post University. A number of studies[6] have identified, both within moderate groups and radical Islamist networks, a diverse range of socio-economic categories, educational attainment levels and a preponderance of upwardly mobile middle class individuals and professional backgrounds. For example, Hegghammer's (2006) study of recruitment and radicalisation amongst Saudi militants identified an overrepresentation of members from middle class and lower middle class. Very few were significantly overqualified for their jobs and not therefore anticipated to be encountering feelings of relative deprivation. Hegghammer's (2006: 45) observes that 'on the whole the … members were unremarkable in the sense that they were neither society's losers nor winners.' Nor is this a recent development. Ibrahim's (1980) study into jailed Islamists indicated that members of such groups tended to be highly educated, motivated, upwardly mobile and from middle class backgrounds. In this respect, the terror groups' constituency is not dissimilar from movements

associated with post industrial politics and post material values (Sutton and Vertigans 2006).

Yet despite this extensive challenge, as Hafez (2004: xvii) comments, 'Gurr's theory continues to prevail, explicitly or implicitly, as the leading explanation of Islamist violence and rebellion by area specialists, Islamic study scholars and journalists covering the Muslim world'. This misrepresentation becomes problematic when seeking to address the causes of terrorism. Explanations that concentrate upon materialist causes share at least an implicit belief that terrorism will disappear if developmental crises are resolved, income levels rise, relative deprivation disappears and unemployment reduced. However if the causes of terrorism extend across other social spheres that are not acknowledged and subsequently addressed then terrorism is unlikely to be defeated. It is therefore important that the focus shifts beyond economics and employment to explore underlying causes that can help explain the diverse appeal of Islamic terrorism.

Repression and Secularisation

The role of opportunities for political engagement within decision-making and civil society opportunities, or to be more precise the repression of opportunities and indeed liberties, is also accorded significance within explanations for militancy and terrorism. For example, Hafez (2004) and Rashid (2002) have both argued state repression is an important factor when combined with institutional exclusion. Certainly there is evidence to suggest that repressive threats to organizational resources and personal lives were contributing factors in Algeria, Egypt and Central Asia during the 1990s when militant challenges intensified. However repression is much less prominent in places like Indonesia, Western Europe and America where Muslim radicalisation is also noticeable. And conversely as Hafez (2004) observes, repression has worked in Syria, Tunisia and Iraq (pre 2003).

Political domination is also important within explanations that emphasise the significance of secularisation within Muslim nation-states. Through secularisation, religion was formally removed from power, with religious influence no longer prominent within nation-states, and made subservient to secular governments. This exclusion of Islam from power is considered[7] to be an important mobilising factor in processes of radicalisation. Again, it is important both to note that processes of secularisation have varied considerably across Muslim societies and often preceded contemporary terrorism by generations. The extent to which religion has been removed from government varies from the aggressive subjugation of religion in Turkey to Islam being integrated within power relations since the formation of the nation-state in Saudi Arabia.[8] Yet militancy can be found to different degrees in all Muslim societies and certainly is more prominent in Saudi Arabia than Turkey. Contrary to widespread opinion, it is therefore possible to argue that rather than the diminution of religious influence being central to the re-emergence of militancy, it is partly a consequence of concessions[9] (discussed below) being made to religious groups that have enhanced the prominence of Islam. By increasing the prevalence of Islam across societies, governments have unintentionally contributed to growing numbers of people being informed about more radical interpretations in conditions which are perceived to legitimise the challenging discourse. For example, in the oft

neglected North Caucasus region, the Islamic challenge to secular regimes has grown considerably following the demise of the rigid Soviet godless ideology[10] and growing prominence of religious institutions. Across Muslim societies concepts like jihad and martyrdom are now embedded within social and political discourse and normative religious behaviour is less moderate, reducing the distance to be travelled to militancy and terrorism.

Economic and political exclusion is instrumental in the processes through which people become militants. But as the above discussion has shown, many people do not experience these factors. It is therefore important to establish how people become aware of broader concerns and equally how they are informed about militant Islam. In other words, simply being aware of poverty, injustice or repression does not inevitably result in people becoming terrorists.

Beyond Brainwashing: The Role of Socialisation

Within modernisation theory, the widespread development of schools, universities and forms of media was considered conducive to progression. Today, the same socialising agents are also associated with processes of radicalisation and at the extreme brainwashing. This form of explanation is prominent across studies of terrorism. For example, Hudson (1999: 32) believes that terror organisations 'attempt to brainwash individual members with their particular ideology.' The emergence of suicide bombers has also been strongly associated with brainwashing. But as the Israeli psychologist Ariel Merari observes, 'no group can just get someone to do that [be a suicide bomber]. At most, they can strengthen existing dispositions, but at the end of the day, it comes from the individual himself, from his experiences, from his beliefs.'[11]

Schools have been closely associated with 'brainwashing' militants. Government and militant groups across the Middle East, South and Southeast Asia have established a network of Islamic schools that disseminate radicalism and recruit members. During the 1970s and 1980s religious content within states' curricula and the number of medressas (Islamic schools) increased tremendously, often aided by funding from the Gulf countries (Esposito 2002, Stern 2003). Many medressas combine classical religious education with a modern curriculum. Other medressas are controlled by more rigid Wahhabi ideologues and their pupils internalise dogmatic discourse (Byman and Green 1999, Esposito 2002). Most notably, Saudi Arabia has sought to utilise Islam to provide legitimacy for the nation-state and the Kingdom's status as guardian of the two Holy Sites. The Saudi regime is based upon a range of policies that have enhanced religious influence across society including education, law and economy. Islam within education has become increasingly noticeable. And within some prescribed textbooks, emphasis is placed upon jihad, meaning in this context outer struggle against irreligious forces. Admon (2007) reports on a document titled 'Educational Policy' published by the Saudi Education Ministry. Amongst a range of goals are two that relate specifically to jihad, 'to prepare students physically and mentally for jihad for the sake of Allah' and 'to arouse the spirit of Islamic jihad to order to fight our enemies, to restore our rights and our glory, and to fulfil the mission of Islam'. The Saudi columnist Saud al-Balawi argues that the

curricula provide 'fertile ground for teachers with extremist ideological tendencies to spread their views officially'.[12]

Clearly, there are many educational institutions involved in processes of radicalisation. Yet their influence has often been overstated. Many militants, notably in the West, have not been educated at militant institutions or by radical teachers. They are assimilating the discourse from other sources. Mosques and religious leaders in particular have been closely associated with the rise in terrorism and methods of brainwashing. For instance, Kepel (2004b: 256) argues that 'the first stage of brainwashing occurs at the hands of a pietistic salafist imam.' Similarly Rashid (2005) claims that "the simple reason is the terrifying brainwashing suffered by most of the Arab youth at the hands of 'religious clerics' and particularly at the hands of the extremists with backward views." Across Muslim societies, the power and influence of the ulema has grown with governments increasingly utilising religious legitimacy for political purposes. Yet conversely the close association of the ulema with governments has also contributed to them being de-legitimised as 'pulpit parrots' (Ibrahim 1980). This results in anti-establishment challenges frequently arising from outside established religious arrangements led by unqualified 'religious' leaders like bin Laden, al-Zawahiri and al-Zawqawi. And when examining links between religious institutions and perpetrators of recent bomb attacks and attempted attacks in the UK, there is apparently no direct link. It is believed that the group involved in the failed 21 July 2005 attack on London formed after meeting at the controversial Finsbury Park mosque in late 2002. But there is no evidence to suggest that any *imams*, including the notorious Abu Hamza influenced the men. Similarly research into the background of the four people considered to have been responsible for the 7 July 2005 suicide bombs in London has shown that as the group became radicalised they became estranged from local mosques which had no history of employing radical *imams* (Burke *et al* 2005). Instead as Hegghammer (2006) has argued with respect to Saudi militants, common recruiting grounds were informal religious study groups and gatherings, not formalised processes through mosques.

Within the West, Stemmann (2006) comments that mosques are losing their significance and are being replaced by private religious courses within informal settings, personal contacts and the Internet. This of course makes counter terrorism much more difficult. Terror groups are adapting to evolving surveillance techniques and other agents are becoming instrumental, including technology and peers, within processes of radicalisation. The role of technology and the media has been well documented[13] but the role of groups is less well known. Individuals associated with bombings and foiled attempts in Bali, Singapore, Madrid, London and the Hamburg cell that attacked America became radicalised as part of a collective process within groups. As Hegghammer (2006: 50) comments, 'group dynamics such as peer pressure and intra-group affection seem to have been crucial in the process' (of radicalisation). Across Muslim communities, younger generations are sharing experiences, information and discourse and collectively are contributing to group radicalisation or recruitment to existing groups (Burke 2003, Sageman 2004, Vertigans 2003). And for many recruits, the sense of belonging to a group, sharing values, explanations and compionship, is part of the attraction. As a former Egyptian member of al-Gama'a el-Islamiya, Khaled al-Berry (2005: 8) explains, 'I wasn't attracted to their brand of religion: I was attracted to them as people…It's like a new group of friends…and [you] want to be one of them because you like their courage

and sense of donation.' Burke (2006: 176) explores this relationship in his research into militancy and believes that groups become substitutes for family, as 'fictive kin' instrumental in recruitment and progressive radicalisation into terrorism.

In order to gain a deeper understanding of the factors behind militancy, it is also important to examine the proclamations of radical groups in press releases, video and website messages and personal messages issued by individual participants. Obviously such statements are biased, designed to enhance appeal. But as such they provide an insight into militant motivations and highlight factors that militants think will attract support and new members. Examination of communications issued by bin Laden, al-Zawahiri and acknowledged spokesmen reveals a range of predominantly non materialist issues that are being raised to mobilise support. Instead of concentrating upon issues associated with poverty, which is rarely mentioned, bin Laden's pronunciations[14] cover a broad spectrum. Nationalist struggles are discussed in places like Palestine, Kashmir and Chechnya and problems with Muslim governments, especially Saudi Arabia and its association with corruption, irreligious behaviour and the decision to allow the American military onto holy land. Denunciations of America are common and include ongoing roles in Iraq and Afghanistan, association with Israel and Jews, cowardice, hypocrisy and perhaps most surprisingly the Kyoto Agreement. There is also considerable attention placed upon immorality, the behaviour of elites, most notably Saudi princes and associated corruption. Rival ideologies such as socialism, communism, Arab nationalism and democracy are seen to have failed Muslims and instead they need to introduce the shari'ah (Islamic law).

When examining why individuals have become associated with al-Qa'ida there are a multitude of factors. These include events in their country of birth for example struggle for independence, opposition to governments, fights against oppression, cultural imperialism or Western military conquests. Feelings referred to by militants include anger, disillusionment, and disgust.[15] For example, Burke (2003) reports on Imam Samudra, one of the Jemaah Islamiyah organisers of the Bali bombing in 2002, who had been disgusted by the 'dirty adulterous behaviour' of the 'whites' and targeted nightclubs as centres of such behaviour and the need both for Muslim unity within the ummah (global Islamic community) and the need for jihad. When "Islamic" terrorists in the West are examined, first, second and even third generation immigrants often face a number of hardships including discrimination and racism. In these contexts, joining groups can be part of a common defence mechanism. And, perceptions of rising Islamophobia, discrimination and the impact of anti-terrorism laws are impacting upon loyalties. The four 7 July 2005 London bombers had experiences of deprivation and racism in Britain. But as the narrator emphasised in Shehzad Tanweer's (one of the four bombers) 'living will,' these terrorists were not motivated 'because of poverty, unemployment and emptiness as some of the mercenary media try to portray it to us'. The acknowledged leader, Mohammad Siddique Khan is known to have expressed his dissatisfaction with the environment in which he lived. But in his 'living will' he was vitriolic in denouncing Britain's foreign policy which was considered to be part of an onslaught against Muslims. Interviews with friends discovered frequent references to the war in Iraq and related suffering and injustices (BBC 2005b, Burke et al 2005, Gerges 2005, Norton-Taylor 2006). Similar reasoning was provided by Salahuddin Amin and Omar Khyam at their trials for plotting to cause explosions in Britain. Both were British

Muslims whose families emigrated from Pakistan and the conflict in Kashmir was a defining issue in their radicalisation. Another member of the group, Anthony Garcia, was born in Algeria but influenced by his increasingly Islamic brother he became inspired by the situation in Kashmir, partly through exposure in videos that showed alleged atrocities committed by the Indian army.

The significance of 'virtual' events in regions that militants may not be familiar with can be noticed across socio-economic contexts. Through the increasingly penetrative media, people view images or listen to narrative that weakens secular discourse while strengthening the legitimacy of militancy. For instance, Gerges (2005: 61) interviews al-Bahri who joined the jihad in Bosnia when aged 21. He was part of a generation that was much more aware of international political developments than older generations. Al-Bahri referred to the impact of 'a picture that is still printed in my mind to this day. It is of a Jewish soldier breaking the limbs of a Palestinian child with a stone, in front of the eyes of the world.' Another militant informed Gerges (2005: 60-1) that the trip to jihad was a consequence of 'watching the slaughter of children, women, and old people; the violation of honor and mass rape of girls; and the huge number of widows and orphans left by the war'. Similarly, a Libyan volunteer to fight the Americans in Iraq, told Pargeter (2006: 8), that the 'media is what brought me. The pictures of Abu Ghraib… the al-Jazeera and al-Arabiya channels and other TV channels like al-Shariqa and others'.

Finally, the appeal of militancy is strongly correlated with the failures of other discourses. Western influenced modernisation and related secularisation have transformed societies. These changes include improvements to infrastructures, the relocation of huge numbers to rapidly growing urban areas and opportunities for millions of people to study. Yet governments have failed to deliver promises, with many widely condemned for elitism, corruption and injustice. [16] In these settings, militancy often has a receptive audience. Raising hopes within the population that are subsequently shattered seems to be particularly significant in instigating processes of rationalisation.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, the contemporary development of different "Islamic" terror groups can be seen as a consequence of a range of social processes, associations and activities behind the rise of militancy. These include modernisation, secularisation and inter-relationships with local, national and international histories and contexts. Many terrorists do not have personal experiences of the factors widely associated with "Islamic" terrorism, namely absolute and relative poverty or brainwashing. Instead interactions between individuals and socialising agents, militant Islamic discourse and local and global social relations and activities are creating a variety of different routes into terrorism. It is within these settings that socialising processes are helping to transform identities and contribute towards radicalisation and ultimately terrorism. There is not therefore a single track following brainwashing or economic deprivation. Militant messages are legitimised by local and global socio-economic, cultural and political events and conditions that are encountered either personally or relayed by socialising agents. For some people, this happens through local issues and experiences. By comparison, for many trans-nationalists, a range of local[17] and

international issues that include corruption, American attacks in Iraq and nationalist struggles in Chechnya, Kashmir and the Palestinian territories.

The variety of factors has tremendous significance for attempts to defeat terrorism. It is becoming increasingly clear that the American led military based 'War on Terror' is proving self defeating. In other words, the 'War' is providing legitimacy for the discourse it is designed to defeat, simultaneously weakening Western concepts and principles. Exposure to Western behaviour does not, as many believe, particularly in the West, necessarily result in widespread acceptance or imitation. On the contrary it can contribute towards radicalisation of opposing ideologies. And when examining the broad range of issues that include repression, racism, corruption, immorality and political and economic exclusion behind the appeal of militancy it is also apparent that the 'War on Poverty' can only be at best partially successful. Consequently there is an urgent requirement for governments to reassess the causes of terrorism and to devise appropriate multi-layered strategies. To this end, greater research needs to be undertaken into different forms of militant Islam that exist in different contexts in order to be able to address solutions to unique problems. Understanding and ultimately defeating "Islamic" terrorism can only be achieved when governments stop imposing isolated policies that are ultimately destined to lead to dead ends and adopt a diverse multi-layered spaghetti junction approach that instead addresses causes and routes.

Western governments also need to re-evaluate the appeal of their own discourse. They have been emphasising an idealised form of democracy, freedom and justice that is clearly contradicted by events and experiences. This stance can be easily dismissed by potential supporters and rebutted by militants. There are therefore grounds to propose that governments stop assuming that audiences are naïve empty vessels who internalise whatever they are told, irrespective of circumstance, and acknowledge that Western values, principles and actions are not perfect. This will enable a more realistic ideological framework to be presented that is much harder to disprove and would enable militant discourse to be confronted through discussion and argument more effectively. 'We are not flawless but have much more to offer than the opposition' may not be a popular mobilising slogan but a 'War for Minds' will only be won through a campaign that is recognisable, representative and achievable.

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[1] Spaghetti Junction is a nickname that can be given to a complicated or massively intertwined road network.

[2] Groups associated with al-Qa'ida refers to those that either belong to al-Qa'ida or are part of international networks and share some similar ideological interpretations, aims and tactics. These groups often have their own local issues, training camps and supporters. Burke (2006: 175) points out that many groups are 'neither part of a single global jihad… nor dedicated merely to a local group, but… a hybrid of the two.'

[3] Blair (2003) at the United States Congress.

[4] For example, Hassan (2001) and Reuter (2004).

[5] For example, Bloom (2005), Davis (2003), Khosrokhavar (2005), Oliver and Steinberg (2005) and Victor (2004).

[6] Studies include Atran (2004), Berrebi (2003), Haddad (2004), Sutton and Vertigans (2005), Vertigans (2003).

[7] This is particularly noticeable in bin Laden's statements designed to attract support. In these communications, he has regularly referred to the removal of Islam from power and the irreligious nature of 'Muslim' governments. Examples can be found in Lawrence (2005).
[8] Islam remains heavily influential within Saudi Arabia and is strongly embedded within social control mechanisms. However it is the royal family who are in power and ultimate control of Islam with religious institutions used to legitimise Saudi policies and actions.
[9] Concessions have been introduced for a number of reasons including attracting political support and/or to countering communism, opposing more militant Islamic schools of thought or hostile nationalists, to engage traditional Muslims and to address concerns over alienation and anomie.
[10] It should also be added that the Soviet Union's military power was also likely to be significant in the limited expression of radical Islam during this period: a point which also highlights that repression does not inevitably lead to a militant challenge.
[11] Merari is quoted in Reuter (2004: 109).
[12] Reported in Admon (2007: 2).
[13] Further details can be found in Bunt (2003), Khatib (2003), Sakr (2001).
[14] The statements are included bin Laden (1998, 2001, 2007) and Lawrence (2005).
[15] For further reading see Burke (2003, 2006), Gerges (2005, 2006), Khosrokhavar (2005), Oliver and Steinberg (2005) and Reuter (2004).
[16] These sentiments are found in many statements by leading al-Qa'ida figures including al-Zawahiri (2001), bin Laden (1998, 2001, 2007) and associated militants like 7 and 21 July London bombers (Brady and Phillips 2005, House of Common's Report 2006, BBC 2005b).
[17] It is important to stress that many of the individuals and groups associated with al-Qa'ida continue to be concerned with matters associated with the countries of their origins. Even bin Laden and al-Zawahiri tend to place disproportionately greater attention upon events in Saudi Arabia and Egypt respectively.

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