

THE FUTURE OF AL-QAEDA AFTER THE DEATH OF BIN LADEN: FIGHTING TERRORISM

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Abstract

Death of the leader of terrorist group al-Qaeda Osama bin Laden on May 2, 2011, was celebrated by the Americans as a final defeat of the terrorism and al-Qaeda. In fact al-Qaeda is a group with the flexible structure, where the core leadership nowadays has only a symbolic value, and therefore death of bin Laden will not cause the damage to the group. More dangerous are the second and third elements of al-Qaeda hierarchy, which act upon the ideology, which was set by Osama bin Laden and his close associates. The main aim for the United States' counterterrorist strategy therefore would be to not target the leader of the group, but to target the ideology of al-Qaeda as a whole. By discrediting the ideology of the group, al-Qaeda will lose the support of the public, which is the core strength of the group. The loss of support will lead to the defeat of al-Qaeda.

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Introduction

On May 2, 2011 United States Special Forces¹ killed, “the most wanted man on the planet”, the leader of terrorist group al-Qaeda, which was responsible for the September 11, 2001 attack on the World Trade Center in New York, and the icon of the modern Islamic resurgence Osama bin Laden. He was assassinated in his Pakistani house, and buried in the sea within 24 hours. United States had captured and killed its number one enemy, but terrorism as a threat is still present. Death of bin Laden will influence the face of the global terrorism. Terrorism was not always labelled as a global threat, and therefore in order to understand the impact of killing bin Laden on global terrorism, this phenomenon has to be properly defined.

Diplomat’s dictionary defines terrorism as a “use of violence against non-combatants, civilians or other persons normally considered to be illegitimate targets of military action for purpose of attracting attention to a political cause, forcing those aloof from the struggle to join it, or intimidating opponents into concessions” (Feeman, 1997). Benjamin Netanyahu (1995), Israeli Prime Minister, defined it as “the deliberate and systematic assault on civilians to inspire fear for political ends.” David Fromkin (1975) assigned terrorism with the creation of fear, which “leads somebody else – not the terrorist – to embark on some quite different program of action that will accomplish whatever is that the terrorist really desires.” All of these definitions contain two characteristic features: deed, or an action (which is in most cases violent), and achievement of a political goal. Types of actions and the political goals varied throughout the history, and therefore David C. Rappoport (2012), classified these differences into waves in his article *The four waves of modern terrorism*.

¹ Navy SEALs

First wave of terrorism started in the late 19th century in Russia, and it is also where the modern terrorism emerged. Nineteenth century Russian terrorists were anarchists, who fought against the old Czarist regime. In order to achieve their political goals they focused on assassination of the “famous public figures”, which represented the regime they wanted to change. Narodnaya Volya was most successful anarchist terrorist group, because they assassinated the Russian Czar Alexander II in 1881. The peak of the first wave was in 1890s “Golden Age of Assassinations”, during which the leaders and representatives of regimes were killed throughout the whole Europe. With the fall of feudal regimes, anarchism changed to nationalism, which is the characteristic feature of the second wave of terror. Goal of the nationalists was to achieve the sovereignty of their nation. Tactics of the targeted assassination was replaced by the use of guerrilla warfare in order to fight the army and the police of the “oppressor”. Groups like Irish IRA, Palestinian PLO, or Algerian FLN, are the representatives of the second wave of terrorism. However, the nationalist movements are still present, so does the nationalist conflicts, new trend in terrorism emerged in nationally coherent countries. Third wave of terrorism was same as the first wave challenging the state establishment as a whole. Third wave terrorists were a Marxists or Leftist movements, which fought against, political order, in order to establish socialism, or at least regime, with the features of it. Italian Red Brigades and German Red Army Faction were using targeted assassinations and kidnappings of the influential people in order to achieve their goal. Fourth wave and the actual threat is characteristic by its religious aspect. The main defining goal of the so-called Islamic resurgence is the establishment of *umma*, which is the creation of the Muslim state. The vanguard organization nowadays is without doubt al-Qaeda. Islamic terrorists are combining previous terrorist techniques in order to achieve their goals, with addition of the ‘martyrs’ i.e. suicide bombers (Rapoport, 2012). Terrorist attack on the United

States on September 11, 2001 executed by al-Qaeda is the turning point in the age of terror, because since then terrorism became a 'global threat' (Satya, 2002).

Since September 11, 2001 al-Qaeda is most recognizable terrorist group nowadays, although they have been involved in many terrorist attacks worldwide, thoughts about them differ. According to Jason Burke (2003), al-Qaeda as it is popularly recognized existed between the years 1996 and 2001, and the United States State Department referred to al-Qaeda as a group for the first time in 1998. Fawaz Gerges (2011) and John Mueller (2006) argue that al-Qaeda is not capable of major attack since 2001, and therefore the threat that the group poses is exaggerated. On the other hand, Michael Scheuer (2011), Peter L. Bergen (2001), and Rik Coolsaet (2005) claim that al-Qaeda was established in the late 1980s. Bruce Riedel (2007), Paul R. Pillar (2011), and Abel Bari Atwan (2006) argue that al-Qaeda became significantly stronger since 9/11. Same mixture of arguments and ideas is also in the case of bin Laden himself. These were labelled by Michael Scheuer (2011) as "bin Laden's narratives", which follows from the misinformation, using the wrong sources, or from relying on the information provided by the mass media. Osama bin Laden was a jihad warrior and the creator of a terrorist group called al-Qaeda (Sheuer 2011; Cronin, 2009).

How will assassination of bin Laden influence the nature of al-Qaeda and the global terrorism? Would it lead to the complete end of the group, or would it spark the wave of retaliations, or would it leave the group unchanged? Al-Qaeda had evolved since the late 1980s. From the strictly hierarchically centred group became a franchise organization in which the different cells act independently. Bin Laden was an important figure, but whether he is dead or alive his ideology is still present and resonates among his supporters. Therefore the death of bin Laden would not hurt al-Qaeda, nor would it enhance the potential of the group. Global terrorism will remain untouched and the question that follows from this is what tactics should United States implement in order to defeat al-Qaeda? Assassination of the

leadership and the invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq, are not successful. Al-Qaeda has to be hurt internally, i.e. its ideology has to be compromised, and therefore United States, as the biggest enemy of the al-Qaeda, have to aim the tactics on fulfilling some of the goals of al-Qaeda which are tangible. This fulfilment of their goals will not be seen as weakness, but it will undermine the power of al-Qaeda.

In my dissertation I used original works of the prominent Islam thinkers like Taqi ud-Deen Ahmad Ibn Taymiyyah, Sayyid Qutb, Syed Abul A'la Maududi, Muhammad abd al-Salam Faraj, and Sheikh Abdullah Yusuf Azzam, which also have an impact on bin Laden. I also used al-Qaeda manual, bin Laden's *fatwa's: Declaration of War against the Americans Occupying the Land of the Two Holy Places*, and *Jihad against Jews and Crusaders*, and Ayman al- Zawahiri's *Knights under the Prophet's Banner*, in order to understand the nature of the religious terror, and the motivations and the goals of al-Qaeda. Bin Laden's and al-Zawahiri's writing are the base from which I am analyzing the recommendations towards U.S. government in order to defeat al-Qaeda. I also used a secondary literature: books and articles by specialists on terrorism, al-Qaeda and bin Laden.

The structure of my dissertation will be as follows: *Chapter 1* will summarize the ideas of the Islamic ideologues, who had the impact on bin Laden and on the ideology of al-Qaeda. *Chapter 2* will portray life of Osama bin Laden, his ideas reflected in his two *fatwas* from 1996 and 1998, and his position and role in al-Qaeda. *Chapter 3* I will describe history, functions, ideologies, hierarchy, and characteristics of al-Qaeda. The last subchapter of the Chapter 3 will conclude what will happen to al-Qaeda after the death of bin Laden. *Chapter 4* provide recommendations for the United States, which are aimed at the defeat of the al-Qaeda which are derived from the analysis of the life of the bin Laden, his writings and history of al-Qaeda and its manual.

Chapter 1: Islamic resurgence

In order to understand ideas of Osama bin Laden, the goals of al-Qaeda and the contemporary religious terrorism as a whole it is important to look at the crucial Islamic historical figures, who influenced Osama bin Laden and the Islamic resurgence movement as a whole. The first important scholar was Taqi ud-Deen Ahmad Ibn Taymiyyah, who fought against the Mongols in thirteenth and fourteenth century. In his *fatwa* he declared jihad against Mongols, which according to him was obligatory to every Muslim. He was one of the key figures in formulation of Salafism (Laqueur, 2004). Salafism (Salafiyya) is derived from al-Salaf al-Salih, “the venerable forefathers,” which is referring to the Prophet Muhammad. Salafis want to purify Islam, which is according to them nowadays not worshiped in its pure form. They want to get it back to its original form, which was acting in accordance with God’s orders (Doran, 2002). Ibn Taymiyyah (2004) wanted to punish Muslims, who do not act upon *Qur’an*, according to *Sharia*, and fight unbelievers, i.e. infidels, who are enemies of Allah and Prophet Muhammad, "until there is no persecution and the religion is Allah's entirely." [Qur'an. 2:193, 8:39]

1.1 Modern jihad

Thoughts of Ibn Taymiyyah were followed in twentieth century by Sayyid Qutb, Syed Abul A'la Maududi, Muhammad abd al-Salam Faraj, and Sheikh Abdullah Yusuf Azzam. Sayyid Qutb, Egyptian school inspector, wrote most of his thoughts in prison, where he died in 1966 and his brother Muhammad Qutb, university professor, spread his ideas to the world (Laqueur, 2004). Qutb (2004) tried to define the goals of Islamic jihad, which were to defend a man from elements like racial and social distinctions, which are limiting his freedom. True meaning of Islam is therefore to get of these elements, and implement the Islamic law of *Sharia*.

Syed Abul A'la Maududi was not a scholar, although he was recognized among Muslim clergy. Even though was not as extreme as Qutb, major topic of his works was jihad (Laqueur, 2004). Maududi (2004) claims that jihad must bring a universal Islamic revolution, which will free all countries from the rule of non-Muslim countries. This revolution will bring Islam as the only religion and *Sharia* as the only system of laws.

Muhammad abd al-Salam Faraj was the leader of Egyptian Islamist group al-Jihad, which assassinated Egyptian president Anwar Sadat 1981. The group al-Jihad under the leadership of Ayman al- Zawahiri merged with al-Qaeda. Faraj (2004) classified jihad into three stages:

1. Jihad of the nafs (inner self)
2. Jihad of the shaytan (the devil); and
3. Jihad against disbelievers and hypocrites.

By classifying jihad he distinguished the enemies to near enemies “al-Adou al-Quareed”, and far enemy “al-Adou al-Baeed” (Gerges, 2011)

The most important figure in modern jihad was Sheikh Abdullah Yusuf Azzam. Azzam retired from the lucrative post at the International Islamic University in Islamabad, which he took in 1981, and became a part in the Afghan jihad in 1986 (Sheuer 2011). He joined the Afghan jihad against USSR, because he realized that the only way how *umma* can be created is through jihad and the weapon (Laqueur, 2004). "Jihad and the rifle alone: No negotiations, no conferences, and no dialogues" (Azzam, 2004). His thoughts and deeds in Afghan jihad attracted thousands of Muslims, who participated in Afghan war. One of the thousands was also Osama bin Laden, who cooperated with Azzam and his son-in-law, Boudjema Bounoua (known as Abdullah Anas), who in 1984 established NGO-like

organization Makhtab al-Khadamat². Makhtab al-Khadamat expanded from Afghanistan to other Arab countries. Its main purpose was to raise and gain funds for the jihad in Afghanistan. The money were used to supply the mujahedeen and also to propaganda and promotion of jihad in the Islamic countries (Sheuer 2011). Azzam's main goals were to fight jihad until the all countries will accept Islam, and to liberate Palestine (Laqueur, 2004).

Taqi ud-Deen Ahmad Ibn Taymiyyah, Sayyid Qutb, Syed Abul A'la Maududi, Muhammad abd al-Salam Faraj, and Sheikh Abdullah Yusuf Azzam influenced with their thoughts and with their deeds³ new generation of jihadists. They started to form in the war between Afghanistan and Soviet Union, during which name Osama bin Laden gained resonance among Arab countries. To see the impact of these ideologues on bin Laden, I will portray his life and then explore the two *fatwas* he wrote in 1996 and 1998.

² Services Bureau

³ Only Ibn Taymiyyah, and Abdullah Azzam were actively involved in jihad

Chapter 2: Osama bin Laden

Osama bin-Muhammad bin-Awad bin Laden was born on March 10, 1957 in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia⁴ (Bodansky 2001; Riedel, 2008; Scheuer, 2011). Since he was young Osama began to form his pro-Islamic reactionary consciousness. He was meeting with prominent Islamists at the settings organized by his father. As a young man he began to admire the views of Taqi ud-Deen Ahmad Ibn Taymiyyah. He received his entire education in the Saudi Arabian Kingdom, where he was attending King Abdul-Aziz University, where he first met Abdullah Azzam and Muhamman Qutb, and for the first time he was associated with the Muslim Brotherhood (Bodansky 2001; Riedel, 2008; Scheuer, 2011).

In December 1979, USSR invaded Afghanistan. The war was brutal: over million people were killed and about the third of the country was forced to go to exile (Bergen, 2001; McCants 2011). In war, Osama began to be involved at first as a collector of funds for mujahedeen. With money from other Arab countries he was financing the operation of the Arab jihadists in Afghanistan, but fundraising was not enough for bin Laden. Bin Laden started to actively participate in Afghan war using the construction vehicles of his family company, to build roads and secret hides and training camps for jihadists. In 1984 bin Laden asked for a permission from the leader of the Islamic Union for the Liberation of Afghanistan (IULA) Ustad Abdul Rab Rasul Sayyaf to set up a training camp in the mountains near city Jaji (Bodansky 2001; Riedel, 2008; Scheuer, 2011). The name of the camp was, 'al-Masadah al-Ansar', Lion's Den of the Companions, and it started to work on October 1986, and by the April 1987 camp was training around 70 jihadist. However bin Laden was not in charge,

⁴ Bin Laden's father Muhammad emigrated here from Yemeni city called Hadramawt. In 1950s Muhammad bin Laden became a minister of public works for one serving period, and after that he became the private contractor of the King Faisal of Saudi Arabia (Bergen, 2001).

because he handed the command out to the more experienced mujahedeen from Egypt Abu Ubaydah al-Panshiri and Abu Hafs al-Masri. Lion's Den only went through one military operation, which started in August 1987. After three weeks 'bin Laden's men' were forced to retreat from their camp in Jaji. Although bin Laden was forced to retreat it was the first time that Mujahedeen were resisting Soviets for such a long time. The long Jaji resistance put the name Osama bin Laden among the prominent Islamic jihadists (Bergen, 2001; Bodansky 2001; Riedel, 2008; Scheuer, 2011). In the late 1980s, bin Laden during Afghan jihad established group named al-Qaeda. (Scheuer, 2011; Bergen 2001; Coolsaet 2005). Scheuer (2011) claims, that it was established exactly in 1988, in order to continue the legacy of the Afghan jihad.

After the experience in Afghanistan, second important situation that defined the ideas of Osama bin Laden was, when Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait in 1990. Bin Laden offered his help to the defence minister of Saudi Arabia, because they were afraid that Hussein can attack them after Kuwait. Royal family rejected bin Laden's offer and asked for United States for help. Bin Laden was not hiding his anger, and as the real enemy of Islam identified west, not Iraq. He left from Saudi Arabia to Pakistan and then in 1991 he moved to Sudan, where he began to support the war against the United States. He supported the Yemeni attack on U.S. forces in 1992, and also anti-U.S. forces in Somalia during 1992 and 1994. One of bin Laden's major aims in Sudan, was to increase his fortune, so he can support more terrorist attacks (Burke, 2003; Scheuer, 2011). Bin Laden was expelled from Sudan in 1996 and he moved to Afghanistan (Farrall, 2011). After the failed assassination in Jalalabad, he was invited by Taliban leader Mullah Omar to come to Kandahar, where he was under Taliban's protection. On August 23, 1996 London based newspaper al-Quds al-Arabi, published bin Laden's first *fatwa* named: *Declaration of War against the Americans Occupying the Land of the Two Holy Places*, which was followed by his second *fatwa* released on February 23,

1998: *Jihad Against Jews and Crusaders*, which are two most important statements of bin Laden that are stating his positions, ideas, aims, and goals (bin Laden, 2004; Burke, 2003, Scheuer, 2011; McCants, 2011).

2.1 Bin Laden's fatwas

Bin Laden In his 1996 *fatwa* expresses his anger towards United States and its allies. He claims that massacres in Palestine, Iraq, Lebanon, Tajikistan, Burma, Cashmere, Assam, Philippine, Fatani, Ogadin, Somalia, Eretria, Chechnya and in Bosnia-Herzegovina, were a result of the conspiracy among United States and its allies, and therefore U.S. are responsible for these brutal killings of Muslim people (bin Laden, 2004). And the occupation of U.S. troops of Arabian Peninsula is the greatest aggression committed against the Muslims since death of the Prophet in AD 632 (Doran, 2002).

United States, according to bin Laden (2012), are hunting and killing the prominent Islamist preachers (Sheikh Abdullah Azzaam, Sheikh Ahmad Yaseen, and Sheikh Omar Abdur Rahman), because they are afraid, that these preachers can unite the Muslims to fight against the West.

Bin Laden was trying to shift the attention of Muslims from the conflicts among themselves, to their common enemy - United States and its allies: "To push the enemy...out of the country is a prime duty" (bin Laden, 2012). Bin Laden issued his first *fatwa* by himself, and therefore it did not get much attention. More influential and important *fatwa* was his second, released in 1998, and signed by other jihad leaders.

Second bin Laden's *fatwa* released in 1998, was supported and signed by four other jihadists Ayman al-Zawahiri, Ahmed Refai Taha (Abu Yasser) from Egyptian group al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya, Mir Hamzah, from Jamiat-ul-Ulema-e-Pakistan, and Fazul Rahman

leader of Bangladeshi Jihad Movement. All the signatories identified themselves as a World Islamic Front for Jihad against Jews and Crusaders (bin Laden, 2004).

In his second *fatwa* bin Laden is reminding the three most important facts. Firstly, U.S. are for more than seven years “occupying the lands of Islam in the holiest of places, the Arabian peninsula, plundering its riches, dictating to its rulers, humiliating its people, terrorizing its neighbours, and turning its bases in the peninsula into a spearhead through which to fight the neighbouring Muslim people” (bin Laden, 2004).

Secondly, after the attack on Iraq, where “crusader-Zionist alliance” killed more than million people, they are “trying to repeat the horrific massacres, as though they are not content with the protracted blockade imposed after the ferocious war on the fragmentation and devastation. So here they come to annihilate what is left of this people and to humiliate their Muslim neighbours” (bin Laden, 2004).

Thirdly, that the devastation of Iraq is to move the attention from Israel, to cover up the murders of Muslim people. “The best proof of this is their endeavour to fragment all the states of the region such as Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Sudan into paper statelets and through their disunion and weakness to guarantee Israel's survival and the continuation of the brutal crusade occupation of the peninsula” (bin Laden, 2004). These three facts are, according to bin Laden (2004), “clear declaration of war on Allah, his Messenger, and Muslims.”

Upon these facts bin Laden and the signatories issued *fatwa*, binding ruling, which makes killing of Americans and their allies “an individual duty for every Muslim who can do it in any country in which it is possible to do it, in order to liberate the al-Aqsa Mosque [Mosque in Jerusalem] and the holy mosque [Mecca] from their grip, and in order for their armies to move out of all the lands of Islam, defeated and unable to threaten any Muslim”

(bin Laden, 2004). They are urging every Muslim to fight against US, and its allies and also to “plunder their money” (bin Laden, 2004).

In order to put his *fatwas* to work, bin Laden was trying to bring U.S. troops to the Muslim lands and to make them fight against them, through several attacks on the U.S. embassies in 1998, and also through the attack on USS Cole in 2000 (Doran, 2002). All the attacks did not bring the desirable outcomes. The turning point was attack on the World Trade Center executed on September 11, 2001, which bin Laden masterminded along with his associate al-Zawahiri. After 9/11 attack, bin Laden’s role in al-Qaeda and in the terrorism had radically changed (Bergen, 2001; Scheuer, 2011).

2.3 Bin Laden after 9/11

After attack on World Trade Center on September 11, 2001, name Osama bin Laden gained a huge global recognition, and bin Laden became the “most wanted man in the world”. Since the 9/11 attack he started to focus more on the media and the resonance of every deed, that al-Qaeda does. His media war focused in justifying the war against the infidels, fight against the U.S. friendly Muslim states, and it was also trying to discredit moderate anti-jihad Islamic scholars (Scheuer, 2011).

Bin Laden’s role in al-Qaeda after 2001, was less and less active. It was also due to the development of the hierarchy of al-Qaeda which occurred after 9/11 and after the U.S. invasion to Iraq in 2003. Since 2001 al-Qaeda did not manage to strike at U.S. soil again (Mueller, 2006), but they focused more on the Western targets on the soil of the Muslim states. It is also because the core al-Qaeda, with the leaders Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri reached their intended goals (Doran, 2002).

Since its establishment in the late 1980s, al-Qaeda, overcame lots of changes. This development had an effect on the position of bin Laden, and shifted him from the position of

the main leader, planner, financier, and ideologue to the position of a role model. In the next chapter about al-Qaeda, I will go through brief history of the group, I will describe the hierarchy of the group before it changed to the nowadays organization, and also the contemporary hierarchy.

Chapter 3: Al-Qaeda

Same as in the case of the former head of the al-Qaeda Osama bin Laden, there are several different stories about al-Qaeda. According to Jason Burke (2003), al-Qaeda does not exist anymore and what is publicly recognized as al-Qaeda existed only between 1996 and 2001, also United States State Department mentioned al-Qaeda as a group for the first time in 1998 (Burke, 2003). John Mueller (2006) in his famous article: *Is there still a terrorist threat?*, argued that al-Qaeda is not capable of the terrorist attack, and therefore the US government is only exaggerating the threat. On the other hand, the fact that United States Department did not mention the al-Qaeda as a group until 1998 does not indicate that the group does not exist. Other argument that al-Qaeda is not capable of attack on the U.S. soil, does not reflect the power of the group. As seen in the bin Laden's *fatwas* discussed above, al-Qaeda was focusing on the Western targets in the Muslim lands, and al-Qaeda also after 9/11 attacked on the soil of the 'Western world', but not in the U.S.

Michael Scheuer (2011), Peter L. Bergen (2001), and Rik Coolsaet (2005) claim al-Qaeda was established in the late 1980s. The group began to form during the Afghan war in Afghanistan where bin Laden established training camps. After his move to Sudan in 1991, he built new training camps in Africa, where he expanded his activities. The first al-Qaeda attack was executed in year 1992 in Yemen on the Gold Mohur hotel, where the bomb did not kill anybody. This attack was followed by another attack in Yemen on Hotel Movenpick, which killed 2 Australian tourists. This attack was also unsuccessful, because al-Qaeda wanted to kill U.S. soldiers, who lived in both hotels (MSNBC, 2012). The first attack carried out outside of the Arab lands, was 1993 bomb attack on the World Trade Center (Doran, 2002; McCants, 2011).

With the bin Laden's move to Afghanistan and with the support of Taliban, al-Qaeda began to rise. It became a hierarchical organization, with 50 to 100 members, from whom most of them were experienced mujahedeen, who fought in Afghanistan. At this time al-Qaeda focused largely on military and strategic targets (Burke, 2003). In 1998 they bombed U.S. embassies in Tanzania and Kenya and in 2000, they bombed American battleship USS Cole in Yemen (Ajami, 2001). In June 2001, the group merged with Egyptian Islamic Jihad, led by al-Zawahiri, who became bin Laden's right hand.

Until the late 2001 al-Qaeda was a conventional terrorist organization with firm hierarchy directed by Osama bin Laden. They had around 200 core members, a brigade of martyrs, which had 122 members, and around 700 "graduates" of their training camps (Farrall, 2011). Since its establishment in late 1980s, group consisted of four major components: military, administration, religion and propaganda (Scheuer, 2011). On September 11, 2001 al-Qaeda carried out its most important and defining attack. It managed to destroy the World Trade Center and the part of Pentagon, with captured airplanes. The attacks killed more than 3000 people and caused over \$500 billion loss to the economy of the United States. As result United States tightened its homeland security, and invaded Afghanistan in 2001, and Iraq in 2003 (Burke, 2003; Farrall, 2011; McCants, 2011; Riedel, 2007).

9/11 gained al-Qaeda new supporters, but they have lost its traditional supporters. When United States invaded Afghanistan in 2001, many prominent Islamic scholars criticized them for bringing the U.S. troops to the Muslim lands. When U.S. soldiers had conquered Kandahar, the Taliban's capital, al-Qaeda had lost support in Afghanistan (Farrall, 2011; Gerges, 2011; Riedel, 2007). What al-Qaeda lost after 9/11, it has gained after the U.S. led invasion to Iraq in 2003. Presence of the foreign soldiers on the Iraqi soil gained al-Qaeda supporters and active fighters in Iraq, Pakistan, and Afghanistan. It also created an al-Qaeda

branch – al-Qaeda in Iraq, led by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, who managed attacks on several U.S. and Western targets in Iraq, killing hundreds of people. Operation Iraqi Freedom (Whittaker, 2002) led by U.S. have united Muslims and al-Qaeda became the vanguard organization of the Muslim jihad (Pillar, 2011; Riedel, 2007).

After attack on the World Trade Center, al-Qaeda had evolved from a traditionally structured terrorist organization, with the firm hierarchy, directive leadership, to flexible, loosely organized, franchise-like organization, with the influence on the Muslims throughout the whole world. They are radicalized through internet, which plays a big role, and it is a defining tool of the contemporary al-Qaeda. In the next subchapter I will examine the structure of the al-Qaeda, and how strong each elements of the group are.

3.1 Structure of al-Qaeda

Al-Qaeda is structurally not a traditional terrorist group. Since 2001 it does not have a firm hierarchical structure (Riedel, 2007), but it is rather loosely organized. Hierarchically, al-Qaeda consists of the three elements (Burke, 2003; Cronin, 2009; Falkenrath, 2006; Farrall, 2011). First element is the top leadership, or al-Qaeda hardcore (Burke, 2003), wrapped around the contemporary leader al-Zawahiri. The primary function of the top leadership is to represent and spread the messages and the ideology of the group. They do not give orders or directly manage the operations of their branch or franchise groups, because they are either directed from the second level of al-Qaeda, or they act independently, only in the accordance with the ideology which is represented by the central leadership of the group (Cronin, 2009; Farrall, 2011). Because al-Qaeda is the “trans-national” terrorist group, i.e. they are not state supported; the top leadership acts as a state (Burke, 2003).

Second element of al-Qaeda consists of the Islamic militant groups associated with al-Qaeda, i.e. “network” (Cronin, 2009). The groups like al-Qaeda in Iraq, al-Qaeda Islamic

Maghreb, or Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, are groups that are responsive to the hardcore, but they act independently, also because they do not receive any direct orders from the top. If we separate these groups from the core leadership of al-Qaeda and their broad ideology, they are more like the conventional terrorist groups, because they have more narrow goals, e.g. al-Qaeda Iraq, fights for withdrawal of the U.S. troops from Iraq (Burke, 2003; Cronin, 2009; Farrall, 2011).

Third element of al-Qaeda consists of the small cells or individuals, which does not have any formal relationship with the core, and they act independently. The al-Qaeda hardcore serves here as an agenda setter, Coolsaet (2005) compared it to the McDonald's, because of the franchise like nature, which is reflected in this third element. This third element creates a "leaderless jihad" (Sageman, 2008), which acts freely with the occasional indirect connections to the second element. Leaderless jihad poses a biggest threat to the Western world. All the attacks after 9/11 were executed by the independent cells, which were acting only upon the ideology of al-Qaeda. Death of the Dutch filmmaker Theo van Gogh, who was killed by 26 years old Dutchman of Moroccan origin Mohammad Bouyerima on November 2, 2004, is one of the examples of how loose the structures of al-Qaeda are (Bergen, 2011).

The two most deadly terrorist attacks on the European soil of the twenty-first century were masterminded and executed by the independent groups of people. Terrorist attack on the Madrid's public transportation was executed by the group of Moroccan Spaniards, who financed, managed and executed the whole attack by themselves (Bergen, 2011) "The 2004 bombings in Madrid were carried out by a tiny group of men who had never been to Afghanistan, much less to any of al-Qaeda's training camps" (Mueller, 2006). They killed 191 people more and injured few hundreds more. Second example of the leaderless jihad, are the attacks executed on July 7, 2005 on means of the public transportation in London. The 7/7

attacks were managed by the British citizens and they were financed through their credit cards and loans. Both groups have no direct affiliations, to the al-Qaeda hardcore, and only one member of the group that attacked London, made several travels to Pakistan, where he met members of al-Qaeda training facility (Bergen, 2011).

Al-Qaeda is characteristic because of its resilient structure (Cronin, 2009), which is a product of a huge marketing campaign of its 'brand name' (Lia, 2005). They use mass media in order to promote their 'achievements' in a completely unique way, but the most crucial factor in promoting al-Qaeda's brand name is the internet. Whether it is their communication, propaganda, or recruitment of its members, al-Qaeda is enormously dependent on the cyberspace (Atwan, 2008; Benjamin, and Simon, 2012; Cronin, 2009; Muriel, 2012). Al-Qaeda has its leaders, who are easily identifiable, it also consists of the small traditional terrorist groups, with narrow aims, and tangible goals, but it is also an online movement (Cronin, 2009). Therefore the third element, does not include any group, it is simply their ideology, which is spread out through media, which report of their actions, and also through internet which is crucial for al-Qaeda (Burke, 2003).

All these three structural elements differ in tactics and lethality of their attacks. Al-Qaeda hardcore which executed attacks like 9/11, or attack on USS Cole in 2000, is carefully planning each of its potential attacks. It is more vulnerable to intelligence work, because intelligence is primary focusing on their 'known' networks, and it is easier for intelligence to track them. Their success rate (rate of successfully executed attacks and discovered plotted attacks) is around 50 per cent (Helfstein and Wright, 2011). The network, or the second element of al-Qaeda plans its attack less carefully, and their attacks are less likely to be traced, because they mostly operate within Muslim countries, even though their success rate is around 67 per cent (Helfstein and Wright, 2011). The third element of the al-Qaeda's flexible structure is the most successful among the three components with the 100 per cent

success rate (Helfstein and Wright, 2011). Its success rate follows from the less carefully planned attacks, and also because these cells or individuals are hard to trace, because most of the time they act as law abiding citizens, they have ordinary jobs, and their neighbours have not spotted any suspicious behaviour of theirs.

Individuals and small cells of the al-Qaeda ideology adherents are more successful to execute the terrorist attacks, but on the other hand lethality of their attacks is lower than the attacks of the al-Qaeda hardcore, or the network. Attacks of the small cells or individuals killed or injured 13 people on average, whereas attacks managed and executed by the core leadership of al-Qaeda killed or injured 452 people on average, and attacks of the network killed or injured an average of 173 people per attacks (Helfstein and Wright, 2011). These casualty differences are due to the severity of the attacks. As mentioned above core leadership of al-Qaeda plans its attacks more carefully, then network, or individuals and cells, therefore the lethality of its attacks is higher, but on the other hand its success rate is much smaller. Which element then possesses a bigger threat, and how would the death of bin Laden influence the group as a whole?

3.2 Al-Qaeda after death of bin Laden

The biggest threat of all the elements possesses the third element, which is the ideology of al-Qaeda. Al-Qaeda hardcore is nowadays incapable of executing a major terrorist attack (Cronin, 2009; Mueller, 2006; Pillar, 2011; Stern, 2011). It is not only because their leadership was weakened, it is because this was part of its tactics. Bin Laden and al-Zawahiri intended to create a 'brand name', which will be recognizable throughout the world, and Muslims will be likely to identify with it. Al-Qaeda maintains its activities of a 'pr agency', which informs its supporters, and creates, through its websites, new mujahedeen, who are willing to die for the al-Qaeda ideology. The network mostly consist of the groups,

with the very clear goals, like al-Qaeda Iraq, which fights for the withdrawal of the U.S. troops from Iraq, which already have happened.

Third component of al-Qaeda structure is the biggest threat to the Western countries. It is because the 'members' of the third component, are the secret adherents of their ideology, ordinary citizens with ordinary jobs, and ordinary daily habits. People like Mohammed Merah, who earlier this year killed four people in the Jewish school Ozar Hatorah, are the prime example of the third element of al-Qaeda. Merah calling himself a mujahedeen, had no direct ties to al-Qaeda, nor did he receive any directions either from al-Qaeda hardcore, or the al-Qaeda network. He was a French citizen of Algerian descent. Merah along with the masterminds and executors of the attacks on Madrid and London local transportation, are the threat to the West. Will the recent death of Osama bin Laden hurt the al-Qaeda?

Due to its flexible structure, and the message that has been spread by Osama bin Laden and the al-Qaeda after the 9/11 attacks, death of bin Laden will unlikely hurt the group as a whole. Al-Qaeda is a 'hydra-headed organization' (Singh, 2003), where United States chopped one head and the new heads will grow. Bin Laden was replaced by al-Zawahiri and the group continues to function, as it was after 2001. Al-Qaeda evolved to an organization which cannot be beaten by the decapitation of their leader. After September 11, 2001, bin Laden was less and less involved in the matters of al-Qaeda. He released only few speeches, which were mostly released in audio files on jihadi Web sites. And because al-Qaeda hardcore did not execute any major anti-Western attack he was even less involved in jihad. Jihadi propaganda involved and quoted bin Laden less and less.

Death of bin Laden is not the only loss in leadership that al-Qaeda suffered since its establishment. Al-Qaeda has lost 5 to 7 thousand fighters and two thirds of its leadership was either killed, captured, or they simply abandoned the group (Scheuer, 2011). Despite this fact

the group is stronger than it has been before 9/11 (Bergen, 2011, Burke, 2003; Falkenrath, 2006; Farrall, 2011; Helfstein and Wright, 2011; Ikenberry, 2002). Bin Laden has been an inspiration for young jihadists, he is their model and icon (Scheuer, 2011), a Che Guevara of Muslim jihad (Ajami, 2001). The group is now under leadership of al-Zawahiri, who is a well known jihadist and took part in 9/11 attack, therefore al-Qaeda is unlikely to be torn apart. Its structure is so flexible and loose that the replacement of the figurehead will not have any impact on its future actions (McCants, 2011). It will remain, also due to the specific type of communication, through information committees, which communicate either through internet, or directly, and have close ties with all senior members of al-Qaeda and with the al-Qaeda network. Even the death of al-Zawahiri will not hurt al-Qaeda (Farrall, 2011). Al-Qaeda set up the firm ideology which is followed by radical Muslims living in the Western Europe, and radical Muslims living in the Arab world.

Death of Osama bin Laden did not hurt or paralyze al-Qaeda, and the counterterrorist tactics of the United States are, by far, not likely to defeat al-Qaeda. Invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq, military presence in Saudi Arabia, and support of Israeli activities are the facts, which bother radical Muslims the most. Al-Qaeda is still strong despite the fact, that the United States has killed almost its whole leadership including the supreme leader Osama bin Laden. Can such a flexible group be defeated? If yes what are the conditions in order to achieve it?

Chapter 4: End of al-Qaeda?!

The contemporary counterterrorist techniques implemented by the United States are not likely to work (Lutz and Lutz, 2004). Despite the Mueller's (2006) claim that al-Qaeda did not carried out a major attack on U.S. soil, al-Qaeda still remains a threat and a major terrorist player with the global reach. After September 11, 2001, al-Qaeda and its affiliate groups were involved in more than 480 incidents, leaving thousands people dead, and even more wounded. Majority of the attacks were executed after U.S. invaded Iraq in 2003, peaking in the year 2007, with over 110 incidents (Global Terrorism Database, 2012). Invasions to Afghanistan and Iraq and killing bin Laden did not defeat al-Qaeda.

When bin Laden established his first training camp in Jaji area, Afghanistan, he did not put himself in the command of the camp. The leaders of the camp became two Egyptian mujahedeen Abu Ubaydah al-Panshiri and Abu Hafs al-Masri. This is the first sign of where bin Laden was trying to put al-Qaeda. He did not intent to wrap the whole group around his personality, because he knew that the group will be more vulnerable to collapse after his dead. Therefore he created a broad ideology, followed by Muslims all over the world. Bin Laden has been only a symbol of jihad against "crusaders" not its leader, though his death did not cause the defeat of the al-Qaeda, and the jihad against "Westerners" still continues. In examining what can defeat al-Qaeda, there must be answered more basic question whether the terrorism can be defeated, and what does defeat of the terrorism means?

In war victory and defeat are clear. Winner is one who defeats its enemy and imposes its will, in form of political sanctions, on its opponent (Gordon, 2007). In fight against modern terrorism the victory is achieved through different means. Because the message of al-Qaeda's ideology has such a high response rate in form of recruiting and radicalizing new members, it is crucial that the ideology is defeated not the terrorists itself. If the terrorist

group is defeated, it is because their message has not been respected among their supporters. IRA lost its support after Omagh bombing in 1988, where the car bomb did not killed its intended targets, but several kids and tourists (Cronin, 2009). Al-Qaeda also lost its support in several Muslim countries after they attacked and killed Muslim people (Boot, 2012), and also after the 9/11 attack on United States, where many prominent Islamic scholars refused to take part in the jihad of al-Qaeda. They also lost support after the troops of U.S. defeated Taleban government.

According to Philip H. Gordon (2007), lessons, how to defeat the ideology of the opponent, can be drawn from the Cold War. In Cold War, there was no direct armed conflict between USSR and the USA, though USSR collapsed. USA did not bombed Kremlin, did not assassinate any of the leaders of the Communist Party. The regime collapsed, because it did not give people what they wanted, and what they expected. The regime and the ideology have discredited itself, because of the huge economic underdevelopment, and because of the oppression that people fell.

The contemporary fight against al-Qaeda is counterproductive. On one hand, Invasions to Afghanistan and Iraq destroyed the oppressive regimes militarily; on the other hand it had given support to the al-Qaeda and Taliban, because of the presence of the foreign troops in the Muslim lands. In order to defeat the ideology and support of al-Qaeda, U.S. must change its counterterrorist tactics radically. What are United States doing wrong?

4.1 Targeted assassinations and military invasions

The main technique of U.S. dealing with the al-Qaeda involves military and intelligence gathering. They are trying to kill the leaders of the group or invade the country, which are harbouring terrorist. In targeted assassinations United States have three options. Targeting the core leadership, which is now lead by Ayman al-Zawahiri; they can also focus

on the leaders of the al-Qaeda network groups like Al-Qaeda in Iraq or al-Qaeda Islamic Maghreb; the last option, which is fully depended on the work of intelligence is to hunt down the small cells and individuals planning and plotting the attacks, most of the time in the particular country of the Western world.

United States can continue targeting the core leadership of al-Qaeda, but it will not bring the desirable results. If United States will somehow manage to kill the entire al-Qaeda hardcore, it would have only short term effect on the group. Its recovery will take some time, but overall the group will remain unchanged, because the ideology of the group was stated years ago in *fatwas*, which are the core of al-Qaeda franchise. Such military action is very costly, because it requires intelligence gathering, and large military action on the soil of a country where the terrorists are hiding. Benefits of this action will not overcome its costs, because most of the times al-Qaeda hardcore is not active, and it is not planning or plotting any terrorist attack, because they rely on the second and third components to spread out their message. If United States will continue to target the core leadership, they can temporarily paralyze the group, but they will not defeat it in long term.

Targeting and hunting the al-Qaeda affiliate groups can also cause only short term damage, but it will not hurt the group as a whole. The case of al-Qaeda in Iraq lead by al-Zarqawi is the prime example. After the killing of several leaders of al-Qaeda in Iraq in 2006, including Zarqawi, group was continuing to operate, it was because the presence of U.S. soldiers in Iraq sparked the wave of anti-U.S. sentiment and the group as a whole had its supporters, who were dedicated to jihad against the U.S. What really hurt the al-Qaeda in Iraq were its attacks against Iraqi civilians in the late 2007. Group lost its support, and also its members, who helped U.S. soldiers to capture the groups' leadership. The group lost its financial support and now after the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq, the group is even weaker because the presence of the U.S. troops is no longer causing the anti-U.S. sentiment,

which was caused by the invasion. Targeting the leadership of the affiliate groups of al-Qaeda, required the military invasion which was the case of Afghanistan and Iraq, which caused more anti-U.S. sentiment among ordinary citizens, who became the members of al-Qaeda and its affiliated groups, just because the U.S. troops, were present in their country. Military interventions are imposing heavy financial burden on the U.S. budget, which is also causing the pressure from the US citizens, whose tax money are spent in the ineffective intervention.

Targeting the small cells and individuals, who mostly operate in the “Western” countries, is not feasible strategy either. Firstly, it is not easy to track them. These small cells or individuals are most of the times ordinary, law abiding citizen, with no affiliations either to the core leadership of al-Qaeda or to its network. Their success rate of the attacks is almost 100 percent, because they are hard to track. They usually execute a small scale attack, which does not require large financial capital, and therefore is hard to track their credit cards, or their financial operations, because they do not receive any support from the core or network of al-Qaeda. Secondly, targeting them or trying to break up the possible terrorist attacks, will have no impact on the ideology of the group which is the main motivation of these smalls cells or individuals. As in the case of IRA, where British government implemented the internment without trial, putting terrorists into prison did not hurt the group, and the frustrated terrorists became even more violent after they were released by the authorities. Pre-emptive imprisonment is undermining the United States as a whole, which claim that they are the state which put the emphasis on the individual human rights, and the Guantanamo prison, is sparking protests not only among Muslims living in Middle East, it is also radicalizing Muslims living in the “Western” countries, and also “Westerners” fighting for human rights. Preventive imprisonment and internment are contra-productive and ineffective. The targeting of the third element and the whole process of investigation is creating more anti-U.S.

sentiment than it is capturing terrorists, therefore this tactic is not feasible, and its continuation is not number one priority, on which U.S. counterterrorism should put emphasis on.

Besides targeted assassinations United States used other technique, which involved military, intelligence, and violence – intervention of countries which are harbouring terrorists. Military invasion to Afghanistan in late 2001 was aimed against al-Qaeda and Taliban. After the U.S. defeated Taliban militarily, al-Qaeda lost support of some prominent Islamic thinkers and important Islamic figures, because 9/11 attack attracted foreign troops to the Muslim lands. In this case the military intervention of U.S. can be regarded as successful, because it hurt Taliban and al-Qaeda's support. Second U.S. led invasion to Iraq was totally different case. Invasion to Iraq gained the support, which made al-Qaeda a leader in jihad. Al-Qaeda gained support among radical Islamic scholars, and large support in Iraq, where al-Qaeda had almost none.

There are still few possibilities for US to military intervene to the Muslim countries. One of the latest interventions, where US army was involved, was “liberation” of Libya, during so-called Arab Spring. US along with other members of NATO helped Libyan rebels to get rid of Muammar Gaddafi. Another “hot spot” is Syria, which ex-U.S. president Bill Clinton seems same as the conflict in Yugoslavia. U.S. intervention of Syria will cause on one hand the support among Syrians, who are fighting against the authoritarian regime of president Bashar al-Assad and Ba'ath Party. On the other hand it will cause the disagreement among radical Muslims, because Ba'ath Party promotes Pan-Arabism, which is one of the goals of Islamic scholars. This will gain more strength to al-Qaeda, not only because of the fall of the Ba'ath Party, but also because of the presence of the U.S. troops on the soil of another Muslim country.

Another “sphere of U.S. interest” - Iran, which is accused of enhancing its nuclear potential, and also developing Weapons of Mass Destruction. Invading Iraq would cause same outcomes as the invasion of Iraq. Iraq was primarily invaded because Saddam Hussein was accused of possessing WMD’s, which were not found after the U.S. troops defeated him. Iran still does not have the capabilities to develop WMD’s and they declared that they are trying to increase their nuclear potential just for the industrial reasons. Invading Iran pre-emptively will cause a large unification among Muslims, despite the fact that majority of Iranians are Shia Muslims, and they are in the enduring conflict against the Sunni Muslims. The invasion to Iran will have the effect, of identifying U.S. as the common enemy, as bin Laden did in both of his *fatwas*. There is a high possibility that after invasion to Iran, al-Qaeda will spread to Iran, to fight against the foreign troops. Ordinary people, whose lives will be influenced by the war, driven by the anti-U.S. sentiment will also join jihad against U.S. troops. Invasion to Iran can also influence the Iranians living in the Western world, and it can force them to be reactionary and in order to persuade U.S. troops to withdraw from Iran, they can execute deadly attack.

Targeted assassinations along with the military intervention, which have to cease the alleged attack of country pre-emptively, are very unlikely to work as a tactics to stop terrorism. On one hand both tactics are very costly. To keep war expensive is the part of bin Laden’s game, because from his experience from Afghan jihad, war is a heavy economical burden on a country, which can lead to bankruptcy of the country, which will force them to withdraw its forces. If U.S. will continue to pursue its “imperialistic” policies towards countries like Afghanistan, Syria, Iran, and Iraq, they can fell apart economically, and fulfil bin Laden’s fatwa from 1998, where he is urging every Muslim to “plunder the U.S. money” (bin Laden, 2004) whenever and wherever possible. Besides its financial difficulties, targeted assassinations and military interventions are not effective so far. Al-Qaeda is still dangerous

and expanding also due to the actions undertaken by the U.S. Therefore, these two tactics will not work, and will cause more damage than benefits. U.S. has to switch from its “imperialistic” nature towards different tactics. Complete opposite from these two tactics is negotiation. Will negotiation help to defeat al-Qaeda?

4.2 Negotiations

If we look at the bin Laden’s *fatwas*, they are indicating that negotiations between al-Qaeda leadership and representatives of their enemies are unlikely to happen. Bin Laden in both of his *fatwas* is calling for jihad, which is a religious war against the infidels. This war is also mandatory for every Muslim. Current leader Ayman al-Zawahiri (2004) in his text *Knights under the Prophet’s Banner*, is also indicating that negotiations are unlikely to work either. Al-Zawahiri (2004) encourages the al-Qaeda members to cause the greatest damage to its opponents, because it is the only language that West understands. Al-Zawahiri is therefore not opened to negotiations of any kind, because he is urging other Muslims to act against the ‘crusader alliance’. These ideas are reflected in al-Qaeda manual, which clearly states that jihad is not fought through dialogues: *“The confrontation that we are calling for with the apostate regimes does not know Socratic debates... Platonic idealy... Nor Aristotelian diplomacy. But it knows the dialogue of bullets, the ideals of assassination, bombing, and destruction, and the diplomacy of the cannon and machine gun.*

...Islamic governments have never and will never be established through peaceful solutions and cooperative councils. They are established as they always have been:

by pen and gun;

by word and bullet; and

by tongue and teeth” (al-Qaeda, 2004)

Besides their ideology it is very unlikely that the al-Qaeda leaders will meet with the representatives of the United States, or with the representatives of the United Nations for two reasons. Firstly, because its leadership consists of people who are wanted, and it is highly possible that they could be arrested when they enter the soil of any Western country, and the meeting in some al-Qaeda training camp is even more unlikely because they want to remain hidden. Secondly, it is because it is against their ideology, and the denial of their ideology will not cause the end of the al-Qaeda as a whole, but it may cost their lives as traitors.

In the unlikely event that the representative of United States or United Nation will get the chance to diplomatic negotiations with the al-Qaeda representatives, it is very unlikely that the outcomes of the negotiations will be put into practice. As argued above, al-Qaeda has very flexible and loose structure; Singh (2003) even called it a ‘hydra-headed’ organization. Some fractions, which belong to the second structural element – network – with the ties to the leadership may be influenced by the outcomes of the negotiations, but most of the fractions from the network are acting independently, only according to the ideology of al-Qaeda mostly emanating from bin Laden’s *fatwas*. The influence of the third element of the al-Qaeda structure, will be minimal, surely none. Third element acts even more independently, it is loosely organized, and most of the time, they have no affiliations not only with the network, nor do they interact with the al-Qaeda hardcore.

Negotiations are not going to help discredit the ideology of al-Qaeda, due to the reason that it is unlikely to happen, and also due to the flexible structure of al-Qaeda. Negotiations with the terrorist will not defeat them. Rather than negotiate with them United State will have to focus on their goals, and aims, from which all of them are stated in both bin Laden’s *fatwas*. Giving all al-Qaeda what they want will cause the internal change of the group which will lead to its disruption and its defeat.

4.3 Defeating al-Qaeda: Giving them what they want

The perfect scenario will be: The U.S. troops will withdraw from Afghanistan, and instead of plundering the country, they will engage in financial help and the total restructuralization of the country. United States will also withdrew its troops and leave their military bases in the Saudi Arabia; they will accept Palestine as a sovereign state, backup from support of Israel and began mediate the peace among Israel and Palestine. This “perfect” scenario contains elements which are likely to happen. These elements will be crucial in the future war against terrorism, because if they will be implemented there will be no need for war. Support for al-Qaeda will disappear, so it would terrorism in the name of Allah. What and where should the actions take place?

Following bin Laden’s *fatwas* and the people who influenced him the most, crucial areas of al-Qaeda interest are the Muslim land’s occupied by the foreign troops. His primary goal is to “liberate the al-Aqsa Mosque [Mosque in Jerusalem] and the holy mosque [Mecca] from their grip, and in order for their armies to move out of all the lands of Islam” (bin Laden, 2004). The most crucial areas are the lands where foreign troops have their military personnel and bases, and Israel. Due to the Arab Spring which smashed autocratic regimes in the Arab world U.S. also need to properly react on the governments which will emerge after the elections in those countries, also Syrian conflict between the government forces and the people has to be resolved, which can also shift the support among Muslims towards United States.

4.3.1 Middle Eastern Challenge

“The United States and its allies will win the war only if they fight it in the right way- with the same sort of patience, strength, and resolve that helped win the Cold War and with policies designed to provide alternative hopes and dreams to potential enemies” (Gordon, 2007).

Both current leader of al-Qaeda Ayman al-Zawahiri (2004), and the former leader Osama bin Laden (2004) were urging jihadists in their *fatwas* to fight “crusader alliance led by United States” in order to achieve the establishment of Muslim state. It is crucial for the United States, that they are viewed as crusaders not as the ones delivering freedom. In order to lose the label crusaders, United States must continue to withdraw soldiers from the Muslim lands. Iraq is just the start, Afghanistan must be next. The withdrawal must be complete, not partial or just a cease fire. After Afghanistan, US must give up its presence in the Saudi Arabia. American help in the Persian Gulf War against Iraq in 1990 and 1991 was the primary motivation of Osama bin Laden to shift his focus from uniting Arabs, to fighting United States, he called the American help “the great devastation inflicted on the Iraqi people by the Crusader-Zionist alliance” (bin Laden, 2004). It was the presence of the U.S. troops in the Saudi Arabia that urged bin Laden to write in his 1996 *fatwa* that “It should not be hidden from you that the people of Islam had suffered from aggression, iniquity and injustice imposed on them by the Zionist-Crusaders alliance and their collaborators; to the extent that the Muslims blood became the cheapest and their wealth as loot in the hands of the enemies. Their blood was spilled in Palestine and Iraq” bin Laden (2012). The withdrawal of the U.S. troops will “cause” the liberation of the “holy mosque”, in Mecca, Saudi Arabia, which was stated by bin Laden in his Second fatwa from 1998: “an individual duty for every Muslim who can do it in any country in which it is possible to do it, in order to liberate... the holy mosque [Mecca] from their grip, and in order for their armies to move out of all the lands of Islam” (bin Laden, 2004). Withdrawal of the U.S. troops from the Muslim lands will fulfil both *fatwas* issued by Osama bin Laden which will weaken the ideology of al-Qaeda and also the purpose for the mandatory jihad issued by bin Laden and al-Zawahiri.

The withdrawal of the U.S. troops from the region will not cause the immediate establishment of *umma* – the Muslim state, as bin Laden was intended in his *fatwas*. Muslim

world is suffering from huge differences among each state, tribe or groups. Struggles between Shia and Sunni Muslims are much bigger then between Muslims and United States. Countries like Afghanistan, Iraq, and Pakistan are highly divided between different tribes, and it is highly unlikely that these countries are willing to unite to fight against the far enemy. Countries like Egypt, Libya, and Tunisia, which went through the series of revolutions, are unlikely to unite either. They are having parliamentary elections, which will generate the new government. For the United States it is crucial to support the winner of the elections in order to create allies in the Arab World. Turkey is willing to join the Western forces, with its increased interest to join the European Union. Samuel Huntington (1996) wrote, that after the Cold War, civilizational differences would be the root causes of every conflict. Conflict between al-Qaeda is not civilizational, because al-Qaeda does not represent the Muslim civilization, and after the withdrawal of the U.S. troops from the Arab lands, there will be no united Muslim front fighting against far enemy.

4.3.2 New role: Peace negotiator

Both Osama bin Laden (2004) and Ayman al-Zawahiri (2004) are referring to the “crusader-Zionist alliance”, which is plundering the land of Muslims. Bin Laden describes this alliance in his second *fatwa* from 1998: “the Americans'... aim is to serve the Jews' petty state and divert attention from its occupation of Jerusalem and murder of Muslims there. The best proof of this is their endeavour to fragment all the states of the region such as Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Sudan into paper statelets and through their disunion and weakness to guarantee Israel's survival and the continuation of the brutal crusade occupation of the peninsula” (bin Laden, 2004). Therefore, the second crucial area of policy change must be Israel. United States must change its position in the Israeli Palestinian conflict. They can no longer afford to support Israel, thus their position must have shift from the supporter of the Israel towards the promoter of the peace. One of the reasons why George W. Bush was losing

his war on terror was that he and his National Security Advisor and later the Secretary of the State Condoleezza Rice abandoned the peace negotiations between Israel and Palestine, which was initiated earlier by Bill Clinton.

First sign of the lost support towards Israel will be acceptance of Palestine as a sovereign state. This will be a clear message towards all other Muslims states, Islamic scholars, and most importantly the supporters of al-Qaeda, that United States is no longer the supporter of the oppression of Muslim people in their holy lands. Through their influence which United States have on the Israel, they have to persuade them that it is even within their interest to return the Gaza strip and the West Bank to the Palestinians. The negotiations around Gaza strip may be quite difficult, because Gaza is controlled by Hamas since 2007, so the members of the Hamas have to be invited to the negotiations. Bin Laden in his second *fatwa* is urging Muslims to liberate the “al-Aqsa Mosque”, which is the third holiest place of Islam practiced by the Sunni Muslims, which is in the located in the hearth of Jerusalem. These holy sites of Islam must have been returned to Muslims, which have to have a cleared entry to them at all times.

It will also be the role of the United States to mediate peace in the other regions where allies of United States are involved. Bin Laden (2004) in his second fatwa is calling for the death of “Americans and their allies - civilians and military,” to be “an individual duty for every Muslim” (bin Laden, 2004). The role of the United State, as a promoter of the peace will be to settle down the disputes, between Muslim countries and their allies. First such conflict besides Israeli Palestinian conflict is conflict between Israel and Syria. The solution to this conflict is very simple: Israel would return the Golan Heights back to the Syria. With the help of the United States, Golan Heights would become a demilitarized zone, and the peace between Syria and Israel will be signed with the active participation from the side of United States.

After mediating the Israeli Palestinian conflict and Israeli Syrian conflict, the third challenge for the peace-making United States will be to resolve the Pakistani Indian and Chinese conflict over the area of Kashmir. The ideal situation from the viewpoint of discrediting the al-Qaeda ideology would be if India would give whole Kashmir area to the Pakistan. Such situation is unlikely to happen because India is also demanding the full control over the Kashmiri region. The role of the United States in this conflict would be to push the both side towards reaching the compromise conclusion, which will involve the division of the territory among them, and also creating a demilitarized zone in Kashmir, which will prevent them to be involved in the armed conflict.

Change in the foreign policy of the United States towards the middle East will not only change the face of the earth conflicts, but also it will influence the ideology of a terrorist group al-Qaeda and its activities. Withdrawal of the U.S. soldiers from Afghanistan and Saudi Arabia and the complete withdrawal from Iraq will fulfil the first part of both bin Laden's *fatwas*, which is urging a mandatory jihad for all Muslims in order to get rid of the foreign military from the Holy lands of Islam. Withdrawal of the U.S. troops will change the perception of the U.S. in the eyes of radical Islamists and their supporters where America is seen as a crusader. The shift in the U.S. foreign policy especially towards Israel, with the acceptance of Palestine as a sovereign state, will deny the second crucial premise of bin Laden's *fatwas*, which are the base for the al-Qaeda ideology. Losing the support of Israel and promoting peace in the conflicts between Israel and Palestine and Syria, will be the second crucial step in the process of undermining the al-Qaeda ideology.

The lost of ideology of al-Qaeda will have immediate influence on the al-Qaeda network, which operate in the Muslim countries. If the U.S. and their allies will not been seen as crusaders and the imperialists, al-Qaeda affiliates would not have any support and same as IRA, their members will incorporate in the society. The more problematic will the

incorporation be with the al-Qaeda hardcore and with the radicalized Islamists living in the “Western” world. The al-Qaeda hardcore, which consists of the wanted terrorists, with Ayman al-Zawahiri being number one on the list, will still continue to spread the ideology, because their major goal to establish the Great Muslim Society, *umma*, had failed because of the differences among the Muslims. They can motivate the small groups within the Muslim world which fight for the establishment of the *umma*, but they will not find the same support as in the struggle against the “common enemy” United States. The core leadership of al-Qaeda will be captured sooner or later, because the police of the Muslim countries would not tolerate the terrorist attacks in their countries. Same as Saudi Arabia dealt with the al-Qaeda after the attacks on the Saudi hotels; same procedure will follow other Muslim countries like Pakistan, Iraq, Afghanistan, Indonesia, etc. The biggest problem to deal with will be the third element. Even though the ideology of al-Qaeda is discredited by the U.S. actions and the changes in the U.S. foreign policy, the third element will still consists of the “crazy” individuals dying for the non-existent problems, and the discredited ideology. The numbers of these attacks and of the supporters will be significantly lower, but the threat will still remain.

Conclusion

Al-Qaeda is complex terrorist organization, with the flexible structure, and loose hierarchy. Death of its leader Osama bin Laden will not cause any damage to the organization, nor would it cause the death of the contemporary leader Ayman al-Zawahiri. Al-Qaeda has deeply rooted ideology, and its message has been spread out to the world through media, since their first attack on the World Trade Center in 1993. Media and Internet plays an important role in promoting their ideology, which is influencing and radicalizing young Muslims throughout the Western world.

Invasion to the Afghanistan and Iraq, killing al-Qaeda leaders, and pre-emptive detention of potential terrorists, are the techniques, that can temporarily paralyze the organization, but it cannot defeat them in a long term. In order to defeat the terrorist group like al-Qaeda, United States must defeat their ideology, and make their supporters lose the interest in fighting for their ideas. To make their ideology irrelevant, U.S. must focus on fulfilling the goals which is the core of bin Laden's *fatwas* that create the al-Qaeda ideology.

First goal is to lose the label "crusader", which is due to invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan, but also due to the military presence in the Middle East, especially in Saudi Arabia. U.S. started to work on this second step, when United States President Barack Obama withdrew U.S. troops from Iraq. Next task for United States is to start removing its soldiers from the other parts of the Arabic world, what will completely disrupt the ideology of al-Qaeda, because the fight against the United States was the uniting element of the Muslim people.

Second goal is the change in the foreign policy. U.S. change their standpoint towards Palestine. U.S. should lose the overwhelming support of Israel, and focus more on the peace negotiation between Israel and Palestine. Bin Laden in his second *fatwa* called the biggest

enemy of the Muslims “crusader-Zionist alliance”. By supporting the negotiations between Palestine and Israel, U.S will lose the “label Zionist alliance”, and it will gain support of the Islamic scholars, and ordinary Muslims. This peace creating nature must be reflected in coordinating other conflicts between Israel and Syria over Golan Heights, and between India and Pakistan over Kashmir.

Al-Qaeda can be defeated, and it will be the end of a global terrorism. On the other hand local terrorism has been here since the Jewish Zealots fighting against Roman Empire, through Maximilien Robespierre fighting against feudal regime of Louis XVI., IRA, PLO, FLN, al-Qaeda, to Anders Behring Breivik, who killed 77 people in Norway, most of whom were kids. It is impossible to fight against the local terrorists because if they have at least small reason to fight, they will fight. With the defeat of al-Qaeda terrorism will not end, it will only enter its new chapter.

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