



Terrorism Monitor

In-Depth Analysis of the War on Terror

VOLUME VIII, ISSUE 11 ♦ MARCH 19, 2010

IN THIS ISSUE:

BRIEFS.....	1
SECURITY IMPLICATIONS OF SHI'A POLITICS IN POST-ELECTION IRAQ By Babak Rahimi.....	3
AL-SHABAAB PROSCRIBED IN CANADA AND THE UNITED KINGDOM By Raffaello Pantucci.....	4
AL-QAEDA ON PAKISTAN: DR. AYMAN AL-ZAWAHIRI'S "MORNING AND THE LAMP" By Michael W. S. Ryan.....	6



Member of Al-Shabaab

Terrorism Monitor is a publication of The Jamestown Foundation. The Terrorism Monitor is designed to be read by policy-makers and other specialists yet be accessible to the general public. The opinions expressed within are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of The Jamestown Foundation.

Unauthorized reproduction or redistribution of this or any Jamestown publication is strictly prohibited by law.



For comments or questions about our publications, please send an email to pubs@jamestown.org, or contact us at:

1111 16th St. NW, Suite #320
Washington, DC • 20036
Tel: (202) 483-8888
Fax: (202) 483-8337

Copyright ©2009

BRIGADIER DESCRIBES AL-QAEDA OPERATIONS IN YEMEN

As head of the Yemeni Army's Moral Guidance Directorate and editor-in-chief of the Ministry of Defense's *26 September Weekly Political Review* (www.26september.info), Brigadier General Ali Hasan al-Shatir is one of the most influential figures in Yemen's security structure. In a recent interview with pan-Arab daily *Asharq al-Awsat*, Brigadier al-Shatir described al-Qaeda infiltration methods and activities in Yemen and the response of the security apparatus (*Asharq al-Awsat*, March 11).

According to the Brigadier, al-Qaeda members regularly cross the border between Saudi Arabia and northern Yemen, where they are assisted by members of the Zaydi Shiite Huthist rebel group. The accusation appears to be an effort to tie the Huthist rebellion to al-Qaeda, a suggestion that has not been supported by evidence in the past. Al-Shatir, however, now claims that this information was obtained in the interrogation of Muhammad al-Awfi, an alleged al-Qaeda operative who surrendered last year (*Marebpress.net*, February 17, 2009):

He revealed that there is cooperation and coordination between the al-Qaeda organization and the Huthists, because both sides know they are united by one goal and that is to undermine the stability and security of Yemen and [carry] out their destructive sabotage plans.

The Brigadier says the cooperation between al-Qaeda and the Huthists has also been confirmed by Tariq al-Fadhli, whom he describes as “one of the main members of the al-Qaeda organization who now leads part of [Southern] Mobility in the south” (*al-Thawra*, July 31, 2009; *Yemen Post*, August 2, 2009; see also *Terrorism Monitor*, November 19, 2009). Al-Fadhli, a son of the former Sultan of Abyan, fought in Afghanistan’s anti-communist jihad in the 1980s but has long been a close ally of Yemeni president Ali Abdullah Saleh and a member of the ruling General People’s Congress party. Their close relationship was recently severed when al-Fadhli joined the Southern Mobility secessionist movement—an act that landed the former jihadi on the government’s list of al-Qaeda activists and led to an assault on his compound by security forces earlier this month (Alfjoweb.com, April 18, 2009; *Yemen Post*, March 2). In early February, al-Fadhli raised the American flag over his compound while blaring the “Star Spangled Banner” from a sound system. A relative told reporters al-Fadhli was indicating his opposition to terrorism and had been approached by the U.S. embassy in his role as a leader of the southern secessionist movement. The latter information remains unconfirmed (Adenpress, February 5). Al-Shatir also accuses al-Fadhli of agitating for the return of British occupation (which ended in 1967) to southern Yemen. “Is it rational for a Yemeni national to ask for the occupation to return to his country?”

The size of al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) has been greatly exaggerated by the European and American media, according to Brigadier al-Shatir, who believes this is part of a deliberate effort to prepare “international public opinion that Yemen will be the third front after Afghanistan and Iraq in the war against al-Qaeda.” When pressed for an estimate of the actual size of AQAP, al-Shatir responded: “They may be in the dozens; there is no exact figure.”

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE SOMALI GOVERNMENT OFFENSIVE?

Despite expectations since early February of an imminent offensive by Somalia’s Transitional Federal Government (TFG) against the Islamist militias that control most of Mogadishu and southern Somalia, such an offensive may still be weeks away, at best. TFG Interior Minister Shaykh Abdulkadir Ali Omar announced the offensive was in its “final stage” of preparation on March 6, but there are few indications on the ground that it is about

to start any time soon (Shabelle Media Network, March 7).

Ministers of the TFG, including Minister of State for Defense Shaykh Yusuf Si’ad Indha Adde, have expressed concerns that the government has only enough money to sustain a few days of fighting, rather than the months it is expected to take to drive the Islamists from Mogadishu and south Somalia (AllPuntland.com, February 8). Appeals have been made for further financing, but the alleged corruption of the TFG has dissuaded foreign donors from making further commitments.

While newly trained TFG fighters have begun to return to Mogadishu from Djibouti, their deployment has run into problems. When they arrived on the frontlines to replace poorly armed and trained clan militias, the militias refused to withdraw without financial “compensation.” Plans to train the militias to a professional level have thus fallen through and there is no confidence in the TFG military staff that the militias can be counted on to follow orders. Meanwhile the newly trained troops of the TFG have returned to barracks (Jowhar, February 8).

Continuing defections of TFG troops (including those newly trained) to the Islamist militias pose another problem. Though this is a two-way street, with Islamist fighters frequently defecting to the TFG, it is yet another indication of instability and unreliability within the TFG forces (Shabelle Media Networks, February 9; Dayniile February 8). TFG Minister of Information Dahir Mahmud Gelle recently remarked that the TFG lags far behind the Islamist groups opposing it in terms of military skills and intelligence capability (AllPuntland, March 1).

Leadership is also in question, with TFG president Shaykh Sharif Shaykh Ahmad rarely emerging from his quarters at the Villa Somalia presidential palace. Most of the TFG parliament remains in Kenya, awaiting a successful outcome to the fighting before returning to Mogadishu.

Possibly sensing that there is little chance for a successful offensive at this time (and every chance of a disastrous outcome that could bring the downfall of the TFG), the government negotiated an agreement on March 15 with the Sufi-dominated Ahlu Sunna wa’l-Jama’a (ASJ) militia to unite militarily with TFG forces, though the agreement will not come into effect for another month (Mareeg, March 15).

The offensive is expected to include the participation of the armor, artillery and troops of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), a 5,300-man contingent drawn from Uganda, Burundi and Djibouti. With troops trained by French, Belgian and American instructors, AMISOM is far stronger than the combined forces of the TFG and would play an essential role in the success of any government offensive. Though AMISOM was initially conceived as a peacekeeping force, it has gradually abandoned this mandate to play an active role in the preservation of the beleaguered TFG.

A *New York Times* report based on anonymous sources claimed the United States was prepared to assist the expected offensive with Special Forces teams and aerial strikes (*New York Times*, March 5). U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Johnnie Carson refuted the report in a March 12 statement:

The United States does not plan, does not direct, and does not coordinate the military operations of the TFG, and we have not and will not be providing direct support for any potential military offensives. Further, we are not providing nor paying for military advisors for the TFG. There is no desire to Americanize the conflict in Somalia (U.S. AFRICOM Public Affairs, March 13).

Nonetheless, the *New York Times* report is now being used in the Middle East and Africa as “proof” the offensive is being planned and directed by the United States, much like the disastrous “anti-terrorist” offensive carried out by U.S.-supported Somali warlords in 2006 (see *Terrorism Focus*, May 31, 2006). The United States has acknowledged it is training AMISOM troops and providing logistical support to African nations providing military training to TFG recruits. AFRICOM commander General William Ward recently told the U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee that TFG plans to retake southern Somalia are a “work in progress” (U.S. AFRICOM Public Affairs, March 9).

Security Implications of Shi’a Politics in Post-Election Iraq

By Babak Rahimi

Although the final count will not be available until the end of March, the preliminary results from Iraq’s parliamentary election show a

strong victory for the State of Law list (SLA), led by the current Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki and the Iraqiyya Coalition, led by Iyad Allawi (*Tabnak*, March 8; al-Jazeera, March 14; IRNA, March 14; al-Sumaria TV, March 14). Unlike the 2005 elections, the latest results appear to indicate a seismic shift away from sectarianism and a decline of the Shi’a Iraqi National Alliance (INA), a situation most favorable to the United States (Fars News, March 7). With Kurds losing to Allawi in Kirkuk and the INA’s apparent defeat in many southern provinces, Iraq appears to have overcome its ethnic and sectarian party politics (al-Jazeera, March 15).

In reality Iraqi politics still retain their sectarian composition, with Shi’a-dominated parties playing a major role in creating several security problems in the country. Although it describes itself as non-sectarian, the SLA coalition remains for the most part a Shi’a political alliance. This sectarianism is reflected mainly in al-Maliki’s support for anti-Sunni policies, including the disqualification of a number of Sunni politicians like Salah al-Mutlak through the de-Ba’athification program led by Ahmad Chalabi, who has close ties with Iran (*Voice of Iraq*, January 8; *Asharq al-Awsat*, January 10). In many ways, al-Maliki’s popularity has been sustained by his efforts to bring security to the country, but signs of increasing sectarianism in his political coalition and close ties with factions of the INA led by Amar Hakim’s pro-Iranian Islamic Supreme Council in Iraq (ISCI) could inspire a new wave of sectarian politics in the post-election period.

Moreover, allegations of fraud by Maliki’s rival factions not only reflect deep tension within the Shi’a faction, but also signal a brewing problem over post-election governance and stability. The INA, led by Hakim, appears to support the charge that Allawi’s promotion by pro-Saudi news media (including al-Arabiya) and the apparent production of seven million surplus ballots reeks of pre-planned fraudulent activity (IRNA, January 11; al-Alam TV, March 5; Fars News; March 7; *Kayhan*, March 8). If such allegations resonate between the major factions (especially the Shi’a factions) during the first weeks of government formation, a major crisis of legitimacy could ensue, jeopardizing the political process as a result. Charges of fraud could also create an atmosphere of distrust, further dividing Iraq’s ethnic and sectarian communities.

In terms of governance, Baghdad remains notorious for its factional and personal politics and any process of government formation will be a messy one (*Vatan*

Emrooz, March 9). A possible SLA and INA government coalition may seem natural to Tehran, which seeks to increase sectarian politics in its neighbor, but it could result in a weak government with growing factional conflicts over issues such as state centralization and inter-sectarian relations (especially between Sunni and Shi'a political elites). Since tensions between al-Maliki and the Dawa-Sadrists remain high, a SLA-INA coalition could lead to ineffective governance in the critical first year of the newly-formed government, when security should be of the utmost concern for the central state (IRNA, January 27).

If an INA and SLA alliance develops, Allawi's marginalization from politics could encourage the Saudis to increase their support for the Sunnis (as they did between 2005 and 2007), a move that could result in Iran spreading its influence in Baghdad to curtail Saudi influence. So far, Tehran has hailed al-Maliki's electoral gains as a "Shi'a victory" (*Kayhan*, March 10). However, Tehran is also aware that it has lost much of its influence with the rise of al-Maliki after the Basra offensive in March 2008 and the Iranian occupation of the Fakkah oil field. Despite the efforts of Iran's Speaker of the Parliament, Ali Larijani, to rally the Shi'a in a united political front during his last trip to Iraq, Shi'a factions remain divided over many issues, including the extent to which Iran should play any role in Iraq's internal politics. [1]

Finally, there is the issue of American troop withdrawal, scheduled for the end of 2011. If security in Iraq deteriorates, U.S. troops have the option to extend their stay (*Fars News*, March 7). With the strong possibility of a continuous U.S. presence in Iraq beyond 2011, key anti-occupation factions like the Shi'a Sadrists, the Sunni Ba'athists or the Sunni Islamists could reemerge to challenge the political establishment for legitimacy and power. If pre-election violence in Baghdad, Fallujah, Najaf and Mosul is any indicator, Iraq will continue to undergo increasing violence in the next few months, when the coalition formation government remains at its weakest (*Press TV*, March 5; *al-Jazeera*, March 6; *IRNA*, March 7). In the post-election period, Baghdad must quickly engage in the formation of a government that is inclusive and strong to ensure stability for Iraq's fledgling democracy.

Babak Rahimi is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Literature, Program for the Study of Religion, University of California, San Diego.

Notes:

1. Interview with an Iranian Iraq expert, Tehran, Iran, March 6, 2010 (name withheld by request).

Al-Shabaab Proscribed in Canada and the United Kingdom

By Raffaello Pantucci

In the first week of March, the British and Canadian governments both added the Somali al-Shabaab group to their respective list of proscribed terror groups. [1] The decisions mean that it will now be illegal to fundraise or support al-Shabaab in both nations, while Canadian Minister of Public Safety Vic Toews specified, "The Government is taking this step to help protect Canadian families from the activities of this organization. The Government received reports from the Somali community that al-Shabaab has attempted to radicalize and recruit young Canadians. The listing of al-Shabaab will help the Government of Canada to better support the Somali community of Canada." [2]

The respective decisions follow previous proscriptions in Australia, Norway, Sweden and the United States. They reflect a growing trepidation amongst Western governments regarding the growing threat from the Somali group – in particular their ability to attract young men with local passports to their cause and the movement's growing regional assertiveness. Furthermore, reports indicate that the group appears to be increasingly attracting fighters from the Somali diaspora and other sources in the West (*Independent on Sunday*, September 13, 2009; see *Terrorism Monitor*, January 14).

For Canada and the United Kingdom in particular, the decision to proscribe follows a series of stories indicating that steady streams of young men are going abroad to fight in East Africa. In autumn 2009, a group of six young Somalis disappeared from their local community in Toronto, with reports suggesting they had ended up fighting in Somalia (*National Post*, December 12, 2009). A report from earlier in the year in the U.K. indicated

that most recently “almost a dozen” British Muslims had left the U.K. to join the Shabaab in Somalia, including some students from the prestigious London School of Economics and King’s College London (*Sunday Times*, January 24).

Furthermore, plots have emerged from the Somali diaspora community in both nations; at least two of the attempted bombers and a substantial number of the support network involved in the July 21, 2005 plot to attack London’s public transport system were of Somali extraction. In Canada, two Somalis were among the 18 suspects arrested for planning a series of bombings and assassinations in Toronto and Ottawa (*National Post* [Toronto], June 5, 2006; September 21, 2009; see also *Terrorism Focus*, June 6, 2006). [3] However, in neither case was the al-Shabaab group implicated in any way, nor was Somalia a feature on the broad canvas offered by each plot. Rather, individuals from the diaspora were drawn into plots fostered by local networks to prepare for large-scale domestic attacks.

More recently, however, there has been a greater law-enforcement focus on Shabaab. Aside from the Toronto cells, the RCMP and FBI ramped up their efforts after an informant told overseas U.S. embassy staff that a group of Somalis had crossed the border from Canada with the intention of launching an attack on President Obama’s inauguration ceremony. The information proved to be a hoax, but it highlighted the reality of security concerns (CanWest News Service, February 4). [4] In the U.K., on the other hand, the government attempted to shut down what it believed was an al-Shabaab fundraising and support network last year, though the case against the two Somali-Britons did not stand up in court (Press Association, July 28, 2009).

Beyond this, there is a clear sense of growing trepidation surrounding Somalia’s al-Shabaab; its decision to formalize the connection to the Ras Kamboni group, the declaration of allegiance to al-Qaeda and its connection to al-Qaeda operative Saleh Ali Saleh Nabhan (killed by a U.S. Special Forces raid in September 2009 while helping train Shabaab fighters), all point to a strengthening network (for Ras Kamboni, see Shabelle Media Network, February 1; Garowe Online, February 2; *Terrorism Monitor*, February 10). Its influence can increasingly be seen abroad; examples include an alleged plot to target Secretary of State Hilary Clinton when she was visiting neighboring Kenya in August 2009, the recruitment of Somali youths in Minneapolis, the attempted assassination of Danish cartoonist Kurt

Westergaard and an alleged plot to attack a military base in Melbourne (see *Terrorism Monitor*, January 14; *Terrorism Monitor*, September 10, 2009).

Reaction from Somalia to the terrorist designations was swift; al-Shabaab spokesman Ahmad Dayib Mursal held a press conference in Mogadishu to announce the group was “saddened” by the British decision (Holy Koran Radio [Mogadishu], March 2). Senior al-Shabaab spokesman Shaykh Ali Mahmud Raage (a.k.a. Shaykh Ali Dheere) condemned the Canadian and British designations, claiming some Western nations were trying to find ways of looting the properties of Somali Muslims living in their countries (Radio Simba [Mogadishu], March 8). More favorable reaction came from the deputy prime minister of Somalia’s Transitional Federal Government, Professor Abdirahman Haji Adan Ibi, who welcomed the British decision (Shabelle Media Network, March 4).

As of yet, no major plots appear to have been hatched in the West drawing specifically on this network and direction from Somalia. However, given previous experiences of threats emerging from radicals with Western passports associated with groups fighting abroad, as well as the rather abrupt shift from the near enemy to the far enemy by the previously regionally-focused al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), al-Shabaab is clearly a threat that needs to be watched with some care. The respective proscriptions give British and Canadian authorities further legislative tools to deal with this threat.

Raffaello Pantucci is a Consulting Research Associate with the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) and an EU Science and Technology Fellowship Programme (China) Research Fellow.

Notes:

1. For the complete British order effective from March 4, 2010, please see: http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2010/uksi_20100611_en_1; and the Canadian announcement, effective March 5: <http://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/media/nr/2010/nr20100307-eng.aspx?rss=false>
2. “The Government of Canada lists Al-Shabaab as a terrorist organization,” Ministry of Public Safety Press Release, March 7, 2010, <http://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/media/nr/2010/nr20100307-eng.aspx?rss=false>
3. Of the “Toronto 18,” seven suspects have pled guilty or been convicted, seven have had their charges stayed and three remain to be tried.

4. The alleged plot was first described in Martha Joynt Kumar, “The 2008-2009 presidential transitions through the voices of its participants,” *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 39(4), December 1, 2009

Al-Qaeda on Pakistan: Dr. Ayman al-Zawahiri’s Morning and the Lamp

By Michael W.S. Ryan

Over the past year, Pakistan has suffered from widespread extremist violence supported by a concerted al-Qaeda political attack on the government’s main institutions. The most extraordinary escalation of this attack was a 130 page *risala* (monograph) written by Ayman al-Zawahiri, entitled *The Morning and the Lamp*, which contains his analysis of Pakistan’s constitution. This document does not merely call for radical reform of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan along the principles traditionally espoused by al-Qaeda and its local allies; it calls for the destruction of the state itself. In making this call, Zawahiri is going beyond the name-calling and the declaration that Pakistan is an apostate government, to providing reasoned legal arguments to support his assertion that apostasy is rooted in the state’s foundational document.

The February arrest of the Afghan Taliban’s top military commander, Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar in Karachi, reports of a number of additional arrests of Taliban leaders in Pakistan and the increasing success of the Pakistani Army against the Pakistani Taliban have all combined to spark speculation about a sea change in Pakistani cooperation with the United States. There are those that argue that U.S. pressure is the primary cause of this potential change, while others argue that the Pakistani establishment has concluded that radical al-Qaeda inspired groups now pose a significant threat to the Pakistani system (*The News* [Islamabad], February 24; February 27). If there really is a sustained change in Pakistan, its motivation would no doubt be a combination of both of these factors at least. However, the timing in early 2010 raises some doubt that U.S. pressure was the key factor since that pressure has been

a constant over the last eight years. Nor is the upswing in extremist violence or the willingness of Pakistan’s security forces to arrest extremists on occasion an entirely new factor. What then is new today that did not play out in the Bush administration?

The answer may be partly found in the intense political attack by al-Qaeda on the legitimacy of the Pakistani state that intensified after the Pakistani Army’s offensive against the Taliban in Swat in May, 2009. Osama Bin Laden issued his “Letter to Our Brothers in Pakistan” (June, 2009) that asserted the Pakistani people have a religious duty to fight their government. Ayman al-Zawahiri also issued several propaganda statements attacking the Pakistani state (particularly the army) and called on the Pakistani people to join the jihad in Pakistan and Afghanistan. Except for their intensity, these statements by al-Qaeda’s leadership did not break entirely new ground. Even before the Swat offensive, Abu Yahya al-Libi had issued his *Cutting Edge of the Spear to Fight the Government and Army of Pakistan* (al-Fajr, April 2009). *The Morning and the Lamp* seems to have been written as early as November 2008, but was not released by As-Sahab Media until December, 2009. [1] Both Zawahiri’s and al-Libi’s essays, like many other al-Qaeda documents, were translated into Urdu to make them available to a much wider Pakistani audience. Whatever the reason for the delay in releasing *The Morning and the Lamp* to the general public on the internet, the timing of its release makes it appear to be a dramatic escalation of al-Qaeda’s political attack. Zawahiri’s monograph provides the philosophical, religious, and legal underpinnings for the campaign of violence against the Pakistani state itself and not just for isolated attacks against its army and security apparatus.

The Content of the Risala

Zawahiri begins his monograph by noting that Pakistani “brothers,” including preachers and those working in Pakistan’s Islamic groups, have always told him that Pakistan was something unique in that it has an Islamic Constitution that actually governs the state and allows citizens to elect representatives freely. According to these brothers, “the problem [in Pakistan] is not with the constitution or the system; instead the problem is with the corrupt ruling class, which assumes power by force or other means and does not abide by the rules of the constitution.” Zawahiri does not condemn those that make the statement. Instead, he claims that these statements stirred up a series of perplexing questions that baffled him. He prefaces his points by asking:

“How is it possible that the [Pakistani] system is based on Islamic foundations:

- Yet results in all this corruption, sabotage, and subordination to the West and the Americans?
- Yet is the system that teaches the confusion which results in the creation of generations with a sentimental attachment to Islam, while in fact, practice, tradition, and general fascination [are sympathetic] to Western culture.
- Yet the Army - the uncrowned king in Pakistan - is subordinate to the Americans?
- Yet Pakistan has become the greatest ally of America in its crusader war against Islam?”

Citing these questions, Zawahiri claims he studied the constitution because he was convinced that those who were praising it actually did not know much about it. He concluded that the answer to his fundamental question is quite simple if painful to some of his audience. “Pakistan is not an Islamic state; it contradicts the Islamic Shari’a in a number of fundamental and significant ways.” All of the arguments that follow are directed to Pakistanis but could just as well be directed to Iraqis, Afghans or to any Muslim community as a fundamental attack on democracy itself.

Zawahiri uses many references to the Quran, rational arguments and rhetoric to convey his message. Towards the end of his introduction, he explains that he chose the title *The Morning and the Lamp* to convey a message to the “sons of English culture” that the “sun of Muhammadan guidance rose 14 centuries ago. Thus your weak lamps are extinguished, [the lamps that] have illumined only your teachers in the West who are living in the darkness of modern barbarism (*jahiliyya*).” Zawahiri thanks Shaykh Atiyatullah and Shaykh Abu Yahya al-Libi for helping him with a draft of the monologue, but does not refer to Bin Laden.

Under the subtitle “Who has authority (*hukm*)?”, Zawahiri defines an argument that depends on Sayyid Qutb’s formulation that sovereignty (*hakimiyya*) belongs to Allah alone. [2] It is a clever argument, which at one stroke denies the validity of the majority of the legal edifice built up over the centuries within Islamic jurisprudence. It is one thing to say that Allah is the source of all legal and governmental authority and another to say that Allah provides all law, even the most

mundane, rather than being the source of infallible divine law and the principles upon which all human law should be based.

Zawahiri asks, “Who has the right to legislate and who has authority in Pakistan? Is it Allah alone or the majority of the representatives in Parliament or [does authority reside in] whatever the Advisory Council declares?” Zawahiri goes on to say that he has found the answer settled authoritatively in the fundamental documents of the State of Pakistan. “The answer is that the “right to amend the constitution or issue laws belongs to the majority of the representatives [of Parliament] alone.” He then presents a red herring by declaring that a two-thirds majority vote of the Parliament could change the name of Pakistan to the “Pakistani-American Republic” or the “Pakistani Christian Republic.” In fact, he argues that a two-thirds majority of Parliament could change the constitution in any way they want and those changes could not be contested in any court. Zawahiri’s text provides the constitutional provision in its English version to demonstrate that he is on solid ground in making these assertions. [3]

Zawahiri’s attack is intended to undermine all of the institutions of the Pakistani state: the executive, the legislature, the judiciary, and the military, from the very foundation of the state in 1947 until today. In fact, one of the major goals of Zawahiri’s risala is to disabuse Pakistanis of the belief that the real problem is the corruption of the ruling class, asserting it is the nature of the Pakistani system itself. To accomplish the destruction of Pakistan’s legitimacy, he provides a close analysis of eight examples from the constitution that contradict Shari’a:

1. A two-thirds majority of Parliament can change the constitution without any check by higher authority.
2. Immunity from prosecution or questioning of the president and other high officials.
3. The right of the President to pardon crime.
4. Lack of a clear stipulation that judges should be Muslim and no requirement that judges be just in any court.
5. Lack of a requirement that the president be male.

6. Absence of protection from the application of retroactive punishment.
7. Absence of protection from double jeopardy.
8. The lack of a prohibition on usury.

The Impact of the Risala

Zawahiri's analysis of the Constitution is likely not intended to influence groups like the Tehrik-e-Nifaz-e-Shariat-e-Mohammadi (TNSM) or the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) since they need no convincing. Voices similar to these have been arguing for the strict application of Shari'a for as long as the Pakistani constitution has existed. The real target is much more likely the ordinary people of Pakistan, especially the youth. It is probable that Zawahiri assumes these groups know as little about the Pakistani constitution as the more extreme "brothers" who motivated him to write his monograph in the first place.

A recent poll of Pakistani youth revealed that 64% want an Islamic state in Pakistan even though religious parties have received an insignificant share of the vote (*Dawn*, February 22). Similarly, a recent Gallup Poll showed that fully 60% of the Pakistani public thinks that Shari'a should be the only source of legislation and one-third thinks that religious leaders should play a direct role in government. [4] Both polls show that despite these answers, support for freedom of speech and other democratic values co-exist with what many see as Islamic values. Perhaps this is the confusion that Zawahiri is referring to when he complains that Pakistanis are attached both to Islam and Western culture, which he asserts are incompatible. Is the subtle purpose of Zawahiri really to create another kind of confusion that might make the public more passive in the face of extremist violence aimed at undermining the Pakistani government? In this period of rising extremist violence in Pakistan, is he recalling the public's negative reaction to the military operation against the Red Mosque in July, 2007? The public had initially been against violent attacks associated with the mosque, but then reversed itself after what it perceived to be indiscriminate violence by the army (see *Terrorism Monitor*, July 19, 2007).

It is reasonable to assume that Zawahiri is well aware of the small chance he has of actually convincing the public that his vision of Pakistan is correct? Creating

confusion in the short run and exacerbating the cracks in Pakistani society while the Taliban and other confederate groups work to destabilize the Pakistani state might be exactly what he intends. In any case, the challenge to Pakistani security authorities will be to act with carefully calibrated operations that do not repeat the Red Mosque experience. This is a very difficult challenge that will play itself out over the next year of increased American operations in Afghanistan and a potential increase in spillover violence in Pakistan.

Dr. Michael W.S. Ryan is an independent consultant and researcher on Middle Eastern security issues and a Senior Research Associate at the Jamestown Foundation.

Notes:

1. This written piece is referred to as a monograph in Western sources but is referred to as risala in Arabic, which could mean anything from a "letter" or "essay" or even the generic "communication."
2. Sayyid Qutb was one of the foremost theorists for the Muslim Brotherhood and was executed by the Egyptian Government in 1966 (see *Terrorism Monitor*, May 4, 2005).
3. See <http://www.pakistani.org/pakistan/constitution/>. The amendments cited by Zawahiri are Amendments 238, 239 of Part IX. Zawahiri is fluent in English but does not claim to know Urdu.
4. Dalia Mogahed, "Islam and Democracy," Gallup Muslim West Facts Project, n.d., <http://www.muslimwestfacts.com/mwf/105643/Islam-Democracy.aspx>.