

## TERRORIZING EUROPE: LONDONISTAN

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**Abstract.** *With secret service permission, militant Islamic preachers establish the most important control room of the European Jihad.*

**Key words:** *Terrorism, CIA, Jihad, London Attacks, muslim Bosnia.*

*"I am actually puzzled. I mean, if America were serious about eliminating terrorism, the first capital it should rock with cruise missiles is London."*

(Libya's head of state Muammar al Qaddafi,  
October 25th 2001)<sup>1</sup>

To be an authentic good ol' boy from north London, you've got to be a fan of the local beloved soccer team, Arsenal London. England's premier league team has its own subway station for Highbury Stadium on the Northern Line, right before Finsbury Park. Ciaran Cassidy usually got on the subway when he had to run errands downtown, but he always walked to soccer games—straight down the Seven Sisters Road, maybe with a little stop at "The Twelve Pints" pub to get in the right mood by knocking back an ale. From there, he'd turn left at the station, right at the souvenir shop and head on down the St. Thomas Road. From there, you could hear the masses heartily practicing their rousing team chants before the match had even begun.

On that last kilometer before the stadium gates, the 21-year old Ciaran strode quickly, attracted by the action ahead and feeling psyched up for the game. Were he not so focused, Ciaran might have noticed the red brick building at the corner of St. Thomas Road,

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<sup>1</sup> Qaddafi in an interview with Al Jazeera 10/25/2001, as cited in Webster, Griffin and Tarpley, 2005, 9/11 Synthetic Terrorism Made in USA, Joshua Tree/California 2005, p.157.

a building that stood above the typical English row houses, and was capped with a small, simple minaret. Its plain stony walls were strung with barbed wire. This was the Finsbury Mosque, where more than one Arsenal London soccer fan would meet his fate; it was here that the crime was planned which would take the life of Ciaran and 55 other Londoners killed on July 7th, 2005.<sup>2</sup>

The construction of the Finsbury Mosque was complete by the middle of the 1990's – under the auspices of Prince Charles, having received its key financing from Saudi Arabia. The red brick-lined building spans three levels, each floor with its own unadorned prayer room. Large basement vaults provide ample storage room, and usefully served another purpose, as we will see later.

In those years, the construction of a mosque was nothing special; as in other European Union countries, the Muslim minority was growing quickly and significantly. The U.K. welcomed tens of thousands of Pakistanis at the end of the 1940's and their population was very willing to integrate. In the 1980's, a new wave of immigrants came to the English Isle, bringing along a more radical contingent of believers– people who had become politically awakened as they witnessed the Israeli occupations after 1967, Khomeini's revolution in 1979, and the occupation in Afghanistan. The U.K is today home to 1.6 million Muslims.

Referring to the waves of Muslim immigration to the UK, Langewiesche emphasizes that: "They came in burning with political energies, revitalized the moribund mosques, and, in this turnkey paradise of free speech, began collecting funds, organizing volunteer fighters, and openly preaching the righteousness of their foreign holy wars."<sup>3</sup>

And for activities such as these, there was no more ideal headquarters than Finsbury Mosque.

### 1. FUNDAMENTALIST PREACHER ABU HAMZA

The leader of the mosque was a giant of a man with fearsome appearance: his right arm ended not with a hand, but with an iron prosthesis. The tabloid press quickly baptized him "Captain Hook," after the iron-fisted seaman in J.M. Barrie's novel *Peter Pan*. Mosque visitors looked through a wild beard into his pitted face, from which stared two clouded pupils swimming in the milk of ruined eyeballs – the results of a battle wound that the holy man brought with him from Afghanistan. Author William Langewiesche summarized his impressions, saying: "An uglier man would be hard to find".<sup>4</sup>

"Captain Hook" was born as Mustafa Kamel Mustafa in Egypt during 1958. After studying engineering at the University of Alexandria he emigrated to Great Britain in 1979. He received a permanent residence permit in 1982 and was naturalized in 1984. In those days there was no reason for anyone to monitor his activities-- his first job in England was at a nightclub. Only in 1981 did he convert to Islam. In his younger years this

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<sup>2</sup> The ideas within this introduction were inspired by the book of Sean O'Neill/Daniel McGrory, *The Suicide Factory. Abu Hamza and the Finsbury Mosque*, London 2006; and complemented by the author's own impressions of Finsbury Park.

<sup>3</sup> William Langewiesche, *A Face in the Crowd*, *Vanity Fair* 02/2008.

<sup>4</sup> William Langewiesche (FN 3).

man who became a preacher had been quite a secular fellow – a rather handsome man-about-town. A friend from those wilder years recalls: "He wore jeans and T-shirts and usually had a gold chain around his neck. He was cool and, yes, he was a womanizer. He was an Egyptian after all, what do you expect?"<sup>5</sup>

The radicalization of this preacher-to-be began during his involvement with the Afghan jihad, which initially attracted him only in 1989. At that point, he took the war name Abu Hamza al Masri. In those days his primary influence was the counsel of Abdullah Azzam, Osama bin Laden's most trusted companion in Afghanistan. In 1993 Abu Hamza returned to London with his physical disability. The causes of this severe injury still remain in the dark. He himself claimed he was the victim of a mine. Others reported he accidentally blew himself up while fabricating explosives. The Algerian secret service supplies yet another version of the story— that Abu Hamza received the injury not in Afghanistan but later, during a combat mission in Bosnia.<sup>6</sup> Yet Abu Hamza asserted that he did not even go there until 1995 when "he had advised Algerian fighters in Bosnia."<sup>7</sup>

During the time between combat missions, Abu Hamza crossed paths with a man who had connections to the unofficial governmental intelligence operations known as 'secret services.' Omar Abdel Rahman, the "Blind Sheik" from New York (and the alleged organizer of the first attack on the World Trade Center in 1993) came to London as part of a speaking tour to promote interest and support for the Afghan jihad. Times reporter Sean O'Neill wrote that Rahman's trip was "supposedly sponsored by the CIA."<sup>8</sup>

After Abu Hamza left Bosnia in 1996, he began preaching at a mosque in Luton; one year later he took over the mosque at Finsbury Park. His speeches quickly attracted a sizeable audience with up to a thousand people pouring in to fill all three floors of the mosque on St. Thomas Road. Everyone wanted to hear and experience "Allah's machine gun." His foreboding appearance empowered the blazing force of his speeches which were given in an English colored with Arabic dialect. His oratory was full of cynicism and mockery of those of different faiths—and were always peppered with references to popular soap operas and tabloid teasers.

In time, Abu Hamza's sermons became more radical and in turn, radicalized the views of many. This development is well documented because many of his speeches exist in the form of video recordings made by his fans that were distributed all over the world. On one of these tapes, recorded between 1997 and 1998 at a private gathering, Abu Hamza rails that Muslims in England "are living in a toilet and are living like animals." He appealed to his audience to begin "bleeding the enemy." He explained further in the recording that: "You can't do it by nuclear weapon, you do it by the kitchen knife, no other solution. You cannot do it by chemical weapons, you have to do it by mice poison."<sup>9</sup> In one sermon on jihad Abu Hamza urged: "My dear brothers, if you can go, then go! If you can't go, sponsor! If you can't sponsor, speak! If you can't do all of this, do all of that! If you can send your children, send them! You must have a stand—with your heart, with your tongue, with your money, with your hand, with your sword, with your Kalashnikov!

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<sup>5</sup> See Sean O'Neill/Daniel Mc Grory (FN 2), S.5.

<sup>6</sup> See Sean O'Neill/Daniel McGrory (FN 2), p. 22 ff.

<sup>7</sup> Sean O'Neill, Abu Hamza boasted of Bosnia action, Times 01/17/2006.

<sup>8</sup> See Sean O'Neill/Daniel McGrory (FN 2), p.18.

<sup>9</sup> N.N., Hamza's Web of Terror, Daily Mail 02/08/2006.

Anything you think will help. Don't ask, 'Shall I do this? Shall I do that?' Just do it! If it is killing, do it! If it is paying, pay! If it is ambushing, ambush! If it is poisoning, poison! You help your brothers. You help Islam anyway you like, anywhere you like! They are all kuffar, and can all be killed! Killing a kuffar who is fighting you is okay! Killing a kuffar for any reason, you can say it is okay! Even if there is no reason for it!"<sup>10</sup>

And it was a special hatred that he bore for the Jewish people: "Hitler watched their relationships and their betrayals. In this war they wanted to cheat him. Some of them collaborated with the allies against him. That's why he killed and punished them, and this is Islamic law... It shows that the Jews will be destroyed, their country will be destroyed, and some Jews will run around and hide behind trees and rocks, until they are swallowed by the earth so completely that none of them exist anymore."<sup>11</sup>

Only after seven long years did his agitation come to an end: In 2004, Scotland Yard made a raid at Abu Hamza's headquarters and confiscated 2700 audio tapes, 570 videos and all eleven volumes of the "Encyclopedia of the Afghan Jihad." This 'blueprint of terrorism' described, among other things, the execution of attacks against the Statue of Liberty, the Eiffel Tower and Big Ben – as well as airports, museums and stadiums.<sup>12</sup> The investigators accused him of converting the Finsbury Mosque into a "center for extremism and a safe haven for Islamic extremists." Here, "they were able to network, getting support and contacts for pursuing their violent ambitions."

The list of people who received instruction and assistance at Finsbury Mosque for terrorist activities was so extensive that Sean O'Neill (Times reporter and expert on the topic) labeled Finsbury Mosque "The Suicide Factory," also giving his book that title.<sup>13</sup> Salman Abdullah, one of the men who was recruited there, estimates that no fewer than 50 disciples of Abu Hamza lost their lives during terrorist activities and jihad missions.<sup>14</sup> Along with many others, those tutored at this mosque included:

- Christoph Caze, ring leader of the Roubaix-gang, which terrorized Northern France in 1996;
- Shoe bomber Richard Reid, who in December 2001 carried explosives onto a transatlantic flight in his shoe sole;
- Nizar Trabelsi, who was sentenced to ten years in Belgian prison in 2003 because of a planned suicide bombing on a NATO base;
- Asif Hanif, who blew himself up in April 2003 in a café in Tel Aviv;
- Leading members and militants of the Algerian underground movement GIA;
- Jamal Zugam, one of the terrorists who was sentenced for the Madrid bombings of 2004;
- Mohammed Siddique Khan and three other alleged terrorists from the London attacks on July 7th 2005. It was precisely that day, a day on which bombs killed 56 people, that the trial against Abu Hamza began;
- Zacharias Moussaoui, the alleged 9/11 hijacker number twenty;

<sup>10</sup> Cited in William Langewiesche (FN 3).

<sup>11</sup> Cited in Sean O'Neill/Daniel McGrory (FN 2), p.63/64, translated from the German edition.

<sup>12</sup> See Sean O'Neill/Daniel McGrory (FN 2), p.280 ff.

<sup>13</sup> Sean O'Neill/Daniel McGrory (see FN 2).

<sup>14</sup> Sean O'Neill/Daniel McGrory (FN 2), p.193.

- Moussaoui's family testified how much influence the Finsbury Mosque had on his metamorphosis, saying: "he changed from being a happy, outgoing young man to being a hardline radical."<sup>15</sup>

## 2. THE SECRET AGREEMENT

Unfazed, the British authorities watched the Finsbury Mosque develop into what was probably the most critical junction for the entire international jihad; their hands-off response echoed a familiar strategy of the MI5 and MI6 intelligence agencies. In the mid-1990's, those same secret service organizations acted covertly to support and not interfere with supporters of Bin Laden who planned to assassinate Libya's president Muammar al Quaddafi.

What Abu Hamza planned to accomplish via his leadership at the Finsbury Mosque was well known to the authorities. For example, his ownership of the "Encyclopedia of the Afghan Jihad" and other propaganda landed him in jail following a 2004 raid— yet in March of 1999, those same materials had already been examined and "returned to him."<sup>16</sup> This laissez-faire attitude was first modeled by Scotland Yard when the searches of 1999 did not produce evidence for the particular crime they were investigating regarding Abu Hamza in those days: the kidnapping of sixteen Western tourists from Yemen in 1998.

The fact that Scotland Yard allowed Abu Hamza to go free in 1999 raises a deeper question about his alliances, because Abu Hamza's plans were no secret; his followers were already selling recordings of his fundamentalist hate sermons all over the world. That same year, the police learned from undercover informer Reda Hassaine that Abu Hamza's work was not limited to incendiary militant speeches—he was clearly involved in coordinating terror attacks.

Reda Hassaine first agreed to cooperate with French and British intelligence agencies after the Algerian terrorist group GIA killed his family. He worked to trace the London GIA membership, first for the French intelligence DGSE and then for the MI5. During the course of his 15-month mission, Hassaine bugged the offices of Abu Hamza, but did not learn anything about Abu Hamza that served effectively to incriminate him.

Book author Nafeez Mosaddeq Ahmed, one of the most knowledgeable writers about the actualities of Londonistan wondered why it was that: "Neither the Al Qaeda documents found by Hassaine, nor the elaborate eyewitness reports that he gave to a special department of Scotland Yard, were used by the authorities to pursue Hamza for his terrorist activities."<sup>17</sup>

Hassaine was so desperate over the indifference of the British secret service, that he finally complained to the French DGSE. They had already noted evidence of covert cooperation between the British secret services and radical Muslims, and had been watching the situation for some time. "In the eyes of the French intelligence personnel, the British appeared to have made a Faustian pact with the extremist Islamic groups gathered in London."<sup>18</sup>

<sup>15</sup> N.N., Hamza's Web of Terror, Daily Mail, 02/08/2006

(orig. source: <http://www.tmcnet.com/usubmit/2006/02/08/1354116.htm>).

<sup>16</sup> Sean O'Neill, Police viewed imam's terror book years before he was seized, Times 01/18/2006, cited in Nafeez Mosaddeq Ahmed, The London Bombings. An Independent Inquiry, p.161.

<sup>17</sup> Nafeez Mosaddeq Ahmed (FN 16), p.163, translated from the German edition.

<sup>18</sup> Sean O'Neill/Daniel McGrory (FN 2), p.127, translated from the German edition.

There existed a sort of mutual non-interference agreement between the British secret services and the Islamic fanatics – "informal, but real," as Langewiesche writes.<sup>19</sup> That "Covenant of Security" was not a formal contract, but rather an unwritten law that took shape as early as the 19th century, when the Foreign Office mobilized Muslim minorities in the fight against czarist Russia. The "New Statesman" magazine articulated the logic of this "Covenant of Security" as follows: "Ironically, then, the presence of vocal and active Islamist terrorist sympathisers in the UK actually makes British people safer, while the full brunt of British-based terrorist plotting is suffered by people in other countries."<sup>20</sup>

Former Hassaine expressed his feelings about that relationship more strongly, saying: "All this killing was taking place abroad, but the British didn't give a shit that the killers were here in London. As long as nothing happened in Britain, then everything was alright. Abu Hamza was left to do whatever he liked, to brainwash, to recruit, and send people off to the training camps."<sup>21</sup>

Former Home Secretary David Blunket confirms the existence of this unspoken 'covenant' when he explains that, during the second half of the 1990's there was unambiguous evidence about the direction of events at Finsbury Mosque. He asserts that he himself was kept from initiating countermeasures by forces within his own department: "So much for those in the security services who told me when I was Home Secretary that I was exaggerating the threat, and the closure of the Finsbury Park mosque where he preached his evil message would be a 'massive overreaction.' There was a deep reluctance to act on the information coming out of Abu Hamza's own mouth."<sup>22</sup>

### 3. ABU HAMZA AS PARTNER OF THE MI5

In the trial proceedings that were to follow these events Abu Hamza testified that, prior to his arrest and detention in 2004, he had several meetings with the British secret service which were, in essence, friendly. The officials of the MI5 had even given the imam his own code name: 910. Abu Hamza reported having had "meetings with officers from Britain's internal security services," and in 1997 he asked some members of the MI5 if they saw his sermons as a problem ("My sermon, is it a problem?"). One man answered: "You have freedom of speech. You don't have anything to worry as long as we don't see blood on the streets."

In another conversation in 2000, the officials were more critical. "We think you are walking on a tightrope," they said, and told Abu Hamza that "there were some things that they don't like."<sup>23</sup> There were, however, no consequences for the casual 'dislike' that the MI5 expressed.

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<sup>19</sup> William Langewiesche (FN 3).

<sup>20</sup> Jamie Campbell, Why terrorists love Britain, *New Statesman* 08/2004, cited in Nafeez Mosaddeq Ahmed (FN 16), p.66.

<sup>21</sup> Cited in Sean O'Neill/Daniel McGrory (FN 2), p.150

<sup>22</sup> Sean O'Neill/e.a., Police had Hamza's "murder evidence" 7 years ago, *Times* 02/09/2006.

<sup>23</sup> Alan Cowell, Cleric asserts British once asked his aid on terror, *NYT* 01/20/2006, cited in Nafeez Mosaddeq Ahmed (FN 16), p.162.

Based on records of the meetings, authors Daniel O'Neill and Sean McGrory wrote this in review:

"London-based imam Abu Hamza al-Masri starts working with two branches of the British security services, the police's Special Branch and MI5- the domestic counterintelligence service. The relationships continue for several years and there are at least seven meetings between Abu Hamza and MI5 between 1997 and 2000." The authors describe the relationship as "respectful, polite, and often cooperative. (...) The security services tell Abu Hamza that they do not want any trouble and ask him to tone down some of his more inflammatory comments. Abu Hamza listens politely, but always replies he is committed to jihad. (...) Abu Hamza provides the security services with information about the ideology of various extremist factions, as well as 'tidbits' of information about others (...) Sometimes Abu Hamza asks for favors from his handlers. For example, on one occasion he requests the release of some associates after promising that they are not a threat in Britain."<sup>24</sup>

#### 4. TERRORISTS TRAINED BY THE SECRET SERVICES

Upon the list of criminal activities tolerated by the British Government was nothing less than weapons training at the Finsbury Mosque. In February 2002, the weekly "Observer" reported that "British Islam extremists" openly practiced with their Kalashnikov AK-47's in the mosque compound. According to the Observer, "several groups had been taught to strip and reassemble Kalashnikovs in the mosque's basement." It makes little sense that despite knowledge of the trainings, the MI5 did nothing to stop them. The Observer also pointed out that the "MI5 was told by their agents that scores of young men were being sent from the mosque for training at camps in Afghanistan."<sup>25</sup>

But British intelligence services did not merely tolerate ongoing terrorist activities—they also provided active assistance. According to reports by U.S. intelligence services, former British soldiers were themselves leaders of some of Hamza's terrorist training programs:

"In an ad-hoc terrorist training at a camp in Wales, they demonstrated to Abu Hamza's recruits the use of weapons." By 1997 such allegedly British-led training camps likely also existed at Brecon Beacons, at an old monastery in Tunbridge Wells, in the county of Kent, as well as in Scotland. Interrogation transcripts of suspected Al Qaeda members who were detained in Guantanamo, show that "British ex-soldiers, some of whom fought in Bosnia, were recruited to train about 10 of Hamza's followers at the Brecon Beacons camp for three weeks in 1998. The former troops taught them to strip and clean weapons and gave them endurance training and lessons in surveillance techniques." In other camps they "trained to use AK-47 rifles, hand guns and a mock rocket launcher."<sup>26</sup>

These testimonies were probably extracted by torture, thus their authenticity is uncertain. However, various witnesses did confirm the details independently from each other.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> See Sean O'Neill/Daniel McGrory (FN 2), p.144.

<sup>25</sup> Jason Burke, AK-47 training held at London mosque, Observer 02/17/2002.

<sup>26</sup> Jason Burke (FN 25).

<sup>27</sup> Nafeez Mosaddeq Ahmed (FN 16), p.165.

The disabled Abu Hamza was not in charge of running these terrorist training operations—there was another organization for this purpose: Sakina Security Service. They ran training camps in Britain and the U.S., advertising their program as "ultimate Jihad challenge" in which clients were taken to a live firing range in the United States for weapons training where they shot up to 3,000 rounds each. It also offered training in hand-to-hand combat, including "the art of bone breaking" and how to "improvise explosive devices" in live operations. Also included in the training program was instruction on how to set up an ambush, how to duck-and-cover, and how best to camouflage oneself.<sup>28</sup>

Author Ahmed comments: "It is to some extent bizarre that the police closed the training programs after the protest of politicians, whereas the ministry of economics did not close that firm."<sup>29</sup>

## 5. THE UNHOLY TRINITY

In addition to Abu Hamza, there were two other people that surfaced from the London Islamic network: Omar Bakri Mohammed and Abu Qatada. Abu Qatada was allegedly born in Bethlehem; his age is unknown. He lived in Jordan for many years and was condemned to death in a military trial for allegedly financing an assassination plot against King Hussein in 1998. Abu Qatada was able to circumvent the judgement because previously in 1993 he had immigrated to Britain, and British authorities refused to extradite him to Jordan—in accordance with provisions of British law prohibiting extradition if there is threat of a death sentence upon arrival. In London, Abu Qatada became Abu Hamza's mentor. Speaking of Abu Hamza, Abu Qatada mused to another disciple "He was the best Quran student I ever had."<sup>30</sup>

The weekly newspaper "Die Zeit" described Abu Qatada as the "top leader of Islamic terrorist cells in Europe."<sup>31</sup> This statement is probably an exaggeration, although Abu Qatada's name has appeared in connection with a series of completed attacks and other terror attempts. In 1999, when the MI5 infiltrated the underground London Islamists using undercover agent Reda Hassaine, they discovered connections between Abu Hamza and the Algerian terror diaspora, as well as clear connections between that group and Abu Qatada himself. It was also shown that Abu Qatada was running a fake credit card scam operation as a funding source for sponsoring terrorist activities; it was based at the Four Feathers community center on Baker Street where he often led sermons.<sup>32</sup>

It is probable that Abu Qatada had contacts to the editor-in-chief of the London paper "Al Ansar," which was known to be a mouthpiece of the Algerian GIA. The editor, Mustafa Setmarijan Nasar was "according to French agents, allegedly involved in the Paris metro attacks of 1995."<sup>33</sup> Soon after the 1995 attacks, the British police detained Nasar, "but set him free for inexplicable reasons."<sup>34</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Sean O'Neill/Daniel McGrory (FN 2), p.189.

<sup>29</sup> Cited in Nafeez Mosaddeq Ahmed (FN 16), p.78, translated from the German edition.

<sup>30</sup> Sean O'Neill/Daniel McGrory (FN 2), p.29, translated from the German edition.

<sup>31</sup> Oliver Schröm, Prediger und frommer Killer, Die Zeit, 36/2002.

<sup>32</sup> Nafeez Mosaddeq Ahmed (FN 16), p.84.

<sup>33</sup> Nafeez Mosaddeq Ahmed (FN 16), p.85.

<sup>34</sup> Nafeez Mosaddeq Ahmed (FN 16), p.85, translated from the German edition.



At this point, Abu Qatada stepped up expansion of the international network to which he was linked:

- By the end of December 2000, a group of Islamists based in Frankfurt plotted an attack in Strasbourg, France. They were in constant contact with Abu Qatada.
- In Milan in 2001 a cell formed around the Tunisian leader Emid Sami Ben Khe-mais (also known as Saber) prepared an attack on a U.S. facility. In a monitored phone call Saber said: "We have to show them that we exist, and that we are the real mujahideen. But we have to wait for the order of sheik Abu Qatada."<sup>35</sup>
- During July of 2001, Djamel Beghal was arrested in Paris. By his own account, he was the head of the Parisian Al Qaeda cell. He had attended activities led by Abu Qatada in London in 1997 and "was electrified by the preacher's hate tirades."<sup>36</sup>
- By 1994, a network for Al Qaeda had already been created in Madrid by Eddin Barakat Yarkas. After September 11, 2001 the Spanish judiciary issued an arrest warrant against him and other Islamic activists. Physical search of his home turned up records revealing that the Syrian-born Yarkas had, in the previous four years, visited Abu Qatada in London no fewer than twenty times. Shortly after the atrocity of the Madrid attacks in March 2004, the prime suspects were surrounded by the police; they tried to reach Abu Qatada on the phone—immediately before igniting a bomb that blew all of them up.<sup>37</sup>

After those facts came to light, Abu Qatada was supposed to be arrested in Britain, and apparently he had secured first place atop a 'wanted' list which would take effect immediately upon the ratification of a new anti-terror act. But precisely on December 15, 2001 the day the law was to take effect, Abu Qatada disappeared from the face of the earth. But hadn't Scotland Yard been observing him and monitoring his moves since he appeared so prominently on their wanted list? Shortly before his disappearance, Abu Qatada asserted that "the British intelligence agency MI5 offered him a passport and a visa for Iran in order to leave Britain."<sup>38</sup>

Even Oliver Schrom of the German weekly paper "Die Zeit," a reporter who normally is content to write within the mainstream of terror reporting, found himself wondering why : "In French intelligence circles it is ... spread, that Abu Qatada is in direct custody of the MI5, as in a kind of witness-protection program." O'Neill had heard similar things from the French: "They speculate that Abu Qatada was an informer for the MI5. More than one year he was hidden in a flat in Bermondsey, from there it is only a couple of minutes to walk to the head quarters of the MI6." It was also rumoured that his wife and children lived with him in Bermondsey, and he frequently had visitors from foreign countries.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Cited in Oliver Schröm (FN 31).

<sup>36</sup> Cited in Oliver Schröm (FN 31).

<sup>37</sup> Nafeez Mosaddeq Ahmed (FN 16), p.86.

<sup>38</sup> Cited in Oliver Schröm (FN 31).

<sup>39</sup> Sean O'Neill/Daniel McGrory (FN 2), p.108, translated from the German edition.

## 6. TERRORIST TRAINING

Abu Hamza coordinated most of his terrorist training programs not with Abu Qatada, but with Omar Bakri Mohammed, the chief of the organization Al Muhajiroun (The Emigrants). Omar Bakri Mohammed was born in Syria in 1958, and participated in the uprising of the Muslims against President Assad in 1982. He fled after the revolt was put down, and in 1986 he sought asylum in Great Britain. Omar Bakri Mohammed immediately created a branch of Al Muhajiroun, which had been founded three years previously in Saudi Arabia.<sup>40</sup> Most of the members in the British branch of Al Muhajiroun are Muslim immigrants and their children who possess British passports.

Omar Bakri Mohammed was vilified by the tabloid press as the "Tottenham-Ayatollah," and he frequently gave public speeches with Abu Hamza. At one such event, held to mark the commemoration of the first anniversary of 9/11, Bakri Mohammed said, 9/11 appears to him in retrospect "like a battle, as a great achievement by the mujahideen against the evil superpower." He went on to say that: "I never praised September 11 after it happened, but now I can see why they did it."<sup>41</sup>

In a 2001 interview, Omar Bakri Mohammed described his group's activities during the 1990's: "Al Muhajiroun sent young Muslims to jihad training courses in Virginia, Michigan and into the desert of Missouri where they learned various techniques of guerilla warfare such as the fabrication of explosives and the handling of shoulder-launched missiles." It is estimated that every year between three hundred and four hundred young men attended those courses, "with British, French and German passports, so that they did not need visas for immigration into the USA— even though they were mostly of African and Asian origin." After finishing their training "some of them went to Kashmir, others to Chechnya after fighting in Kosovo."<sup>42</sup>

## 7. AL MUHAJIROUN IN PAKISTAN

One of the parties responsible for coordinating terrorist training programs with Al Muhajiroun was Mohammed Jameel. He gave an interview to the London-published Arabic newspaper "Al Wassat." In this interview, which appeared under the headline "Yes, we have camps for the training of the mujahidin," Jameel attested that he personally supervised the training of 150 British citizens in Afghanistan and Pakistan.<sup>43</sup> Perhaps more important to the training programs of Al Muhajiroun was the British citizen Hassan Butt. By the end of 2001, Butt claimed to have "recruited hundreds of fellow Britons to the cause of Osama bin Laden."<sup>44</sup> He said that 60 percent of all foreign fighters for Al Qaeda and Taliban came from the UK, and he himself was only one out of 40 British recruiters

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<sup>40</sup> Other sources assert that Al Muhajiroun was found only in 1996 and that Omar Bakri Mohammed previously gathered his henchmen in the "Hizb ut Tahrir", up to now a legal group in the UK.

<sup>41</sup> Cited in an Al Muhajiroun post on Wikipedia (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/al-muhajiroun>).

<sup>42</sup> Interview of Omar Bakri Mohammed with the London daily paper "Al Sharq al Aswat" in 2001, here cited by the former U.S. agent John Loftus in Fox News, 07/29/2005.

<sup>43</sup> See Nafeez Mosaddeq Ahmed (FN 16), p.77.

<sup>44</sup> Richard Alleyne/Nigel Bunyan, Britons boast of recruiting for bin Laden may lead to charges, *Telegraph* 12/19/2001, citationen after Nafeez Mosaddeq Ahmed (FN 16), p.78.

working in the Pakistani town of Lahore. Butt boasted "I've been in contact with a thousand British Muslims who are going to the holy war."<sup>45</sup>

What initially appeared as gloating on the part of Butt was soon confirmed by others. The British military secret service announced after the invasion in Afghanistan, that "1,200 British Muslims trained with Osama bin Laden's al-Qa'eda terrorist network in Afghanistan... The names, addresses and other details of the Britons were found by British military intelligence during searches of bin Laden's cave complex at Tora Bora in eastern Afghanistan."<sup>46</sup> Butt warned that the newly trained terrorists would be returning to Britain in order to wage attacks against the government and military facilities.

Were these men, whose names were known, ever interrogated by the British authorities? Ahmed claims "no" but makes no specific reference to other sources. It has, however, been documented that by the end of 2002 Butt was detained for actively recruiting terrorists, although "he was for inexplicable reasons immediately released."<sup>47</sup> This is an incredible act – incredible but true.

The head of Al Muhajiroun, Omar Bakri Mohammed claimed as early as 2000 that: "The British government knows who we are. MI5 has interrogated us many times. I think now we have something called public immunity."<sup>48</sup>

#### 8. AL MUHAJIROUN IN THE BALKANS

Labour Party representative Michael Meacher, who was Minister of the Environment from 1997-2003 in Blair's cabinet, pointed out that from 1992 on, Al Muhajiroun also recruited young British people for the Bosnian jihad who received their military training from the Pakistani terrorist group Harkat al Ansar (HUA). According to Meacher, around 200 Pakistani Muslims living in the UK left for Pakistan in 1992, and in ensuing years trained in HUA camps before finally joining the HUA contingents in Bosnia. Meacher said that all of this was "with the full knowledge and complicity of the British and American intelligence agencies."<sup>49</sup>

What went on after the civil war in Bosnia was explained by John Loftus, the former U.S. Justice Department prosecutor. According to Loftus, "former and active members of the British 22nd Special Air Services Regiments (SAS)" launched the education program for the Kosovo-Albanian underground army UÇK. Officially, the members of the SAS who conducted this training were employed at two private British firms which, as told by Loftus, were commissioned by the MI6. And in turn, the MI6 received orders by request of the U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA).<sup>50</sup> This arrangement fits together with

<sup>45</sup> Danielle Demetriou/Patrick Sawyer, Al-Muhajiroun say 1000 Brit Muslims have joined jihad, This is London 10/29/2001.

<sup>46</sup> David Bamber, Hunt for 1,200 Britons who trained with al-Qa'eda, Telegraph 01/26/2003, cited in Nafeez Mosaddeq Ahmed (FN 16), p.81.

<sup>47</sup> Nafeez Mosaddeq Ahmed (FN 16), p.81, translated from the German edition.

Interview with CNS-News 01/24/2000.

<sup>48</sup> Michael Meacher, Intelligence interests may thwart the July bombings investigation, Guardian (London), 09/10/2005.

<sup>49</sup> Interview of the author with Nafeez Mosaddeq Ahmed 05/09/2008, translated from the German edition.

<sup>50</sup> Interview of the author with Nafeez Mosaddeq Ahmed 05/10/2008, translated from the German edition.

information discussed in the next chapter, which illuminates the way that the Pentagon subcontractor MPRI hired and educated Bosnian mujahideen for fighting in Kosovo.

#### 9. THE FRUITS OF THEIR LABOR

The group Al Muhajiroun dissolved formally on October 13th, 2004. Its successor organizations The Saviour Sect and Al-Ghurabaa were prohibited two years later. After the London attacks on July 7th, 2005, leader Omar Bakri Mohammed traveled with his family to Lebanon and the British government blocked his return to the UK. Ahmed wrote that: "A source within the MI5 told me that the British intelligence agency wanted to protect Bakri by letting him escape." Now living in Lebanon, Bakri continues his contact with an informal network known as "Al Sabiqoon Al-Awaloon," made up of individuals from diverse 'prohibited' groups who have reassembled.<sup>51</sup>

After the French intelligence service told the media that the preacher Abu Qatada was hidden in a residence rented by the MI5, he was arrested by Scotland Yard in August 2005. In February of that same year, trial proceedings in Jordan called for Abu Qatada to be extradited to his home country, but he won his appeal on a point of law and was set free on bail in early May 2008.

Abu Hamza had a different experience. In January 2006 a suit was filed against him, and in February 2007 a sentence was handed down: seven years in prison, on a variety of charges including incitement to murder and racial hatred.

The seeds of this "unholy trinity" that were sown years ago went on to bear fruit in the form of the London terror attacks that took place on July 7th 2005. Haroon Rashid Aswat, the leader of those attacks was none other than Abu Hamza's "teacher's pet".<sup>52</sup>

## TERORISANJE EVROPE: LONDONISTAN

**Jürgen Elsässer**

*U radu je izvršena analiza načina na koji su, uz dozvolu tajnih službi, militantni islamski propovednici upostavili jednu od najvažnijih kontrolnih soba evropskog džihada.*

Ključne reči: *Terorizam, CIA, džihad, napadi u Londonu, muslimani u Bosni*

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<sup>51</sup> See Sean O'Neill/Daniel McGrory (FN 2), p.45.

<sup>52</sup> See Sean O'Neill/Daniel McGrory (FN 2), p.45.