



## **The Cartoon Jihad: The Muslim Brotherhood's project for dominating the West.**

(Published in [\*Weekly Standard\*](#), 02/20/2006)

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**Colaboraciones n°808**

**February 16, 2006**

It is now abundantly clear that the recent murderous protests over cartoons of the prophet Muhammad published in a Danish newspaper last September were anything but spontaneous. The actions of Islamist agitators and financiers have deliberately drummed up rage among far-flung extremists otherwise ignorant of the Danish press. The usual suspects--the regimes in Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Iran--have profited from the spread of the disorders, and even the likes of tiny Kuwait has reportedly offered funds to spur demonstrations throughout France. More important, however, and perhaps less widely understood, the cartoon jihad is tailor-made to advance the Muslim Brotherhood's long-term worldwide strategy for

establishing Islamic supremacy in the West.

As first reported by the Italian terrorism expert Lorenzo Vidino on the Counterterrorism Blog, one of Denmark's leading Islamists, Imam Ahmed Abu-Laban, led a delegation late last year to visit influential figures in the Muslim world. He took with him a dossier of cartoons, both those that had been published and others, much more offensive, of dubious provenance. One place he took his road show was Qatar, where he briefed Sheikh Yusuf al-Qaradawi, a prominent leader of the Muslim Brotherhood and a star of Al Jazeera.

Even after the riots began, Abu-Laban continued his meddling. On

February 4, he told Islamonline.net that Danish demonstrators were going to burn Korans in the streets of Copenhagen, a falsehood that nevertheless added fuel to the fire.

Abu-Laban's extremist connections are well established. A Palestinian who is close to the Muslim Brotherhood, he was expelled from the United Arab Emirates in 1984 for his fiery sermons and denunciations of local leaders. According to Vidino, he served as translator and assistant to Talaal Fouad Qassimy, top leader of the Egyptian terrorist group Gamaa Islamiya, in the mid-1990s. During the Iraq war, he called the Danish prime minister "an American puppet." In August, he told the Washington Post that the Danes "have made immigrants pay the price. Muslims have become the scapegoat. They think we will undermine their culture and their values."

Abu-Laban's labors were not in vain, and everywhere the loudest protests have come from the Muslim Brotherhood. On February 3 in Paris, Larbi Kechat, an imam linked to the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood, said, "The most abject terrorism is the symbolic kind, which spreads unlimited violence." Meanwhile, in Qatar, al-Qaradawi was calling for an "international day of anger for God and his prophet," describing the cartoonists as "blasphemers" and Europeans as "cowards." Acknowledging the latter's role, the pan-Arab daily Asharq Al-Awsat, in London, stated on February 8, "The issue disappeared from the radar until Sheikh Yusuf al-Qaradawi, the mufti of Al Jazeera TV, seized upon

it and called for Muslims worldwide to protest."

Finally, according to the Moroccan daily Le Matin, the U.S. branch of the Muslim Brotherhood, the Muslim American Society (MAS), called on Muslims everywhere to use their economic power to punish European countries where the cartoons were published. After French and German newspapers reprinted the controversial cartoons, MAS executive director Mahdi Bray commented, "Denmark has already paid an economic price for disrespecting Islam. If France and Germany want to be next, then so be it."

That the muslim brotherhood would seek to inflame this controversy makes perfect sense, given the organization's Islamist philosophy and past links to al Qaeda. What may not be sufficiently appreciated, however, is the extent of the Brotherhood's deliberate planning for an Islamist takeover of the West--and how neatly the cartoon jihad conforms to its strategy.

A new book published by Le Seuil in Paris in October may further Western understanding of this reality. Written by the Swiss investigative reporter Sylvain Besson and not yet available in English, it publicizes the discovery and contents of a Muslim Brotherhood strategy document entitled "The Project," hitherto little known outside the highest counterterrorism circles.

Besson's book, *La conquête de l'Occident: Le projet secret des Islamistes* (The Conquest of the West: The

Islamists' Secret Project), recounts how, in November 2001, Swiss authorities acting on a special request from the White House entered the villa of a man named Yusuf Nada in Campione, a small Italian enclave on the eastern shore of Lake Lugano in Switzerland. Nada was the treasurer of the Al Taqwa bank, which allegedly funneled money to al Qaeda. In the course of their search of Nada's house, investigators stumbled onto "The Project," an unsigned, 14-page document dated December 1, 1982.

One of the few Western officials to have studied the document before the publication of Besson's book is Juan Zarate, named White House counterterrorism czar in May 2005 and before that assistant secretary of the treasury for terrorist financing. Zarate calls "The Project" the Muslim Brotherhood's master plan for "spreading their political ideology," which in practice involves systematic support for radical Islam. Zarate told Besson, "The Muslim Brotherhood is a group that worries us not because it deals with philosophical or ideological ideas but because it defends the use of violence against civilians."

"The Project" is a roadmap for achieving the installation of Islamic regimes in the West via propaganda, preaching, and, if necessary, war. It's the same idea expressed by Sheikh Qaradawi in 1995 when he said, "We will conquer Europe, we will conquer America, not by the sword but by our Dawa [proselytizing]."

Thus, "The Project" calls for "putting in place a watchdog system for monitoring the [Western] media to warn all Muslims of the dangers and international plots fomented against them." Another long-term effort is to "put in place [among Muslims in the West] a parallel society where the group is above the individual, godly authority above human liberty, and the holy scripture above the laws."

A European secret service agent interviewed by Besson explains that "the project is going to be a real danger in ten years: We'll see the emergence of a parallel system, the creation of 'Muslim Parliaments.' Then the slow destruction of our institutions will begin."

One point emphasized in "The Project" is that Muslims must constantly work to support Islamic Dawa and all the groups around the globe engaged in jihad. Also vital is to "keep the Ummah [the Muslim community] in a jihad frame of mind" and--no surprise here--"to breed a feeling of resentment towards the Jews and refuse any form of coexistence with them." (On February 2, At-Tajdid, a Moroccan Islamist daily close to the Brotherhood, explained to its readers that the Danish cartoons were "a Zionist provocation aimed at reviving the conflict between the West and the Muslim nation.")

By inflaming a controversy such as the current one, the Muslim Brotherhood attempts to widen the rift between the West and Islam. It specifically targets Muslim communities living in the West, aiming to

radicalize their moderate elements by continually pointing out the supposed "Islamophobia" all around them. Right on cue, the Saudi daily Al Watan reports that the Council of Islamic Countries decided in December to create a worldwide Islamophobia watchdog organization that will lobby for the adoption of "anti-Islamophobia" laws, as well as promoting a common position against states or organizations it sees as attacking Islam.

Under the scheme outlined in "The Project," the Muslim Brotherhood would seek to become the indispensable interlocutor of Western governments on issues relating not only to Islam but also to international issues touching the Islamic world, notably the Israeli-Arab conflict, the war in Iraq, and even the war on terror.

The same approach turns up in Qaradawi's 1990 book *Priorities of the Islamic Movement in the Coming Phase*. Qaradawi sees the presence of large Muslim populations in the West as a major opportunity. For

him, "the Islamic presence" in the West is necessary "to defend the interests of the Muslim Nation and the land of Islam against the hostility and disinformation of anti-Islamic movements." He actually calls on Western Muslim communities to reform their host countries.

The cartoon jihad has been a godsend for Islamists throughout the world. For the past year, Muslim lobbies in Europe have been pushing for the adoption of blasphemy laws by the United Nations, the European Union, and the nations of Europe. Predictably, Qaradawi endorsed this cause in his sermon of February 3 (translated and posted on the web by the Middle East Media Research Institute): "The governments must be pressured to demand that the U.N. adopt a clear resolution or law that categorically prohibits affronts to prophets." Like the cartoon jihad, it is a ploy straight out of the Muslim Brotherhood playbook--and, most worryingly, a move likely to have strong appeal to Muslim moderates.

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