

IS THE SALAFI MANHAJ AN INDICATOR OF TERRORISM, POLITICAL VIOLENCE AND RADICALISATION?

A CRITICAL STUDY OF THE NYPD DOCUMENT:

**'RADICALIZATION IN THE WEST – THE HOMEGROWN THREAT',
BY MITCHELL D.SILBER AND ARVIN BHATT
(SENIOR INTELLIGENCE ANALYSTS – NYPD INTELLIGENCE DIVISION)**

SALAFIMANHAIJ.COM RESEARCH DIVISION

هَلِ الْمَنْهَجُ السَّلَفِيُّ مِنْ أَسْبَابِ
الْإِرْهَابِ وَالْغُلُوِّ وَالتَّطَرُّفِ؟

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¹ This is available Online at: http://www.nyc.gov/html/nypd/pdf/dcpj/NYPD_Report-Radicalization_in_the_West.pdf

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SUMMARY

Indeed, all praise is due to Allaah, we praise Him, we seek His aid, and we ask for His forgiveness. We seek refuge in Allaah from the evil of our actions and from the evil consequences of our actions. Whomever Allaah guides, there is none to misguide and whoever Allaah misguides there is none to guide. I bear witness that there is no god worthy of worship except Allaah and I bear witness that Muhammad is the servant and messenger of Allaah.

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“O you who have believed, fear Allaah as He should be feared and do not die except as Muslims (in submission to Him).”

{Aali-Imraan (3): 102}

ä ä ä ä á ä á ä

ä ä â ä ä ä

“O mankind, fear your Lord, who created you from one soul and created from it its mate and dispersed from both of them many men and women. And fear Allaah through whom you ask things from each other, and (respect) the wombs. Indeed Allaah is ever, over you, an Observer.”

{an-Nisaa (4): 1}

ä ä

ä ä ä ä

“O you who have believed, fear Allaah and speak words of appropriate justice. He will amend for you your deeds and forgive your sins. And whoever obeys Allaah and His Messenger has certainly attained a great attainment.”

{*al-Ahzab* (33): 70-71}

To proceed:

Within the “war on terror” scenario the *Salafi da'wah* and tradition has been seen as a methodology which is the main cause, thrust and impetus for terrorism and political violence and as even promoting such radical views. A large body of research has been authored which seeks to claim that the *Salafi* way is indeed an extremist radical belief system which eventually manifests itself with political violence and terrorism.² One such report which follows this rather simplistic and incorrect assertion is the latest report by the New York Police Department entitled *Radicalisation in the West: The Homegrown Threat* by two senior intelligence analysts for the NYPD, Mitchell D. Sibling and Arvin Bhatt. Even though they aimed to understand the process by which Muslim youth become attracted to more extreme understandings and interpretations of Islam, it fell far short of doing the subject any justice and greatly misunderstood much in this regard. One of the more glaring problems with the report is that it rather boldly holds the *Salafi* methodology as being the main catalyst for terrorism and then seeks to present examples of what they consider to be ‘Salafi’. Here is where the problem lies, as the two analysts Silber and Bhatt, make reference to samples which are not ‘Salafi’ in the slightest and are rather *takfeeri*, *jihadi*, *ikhwaani* (i.e. followers of the Muslim Brotherhood) and even at times *Tablighi*! Yet all of it is placed under the poorly defined, by them, rubric of ‘Salafism’.

This study hopes to critically assess some of the claims of the Sibling and Bhatt and explore the reality of the *Salafi* way in regards to issues related terrorism, political violence and extremism. We will actually quote from the leading and well-known *Salafi* scholars themselves who the *Salafis* hold to be their reference points – in order to assess

² For example Marc Sageman in his book *Understanding Terror Networks* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 2004) states on page 1: “**The global Salafi jihad is a worldwide religious revivalist movement with the goal of re-establishing past Muslim glory in a great Islamist state...it preaches salafiyyah (from salaf, the Arabic word for “ancient one” [sic] and referring to the companions of the Prophet Muhammad),...**”

Sageman goes on to say about al-Qaeda that “**Salafi ideology determines its mission, sets its goals, and guides its tactics.**”!!? Then Sageman says: “**What sets the global Salafi jihad apart from other terrorist campaigns is its violence against foreign non-Muslim governments and their population in furtherance of Salafi objectives.**”

the assertion that adopting *Salafi* Islam leads to political violence and terrorism. As a result, it will be evident that the *Salafi da'wah* and methodology is one of the main barriers to the spread of terrorism in the world today.³ Indeed, the more stricter and serious the *Salafi*, the less likely the person will fall into radicalisation or terrorism:

Ironically, this means that the most “radical” of the salafis are the most immune to jihadist teachings, and the more “moderate”, those more open to other streams of thought, may provide slightly more fertile recruiting grounds for the jihadis.⁴

These are for the following reasons:

- ✓ Strict *Salafis* are religious and not entrenched in political activity, political involvement and rhetoric; let alone terrorism. Politics is not their first port of call, rather to educate and cultivate Muslims upon *tawheed* and adhering to the *Sunnah* of the Prophet Muhammad (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wassallam*) along with purifying the beliefs of the Muslims is their focal emphasis.
- ✓ *Salafis* frown upon forming political parties and groups which are based on partisan loyalties.
- ✓ *Salafis* do not hold secret clandestine meetings in order to put into place a strategic political plan.
- ✓ *Salafis* do not pledge allegiance to heads of organisations, groups and political parties.
- ✓ *Salafis* hold it to be un-Islamic to stage a revolt or rebellion against the leader of a Muslim country regardless of how unjust and oppressive that leader is, and especially if the Muslims do not have the ability to remove a particular leader from power.
- ✓ *Salafis* take into account the benefits and harms of any action which is done in the name of advancing the religion.
- ✓ *Salafis* do not agree with the targeting of innocent people in warfare based on the evidences from the Qur'aan and Sunnah.
- ✓ Those who claimed to be *Salafi* and then began adopting the methodology of *Ikhwaan ul-Muslimeen* (i.e. the Muslim Brotherhood) were those who eventually

³ See for example the excellent study: *Indonesia Backgrounder: Why Salafism and Terrorism Mostly Don't Mix* (International Crisis Group: September 2004). Online: http://www.seasite.niu.edu/Indonesian/Islam/83_indonesia_backgrounder_why_salafism_and_terrorism_don_t_mix_web.pdf

⁴ Ibid., p.ii

avoided referring to themselves as being 'Salafi' and rejected its well known principles. Unfortunately then, these individuals did end up leaving the *Salafi* way and some began to support erroneous ideas of jihad which the *Salafi* scholars did not endorse whatsoever.

For more on the above topics refer to the lecture series entitled '*Politics in Light of Islam*' by Shaykh Khalid al-'Anbaree which is available on www.salafimanhaj.com

As a result, this in itself indicates the *Salafi* way and tradition is quite clear in its emphasis and position but unfortunately all of this seemed to have escaped the NYPD analysts, Sibler and Bhatt.

We will also critically assess the claim made by Sibler and Bhatt in their NYPD study that regular attendance at a *Salafi* Mosque is a factor that leads to terrorism. We support our refutation of this claim with reference to a case study of a *Salafi* Mosque in the heart of London and how it has been probably the most pivotal mosque in London in opposing extremist and terrorist beliefs and methodologies. We also critique the assertion that terrorist incline towards the *Salafi manhaj* as it will be demonstrated that most of those involved in terrorism absolutely detest the *Salafi* way, belief and understanding.⁵

⁵ Indeed, this has even led to death threats against the Salafis and the accusation of them being spies, government agents, sell-outs and the likes!

INTRODUCTION

The main problem with the research of Silber and Bhatt is that they have a complete and utter misunderstanding of *Salafi* Islam. They equate it with a political ideology and as being the ideology of al-Qaeda, and this is cataclysmic misinterpretation.

Furthermore, they rashly charge extremist mosques as being “Salafi” without a detailed evidenced analysis or assessment as to whether those mosques were indeed ‘Salafi’ but as Silber and Bhatt had a misapprehension of the term ‘Salafi’ in the first instance, it is not surprising that they make these errors.

Moreover, they constantly mention the word ‘Salafi’ and claim that certain terrorists subscribed to the *Salafi* way yet Silber and Bhatt neglect any reference whatsoever to the *Salafi* scholars over the last decade. The well-known *Salafi* scholars who *Salafis* take their guidance from - such as Imaam ‘Abdul’Azeez Bin Baaz, Imaam Muhammad Naasiruddeen al-Albaanee, Imaam Muhammad bin Saalih al-’Uthaymeen (*rabeemabumullaah*), Imaam Muqbil bin Haadee al-Wadi’ee and other contemporaries such as Shaykh ‘Abdul’Azeez Aali-Shaykh,⁶ Shaykh ‘AbdulMuhsin al-’Abbaad al-Badr,⁷ Shaykh Rabee’ bin Haadee al-Madkhalee,⁸ Shaykh Saalih al-Fawzaan, Shaykh AbdulMuhsin al-’Ubaykaan,⁹ Shaykh AbdulMaalik ar-Ramadaanee,¹⁰ Shaykh AbdusSalaam as-Suhaymee,

⁶ The current Muftee of KSA.

⁷ One of the senior contemporary *hadeeth* scholars of Madeenah, he authored a book entitled *Bi Ayyi’Aql wa Deen yakunu at-Tafkeer wa’t-Tadmeer, Jihad?* [According to Which Intellect and Religion is Bombing and Wreaking Havoc Considered Jihaad!?] – translated into English by Abu Eesa Yasir Gilani (London: Daarul-Itisaam Publishing, 2004).

⁸ Another senior contemporary scholar of *hadeeth*, he is the main *Salafi* scholar to refute the ideas and writings of Sayyid Qutb.

⁹ A scholar from Riyadh, he has authored many books refuting the contemporary *Khawaarij* and *takfeerees*, such as the book which has been translated into English: *The Khawaarij and their Recurring Ideologies* (Texas: Tarbiyyah Bookstore Publishing, 2005). He has also been outspoken regarding the Iraq situation and opposing those *takfeerees* who call themselves “Mujaahideen”. See: <http://www.arabnews.com/?page=7§ion=0&article=53890&d=3&m=11&y=2004>

Also refer to these questions put to him wherein he unequivocally advises the Muslims to co-operate with the police if they are aware of terrorists in the community: http://www.al-athariyyah.com/media/pdf/terrorism/qanda_london_bombings_1.pdf

¹⁰ Author of the 460 page refutation of the statements, beliefs and ideologies of Abu Qatada and others. He also wrote a book regarding the Algerian crisis entitled *Madarik un-Nadhr fi’s-Siyasah: Bayna’t-Tatbiqat ash-Shar’iyyah wa’l-Infia’lat al-Hamasiyyah* [Perceptions of Viewing Politics:

Shaykh Khaalid al-Anbaree,¹¹ Shaykh Ali Hasan al-Halabee al-Atharee,¹² Shaykh Mashhoor Hasan Aal Salmaan, Shaykh Saleem al-Hilaalee, Shaykh Saalih Aali-Shaykh,¹³ Shaykh 'Abdul'Azeez bin Rayyis ar-Rayyis,¹⁴ Shaykh AbdusSalaam Burjis (*rabeemabullaah*) and many others – all of these *Salafi* scholars are regarded as the heads of the *Salafi* methodology and tradition and are all well-known for their stances against terrorism, extremism, political agitation and the likes, we will mention some of their statements later. Yet Silber and Bhatt did not refer to these *Salafi* scholars whatsoever and merely equated the *Salafi* tradition with terrorism and violence – this is inappropriate.

Silber and Bhatt should have been more careful in their labelling, as it is rather simplistic to merely say that something is “Salafi” when in fact such an organisation for example does not even refer to itself as being “Salafi”! So for example, Silber and Bhatt refer to “Salafi NGOs” when in fact such “NGOs” belong to the Ikhwan ul-Muslimeen/Muslim Brotherhood. Kumar Ramakrishna states in his paper *Delegitimizing Global Jihadi Ideology in South-East Asia* states:

A brief exposition of terminology is called for. Islamic fundamentalism (or Salafi Islam) is not all monolithic. Salafi Muslims, who take the injunction to emulate the Companions of the Prophet very seriously, may express this piety simply in terms of personal adherence to

Between the Divinely Legislated Application and Enthusiastic Disturbances], (KSA: Dar Sabeel il-Mumineen, 1418 AH/1997 CE, 2nd Edn).

¹¹ An assistant professor in Saudi Arabia, he was one of the first scholars to warn in the late 1990s about the tribulation of *takfeer*, in his book *Hukm bi-Ghayri Ma Anzala Allaah: Usool ut-Takfeer* [Ruling by other than what Allaah has revealed: Principles of Takfeer]. He has also recently written a book emphasising the Islamic evidences against suicide bombing, *'Iqra' Maseerak Qabl an-Tufajjir* [Read about your end, before you blow yourself up!].

¹² From Jordan he was one of the first to also warn throughout the 1990s about the tribulation of *takfeer* and is one of the main bulwarks against the *takfeeree da'wah* in the world today. Among the many classical works which he has edited he has also visited many countries conducting lectures, seminars and teaching. He has visited the US (New York in particular), the UK (Brixton and Luton), Canada, Indonesia and is well-known in the Middle-East.

¹³ The current Saudi Minister of Islamic Affairs, he gives many lectures within KSA. Of his relevant lectures to this topic is *A Warning Against Extremism* which has been translated into English here: <http://www.salafimanhaj.com/pdf/warning.pdf> Other beneficial lectures by Shaykh Saalih Aali-Shaykh which have been translated into English include *The Fitnah of the Khawaarij*, trans. Abu Az-Zubayr S. Harrison here: http://www.authentictranslations.com/trans-pub/sas_fitnah-khawaarij.pdf

¹⁴ One of the scholars of Riyadh who has also been thorough in refuting the extremist *takfeerees*, he is known for his detailed refutation of their ideas and probably the best that he has written on this topic is his book *al-Burhan al-Muneer fi Dahd Shubuhaat Ahl it-Takfeer wa't-Tajfeer* [The Clear Proofs for Refuting the Doubts of the People of Takfeer and Bombing] – it has been translated into English here: http://www.salafimanhaj.com/pdf/SalafiManhaj_TakfeerAndBombing.pdf

implementing shariah-derived standards of worship, ritual, dress and overall behavioural standards. The majority of Salafi Muslims, in fact, may be considered as “neo-fundamentalists” who possess “neither a systematic ideology” nor “global political agenda” (Metcalf).¹⁵

¹⁵ Paper in journal *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 27, no.3 (2005), p.350. The reference to ‘Metcalf’ is Barbara Metcalf and her research entitled “*Traditionalist Islamic Activism: Deoband, Tablighis and Talibs*” (2001). This essay was for the *Institute for the Study of Islam in the Modern World (ISIM)* Annual Lecture, Leiden University 23 November 2001.

WELL-KNOWN SALAFI SCHOLARS AND THEIR POSITION ON TERRORISM, RADICAL POLITICIZATION AND VIOLENT EXTREMISM

First of all it is important for us to look at the efforts of the bona-fide Islamic scholars of the Salafi tradition in opposing extremist ideologies which have been responsible for the misconceptions about Islaam today. The Salafi scholars have been the most vocal in their condemnations from the mid-1990s when many people had not even heard of the likes of Bin Laadin!¹⁶ The former *Muftee* of Saudi Arabia, Imaam 'Abdul'Azeez ibn 'Abdullaah ibn Baaz (*rabeemabullaah*) one of the main Salafi scholars, stated in the late 1990s in regards to Usaamah Bin Laadin, Muhammad al-Mas'ari and Sa'd al-Faqeeh:

These publications from al-Faqeeh, al-Mas'ari or other callers to evil, baatil (falsehood) and division must be totally destroyed and no lenience should be shown to them. It is incumbent to advise and guide them to the truth and warn them from this baatil. It is not permissible for anyone to co-operate with them in this evil, they must be advised and referred back to (true) guidance. And leave this baatil. And my advice to al-Mas'ari, al-Faqeeh, Ibn Laadin and all who traverse their way is that they leave off this dangerous path, to fear Allaah and be warned of His Wrath and Anger, to return back to (true) guidance, to repent to Allaah from they have done before.¹⁷

Imaam Bin Baaz (*rabeemabullaah*) also stated this in the Arabic newspaper *al-Muslimoon* and also reported in *ash-Sharq al-Awsat*, on 9 Jumadaa al-Ulaa 1417 AH corresponding to 21 September 1996 CE. It can be heard in audio here where Imaam Bin Baaz (*rabeemabullaah*) further emphasises that no co-operation should be made with the likes of Usaamah Bin Laadin due to their harms for safety and security, this was way before any foolish 'investigative report' or 'think tank into global tolerance' even cared about the likes of Bin Ladin: <http://www.al-mobile.org/File/1163762664.ram>
Imaam Bin Baaz (*rabeemabullaah*) also stated:

¹⁶ This is important to highlight as there is no doubt that the increased Western interest, attacks, accusations, investigations, reports etc into Islaam of late has been due to the horrific 9/11 attack which Bin Laadin has been accused of sanctioning and authorising, along with other attacks that have taken place in Europe or against Europeans abroad.

¹⁷ 'Abdul'Azeez bin 'Abdullaah bin 'AbdurRahmaan bin Baaz, *Majmoo' Fataawaa wa Maaqaalaat Mutanawwi'ah* (Buraydah, Saudi: Daar Asdaa' al-Mujtama', 1421 AH/2000 CE, Third Edition), vol.9, p.100

From that which is known to anyone who has the slightest bit of common sense, is that hijacking airplanes and kidnapping children and the like are extremely great crimes the world over. Their evil effects are far and wide, as is the great harm and inconvenience caused to the innocent; the total effect of which none can comprehend except Allaah. Likewise, from that which is known is that these crimes are not specific to any particular country over and above another country, nor any specific group over and above another group; rather, it encompasses the whole world. There is no doubt about the effect of these crimes; so it is obligatory upon the governments and those responsible from amongst the scholars and others to afford these issues great concern, and to exert themselves as much as possible in ending this evil.¹⁸

Imaam Bin Baaz (*rabeemabullaah*) also stated with regards to the terror attack in Riyadh in 1416 AH/1995 CE that:

There is no doubt that this incident is great evil which is based upon causing major corruption, major evil and serious transgression. And there is no doubt that this incident can only be done by one who does not believe in Allaah or in the Last Day, with correct and sound faith, performing such a criminal and filthy act which has brought about great harms and corruption. Only those with filthy souls filled with hatred, envy, evil and corruption, and devoid of (sound and correct) faith, would do the likes of such actions. We ask Allaah for well-being and safety and to help the people in authority in all that will affect those people because their crime is severe and their corruption is huge. There is no power or movement except with Allaah! How can a believer or a Muslim perform such a serious crime which is based upon such huge transgression, corruption and destroying lives and injuring others without due right?

He further stated:

I exhort all who know anything about these (terrorists) to convey that info to the relevant people. It is upon all who know about their condition and about them should convey that about them, because this is from the avenue of co-operation in order to prevent sin and transgression and in order to secure safety of the people from evil, sin and transgression; and to establish justice from the transgressions of those oppressors...There is no doubt that this is from the greatest of crimes and corruptions on the earth and those who commit such actions are more deserving to be killed and restrained due to the heinous crime that they have committed. We ask Allaah that He makes them fail and that He shackles them and their likes and

¹⁸ *Kayfa Nu'aaliy Waaqi'unal-Aleem* pp. 113, 114

that He saves us from their evil and the evil of those like them and that He totally destroys their plots, indeed He is Lofty and Majestic, Generous and Kind.¹⁹

Dr Natana DeLong-Bas superbly states in chapter six of her book *Wahhabi Islam: From Revival and Reform to Global Jihad*:

The global jihad espoused by Osama bin Laden and other contemporary extremists is clearly rooted in contemporary issues and interpretations of Islam. It owes little to the Wahhabi tradition, outside of the nineteenth-century incorporation of the teachings of Ibn Taymiyya and the Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyyah into the Wahhabi worldview as Wahhabism moved beyond the confines of Najd and into the broader Muslim world. The differences between the worldviews of bin Laden and Ibn Abd al-Wahhab are numerous. Bin Laden preaches jihad; Ibn Abd al-Wahhab preached monotheism. Bin Laden preaches a global jihad of cosmic importance that recognizes no compromise; Ibn Abd al-Wahhab's jihad was narrow in geographic focus, of localized importance, and had engagement in a treaty relationship between the fighting parties as a goal. Bin Laden preaches war against Christians and Jews; Ibn Abd al-Wahhab called for treaty relationships with them. Bin Laden's jihad proclaims an ideology of the necessity of war in the face of unbelief; Ibn Abd al-Wahhab preached the benefits of peaceful coexistence, social order, and business relationships. Bin Laden calls for the killing of all infidels and the destruction of their money and property; Ibn Abd al-Wahhab restricted killing and the destruction of property. Bin Laden calls for jihad as a broad universal prescription for Muslims of every time and place; Ibn Abd al-Wahhab confined jihad to specific and limited circumstances and contexts. Bin Laden issues calls to violence and fighting; Ibn Abd al-Wahhab sought to curtail violence and fighting. Bin Laden provides an ideological worldview based on jihad; Ibn Abd al-Wahhab provided legal justifications for the mechanics of jihad. Bin Laden calls for jihad as an individual duty; Ibn Abd al-Wahhab upheld jihad as a collective duty. Bin Laden requires no justification for jihad outside of the declaration of another as an infidel; Ibn Abd al-Wahhab limited justifications for jihad and restricted the use of the label infidel. Bin Laden's vision of jihad clearly belongs to the category of contemporary fundamentalists; Ibn Abd al-Wahhab's vision of jihad contains elements of both classical and modernist interpretations of Islam. Wahhabi Islam is neither monolithic nor stagnant. Changes in thought, topics addressed, and emphases on different themes have

¹⁹ 'Abdul'Azeez bin 'Abdullaah bin 'AbdurRahmaan bin Baaz, *Majmoo' Fataawaa wa Maaqaalaat Mutanawwi'ah* (Buraydah, Saudi: Daar Asdaa' al-Mujtama', 1421 AH/2000 CE, Third Edition), vol.9, pp.253-255

clearly occurred over the past 250 years. The militant Islam of Osama bin Laden does not have its origins in the teachings of Ibn Abd al-Wahhab and is not representative of Wahhabi Islam as it is practiced in contemporary Saudi Arabia, yet for the media it has come to define Wahabbi Islam in the contemporary era. However, “unrepresentative” bin Laden’s global jihad of Islam in general and Wahhabi Islam in particular, its prominence in headline news has taken Wahhabi Islam across the spectrum from revival and reform to global jihad.²⁰

Shaykh ‘AbdulMaalik ar-Ramadani al-Jazaa’iri, an Algerian *Salafi* scholar, stated about the Algerian *takfeeree* group known as the ‘*Salafi Group for Da’wah and Combat*’:

How can, with all of this, making permissible the blood of the police and killing them, be clean (i.e. permitted)? Then they live on stolen monies which have been ransacked from people by force! They destroy the souls of the Muslim soldiers...As a result, we do not however absolve ourselves from ‘Salafiyyah’ as it is the truth, yet we absolve ourselves for Allaah from the ‘Salafist Group for Dawah and Combat’ and from all those who grasp weapons today in our country against the system or the people. I say this so that the creation know that the ascription of those revolutionary groups (i.e. the GSPC) to Salafiyyah is a distortion of Salafiyyah, just as how ascribing deviant Muslims to Islam is also a distortion of Islam, blocking the true path of Allaah and causing people to flee from the victorious ones (*firqat un-Naajiyah*). However, Salafiyyah is Salafiyyah, just as Islaam is Islaam, even though it is distorted by the deviants.²¹

Shaykh ‘Ali Hasan al-Halabee al-Atharee gave a *khutbah* on *takfeer* and terrorism in *Masjid ul-Haashimiyyah* in ‘Ammaan, Jordan on 11/11/2005 CE, the day after the terrorist attack upon the hotel in ‘Ammaan.²² Within the *khutbah* Shaykh ‘Ali said:

...Without any fear of Allaah, and with no shame for the servants of Allaah, those ignorant ones who get in the way and issue rulings, who spoke with great ignorance regarding matters related to the spilling of blood and then turned their corrupted speech towards something worse and caused killing, calamities, tribulations and ordeals for the Ummah, all in the name of jihaad and in the name of spreading the deen and commanding the good and forbidding the evil. Rather, due to their corrupt actions, these have been the reasons for the enemies to rule

²⁰ Natana DeLong Bas, *Wahhabi Islam: From Revival and Reform to Global Jihad* (New York: Oxford University Press and London: I.B. Tauris, 2004), pp.278-279

²¹ Shaykh ‘AbdulMaalik bin Ahmad bin al-Mubaarak Ramadaanee al-Jazaa’iree, *Fataawaa al-‘Ulamaa al-Akaabir fima’ Uhdira min Dimaa fi’l-Jazaa’ir* [The Legal Verdicts of the Senior Scholars Regarding the Killings in Algeria] - (Cairo: Daar Imam Ahmad, 1426 AH/2005 CE), pp.16-17.

²² See the full *khutbah* in Arabic at www.alhalaby.com

over the Ummah and exert pressure upon it, not to mention their describing Islaam with terrorism and the righteous Muslims with extremism. So they (the ignorant ones) do not perceive and with their misguidance and corruption they are not able.

O Believers!

Indeed the words of our senior scholars, may Allaah have mercy on them, which are built upon the Book of Allaah and the Sunnah of His Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم and the path of the companions and the successors رضي الله عنهم which is a lamp for all people rather it is the origin and the foundation, from the times of old, in warning against this dangerous and tenacious takfeeree way and what it is built upon from killing, carnage, blood-shed and bombings. These are the true statements and are repeated much throughout history, and is frequently heard in all lands at all times and in all places. One of our contemporary scholars and our wise senior scholars, upon whom their status and trust has been agreed upon for over ten years, have said that “Hastiness in takfeer has a great danger, especially in regards to that which results in making permissible the spilling of blood and taking honour and plundering wealth, specially and generally, and blowing up dwellings and vehicles and destruction of establishments. This actions, and the likes, are prohibited in the Sharee’ah, according to the consensus of the Muslims, especially when within that is taking the honour of a innocent soul, taking the honour of wealth, taking the honour of safety and security and the lives of the people who are living under such security within their homes and dwellings. Islaam is free from such dangerous beliefs. So what is happening in some countries with regards to shedding the blood of the innocent, bombing dwellings and vehicles, bombing private and public utilities and destruction of establishments - are criminal actions which Islaam are free from. This is how a Muslim who believes in Allaah and the Last Day is free from such criminal actions, which is the behaviour of those who have deviant thought and misguided belief and carry the sin and crime upon themselves, so their actions should neither be ascribed to Islaam nor upon the guided Muslims who are guided by Islaam and who ascribe themselves to the Book and the Sunnah, who hold firm to the rope of Allaah. Such actions are outright corruptions and crimes that the Sharee’ah and the natural disposition censure, for this reason the Sharee’ah texts have come to prohibit such actions, as a warning against companionship with its people.” The end of his words, may Allaah have mercy upon him. I say, to conclude, the saying of the Imaams of knowledge and deen are to be applied to those deviant takfeerees and misguided ignoramuses. They do not give any victory to Islaam and they do not bring any loss to disbelief.

In an interview with Mshari al-Zaydi of *Sharq al-Awsat* newspaper Shaykh 'AbdulMuhsin al-'Ubaykaan (*hafidhabullaah*) of Riyadh shed some light on Islaam's war against terror and their efforts of the Salafis in that war against terror:

“One of the few Islamic scholars who continue to oppose al Qaeda and confront the organization using Fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence, literally: understanding and acquisition knowledge) is Sheikh Abdul Mohsen Bin Nasser Al Obeikan, born and raised in Saudi Arabia? A writer, a lecturer, and a speaker, he is a prominent figure who actively defends Islam against the fundamental and militant ideologies of groups such as al Qaeda who have been gaining popularity in Saudi Arabia in the last few years. Going against many others, Sheikh Al Obeikan rejects Al Qaeda's claims of engaging in Jihad (struggle for Islam) in Iraq, against Coalition troops and civilians. **Interestingly, Al Obeikan describes himself as a Salafi, a traditionalist who advocates a return to a Sharia (The body of Islamic law based on the Quran and the sunna, the body of customs and practices based on Prophet Mohammed's words and deeds found in the Quran and the Hadiths) minded orthodox, using the Quran and the Hadiths (the sayings and deeds of the Prophet as recorded by his followers), or even a Wahabi (a puritanical Saudi Islamic sect founded by Muhammad ibn-Abd-al-Wahab in the 18th century) who opposed, during the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990, Saudi Arabia's reliance on foreign troops to drive Saddam Hussein out of Kuwait, for religious and political reasons. He is the first to admit his position, at the time, was a mistake and is quick to blame others who realize they were not (mistaken) for not publicly admitting the erroneous beliefs.** In a lengthy conversation with Asharq Al Awsat, Sheikh Al Obeikan candidly discusses the much-needed reforms to the Saudi judiciary, his readiness to confront Bin Laden and traces the rise of radical political Islam in the Gulf Kingdom...

Q: You have been known for your direct criticism, or even attack, of the thoughts of Al Qaeda and similar groups, whereas other religious figures have not been so vocal. Some might even argue that this silence is a direct result of tacitly approving Bin Laden's discourse, or, the consequence of a lack of religious arguments to disprove these beliefs. What is your reaction?

A: I say to those who believe in Al Qaeda and its ideology of Takfir that they are being superficial and simplistic. I have challenged such people on many occasions through the media and by other means. I've even sat and debated with such sympathizers at my home and in the mosque. None was ever able to convince me. I, Sheikh Al Obeikan, am even ready to debate with Bin Laden himself!

Q: Why is the religious establishment not engaged in debates with those belonging to al Qaeda and their followers? Wouldn't Saudi Arabia benefit from a debate on complex religious issues such as Al Walaa wa Al Baraa (loyalty to Islam and disloyalty to its opponents), the role of Islamic law in everyday life, the Kingdom's membership in international organizations such as the UN? Why, when such a debate has already occurred in Egypt, is it absent from Saudi Arabia? Do you believe that a comprehensive debate is needed to replace the diversity of opinions currently publicized after each terrorist incident?

A: Indeed, what you propose is very much needed. I have discussed such a scheme with many sheikhs and scholars and we all agree that a national debate is a must. I have also invited followers of Al Qaeda to engage in a debate with me, but so far, I have received no replies.

Q: If were to be invited to a public debate with Bin Laden, would you accept?

A: Yes! I am ready to engage in a debate with Bin Laden and others such as Abu Mohammed Al Makdissi²³ in public. I have already said so on air, on the "Al Hewan Al Ghaib" television program. During the program, I received a phone call from Hamed Al Aaly a religious scholar in Kuwait who is now imprisoned for supporting terrorism. We had a debate, which was written about in Kuwaiti newspapers.

Q: Sheikh Faris Al Showeil, one of the members of al Qaeda's religious committee, asked, before his arrest, to discuss with Sheikh Safar Al Hewaly, whether the Saudi Arabia really has a Muslim government. The latter declined. If you were invited to discuss such matters, would you accept?

A: I am ready to debate at any time with anyone who defends Al Qaeda or justifies its actions.

Q: Nowadays, Sheikh Al Obeikan, you are mostly known as a prominent advocate for judicial reform as well a leading Sheikh confronting militant Muslim ideologies and groups. However, if we were to go back a decade, to the aftermath of the liberation of Kuwait, some might argue that you were not the same person. Then, for example, you were known for your activities in the "Jama' Al Jawhara" mosque in Riyadh, which served as a meeting point for those condemning the government's policies. What has changed since then?

A: I do not think I have changed at all. What has happened is that I have changed my style and how I deal with different situations. Whereas, in the past, I expressed my opinion in public, I now believe that public denunciations are a mistake, both on a religious and a rational level. I continue, however, to give advice to and discuss matters with those in power, in private.

²³ Usually spelt 'al-Maqdisi' or 'al-Maqdissee'

Q: What are, if any, the mistakes that have accompanied the Sahwa (religious revival) across Saudi Arabia, in your opinion?

A: This religious revival started before the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and the second Gulf war that ensued. At the time, it was still a harmless phenomenon that was non- political and confined to individual acts such as listening to tapes of the Quran at home or in the car. The figures we tend to associate with this revival were, I believe, its product.

Q: Has religious sentiment been, therefore, politicized in Saudi Arabia?

A: Yes, that is what's happened! If the increase in religiosity had remained private, our society nowadays would be much more balanced.

Q: If you are saying that the true revival has been hijacked by politics, what do you say to the leaders of this Sahwa?

A: I would like to repeat that I do not believe in those self-styled leaders or symbols of the revival. I believe that the initial Sahwa created them. Let me add, however, that these figures you ask me about are the ones to blame for corrupting society's desire to do the right thing and transforming it into an attack on the Kingdom's rulers, convincing them that those in power should be fought, confronted, and eliminated. They are the ones who have been giving lectures and making speeches in the last few years, many influenced by the Kharijite thought (The Khawarij are a Muslim sect who rejected the authority of the fourth caliph, Ali Bin Abi Talib. In modern times, Islamic thinkers have sometimes branded terrorist organizations which emphasis Takfir as neo Kharijites).

Q: Could you explain your last statement a bit further?

A: These figures took pieces of the old Khawarij sect, perfectly summed up in the thoughts and behavior of the Muslim Brotherhood, which has been a great influence on the latest militant Islamic groups. Some of these groups derive their thoughts from the Khawarij who advocated the belief of challenging their rulers because they abused their wealth and power and did not rule according to the Quran. These contemporary groups make the same claims under what they consider is "Hakimiyyah" or the rule of Allah.

Q: How can one call for reform in Saudi Arabia but avoid falling into the trap you have described, namely denouncing the rulers and rebelling against those in power?

A: It is necessary for wealth and power to be justly distributed in our society.

One can achieve this by making demands in a peaceful way, as the Prophet Mohammed taught us. Those who govern Saudi Arabia are now, more than ever, paying close attention to the interest of the country and the needs of its citizens. The decision to forge ahead with reform has already been taken at the highest levels and much implemented since the liberation of Kuwait, for example, the establishment of a Shura Council and the announcement of the Basic Laws.

Q: How is one to reconcile your enthusiasm for reform with your image as a traditionalist, Sheikh Al Obeikan?²⁴

A: Some might even tell you that I am a Wahabi! To all these people, I have one important thing to say and that is that political and administrative reform is possible without having to resort to the ways of the Muslim Brotherhood. Some might even think that Salafis (traditionalist) are not reform minded. In fact, traditionalists have, in the past, called for reform. Figures of this latest religious revival are, in reality, calling for corruption, strife, destruction, and killing, as the Khawarij did many centuries ago.

Q: Why, in your opinion, did Sheikh Mohammed Bin Othaymin denounce the Islamist figures that wrote the “Memorandum of Advice”, if he is not against the principle of reform?

A: I am also against this memorandum. I adopted the earlier “Letter of Demands” because it was concerned with religious matters of public interest. There is, however, a huge difference between the two. For example, the Memorandum calls for the Kingdom to open its borders to all Muslims. But how can such a situation be contemplated? Each country has its own economy and its own regulations. There are, evidently, considerable differences between the various Muslim countries in educational, cultural, and social matters. If, in the situation we find ourselves in, the limited number of foreigners has had a great impact on Saudi society, how can we possibly ask to open our doors to everyone? Many Muslims would like to settle in the Kingdom, whether to be close to the holy mosques in Mecca and Medina, or to benefit from the economic riches of the country. If we were to open our doors to every Muslim, Saudi Arabia will be destroyed and its resources plundered. If Muslims want to come and use our resources, why don't we use theirs as well? We shouldn't compare both documents. Many religious scholars and sheikhs approved the first “Letter of Demands” across Saudi Arabia, in addition to Sheikh Bin Baz. Assembly of Senior Ulemas, however, rejected “The Memorandum of Advice”. While the latter represents the Salafi tradition and its demands for reform, the Memorandum embodies the politically active religious current.

Q: Does all this criticism indicate that you reject the outcome of the current Islamic revival in Saudi Arabia?

²⁴ By asking about the Shaykh's image of being a “traditionalist” the intent is that image of being a Salafi who sticks to the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad and the Salaf, along with the traditional and classical methodology of learning.

A: Perhaps it is best, in order to answer your question, to look at the results of this revival. Are Saudi Arabians in a better condition as a result of the tapes in circulation inciting political hostility? I believe we were in a better situation before the emergence of such tapes.

Q: How can you condemn the usage of tape cassettes when some sheikh uses them as well?

A: I did not mean to condemn all usage of such tapes. **I do, however, condemn all the tapes that call for political incitement and hostility, such as the one entitled “a message to the security officer” or the tape entitled “You will remember in the future what I am now telling you”, which featured speculation on the developments of the war in Kuwait, none of which turned out to be true. I believe this tape, which wanted to challenge the edicts of Sheikh Abdul Aziz bin Baz has been harmful. Its makers should admit their mistakes, like I have done in the past when I stopped voicing my opposition in public.**

Q: Many of the theoretical advocates of Al Qaeda, such as Yousef Al Airy²⁵ and Faris Al Showail, have been quoting the religious edicts and opinions of prominent sheikhs on issues of Takfir and Jihad, implying that they are merely repeating the beliefs of Saudi religious leaders. What is your opinion on such practices?

A: These new militant leaders are the product of a revival that calls for political incitement and discord. They are willing to do anything that will serve their cause.

Q: How then, can Saudi Arabia protect its younger generation from succumbing to such ideology?

A: I would like to see the creation of a Supreme Committee to confront this Takfiri ideology, which will undertake a comprehensive and in depth study on how to combat revivalist ideology. We can no longer shy away from confronting this problem. Can you believe that some sheikhs, instead of delivering lectures on terrorism, speak about the importance of obeying parental obedience as a religious duty?

²⁵ One of his works has been ‘explained’ by ‘Imam’ Anwar al-Awlaki, a *takfeeree* propagator who makes *takfeer* of the scholars who do not agree that Muslims should wage armed *jihad* during times of weakness, referring to them as being “hypocrites”! Yoosuf bin Saalih al-’Uyeree, also known as Aboo Qutaybah al-Makkee was a represent of the group which called themselves ‘*al-Qaa’idah in the Arabian Peninsula*’ which was headed by ‘Abdul’Azeez al-Muqrin. Both died after shoot-outs with the Saudi police and al-’Uyayree was killed on 31 May 2003 CE. He fought in Afghanistan against the Soviets and then returned to Saudi Arabia in the early nineties and set himself up as a *takfeeree* ideologue. He has authored many books some of which have been translated into English by the *takfeerees* of the *Tibyan* (*Tughyaan!*) Publications and others of their affiliates.

Q: Are you implying that some sheikhs might be encouraging revivalist ideology that incites violence?

A: Indeed. We need to address them and find out the reasons they are shying away from confrontation. They should fear for the future of their country, its safety, and security, in addition to the future of Islam. I would, at this point, commend the national media for its efforts to rid us of militant ideologies.

Q: There are some who accuse a sizeable segment of schoolteachers of being sympathetic to the ideology of Al Qaeda. Do you agree?

A: Not only does this segment populate our schools, but it also exists in our universities with some who believe in the ideology of Takfir even lecturing on the subject and publicizing it.”²⁶

Shaykh ‘AbdulMuhsin al-‘Ubaykaan was also asked after the horrific London bombings if it was allowed for Muslims to inform the police if they are aware of such terrorist plots and replied:

Yes (he can). We say this is considered forbidding an evil. We already know that Islaam has judged this type of act to be impermissible, and the Prophet (sallallaahu ‘alayhi wassallam) said: “Whoever amongst you sees an evil then let him change it with his hand. If he is unable then let him change it with his tongue (i.e. by speaking out against the evil). If he is unable to this then let him hate it with his heart and that is the lowest level of eemaan.” This act (i.e. terrorism) is evil, it is a crime and it is forbidden. Therefore, it is obligatory upon the one who can change an evil in the way he is able to, and one of the ways is to inform on those criminals.²⁷

Shaykh Muhammad bin Haadee al-Madkhalee (*hafidhabullaah*), a professor at the *Islamic University of Madeenah* in Saudi Arabia stated:

Those who set off the explosions in the Kingdom admitted with their own mouths, that they were affected by the Jamaa’atut-Takfeer (one of the Egyptian Qutbist groups) and that they were from the group of Osama Bin Laden and al-Masari, and they were spreading their literature. Osama Bin Laden - who taught this man? Who educated him about the Shariah (Islamic laws)? He is a businessman, this is his field of specialization... they admitted, as we said, with their own mouths, we saw it and read it in the newspapers, and I have it here with me recorded with their own voices, that they were affected by some of the people of takfeer (from the Qutbist

²⁶ Mshari al-Zaydi, “Interview with Sheikh Abdul- Mohsen Bin Nasser Al- Obeikan” in *Sharq al-Awsat*, 24 May 2005 CE see: <http://www.asharq-e.com/news.asp?section=3&id=85>

²⁷ Tele-link session on 21 July 2005 CE entitled ‘Questions on the London Bombings’ from the Salafi website *al-Athariyyah*, see: http://www.al-athariyyah.com/media/pdf/terrorism/qanda_london_bombings_1.pdf

groups) of Afghanistan. The majority of our youth that returned from the jihad in Afghanistan to our country were affected, either by the ideology of the Ikhwaan (the group al-Ikhwaan al-Muslimoon) in general, or by the revolutionary, takfeeree ideology. So they left us believing that we were Muslims, and they returned to us believing that we were disbelievers. So with that, they saw us as being disbelievers, the rulers, and the scholars, not to mention the common folk. They labelled the (Saudi) state apostate, and they rendered the major scholars apostate. They admitted this with their own mouths. They declared the scholars to be disbelievers, and mentioned specifically the two Shaykhs, Shaykh Abdul-Aziz Bin Baaz and Shaykh Muhammad Bin al-'Uthaymin, may Allaah preserve them. They mentioned their connection with al-Masari and Osama Bin Laden. Did they get this from the scholars of Salafiyyah? No! Rather they got it from the people of takfeer.²⁸

After the London bombings, Mushtak Parker and P.K. Abdul Ghafour reported in an article in the *Arab News* dated: Saturday 9 July 2005 that:

Grand Mufti and Others Denounce London Bombings

The Kingdom's grand mufti yesterday strongly denounced the deadly blasts that rocked London, saying Islam strictly prohibits the killing of innocent people. He also censured the terrorists for tarnishing the image of Islam by attaching their heinous crimes to the religion. The explosions that ripped through central London's transport system on Thursday, "targeting peaceful people, are not condoned by Islam, and are indeed prohibited by our religion," Sheikh Abdul Aziz Al-Asheikh said in a statement carried by the Saudi Press Agency. "Attributing to Islam acts of individual or collective killings, bombings, destruction of properties and the terrorizing of peaceful people is unfair, because they are alien to the divine religion," said the mufti, who also heads the Council of Senior Islamic Scholars, Saudi Arabia's highest religious authority. "Islam is a religion of reforms and righteousness. It envisages the progress of humanity and takes it from darkness to light. It also calls for respecting agreements and prohibits their violation," the mufti said referring to accords binding governments. "Causing corruption on earth is one of the biggest crimes in Islam," he explained. Sheikh Abdul Mohsen Al-Obaikan, a senior Saudi scholar and a Shoura member, said there was no justification, whatsoever, for the killing of innocent people. Speaking to *MBC* television, he urged all members of the Muslim community in Britain to cooperate with British authorities in tracking down the criminals behind the attacks.

Imaam Muhammad Ibn Saalih al-'Uthaymeen (*raheemahullaah*) of 'Unayza, Saudi Arabia, also affirms the Islamic belief of tolerance of non-Muslims. Prior to his passing away, he

²⁸ From Abu Hasan Maalik, *In Defence of Islaam* (Toronto: Troid Publications, 2002 CE), p. 97

gave some advice to a *Salafi* community in the city of Birmingham (UK), via tele-link from Saudi Arabia. Speaking about several different topics, he had the following advice for the *Salafi* youth of Great Britain regarding interaction between Muslims and non-Muslims:

Likewise I invite you to have respect for those people who have the right that they should be respected, from those between you and whom there is an agreement. For the land in which you are living is such that there is an agreement between you and them. If this were not the case, they would have killed you or expelled you. So preserve this agreement, and do not prove treacherous to it, since treachery is a sign of the hypocrites, and it is not from the way of the Believers. And know that it is authentically reported from the Prophet that he said, *"Whoever kills one who is under an agreement of protection will not smell the fragrance of Paradise."*²⁹ Do not be deceived by the sayings of the foolish people who say, "Those people are not Muslims, so their wealth is lawful for us." For I swear by Allaah - this is a lie; a lie about Allaah's Religion, and a lie that Islamic societies (hold this to be true). So we may not say that it is lawful to be treacherous towards people whom we have an agreement with. O my brothers. O youth. O Muslims. Be truthful in your buying and selling, and renting, and leasing, and in all mutual transactions. Because truthfulness is from the characteristics of the Believers, and Allaah, the Most High, has commanded truthfulness,

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"O you who believe - keep your duty to Allaah,
and be with the truthful."

{*at-Tawba* (9): 119}

And the Prophet encouraged truthfulness and said, *"Adhere to truthfulness, because truthfulness leads to goodness, and goodness leads to Paradise; and a person will continue to be truthful, and strive to be truthful, until he will be written down with Allaah as a truthful person."* And he warned against falsehood, and said, *"Beware of falsehood, because falsehood leads to wickedness, and wickedness leads to the Fire. And a person will continue lying and striving to lie until he is written down with Allaah as a great liar."*³⁰ O my brother Muslims. O youth. Be true in your sayings with your brothers, and with those non-Muslims whom you live along with - so that by your actions, you will be inviters to the religion of Islam - in reality.

²⁹ Al-Bukhaaree, *hadeeth* no.3166

³⁰ al-Albaanee, *Saheeh al-Jaami' as-Sagheer* (no. 4071)

And indeed, how many people first entered into Islam because of the behaviour and manners of the Muslims, and their truthfulness, and their being true in their dealings.³¹

Shaykh Saalih Aali-Shaykh (*hafidhabullaah*), the head of the Saudi *Ministry of Islamic Affairs*, noted in his lecture on the subject of *Rights in the Sharee'ah (Human Rights)* that:

The non-Muslims of the earth can be divided into four categories, they can either be a dhimmi; a mu'aahid; a musta'min or a harbee. And the Prophet (sallallaahu alayhi wassallam) instructed given each one their due rights. Rather, Allaah instructed given non-Muslims rights in His Book, if they are not at war (with Muslims) and do not manifest enmity (against the Muslims). Allaah says,

أَلاَ يَأْمُرُكَ اللَّهُ أَلَّا تَكُونَ مِنَ الْفَاسِقِينَ

أَلَّا تَكُونَ مِنَ الْفَاسِقِينَ

أَلَّا تَكُونَ مِنَ الْفَاسِقِينَ

أَلَّا تَكُونَ مِنَ الْفَاسِقِينَ

“Allaah does not forbid you from those who do not fight you because of religion and do not expel you from your homes – from being righteous toward them³² and acting justly toward them.³³ Indeed, Allaah loves those who act justly.³⁴ Allaah only

³¹ Shaykh al-'Uthaymeen on 'Interacting With non-Muslims in Western Countries', Tele-link (28th July 2000, Birmingham UK); Article ID: LSC010001 (www.spubs.com).

³² Ibn Katheer (*raheemahullaah*) says about this: to be gentle with them.

³³ Ibn Katheer (*raheemahullaah*) says about this: to be fair with them.

³⁴ Ibn Katheer (*raheemahullaah*) transmits in regards to this in the ayah: Imaam Ahmad recorded that Asmaa' bint Abu Bakr said, "My mother, who was an idolatress at the time, came to me during the Treaty of Peace, the Prophet conducted with the Quraysh. I came to the Prophet and said, "O Allaah's Messenger! My mother came visiting, desiring something from me, should I treat her with good relations" The Prophet said,

« أَأَمْرٌ أَنْ تَقْرُبَ أُمَّكَ »

"Yes. Keep good relation with your mother." The Two Saheehs recorded this *hadeeth*. Imaam Ahmad recorded that `Abdullah bin Zubayr said, "Qutaylah came visiting her daughter, Asmaa' bint Abee Bakr, with some gifts, such as Dibab, cheese and clarified (cooking) butter, and she was an idolatress at that

forbids you from those who fight you because of religion and expel you from your homes and aid in your expulsion – (forbids) that you make allies of them.³⁵ And whoever makes allies of them, then it is those who are the wrongdoers.”

{*al-Mumtabinah* (60): 8-9}

Therefore, the right of the dhimmi is well-established in the Divine Legislation. Not rights from people, but rights that Allaah has set for the dhimmi. The Prophet (sallallaahu alayhi wassallam) stated “Whoever harms a dhimmi has harmed me”³⁶ or as is stated in the hadeeth. It is also authenticated from him (sallallaahu alayhi wassallam) that he said “Whoever kills a mu’aahad will not smell the fragrance of Paradise, the smell of which can be smelt for the distance of forty years.”³⁷ Why? Because the Muslims honour their lives as they came with an agreement, they came with a trust and is not to be transgressed against with regards to his life, blood, honour, money, rights are obligatory to them in the Divine Legislation. The texts regarding the rights of the enemies, the rights of the people of dhimma, the rights of the people of agreement (mu’aahadeen), the rights of the people with whom there is a trust, are various and the statements of the people of knowledge regarding the field is abundant. As for the harbee’oon, they are the ones whom between us and them is war and there are many regulations in regards to them and

time. Asmaa’ refused to accept her mother's gifts and did not let her enter her house. ‘Aa’ishah asked the Prophet about his verdict and Allaah sent down the ayah,

أَلاَ بِذُنُوبِكُمْ أَصَابَكُمُ الْمَوْتُ وَالْقَتْلُ

“Allaah does not forbid you with those who fought not against you on account of religion”

...until the end of the ayah. Allaah’s Messenger ordered Asmaa’ to accept her mother’s gifts and to let her enter her house.” Allaah’s statement,

أَلَا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَّقِينَ

“Indeed Allaah loves those who act justly.”

³⁵ Ibn Katheer (*raheemahullaah*) states about this part of the verse:

“Allah forbids you from being kind and befriending with the disbelievers who are openly hostile to you, those who fought against you, expelled you and helped to expel you. Allah the Exalted forbids you from being their friends and orders you to be their enemy.”

³⁶ Saheeh Muslim

³⁷ Saheeh Bukhaaree in *Kitaab ul-Jizyah* under the chapter ‘The sin of the one who kills a mu’aahad who has not committed any crime.’

if we gain empowerment over them, they are respected if they are Christians and none of their children, women or elderly are killed. Whereas within other legislations everyone is to be killed! As is mentioned that within the Divine Legislation of Moosaa (alayhi salaam) that all are to be killed during war. As for the Divine Legislation of Islaam, Allaah allowed for only the fighter to be killed during battle, due to the benefits in the Divine Legislation for this. The dhimmi in an bode of Islaam has rights and within his home can do as he wills yet is not allowed to advertise what he does or anything from the prohibited actions. He can also not manifest his deen, this is for the mu'aahad and for the musta'min, as for the dhimmi there is some explanation required for this speech in relation to those countries which were conquered yet there were already churches there like in Shaam, Egypt and 'Iraaq.

Indeed, this is from Islaam and the above quotes from these Saudi scholars can see that they implement to the letter Islaam how it should be practiced. This is in following the Islamic tradition of good treatment to non-Muslims. The Prophet Muhammad (*sallallaahu alayhi wassallam*) strictly warned against any maltreatment of people of other faiths, he said: *"Beware! Whoever is cruel and hard on a non-Muslim minority, curtails their rights, burdens them with more than they can bear, or takes anything from them against their free will; I (Prophet Muhammad) will complain against the person on the Day of Judgment."*³⁸

As a result of the *Salafi* tradition, which is also followed by the scholars of Saudi Arabia for example, Dr Natana DeLong Bas states in her book *Wahhabi Islam – From Revival and Reform to Global Jihad*:

"The militant Islam of Osama bin Laden does not have its origins in the teachings of Ibn Abd al-Wahhab and is not representative of Wahhabi Islam..."³⁹

Salafi Muslim students, from the UK and US, have verified the moderate teachings of the foremost *Salafi* scholars of Saudi Arabia which have emphasised how to interact with non-Muslims. An example of this can be seen in a report by Ismaeel Nakhuda for the *Arab News* on 10 Sha'baan 1427 AH corresponding to Sunday 3 September 2006 CE:

Westerners Attend Seminars Dispelling Myths About Islam:

MAKKAH, 3 September 2006 — A group of 82 Western Muslims participated in a set of seminars held in the holy cities of Makkah and Madinah with some of the Kingdom's leading sheikhs and imams to learn about the peaceful message of Islam.

³⁸ Aboo Daawood.

³⁹ Natana DeLong Bas, *Wahhabi Islam: From Revival and Reform to Global Jihad* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004)

The students — male and female, who were mainly from the US and included people from Britain, Canada and the West Indies, were also given an opportunity to visit the holy cities, gain exclusive access to the Prophet's Mosque in Madinah, enter the Kaaba in Makkah and direct questions to Saudi scholars about the challenges faced by Muslim living in the West. According to the organizers, Al-Quraan Wa As-Sunnah Society of New York, the Saudi scholars were able to dispel many of the myths and misconceptions surrounding Islam. Sheikh Zahid Rashid, an American student at the Umm Al-Qura University in Makkah and one of the main organizers of the tour said, "The group includes people who are active in dawa in their areas, imams of mosques in the US and the heads of MSAs at universities in the US. The whole purpose of the program is to make people active in the US to give dawa (propagation of Islam) and dispel myths about Islam and terrorism." Participants spent one week in Madinah and two weeks in Makkah and were able to attend various seminars held by numerous sheikhs in both cities on subjects relating to creed, jurisprudence, hadith, the Qur'an and the methodology of dawa among non-Muslims in the West. Convert to Islam Mohammed Abdul Aziz, from Atlanta, US, said, "I have definitely learned about Islam and this trip has enabled me to dispel some myths there about Islam. There are those who say they are good Muslims but the scholars here are telling people that this is wrong. "As far as terrorism and stuff like that is concerned Saudi Arabia and the scholars here have categorically explained that they don't support terrorism and that terrorism is against Islam." Arab News joined the group on their final day of seminars in which members of the group directed questions to Sheikh Wasiullah Abbas, an Indian scholar who lectures in the Grand Mosque. The sheikh answered questions regarding Muslim unity, how to interact with non-Muslims in dawa work and how Muslims should work with student Muslim bodies at universities and colleges across the West. Speaking to the group the sheikh said, "You shouldn't call them in a harsh way, nor should you put people down but you should call them with wisdom and try helping them." Safwan Abu Kanaz, 35, came all the way from New York to participate in the seminars. Describing the trip to be very "historical" he said, "I've never seen the like of this trip and nor will I." Safwan added, "The way the media are projecting Islam is in total contradiction of what is being portrayed about Saudi Arabia. The extremists are people without knowledge. The sheikhs have condemned all acts of extremism and have explained and clarified that which is Islam and that which is against the ethos of the religion." Speaking about international terrorism he added, "They have explained in full detail that Islam is against terrorism. Those that are portrayed as leaders are not leaders and

in fact don't have any Islamic knowledge." Among the highlights of the trip was an opportunity to visit the factory that builds covers for the Kaaba and a chance to have supper at the home of the Imam of Makkah Sheikh Muhammad Subayyil. Addressing the group Sheikh Subayyil advised against extremism and said, "People should behave with non-Muslims with softness, kindness and ease to attract them to Islam." Wisaf Sharieff, 25, a radiology student from New York, said, "We had a wonderful welcome in Madinah and one of the highlights of the Madinah stay was that within three days of reaching there we were given exclusive access to the haram and we had 35 minutes all to ourselves there. It was a special moment." Commenting on the outcome of the visit Sheikh Zahid said, "We want people to see the peaceful message of Islam and to go back and be able to teach their communities the real message. We want people to know that Islam and Muslims are different from what the media show." Organizers say this is the second time such a visit has been arranged and hope to organize similar visits in coming years.

For more on the above refer to the *NPR News* (USA) story entitled '*Concerns Rise as More Study Islam Abroad*' by Libby Lewis dated 16 October 2002, wherein she goes to a Philadelphia *Salafi* Mosque and interviews some of the regular attendees. The news item can be heard here: <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=1151732>

Shaykh 'AbdusSalaam bin Saalim bin Rajaa' as-Suhaymee (Associate Professor at the *Department of Fiqh* in the *Sharee'ah College*, the *Islamic University of Madeenah*) stated in his book *Be a Serious Salafi*, after mentioning the words of King 'Abdul'Azeez Aali-Sa'ud:

These are precious words which exemplify the correct meaning of Salafiyyah which in itself exemplifies the correct Islaam. In these days Islaam generally and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia⁴⁰ along with the da'wah Salafiyyah specifically⁴¹, have

⁴⁰ Due to it applying the *Sharee'ah*.

Like for example, Mark Silverburg, who is a US attorney and a listed author of the '*Ariel Center for Policy Research*' in Israel. In his book *The Quartermasters of Terror: Saudi Arabia and the Global Islamic Jihad* (Wyndham Hill Press, 2005) he claims Saudi Arabia has **"spent 87 billion dollars over the past twenty-five years to finance the propagation of Islamic extremism"**!! In his introduction, he also makes the same blunder as Nina Shea, Robert Spencer and Bernard Lewis, that the **"...Muslim world is divided into two spheres, the House of Islam (Dar al-Islam) and the House of War (Dar al-Harb), which is non-Islamic. In his view, world peace, according to Islam, is achieved only when the world is subjected to Dar al-Islam. "The presumption", says Lewis, "is that the duty of jihad will continue, interrupted only by truces, until all the world either adopts the Muslim faith or submits to Muslim rule."** Silverburg also demonstrates that he has been influenced by the likes of Hishaam Kabbaanee as he states in the introduction, **"In the estimated 80% of mosques that the Wahhabists control in America..."**

bore the brunt of falsehood, oppression, confusion and things which are not the reality. This has been due to some politicians and Western writers who hate Islaam and those who promote the Zionists and their views and agree with their oppression and falsehood and have thus been influenced by them in certain countries. This is even though the Da'wah Salafiyyah is the furthest from takfeer (to brand a Muslim as an disbeliever), tabdee (to brand a Muslim as an innovator) and tafseeq (to brand a Muslim as a sinner) without evidence, it is also the furthest from extremism and fanaticism. Yet this blessed da'wah has been associated with things which are not from it and it has been ascribed to things which are not from its manhaj which all distorts its beauty and reality. One of the most glaring factors for this is: the existence of contemporary partisan Islamic groups affected by the Khawarij ideology and their well-known leaders agreed with a few things from the Salafi manhaj in some matters.⁴² Indeed, some of them even spoke in the name of Salafiyyah when the reality is that they were not from it and this confused many people and the reality was hidden from them as they thought that these groups were Salafi or "Wahhabi" as some of them named it. What is really strange is that some of these partisan Islamic groups named themselves "Salafi Jihadis", yet how can they be Salafi when they oppose its 'aqeedah and manhaj?! The reality however is in the application and meanings not in mere terms and names and as a result it is a must to bring attention to this confusion and misguidance which is present in the Islamic world today.⁴³

and Silverburg more than likely reached this figure based on Hishaam al-Kabbaanee's claim in 1998 that "80% of mosques in America are controlled by Wahhabis"!! Therefore, the solution for all of this according to Silverburg is for Islaam to be modernized and moderated, he claims, **"in the same way that Christian and Jewish scholars have (over the centuries) moderated the more strident aspects of their scriptures and promoted those verses that spoke of the brotherhood of man, tolerance and understanding over those portions that speak of exclusivity"** (!!!) Has he heard of Christian and Jewish extremists? But then Silverburg states, in a clear demonstration ignorance of the topic: **"To this day, no major Muslim cleric or religious body has ever issued a fatwa condemning Osama bin Laden."** Even though Imaam 'Abdul'Azeez Bin Baaz (*raheemahullaah*) issued one in the 1990s which have referred to in this chapter!

Dore Gold's *Hatred's Kingdom: How Saudi Arabia Supports the New Global Terrorism* (Washington D.C: Regnery, 2003), is in the same vein.

⁴¹ Due to it exemplifying the correct understanding of Islaam.

⁴² Even though they differed with most of the *Salafi manhaj* and *'aqeedah*.

⁴³ From Shaykh 'AbdusSalaam bin Saalim bin Rajaa' as-Suhaymee (Associate Professor in the Department of Fiqh, College of Sharee'ah, Islamic University of Madeenah), *Kun Salafian 'alaa'l-Jaadah!* [Be a Serious Salafi!] (Cairo: Daar ul-Manhaj, 1426 AH/2005). With introductions by Shaykh 'Alee bin Muhammad bin Naasir al-Faqeehee and Shaykh 'Ubayd bin 'Abdullaah al-Jaabiree (*hafidhahumullaah*).

Shaykh Muhammad bin 'AbdulWahhab al-'Aqeel, a Professor of '*aqeedah* (Islamic creed and belief) at the *College of Da'wah* at the *Islamic University of Madeenah* and a *Salafi* Islamic scholar stated:

As for the term terrorism in the Arabic language '*irbaab*' this is a new term which is not found within the classical Arabic dictionaries at all. Rather it has only surfaced in the modern era due to some people utilising it as a specific method yet with unlegislated means, such as violence, killing, breeding fear and its like. Some of these dictionaries mention that the 'terrorist' is: one who utilises violence and terrorism in order to establish his own rule.

Terrorism is the terror that is caused by those groups or individuals who resort to killing and wreaking havoc and destruction. Terrorism is therefore, according to the contemporary compilers of modern Arabic dictionaries, killing akin to the riotous killing that is mentioned within the texts of *Sbar'eeah*. As the Prophet (*sallallaahu alayhi wassallam*) mentioned with regards to the signs of the end of time, the spread of '*al-Harj*' (riotous killing). The meaning of '*al-Harj*' is killing and the increase of the spilling blood,⁴⁴ which is all from the signs of the end of time. To the extent that the one killing will not know why he is killing and the one that was killed will not know why he/she was killed. **Islaam is free from this riotous killing, free from this terrorism and free from this kind of corruption. Terrorism is established upon destruction of properties such as factories, farms, places of worship, train stations, airports and the likes; Islaam is clearly free from such actions that are based upon corruption and not upon rectification.**

Terrorists usually say that they are going against the state in which they are based within. This is like the mafia or other criminal organisations that are based on killing people, causing fear and taking their monies. Such criminal organisations have leaders, deputies and individuals that are responsible for establishing regulations for the organisation and individuals responsible for carrying out attacks, and all of them are terrorists causing corruption on the earth.

However, the ugliest face of terrorism is that which is established in the name of religion, all of the religions from the Prophets (peace be upon them) are free from such terrorism, even if some of the followers of the Prophets participated in such terrorist activities, but the Prophets are free from such corruptions.

The terrorists are in need of doubtful proofs for their methodology especially those who attribute themselves to the Prophets (*peace be upon them*), they claim that the Prophets

⁴⁴ The Arabic word '*Harj*' (riotous killing) was originally an ancient Ethiopian word which entered the Arabic language. In the hadeeth related from Aboo Hurayrah (*radi Allaahu 'anhu*) in Saheeh Bukhaaree, Aboo Moosaa al-'Ash'aree stated that the word is of Ethiopian origin.

ordered them to commit terrorism. Many of those who commit acts of terrorism from those who attribute themselves to the religion of the Jews claim that Moosaa (Moses) commanded them to do terrorism or that the other Prophets from the children of Israa'eel ordered them to do terrorism yet this is a lie.⁴⁵ As Moosaa (*peace be upon him*) and all of the Prophets from the children of Israa'eel (*peace be upon them*) never ever ordered people to commit terrorism. Likewise, those who commit acts of terrorism and attribute themselves to Eesaa (Jesus) claim that the gospels sanction terrorism and the use of it over the enemy.⁴⁶ I have some texts which I have gathered from other sources wherein such terrorists (in the name of Jesus and Christianity) claim that the gospel allows it, however the time does not allow for me to mention all of this here. The important matter for us to mention is that Eesaa was sent with mercy like all of the Prophets, *peace be upon them*, and it is not possible that they ordered people to commit acts of terrorism. **Likewise, those who attribute themselves in this era from the people of corruption, bombing and takfeer within the Muslim countries and the non-Muslim countries, need certain texts from the Qur'aan and sunnah for them to refer. They claim that such texts lead to terrorism but they are lying about this as the Prophet (sallallaahu alayhi wassallam) is totally free from terrorism. For that reason, the Muslim scholars have denounced all acts of terrorism that are committed by those who associate themselves with Islaam.**

The Muslim scholars denounced the attacks on the world trade buildings in New York and made clear that those who committed the act were criminals and that they had nothing to do with Islaam and that they merely killed themselves, and whoever kills themselves intentionally will be in hellfire killing themselves, and Allaah's refuge is sought. Similarly, the Muslim scholars denounced the terrorist attacks committed by those who associate themselves with Islaam that took place in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The scholars also denounced the terrorist attacks committed by those who associate themselves with Islaam that took place in Sharm ash-Sheikh in Egypt. The scholars also denounced the terrorist attacks that

⁴⁵ This has also been attested by some Jewish writers such as Israel Shahak in his book *Jewish History, Jewish Religion – The Weight of Three Thousand Years* (London: Pluto Press, 1994). He notes how the Talmud mentions that if a Jew passes near an inhabited non-Jewish dwelling, he must ask God to destroy it, whereas if the building is in ruins he must thank the Lord for his retribution on the 'Gentiles'. (p. 93 – quoting the *Tractate Berakhot*, p.58b) Furthermore, Shahak notes Rabbi Shabbtay Kohen (mid 17th century), *Siftey Kohen* on *Shulhan 'Arukh*, 'Yoreh De'ah', 158: "But in times of war it was the custom to kill them with one's own hands, for it is said, "The best of gentiles, kill him!"." *Siftey Kohen* and *Turey Zahay* are the two major classical commentaries on the *Shulhan 'Arukh*. Shahak, op.cit., pp.76 and 113.

⁴⁶ Christian groups have sanctioned terrorism, not to mention a huge variety of quasi-religious cults and sects which have also made regular use of terrorism.

took place on the tube stations in London, they denounced this and made clear that Islaam has nothing to do with such actions and that Islaam is free of them.

The doubts of the terrorists, with regards to their twisting of the texts, are with the verse from *Soorah al-Anfaal* verse 60 wherein Allaah says:

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“And prepare against them whatever you are able of power and of steeds of war by which you may terrify the enemy of Allaah and your enemy and others besides them whom you do not know (but) Allaah knows. And whatever you spend in the cause of Allaah will be fully repaid to you, and you will not be wronged.”

{*al-Anfaal* (8): 60}

The verse that comes after it explains it perfectly, wherein Allaah says:

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“And if they incline towards peace, then incline to it also and rely upon Allaah. Indeed, it is He who is the Hearing, the Knowing.”

{*al-Anfaal* (8): 61}

This verse explains the initial verse perfectly, as Allaah within this verse explains the condition of the Muslims with non-Muslims. The first state is one of war, and war is usually not between individual Muslims and individual *kuffaar*, no!⁴⁷

⁴⁷ The word ‘kuffaar’ is a generic term used for those who do not believe in Islaam and it should neither be thought of as being “a term of contempt for non-Muslims” nor meaning “infidel” (which is a Western construct in any case). The very context how Shaykh Muhammad ibn ‘AbdulWahhaab al’Aqeel is using it here clearly shows that he is not using the word “kuffaar” as a term of contempt as he is mentioning that Muslims in non-Muslim countries **should not treat** “kuffaar” with contempt and that non-Muslims should be respected, honoured and treated well! This is all the more the case if a Muslim has an agreement, pact, promise, trust or covenant with a non-Muslim, as in the case of those Muslims who enter non-Muslim countries or are citizens of non-Muslim countries. Furthermore, it is a word which is totally verified and mentioned in the Qur’aan, for Allaah says in the Qur’aan:

... The Islamic state has the same concern as all states past and present, yet it is upon an Islamic state not on individuals to do this. The verse is directed to an Islamic state:

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“And prepare against them whatever you are able of power...”

{al-Anfaal (80): 60}

This is for an Islamic state. **Is it permissible for any individual within a major state to store or possess mass weapons in his house? The answer is clearly no; it is not permissible according to the customary laws of that state rather it is for the state to possess such weapons. Likewise, according to the contemporary regulations there are certain weapons that are prohibited for states to possess as such weapons cause indiscriminate destruction upon crops and vegetation.**⁴⁸ This can be seen with the

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“It is He who created you, and among you is the disbeliever, and among you is the believer. And Allaah, of what you do, is Seeing.”

{at-Taghaabun (64): 2}

With regards to the meaning of *'kufir'* (disbelief), the meaning of *'kufir'* linguistically means, originally, 'to cover' and 'to hide' and within the Arabic language the night is ascribed as being a *'kaafir'*, which does not mean here that it is expelled from the religion of Islaam, rather linguistically the *'kaafir'* here means 'that which covers'. For the night covers the day entirely like when someone walks during the night he does not see everything as there are many things that are covered by the darkness of the night. Thus, from this angle the night was called a *'kaafir'*. The *'kaafir'* was named so as he covers the truth and does not accept it, refusing the truth and covering it up and not answering the truth and for this reason was termed a *'kaafir'*. Some of the people of Islamic knowledge have said that such is known as a *'kaafir'* because he covers with his disbelief that which is incumbent upon him to have from *eemaan* (faith), however his *kufir* covers his *eemaan* and thus does not answer or respond to it (i.e. *eemaan*).

The other issue here is that all religions have terms by which they refer to others who do not share their belief and these words are verified within their religious books. In Judaism for example, non-Jews are referred to as *'the Goyim'*, yet this is rarely translated as 'infidels' or as 'expressing contempt and hatred' for non-Jews. It is only in Islaam that everything has been simplistically assessed as expressing 'hatred and intolerance' of non-Muslims.

⁴⁸ In Islaam, the Prophet Muhammad (*sallallaahu alayhi wassallam*) forbade the use of 'scorched earth policies' wherein crops, vegetation and livestock were destroyed, burned or devastated. Many powerful, usually Western, non-Muslim nations also claim to prohibit such weapons that cause such indiscriminate destruction yet the reality is that it has mainly been these powerful nations that have utilised such weapons of 'mass destruction' such as on Hiroshima, Nagasaki, Vietnam, Afghanistan and Iraq. Depleted Uranium was used for the first time on Iraq during the first Gulf war and it has a

current prohibition of nuclear weapons which cause devastation and serve no benefit in armies possessing them...

As for the terrorist tribulations in the current era, then those people are not an Islamic state and they are also not those to whom the verse in the Qur'aan is directed to those who are the leaders of states, not individuals who live within a state. Those individuals have to listen to the ruler of the Muslims and obey him and not fight anyone except with the rulers permission and authorisation. If the ruler of the Muslims has made agreements with disbelieving nations, such as Britain, America and France then it is not permissible for us to fight against a state that the leader of the Muslims has made agreements with. This is the case even if some aspects of the conditions of agreement seem oppressive on us, as the Prophet (*sallallaahu alayhi wassallam*) made an agreement with the *kuffaar* of Makkah even though some of the companions felt that some of the conditions were against the Muslims and hard on them, but the Prophet (*sallallaahu alayhi wassallam*) commanded them to listen and obey, and thus the companions listened and obeyed.⁴⁹

radioactive future of 125,000 years, like the effects of *Agent Orange* (which was used on Vietnam) its effects on populations and on future generations are devastating.

During the 2006 attack on South Lebanon by Israel, cluster bombs were used by the Israelis even though the Israeli Defense Forces Chief of Staff, Dan Halutz, issued an order that they not be used. As a result the Israeli military advocate general (MAG) initiated a criminal investigation to find out how it happened that so many cluster bombs were dropped in populated areas, contrary to international law. The UN's humanitarian chief has accused Israel of "completely immoral" use of cluster bombs in Lebanon.

UN clearance experts found 100,000 unexploded cluster bomblets at 359 separate sites, Jan Egeland said. The Israeli newspaper *Haaretz* reported that nearly all the cluster bombs fired in Lebanon were made in America and bought with military assistance funding. See: <http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/789906.html> and http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/5299938.stm

⁴⁹ The Shaykh (*hafidhahullaah*) is referring here to the *Hudaybiyah Treaty* which was made between the Muslims and the polytheists of Quraysh. When the *mushrikeen* of Quraysh witnessed the determination of the Muslims to risk their lives, properties, wealth and families for their faith in order to spread it peacefully, they realised that the Prophet Muhammad (*sallallaahu alayhi wassallam*) and his followers (*radi Allaahu 'anhum*) could not be bullied or frightened by mere scare tactics. Therefore, a treaty of reconciliation and peace was made between the Quraysh and the Muslims. The clauses of the treaty were:

- The Muslims would return and come back in the following year (7 AH) but they would not stay in Makkah for more than three days and without arms except those concealed.
- War activities were to be suspended for ten years, during which both sides will live in security with neither side waging war against the other.

As for those Muslims who are living within the kuffaar states then the Divine Legislation, intellect and customs indicate that it is not permissible for a Muslim that has entered a disbelieving country to cheat them.⁵⁰ Rather it is for every Muslim within such disbelieving countries to respect the agreements and promises that were made in order to enter and live in the country. Indeed, it is upon such a Muslim, according to the intellect and the Divine Legislation, to show thanks and gratitude to the people of such a country and to be good with them and be merciful with them and be kind with them and thank them for allowing them to live amongst them in their country. These disbelievers have allowed them to enter the country and have allowed them to seek Islamic knowledge and have allowed them to study and have allowed them to work and conduct business within their countries. It may even be the case that some Muslims take monies from the *kuffaar* countries (such as social benefits and welfare state handouts) or utilise a card under their sponsorship or obtain a passport from them in order to travel the world mighty and honoured under their sponsorship. The Prophet (*sallallaahu alayhi wassallam*) said: “Whoever does not thank the people has not thanked Allaah.”

Therefore, those who have entered kuffaar countries should indeed show gratitude to them for allowing them to enter their countries. As now they have money and honour and if not for the kuffaar and the police within those countries

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- Whoever wishes to join Muhammad (*sallallaahu alayhi wassallam*) was free to do so and likewise whoever wished to join the *mushrikeen* of the Quraysh was also free to do so.
 - If anyone from the Quraysh joins Muhammad (*sallallaahu alayhi wassallam*) without his parent's or guardian's permission, he should be sent back to the Quraysh, but should any of Muhammad's followers return to the Quraysh, he was not to be sent back. (Safiur-Rahman al-Mubarakpuri, *The Sealed Nectar (ar-Raheequl-Makhtum)* Darusalam, 2002, p.403)

The treaty was significant in that the Quraysh began to recognise the Muslims legitimate existence and began to deal with them on equal terms. Safiur-Rahman al-Mubarakpuri notes in his biography of the Prophet Muhammad (*sallallaahu alayhi wassallam*) pp.407-408: “The Muslims did not have in mind to seize people's property or kill them through bloody wars, nor did they ever think of using any compulsive approaches in their efforts to propagate Islam, on the contrary their sole target was to provide an atmosphere of freedom in ideology or religion, **“Then whosoever wills, let him believe, and whosoever wills, let him disbelieve.”**” {*al-Kahf* (18): 29} the Muslims, on the other hand, had the opportunity to spread Islam over areas not then explored. When there was the peace agreement, war was abolished, and men met and consulted each together, none talked about Islam intelligently without entering it; within two years following the conclusion of the treaty, twice as many people entered Islam than ever before. This is supported by the fact that the Prophet (*sallallaahu alayhi wassallam*) went out to al-Hudaybiyah with only 1400 men, but when he set out to liberate Makkah, two years later, he had 10,000 men with him.

⁵⁰ This is for those Muslims who have entered a non-Muslim country and also those Muslims who were born and raised within non-Muslim countries.

maybe his money would have been taken or he would have been killed or his honour would have been disrespected. However, the laws and organisation of those kuffaar countries, and we do not say that all of what is in them is true, we rather just emphasise this point alone, have allowed them into the country and as a result such Muslims should fear Allaah and be grateful for that good by keeping to their promises and agreements with such kuffaar.⁵¹ The Prophet (sallallaahu alayhi wassallam) when he made an agreement with the kuffaar of Makkah and some people became Muslims after the agreement and rectification, the Prophet still had to fulfil the agreement and send them back to their people such as the case of Aboo Jandal.⁵² Look my noble brother at the justice of Islaam and to the strength of the Prophet (sallallaahu alayhi wassallam) in adhering to agreements...

As for those bombers that you have over there who terrorise the people then it should be known that such people not only wreak havoc over there but also in Makkah, Madeenah of the Prophet (*sallallaahu alayhi wassallam*), Riyadh, Khobar, Shaam, Egypt and not only the Christian countries.

Terrorism has no religion and no country, rather it is based on kindling tribulations and is concerned with wreaking havoc on the earth or has other goals, whether economic or political, we do not know. However, we say that terrorism is always associated with wreaking havoc and corruption, and Allaah commanded rectification and forbade corruption and Islaam came with rectification and to prevent corruption.⁵³

⁵¹ This is one of the areas in which the *takfeerees* and so-called ‘*jihaadees*’ contradict themselves. For they argue about the evil of a Muslim ruler due to a perceived allegiance to the *kuffaar* and their ways, yet they do the every same, if not worse, by taking benefits and interacting within non-Muslim society for their own interests; yet they do not also see all of this as “loving the *kuffaar*” or as emphasising the weakness of the Muslims!? Indeed, many of them even claim that what they do is merely part of their “*jihaad* efforts”!!?

⁵² Aboo Jandal (*radi Allaahu ‘anhu*) was brutally chained and was suffering great hardship and oppression. The Prophet (*sallallaahu alayhi wassallam*) and the companions (*radi Allaahu ‘anhum*) tried to secure his release but Aboo Jandal’s father Suhayl was unyielding and would not hand Aboo Jandal over due to the treaty which had been agreed between the Prophet and the *mushrikeen* of Quraysh. Aboo Jandal (*radi Allaahu ‘anhu*) did not want to remain with the *mushrikeen* yet the Prophet (*sallallaahu alayhi wassallam*) had to honour his word and adhere to the agreement.

⁵³ This lecture was given on Saturday August 20th 2005 via tele-link at *Masjid Ibn Taymeeyah* (Brixton Mosque), London.

With regards to other *fatwas* condemning terrorism, hijackings and suicide bombings from Salafi scholars then obviously some have not even bothered to conduct any research on this matter. A cursory look at the website: www.fatwa-online.com demonstrates just out of touch and ill-informed certain researchers are, who are only interested in Islaam when it and the Muslims are blamed for the contemporary manifestations of global terror and intolerance.

There is also the excellent book *According to Which Intellect and Religion is Bombing and Wreaking Havoc Considered Jihaad?!* By one of the elder *hadeeth* scholars of Madeenah, Saudi Arabia, Shaykh 'AbdulMuhsin al-'Abbaad.⁵⁴ There is also the superb *Islamic Condemnation of Terrorism, Hijacking and Suicide Bombing* compiled by Salafi Publications.⁵⁵ And the outstanding leaflet, which was actually originally written in the mid-1990s by a Muslim from the north of England, entitled *'Islamic Terrorism – Exploded!'*⁵⁶ The dates of these publications demonstrate just how uninformed some 'analysts' actually are about the Salafi scholars and their beliefs. Also refer to the documentary *'Mosque'* which was aired in the UK nationally on *ITV* in 2005: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BRSmQ5MpPBM>

⁵⁴ London: Daar ul-'Itisaam Publishers, 2004 CE

⁵⁵ Birmingham: 2nd Edition, 2003 CE

⁵⁶ Available via www.Quran.nu

KEY OBSERVATIONS ABOUT SILBER AND BHATT'S REPORT

- ✓ On page 8 they state that “Salafi literature...has served as “extremist incubators” for young, susceptible Muslims – especially ones living in diaspora communities in the West.”
- ✓ On page 17: “While other Salafi currents encourage non-violent missionary or political activities to achieve these religious/political goals, jihadi-Salafis utilize endorsements of respected scholars of Islam to show that their aims and violent means are religiously justified. - Contemporary Saudi (Wahhabi) scholars have provided the religious legitimacy for many of the arguments promoted by the jihadists.1”⁵⁷

⁵⁷ For a thorough refutation of this claim refer to the research paper *Does Saudi Arabia Preach Intolerance in the UK and the US?* Available for download here: http://www.salafimanhaj.com/pdf/SalafiManhaj_Saudi.pdf

This point is absolutely false and incorrect, for the main Saudi scholars are totally rejected by the so-called ‘jihadis’! Where on earth have Silber and Bhatt been researching? What many researchers have observed is that many of the main extremist ideologues around the world have had total enmity towards Saudi Arabia. For example, the likes of Bin Laden, Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi, Abu Qatadah, Abdullah Faisal, Omar Bakri, Abu Hamza, Abu Mus'ab Zarqawi and Ayman adh-Dhawahiri are all united on their hatred of Saudi Arabia. Dr Natana DeLong-Bas superbly states in chapter six of her book *Wahhabi Islam: From Revival and Reform to Global Jihad*:

“The global jihad espoused by Osama bin Laden and other contemporary extremists is clearly rooted in contemporary issues and interpretations of Islam. It owes little to the Wahhabi tradition, outside of the nineteenth-century incorporation of the teachings of Ibn Taymiyya and the Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyyah into the Wahhabi worldview as Wahhabism moved beyond the confines of Najd and into the broader Muslim world. The differences between the worldviews of bin Laden and Ibn Abd al-Wahhab are numerous. Bin Laden preaches jihad; Ibn Abd al-Wahhab preached monotheism. Bin Laden preaches a global jihad of cosmic importance that recognizes no compromise; Ibn Abd al-Wahhab's jihad was narrow in geographic focus, of localized importance, and had engagement in a treaty relationship between the fighting parties as a goal. Bin Laden preaches war against Christians and Jews; Ibn Abd al-Wahhab called for treaty relationships with them. Bin Laden's jihad proclaims an ideology of the necessity of war in the face of unbelief; Ibn Abd al-Wahhab preached the benefits of peaceful coexistence, social order, and business relationships. Bin Laden calls for the killing of all infidels and the destruction of their money and property; Ibn Abd al-Wahhab restricted killing and the destruction of property... The militant Islam of Osama bin Laden does not have its origins in the teachings of Ibn Abd al-Wahhab and is not representative of Wahhabi Islam as it is practiced in contemporary Saudi Arabia, yet for the media it

- ✓ Again on page 17: ***“The Appeal.* For many Muslims in the West, especially those of the second and third generation who are seeking to learn about their Muslim heritage, the Salafi interpretation is the version of Islam they are most widely exposed to. It has become more mainstream and is proliferated within diaspora communities. This interpretation of Islam is not the cultural Islam of their parents or their home countries.”** – this is incorrect, to say that “the Salafi interpretation is the version of Islam they are most widely exposed to” is utterly wrong. In fact it will obviously be the cultural Islam of their parents or their home countries, or that “expression” of Islam which has most access to the popular media. The Salafis do not have any large major organisations which have membership, neither do they have any access to mass media, nor have the ear of governments in the West which seek to promote conformist ‘Sufi’ versions of Islam.
- ✓ On page 30 they state, in trying to claim that the Salafi way leads to terrorism: **“STAGE 2: SELF-IDENTIFICATION. This stage, which is largely influenced by both internal and external factors, marks the point where the individual begins to explore Salafi Islam, while slowly migrating away from their former identity—an identity that now is re-defined by Salafi philosophy, ideology, and values. The catalyst for this “religious seeking” is often a cognitive event, or crisis, which challenges one’s certitude in previously held beliefs, opening the individual’s mind to a new perception or view of the world.¹⁸”** –

Then we find the most incorrect claim and assertion within the entire ‘research’ on page 31:

“Two key indicators within this self-identification stage that suggests progression along the radicalization continuum are:

- ***Progression or Gravitation Towards Salafi Islam***
- ***Regular Attendance at a Salafi mosque***

As these individuals adopt Salafism, typical signatures include:

has come to define Wahabbi Islam in the contemporary era. However, “unrepresentative” bin Laden’s global jihad of Islam in general and Wahhabi Islam in particular, its prominence in headline news has taken Wahhabi Islam across the spectrum from revival and reform to global jihad.”

Natana DeLong Bas, *Wahhabi Islam: From Revival and Reform to Global Jihad* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), pp.278-279.

- Becoming alienated from one's former life; affiliating with like-minded individuals
- Joining or forming a group of like-minded individuals in a quest to strengthen one's dedication to Salafi Islam
- Giving up cigarettes, drinking, gambling and urban hip-hop gangster clothes.
- Wearing traditional Islamic clothing, growing a beard
- Becoming involved in social activism and community issues⁵⁸

MADRID (2004 Attack)

• *Gravitating Towards Salafi Islam.* A variety of political and personal crises contributed to Madrid bombers' attraction to the Salafi/Wahhabi interpretation of Islam during their inner battle in defining who they were.⁵⁹ For example:

- For Tunisian scholarship recipient, Sarhane ben Abdelmajid Fakheth, it was a personal crisis. After growing up in a middle-class family in Tunis, Fakheth moved to Madrid in 1994, armed with €29,500 in Spanish-government scholarships to study economics.

"At first he was gracious and engaging," says Miguel Pérez Martín, a professor at the Autonomous University of Madrid, where he met Fakheth as a fellow student in 1996."

However, over the next few years Fakheth withdrew from school and the world in general. He was described as having become "incommunicative."

(The exact nature of this personal crisis has not been disclosed.) **As a consequence, Fakheth spent more and more time in the Salafi mosques⁶⁰ and was only interested in talking about Islam and the misery of the world.²¹ As these individuals adopted Salafi ideology,⁶¹ they sought out like-minded individuals by joining groups that provided them a validation of their new**

⁵⁸ It is as if Silber and Bhatt are claiming that just because one becomes a devout Muslim then this in itself leads to radicalisation – this is incorrect. Indeed, most of the 9/11 suspected bombers were clean-shaven, dancing, drinking and living totally Westernized lifestyles!

⁵⁹ This is doubtful, as there is not much evidence to indicate that they were 'Salafi', maybe 'jihadi' but the two are not synonymous at all which is what Silber and Bhatt wrongly perceive.

⁶⁰ We need evidence that he attended Salafi mosques, what are the names of these mosques? What do they teach? Who are their scholars? What books do they study? Etc. as for merely blindly following an article which may claim that he attended Salafi mosques then this is not adequate in thorough meticulous research for such important topics.

⁶¹ But Silber and Bhatt have not even correctly defined what 'Salafi ideology' is, they even claim that it wants to bring back a 7th Century Caliphate! This is not from the Salafi methodology at all!

found beliefs. Members of these groups had ties to other militant groups; some even had specialized skills that could be used for terrorist purposes.

- Basel Ghayon, a Syrian, and Moroccan Anghar Foud el Morabit joined a Salafi/Wahhabi circle led by Rabei Osman el Sayed Ahmed, a 32-year-old Egyptian known as "Mohamed the Egyptian."
- Sayed Ahmed, who claimed to be a veteran jihadi who had fought in both Bosnia and Afghanistan, was a member of Egyptian Islamic Jihad. A former member of the Egyptian army, Sayed Ahmed was an explosives expert. He began attending Friday prayers at the M-30 mosque in 2001, where he came in contact with many of the Madrid bombers.²²
- ***The Salafi Mosque.*** As these individuals continued moving towards Salafism, they began attending Centro Cultural Islámico (Islamic Cultural Center), popularly known as the "M-30 mosque." ("M-30" was a name that was coined for this mosque's due to its proximity to Madrid's M-30 motorway). **M-30 had a history of being the mosque of choice for radical-thinking Muslims and as an extremist incubator, became a hub for the formation of the Madrid bomber cell.**⁶²
 - o Some of the Madrid bombers met with remnants of an extremist group which had formed around Imam Eddin Barakat Yarkas in the 1990's. These extremists played a critical role in the further radicalization of the Madrid bombers.
 - _ Yarkas had organized a militant Salafi support network for jihadi fighters in Bosnia in Spain in the 1990's and prayed at the M-30 mosque in Madrid.
 - _ Before Yarkas was arrested after 9/11, his group proselytized their views and eventually challenged the imam of the mosque for its leadership.²³

AMSTERDAM (Hofstad Group)

- ***Gravitating Towards Salafi Islam.*** Mohammed Bouyeri's journey to radicalism appears to have begun during his seven month stay in prison—a sentence based on an assault charge. He became more religious and extreme in his views.²⁴⁶³
 - After being released from prison, Bouyeri switched his academic pursuits from accounting to social work and began volunteering at his local community center. His friends say he began to wear "traditional" clothing and grew a beard. He was also more sensitive to political issues such as

⁶² But what made this mosque 'Salafi'? Silber and Bhatt did not say.

⁶³ It is almost as if Silber and Bhatt are merely equating extremism with 'Salafism'.

the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Bouyeri's transformation continued with a deepening of his religious convictions while his views on social issues became more conservative.

- As Bouyeri became more of an activist he began organizing Salafi-related events at the community center.⁶⁴ He discouraged women from attending and sought to ban of alcohol. Eventually, Bouyeri was asked to leave.²⁵

• ***The Salafi Mosque.*** Bouyeri began frequenting the Al-Tawheed mosque—a mosque that was well known to Dutch authorities as being Salafi and very extreme. The imam at the mosque praised suicide bombers and sold literature that advocated the killing of homosexuals.²⁶⁶⁵

LONDON (July 2005 Attack)

• ***Gravitating Towards Salafi Islam.*** Beeston's extremist mosque and surrounding community, including youth clubs, gyms, and Islamic bookshop served as the “extremist incubators” for Mohammed Siddique Khan, Shezhad Tanweer and Hasib Husain's adoption of Salafi Islam.⁶⁶

o In 2001, members of the 7/7 London group began to spend time at a youth club in Beeston, playing pool, boxing, and “hanging out.” Extremists often used the club as a venue to proliferate their radical messages to the more susceptible youth. Jihad was a frequent topic of discussion at the club.

o One of the gyms was known as “the al-Qaeda gym” due to its significant extremist membership.²⁷

All three of the 2nd generation Pakistani London bombers appeared to experience this Salafi-based religious transformation⁶⁷; while Germaine Lindsay converted.

o Mohammed Siddique Khan's transformation began when he first entered Leeds Metropolitan University between 1998 and 2000.²⁸

_ **Khan, somewhat new to Salafi Islam himself,** began to pray

⁶⁴ Such as? Silber and Bhatt did not give any examples of these “**Salafi-related events**”.

⁶⁵ If the Imam praised suicide bombing then this is not from the *Salafi* methodology anyway! Neither is to call for the killing of homosexuals within non-Muslim countries nor within Muslim countries wherein the leader decides. The *Salafi* scholars have rejected suicide bombings and wanton killing and these *fatwas* against suicide bombing are widespread, it is thus strange that Silber and Bhatt did not refer to any of these whatsoever.

⁶⁶ This is a huge mistake, for the 7/7 bombers were not *Salafi* in the slightest, they were ‘jihadi’ and *takfeeri* but not ‘Salafi’ – they are not the same. More thorough research should have been conducted into this.

⁶⁷ It is immediately noticeable here then that Silber and Bhatt refer to it as being a ‘Salafi-based religious transformation’ but the 7/7 bombers did not refer to themselves as being *Salafi* at all!? In fact, they totally opposed the *Salafis* and the *Salafi* methodology – which Silber and Bhatt do not actually understand or correctly define.

regularly at school, attend mosque on Fridays. He gave up fighting, bouts of drinking and using drugs.⁶⁸ He began volunteering as a teaching assistant at an elementary school.²⁹

- o Shezhad Tanweer changed as well, giving casinos a rest and growing a beard.³⁰
- o Hasib Husain appeared to become more religious – wearing traditional clothing and a prayer cap after a trip on hajj to Saudi Arabia in 2002.³¹
- o Germaine Lindsay’s mother had converted to Islam in 2000 and, shortly after, he converted—taking the name “Jamal”. Lindsay’s behavior became somewhat erratic and he began associating with troublemakers.

_ At his local mosque and within his Islamic circles in Huddersfield and Dewsbury, Lindsay was admired for the speed with which he achieved fluency in Arabic.⁶⁹ According to those who knew him, he memorized long passages of the Quran, showing unusual maturity and seriousness. He also began wearing the traditional white thobe.³²

_ In 2002, Germaine Lindsay’s mother moved to the US to live with another man, leaving Lindsay alone at the family home in Huddersfield. **This has been described as a traumatic experience for Lindsay, for which he was ill equipped and may have pushed him towards seeking solace and support in the Salafist mosque.**³³⁷⁰

⁶⁸ Again, Silber and Bhatt equate practicing Islam with *Salafiyyah*?! This type of simplistic equation is not befitting in substantial research.

⁶⁹ This is not true whatsoever, for Lindsay did not know any Arabic at all!

⁷⁰ So what was this ‘Salafist mosque’? We find out later that Silber and Bhatt are actually referring to the *Tablighi masjid*!?! Since when have the *Tablighi Jamaat* been ‘Salafi’?? Therefore, Silber and Bhatt are demonstrating an acute lack of knowledge with regards to the sects, groups and trends within Islam.

Sageman also makes this same error in his book *Understanding Terror Networks*, he says on page 5:

The Salafi diagnosis and prescription can accommodate several strategies. A nonviolent personal form was Muhammad Ilyas’s creation of Tablighi Jamaat (Society for the Propagation of Islam) in 1927 in India.

Sageman continues:

Like other Salafi movements, the Tablighi movement rejected traditional worship of saints and tombs.

In fact, the Tablighis are a group which was founded by Shaykh Muhammad Ilyas al-Hindi al-Hanafi ad-Deobandi and Shaykh Muhammad Zakariyya ad-Deobandi authored many books for this group outlining its *manhaj*. They again were not Salafi and neither did they ever refer to themselves as such and as for them rejecting grave and saint worship then Shaykh Arshad al-Qadiree al-Barelwee one of the *Barelwi* authors wrote a book entitled *az-Zalzalah* and mentioned within it many clear texts from the major *Deobandee* scholars which include the innovation of grave-worshipping and superstitious

- **The Salafi Mosque.** Mohammed Siddique Khan attended all three mosques in Beeston, at least two of which had a strong extremist influence.
- o **The Hardy Street mosque was run by Kashmiri Muslims; The Stratford Street by Pakistani Tablighi Jamaat;** and the Bengali mosque on Tunstall Road by Bangladeshis, primarily. Finally, Khan chose to belong to the Stratford Street mosque—a mosque which followed the more rigid, orthodox, Deobandi school of Islam, with a heavy Tablighi Jamaat

practices and even clear *shirk*, translated from Urdu into English by Professor Naim Jamali here: <http://www.nooremadinah.net/EnglishBooks/TableeghiJamaat/TableeghiJamaat.pdf>

This was admitted by Shaykh 'Aamir al-'Uthmaanee director of *at-Tajallaa* in Deoband, one of the major scholars of the *Deobandeers*. He made clear that every calamity, innovation and superstition that the *Deobandeers* have only come about via Sufism, see *az-Zalzalah*, pp.182-193.

For more on the reality of this group see: *Jama'at ut-Tabligh* by Muhammad Aslam al-Pakistani and *as-Siraj ul-Muneer* by Dr. Taqiuddeen al-Hilali. Also see pp.58-9 of: http://www.salafimanhaj.com/pdf/SalafiManhaj_Maturidi.pdf

Ironically, Hasan al-Banna who Sageman goes on to say was 'Salafi' on pp.6-7 of *Understanding Terror Networks*, visited graves of Sufi 'saints'! Hasan al-Banna himself was a Sufi to the point that he gave *bay'ah* (oath of allegiance) to 'Abdul-Wahhaab Al-Khusaafee upon (following) his *Khusaafee Shadhilee* (Sufi) order. Hasan al-Banna himself stated within his *Mudhakkiraat ud-Da'wah* [Memoirs of Da'wah] that he used to visit the graves of the sufi saints, al-Banna's students also confirmed this. Abbas Sisi for example stated in his book *Fee Qaafilaati'l-Ikhwaan il-Muslimeen*:

That he never used to abandon visiting the places in which others besides Allaah the Blessed and Exalted would be called upon - such as the grave of Sayyida Zainab and Tusooqi and Sinjar and others - that he never used to abandon visiting these places, even for one week and that he used to come and arrive at these places before dhuhr and he would stay there till the approach of maghrib, then he would leave and hold circles of dhikr and sometimes he would stand and give a speech to the ikhwaan and would order them to purify their hearts from grudges and jealousies towards one another and from all other Muslims and he would order them to look at the mistakes of the Jews, the Zionists and the enemies of Allaah - and he would never utter, with a single word - something that was related to the greatest form of Shirk, and the basis of the Shirk of all the world - he would come to those places with an open and warm heart and he would see this [greatest Shirk] with his eyes and hear it with his ears - such as from those who would seek succour [istigaathah] from other than Allaah and he saw what would be placed before him of the hair from the body of a muwahhid, or from the skin of a muwahhid or from the head and the actions of the greatest Shirk that would be performed with them - and he would come with an open chest and would leave with an open chest and he did not utter a single word and this is so that he does not say anything that would prevent the people from him or make the people flee from him.

For more on the *manhaj* of Hasan al-Banna see the following: <http://www.salafipublications.com/sps/downloads/pdf/GRVo10001.pdf>

presence.³⁴⁷¹

MELBOURNE/SYDNEY (Operation Pendennis)

Though the details of what characterized this self-identification process among the members of the Sydney and Melbourne clusters are not yet available, it appears these plotters also experienced that same pattern of struggling for identity, dissatisfaction with mainstream Islam, and looking to Salafism as an answer.

- ***Gravitating Towards Salafi Islam.*** Forty-five year-old cleric Abdul Nacer Benbrika, a native Algerian and leader of both the Sydney and Melbourne clusters, appears to have begun his radicalization journey once he arrived in Australia in 1989. For Benbrika, Sheikh Mohamed Omran, was the extremist incubator, who paved the way for his radicalization. Omran was a follower of the infamous jihadi-Salafi cleric, Abu Qatada, whom Omran brought to Australia on a speaking tour in 1994.³⁵⁷²

- ***The Salafi Mosque.*** Benbrika began preaching at Omran's Brunswick mosque, attracting a small following. He called Osama bin Laden a "great man" and endorsed the goals and actions of Algeria's Salafist Group for Call and Combat (GSPC). Later, Abdul Nacer Benbrika was able to extend his influence into New South Wales, creating a second cell in the Sydney area.

o A number of those arrested in Melbourne as part of Operation Pendennis frequented the Brunswick mosque. This location served as a hub where many of the Melbourne suspects began to self-identify with the jihadi-Salafi ideology propagated by Benbrika.³⁶

TORONTO (Toronto 18 Plot)

- ***Gravitating Towards Salafi Islam.*** Similar to the many of those involved in the other plots and attacks, the Toronto plotters also struggled with their identity as evidenced by this excerpt from a poem that was posted on the Internet by Zakaria Amara in 2001.

"Please someone find me

I want to find the light

⁷¹ Is this what Silber and Bhatt regard as an example of "Salafi mosque"? Indeed it is, thus they have again made a serious error here in making *Salafis* to be identical to *Tablighis*. More in-depth research has to be carried out on the part of the NYPD if they are serious about addressing this problem of radicalisation.

⁷² Abu Qatada is not *Salafi*, and in fact has been totally refuted by *Salafi* scholars such as Shaykh Abdul-Maalik ar-Ramadani al-Jaza'iri in a detailed 460 page book entitled *Talkhis ul-Ibad min Wahshiyyat Abi'l-Qataad* [Liberating the Servants of Allaah from the Savage Barbarism of the Father of Thorns] – (Jeddah: Maktabah Asaalih al-Athariyya, 1422 AH). An English version was also placed Online by some Salafis in the UK here: <http://www.salafimanhaj.com/pdf/SalafiManhajQataadah.pdf>

*but no one is there to guide me
Open the door someone give me it's key"*

Saad Khalid, a high school student at Meadowvale Secondary School, formed the "Religious Awareness Club".⁷³ During lunch time, he would preach Islam to other students and spent a good part of his time with Fahad Ahmad and Zakaria Amara. The trio even created a chat group called the "Meadowvale Brothers".⁷⁴ Schoolmates stated that the three began to dress more traditionally and became more withdrawn.

• **The Salafi Mosque.** The trio from Meadowvale began attending the Al Rahman mosque in Mississauga,⁷⁵ where they met Qayyum Abdul Jamaal, the "spiritual sanctioner" who would help them progress to the next stage of radicalization.³⁷ While some of the other plotters attended different mosques, all were progressively being radicalized.

o Steven Vikash Chand attended the Salaheddin Islamic Center, a known radical mosque.⁷⁶ Imam Aly Hindy, an Islamic fundamentalist, was his mentor.

o In April 2004, Chand, who had been enrolled in the reservist corps since June 2000, renounced his Hindu faith, declared himself Muslim, and left the reserves.

_ As recounted by those in his unit, before Chand left the reserves, he had reported for duty with the beginnings of a beard, telling his sergeant that it was required by his religion.³⁸

Footnotes which were used here were:

21 James Graff, "Terror's Tracks," *Time Europe*, 19 April 2004, accessed March 6, 2006

22 Jose Ma Irujo, *El Agujero: Espana Invasada por la Yihad*, Aguilar, Spain, 2005 p. 84 – 86.

23 "FFI Explains al-Qaida Document," Norwegian Defence Research Establishment, March 19,

⁷³ Is this supposed to be a "Salafi" entity?

⁷⁴ Again, is this supposed to be a "Salafi" entity? If so, what were the distinguishing hallmarks by which one could know if it is "Salafi"? Silber and Bhatt did not say!

⁷⁵ Again who on earth do Silber and Bhatt know if this was a "Salafi mosque"?

⁷⁶ Yes, but was it a "Salafi" masjid? That's the issue. Because when Abu Hamza was in charge at *Finsbury Park Masjid* it was a radical mosque but not a *Salafi* one at all, and in fact Abu Hamza never referred to himself as being *Salafi* and actually vehemently opposed those that did openly and frankly referred to themselves as being "Salafi".

2004.

24 Petter Nesser, "The Slaying of the Dutch Filmmaker", FFI Norwegian Defense Research

Establishment February 2, 2005

25 Glenn Frankel, "From Civic Activist to Alleged Murderer" *Washington Post*, November 28, 2004

26 Andrew Higgins "A Brutal Killing Opens Dutch Eyes to Terror" *Wall Street Journal*, November 22, 2004

27 Russell Jenkins, "Killers May Have Been Recruited at Youth Centre," *The Times*, July 16, 2005

28 "Biography of a Bomber", BBCRadio4, November 17, 2005

29 "Profile: Mohammad Siddique Khan," BBC News, May 11, 2006

30 "Profile: Shezhad Tanweer," BBC News, July 6, 2006

31 "Profile: Hasib Mir Husain," BBC News, May 11, 2006

32 "Profile: Germaine Lindsay," BBC News, July 6, 2006

33 Ibid

34 "Undercover on Planet Beeston," *The Times*, July 2, 2006.

35 Stanley, "Australian Anti-Terror Raids: A Serious Plot Thwarted"

36 Ibid

37 Doug Struck "School Ties Link Alleged Plotters" *Washington Post*, June 11, 2006

38 Tom Blackwell and Stewart Bell "Toronto Terror Suspect a Normal Kid Transformed," *National Post*, July 4, 2006.

It is noticeable immediately that most of the above sources which Silber and Bhatt relied upon when they claimed that **"Two key indicators within this self-identification stage that suggests progression along the radicalization continuum are: *Progression or Gravitation Towards Salafi Islam* and *Regular Attendance at a Salafi mosque*"** – are mere articles and reports from the media! No books were referred to and no thorough research was quoted whatsoever such as the research of Dr Natana De Long Bas, Quintan Wiktorowicz,⁷⁷ Thomas

⁷⁷ Silber and Bhatt made reference to him but only in a few small matters, they did not refer to any of Quintan Wiktorowicz's research on the *Salafi* movement for example which would have given them much more insight into the reality of the *Salafi da'wah* and tradition.

Heggehammer, Sidney Jones,⁷⁸ Magnus Ranstorp and the research by the *Combating Terrorism Center* at West Point.⁷⁹ It is odd that Silber and Bhatt did not even mention this research in the slightest.

- ✓ On page 36 Silber and Bhatt refer to a “Salafist cause” – which is odd as us as Salafis would like to know what this “Salafist cause” is which we are supposed to be hell bent on implementing throughout the world?! Indeed, Silber and Bhatt go onto to say that the “cause” is militant jihad! Is this the way of the *Salafi*? Is this from the methodology of the *Salafi*? Is this a “main cause” of the *Salafi*? To be involved in such activities? Of course not! Yet Silber and Bhatt claim that it is!
- ✓ They further state on page 36 that: “**Politicization of New Beliefs.** As these individuals mould new identities based on *Salafi* ideology, they now begin to transfer this radical vision and mindset to the real world.” – hereby claiming that the *Salafi* methodology is a political ideology?!
- ✓ On page 37 for example, they also refer to the phenomena of ‘jihadis’ (we prefer to call them *takfeerees*) using the internet in order to spread their views. This is a very important matter, yet Silber and Bhatt did not even refer to any example of these extremist sites and they did not give any names of these sites?! On page 43 they then try to assert that “Salafi chat rooms” are used by these jihadis?! As if they jihadis refer to themselves as being “Salafi”.
- ✓ On page 54 they refer to one of the Madrid bombers as “a hardcore Salafi”?!! If he was a “hardcore Salafi” then he would not be involved in such extremist, terrorist activities. They also say the same about one of the Melbourne terrorist cells that one of them was a “staunch Salafi”.
- ✓ On page 60 they refer to Ali at-Tamimi as being a *Salafi*, however it must be stressed that he was criticised by Salafis for actually contradicting the *Salafi* methodology in a number of issues particularly with regards to his political ideology. Therefore, it is incorrect to align him to the *Salafi* tradition or as

⁷⁸ See for example *Indonesia Backgrounder: Why Salafism and Terrorism Mostly Don't Mix* (International Crisis Group: September 2004). Online: http://www.seasite.niu.edu/Indonesian/Islam/83_indonesia_backgrounder_why_salafism_and_terrorism_don_t_mix_web.pdf

⁷⁹ Such as the detailed executive report entitled *Militant Ideology Atlas* (November 1996) edited by William McCants, PhD.

being one of its main symbols as he had actually contradicted the *Salafi* way in many matters for which he was rebuked by Salafis in the West as early as the late 1990s. This culminated in Ali Tamimi actually distancing himself from the description ‘Salafi’.

- ✓ On page 68 they also refer to “Salafi Influences and Incubators” yet refer to Sayyid Qutb, Mawdudi and Hasan al-Banna as being *Salafi*! It is well known that the actual *Salafi* scholars refute these individuals.⁸⁰ Furthermore, the three mentioned never referred to themselves as being *Salafi* in any of their writings. So it would be better for Silber and Bhatt to address those who actually do refer to themselves as being *Salafi*.

⁸⁰ Such as the works of the Salafi scholars:

- ✓ Shaykh Rabee’ bin Hadi al-Madkhali in the books *Adwaa’ Islamiyyah ‘ala Aqeedat Sayyid Qutb wa Fikrihi*, *al-’Awaasim min maa fee Kutub Sayyid Qutb min al-Qawaasim*, *Nadhaart fee kitaab Tasweer al-Fannee fee Qur’aan il-Kareem* and *Adwaa’ Islaamiyyah ‘alaa ‘Aqeedat Sayyid Qutb wa Fikrihi*
- ✓ Shaykh Sa’d al-Husayn’s book entitled *Fikr us-Sayyid Qutb Bayna Ra’ayn* [The Ideology of Sayyid Qutb Between Two Opinions];
- ✓ Shaykh Abdullaah bin Muhammad ad-Duwaysh, the author of *al-Mawrad az-Zilaal fi’t-Tanbeeh ‘ala Akhtaa’ adh-Dhilaal*
- ✓ Shaykh Saalih al-Fawzaan, *al-Ajwibah al-Mufeedah ‘an As’latil’l-Manaahij al-Jadeedah* [Beneficial Answers to Questions on Innovated Methodologies] – New York: al-Ibanaah, 1997, 2nd Edn. Trans. Aboo Maryam Ismaa’eel Alarcon.
- ✓ See Shaykh ‘Ali Hasan al-Halabi al-Athari, *ad-Durur al-Mutalaa’ilah* (Ajman: Maktabah al-Furqan, 1423 AH/2002CE). Translated as *Gleaming Pearls*, see pp.28-69 of the ebook here: http://www.salafimanhaj.com/pdf/SalafiManhaj_GleamingPearls.pdf
- ✓ Shaykh Abdul-’Azeez bin Rayyis ar-Rayyis, a Salafi Shaykh from Riyadh, has actually recently refuted the ideas of Hasan al-Banna in a two-part lecture series on his website ‘Islam ancient’.

All of the above works are by Salafi scholars refuting Sayyid Qutb, therefore the assertion by Marc Sageman for example that “**Qutb started by stating the Salafi creed**” is complete folly to say the least. For Qutb was a mere literary expert and writer and was not familiar with the Islamic sciences as was stated by Imaam al-Albaanee (*raheemahullaah*), see page 38 of: http://www.salafimanhaj.com/pdf/SalafiManhaj_GleamingPearls.pdf

**SALAFI MOSQUES IN THE WEST THAT HAVE CONSISTENTLY
OPPOSED TERRORISM, EXTREMIST POLITICIZATION OF
VIEWS AND VIOLENT EXTREMISM:**

**A CASE STUDY OF BRIXTON MOSQUE AND ISLAMIC
CULTURAL CENTRE (AKA MASJID IBN TAYMIYYAH) IN
LONDON**

One of the central themes of Silber and Bhatt's report for the NYPD is that they assert that the mere attendance of *Salafi* mosques and centres is itself an "indicator of radicalisation". This is incorrect from a number of angles which we have to list:

- ✓ Firstly, Silber and Bhatt failed to adequately define what 'Salafi' is and as a result we have seen that they actually consider *Tablighi Jamaat* mosques in the UK to be 'Salafi'!? This makes it very difficult to know whether the mosques from the other places they mentioned such as in Amsterdam, Madrid, Melbourne, Sydney and Toronto are really *Salafi* or actually *Sufi*, *takefeeri*, *ikwaani*, *jihadi*, *tabreeree* or something else. But what is sure is that these places were not *Salafi* as the views of the main *Salafi* scholars on terrorism are very clear as we have seen earlier.
- ✓ Silber and Bhatt also neglected referring to what the *Salafi* methodology and tradition emphasises and thus they made the error of considering the works of Sayyid Qutb, Mawdudi and Hasan al-Banna as being representative of the *Salafi* tradition, when none of these individuals ever referred to themselves as being 'Salafi'. As a result, it would have sufficed Silber and Bhatt to have actually quoted and referred to those who do openly and frankly refer to themselves as *Salafi*, such as the scholars, students, *Salafi* preachers and the *Salafi* communities and their mosques in the West.
- ✓ The actual *Salafi* mosques in the West have been thorough in their clear and open condemnation and refutations of violent extremists and terrorists. This has actually led the bona-fide Salafis to be accused of being government stooges, spies, agents and variety of other allegations from the side of the extremists due to the Salafis not agreeing with their terrorist and radical political views and methods. This is well-known and it is rather odd that

Silber and Bhatt did not pick up on this adequately enough within their report for the NYPD. This is what will be looked at shortly.

One well known *Salafi* mosque in London, *The Brixton Mosque and Islamic Cultural Centre (Masjid Ibn Taymiyyah)*, was vocal in denouncing extreme acts with their chairman Abdul-Haqq Baker making the mosque's position quite clear in 2001 and 2002. Helen Gibson reporting for *Time Magazine* on Monday January 14 2002 states in a superb and well-researched article entitled *Looking for Trouble*:

There is no dome, no minaret, nothing but a small sign to indicate that this rundown Victorian house in the multiethnic south London neighbourhood of Brixton is a mosque. But the fact that would-be shoe-bomber Richard Reid and the alleged 20th hijacker Zacarias Moussaoui both worshiped here during the mid-'90s has brought the Brixton Mosque and Islamic Cultural Centre an unwelcome notoriety. Along with London's Finsbury Park Mosque and fundamentalist cleric Abu Qatada's prayer meetings near Baker Street, **Brixton seemed yet another nexus of Islamic extremism in the capital. But Brixton may not have been a willing terrorist haven after all. Finsbury Park has long been known for the radical, anti-American stance of its one-eyed, steel-clawed cleric Abu Hamza al-Masri, but the Brixton Mosque adherents say that in their strict orthodox teaching, terrorism and suicide bombing are condemned to the point that they earn hostility from extremist factions. And according to Magnus Ranstorp, deputy director of the Centre for the Study of Terrorism and Political Violence at Scotland's St. Andrews University, the mosques themselves are not the problem anyway.** The real threat is from the *al-Qaeda* talent spotters, trusted men of battle-hardened experience who use the mosques to find fresh terrorist operatives. Extremist centers like Finsbury Park and radical groups like the British-based *Al-Muhajiroun* may provide the milieu, Ranstorp says, "but these talent spotters and handlers are the really worrisome parts of *al-Qaeda*. They can tap into new recruits and dispatch them as well. Unless we get them, we're not making any inroads." Though Britain has some new anti-terrorism laws, there is no sign yet of apprehending or even identifying them. **Richard Reid, the 28-year-old Anglo-Jamaican who on Dec. 22 tried to blow up an American Airlines plane by igniting explosives in his sneakers, was ripe for recruitment. He converted to Islam in 1995 while serving time for petty theft. Unlike Moussaoui, though, he was not a committed hard-liner when he arrived at the Brixton Mosque the following year. Over time the amiable, eager-to-learn Reid become more extremist and argumentative. He was not seen for a while, according to mosque chairman Abdul Haqq Baker, and when he returned he wore military fatigues and talked about**

jihad. Moussaoui and Reid, who probably met at the Brixton Mosque, both drifted away in 1998, Reid to travel to Pakistan, Europe and the Middle East. The Brixton Mosque is an ideal hunting ground for terrorist talent spotters since it attracts mainly young worshipers, including ex-convicts it helps rehabilitate. A criminal background is a useful indication that the candidate is not afraid to break the law. Recruiters often approach their targets at small, private Islamic study groups that meet outside the mosques. They "probe the psychological makeup of a possible operative," says Ranstorp. "You must display extreme calm in stressful situations." Reid demonstrated his nerve in July when he flew to Israel and passed El Al's intensive scrutiny, after raising suspicions during security screening. "That was the litmus test of his ability to withstand pressure," says Ranstorp, who surmises Reid's trip involved learning about explosives — or acquiring them — since the type found in his shoes is similar to that used by Palestinian terror groups. His use of such a sophisticated explosive persuaded Ranstorp that Reid did not work alone, as some believe. Although no *al-Qaeda* links have been proved, a French justice official says: "Even if it's too early for us to prove beyond any doubt that Reid was part of, or in contact with, an *al-Qaeda* network, every indicator suggests that indeed was the case." Fortunately Reid is no Mohamed Atta. He failed to cause an explosion and is now awaiting trial in a U.S. jail. But *al-Qaeda's* talent spotters are certain to have other recruits in place. Last week Scotland Yard's assistant commissioner David Veness warned that the number of British-based Islamic extremists and activists with links to proscribed groups reached three figures.⁸¹

Note that this article was over five years ago and yet the findings from such information was devoid within the report of Silber and Bhatt. Helen Gibson referred to Dr. Magnus Ranstorp, the former deputy director of the *Centre for the Study of Terrorism and Political Violence* at Scotland's *St. Andrews University*, who, after his detailed research, concluded that **"the mosques themselves are not the problem anyway."** Dr. Ranstorp, a Swedish terrorist expert is currently research director of the Center for Asymmetric Threat Studies at the Swedish National Defence College and he is also advisor to the *Terrorism Project on Violent Radicalisation* led by the *Danish Institute of International Studies*. So based on this, radicalisation does not take place within mosques apart from the very small number of mosques which actually do call to erroneous concepts such as the Finsbury Park Mosque when it was under the rule of Abu Hamza al-Misri.

⁸¹ <http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1936661,00.html>

Interestingly, Michael Taarnby Jensen in his study entitled *Jihad in Denmark: An Overview and Analysis of Jihadi Activity in Denmark, 1990-2006*⁸², which even though still repeats some misunderstandings of the *Salafi da'wah* and tradition, states on page 70:

The radical mosques thus appear more like a stepping stone into Jihad than an actual recruitment centre. The Al-Tawhid study group is an example of the change of setting. It has attracted teenagers, including at least one of the Glostrup suspects. Their former homepage provided links to Zarqawi's propaganda. It is in the privacy of these smaller groups that Jihadi ideology can be discussed freely.

Therefore, radicalisation rarely takes place within mosques apart from those well-known ones which are actually headed by a *takfeeri* or *jihadi* ideologue. Not to mention that these mosques are not *Salafi* in any case! Taarnby in another study actually refers to *Brixton Mosque* and mentions that it has opposed terrorism! He stated in *Recruitment of Islamists Terrorists in Europe: Trends and Perspectives*⁸³:

The aggressive attempts at Mosque hijacking have only recently attracted the attention of the authorities. To the credit of the London communities of Muslims it should be noted that chairman of the Brixton Mosque, which has often been associated with terrorism, contacted the police when Islamists began to target the Mosque.⁸⁴ The chairman, Abdul Haqq Baker, did not approve of the Brixton

⁸² Copenhagen: Danish Institute for International Studies, 2006, available Online: <http://www.flwi.ugent.be/cie/documenten/jihad-dk.pdf>

⁸³ A research report for the *Danish Ministry of Justice*, dated 14 January 2005, it is available Online here: http://www.justitsministeriet.dk/fileadmin/downloads/Forskning_og_dokumentation/Rekruttering_af_islamistiske_terrorister_i_Europa.pdf

⁸⁴ It must be noted here that Abdul-Haqq Baker warned against well-known callers and individuals and not the average Muslim who may disagree with him on some things! It has been simplistically asserted by the *takfeerees* and their sympathisers that Abdul-Haqq Baker was some sort of "grass" or 'snitch' yet it must be stressed that it is not possible for a Muslim to merely inform without any evidence or on the basis that one does not like the views of another. Rather, the main callers have to be warned about for what they call to and if any Muslim is sure that a terrorist incident is going to take place then they have to warn and inform the authorities about that, as the Salafi scholars have clearly mentioned.

As for merely running to the police or the media when one happens to not agree with the particular views of another and then conjure up a premise that necessitates running to the police - then this is nothing but a farce which even the police would discredit for wasting their time! Furthermore, it must be said that in any case it is very hard for any Muslim to know the full whereabouts, movements, actions, beliefs and plans of others as they are not with them all the time to know, as happened in the case of 'AbdurRaheem Richard Reid for example, the so-called 'shoe-bomber' – for he disappeared from Brixton for years unbeknown to the Muslim community and the Salafis of Brixton. In any case, Abdul-Haqq Baker gave evidence for the defence of Zacarias Moussaoui during his trial so that firstly he would not achieve any martyrdom status and also so that he would not become a scapegoat for 9/11 in the US

Mosque being hijacked by extremists who more or less openly recruited young Muslims for Jihad.⁸⁵

In an article in *The Los Angeles Times* entitled '*Shoe-bomb suspect linked to al Qaeda*' by Josh Meyer, Sebastian Rotella and Majorie Miller, dated Thursday December 27 2001:

The man who allegedly tried to ignite explosives packed in his shoes on a Paris-to-Miami flight has been identified by captured al Qaeda fighters as having attended a training camp in Afghanistan, adding to the suspicions of U.S. and European investigators that he is an Islamic terrorist, authorities said yesterday. Al Qaeda soldiers being held as battlefield detainees by U.S. military forces recognized 28-year-old Richard C. Reid from photos and said they had seen him at an Afghan terrorist training camp, according to Justice Department officials, who said the Pentagon had informed them of the identifications. Those leads require further investigation, which may take months, officials said. "People recognized him from the camps," said a senior federal law enforcement official. "We're not in a position to confirm that (Reid was actually at the camp) because we haven't investigated it. But sure, absolutely, that is what we are pursuing." An FBI official in Washington cautioned that the al Qaeda soldiers might be mistaken or might have an interest in identifying Reid in order to help their own cases. "Just because somebody says they recognized him doesn't mean it's true," the official said. "And it could take weeks to verify." But the official also noted Reid -- a strikingly large man at 6-feet-4 with billowing, shoulder-length black hair -- would be hard to miss. Moreover, interviews with European investigators and Muslims in London indicate that Reid, who is accused of trying to ignite the explosives on American Airlines Flight 63 on Saturday, spent time in Pakistan. Would-be terrorists have often been passed through the country en route to the al Qaeda camps.

INFLUENCED BY RADICAL CLERIC

Reid was known as a disciple of a London cleric accused of being a top al Qaeda ideologue in Europe, according to another cleric who knew the suspect. And he attended the same London mosque as Zacarias Moussaoui, a French Moroccan indicted by U.S. prosecutors in the Sept. 11 attacks, according to fellow worshippers. U.S. and French law enforcement officials also say the sophisticated, volatile explosive packed into Reid's high-top basketball shoes was especially hard for a civilian to obtain and has been used in past terrorist bombings. The forensic examination of the shoes identified the plastic explosive compound as PETN, short for pentaerythritol tetranitrate, according to senior U.S. law enforcement officials. The substance is powerful enough to have brought down the

merely on account of his erroneous beliefs which he gained from the extremists, listen to Abdul-Haqq Baker here on BBC radio 4's *Today* programme on Thursday 4th May 2006 (0810 – regarding the trial of Zacarias Moussaoui): http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/today/listenagain/zthursday_20060504.shtml

⁸⁵ Ibid., pp.42-3

crowded jetliner and killed all 197 passengers and crew. PETN is a key ingredient in Semtex, a plastic explosive favored by terrorists and used in 1988 to blow up Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland.

Reid's suspected trajectory into terrorism recalls that of Moussaoui and thousands of other young Europeans who were indoctrinated at radical mosques in London, then went secretly to Pakistan and Afghanistan to be molded into terrorists, the French official said. "We know when he was in Pakistan," the official added. "It's the classic story, the axis between London and Pakistan. He didn't go to Pakistan to pick flowers." The FBI is eager to interview the al Qaeda detainees about Reid, and also wants to look into reports that he could have trained at the same time as Moussaoui at an Afghan camp known as Khalden. For veteran anti-terrorist investigators in Europe, aspects of Reid's background strike a familiar chord. Reid, the son of a Jamaican father and British mother, has a record for petty crimes in Britain and converted to Islam in prison, a busy recruiting ground for Islamic networks in Europe, according to French authorities.

BEGAN AS MODERATE

He was apparently not a radical at first. After spending about two years in prison, he turned up in late 1996 or early 1997 at the Brixton Mosque and Islamic Cultural Center, a moderate Salafi mosque that holds its services in English and is housed in a two-story brick row house across from a police station. Reid was a "friendly . . . likable character," but not very bright, said Abdul Haqq Baker, 35, chairman of the mosque. But Reid soon came under the influence of two other clerics, Abu Qatada and Abu Hamsa of the Finsbury Park Mosque in North London, according to Baker and others. Law enforcement officials in France and Belgium say Abu Qatada was arrested in Britain last week in a crackdown on suspected al Qaeda leaders. Baker said he had watched with dismay over months as Reid adopted the angry, anti-Western rhetoric of hard-core Islamists who have made London the European hub of al Qaeda recruiting and operations. "By the end of 1998 he was asking questions. . . . What was our view on terrorism and suicide bombing, was (the West) a place of war?" Baker recalled. "We said, 'No, suicide bombing is not acceptable.' " The only job Reid is known to have held was peddling incense outside the Brixton subway station with a company that employs local Muslims. He told French airport police that he had worked maintenance and kitchen jobs at hotels in Belgium and Holland.

Yet he paid for his Paris-Miami-Antigua-Miami-Paris round trip ticket in cash at a Paris travel agency, the French police official said. French investigators are trying to trace the source of the cash and reconstruct Reid's movements.

In another article entitled *Mosque Leader warns of extremist converts* in *The Guardian* (UK) dated Wednesday 26 December 2001:

An Islamic leader from the mosque where the suspected “shoe” bomber worshipped, today warned that other Muslims could have been converted to extreme views. Abdul Haqq Baker, 35, chairman of the Brixton mosque in south-west London, issued his warning two days after Briton Richard Reid appeared in a Boston court. He was charged with intimidation or assault of a flight crew and detained pending a bail hearing on Friday. Mr Reid, also known as Abdel Rahim, was wrestled and tied up by flight attendants and fellow passengers on an American Airlines flight from Paris to Miami after he allegedly tried to touch a lit match to a fuse protruding from one of his shoes.

Mr Baker said: “If they have got the likes of Rahim, there are a lot more and we are very concerned about that.” He added that “Mr Reid knew another worshipper at the mosque, Zacarias Moussaoui, a Frenchman of Moroccan origin who lived in Brixton, and who has been charged in America with conspiracy over the September 11 attacks”. He also claimed there was a period at the end of 1998 when the two men attended the Brixton mosque and may have come into contact with each other.

Mr Baker added that when Mr Reid, who is believed to be of Anglo-Jamaican heritage, first arrived at the mosque some time at the end of 1995 and the beginning of 1996, he had recently been converted to Islam while in prison. He described him Mr Reid as an amiable person who wanted to learn the basics of the religion. He said: “Having recently converted to Islam he asked to come here to learn more and to assimilate back into society, we wanted to help him with that.” He added: “He was someone out of prison who wanted to learn. There was no indication or suspicion he was linked with terrorist organisations.” **Mr Baker said that as his mosque was a community of converts it attracted some “extreme elements” who had tried to convert some of his members and to “grab them using emotional rhetoric”. He added that they worked on “weak characters” and said: “I would say he (Reid) was very, very impressionable.”**

Speaking about the alleged bomb attack on the plane, Mr Baker said: “I don’t think Rahim was capable of planning and orchestrating what was done. “I definitely believe there are individuals behind him and that he was a test and they were watching to see if he would succeed. “The gullibility of him is evident in the way he tried to ignite the bomb in his shoe and failed to do that.” Mr Baker said Mr Reid was a member of his mosque for about two years from 1998 and he was found a job by the community working in an incense shop. But then he just disappeared. He said they had heard he was in Pakistan and that during the summer his mother went to the mosque looking for her son. **Speaking about Mr Moussaoui, Mr Baker said: "He made his more radical beliefs known and as a result, in the end, his beliefs were not welcome. “Abdel Rahim didn’t come to propagate his beliefs, he would be asking questions and probing.” He added that Mr Moussaoui increasingly became arrogant and started arguments to such an**

extent that members didn't want to speak to him: "It was clear to us he was getting teaching from elsewhere," Mr Baker said. Mr Baker said that after the terrorist attack on September 11 he had given the police the names of individuals the mosque was concerned about and added there had been contact with the authorities on this subject during the past five years. He said: "We work very closely with notifying the police of our concerns." He added that following the identification of Mr Reid the authorities were given literature and he met senior officers to give them advice on how to deal with extremists. But he said his mosque had been threatened in the past by a radical minority...He explained that he was concerned about foreign nationals who had entered the country under the pretext of seeking political asylum but then went on to preach "rhetoric" against other members of the Muslim community.

Please also refer to an interview involving Abdul-Haqq Baker with BBC Radio 4's *Today* programme on Thursday 4th May 2006 which can be heard here (0810 AM – regarding trial of Zacarias Moussaoui):

http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/today/listenagain/zthursday_20060504.shtml

For more on the activities of the Salafis of *Brixton Mosque* refer to the insightful six-part documentary entitled '*Mosque*' which was aired nationally in 2005 on *ITV* (UK) and can be viewed on YouTube:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AWzm4o9ChhE&NR=1>

We could also add to *Brixton Mosque* a number of other well-known openly *Salafi* Mosques in the West which have this clear refutation of extremist-terrorist ideology can include:

- ✓ Masjid us-Sunnah, Cranford, London
- ✓ The Call to Islam Centre in Luton (UK)
- ✓ Green Lane Masjid in Birmingham (UK)
- ✓ Masjid Tawheed in Detroit; Michigan (USA)⁸⁶
- ✓ Masjid Qur'an wa's-Sunnah in Toronto (Canada)
- ✓ Salafi Mosque in Birmingham (UK)
- ✓ Masjid ul-Mumineen, California; Los Angeles (USA)
- ✓ Germantown Mosque, Philadelphia (USA)⁸⁷
- ✓ Masjid Tawheed, Chicago; Illinois (USA)
- ✓ Masjd Ahl us-Sunnah, Greensboro, North Carolina (USA)

⁸⁶ See: www.masjidtawheed.org

⁸⁷ See: <http://www.germantownmasjid.org/>

- ✓ Masjid as-Salafiyeen, Columbia, SC (USA)
- ✓ Masjid ul-Ghurabaa', Daytona Beach, Florida (USA)
- ✓ Masjid Irabhim, Austin; Texas (USA)
- ✓ Masjid as-Salaam, Ogden; Utah (USA)

...and others. Also refer to the *NPR News* (USA) story entitled '*Concerns Rise as More Study Islam Abroad*' by Libby Lewis dated 16 October 2002, wherein she goes to a Philadelphia *Salafi* Mosque and interviews some of the regular attendees. The news item can be heard here:

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=1151732>

As for the Salafi Mosques within New York itself, then we know of at least five including: Masjid Ahl ul-Qur'aan wa's-Sunnah in Queens, Masjid as-Sunnah in Rochester, Masjid an-Nur, Masjid ul-Muslimeen and Masjid Ahl us-Sunnah: <http://www.islamiccenterofjunctioncitykansas.com/Masaajid-NY.html> - all of these could have been simply asked in order to find out what they believe as Salafis in regards to the issues that Silber and Bhatt thought was 'Salafi'.

CONCLUSION

The well-known *Salafi* scholars who *Salafis* take their guidance from - Imaam 'Abdul'Azeez Bin Baaz, Imaam Muhammad Naasiruddeen al-Albaanee, Imaam Muhammad bin Saalih al-'Uthaymeen (*rabeemahumullaah*), Imaam Muqbil bin Haadee al-Wadi'ee and other contemporaries such as Shaykh 'Abdul'Azeez Aali-Shaykh, Shaykh 'AbdulMuhsin al-'Abbaad al-Badr, Shaykh Rabee' bin Haadee al-Madkhalee, Shaykh Saalih al-Fawzaan, Shaykh AbdulMuhsin al-'Ubaykaan, Shaykh AbdulMaalik ar-Ramadaanee, Shaykh AbdusSalaam as-Suhaymee, Shaykh Khaalid al-Anbaree, Shaykh Ali Hasan al-Halabee al-Atharee, Shaykh Mashhoor Hasan Aal Salmaan, Shaykh Saleem al-Hilaalee, Shaykh Saalih Aali-Shaykh, Shaykh 'Abdul'Azeez bin Rayyis ar-Rayyis, Shaykh AbdusSalaam Burjis (*rabeemabullaah*) and many others – all of these *Salafi* scholars who are regarded as the heads of the *Salafi* methodology and tradition and are all well-known for their stances against terrorism, extremism, political agitation and the likes.

As a result, the Salafis are not the same as those who are regarded as being “jihadi (‘jihadists’)”⁸⁸ and we also find it relevant to conclude with what was reached by the *International Crisis Group* study into Salafiyyah (‘Salafism’) wherein they stated:

Salafism is not the source of the problem, and jihadism itself is far too complex for simple, silver bullet solutions.⁸⁹

From here then, to claim that the *Salafi* way, belief and understanding is one of the indicators or “signatures” of terrorist-related incidents is absolutely incorrect. So even though Silber and Bhatt claimed that the *Salafi* way was a facet of terrorism and violent extremism based on a dozen or so ‘case studies’ – then their case studies, as we have seen, have not actually shown that any of those involved were *Salafi*! In fact, such individuals were influenced by the likes of Sayyid Qutb, Hasan al-Banna, Abu Qatada, Bin Laadin and the likes, none of whom are *Salafi*. We can also add and include to this, in light of relevance to Muslims in the West, the likes of Abdullah el-Faisal who again

⁸⁸ *Indonesia Backgrounder: Why Salafism and Terrorism Mostly Don't Mix* (International Crisis Group: September 2004). Online, p.29: http://www.seasite.niu.edu/Indonesian/Islam/83_indonesia_backgrounder_why_salafism_and_terrorism_don_t_mix_web.pdf

⁸⁹ Ibid.

influenced many Muslim youth yet he was well known for his hatred of the Salafis, see: http://salafimanhaj.com/pdf/SalafiManhaj_Deception.pdf

As for the “dozen examples” that Silber and Bhatt gave as evidence then the reality is not only that those examples had nothing *Salafi* about them at all and secondly, the overwhelming amount of people involved in such terrorist actions are distinguished by ignorance of the religion of Islaam generally, let alone the *Salafi* way particularly. Furthermore, they neither bring *Salafi* scholars as justification for their desperate and extreme terrorist actions nor do call themselves ‘Salafi’. Indeed, we only have to look at what has happened to the image of Islaam all over the world as a result of the horrific acts of suicide bombings that have taken place in:

- ✓ Saudi Arabia - in 2004 CE there were about five attacks upon the police, Western residential compounds and many innocent men, women and children were killed, Muslim and non-Muslim.
- ✓ Jordan - such as the suicide bomb attack at the hotel in ‘Ammaan, killing a whole load of people that had nothing to do with any kind of war and were just at a *waleemah*. This in fact was condemned by a Jordanian *Salafi* scholar, Shaykh ‘Ali Hasan al-Halabee al-Atharee, on the Friday after the attack at the oldest congregational Mosque in ‘Ammaan!
- ✓ Morocco such as like the bombings conducted by the *takfeeree* youth of Sidi Momin in Daar ul-Baydaa’/Casablanca on May 15th 2003 CE; the Salafis of Morocco affiliated to Shaykh Muhammad al-Maghraawee and *Daar ul-Qur’aan* totally rejected such actions and did for years beforehand.
- ✓ Egypt (such as the Sharm e-Sheikh bombings in 2005 CE).
- ✓ ‘Iraq

None of these were, or have been, carried out by the Salafis and not to mention the hoards of those in the UK who have been implicated in terrorism plots. Expressly none of them have been known as being *Salafi*, but rather *takfeeree*, criminals or ignorant, whether they be:

- ✓ Those responsible for the July 21 attempted attacks
- ✓ Those responsible for the *Ministry of Sound* and ‘Crevice’ plot.⁹⁰
- ✓ Muhammad Junaid Babar of Queens, New York, the follower of Omar Bakri⁹¹ and al-Muhajiroun who turned Super-grass, employee and informant for the FBI in 2004.

⁹⁰ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Crevice

⁹¹ A Syrian of dubious background, his name 'Fustuq', sometimes spelt 'Fostok', is the Arabic word for 'Pistachio nut' in Shaam. According to the Islamic researcher 'AbdurRahmaan ibn Muhammad ad-Dimishqiyyah has noted: he is from Halab (Aleppo) and is Lebanese by residence (before and after his time in the UK). He was one of the main symbols of *Hizb ut-Tahreer* in the 1990s despite his ignorance of the Arabic language in general and of the Qur'aan specifically, in terms of reading, understanding and application; not to mention his hastiness in delivering '*fataawaa*'! He is a pseudo scholar and a person of false propaganda and proof of this is that he claims in his book *Essential Fiqh* (London: Islamic Book Company, 1996) that he graduated from numerous universities, the most of important of which being *Umm ul-Qura'* in Makkah, the *Islamic University of Madeenah* and *al-Azhar* in Egypt, along with the *College of Sharee'ah* in Damascus!!? As he knew how honoured the names of Makkah and Madeenah were with the non-Arab Muslims, he claimed that he spent his life studying between these two holy cities.

His biography is not unknown as during his time in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia he did not study Islamic knowledge in any of the universities, rather he was an employee for the company *Eastern Electric* owned by Shamsaan and 'Abdul'Azeez as-Suhaybee in Riyadh. Then he went to the branch in Jeddah and during that time he did not study in any university, rather he went to America for a few months to study English and suddenly left and went to London and became the *muftee* of *Hizb ut-Tahreer*. Therefore, if he studied at these institutions he has to produce his certificates from the universities of *Umm ul-Qura'* in Makkah and the *Islamic University of Madeenah* if he is truthful! He used to be entrenched in *tashayyu'* (Shi'ism) and used to teach the "Ja'fari madhab" saying that it was from *Ahl us-Sunnah*, and Bakri thus held that it was okay to say in the adhaan "Come to the best of actions". Yet at the same time he used to slander the *salafees* and brand them as being "Wahhabis", like the *Sufis*, indicating his simplistic and erroneous stances.

Bakri, like Abdul-Qadeem Zaloom one of the former heads of *HT*, used to curse the *da'wah* of Muhammad ibn 'AbdulWahhaab and accused him of being in the service of the British to bring down the Ottoman state, which as we shall see is what Bakri is guilty of himself. But what is odd is that they used to accept the narration of a non-Muslim spy and consider that as trustworthy yet reject the conditions for trustworthy narrators in regards to ahad narrations!! So for Bakri and his followers in *HT* during the nineties, and the same is still the case for *HT* today, spies, enemies of Islaam and journalists are trustworthy to relay and report from yet a single companion of the Prophet (*sallallaahu alayhi wassallam*) is not! See 'AbdurRahmaan ibn Muhammad Sa'eed Dimashqiyyah, *Hizb ut-Tahreer* (Istanbul, Turkey: Maktabah al-Ghurabaa', 1417 AH/1997CE), pp.63-66

After 9/11 Bakri claimed to be *salafee* in '*aqeedah* (!?) yet this was a mere claim as he never once used to refer back to the *salafee* scholars and still preceded giving his own extremist and erroneous, he rather became more fervent in his *khaarijiyyah*. He is also known for making very extreme statements via the media yet never ever was apprehended by the British government for his incitement and agitation. So for example, on 19 April 2004 in an interview with a Portuguese magazine called *Publica*, Bakri stated;

"It's inevitable. Because several attacks are being prepared by several groups...one very well organized group in London calling itself 'al Qaeda Europe' appears has a great appeal for young Muslims. I know that they are ready to launch a big operation."

In January 2005 CE Bakri, via live internet broadcasts urged British Muslims to join *al-Qaeda* and that the British government had violated the 'covenant of security' due to their anti-terror legislation. He asserted that the UK had become *Daar ul-Harb*. Nafeez Mosaddeq Ahmed highlights:

Bakri's statements clearly suggest that he had advance warning of the plans to conduct a domestic terrorist attack in London by a British-based group, al-Qaeda in Europe. This, in turn, suggests that he was in a position to be directly acquainted with the relevant terrorist planning; and by implication that being so acquainted, he must have had sufficient contact with the planners and/or their terrorist associates.

See Nafeez Mosaddeq Ahmed, *The London Bombings: An Independent Inquiry* (London: Duckworth, 2006), pp.54-55. Ahmed also mentions;

Further firm evidence of a direct connection between the bombers and al-Muhajiroun came in the form of a confession made by al-Qaeda suspect Muhammad Junaid Babar, detained in New York for attending an al-Qaeda terror summit in Pakistan. Babar admitted to US authorities that he knew the chief London bomber, Mohammed Siddique Khan. Babar was a member of the Queens branch of al-Muhajiroun. Reportedly part of a terrorist network in Pakistan, Babar was also connected with the March 2004 plot uncovered by the police. After pleading guilty in June 2004, he turned informant for the security services. See Ahmed, *op.cit.*, pp.58-59

Bakri boasted in a 2002 interview: **"The British government knows who we are. MI5 has interrogated us many times. I think now we have something called public immunity."** Ahmed, *op.cit.*, p.72

Also, *al-Muhaajiroon* published '*fataawaa*' from Bakri inciting acts of violence and terrorism against governments including a death threat against the Pakistani military leader Musharraf, after making *takfeer* on him after 9/11 on BBC news in September 2001 and also a call to kill Boris Yeltsin and even a call to assassinate Tony Blair in 2004!!? Bakri had already made *takfeer* of the Taalibaan regime in August 2001 CE in a letter that Bakri wrote to Mullah 'Umar wherein he branded Afghanistan as 'Daar ul-Kufr' under the Taalibaan and not an abode of Islaam!? See: '*Ash-Sharq al-Awsat*' newspaper; no. 2 August 2001 CE

Bakri also boasted that his brother had joined *al-Qaeda* and had received a one year course in weapons and evasive vehicle maneuvering in Texas and Scotland!!? More recently, Aboo 'Izzaddeen 'Umar Brooks and Aboo 'Uzayr stated on national British TV (BBC2's *Newsnight* programme) last year after 7/7 that **"martyrdom operations are completely praiseworthy"** (!) and Aboo 'Uzayr described the 9/11 bombers as being **"the magnificent 19"**!!? Then they wonder why police raid as they do in East London!? They only do so due to the agitation and negative image of Islaam that they hear from the likes of the blind followers of Bakri Lubnaanee! With regards to all of this Nafeez Ahmed states:

These selected citations are only a small representative sample of hundreds of inflammatory anecdotes, documents and speeches made by Bakri and other leading members of al-Muhajiroun. Inciting people to violence breaks existing UK law and under normal circumstances would lead to arrests, charges, prosecution, and in appropriate cases, deportation. After the London bombings, the government called for new legal powers to tackle terrorism. But this only highlights the question of why the government failed to use the powers it already had? See Ahmed, *op.cit.*, p.76

Nafeez Ahmed then superbly notes;

The security and intelligence services knew that al-Muhajiroun was recruiting aggressively and successfully in the UK. They knew that individuals radicalized by the group had fought and died in Afghanistan. By consistently refusing to arrest

- ✓ Those responsible for running alleged terrorist websites in London, who plotted to attack Western targets in New York or elsewhere and who made *takfeer* of the Salafis, again had no link to the *Salafi da'wah* whatsoever. Such as those who have been implicated for trying to run such extremist and ignorant websites from shed-hide-outs in South London and West London.
- ✓ Those youth, which numbered about 25 or so, who were implicated for the 2006 airplane plot. Some of these youth were from Walthamstow (East London) and High Wycombe (Buckinghamshire, UK) which are both areas which have large *Salafi* communities. None of these alleged plotters had anything to do with the Salafis let alone attending their Mosques and the *Salafi* gatherings. In fact the eleven or so from the alleged plotters who are from Walthamstow, were hardcore *Deobandi Hanafi Sufis* – a far cry from *Salafi* Islam to say the least!⁹² They were also associated to a Mosque in Walthamstow which is also known for its hatred towards the Salafis there.
- ✓ The Birmingham six who were charged under what the West Midlands police called '*Operation Gamble*' – then again none were known as being *Salafi* or attending the *Salafi* gatherings within Birmingham.⁹³
- ✓ Those fanatical followers of Omar Bakri (including 'Abdur-Rahman Saleem and other ignorant blind-followers of Bakri from Whitechapel and Stepney Green in East London!) who protested in the streets prancing around with placards saying **"Behead Those Who Insult Islam!", "Denmark you will pay! 7/7 is on its way", "Bomb! Bomb! Bomb!", "UK you will pay! The fantastic four are on their way!", "Europe you will pay, Bin Laadin is on his way!"**⁹⁴ and the likes of such pathetic, foolish and dim-witted sloganeering – were not *Salafi*!

and charge members of al-Muhajiroun for their post-9/11 terrorist training and recruitment programme, which by their own proud admission allowed British Muslims to be trained in al-Qaeda camps in Afghanistan in preparation for future terrorist operations on UK soil, British authorities left intact the networks that radicalized Siddique Khan and his companions. We have had no explanation for this apparent lapse... Ahmed, *op.cit.*, p.82

⁹² http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2006_transatlantic_aircraft_plot_suspects

⁹³ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/31_January_2007_Birmingham_raid

⁹⁴ <http://search.bbc.co.uk/cgi-bin/search/results.pl?scope=all&edition=d&q=cartoons+protests>

- ✓ Those further blind followers of Omar Bakri who went on UK TV and stated that suicide bombings are “**completely praiseworthy**”⁹⁵ – again were not *Salafi*, were ignorant of *Salafiyyah* and stayed away from the *Salafi* gatherings in London such as at *Brixton Mosque*, *Masjid us-Sunnah* or *al-Athariyyah*.
- ✓ Those responsible for the Glasgow international Airport attack – were not *Salafi* and in fact ex-members of *Hizb ut-Tabreer*, the *Tablighis* and some of them were *takfeerees*.
- ✓ Those implicated and accused of other terrorist plots and are linked to the likes of Zarqawi, Ayman adh-Dhawahiri, Bin Laadin, Abu Qatada, Abu Hamza, Abdullah Faisal and Omar Bakri – again are not *Salafi* and these have all been refuted in great detail by the Salafis.

So we advise future analysts, researchers, writers and academics to actual do the research in the first place and conduct the appropriate verifications before making odd assertions about the *Salafi da'wah* and *manhaj* about it being “...one of the stepping stones and factors that lead to extreme terrorist inclinations”. Or, considering the works of Sayyid Qutb, Mawdudi and Hasan al-Banna as being examples of ‘Salafi’ literature; such assertions demonstrate acute ignorance and unawareness of the very topic that one attempts to assess in the first place. It is also folly to claim that most of the Muslims are exposed to the *Salafi manhaj*?! The Salafis hope that this was the case, but the reality is that most of the Muslim youth are totally ignorant of the *Salafi* way, let alone being “widely exposed to it”.

Simply, researchers can ask the Salafis of the West as to what their views are with regards to matters regarding terrorism, violence and the likes. As for describing all and sundry as being ‘Salafi’ then this fails to adequately address the issues and just adds further confusion.

⁹⁵ See: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vDmK933BvXg&mode=related&search=>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FjdT7THoAUA&mode=related&search=>