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A Roadmap to Terror in Saudi-Arabia

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In a document published in 2015 at an IS *telegram* channel, the author discussed ways of "targeting unbelievers (*kāfir*) and apostates (*murtadd*)" at the Arabian Peninsula, i. e., Saudi-Arabia. The document is called "The easy ways to target unbelievers and apostates at the Peninsula" and written by Suhail Hijāzī (Hijāzī 2014), the original is dated as of June 14, 2014.

The author is talking to those who are not able to join the military jihad, stating there are targets just at hand (p.2).

The **first** method is quite simple: Killing Shiites, called *rawāfid* (sg. *rāfida*), to be translated as *rejectors*, a derogatory term with a long history used today by Salafis, Wahhabis, and Jihadis to mark Shiites. The negative marking of Shiites is intensified by the term *mushrikīn*, polytheists. These combined terms are intended to mark Shiites as unbelievers. Targeting Shiites as unbelievers is supplemented by quoting one verse from the Qur'an and a tradition from the prophet calling for the expulsion of polytheists (=Shiites, for the author) from the Arabian Peninsula.

Means to be used: blowing up their buildings, blasting their estates, explode their busses, aiming at them on the highway between Mecca and Medina and at gas stations or killing them at their places of pilgrimage, e. g., the mosque of al-Qubā¹ or the cemetery of al-Baqī².

The Shiites are regarded as apostates (*murtaddūn*), and the author declares it is obligatory to kill them. The reasons given for this judgment are the negative attitude of Shiites towards 'Ā'isha, the wife of the prophet, and the companions of the prophet. They are, the author writes, "more wicked than the Jews and the Christians" (p.3).

Another tactic is to threaten the people who are renting buildings and real estates to Shiites and killing them if they continue to do so. The ultimate aim is to expulse the polytheists (=Shiites) and those who is helping them from the Arabian Peninsula.

The **second** method is "the economic jihad". Targeting the petroleum industry, the author says, is a valid strategy to do harm to the unbelievers who have occupied „the lands of the Muslims“ (p.3) to benefit from this wealth. He states: „it does not belong neither to the unbelieving occupiers nor the apostate rulers“ (p.3). i. e., the rulers of the oil-rich Arab countries.

Then the author quotes a book written by 'Abd al-'Azīz b. Rashīd al-Tuwayli'ī, imprisoned at the time of writing the booklet discussed here and executed by order of the Saudi government on February 1, 2015.³ Al-Tuwayli'ī was called the minister of information of al-Qa'ida at the Arabian

1 The oldest mosque in the world in the outlying environments of Medina in Saudi Arabia.

2 A cemetery in Medina going back to the time of the prophet containing the graves of many relatives of the prophet.

3 <http://www.almsal.com/post/300360>, accessed January 29, 2016; cf.

<http://english.aawsat.com/2005/10/article55269487/infamous-al-qaeda-bloggers-nationalities-revealed>, accessed January 29, 2016.

Peninsula (see for this organization Hegghammer 2010). He wrote inter alia for the online journal of al-Qa'ida *Sawt al-jihād*, the voice of jihad (Prucha 2010). The book mentioned is „The judgment on targeting oil facilities“ (al-Tuwayliī s. d.) written when al-Tuwayliī was still in prison.⁴ The general principle deducted from this text is the permissibility of the destruction of the property of Muslims to preclude any benefit for the unbelievers from it. Far better is to destroy resources already under the control of the unbelievers.

This destruction may happen through suicide attacks. Suicide is regarded allowed by al-Tuwayliī when the person knows vital secrets of the Muslims – we may assume this means first and foremost: Jihadis – and the unbelievers are able to extract these secrets from him. The author refers to a contemporary Fatwa and, e. g., to the example of Jonah (Yūnus in Arabic). It is allowed to kill Muslims if they are used as human shields (*tatarrus*) by the polytheists (=unbelievers); e. g., when human shields are used as human shields to stop the true Muslims, i. e., Jihadis, from fighting military Jihad.⁵ The author quotes a sentence saying that it is according to Islamic law allowed to destroy Muslim property if there is no benefit for Muslims in it, only for the unbelievers.

The attacks on the oil facilities may take place by blowing up pipelines or oil tankers at sea, by killing "the crusaders", i. e., Europeans or Americans, working at oil refineries. A result of attacking them may be in the long run the expulsion of „the crusaders“ from the Arabian Peninsula. If these attacks cause an increase in the price of the barrel of oil, the author regards this as an act of economic warfare that will lead to the downfalls of "the crusaders." He adds the statement that is absolutely forbidden to kill anyone working in oil facilities if it is not proven that he is an unbeliever or an apostate.

The author stresses four aspects of the "economic jihad":

- 1) the increase in the oil price.
- 2) the rise in the amount of money to be spent on security measures at oil refineries.
- 3) the flight of investors and foreign workers from the Arabian Peninsula because of the attacks and the lack of protection for them.
- 4) the negative effects on the American and European economies since they are dependent on oil to a large extent.

4 A study of this text is in preparation.

5 There is an intense discussion on the concept of *tatarrus* among Jihadis, some declaring *tatarrus* as allowed, others as forbidden. Cf. al-Azdi 2003.

The last point demonstrates a very superficial understanding of the oil and energy markets.

The **third** method is targeting the commanders, officers, and prison wardens to help the – jihadi, called in the text "professors of the unity of god" (*muwahhidūn*) – prisoners. Judges are mentioned, too. Two other groups are targeted, too: intelligence people and special law enforcement units who are said to have "sold their religion to keep the apostates [i. e., the Saud family] in power."

Targeting these groups is explained as an act of revenge for the suffering of the jihadi prisoners. By referring examples from the time of the prophet and another historical example the author stresses the need to help especially Muslim – i. e., jihadi – women (p. 6). He is adding a verse from the Qur'an and quote form a commentary on the Qur'an to emphasize the need to help prisoners. To strengthen his argumentation the author quotes one Saudi scholar, Sulaimān al-'Ulwān⁶, who talks about the absolute obligation to help prisoners „in political prisons“. He refers to another leading Saudi jihadi, 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Muqrin (d. 2004), to add to al-'Ulwāns authoritative view. The ultimate legitimacy is proven in one sentence, when stating that the Saudi government is at the forefront of "the fight against Islam" (p. 7) and, quoting al-Muqrin, with the belief that god promised "victory to those who are striving in his path" (p. 8).

The **fourth** method is attacking the "writers in the heretical journals who are joking about the religion" and journalists who are spreading "the evil" and following "the West". The author identifies them as agents of cultural imperialism, dangerous because they look like natives and speak their language. He says a large number of journals and journalists emerged in the last years in Saudi Arabia. He is quoting Muhammad b. 'Abd al-Wahhāb as an authority against these writers. We may assume he is thinking of publications not following his narrow worldview.

The **fifth** method is kidnapping and murdering foreign – non-Muslim – tourists. Referring to the older discussion if it is allowed or not for non-Muslims to live the author states clearly that there is no justification for non-Muslims to stay on the Arabian Peninsula – exception: for commercial purposes or the benefit of the Muslims. So it is not allowed to grant unbelievers immunity in the Arabian Peninsula – a clear attack on the Saudi government protecting non-Muslim expats and being protected by non-Muslim soldiers. Since it is allowed to kill any non-Muslim met at the Arabian Peninsula, the author states: "don't treat them with mercy" (p.12).

The author refers then to Salih al-Qar'āwī⁷ for a final quote supporting attacks on tourists. Al-

6 One of the leading pro-jihadi scholars in Saudi-Arabia, serving a long prison term after being released for a short time in 2012.

7 A leading al-Qa'ida field commander imprisoned in Saudi-Arabia (<http://theoranetracker.blogspot.co.at/2013/04/the-alleged-arrest-of-maimed-terrorist.html>) (retrieved February 7, 2016).

Qar'āwī is cited saying: "If American, British and other polytheist tourists are targeting this [...] is an honour for us." (p. 13)

The **sixth** method targets diplomats, especially those of "states that wage war against Islam". These diplomats should be kidnapped and killed (p.13).

Kidnapping diplomats like the Iraqi ambassador is recommended by the author since it would be possible to exchange him for jihadi prisoners in Iraqi prisons. He says these diplomats are not as protected as others and an easy target. American or European diplomats are another target to be taken as hostages and exchanged for jihadi prisoners, e.g., the prisoners at Guantanamo, 'Umar 'Abd al-Rahmān. This method is legitimized as the other are by quoting Hadiths and a Qur'anic verse.

The **seventh** method is the "destruction of banks and centers of depravity" (p.14). There is no further justification for destroying banks and interest (*ribā*) charging institutions. It seems to be too evident for the authors that *ribā* is forbidden according to Islamic law to devote a lengthy discussion to it. He is more specific in singling out the press and satellite tv stations for destruction mentioning the tv network MBC, the journals al-Sharq al-awsat and al-Watan and others which "are fighting the jihadis day and night" (p.14). The seventh method is a pressing imperative, the author says, because jihadis in Iraq are attacking satellite tv bureaus.

International schools are another target. They are accused of poisoning "the children of the Muslims" (p.14).

The **eighth** method is threatening the "scholars of evil" (*'ulamā' al-sū'*) and killing those who continue to follow their usual practice. Since the author is writing at the time of the Iraqi civil war, he is mentioning "those who are telling the Iraqis that Bremer⁸ is their ruler" (p.14) and others.

The scholars of Saudi-Arabia are accused of being responsible for the religious support for the occupation of Iraq, responsible for the killing of millions of Muslims, and "spokesmen of the rulers in Riyadh" (p.14). He then quotes Fāris al-Zahrānī, a leading figure of al-Qa'ida at the Arabian Peninsula executed in Saudi-Arabia in 2016, who said he would like to see the widows and children of the killed jihadis killing these "scholars of evil" by throwing shoes at them (p.15).

The **ninth** method is targeting Shiite cities like al-Qatīf, 'Awāmiyya, or Saihāt. The author mentions densely crowded locations like hospitals, schools, markets, Husainiyyas⁹, or sports grounds. The intention is to kill as many people as possible to create "streams of blood" (p.15). The ultimate aim is "to clear the Arabian Peninsula from their filth" (p.15) dehumanizing the Shiites of Saudi-Arabia.

The **tenth** method is blowing up embassies and consulates, esp., the American embassy, but also the

8 Paul Bremer, highest civilian administrator in Iraq 2003-2004.

9 Congregation halls for Shia ceremonies. In the city of Saihāt, e. g., 32 Hussainiyyas are mentioned.

British, the embassies of the NATO member states, called crusaders, China and Russia, both called communists, and Iran. The author mentions the cases of the attacks on the US embassies in Nairobi and Daressalam, and the killing of the US ambassador in Libya.

Finally, he is calling upon the citizens of Saudi Arabia to rise and fight, because "only [military] jihad is the honor of the Islamic community (*umma*)" (p. 16).

Summary

The text emerges from a set of inner-Saudi pro-jihadi discourses (s. Hegghammer 2010). The arguments are embedded in the discussions of extremist pro-jihadi scholars in Saudi Arabia again and again quoted in the text.

The text explains a multi-level strategy against Saudi Arabia focussing on the attack on the Shiite community in Saudi-Arabia, on foreign interests, and on people supporting the Saudi regime. The basic assumption that all terrorist attacks are to be justified as a kind of revenge for injustice against true Muslims, i. e., jihadis. The methods described are legitimized by quoting Qur'anic verses, Hadiths, scholarly and jihadi literature.

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