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**“Wanted: Dead!”**

## **The Islamic State and How to Defeat It**

by Robert Hardy

*“As recited by the Messenger, Allah said: ‘We shall cast terror into the hearts of the Unbelievers...and their abode is the (hell) fire, and evil is the abode of the unjust.’ ”*

Caption of an Islamic State post showing dead bodies  
after the November 13, 2015 attack in Paris.

Today’s Islamic State (now IS, but formerly ISIS) has the same objectives as Muhammad’s Islamic State: to have all mankind submit to Allah or otherwise to eliminate non-believers. Al-Baghdadi’s Caliphate has committed no act of terror more horrible than those of Muhammad and his companions, except that, al-Baghdadi’s forces have modern weapons and a modern bureaucracy in Syria, Iraq, and 22 other countries.

Dozens of people are behind Islamic State fighters and actors. The group’s troop strength had been estimated at 50,000 to 100,000 with an additional support base of 350,000 worldwide, but now the support base may be closer to 800,000.

It uses propaganda effectively to recruit and relies heavily on symbolism from Muhammad’s first Islamic State (its famous black banner is similar to Muhammad’s battle standard). It distorts the Qu’ran and the Hadith selectively for its ideology and recruits with apocalyptic propaganda derived from the Hadith, the doings and sayings of the Prophet and his companions.

Recent converts include self-radicalized foreigners ignorant of Islam, street thugs who love violence and want to join the most powerful gang on the planet, and those wanting to transform themselves from being a nobody to being a member of IS. It appeals, also, to people who are often materially affluent but spiritually yearning.

However, the facts on the ground are inescapable; the tide of war has turned against the Islamic State. It’s losing territory, its finances are diminishing and its leaders are being killed by airstrikes. Nonetheless, Abu Muhammad al-Adnani (the former spokesman of IS) was correct when he said the Caliphate might be down but definitely not out.

**One cannot bomb an idea or an ideology and IS can survive physical defeat and dispersion.**

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As it disperses, the Islamic State 2.0 will be far more difficult to track. It could be possible to infiltrate the Islamic State as a potential fighter, but I doubt it would be possible for agents to penetrate deep inside this cult's living system. IS will use the past (2006-2011) as prologue and go to ground and wait for circumstances to improve. While it is in this state one may expect far more terrorist attacks in the West and around the world.

I offer these modest proposals:

- **Replace the IS Salafi Jihad ideology with another.**

In general, dangerous concepts must be replaced with equally powerful ones. Only Muslims can address this and related issues. Muslim scholars must question the Jihad element and offer IS members and supporters a replacement ideology: Salafism alone or a derivative.

Questions should be posed on social networks to distinguish between ideology and reality: "Are you being asked to join the Jihad and lose your lives just to satisfy the vanity of a man who claims he was chosen by Allah to lead you? If paradise can be achieved by martyrdom, then why are those asking you to detonate yourselves not doing so themselves?"

- **Support the Islamic State to attack Iran and Iranian interests - let them exhaust each other.**

I consider Iran's Islamic Revolution to be a greater threat to the West than Jihad and contend the U.S. and the West are fighting Iran's war. Iran's objective is to form a Shia crescent stretching from the Persian/Arabian Gulf to the Mediterranean Sea, comprised of Iran, Iraq, Syria and Lebanon. The aim is to recreate the Persian Empire and regain control over the holy places of Mecca and Medina that they lost to the Ottoman Empire almost 400 years ago.

The Sunni states have supported the Islamic State to fight Iranian Shi'ite hegemony in the Middle East. However, I believe some Sunni leaders want to use the Islamic State as a spear to fight Iran. The U.S. administration must establish a Middle East policy that takes into account Iran's grand ambitions.

- **Encourage the Islamic State and Al Qaeda to fight each other.**

The title "Wanted: Dead" comes from IS posters attached to buildings and posts in Syria, Egypt, Libya, Somalia, Yemen, Afghanistan and so on. Without these posters, Western intelligence would not have known names, aliases, CVs, family members, residences, and operation area of al-Qaeda affiliates.

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To make IS leaders paranoid, turn information from agents in regions where al Qaeda and the Islamic State compete into misinformation. If Western intelligence knows the location of Islamic State leaders, give that to al Qaeda and vice versa.

Do not hunt al-Baghdadi down and shoot him dead on the spot. This would make Caliph Ibrahim a martyr to the Caliphate and would generate retribution in the West. It would be far better to have one of his competitors kill him.

Al-Baghdadi will likely move to Afghanistan where the Taliban/al-Qaeda (one and the same) is winning the war, making it a base for Jihadis. However, since Afghans do not like Arabs, a false flag local group, supported by the Russians and Americans, could destroy both the Islamic State and the Taliban/al Qaeda.

- **Monitor mosques and Muslim religious schools in the West and de-radicalize IS educated children**

Despite civil libertarian opposition, it must be done. Too few Sunni Muslim clerics publicly denounce acts of terror. The Westerners ones who do not should be investigated. Offer rewards for information on Jihadist preaching and teaching.

In the Islamic State, young children attend literature classes based on the Quran, history classes focused on ancient battles, and geometry classes teaching concepts like “the angle for a mortar or rocket launcher to hit a target 800 meters away?” To anesthetize them they are shown videos of extreme violence, are trained to use assault rifles and RPGs at Islamic State “Cubs” camps and are called upon to perform executions. These thoroughly indoctrinated children, especially the boys, who return to the West must be reeducated.

In summary, if these proposals are not undertaken, as sure as the sun rises in the east, the battle against the Islamic State and Jihad will last for generations.

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