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A critical analysis of the discourses on Muslims in the media before and after the events of September 11, 2001

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Appendix A: Relevant articles, The Daily News

Source: DAILY NEWS
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1
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Islamic banking offers a 'solution'

CONVENTIONAL INSTITUTIONS STIFLING OPPORTUNITIES

The man charged with ensuring financial accountability by the Government says there is an alternative to the crumbling Western banking system, writes ***Des Parker.***

THE Islamic banking and economic system offers a workable solution to the crisis of despair confronting the "failing" system of capitalism, says auditor-general Shauket Fakie.

However, the Muslim world has a tough sell on its hands given the power and pervasive global influence of the capitalist financial services sector, he adds.

The head of one of three organisations leading the inquiry into the Government arms procurement process, Fakie was speaking at a three-day Islamic economic, banking and finance seminar in Durban organised jointly by the Islamic Dawah Movement of Southern Africa and the Saudi Arabia-based Islamic Development Bank.

In a wide-ranging talk, Fakie charged that colonisation by Western powers had "wiped out the centuries-old institutions of Islam and replaced them with its systems".

"It interrupted our thought processes and contaminated our thinking to the extent that if you speak to the average banker about operating a banking system without the principle of charging interest, they will tell you you're crazy, that it cannot work; that is the kind of blinkered thinking that we have got," said the South African educated chartered accountant.

Ignorance

However, Fakie conceded that "huge prejudice" – based mainly on ignorance of how the "integrated, holistic system of Islam" worked – confronted advocates of change.

"We need to collaborate with each other to grow the size and efficiencies of our institutions, be they banking or insurance, so that they offer value for money and people go to them because they are the best and not just because they are Islamic.

"We need to trumpet our successes and have a strong marketing drive to counter the negative images conveyed by the media."

Islamic institutions also had several strengths, not least the "crisis of credibility" faced by conventional financial services because of their aversion to risky lending – particularly to small enterprises – their publicised involvement in "dodgy transactions" and their "exorbitant fees".

"These institutions (banks) lend only to people who don't need to borrow, who have plenty of collateral; they are stifling opportunity for the small enterprises who can create jobs for people, and this is an opening for our (Islamic) banks," said Fakie.

He praised the "real empowerment" of ordinary people provided by organisations such as the Islamic Dawah Movement, saying it contrasted with the self-enrichment and window dressing that he saw so much of as auditor-general.

Fakie also said there was a need for people and businesses alike to be accountable to those affected by their actions to mend a moral degeneration that allowed "people to literally get away with murder".

Quoting US-based international Islamic authority Yusuf Delarenzo, who recently visited South Africa, Fakie said roughly 200 Islamic financial institutions had been spawned worldwide since the "re-awakening" 26-odd years ago of "an Islamic economic identity".

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1
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Israel set to stage walk-out

AS ISRAEL and others accused Arab and Muslim countries of hijacking the World Conference Against Racism in Durban, its official delegation in Durban said it was considering a walk-out.

Meanwhile, it has emerged that Israel has asked South African President Thabo Mbeki to intervene in the Middle East conflict.

The head of the Israeli delegation Mr Mordechai Yedid told reporters the United Nations conference on racism was part of a Palestinian international offensive to tarnish the name of Israel and the Jewish people.

"We are reaching a stage where we have to reconsider our participation, to consider whether we walk out of this conference."

He was speaking as a small group of Orthodox rabbis protested outside the press conference venue, calling for Jews and Palestinians to unite against Zionism.

Yedid said Israel was very concerned about its relationship with the UN and had raised this with Secretary-General Kofi Annan and others. "We made it quite clear we are at a critical junction in our relationship with the UN and its different institutions."

However, Yedid said his delegation had not exhausted all diplomatic efforts to ensure that anti-Israeli language in conference documents were removed.

Yedid's remarks followed a statement by Israeli Foreign Minister Mr Shimon Peres, who was quoted by foreign news agencies as saying Israel was seriously considering recalling its delegation from Durban and boycotting the rest of the meeting.

Yedid said his delegation's "red-line" was that the final declaration and programme of action should contain no "hate language, no singling out of Israel and no condemnations".

Although government delegations are negotiating the text of the WCAR's final declaration and programme of action, both the youth summit and the NGO forum on the sidelines of the conference condemned Israel in their documents. – Sapa

Source: DAILY NEWS
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Hate pamphlets shock Durban Muslims

ISMAIL SUDER

DURBAN's Muslim community yesterday distanced itself from the distribution of thousands of "outrageous" hate pamphlets directed at Jewish people.

According to the Jewish caucus attending the World Conference Against Racism, the Islamic Propagation Centre International (IPCI) of Durban was involved in the publishing of the hate pamphlets, but this was strongly denied by IPCI director Mr Fuad Hendricks.

The pamphlet infers that, had Nazi leader Adolf Hitler won World War 2, he would have killed all the Jews so there would have been no Israel and, subsequently, no Palestinian bloodshed.

"The pamphlet is outrageous and whoever issued the pamphlets wanted to harm the Palestinian cause and undermine the Islamic Propagation Centre International," Hendricks said.

"We do not support any dictator or any state that commits ethnic cleansing and would perpetrate atrocities against humanity."

Moulana Rafeek Shah, chairman of the Muslim Youth Movement of South Africa and imam of the Raza Mosque in Phoenix, believed there was a sinister force behind the pamphlets.

He said: "I believe this is an attempt to make the Muslims come across as anti-Semitic in the eyes of the world," he said. "Our battle is not against Judaism. It is against any political or religious philosophy that seeks to oppress on the basis of skin colour or religion."

Moulana Yunus Osman, secretary general of Jamiatul Ulema, the supreme Muslim body in KwaZulu-Natal, said: "As Muslims, we are supposed to respect all religions. We are shocked by the publishing of the hate pamphlets, purportedly by the Islamic Propagation Centre. We have carried out an investigation and we could find no evidence that the IPCI was behind this mischief making," he added.

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Bin Laden: the Durban connection

Report and picture: ISMAIL SUDER

YOUSUF DEEDAT, the former secretary-general of the Islamic Propagation Centre International (IPCI) in Durban, is a man who is used to courting controversy. His elderly father, Sheik Ahmed Deedat (78), who suffered a stroke, is an internationally known scholar and defender of Islam. As a founder and head of the IPCI, Ahmed Deedat has wooed the heads of many Arab nations, including the Saudi-based Bin Laden family, who are thought to be worth at least $5-billion (R40-billion).

It was not surprising then that the Bin Laden family had pumped at least $3,1-million (R24-million) into the IPCI for the propagation of Islam in South Africa. This also included the printing of the Holy Quran in Zulu.

The imposing building of the IPCI at the corner of Grey Street and Queen Street was named the Bin Laden Centre after the wealthy Arab benefactor. However, the building was renamed after the Bin Laden family requested that its name be removed from the building. Last week, at least half a dozen media people descended on the Deedat family home in Verulam to interview both father and son about their association with America's enemy number one, Osama bin Laden, who is suspected of being the mastermind behind the suicide attacks of the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon.

The Deedats pointed out that they have had no recent contact whatsoever with Osama bin Laden, but continue to enjoy close relations with his relatives, who are one of the richest families in Saudi Arabia.

Carte Blanche producers from M-Net television conducted an extensive interview with Ahmed Deedat who, since his stroke, can only communicate by a special word board.

His son Yousuf Deedat told the *Daily News* this week that since the attacks on key American targets, he had contacted a member of the Bin Laden family to express sympathy" for possibly being tarred with the same brush as their kin, Osama bin Laden.

'Some people say that my telephone may be bugged by American intelligence or my

movements monitored, but I have nothing to hide," he added.

Yousuf Deedat said the Bin Laden family had vehemently condemned the attack.

"An elder of the Bin Laden family has told me that the family had already distanced itself from Osama bin Laden.

"It is unfortunate that the good name of the Bin Laden family in Saudi Arabia will now be associated with America's main suspect, Osama bin Laden, who is falsely regarded by America as a ruthless mass murderer. It now means that any member of the Bin Laden family who innocently travels to the United States would be viewed with suspicion."

Yousuf Deedat said he had met the charismatic Osama bin Laden at a lecture he gave at a mosque in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. "When I was introduced to him I was awestruck by the man's charisma. He came across as a humble person, but his captivated audience were gripped by his powerful oratory skills which were almost magnetic."

Osama bin Laden, according to Yousuf Deedat, was once a loved son of the United States government. However, he returned home and was deeply offended by the presence of foreign forces based in the Holy Land, Saudi Arabia.

"He was also appalled by the many multi-billion dollar construction contracts that were given to American companies rather than the local companies.

"THE once warm relationship with Osama bin Laden and the Kingdom changed when he opposed the presence of American forces there. Since then he has been regarded by the United States and Saudi Arabia as a dangerous adversary. He was then exiled first to Sudan and thereafter to Afghanistan."

Yousuf Deedat said he was outraged by the attack on America which left thousands of people either killed or injured. "I felt the same outrage when the American forces relentlessly bombed Iraq," he said.

Commenting on allegations that Osama bin Laden may be behind the well-orchestrated suicide attacks, Yousuf Deedat said it was premature to blame Osama bin Laden for the attacks. "However, if it was proved that Osama bin Laden was involved, then I would condemn his actions in the strongest possible terms. As a Muslim, the murder of innocent people is abhorrent in Islam.

"The persons who had carried out these brutal attacks are not worthy of being categorised as Muslim," he said.

Asked what his thoughts were on an impending revenge attack, possibly on Afghanistan which is harbouring Osama bin Laden, Yousuf Deedat said simply: "Two wrongs do not make a right".

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Bring real culprit to justice

THE world media has publicised the carnage in America as one perpetrated by Islamic fanatics. Please examine the details unemotionally and rationally.

The "Muslim terrorists" over the decades have succeeded in either planting the occasional bomb or blowing themselves up. That is about all they are capable of. Deep divisions between different factions, poor co-ordination, lack of effective leadership and expertise will ensure that for decades to come, that is the sum of their abilities.

To co-ordinate the commandeering of, not one, but four civilian planes within the USA within 45 minutes of each other and then callously slamming them into thousands of civilians is something totally out of their league. It is totally out of character. It simply could not have been them. So, who did it?

Repeatedly, we hear of "Pearl Harbour". Is this co-incidence or blatant bravado and contempt? Subsequent declassified documents have confirmed the US leadership was aware of the planned attack on Pearl Harbour long before it happened.

The main fleet was secretly moved away from the harbour under cover of darkness. The rest is history.

Many Americans lost their lives because people who have no respect for American (human) lives used them as bait to contrive America's entry into the war. It is the same kind of disregard for human life that is portrayed in this heinous act against humanity. The people behind it are one and the same in character and thinking. These people seem to enjoy using esoteric codes. It is therefore not surprising they chose September (the 9th month) 11 for this criminal emergency – 911 is the American number to dial for an emergency.

The "evidence" being presented would make any thinking person laugh were it not so sinister. When last have you rummaged in your tipster or garbage truck? Why should landlords suddenly rummage among the rubbish? Because the "evidence" was planted. A group so efficient and so meticulous to the last detail yet so incompetent as to leave a trail of overwhelming evidence in their wake?

I think not. If they could have been careful enough to use false names so as to protect their associates still alive, would they leave Qu'rans in cars at the airport from which they departed, together with flight manuals and instructions? I certainly think not.

President Bush claims this is war against terrorists. Watch his actions carefully and you will seriously wonder just who the terrorist really is. If his intention is to bring about peace and security, would he act in a way that catapults us towards another world war? Does he care one bit about the innocent people that will die, be they American or otherwise? Does he engage all world leaders? Does he obtain all the evidence and present it?

No. Presently he is acting as judge, jury and would-be executioner. He is taking the world towards another world war (Pearl Harbour). Are we really so foolish to fall for it?

Bin Laden previously took "credit" for the blasts that he orchestrated, and they were also directed against American nationals. He denies any involvement in this one. Why should he suddenly change character and not take "credit" for this greatest of great deeds? Because he was not responsible.

I believe the people behind the attack have no regard for human life. Be it Muslim, Christian, Jew or whoever, all will perish (remember the gas chambers in Germany?) Different groups will be used against each other so that we end up killing each other while the true perpetrators present themselves as the "good guys" fighting "evil".

We need to ensure Bush is not given the freedom to torpedo us into another world war. We need to stand firm and bring to justice the people really responsible. We must no longer accept another Timothy McVeigh or Lee Harvey Oswald or Bin Laden, all of them scapegoats (or as the Americans call them "patsies"). Rather we should express our indignation and strive for the real culprits to be brought to justice.

N C KAMDAR
Chatsworth

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Muslim restraint plea

ISMAIL SUDER

ABOUT 3 500 worshippers at Durban's Grey Street mosque were today urged to show restraint in the face of anti-Muslim sentiments sweeping the world after terrorist attacks on American targets that killed more than 5 000 people.

Community leader and radio personality Mr Rafeek Hassan was the guest speaker during the Jumma prayers at the mosque, the largest in southern Africa.

Trustees of the mosque have tightened security after a bomb threat last week. Tourists have been banned until further notice and worshippers arriving with parcels will not be given access.

In his address, Hassan urged Muslims to show restraint in the face of provocation by people angered by last week's terror attacks in the United States.

But he said that violent attacks on Muslims and their places of worship should be defended "with responsibility."

He said Muslims everywhere had condemned the violence against the US and the loss of innocent lives.

"However, we take exception to the US pointing a finger at the Muslim world without proof. This type of unfair and speculative accusation is irresponsible and has already led to hate sentiments against Muslims around the world, and, to a lesser extent, in our country."

Hassan said that if the US's prime terror suspect Osama bin Laden was indeed behind the attacks, then he should be captured and made to pay for his crime.

"However, we must learn not to brand an entire community or religious group by extremists."

Muslims in South Africa should defend attacks on Islamic sites by "fanatics and extremists".

Bishop's plea: Page 3

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1
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Nicola Jones

A nasty response to horror attacks

TWO very scary things have become clear to me since the bombing of the World Trade Centre in New York. The first is that individual humans get to make choices which can change the course of world history, and the second is that when fundamentalists make these choices, all hell breaks loose.

First we got a bunch of Muslim fundamentalists making the choice to turn aeroplanes filled with people into flying bombs, thereby creating horror, destruction and world tumult.

And just as America began to get to grips with the horror of it all, we got the most cruel and nasty response to the tragedy from within the US itself – from Christian fundamentalists.

Two of the most prominent voices of the religious right in America – Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson – said liberal civil liberties groups, federal courts, pagans, feminists, homosexuals and abortion rights supporters (among others) bear partial responsibility for the terrorist attack because their actions have turned God's anger against America.

On America's Christian Broadcasting Network's "700 Club" hosted by Robertson, Falwell said: "I really believe the pagans, and the abortionists, and the feminists, and the gays and the lesbians who are actively trying to make that an alternative lifestyle, the ACLU, People for the American Way – all of them who have tried to secularise America – I point the finger in their face and say, 'You helped this happen.'"

Falwell must have got the finger-pointing thing from former National Party state president P W Botha. He was, after all, quite sympathetic towards the apartheid regime.

He also appears sympathetic towards people who bomb abortion clinics and murder the doctors and nurses who work there, as well as those who bomb gay bars and bash nerdy-looking men. After all, if you perpetuate violence in the name of God, it isn't wrong, is it?

Falwell, for those of you who don't remember, was also responsible (among many other things) for slamming the Teletubby Tinky Winky as setting a role model for kids to become homosexuals. Tinky Winky is purple and Falwell said this is the colour of gay people. On top of all this, Tinky Winky carries a red handbag.

He can't have noticed that Barney, the world-famous bouncing dinosaur, is also purple. Added to that, Barney has a bloody irritating high-pitched giggle, can be quite astonishingly camp and is always hugging everybody. He does, however, teach kids to share, which sets them in good stead for an adulthood of tithing and is probably why he missed Falwell's knife.

Actually, Falwell's purple phobia makes me think he can't have been in a regular church much. Purple features quite predominantly in many orthodox churches, from stain glass windows to priests' robes. In terms of Western symbolism – yes, part of the Western Christian tradition which Falwell claims to support – purple has been associated with royalty since ancient Roman times, and stands for power, leadership, respect and wealth.

ALL OF WHICH explains why Falwell himself doesn't wear much purple. I must admit as well to a little concern at his targeting feminists, of all groups. Perhaps he coached the US politician who said in 1992: "Feminism encourages women to leave their husbands, kill their children, practise witchcraft, destroy capitalism and become lesbians."

If his brand of fundamentalist followers subscribe to this view, imagine what targets they could pick: any of thousands of crèches all over the world (because good mothers don't abandon their children), any of the millions of companies or organisations which employ women, or even any of the thousands of book clubs throughout the world where women gather to read nasty (secular) novels for entertainment purposes instead of staying home and doing some ironing.

Indeed, he must agree with many of the rules fundamentalist regimes such as the Taliban set down for their women. Let's face it – people who claim Disney's *The Lion King* contains a subliminal message (the letters S-E-X flashing across the screen; try as I might, I can't see it) and want all the videos withdrawn, are capable of anything.

Oklahoma bomber Timothy McVeigh was a fundamentalist Christian. Need I say more?

Falwell believes there should be no separation between Church and State, and wants to be president. Perhaps he was simply pissed off with the above-mentioned groups for not voting him in to some position of power.

Whatever the reason, all I can suggest is that he reads 1 Corinthians: 13, and gets some understanding of the word "charity", because his recent actions have failed the charitable test is a most repulsive way.

Nicola Jones is a lecturer in communications at the University of Zululand

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So why are Americans hated so much?

Hans Pienaar

THEY SAY IT in tones of having given the matter much thought, and then having come to a regrettable conclusion, wishing to provide a way out for all right-thinking people: "The Americans should ask themselves why the world hates them so much."

Don't you just abhor the mix of false caring, hidden deviousness and sheer arrogance of such a statement? It is xenophobia in a wrapper, a kind of letter bomb with a charitable stamp on it. Only the fact that it is a cliché, having been repeated so many times now, reduces one's reaction from nausea to irritation.

It becomes all the more hypocritical when expressed by African intellectuals wholly dependent on American products for their lifestyle. You know the picture: Four-by-four, baseball cap, American-style jeans and T-shirts, articles written on American computer chips and sent to American-trained colleagues by e-mail on the American Internet, after having watched American TV.

Do people hate Americans? That can't be true. Xenophobia is a response to an image, a caricature can only be truthful to the extent that it is a response to an image, whether it is a caricature or a memory of the business expert jetting in for efficiency audits with the personnel manager. The great majority of us have only a movie-mediated view of Americans.

Despite the proximities of the global village, we can't say we know the Americans well enough to hate them, or to love them. Individuals yes, and collections of individuals with whom we are in regular contact. That is why the attacks on American targets are meaningless for us, insofar as they are the result of distortions among Muslim radicals – about whom we know even less.

Which is why I find certain local commentators' analogies between the feelings the oppressed had in the apartheid days and the jubilation in certain Mideastern streets so disappointing. Not only is it stretching things further than teenagers at an American bubblegum contest, but it reflects rather adversely on the local level of thought.

Now is not the time for crude statements of solidarity.

The world now needs well-weighted criticism, against America, united as it stands behind a cowboy, George W Bush, who spouts a Wild West movie rhetoric.

America could now be leading the world into an age possibly darker than the Cold War in the 1950s. Bush's family-values crusaders now suddenly have carte blanche to force the world into the straitjackets we had thought had been locked up in museums.

The first cause of this massive regression is not America's paranoia or dormant fascism, but two airliners being crashed into two skyscrapers by terrorists whose minds had been corrupted by xenophobic distortions of America.

The tragedy is that we had seen it all before. In Israel, where a war criminal called Ariel Sharon was voted into power by an electorate goaded not by their anti-Palestinian racism – that had been there all along – but by suicide bombers, poor kids with minds corrupted by promises of virgins waiting in heaven for all so-called martyrs.

Most African intellectuals, some fresh from jaunts all over the world to attend American-funded conferences on, say, the use of children in warfare, looked everywhere but there. And they barely raised a cellphone flap when suicide bombers attacked Nairobi and Dar es Salaam, killing 250-odd Africans. But when America called a spade a spade and withdrew from the Durban racism conference, the din raised rusty roofs from Cape Town to Cairo.

Let's speculate for a moment what would have happened had the world and America adopted a resolution in Durban declaring that Israel was an American colony exploiting Palestinians as cheap labour. Would it have stopped the WTC suicide bombers? With all those virgins waiting for them? Of course not.

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This conclusion can only mean that America was right to withdraw. We should have the courage to admit this – and that our mistake in the first place was to try to legitimise a political process steered by terrorists, i.e. suicide bombers.

If we had seen things for what they were, and rejected Palestinian dementia just as much as the Israeli variety, we would have lost friends in the Mideast but earned the respect of informed Americans, of which there are many.

We would have been in a position today to tell America to go slow, and get out of the Afghan corral. Maybe America would not have listened, but at least we would not be the diplomatic fly to be politely waved at that we have suddenly become.

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thethursdayfile

Class theory is kept to a minimum in terror training. In London.

Ian Burrell and **Jason Benetto** report for the Independent Foreign Service

A FOURTH-FLOOR flat on one of Britain's most deprived council estates may not be the likeliest base from which to recruit an army to fight a global war. But police suspect that behind a white-painted front door on a windswept walkway of the notorious Ferrier estate in Kidbrooke, south-east London, was a British command centre for raising funds and warriors for a Jihad.

On Monday night, officers from Scotland Yard's anti-terrorist branch broke down the door and took away boxes and bin-liners of equipment and documents.

Police believe the flat is the centre of operations for a company called Sakina Security Services, which runs a website

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offering Islamic fighters training in sniping, ambush and other firearms skills at a "state of the art shooting range in the United States".

Inviting clients to partake in "The Ultimate Jihad Challenge", the company promises: "You will fire between 2 000 to 3 000 rounds of mixed calibre ammunition. Class theory is kept to a minimum."

Scotland Yard's investigation is centred on Sakina's alleged involvement in fundraising for Islamic Jihad, a terror group outlawed in Britain. The website invites people to "donate now" to a London account of the Woolwich Bank and help pay for the "liberation" of the Al Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem, Islam's second most holy site.

Officers arrested Sulayman Zain-ul-Abidin, owner of the flat where Sakina is allegedly based, and were yesterday questioning him at the high-security ddington Green police station, west ondon.

The Kidbrooke council flat is innocuous, just like so many of the other premises raided by British and American police investigating suspected Islamic terror groups in the past three weeks. But the surprise among terrorism experts, MPs and neighbours on the Ferrier estate yesterday, was not at the unlikely location but at why Sakina has been allowed to continue operating for so long.

The company's activities have been public knowledge for more than a year and a half, during which time it has been monitored by the Special Branch and the Home Office. The Federal Bureau of Investigation has been aware of intelligence that Sakina operated firearms training courses in Michigan, Virginia and the Missouri desert for more than a year.

Mohammed Jameel, a 1.9m tall martial s expert who is the operational head of akina, has for nearly three years been organising training camps in the English countryside for young Muslims to learn hand-to-hand combat and survival techniques.

During that period, a network of Islamist organisations which allegedly includes Sakina and al-Muhajiroun – a radical Muslim organisation which has been banned from campuses by the National Union of Students – have sent between 1 000 and 2 500 young Britons overseas to train and fight for the Jihad.

"I HOPE THIS IS THE BEGINNING OF THE STORY IN UNRAVELLING SOME OF THESE VERY SHADOWY ORGANISATIONS"

British Muslims have been linked to car-bombings in Afghanistan and Kashmir and a terror campaign in Yemen.

Mr Andrew Dismore, MP for Hendon, began investigating Sakina two years ago and has raised questions about the company in Parliament. Dismore said he had once been "a voice in the wilderness".

"I don't know why it has taken so long," he said of Monday's raid. "What we don't know is whether a decision was taken by the Security Service to let these people carry on so that they could keep an eye on them and who they were working with."

Even neighbours in Kidbrooke had suspicions about Sakina. One woman claimed that she had seen Zain-ul-Abidin, who has lived at the raided flat for the past four years, on a television documentary about Islamic extremism two years ago. Around the same time, police carried out a dawn raid at the flat and searched the premises but apparently found nothing.

The recruitment went on and the involvement of young Britons in terror activities has become increasingly apparent.

Last February, the Russian government complained that students from British universities, including the London School of Economics, were being recruited by Islamic groups to fight in Chechnya.

The comments echoed the frustrations of France, Israel, Syria and the United States in their efforts to extradite British-based suspected Islamic terrorists.

Britain, those governments claimed, was creating in London a hotbed of Muslim fundamentalist opinion and a haven for those intent on campaigns of violence elsewhere in the world.

But after last month's atrocities in New York and Washington DC, the approach of Britain's anti-terrorist agencies has significantly changed.

The government has been stung by criticisms from abroad of its perceived inactivity and ministers are keenly aware that since September 11, the British public feels frightened by a threat that it previously

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believed existed only in places like Kashmir, Chechnya, Yemen and Afghanistan.

Professor Paul Wilkinson, from the Centre for the Study of Terrorism and Political Violence at St Andrews University, said publicity around the presence in Britain of Islamic extremists had put great public and media pressure on the authorities.

"Many people have been rather surprised by the fact that the Bin Laden network has had sleepers and people working in Britain for fairly long periods of time," he said.

Whitehall sources admitted yesterday that police and security services had preferred to keep suspect organisations under surveillance unless clear evidence of wrongdoing existed, but had now been forced to take a more proactive and aggressive approach.

In weeks to come, fresh operations are expected against suspected money launderers, fake charities, front companies and extremists attempting to recruit new followers.

Part of the new tactic is to disrupt the flow of money and recruitment by raiding the homes and businesses of suspects and arresting the alleged organisers. Anti-terrorist officers not only hope to obtain evidence to prosecute the suspects of illegal fund raising and inciting acts of terrorism, but also to put pressure on them and make life uncomfortable.

Dismore said: "I hope this is the beginning of the story in unravelling some of these very shadowy organisations."

The heat is on. Outspoken Muslim radicals like Al-Muhajiroun leader Omar Bakri Mohammed, who previously boasted of sending thousands of young Britons to fight for Islam, has moved to distance himself from Sakina, even though he is a close ally of Mr Jameel.

Muslim extremists in Britain have previously taken great care to stay within the law. Sakina used American shooting ranges "due to the firearms law in the UK".

Wilkinson, who believes the authorities should seek to prosecute extremists for incitement to commit terrorism, warned that government plans to use financial investigators to trap fundraisers for terror groups may not succeed. "They are sophisticated organisations that change the identities of the groups they are working for and set up new charities and bodies all the time," he said.

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JJ Cornish

They hate – but who do they love?

ONE has to step lightly when writing about Islam in South Africa. Rightly so. Muslim pressure groups, which have mushroomed in this country, spend much of their time responding to unforgivable Islamophobia and sheer bigotry. They do this with some energy and an uncompromising defensiveness – so much so that it is often easier simply to avoid the subject than incur their scrutiny and their wrath.

Not possible this time, I'm afraid. The first row I ever had with the Laudium-based Media Review Network (MRN) – which scours the newspapers for anything written about Islam – followed my first visit in 1995 to Algeria.

It was a very civilised encounter. Two gentlemen came to the office and took me out to tea. Was I sure about labelling the Algerian extremists – who had at that stage slaughtered about 50 000 men, women and children – terrorists, the gentlemen wanted to know.

Why had I not given equal space to the grievances of those people who had resorted to violence following the government's cancellation of the 1991 election when it looked as if the fundamentalists were going to win the election?

True, I had concentrated on the activities of the hard men. This involved decapitation, throat slitting, rape, beating babies to death by swinging them up against a wall and blowing up merchants driving by in their panel vans.

Their objective was to strike such terror in the hearts of the population that the country would become ungovernable.

I did not apologise then, neither do I do so now with the benefit of hindsight, for my news judgment. The horror of what was being done needed to be broadcast to the world. I never got the other side of the story because the perpetrators of this terror were not in the business of talking to the media. Try it, I was warned, and you will get your throat slit. The fundamentalists had already killed six journalists by then.

Reporters were living like special forces troops away from their families, sneaking visits on safe ground at weekends.

Understandably, visiting Algerian President Abdelaziz Bouteflika stands four square behind the war on terrorism. As he said in Cape Town this week, the countries now enthusiastically prosecuting that war have given refuge to terrorists from his country and others.

> **... THE PERPETRATORS OF THIS TERROR WERE NOT IN THE BUSINESS OF TALKING TO THE MEDIA**

The terrorists who killed thousands in New York and Washington last month have also preferred not to identify themselves. Perhaps they were horrified by what they had done. The apologists for them took some weeks to come out of the woodwork. Now that they have, they sound alarmingly like the apologists for the terrorists in Algeria. Both terror groups are largely the creation of the Americans, who trained and armed them in Afghanistan during the Cold War in the 1980s to fight the Soviet occupiers.

Sure they have some legitimate grievances to air. A government once hamstrung by corruption; a superpower behaving with arrogance. But nothing justifies their bloody, indiscriminate terrorism. To act in the name of Islam is an insult to that religion. The overwhelming majority of Muslims will argue that theirs is a religion of tolerance and humanity. It is designed to build society, as groups like the MRN contend.

The terrorists claim to have a finer grasp of the religion. Nothing could be further from the truth. They certainly show a very poor understanding of history. Islam reached its high point in the middle ages, when influence of Christians and Jews, among others, was co-opted to enrich cosmopolitan Muslim cities. They were incorporated and assimilated into societies that advanced art, music, mathematics and science for the whole world.

This was a period of growth in business and of building Islam. What can Osama bin Laden and groups like the GIA in Algeria claim to be building? We know who they hate, but who do they love? The Palestinians, whom Bin Laden claims to speak for, shun him and say he has no claim to represent them.

We know they wish to cast all the infidels out of Islam's most holy places. But who will they include and who will benefit by this? They know how to kill their enemies. But where do they show how this will genuinely raise the people they send to their kamikaze deaths. To justify breaking something down, you have to build an alternative. The terrorists offer none.

History will judge them as vandals, monsters who destroyed with no hope of rebuilding. They scared the hell out of us, but they will pass through like a base wind.

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thefridayfile

No place for women

Women find no place in notorious fugitive Osama bin Laden's terrorist network. **Brian Williams** explains from Washington

WHEN the FBI released its list of most wanted terrorists last week, the faces of 22 men stared out at the world. There was not a woman among them. If there is a way the current global wave of terrorism – apart from its greater ferocity – differs from the previous heyday of terrorism in the 1970s and 1980s, it is the almost complete lack of involvement by women.

There is no Fusako Shigenobu of Japan's Red Army, Leila Khaled of Palestinian hijack infamy, Adriana Faranda of Italy's Red Brigades or Ulrike Meinhof of Germany's Baader Meinhof gang.

In their time, the four, as well as other women in the groups, stood shoulder to shoulder with their men and were equally feared and sought by international law enforcement agencies.

If there is a woman of their stature in Osama bin Laden's Al Qaeda network, chief suspect in last month's suicide plane attacks on the United States, intelligence agencies are not letting on.

Intelligence officials do not rule out the use of women, perhaps even unwittingly, as couriers in Al Qaeda's global network, but their involvement – if any – is low profile at best.

A senior official in the US State Department's rewards programme, which offers a bounty for information leading to the capture of terrorists, said there was not a single woman targeted by the department.

"No, not even a courier," the official told Reuters.

Dr Shireen Hunter, director of the Islamic Programme of the Centre for Strategic and International Studies, a Washington think-tank, is not surprised there is no role for women in Bin Laden's operations.

"There is just no tradition of female warriors in Islam," said Hunter, who is Iranian-born. "There is no Joan of Arc figure in Islamic history.

"For an extremist like Bin Laden, who regards women as subhuman almost, it would be unthinkable."

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Hunter said that 30 years ago the groups in which women played such a big part were driven by Marxism, even when they were supporting Arab causes.

"Bin Laden is driven by his completely false view of Islam, and in his twisted view, there is no place for women," Hunter said.

Former CIA counter-terrorism agent Stanley Bedlington believes the use of women would even be counter-productive for Bin Laden because of resistance to their use by fundamentalists who are his main followers.

"Particularly, in a place like Afghanistan, it would lead to a backlash against Bin Laden by village elders and religious leaders," Bedlington said.

"There is no honey-trap strategy in Al Qaeda," Bedlington said. "That's something we don't have to worry about – yet."

It was not like that in the 1970s and 1980s.

Japan's Shigenobu was a founder of the Army and oversaw a multinational campaign of kidnappings, bombings, and hijackings.

Ulrike Meinhof was the founder, with Andreas Baader, of the group named after them that spread fear throughout Germany.

Italy's Red Brigades were an equal opportunity group. There were many women in their ranks and they shared the duties, violent or not, with the men. Both fired the guns and both did the cooking and cleaning at the hideouts.

At the first trial for the 1978 kidnapping and murder of former Italian prime minister Aldo Moro, about a third of the 60 or so Red Brigade defendants were women.

Perhaps the most famous woman who was a member of the Red Brigades was Adriana Faranda, the companion of Valerio Morucci, one of the masterminds of the Moro kidnapping.

The period's most famous hijacker, Leila Khaled, who was involved in two hijackings, was a woman – and a Muslim. She is now a leader of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

For Dan Benjamin, director of transnational security, including terrorism, during the Clinton administration, no comparison can be made between the lack of involvement of women in current-day events and the previous era of terrorism.

"Bin Laden is from a different universe," Benjamin said. "He believes in the subjugation of women."

... or children either

KHOROQ (Afghanistan): Farkhuddin Abdurazik is still learning his trade as a warrior, but the 12-year-old already proudly b[illegible] the scars of a veteran fighter.

[illegible] months on the frontline in northern Afghanistan facing off against the ruling Taliban have left him with physical scars and an air of bravado.

A few strands of hair poke from beneath Abdurazik's bright pink and green silk cap, but the black traces of shrapnel from a mortar injury still mark his purple scalp where his hair has yet to grow back.

"My father was killed in this war and I decided I would fight in his place," says Abdurazik, who holds his Kalashnikov rifle proudly across his chest and believes he was destined to be a warrior.

Abdurazik started training as a fighter for the opposition Northern Alliance when he was 10, one of the youthful pieces of cannon fodder the opposition has been using in its war against the Taliban since 1994.

It is not only the Northern Alliance that recruits such youthful fighters. He often finds himself fighting boys as young as himself recruited by the hardline Taliban, which controls about 90% of this rugged, barren country.

Abdurazik says his mother has urged him to fight his father's war in the Northern Alliance's ragtag army, composed mainly of ethnic Tajiks and Uzbeks from the north.

His frontline duties have taken on a new significance in recent weeks after the United States began pounding Taliban positions to force them to give up Saudi-born militant Osama bin Laden – blamed for the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon.

That has led to renewed hopes for the Northern Alliance, on the back foot since being run out of the capital, Kabul, in 1996.

The opposition has started moving forward again and has repositioned many of its veteran troops for a final push on the key northern town of Mazar-i-Sharif, leaving eager younger fighters on the frontline.

"Yeah, I really like fighting, especially when we get to shoot at the black turbans (Taliban) over there," Abdurazik says, gesturing across a slim valley from his bunker on the brow of a hill above the abandoned village of Khoroq.

Behind him, five fighters scurry about a warren of trenches, carrying Kalashnikov rifles and rocket launchers and wearing traditional rolled-ridge, woollen pakul hats, long cloaks and waistcoats.

They shoot for entertainment, laughing as they pepper the air with bullets.

"There's been no action ... it's boring. All that's here is dust. Everyone is at Mazar-i-Sharif," said commander Iman Udin, who is only 20. Mazar-i-Sharif is the strategic northern city where Northern Alliance forces are battling to advance.

"I've been here for months and I hate this dust," he says, crouching on the ground that swims in orange-coloured and gritty sand.

They are passionate, but some of the more experienced fighters who helped to grind down the Soviet Union's army and force them out in 1989 say they take unnecessary risks. – Reuters