Terrorism and the Mass Media after Al Qaeda: A Change of Course?

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Resumen	Abstract
Este artículo analiza las posibles relaciones entre grupos terroristas y medios de comunicación. Se utiliza como estudio de caso a la organización Al Qaeda, analizándose su discurso público y su evolución histórica. Su percepción de los *mass media*, es el resultado de un cálculo de oportunidad, lo que determina tres fases históricas: 1) De hostilidad hacia unos medios a los cuales responsabiliza de que su mensaje sea ocultado o distorsionado; 2) Adaptación a un nuevo entorno, donde existen canales dispuestos a interpretar la realidad desde una perspectiva mucho más cercana a la ideología yihadista (principalmente *Al Jazeera*); 3) Explotación de internet como estrategia indirecta de acercamiento a los medios de masas.	This article analyzes the possible relationship between terrorist groups and the media. As an example, a case study on the Al Qaeda organization will be used. Our methodology will involve analyzing the content of its public statements and examining the developments that have taken place during its history as an organization. Both perspectives suggest that terrorism's view of the media, far from being composed of rigorous ideological or political principles, is shaped by their calculations of estimated opportunities. Its perception of the mass media, has depended on its perception of estimated media impact. This has determined three stages during its history: 1) Hostility toward media that it has held responsible for hiding or distorting its message; 2) Adaptation to a new environment where there are networks that are willing to interpret reality from a perspective similar to the jihadist point of view 3) Exploitation of the Internet as an indirect means of obtaining the mass media's attention.
Palabras clave: Al Qaeda, terrorismo, internet; comunicación política, yihad; medios de comunicación; Al Jazeera;	**Keywords:** Al Qaeda, terrorism, internet; political communication, jihad; television; Al Jazeera

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Introduction

Marshall McLuham, one of the most celebrated researchers on the social impact of the mass media, came to the relatively precocious conclusion that "without communication terrorism would not exist.[1]" This short sentence holds a truth that has remained unchanged during the last decades. It is not uncommon to cite the relationship between the diffusion of terrorist messages and the existence of modern mass media. Terrorism, however, did widely exist before the mass media did. An example of this is the type of terrorism that promoted anarchy (an authentic plague for nineteenth-century societies) utilizing assassinations and other types of attacks as a way to reach entire societies. The killing of important figures or other actions that took place in front of hundreds or thousands of witnesses, were effective means of ensuring that these events were made known during a time in which there was strong governmental control over information and the mass media acted within a limited scope. In the future, technological developments would allow terrorist attacks to be published in ways that were previously unimaginable. Terrorists found a powerful ally in the mass media that would help them obtain public attention for the group and its demands.

According to Brigitte Nacos, one of the scholars that has most studied this issue, terrorists commit violent acts looking for three universal objectives[2]: to get attention, to gain recognition, and even in order to obtain a certain degree of respect and legitimacy. These objectives are attainable for those individuals that are capable of receiving the most media coverage. And those that obtain it have more opportunities to influence others. Terrorists always calculate the effect that their actions will have in the media and the overall probability that this will provide them with the opportunity to be a member of the "triangle of political communication"[3] This image exposes one of the principal characteristics of contemporary society where personal and direct contact between the government and the citizens is no longer possible; a situation where the mass media is in charge of providing the channels of communication between those that govern and their constituents. Access to the media brings terrorists closer to a democratic society's decision-making process, which greatly increases that chances that this complex network of interactions will result in a political decision that favors the interests of their group.

The objective of this article is to more closely examine the type of relationships that can be established between a terrorist group and the news media. As part of our case study, we will utilize the terrorist organization Al Qaeda, given that with this group it is possible to encounter diverse models exemplifying its relationship with mass media. Our methodology will involve analyzing the content of its public statements and examining the developments that have taken place during its history as an organization. Both perspectives suggest that terrorism's view of the media, far from being composed of rigorous ideological or political principles, is shaped by their calculations of estimated opportunities.

Modern terrorism and TV logic

Any study of the relationship between the media and terrorism would be incomplete if it did not mention the peculiarities of the principal and most influential medium of mass communication. In fact, television's consolidation as the principal source of information

and knowledge for millions of people meant a new step in the evolution of the terrorist phenomenon. TV has a series of characteristics that make it easily adaptable to terrorist logic creating a situation of almost perfect "symbiosis":

The TV news bulletins are focused mainly on what is known as "visual culture." The attention that a given news event receives is directly proportional to the amount of audiovisual material available for it. Many news bulletins are extremely adverse to covering and presenting a story using only narrative o audio components. The availability or lack of audiovisual material becomes a determining factor when choosing which stories will be included in the broadcast and which ones will be excluded. This principal trait of mass media has repercussions on the planning of any possible attack[4]. As a result, terrorists look to attack those places that given their location or their significance will attract the immediate attention of the media. This, in turn, provides a sufficient quantity of images that will guarantee one's presence on the news. Following this logic, the example of the September 11, 2001, attacks were sufficiently visual to meet the demands of the TV culture and to satisfy the public fascination for live coverage of events. By attacking cities like New York, among others, where the largest concentration of television stations and film studios and equipment exist, terrorists not only guaranteed for themselves an exhaustive coverage and a global projection of their actions, but the existence of multiple tourists and citizens who had their own film equipment. This allowed news broadcasters to utilize domestically filmed new materials in which the news did not have as much to do with the terrorist attack as with the existence of new images that allowed the viewing public to contemplate the horror and destruction from a different point of view.

Time on TV, by definition, is short. Any topic covered on a televised news report is subject to strict boundaries of time limitation. The search for a compact format, where one can summarize and offer the viewer the principal news events in a brief time period make deep analysis, knowledge of historical context, antecedents and any other element which escapes the realm of the immediate highly difficult. This constitutes an enormous limitation when informing citizens about a series of issues that deeply affect their interests. The fact that that the majority's perception of terrorism is of audiovisual origin, where clichés predominate alongside of simplifications and shallowness, has an enormous influence in the way in which public opinion presents its demands to the public officials. This influence is also seen in the latitude with which these political decision makers can operate. Time also constitutes a problem, not only because of its shortage, but also because of its poor use. Mass media is strongly dependent on novel aspects that create a new "story." They look for attention-drawing elements and that them to stretch out a story as much as possible, making less significant events big news flashes with the purpose of slowing down events while waiting for new headlines[5].

The TV prioritizes violence indirectly. The media selects events that are news worthy (based on its own set of values that give priority to violence and conflict in any form). The broadcasting of a news program involves uncountable preparatory actions that involve the selection and discrimination of content that daily is placed on the desk of any entity that works and writes stories that will be come out in the mass media. There is competition among the different stories that will finally be emitted; those that are victorious are more dramatic, are more spectacular in a visual sense, are more emotional,

and contain other elements that are able to be assimilated by an image-oriented culture. The result is not only the shadowing of those events that, despite their interest, lack a conflicting nature, but the establishing of a dangerous pattern for those that want to be "made public" at any price[6]. On the other hand, different studies demonstrate that the visual presentation of violence and brutality by the news media creates feelings of fear among individuals that are not directly exposed or who have not suffered said actions[7]. In fact, televised coverage of a terrorist attack's effects (especially if it is live) creates a paradoxical situation in which the spectators imagine more horrendous scenes that the very witnesses situated in the area[8]. Terrorism's permanent and unconditional presence in current mass media "overdimensionalizes" its capacity for reaching the population, strengthening the effects of its threats and coercion.

The media's capacity for concentrating and maintaining its attention over a determined issue is weak. Events normally stop being discussed in current news stories when they can no longer repeat those elements that attract the mass media's attention. A never-ending search for novelty causes the media to leave out stories that, despite having initially received widespread attention and regardless of their continued importance, are suppressed or put aside. The reasons for this are the supposed saturation that could be produced in the viewing public after watching the "same images" day after day. The fact that the mass media search constantly for novelty and new points of view makes it, from the terrorists' perspective, a "fickle friend."[9] As a consequence, they attempt to perform violent actions in rhythmic succession, or innovate in a way that allows them to regain the media's "favor."

Television attempts to promote a self-image of truthfulness. Stations do not hesitate to present the contents of the stories that they broadcast as authentic "pieces of reality," exploiting the credibility that one usually gives to anything that "can be seen".

The relationship between the credibility that one gives to what he or she perceives visually and this use of the trust factor by the media has been an object of reflection for Italian political scientist Giovanni Sartori[10]. According to him, the media distorts the knowledge gaining exercise because it does not remind its viewers that the information that an image can "transmit" is a question of framing, the use of a particular camera, the choice of one focus over another, etc. The inherent truthfulness that one assumes exists in everything that "can be seen" gives television a persuasiveness that other media lack. This signifies that the product that TV stations offer is "reality in and of itself," without taking into account the context and a group of other circumstances that "surround" these images. Given this visual advantage, television does not hesitate to claim its capacity to reach the news story wherever it may take place. This proclamation, however, holds a dangerous misconception. Financial limitations cause the media to concentrate its resources where "it is believed" that there is higher news interest. This leads to a situation in which their interests in every corner of the planet have more to do with determining beforehand where a certain news event "can" take place than with where news is really happening.[11] Thus the mass media itself generates newsworthy events, devoting a disproportional amount of attention to frivolous and irrelevant occurrences, excluding other situations that can affect tragically thousands of people causing them to be simply be forgotten or of anonymous character. The result of the aforementioned situation is the existence of several corners of the planet that are never discussed in the news, despite the emergence

of problematic situations that could affect the world as a whole. This asymmetric quality of the news causes terrorists to concentrate their efforts in those places where they can receive the media's attention, setting aside other places where their actions receive no interest aside from the violence itself.

Searching for a more human, intimate, and accessible side of current events, TV shows a strong tendency to "personify" the story. The media's attempts to catch the viewer's attention by giving a face and human qualities to problems whose genesis and complexity completely exceed the limitations of any one individual. This way of focusing on reality has repercussions on the way in which citizens face problem formulation, setting aside the collective, cultural, transnational, and ideological aspects that underline the vast majority of terrorist movements. Even when it is tremendously difficult to personify a problem in one or several concrete subjects, the news tends to perform this very operation utilizing a series of stereotypes o clichés that are widely diffused among the population. Following this pattern, one frequently finds information that rests on popular clichés and cinematographic imagery[12], when offering information on terrorists, mafias, secret agents, etc. These types of operations help to favor the appearance of "charismatic celebrities".

Mass media's weaknesses and limitations when focusing on the terrorist phenomenon are not only found in "structural" elements, as one might call them; they also feed on a series of ideological conditioners knows as "focuses."[13] We can understand a focus as the active construction, selection and structuring of information that the news media carries out in order to fill a particular reality with meaning for the viewer.

This type of focusing takes place when the mass media highlights determined aspects of a particular issue making them more preeminent, promoting one definition of a particular problem or a moral judgment, or giving a recommendation on how to resolve a troublesome issue. The media are not a simple entities that transmit "raw" information. It has an active role in "constructing" the news, making terrorists actions understood in a context that simplifies, prioritizes, and structures the narrative flow of these stories.

The fact that popular perception on terrorist violence is shaped, to a large extent, by mass media's ideology and the underlying moral point of view is not necessarily negative. Presenting terrorism in a manner that clearly rejects violence, demystifies assassins and emphasizes victims' personal tragedies is an essential resource in any type of multi-faceted strategy that combats terror. The problem arises when media controlled by certain ideological, cultural or religious conniving begins to look for a fictitious balance between murderers and victims; when the "causes" of certain terrorist groups are justified against others; or when a story is treated in such a way that it gives the viewer the impression that terrorist groups are political participants that deserve certain legitimacy in the competition for power.

Categorizing the relationship between terrorists and the media

The majority of a considerable amount of academic literature where this topic has been discussed has pointed out the symbiotic relationship between terrorism and the mass media. In other words, it is the type of relationship between two groups involving mutual dependence where one party complements the other. There is, however, more than one type of relationship that can exist between terrorists and the mass media. The diversity of causes, ideologies, and social and cultural conditioning factors that inspire different terrorist groups are equally applicable to the type of relationships that these groups establish with the news media. Michael Wievioska, a French sociologist, was one of the first specialists to dissect this plural nature. He would establish four different models of behavior[14]:

Complete indifference. The terrorists' goal is to terrorize their victims, without seeking to attain media attention for their acts. There is no expectation that the press will become involved. This French author does not hesitate to mention that this situation is highly unusual.

Relative indifference. The terrorists are not concerned with being on the news, even though they are conscious of the power that explaining their cause in currently existing media can provide them.

A media-oriented strategy. The terrorists are not only aware that the press can expand the scope of their words and actions, they also perform a series of operations based on the knowledge that they possess on the dynamics and functioning and the of news producers. After well thought manipulations, the news media becomes integrated in the terrorist group's actions.

Complete breakaway. This is case of terrorists that see journalists and reporters as enemies that must be destroyed, putting them on the same level as other direct adversaries. The press ceases to be an entity that should be cynically manipulated (as democracy's Achilles' heel). It is instead viewed as the appendix of a system that must be destroyed.

These four options do not only give us an idea of the variety of possible relationships that can be established between these two entities, it also allows us to see how terrorists can alternate between different models, or even adopt more than one at the same time. In fact, modern terrorist groups frequently employ strategies that work to satisfy the news media's demands, while at the same time considering them an integral part of an enemy that they seek to overcome and annihilate.

The jihadist perception of the media

A large part of the structural characteristics and the modus operandi of Al Qaeda are novel within the general history of terrorism; however, its relationship with mass media has long followed the common patterns known up until now. In fact, this attitude falls into the last two categories that Michael Wievioska formulated. On one hand, the group is aware that its final goals are unreachable without the wide and constant presence of the organization in the press; however, on the other hand, its messages brim with hostility toward those that they consider to be guilty of the failure of the Jihadist movement.

From Al Qaeda's point of view, the news media are principally responsible for the liberating message of the Salafist Islam being ignored or distorted. This makes it impossible for the Jihad to penetrate in large sectors of the Muslim community, which finds itself immersed in the most pure ignornace and error:

"If we add to the foregoing the media siege imposed on the message of the jihad movement as well as the campaign of deception mounted by the government media we should realize the extent of the gap in understanding between the jihad movement and the common people."[15]

The media are the principal authors of the stereotyped and clearly negative vision that society has of the organization's particpants and activities. The press is considered to be mere extensions of the enemy. Along these lines, Muadh bin Abdullah Al-Madani, Al Qaeda ideologist and the author of one of the most extended jihadist articles following the September 11 attacks, expressed it in this way:

"This past year has seen the media, which pleads impartiality, churn out their most awesome propaganda machine bombarding the watching public with the White House spin on events, completely ignoring any other perspectives. In all the reams of newspaper articles, stacks of video footage and radio interviews, has there been a single dedicated documentary into the 'hijackers' and their motives for the attack? No. Why? Because it is more convenient to label them as madmen, crazed, psychotic evil doers who either wallowed in the squalor of abject poverty and therefore had nothing to live for, or were psychotic fanatical killers easily brain-washed by power hungry religious nuts."[16]

Ayman Al Zawahiri, number two in Al Qaeda, enumerates the "tools" that the "Western powers" use to fight against Islam in his book "Knights Under the Prophet's Banner". In this list, "international news agencies and satellite television" has a very prominent role, together with other entities like the United Nations, western companies, non religious governments, o international aide organizations.

Jihadist propaganda frequently denouces the pernicious role that the media play in the covering the "war" that the Muslim world is carrying out. According to Al Qaeda, the press continously lies, not only about the real motivations of the muyahidin, but above all about the real motivation of Western governments. These are presented on the news as entities that look to find peace and international security, hiding the economic exploitation of the Muslim world and a deep rooted hostility against the Islamic religion and its followers.

The Jihadist vision of media's role and their influence in the development of this "new crusade" can be resumed in the following points:

a) The media numbs the population in general and particularly Muslims, entertaining them with futile and sinful issues. Their goal is to keep Muslims unaware of the seriousness of their situation as a people and of their obligations as believers:

"The media sector is in the same category as it strives to beatify the persons of the leaders, to drowse the community, and to fulfil the plans of the enemies through keeping

the people occupied with the minor matters, and to stir their emotions and desires until corruption becomes widespread amongst the believers."[17]

b) They contribute to creating a false image of Islam's enemies' strength. Jihadists are firmly convinced that American prowess and influence a have been constructed over a series of mistruths diffused by the media. They have taken charge of creating the image of an invincible superpower, magnifying its military capacity to the point of delirium. This, in turn, has made it possible that many decide not to rise against the injustice due to the fact that they are convinced that they will be defeated:

"Oh people, do not fear America and its army. By Allah, we have struck them time and time again, and they have been defeated time after time. In combat they are the most cowardly of people. Our defense and our war against the American enemy have shown that [America's] warfare is mainly psychological in nature, because of the vast propaganda apparatus at its disposal."[18]

"The American battle is a psychological battle that depends on the media and the magical effect of the microphone (…) This campaign was successful in some of respects in Afghanistan, due to the absence of the counter psychological warfare in all of its forms."[19]

c) The media distorts the Islamic combatants' true colors and motivations. Said actions prevent the population from adequately appreciating and understanding the muyahidins' actions. The chances for creating widespread revolt in the Muslim world are weighted down by the mass media's pernicious filter:

"The Arab and Western media are responsible for distorting the image of the Arab Afghans by portraying them as obssesed half-mad people who have rebelled against the United States that once trained and financed them (…)the purpose of the distortion campaign against the Arab Afghans is clear and obvious, namely, the wish of the United States to deprive the Muslim nation of the honor of heroism and to pretend to be saying: Those whom you consider heroes are actually my creation and my mercenaries who rebelled against me when I stopped backing them."[20]

d) The media contributes to the utilization of aggression against Islam because it ensures

a sufficient amount of social support for the policies of Western governments. Using these methods, the press takes responsibility for extending hate toward Muslims and gaining the viewing public's acceptance for the use of violence against them and the occupation of their land:

"There are many innocent and good-hearted people in the West. American media instigates them against Muslims. However, some good-hearted people are protesting against American attacks because human nature abhors injustice."[21]

"As for the decisions made by Bush and the US administration to prevent satellite channels and world news agencies from making our voice heard in the world, then this is clear evidence that the US administration fears the revelation of the truth that led to the Tuesday events."[22]

Terrorists, however, are not immune to the enormous power of the mass media. This leads to a contradictory dependence on them. Jihadists are aware that they are fighting a battle where main setting is the news media itself. Ayman Al Zawahiri recognizes this in a personal letter:

"However, despite all of this, I say to you: that we are in a battle, and that more than half of this battle is taking place in the battlefield of the media. And that we are in a media battle in a race for the hearts and minds of our Umma. And that however far our capabilities reach, they will never be equal to one thousandth of the capabilities of the kingdom of Satan."[23]

Al Qaeda places enormous value on the benefits generated by continuously forming part of the evening news. The news media help to multiply terrorist groups' power. Their mere appearance in news bulletins allow terrorists to strengthen the psychological effects of their actions, to call society's attention to their message, and to offer a favorable image of their power and capacity. In one way, they are cynical of the press considering it to be an enemy against whom they should fight[24], but in another way it is seen as a valuable resource which the terrorist organization can utilize in order to achieve its goals.

A good part of Al Qaeda's attitude toward the media can be explained by some of the organization's experiences during the second part of the 1990's. The "Declaration of War against the United States" in 1996, for example, caused little impact. With this communiqué, Bin Laden hoped to carry the banner of Islam's battle against "Crusaders and Jews;" however, his declaration only caused commotion in radical sectors, and went practically unnoticed in the country on which war was declared. Unwilling to commit the same error, Bin Laden spend two year undertaking on a publication campaign in the news media and gave various interviews with Arabic and Western journalists before reaffirming his threats against the West in 1998 this time under the umbrella of "World Islamic Front for Jihad Against Jews and Crusaders".

This openness to the media had a series of immediate effects for the group such as an increase in donations, new recruits, and the growing and increased psychological impact of their actions. Journalist, Jason Burke, in one of his books discusses that in early 1998, Osama Bin Laden sent a signed letter to a collaborator in Pakistan in which he asked that certain journalists be paid more; his goal was to increase coverage of his statements and activities[25].

His interest in gaining notoriety and fascination for power in the media arrived at such heights that some of his collaborators consider that Osama "has caught the disease of screens, flashes, fans, and applause."[26] He contemplates how the international media greatly contributes to Al Qaeda reaching their ultimate goal of becoming an ideological reference. For this reason, the organization started to openly ignore the Taliban's requirements of a covert operating style[27]. Following the Americans' invasion of Afghanistan, renown Jihadists, like Abu Walid al Misri, member Al Qaeda's Shura Council did not hesitate to blame Bin Laden's obsession for appearing on the news for the "disaster" that losing Afghanistan meant for Islamism:

"At that time, Bin Laden was obsessed with the media, the international media in particular. Mullah Omer could not restrain Bin Laden's words (…) However, Bin Laden was prepared to sacrifice Afghanistan and Mullah Omer, in exchange for making his statements."[28]

Al Jazeera: The turning point

Al Qaeda's negative perception of the mass media has been largely conditioned by the Western media's leadership in the world and by the airtight political control of the press in the Arabic-Muslim world. In both cases, Al Qaeda detects an deliberate interest in silencing the mujahideen or distorting their image. It does not aspire toward its message receiving any type of understanding, given that this would imply questioning the legitimacy of political regimes that are "protected" by the media's actions. The terrorist group is reconsidering, however, their Manichaean view of the mass media with the emergence of an outlet that is radically transforming the audiovisual panorama in the Islamic world: the satellite television station Al Jazeera.

Many individuals have written about the controversial relationship between the terrorist organization and this TV station. In fact, Bin Laden's organization has been particularly partial to this Arabic channel, using it to gain publicity for his most important post-9/11 manifestos. This station has also enjoyed some exclusive privileges as far as the sending of propagandistic material and conducting interviews. Along these lines, for example, this station was the only one that was able to interview Bin Laden after the attacks in Washington D.C. and New York. The interviewer was journalist Tayseer Alouny who was arrested and prosecuted in Spain for his membership in Al Qaeda.

Several data like the fact the Bin Laden himself confessed to being a "regular viewer"[29] of the TV channel or that a dozen members of Al Jazeera have been arrested with charges of collaboration with terrorism[30] combined with the directors' refusal to facilitate information on how the network is able to make contact with Al Qaeda and their ability to constantly obtain previously unpublished information leads detractors to denounce the existence of a true ideological meeting of the minds between the Bin Laden network and the Qatari station. In order to address these doubts, it is necessary to thoroughly examine the TV channel's genesis in a wider context.

The monarchy that governs Qatar created Al Jazeera with the goal of multiplying this diminutive emirate's influence and international presence. If we take in account the way that this small kingdom (with a population 863,051 people according to data collected in 2003) has made a place for itself channeling issues that affect hundreds of millions of Muslims, we can classify this initiative as being one of the best investments in history. In fact, Al Jazeera is considered a paradigm of "asymmetric interdependence," given the disproportionate influence and impact that a broadcasting network can have on international affairs and on public opinion with respect to the miniscule quantity of political power that Qatar as a country possesses[31].

Given that the rest of Arabic TV stations, strongly controlled by their governments of origin[32], are known for their lack of credibility, Al Jazeera has become the preferred network for the majority of Muslims, regardless of the country where they live, their

social situation, their level of religiosity, and their political preferences. Its has a varied staff coming from different countries helping to place the foundations for a Pan-Arabic identity; this is reflected in its wide editorial coverage. All of this is enhanced by attractive visual surroundings and narrative techniques "imported" from U.S. news bulletins.

Al Jazeera began its consolidation covering the so-called "Second Palestinian Intifada" in 2000. Its ample and graphic manner of filming the confrontations, sparked a wide series of pro-Palestinian demonstrations throughout the Middle East. When the network broadcasted Arabic citizens' opinions calling for their leaders to do more for the Palestinians, governments of the region quickly reacted accusing the broadcaster of inciting violence. Several Arabic governments, including Egypt and Jordan, declared that Al Jazeera's coverage of the insurrection threatened their regimes' stability and exposed them to their own people's criticism. In fact, Egypt and Jordan have been more critical of Al Jazeera then even Israel.

The continual criticism that the network has received since its inception from political regimens in the Islamic world has been one the key reasons behind its popularity and acceptance. Tight government control of the domestic media has praised Al Jazeera's role as a pillar of free expression in the region. For the first time, Muslim audiences can feel identified with a channel that not only broadcasts in their religion's language but also does this without fearing those in power. Al Jazeera, however, has not only been the first broadcaster that openly criticizes powerful individuals, it has also been completely revolutionary in the way it treats certain issues that are of interest to the Arabic world. Despite the fact that its editorial line is clearly pro-Palestinian, the broadcaster has no qualms about feeding the controversy by including in its stories "the other side's point of view." The Qatari station does not only interview Israeli officials, it also discusses certain unquestionable ideas in the Islamic world.

Al Jazeera reached maturity starting with the coverage of the September 11 attacks. According to one member of the network, it is estimated that subscriptions via satellite increased 300% during the month that followed 9/11[33]. The human tragedy of these terrorist attacks unleashed a wave of solidarity toward the United Stated in the international media. This includes some traditionally anti-American Arabic channels that decided to take a break before recommencing an editorial line fomenting hate toward the United States and Israel. In these moments, it was possible to find disaccord in Al Jazeera, which allowed them to increase their audience's loyalty. The Qatari network's programs not only sheltered the most outlandish theories pointing toward an American and Jewish conspiracy whose objective was to blame the Arabs, they also had no qualms about being spokespeople for Bin Laden and his organization's messages.

This was not the first time that Al Qaeda used Al Jazeera's signals to transmit its messages. The network had previously interviewed Bin Laden who had been the object of wide news coverage for years making the Saudi Arabian relatively well known to Al Jazeera's habitual viewers; the opposite was true in the Western world, where Bin Laden was largely unknown. Broadcasting this organization's post-9/11 videos and manifestos was a risky gamble for the network, given that this treatment meant making the U.S.A. and Bin Laden moral equivalents. The channel did not only take charge of extending and amplifying these messages, it also left room in its broadcasts for individuals that did not

hesitate to zealously defend Al Qaeda and the need for a jihad against the West. This support was positively valued and met with gratitude by the terrorist organization that responded by rewarding the network with some of these years' most important exclusives.

Al Qaeda found the network to be an important and efficient spokesperson, a broadcaster that continuously validated its message due to the way it covered given news stories. The organization's discourse emphasized the opinion that the American invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq were genocidal and viscerally anti-Muslim in character this being the very type of news that a viewer could find on this TV station. Al Jazeera does not hesitate to highlight the most human and emotional side of the Muslim victims of these conflicts, presenting the insurgent and terrorist groups that attack Western troops as legitimate resistance to unjustified aggressions.

The beneficial perspective for the jihadist discourse allowed Al Jazeera to be the only network present in the Taliban territory during the U.S. invasion. The network played an important role in delegitimizing the American response to the 9/11 attacks. The impact that their chronicles on the civilian victims of the conflict had on the world's public opinion combined with the supposedly deliberate nature of these casualties increased the American administration's anger who did not hesitate to "mistakenly" bomb Al Jazeera headquarters in Kabul[34].

This belligerent way handling of information has also taken place during the U.S. intervention and occupation of Iraq. Its qualifying of Iraqi terrorists and insurgents as "resistance" has led the new Iraqi government (strongly hit by these groups' actions) to temporarily suspend the network's activities in the country and not grant permission for its reporters to cover certain events. The new Iraqi government's complaints are some of more than 450 formal complaints that the countries of regions have filed to Qatari diplomats[35]. In fact, countries like Saudi Arabia and Algeria do not hesitate to classify the news broadcaster as responsible for the spreading of terrorism in the region.

Al Jazeera's height and influence have changed the Jihadist movement's perception of the role that traditional media can play in terrorist strategies. After 9/11, Al Qaeda was able to see how its ideological message met with a certain amount of comprehension in the mass media. This circumstance led the group to qualify its previous hostility toward these entities. Along these lines, Bin Laden himself made reference to this "turning point":

"Apart from that, there is the group of the media people and writers who have remarkable impact and a big role in directing the battle, and breaking the enemy's morale, and heightening the Ummah's morale (…) The time has come to have the media take its rightful place, to carry out its required role in confronting this aggressive campaign and the open declared Crusader war by all means that can be seen, heard, and read. It is upon the media people, whether writers, journalists, analysts or correspondents, to exercise responsibility in reporting events, and to carry out their required role by showing the Ummah the reality of the events, and to announce the real intentions of the enemy, to reveal his plans and his tricks."[36]

Numerous individuals have tried to denounce the fact that Al Jazeera's connivances with jihadist terrorism go beyond mutual sympathies or certain ideological principles shared by the two groups. Those that hold this point of view believe in the existence of an explicit agreement on the broadcasting of propagandistic material. They base their theory on information published in 2003 by Al Quds Al Arabi, an Arabic language newspaper, that reproduced an interview done on a jihadist on-line forum of "Abi Osama," the alleged head of Al Qaeda's media division. In this interview, the director of the Sahab Institute for Media Production openly recognizes the existence of this link, even stating that "the station is obligated to broadcast any videotape we send to it".[37] Aside from the amount of credibility that we can give to this information, the fact is that this network's attitude is determined by more obvious and easily perceivable factors:

The first of these is of economic nature. Al Jazeera's attitude, like other networks, adjusts to a series of calculations on profitability analysis. One of the principal criticisms made about the broadcaster is the near nonexistence of criticisms of the Qatari government, the chief economic supporter of company. Differing from the way it treats other regimens in the area, it is much more careful when questioning the lack of freedom in its home country and the efficiency of the governing class. Despite its reputation for independence and honesty, this satellite TV station is subject to the same restrictions as any other government channel. The subservient relationship that it has with its owners (some of the most loyal allies to the U.S. in the region) may seem contradictory with respect to its attitude towards Al Qaeda, but it does help us to understand how economic factors can influence in the way a news broadcaster treats a story. In fact, given the available information, it can be affirmed that everything related to Al Qaeda has been wonderful in a business sense for the news channel. The exclusive material on the bombings of Afghanistan was sold by Al Jazeera for a succulent quantity of money: they sold footage on Bin Laden for 20,000 dollars a minute and even a three minute long video with a 1998 interview of him for 250,000 dollars[38].

The terrorist organization has become an highly valuable accumulator of resources in a setting in which the majority of Middle Eastern governments have stopped advertising the broadcaster in retaliation for the continual criticisms that they have received. Ibrahim Helal, editor in chief of the channel, recognized this fact in an interview for the BBC:

"It is necessary to admit that to have these tapes in our power is a novelty that cannot be rejected from an informative and commercial point of view. I do not believe that any television it had thought two times. On having showed these tapes, we generate a major number of television viewers and sell better"[39]

Beyond the economic motivations, the members are clearly convinced of what the editorial line of the news network should be. In this broadcaster's staff, it is possible to find a heterogeneous cast of professionals from very diverse backgrounds and political and religious orientations: members of the Muslim Brotherhood, westernized journalists, leftist intellectuals, etc. Regardless of these traits, all of them share a strong rejection toward the United States' traditional role in the region; and this is where Al Qaeda finds its place among them. Although it is true that jihadist plans for the world are completely different from what many members of Al Jazeera wish for (some of whom sincerely hope for the democratization and opening of these societies,) both visions require as a previous

step the restriction of the West's role in the Islamic world's affairs. This relates to applying Ronfeld and Arquilla's theory on the "netwars"[40] where participants who "network" receive the benefits of other groups' work, even when they have opposing objectives. In their treatment of information, Al Jazeera uses the same editorial process as other Western media; however, the final product is completely different. During the Iraqi war, they had a clearly sympathetic tone toward insurgent Iraqis and a clearly hostile one toward Americans. The same thing happened with the Taliban and with the cutting irony used when reporting on Muslim governments that are self-declared allies of the U.S. in the War on Terror. Al Jazeera shows an obsessive willingness to always give "both sides" of the same situation, and this has had contradictory and troublesome effects. On one hand, it is has provided Al Qaeda with the same legitimacy and attention that is given to legitimate participants in a war, but on the other hand, it has also broadcast messages completely unknown in the Arabic-Muslim world's audiovisual repertoire. For example, before this network's existed, it was normal for a resident of Muslim country to never have heard an Israeli spokesperson explain his version of the conflict[41]. It should be recognized, however, that the process involved between receiving and broadcasting terrorist videos and other materials is still not automatic. At times, the network has chosen to only broadcast a certain part of materials received o simply state that it has received materials without putting them on the air.

In short, Al Qaeda's choosing of Al Jazeera is logical if we take into account the clear interest that the terrorist organization has for diffusing its message to the Muslim world. Bin Laden found in Al Qaeda not only a powerful mechanism of transmission, but also an inclination toward his message and an editorial backing difficult to perceive in other wide reaching mass media. A member of Al Qaeda recognized that its choice of network was strongly related to its clear and irrefutable history of support of the mujahideen:

"Sheikh Osama knows that the media war is not less important than the military war against America. That's why al Qaeda has many media wars. The Sheikh has made al Qaeda's strategy something that all TV stations look for. There are certain criteria for the stations to be able to air our videos, foremost of which is that it has no taken a previous stand against the mujahideen. The maybe explains why prefer Al Jazeera to the rest."[42]

The Internet and approaching the media indirectly

Despite the United States and its allies' massive mobilization of resources in the "War on Terrorism" Al Qaeda has been able to continue supplying the mass media with new propaganda. Each new consignment has meant a new symbolic triumph for the terrorist organization, given that each new communiqué demonstrated their capacity to evade their powerful enemies' siege. The way in which Bin Laden's organization has been capable of maintaining this line of communication was a mystery before some of the most noteworthy members' capture. This was especially true in Abu Faraj al Libbi's case who was arrested in Pakistan in May 2005.[43] His interrogation revealed how Al Qaeda utilized a complicated network of messengers who distributed principal communiqués (with Ayman Al Zawahiri or Bin Laden himself as their protagonists.) These couriers took anywhere from six to twelve weeks to travel less than 70 miles of intricate routes between the Afghan-Pakistani border and Al Jazeera's office in Islamabad. The messengers (many of whom are recruited among the preachers who travel through this zone by foot,) for

security reasons, only travel a small part of the route, being unaware of the origin, the final recipient, and the content of the material that they transported. On occasions, the last stage, instead of involving bringing the message to the TV network, involves an intermediary sending the file by Internet.

This complicated network of links has been challenging for intelligence services that have been left to powerlessly contemplate how Al Qaeda has continued maintaining its propagandistic capacities intact. In this situation, Al Qaeda has been able to appear to the world as durable and resistant, despite the losing its sanctuary in Afghanistan and the death and imprisonment of many members. Pakistani authorities did, however, manage to intercept the sending of these messages in at least two occasions in 2003 and 2004[44]. This allowed U.S. intelligence services to develop a better understanding of the network that allowed Al Qaeda to keep its propagandistic system active. In fact, the American air attack of Damadola, a Pakistani town, in January 2006 (that resulted in the deaths of important members of the organization and almost reached Ayman Al Zawahiri) has been attributed to U.S. intelligence's capability to infiltrate this web propaganda distribution.[45]

Al Qaeda understands that the type of relationship that it has with the mass media in recent years highly threatens the organization's and its members' security. Its desire to eliminate these vulnerabilities has lead the terrorist organization put new technology to even more use. This way, Bin Laden's organization has opted to disseminate its most recent news developments on the Internet.

This new strategy does not mean that they disregard the chance to have top roles on the mass media's agenda; it means that they work toward an indirect approximation strategy. In other words, the group continues taking into consideration that a large part of its strategy's success depends on its capacity to reach the mass media; however, it looks to make this contact in a safer and more effective manner. Al Qaeda has learned from the propagandistic experience of other terrorist groups that surround it. Many of them (for example, the group founded by Abu Musab Al Zarqawi o the Saudi faction of Al Qaeda) almost never establish direct contact with the mass media, concentrating their communicative activities in cyberspace. These methods have prevented them from receiving wide media attention. Paradoxically, the mass media themselves use the web to look for footage and messages that act to further illustrate their news stories. The very existence of these elements on the Internet is a story in and of itself., without the need for other intermediaries. In this way, the news is compelled to reflect and present those events that anonymously have the capability to gain noteworthy repercussions on international public opinion.

Al Qaeda has no problems in adapting to the demands of this new media and has incorporated a series of innovations that tend to obtain the maximum repercussion for its messages. Thus, Al Qaeda's most recent communiqués have been preceded by a series of publicity banners that it puts on jihadist forums advertising the imminent diffusion of these materials. Using this practice, the group manages not only to create expectation among its followers, but also to alert the media so that they eco the new message from the very instant in which this new material is placed on the web. At times, TV stations compete with each other to be first to broadcast the most recent developments.

For Al Qaeda, the Internet is not only method to reach the media in a safer and more immediate way, it also is a turning point in their communication strategy given that the web devalues the importance of traditional media. For the first time in history, cyberspace allows for there to be direct communication between a terrorist and his "public." Terrorists control their messages well, always saying exactly what they want to say and when they want to say it.

In the past, directly sending materials to the mass media was quite problematic for a terrorist group. Firstly, there were chances that the message would be ignored, slanted or even manipulated. Terrorists especially needed to take into account in their calculations what the media was willing to tolerate and what it was not. Thus, for example, the chance to distribute a long and dense ideological discourse was discarded when we take into account that TV stations are characterized by time limitations that affect the contents of the news and encourage them to search for visual effects. Diffuse a message like this was difficult, including for a legitimate political leader. Secondly, and as we have already indicated, the perpetual sending of materials presented security problems, due to the possibilities that counter-terrorist agencies could follow the path of these messages from the sender to the media. This forced terrorist groups not make frequent contact with this method of diffusion. Furthermore, the repeated sending of material to a determined media could cause public opinion to unavoidably associate a terrorist group with the media that attended to these initiatives. The fact that the media themselves selected the materials that were clearly newsworthy avoided their being prejudiced by the violence that terrorism communicated.

The Internet does only permit the avoidance of the aforementioned limitations, it also has made it possible for the mass media to ignore a series of moral restrictions that highly benefit terrorism strategies. In the past, television was the only means by which terrorist violence could be published on a grand scale. This meant that those who were responsible for this media were the only ones who could decide if the public at large should see material of this nature. But since this type propaganda has been available on the Internet, TV channels feel that they have been released from making this difficult moral decision; they are now not the only ones who are responsible for the viewing public witnessing this cruel and bloody show. The blurring of this responsibility has caused television stations to not be excessively scrupulous when showing macabre or dramatic footage; they have become terrorism's involuntary accomplices.

Conclusions

Al Qaeda's relationship with the media has passed through different phases. Its different perceptions and the way in which this terrorist group has attempted to utilize the mass media are really the results of estimated media impact and have much less to do with ideological or religious interpretations.

Thus, in the initial phases, starting with its appearance in the late 1980s in Afghanistan up until the late 1990s, perception of the group has been shaped Western media (especially the United States',) given its dominance in the world media scene. Al Qaeda shares its hostility toward the media with other terrorist groups holding them responsible for hiding or distorting its message. But, it is also conscious of the importance that these

channels have for reaching a wide audience and, with these methods, achieving its ultimate goal: worldwide Islamic revolt. Terrorism sees mass media, especially TV, as having a series of characteristics that make them especially vulnerable to terrorism's attempts to monopolize the "public sphere."

The second phase is related to the Arabic television network Al Jazeera starting with its appearance in 1996. This is time when Muslim controlled press starts to gain prominence. Al Qaeda detects new opportunities, characterized by greater repercussions for its message and the existence of certain channels willing to interpret reality from a more jihadist ideology friendly perspective. The terrorist group starts a relationship not free of certain complicity with Al Jazeera, a network that also has an enormous influence in the Muslim world; this network becomes a principal objective in Al Qaeda's communication strategy.

The current phase corresponds to the Internet becoming generalized as part the mass media. Certain jihadist groups exploit it following the invasion of Iraq in 2003. The Internet not only allows them to avoid certain operational risks, it also allows them to gain access to traditional media. Thus, the old "terrorist dream" of being able to establish direct contact between the group and a potentially unlimited public comes true.

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[1] Interview of Marshall Macluhan with the Italian newspaper *Il Tempo*, February 19, 1978.

[2] See: Nacos, Brigitte L. *Terrorism & the Media*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 16.

[3] See: Nacos, Brigitte L. *Mass-Mediated Terrorism. The Central Role of the Media in Terrorism and Counterterrorism*. (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2002), 12.

[4] This example applies to Timothy McVeigh who perpetrated the attacks of a governmental building in Oklahoma City (U.S.A.) in 1995. Following his arrest, he made a statement declaring that he had chosen the federal building *Murrah* for his attack because "it was full of open spaces making it easy to take pictures and focus TV cameras." He was so focused on obtaining publicity that when he learned that a group of children were among the victims he felt guilty that "the death of innocent children could cloud the political message of the bomb."(Nacos 2002, 12-3)

[5] An example of this tendency applied to the terrorist phenomenon can be found in the fear caused by the sending of letters with anthrax spores, immediately following 9/11. For several weeks, the anonymous sending of contaminated letters became the principal source of news, despite the small number of victims, the practical absence of new evidence, and the lack of arrests. See: Farmanfarmaian, Roxane. "The Media an the War on Terrorism: Where Does the Truth Lie?", *Cambridge Review of International Affaires* 15 (1) (April 2002), pp. 159-163.

[6] See: Ignatieff, Michael. *Warrior's Honour: Ethnic War and the Modern Conscience*. (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1998).

[7] See: Slone, Michelle. "Responses to Media Coverage of Terrorism", *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 44 (4) (August 2000), pp. 508-522.

[8] See: Ganor, Boaz. *The Counter-Terrorism Puzzle. A Guide for Decision Makers*, (New Brunswick (USA): Transaction Publishers, 2005), 239.

[9] See: Laqueur, Walter. *A History of Terrorism* . (New Brunswick, N.J: Transaction, 2001)

[10] See: Sartori, Giovanni. *Homo videns. Televisione e post-pensiero*. (Roma: Laterza, 2007)

[11] See: Laqueur, Walter. No End to War: Terrorism in the Twenty-First Century. (New York: Continuum, 2003)

[12] See: Peleg, Samuel. *"One's Terrorist Is Another's Blockbuster: Political Terrorism in American Versus European Films"*, *The New England Journal of Political Science* 1 (1) (Summer 2003), pp. 81-108.

[13] See: Norris, Pippa; Montague, Kern & Just, Marion (Eds). *Framing Terrorism. The News Media, the Government, and the Public*. (New York: Routledge, 2003)

[14] Wieviorka, Michael. *The making of Terrorism*. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2004), 43-5.

[15] "Knights Under the Prophet's Banner" written by Ayman Al Zawahiri in December 2001 and published by *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat* newspaper in an 11 part excerpt series.

[16] A fragment of an article titled "The Nineteen Lions." It appeared for the first time on December 14, 2001, on Al Qaeda's web page Azzam.com.

[17] Osama Bin Laden interview to *Nida'Ul Islam* journal: "The New Powder Keg in The Middle East" October - November 1996. Available at: http://www.fas.org/irp/world/para/docs/LADIN.htm

[18] Osama Bin Laden's Sermon for the "Feast of the Sacrifice" (Id al-Adha), February 2003. Available at: http://memri.org/bin/articles.cgi?Page=archives&Area=sd&ID=SP47603

[19] Saif al-Adel article in Internet: "Message to our People in Iraq and the Gulf Specifically, and to Our Islamic Ummah in General: The Islamic Resistance Against the American Invasion of Qandahar and Lessons Learned". March 2003. Available at:
http://www.globaldefensegroup.com/pdf/alQaeda%27s%20Advice%20for%20Mujahideen%20in%20Iraq.pdf

[20] Zawahiri: "Knights Under the Prophet's Banner"

[21] Interview of Hamid Mir (*Dawn and Ausaf* newspaper) to Osama Bin Laden in November 9, 2001. Available at: http://jihadunspun.com/BinLadensNetwork/interviews/

[22] Sulaiman Abu Ghaith's Video Statement Broadcast on *Al Jazeera* Television on October 13, 2001. http://news.bbc.co.uk/low/english/world/middle_east/newsid_1598000/1598146.stm

[23] Letter from Ayman Al Zawahiri to Abu Musab Al Zarqawi, diffused by the American Army in October 2005. Available at:
http://www.weeklystandard.com/Content/Public/Articles/000/000/006/203gpuul.asp

[24] "Our actions will reveal their lies, in other words, we will expose their vulnerability and false nature. As far as journalists that spy for the United States, whether they be Jews or Americans, they will also be objectives [of our attacks.]" Interview with Al Qaeda member Abu Mohammad al-Ahlaj in the *al-Maidlah* newspaper published on June 22, 2003.

[25] See: Burke, Jason. *Al-Qaeda: Casting a Shadow of Terror.* (New York: I. B. Tauris, 2003).

[26] E-mail sent by Mustafa Setmarian (Abu Musab Al Suri) to Osama Bin Laden on July 19, 1999. See: Cullison, Alan. "Inside Al-Qaeda's Hard Drive", *The Atlantic Monthly*, September 2004.

[27] See: Bergen, Peter L. *The Osama bin Laden I Know. An Oral History of al Qaeda´s Leader.* (Free Press, New York, 2006).

[28] Book by Abu al- Walid al Misri: "The Story of the Afghan-Arabs: From the Entry to Afghanistan to the Final Exodus with Taliban", published anonymously by means of a series of submissions to the London Arabic language newspaper, *Asharq Al-Awsat*, (June 29, 2005) (July 1, 2005) (July 9, 2005) (July 10, 2005) (July 22, 2005) (July 27, 2005.)

[29] A distinguished member of Al Qaeda, even confessed to *Al Jazeera* journalist Yosri Fouda that Bin Laden was a "regular viewer" of the TV network. In fact, some of his collaborators were in charge of making a video recording of this program given that Bin Laden was unable to see it when it was broadcasted. See: Fouda, Yosri and Fielding, Nick. *Masterminds of Terror: the Truth behind the Most Devastating Terrorist Attack the World Has ever Seen.* (Edinburgh: Mainstream, 2003).

[30] Some examples of this are the arrest of the correspondent Dib Abu Zayed who was accused by an Israeli court of collaborating with the *Al Fatah* terrorist organization providing them with weapons and money. In Iraq, the Iraqi newspaper, *Al-Sabah*, on November 9, 2003, revealed how *Al Jazeera* correspondent Sattar Karim admitted that the station's offices in Bagdad had been used to organize attacks against coalition troops. In 2003, American troops also arrested cameramen Salah Hasan and Samir Hamza while they filmed the terrorist attack about which they had been previously informed at an Iraqi police station. These were the same circumstances under which correspondent Anwar Bahjat was arrested. See: Stalinsky, Steven. "Mixed Signals. Iraq turns off al Jazeera", *National Review Online*, August 11, 2004.

[31] See: El-Kanawy, Mohamed and Iskandar, Adel. *Al-Jazeera. How the Free Arab News Network Scooped the World and Changed the Middle East.* (New York: Westview Press, 2002), 32.

[32] Along these lines, during the Arab-Israeli conflict in 1967, the Egyptian radio station, *Sawt al.-Arab* proclaimed that Arabic armies crossed Israel's borders while Israeli planes "dropped like flies." The rest of the stations kept repeating the same message until Muslim public opinion was able to see with its own eyes the magnitude of the Arabic defeat days afterwards. A similar occurrence took place during the

invasion of Kuwait when Saudi media delayed relating the story up to two days. See: Miles, Hugh. *Al-Jazeera. How Arab TV News Challenged the World.* (London: Abacus, 2005).

[33] Miles 2005, 33.

[34] See: Suskind, Ron. *The One Pecent Doctrine. Deep Inside America's Pursuit of its Enemies Since 9/11.* (New York: Simon & Shuster, 2006), pp. 137-8.

[35] See: Bradley, John R. "Will Al-Jazeera bend?", *Prospect*, March 25, 2004.

[36] Osama bin Laden Statement: "*To the Islamic Ummah on the First Anniversary of the New American Crusader War,*" October 12, 2002. Available at:
http://www.jihadunspun.com/articles/10152002To.The.Islamic.Ummah/faotnacw01.html

[37] Abi Osama's" interview on the *Al Anbaa,* reproduced by the *Al-Quds Al-Arabi* newspaper on December 9, 2003. Available at: http://memri.org/bin/articles.cgi?Page=archives&Area=sa&ID=SA1303

[38] Miles 2005, 136-7

[39] See: BBC WORLD SERVICE. "Al-Jazeera: ¿una "isla" de verdad?", *BBC Mundo*, November 5, 2001. Available at:: http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/spanish/misc/newsid_1639000/1639337.stm

[40] See: John Arquilla and David Ronfeldt, "The Advent of Netwar (Revisited)," in Arquilla, John and Ronfeldt, David (eds.). *Networks and Netwars: The Future of Terror, Crime, and Militancy* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2001), 1–25.

[41] See: Miles, Hugh. "Think Again: Al Jazeera", *Foreign Policy*, July/August 2006. Available at http://www.foreignpolicy.com/story/cms.php?story_id=3497

[42] See: Greenberg, Karen J. (ed.). *Al Qaeda Now.* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 117.

[43] See: Debat, Alexis. "How does al Qaeda send Terror Tapes Without getting caught?", *ABC News* Analysis, January 20, 2006. http://abcnews.go.com/International/Terrorism/story?id=1527351

[44] See: Abdul Nasir, Sohail. "Al-Qaeda's Clandestine Courier Service", *Terrorism Focus* (3) 7 (February 21, 2006). http://jamestown.org/terrorism/news/article.php?articleid=2369903

[45] See: Stratfor.com. "Al-Zawahiri and the Trail of Tapes", *Stratfor Terrorism Brief*, 01.16.2006. http://www.stratfor.com/products/premium/read_article.php?id=260872

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