



# TRC TWW Report

## Terror Web Watch Report



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**Graphic:** Snipers in Iraq ([Country Profile](#)): There has been increased attention on the importance of snipers to the fight in Iraq, including a recent video featuring a sniper (mentioned in Terror Web Watch, May 13, 2005 ([Intel Report](#))), a document suggesting the Mujahideen undertake a "war of snipers," as well as attempts to recruit Arabs with such skills over the Internet.



## Orientation/Introduction:

Please review the introduction to the Terror Web Watch at [Intel Report](#).

# Item 1: An Analysis of Foreign "Martyrs" in Iraq

On May 15, 2005, the *Washington Post* published an article that analyzed the breakup of Jihadist groups in Iraq by nationality. The source of the information was a list of "martyrs" published on the Internet that contained about 150 names of dead Arab Jihadists. That same day, Terror Web Watch obtained a list of 400 dead Jihadists that included, in most cases, details on how they died and other facts about their lives and fighting careers. The list was compiled by the administrators of Jihadist Web sites.

An analysis of the list showed that 53% of the dead fighters were from Saudi Arabia ([Country Profile](#)). However, what the *Post* article does not point out is that this does not indicate that the insurgency is made up of that percentage of Saudis. The profiles of the Saudi "martyrs" demonstrated that they tended to be young, religious zealots with no military experience. Unlike many other Arab countries, Saudi Arabia does not have compulsory military conscription for males, so the Saudis coming into Iraq are likely far less useful to their group commanders than Syrians, Algerians, Egyptians, or others who have had some sort of formal military training. They are, therefore, more likely to be used by group commanders for suicide missions – to wear explosive vests or drive vehicle-borne IEDs. Of insurgents who died in these types of suicide operations, 50% were Saudis – a considerable plurality out of a total of 16 nationalities listed. In contrast, of the group commanders on the list, 50% came from Syria ([Country Profile](#)) – a country that has a 2.5-year mandatory military service; therefore, statistically, Syrian Jihadists enter Iraq with a good deal of training already (for more on this subject, see this week's [WAR Report](#)). Other Arab countries where males serve in the military include Algeria ([Country Profile](#)), Egypt ([Country Profile](#)), Jordan ([Country Profile](#)), Kuwait ([Country Profile](#)), Morocco ([Country Profile](#)), Sudan ([Country Profile](#)), Syria, and Yemen ([Country Profile](#)). As the number of Jihadists trained in Afghanistan ([Country Profile](#)) is whittled away, it would make sense that recruiters would go to these countries to refill the ranks of fighters. "Warrior societies," where many young men grow up with weapons' familiarity are also attractive places to recruit. These include Arab countries -- like Yemen, the Sudan and, to a lesser extent, the Palestinian territories -- and non-Arab Muslim societies -- like those of the Kurds and the Chechens.



The document also contained details of not only the countries where most of the dead Jihadists came from, but also in some cases the particular regions from which they came. The list demonstrates that certain regions in Saudi Arabia are producing most of the Jihadists from that country. These include the Bureida, al-Qusaym, al-Jawf, and al-Ha'il regions – all known to be among the most religiously conservative areas. This is probably indicative of particularly strong recruiting efforts there. The majority of Saudi Jihadists also came from just four tribes in the country: Qahtani, Ghamadi, Shamri, and Mutairi. For instance, it was a Saudi from the Ghamadi tribe who carried out the devastating Mosul mess tent bombing in December ([Terrorist Incident](#)). Saudi "martyrs" tend to be very young – late teens and early- to mid- twenties, such as the 18-year old from Jeddah, who was killed in Fallujah, shown to the left. Another Saudi 18-year old's biography noted that he had obtained his mother's permission before coming to Iraq.

Some of the stories about the dead Jihadists also provide insight into how they get into Iraq. A number of young Saudis were brought over in small groups by a trafficker identified only as "Abu Wadha." In other cases, a national was sent into Iraq to set up the pipeline and establish contact with a Jihadist group and then sent back to his home country to bring others to Iraq. This was how a group of nine Libyans made their way to Iraq. A number of Palestinians were brought over by a Palestinian group leader who entered Iraq immediately after the end of combat operations, established contact with Zarqawi, and returned to the Palestinian territories to bring over more of his countrymen.

As for routes to Iraq, only in a few cases were any details provided, but Syria was the emphasis as the main route. For instance, the Saudi Jihadists went through Syria although their own country shares an extensive border with Iraq, as do Jordan and Kuwait, both of which are also closer options than Syria. In one case, an individual



from Saudi Arabia was arrested in Syria twice while trying to move through that country into Iraq. Instead of trying an alternate route, he returned to Syria a third time. It, thus, seems to be a prevailing belief in these communities that the only way into Iraq is the Syrian pipeline.

Also on the list were four European Jihadists: three Arabs with French nationality and one Palestinian who had been living in Denmark ([Country Profile](#)). There were also only three veterans of the Afghan Jihad or Afghan training camps. Although this is probably because these experienced fighters are not killed at the same rate as their greener counterparts, it is such a low number for a 400-person sample that it also may suggest that there are not many of these veterans in Iraq.

The list comes from the ranks of radical Islamic groups made up mostly of foreign Arabs. However, it also demonstrates that there are a considerable number of Iraqis fighting with these groups. This was not believed to be the case a year or so ago when resistance groups were divided between those made up of foreign fighters and those made up of Iraqi nationalists and Baathists. The latter have diminished, and now it seems that more of the fighting is done by combined groups of foreigners and Iraqis.

In some cases, especially when the "martyrs" were Saudi, phone numbers of family members were provided so that people could call and congratulate them on having a martyr in the family – a great honor among radical Muslims. In one case, directions to a family's home in the Suweida district of Riyadh were provided so that people could visit the family and pay their respects.

## **Item 2: A Strange Request and Recent Training Manuals Cast Spotlight on Dirty Bombs**

On a forum called "the Jihad Cell," on which training manuals and materials are exchanged, an odd request came from one of the members this week:

*"My generous brothers, I am looking for information on mercury – how to process raw mercury and how it may be used with explosives."*

The question comes at a time when this Web site, in particular, has demonstrated a focus on dirty bombs. The manuals of al-Qaeda ([Group Profile](#)) trainer Abu Musaab al-Suri, an expert in poisons and chemicals, have been posted there recently. They contain instructions on the making of bombs packed with toxic chemicals or poisons (for more on these manuals, see Terror Web Watch April 22, 2005 ([Intel Report](#)), and April 29, 2005 ([Intel Report](#))). The request is unsettling because it suggests that members of the forum may have been inspired to act by these manuals.



### Item 3: "Large Weapons and Anti-Aircraft Weapons" Training Manual Issued by *Ansar al-Jihad*

A 400-page manual on the use of large weapons and anti-aircraft weapons has been posted on the Internet by a group calling themselves Ansar al-Jihad. It contains pictures, diagrams, and instructions on the use of a Gorjunov,



DSHKM

a DShK, a Shilka, and other large weapons. The manual opens with the Koranic phrase: "Against them make ready your strength to the utmost of your power, including steeds of war, to strike terror into the hearts of the enemies of Allah and your enemies."

It is not likely such weapons are intended for training use, rather they are propaganda materials to entice aspiring Jihadists to Iraq. Such materials, and large, "exciting" weapons, are intended to animate the imaginations of aspiring Jihadists and entice them to travel to Iraq. Young, radical Islamic men in Arab countries or in Arab communities in Europe are intended to download the manuals, read them, and become convinced that they are prepared to be soldiers in the Jihad. These manuals also project an image of strength of the insurgency by suggesting that the fighters in Iraq possess many such weapons.

### Item 4: A Prominent Radical Sheikh Issues Ruling Calling for Jihad in Syria

Recently, Sheikh Abu Busir al-Tartousi has ruled that Jihad against the Syrian government is a religious obligation for every Muslim:

"Praise God Lord of the Two Worlds. Fighting Jihad against this *Nusayri* [a derogatory term for Alewite], infidel, Baathist governing faction in Syria is mandatory, a personal obligation, under the Koran and Islamic tradition. The clerics of Islam must also gather together around this issue. This Jihad is more important than the Jihad against the Jews and the Christians. Syria will never live out its destiny under them. The humiliation must be lifted from the country. The Jihad against this cursed, infidel faction, represented by the Baathist governing party, must be purged from power."

The basis for the Islamist anger against the Syrian government is the fact that the Syrian president and other power holders belong to a moderate, minority faction of Muslims called Alewites. Their animosity is exacerbated by Syria's repeated crackdown on its domestic Islamist groups. However, it is an extreme development for this Sheikh to declare that taking down the Syrian government is more important than fighting Jews and Christians – this is, in effect, declaring the fight against Bashar al-Assad's government more important than fighting in Iraq or fighting against Israel ([Country Profile](#)). Other extremists would likely disagree on this point.

Such comments are part of a trend of statements coming from both al-Qaeda-associated groups and the Muslim Brotherhood ([Group Profile](#)) in Syria that are inviting Jihadists to that country. In some of the statements, the purpose of amassing force in Syria is, as stated here, to bring down the Syrian government. In others, it is to prepare for an upcoming US ([Country Profile](#)) invasion of Syria, the plan being to gather Jihadists in the country and let the US military remove the ruling regime, and then to fight against the US occupation. In other words, they would like to replicate what is going on now in Iraq in Syria.





The Jihadist end game, in any case, whether it is they who take out the Syrian government or the US military, is to fight to establish an Islamic state spanning both Iraq and Syria.

## Item 5: Pro-Jihadist Media Group Issues Report the Mujahideen in al-Qaim

*Mafkra al-Islam*, a pro-Jihadist, Arabic language media organization, has issued the following report from western Iraq.

[begin translation]

The Soldiers of the American Naval Infantry [sic] (Marines) have admitted that the Iraqi insurgents have strengthened themselves and are more well-equipped fighters than the American forces expected. The occupying forces admitted this after seven days of brutal fighting and crushing battles near the Syrian border.

Correspondents from the British newspaper "the Daily Telegraph" in Baghdad say that the Marines have said that a number of Iraqi fighters wear real body armor and helmets, possess Soviet-made armor piercing bullets and other materials that have been very rarely seen in Iraq previously...

The American occupation forces announced yesterday that they have ended their military operations in al-Qaim, which were known by the name "Matador." Correspondents from Mafkra al-Islam in al-Qaim, al-Romana, and al-Kerabala emphasize that the American forces cannot enter these cities, and strongly insist that the reason behind the ceasing of the operation and the siege on the city of al-Qaim are the immense losses suffered at the outskirts of al-Qaim.

The men of the resistance in the city assure that they consider the battle of al-Qaim to be one of their best successes and one of the worst defeats of the occupying forces. This comes from comments made by the resistance groups and their leadership to the correspondents of Mafkra al-Islam..."

[end translation]

Such a report can be expected to draw recruits looking to come over the Syrian border to these cities. This report and others on "the battle of al-Qaim" creates the impression that there are cities right across the Syrian border where the Mujahideen are gathering and gaining strength, making the supply chain of new fighters from the Syrian border to the new power base seem more accessible.

## Item 6: Videos Available

A video on the use of the powerful explosive C-4 in Iraq has been posted on the Internet. The opening scene shows a man in a lab explaining how C-4 can be spread between two pieces of wood and placed in a large handbag to make a powerful suicide bomb. The second part shows an officer in the Baathist army discussing how C-4 is not available on civilian markets but how they have been able to obtain it from military factories in Iraq. He then gives a demonstration of what one kilogram of C-4 can do to two cars, one stacked on top of the other. The video is available from TRC upon request.

"The Voice of Jihad in Iraq," parts 1 and 2, are now available. These videos show various operations in Iraq, including the construction of IEDs. They were posted on the Internet several months ago, but circulation was limited, and the links to access the videos went dead after a brief time. TRC has now obtained copies, which are available by request.

Al-Qaeda's affiliate in Algeria has issued a 50-minute video showing off their activities in that country. The tape contains footage of the use of IEDs on Algerian military vehicles and the drawing up of a plan to attack a convoy. Much of the footage does not show Jihadist operations but rather the daily activities of the Mujahideen living in the woods of Algeria – gathering firewood, living in stone huts, sewing together clothing. These scenes seem like they are meant to be reminiscent of the lives of the Mujahideen during the Afghan Jihad who lived in the



mountains – a lifestyle that is religiously praised for its distance from the corrupting influences of society and its similarity to the lifestyle of the Prophet in the seventh century, and one that is also romanticized by circles nostalgic for the Afghan Jihad.

The GSPC, or the Salafi Group for Preaching and Combat ([Group Profile](#)), has historically targeted Algerian soldiers and police, but just last June, they issued an announcement that all Western foreigners in Algeria were now targets. It is also from the activities of this group that al-Zarqawi's spiritual and tactical mentor, Abu Musaab al-Suri, gleaned the usefulness of remote controlled IED's against military convoys (See Terror Web Watch, May 13, 2005 ([Intel Report](#))).

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