
24 Disrupting and Influencing Leaders of Armed Groups

Elena Mastors and Jeffrey H. Norwitz

INTRODUCTION

The United States has a superb capability to collect and analyze information about the rest of the world. Yet many decision makers still fail to adequately understand the leaders of armed groups. Dealing with and attempting to influence or disrupt the activities of these shadowy leaders cannot be achieved without understanding what makes them tick.

Most of us don't have direct access to leaders of armed groups or their close associates. Thus, we have to work with indirect information such as speeches, letters, books, media interviews, and what associates say about these leaders. This is particularly true about al-Qaida.

This chapter does not subscribe to a singular type of leadership analysis. We contend that if we only use one approach, we can miss some very instructive information about

Dr. Elena Mastors is currently an associate professor in the National Decision Making Department at the Naval War College. Previously, she held various senior intelligence and policy positions in the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence and received numerous performance awards from the Defense Intelligence Agency. Dr. Mastors earned a BA in political science from Eckerd College and a political science MA from the University of South Florida. She received her PhD in political science with a concentration in international relations and political psychology from Washington State University, where she focused on leadership, conflict, and terrorism. She writes frequently on understanding leaders and group dynamics, from a political-psychological perspective. She is also a frequent lecturer on the important role of individuals and group dynamics in terrorist groups and is currently conducting fieldwork in Northern Ireland on the leaders of banned terrorist groups. Dr. Mastors is published in *Political Psychology Journal* and authored *Introduction to Political Psychology* (Lawrence Erlbaum and Associates, 2004); *The Lesser Jihad: Recruits and the al-Qaida Network* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2007); *The Psychology of Terrorism* (Blackwell, forthcoming 2008); and *Introduction to Political Psychology*, 2nd ed. (Lawrence Erlbaum and Associates, forthcoming 2008).

Jeffrey H. Norwitz, the editor of this volume, has 34 years as a law enforcement official with military, municipal, and federal career experience. He is presently a special agent with the Naval Criminal Investigative Service (NCIS), having served worldwide specializing in complex criminal, intelligence, and terrorism investigations. This included an assignment at Camp Delta, Guantánamo, as part of the Criminal Investigative Task Force interviewing al-Qaeda and Taliban fighters (2003–04). His last assignment was as NCIS supervisory special agent responsible for counterintelligence throughout New England. Mr. Norwitz has twice received the Department of the Navy's Meritorious Civilian Service Medal for his counterintelligence and counterterrorism accomplishments. Mr. Norwitz earned a BA in criminal justice from Eastern Kentucky University. In 2001, Mr. Norwitz earned an MA in national security and strategic studies from the Naval War College and joined the teaching faculty, where he teaches national security studies, as the NCIS adviser. He is the inaugural holder of the John Nicholas Brown Academic Chair of Counterterrorism generously endowed by the Naval War College Foundation.

the leader. As a result, we have integrated different leadership approaches into our framework. Furthermore, other practical aspects about leaders that lead us to understand how to influence or disrupt their activities also need to be considered.

The literature on influencing leaders is sparse.¹ Therefore, this chapter focuses on certain biographic and personality aspects to develop a campaign to influence leaders of armed groups. The key here is specific and relevant information. Rather than collecting everything written on a leader, it is much more important to focus on essential information. Toward that end, this chapter offers a unique framework for analysis that focuses on decisive aspects of a leader. The framework points us to the germane information for leadership-influencing operations. It integrates some of the personal characteristics and motivation literature and offers new insights for use in influence application.² We then examine the art of human-source-intelligence collection and social-psychological principles of influence, which, if successful, will give us the relevant information for leadership targeting. Next, the chapter offers an enlightening case study of Ayman al-Zawahiri using the framework as an organizing tool. Finally, the chapter concludes with a brief discussion of how one would influence him, disrupt his activities, and make him irrelevant to the network and perhaps even draw him out to kill or capture him.

THE LEADERSHIP FRAMEWORK³

There are four aspects of the leadership framework: (1) personal characteristics, (2) operating environment, (3) advisory process, and (4) information environment.

Personal Characteristics	Operating Environment	Advisory System	Information Environment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self-confidence - Locus of control - Perception of self - Motivation - Ideology - Philosophy - Beliefs - Values - Likes and dislikes - Social norms - Relationships with family - Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rise to power - Allegiances - Competing leaders - View of others - Others' views of leader - Ethnocentrism - Distrust of others - Constituency - Sources of finance - Areas of corruption 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Significant advisers - Formal networks - Informal networks - Sources of influence - Advisers' own agendas - Advisers' influence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clarity of thinking - Complexity of thought - Diversity of sources of information - Challengeability of opinions

The first part of the framework, personal characteristics, focuses on the leader's view of him- or herself, to include degree of self-confidence and locus of control,⁴ personal perception of the role he or she plays and how he or she became a leader, ideology and philosophy, motivation (task, affiliation, or power),⁵ beliefs,⁶ values,⁷ proclivities, and likes and dislikes. Another important aspect of personal characteristics is background

and skills. Among them are age, places where the leader was born and raised, and relevant socialization factors. Also included are marital status, the nature of the marital relationship, and relationships with immediate and extended family, and the nature of those relationships. Interests; schooling, including the type of student the leader was and focus of study; former positions held; and key personal associates are also important to know. Understanding the leader's norms is crucial. Norms include the leader's views of proper individual behavior, impertinent behaviors, words or phrases that can be insulting, and the roles of minority or majority groups.

The second part of the framework is the leader's operating environment. This includes how the leader came to power. Groups or individuals that constrain the leader must be examined, as must whether or not the leader challenges constraints.⁸ Another aspect of the operating environment is the leader's image of other groups.⁹ Incorporated in this are also perceptions about others, the leader's degree of ethnocentrism, and distrust for others.¹⁰ However, of interest is not only how the leader views others but also how the leader is viewed by others.¹¹ Thus, the focus is on existing perceptions about the leader on a variety of perceptual issues and, at a more basic level, whether the leader is liked or disliked, and by whom. Also relevant is the leader's view of his or her defined constituency or followers. Finally, a leader's operating environment includes sources of finance and areas of corruption.

The third part of the framework deals with the leader's advisory system. Some of the most significant people in a leader's world are his or her advisers. When examining a leader it is important not to become caught up in the formality of line-and-block charts because they may not really tell us who is influential. Therefore, we have to look at the leader's formal and informal networks of advisers. Advisers can also change over time. For a variety of reasons advisers can also fall out of favor, or new ones may emerge. When the most influential advisers are identified, the potential spin, personal agenda, or filtering of information by them should also be discerned. Finally, some leaders may not even care about advice from others. As a result, they may pay lip service to their advisers but consider themselves the ultimate authorities on all issues. Last is the degree of control a leader needs over the policy process, and the interest and level of policy expertise.

The framework's fourth and final part is the leader's information environment. This involves the degree of complexity the leader exhibits. For example, some individuals are open to information, deal in shades of gray, and have an ability to differentiate their environments.¹² They will seek ways to help them understand their states of affairs. These types of leaders usually want a lot of information at their disposal. Those who lack in cognitive complexity are "black and white thinkers."¹³ They are essentially closed to conflicting information, do not seek out alternative views, and do not care about supplementary information. Once certain traits are established, notably regarding the degree of cognitive complexity and motivation, as well as responsiveness to constraints, it is possible to then draw additional conclusions about the nature of the leader's style.¹⁴ Whether complex or not, the type of information a leader pays attention to, the sources of this information, and how a leader prefers information to be presented will aid in designing an influence strategy.

This framework covers many pertinent areas about leaders that we must understand before proceeding with any campaign against them. However, we are at the behest of the information we have access to. There may be times where certain parts of the framework cannot be filled in. In this regard, the framework is an ideal, and at times the ideal cannot be fully satisfied.

THE NEED FOR HUMAN-SOURCE INTELLIGENCE

Human intelligence, commonly abbreviated as HUMINT, is that which is derived from human sources. In contrast to intercepted phone conversations (signals intelligence), photos (imagery intelligence), and other technical or scientifically derived intelligence, HUMINT is the cornerstone of intelligence work.

HUMINT is espionage—spying—and is sometimes referred to as the world’s second-oldest profession. . . . Spying is what most people think about when they hear the word “intelligence,” whether they conjure up famous spies from history such as Nathan Hale . . . or fictional spies such as James Bond. HUMINT largely involves sending agents to foreign countries, where they attempt to recruit foreign nationals to spy. Agents must identify individuals who have access to the information that we may desire; gain their confidence and assess their weaknesses and susceptibility to being recruited; and make a “pitch” to them, suggesting a relationship.¹⁵

HUMINT provides an otherwise unattainable window into the personality, emotional makeup, and innermost secrets of those who are being targeted for influence operations. Recall the four aspects of our leadership framework: (1) personal characteristics, (2) operating environment, (3) advisory process, and (4) information environment. HUMINT is unmatched in its ability to uncover this often private, subtle, and privileged information about leaders and decision makers whom we want to influence.

Professional intelligence officers who specialize in human-source intelligence are customarily called “HUMINTers.” They are not intelligence analysts nor are they staffers who write reports. Rather, HUMINTers are operational people, specially trained and highly skilled to blend into any environment wherein human relationships are the essence. Human-source-intelligence work is part clinical psychology and part theatrical acting. As you read this, throughout the world, thousands of men and women are quietly gathering intelligence, manipulating human relationships, assessing likely informants, and influencing leaders. Furthermore, there are those whose job it is to detect and neutralize human-source-intelligence collection done by adversaries, thereby protecting their own leaders. This is called counterintelligence.

Thus the HUMINT community is in a continuous reciprocating ballet of spy versus counterspy, sometimes using very different rule-sets. For example, a democratic nation will, by the very nature of the form of government, follow a set of norms embodying “rule of law” and human dignity, unlike some adversaries, which justify ends by any means. Therein emerges a tension when armed groups violently attack democracies, yet measured state responses are a necessary moral obligation. One of the quintessential thinkers on intelligence matters and democratic norms of behavior is Stansfield Turner, retired Navy admiral and former director of central intelligence (1977–1981). Citing a

perceived “lack of discussion of how our democracy affects and is affected by what we do to deter terrorism,” Turner wrote a book on the very subject.¹⁶ His conclusions:

One of the key elements for us in combating terrorism is international cooperation. . . . If we are going to defeat international terrorism—not just Osama bin Laden but the broader sweep—we will need an analogous multinational program that will put pressures on the movement of individual terrorists and on their bases of support in our societies. . . . Today many countervailing strengths come from the very fact that we have a democratic system. But that means we need public understanding of our options for curtailing the current wave of terror and the wisdom to avoid actions that might undermine the democratic process we are defending.¹⁷

In point of fact, based on abuses in the past, there are codified laws and presidential orders that clearly define how America conducts intelligence activity and still protects constitutional underpinnings.¹⁸

For the purpose of this chapter, we will now briefly explore some of the methods that HUMINTers employ to manipulate the minds of witting and unwitting sources. The first step is to create opportunities to meet influential people who are either themselves leaders or individuals who have close access to leaders. Traditional environments such as social settings, dinner gatherings, business dealings, or recreational activities provide ample chance to find likely targets. At a minimum, they are ideal occasions to pass a carefully crafted rumor hoping key attendees will incarnate the infamous “grapevine,” starting a campaign to manipulate perceptions. Many winning influence and disruption strategies started with a well-orchestrated gaffe at an embassy cocktail party. Similarly, social and business settings where HUMINTers toil are ideal for assessing others for exploitation. HUMINTers seek, if not the leaders themselves, then likely candidates that have notional access to leaders or their families or are in positions to support clandestine activity.¹⁹

Experience shows that regardless of culture; language; age; gender; political, religious, or educational background, the four most common motivators for people to deceive trusted comrades are (1) greed, (2) anger or revenge, (3) thrill or excitement, and (4) visions of self-importance (ego, vanity). Others simply volunteer their services for ideological motives. HUMINTers perfect ways to exploit each of these scenarios and literally develop scores of persons acting as psychological hostages. Even in those relationships that seem to start with full cooperation, a measure of coercion will be contrived in order to “hook” the source lest he or she develop remorse.

HUMINT involves the manipulation of other human beings as potential sources of information. The skills required to be a successful HUMINT collector are acquired over time with training and experience. They basically involve psychological techniques to gain trust, including empathy, flattery, and sympathy. There are also more direct methods of gaining cooperation, such as bribery, blackmail, or sex.²⁰

One of America’s most successful yet unheralded HUMINT officers is Duane R. “Dewey” Clarridge, retired senior official of the Central Intelligence Agency. For 32 years, Clarridge was a legendary CIA operations officer deeply involved in many of the agency’s most important covert actions in the cold war.²¹ Clarridge ran some of the most clandestine yet indispensable campaigns of the twentieth century to disrupt, influence,

and in some cases totally destroy armed groups with aims inimical to those of the United States.²² Commonly referred to as covert action, or CA operations, Clarridge's activities showcase the effectiveness and efficacy of disruption and influence campaign strategy. Working against the Abu Nidal Organization (ANO), Clarridge headed the CIA Counterterrorism Center (CTC) in 1986. From the recruitment of an ANO member, and good analysis, Clarridge's shop developed superb intelligence about Abu Nidal himself.

From our ANO agent penetration, we began to accumulate a lot of knowledge about Abu Nidal's "diplomacy" [internal and external behavior] and his financial dealings . . . which led us to ANO activists and backers in France, England, and Germany. . . . I arrived at the conclusion that the best way to attack Abu Nidal was to publicly expose his financial empire and his network of collaborators. . . . I proposed that the Department of State issue an explosive little tome called *The Abu Nidal Handbook* . . . [which] laid out chapter and verse on the ANO, its members and accomplices, and its crimes. It even had an organizational chart. . . . [W]e decided to make recruitment pitches to [ANO] personnel in various countries. . . . Seeing his financial empire under attack and listening to reports of CIA efforts to recruit his cadres, Abu Nidal was aware . . . [that] we were coming after him and his people. He, like many in his line of work, was paranoid. The CTC fueled his hysteria over plots against him—feeding fear to a paranoid is something we know how to do. Not surprisingly, Abu Nidal panicked. Those who reported having been approached by us were not rewarded for their loyalty, because Abu Nidal never quite believed that anyone in his group had turned us down. Their loyalty was suspect thereafter, and the punishment for disloyalty was torture and death.

By 1987, a fearful Abu Nidal had turned his terror campaign inward. . . . After the effective ANO apparatus in southern Lebanon fell under suspicion, over three hundred hard-core operatives were murdered on Abu Nidal's order. . . . Another 160 or so were killed in Libya shortly thereafter. Distrust reached high into the politburo ruling the ANO. Even his closest surviving lieutenants began to believe that Abu Nidal was insane. Abu Nidal's paranoia, fed by our crusade against him, caused him to destroy his organization.²³

Dewey Clarridge's remarkable career successes in the clandestine service serve as proof that exploiting personality and biographic elements from our leadership framework to disrupt and influence leaders gives us stunning advantages against America's enemies.²⁴

We combine these well-grounded operational approaches with the literature in social psychology on influence that describes influence techniques such as consistency, social proof, likability, scarcity, and so forth.²⁵

THE CASE OF AYMAN AL-ZAWAHIRI

The story about Ayman al-Zawahiri begins with a summary of some key findings that relate to several of the personal characteristics in the framework, namely, biographical information, background and skills, and some of his traits we see developing at an early age.

Al-Zawahiri was born in Maadi, Egypt, a suburb of Cairo, in 1951. He was from a wealthy and educated family. In fact, his family seemed "never to have faced social or economic hardships; many of its members would be considered part of the elite in any society."²⁶ For example, al-Zawahiri's grandfather was the imam at the al-Azhar Mosque

in Cairo, his father was a professor of pharmacology, and his maternal grandfather was a professor of oriental literature and president of Cairo University and also served as ambassador to Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen.²⁷

Al-Zawahiri was interested in education and was also considered a loner and introvert. According to an account by Montasser al-Zayyat, a Cairo lawyer who was later imprisoned with him in 1981, “his family noticed his interest in reading, academic excellence and studiousness from a young age. Whenever he got tired of studying, he would not spend time with children his age to play or watch television, but rather read books on religion and Islamic jurisprudence as a pastime.”²⁸ Al-Zawahiri read and was influenced by Islamist literature of Sayyid Qutb, Abu al-Mawdudi, and Hassan al-Nadwya.²⁹ Other than the works of these Islamists, Abdullah Azzam also had a significant influence on al-Zawahiri’s thinking. Azzam is frequently referred to as the spiritual father of Usama bin Ladin and a much-revered leader of the mujahideen in Afghanistan.³⁰ Al-Zawahiri graduated in 1968 from secondary school and went on to enroll in medical college at Cairo University. He finished his medical training in 1974, and then completed a master’s degree in surgery in 1978.³¹ He married Azza Ahmed Numar in 1979 and had at least four children by her. Azza graduated from Cairo University with a degree in philosophy, but met the criteria of being a pious wife.³² His wife and two of his children were killed during a U.S. air strike in Afghanistan in December 2001.³³ He later married two other widows of a colleague who died in the bombing.³⁴ He also had children by them and it’s assumed his family still resides with him.

Despite the opportunity granted by his elite status in society and access to education, al-Zawahiri was more interested, it seems, in clandestine activities aimed at overthrowing the Egyptian regime.

At the age of 15, Zawahiri joined Jam’iyat Ansar al-Sunnah al-Muhammadiyah . . . , a “Salafi” (Islamic fundamentalist) movement led by Sheikh Mustafa al-Fiqqi, but soon left it to join the Jihad movement. By the age of 16, he was an active member of a Jihad cell headed by Sa’id Tantawi. Tantawi trained Al-Zawahiri to assemble explosives and to use guns. In 1974, the group split because the group declared Tantawi’s brother as *kafir* (infidel) because he fought under the banner of *kuffar* or infidels which characterized the Egyptian army. In 1975 Tantawi went to Germany (and is said to have disappeared) and Ayman took over the leadership of the cell. He immediately organized a military wing under Issam Al-Qamari, an active officer in the Egyptian army at the time.³⁵

After finishing his studies, al-Zawahiri took a position in a Cairo clinic operated by the Muslim Brotherhood. He then traveled to Peshawar, Pakistan, and stayed for four months. “For him, this experience was providential because it opened his eyes to the wealth of opportunities for jihad action in Afghanistan.”³⁶

Al-Zawahiri was imprisoned by the Egyptians in 1981 as a suspect in the assassination of Egyptian president Anwar el-Sadat. At this point we start to learn more about his personal characteristics, including additional information on his formative years, traits, and also his motivation. We also see some elements of his early operating environment, specifically, how he dealt with rivals and the perceptions of him by others.

For example, while in prison, al-Zawahiri was branded a man who created discord among the other prisoners. Specifically, in prison with him was Sheikh Omar Abdel

Rahman. Rahman, who was blind, was appointed emir of the group. Debate in prison focused on whether Rahman should lead a newly formed coalition of the Islamic Group (IG), led by Refai Taha, and other jihadist factions.³⁷ Montasser al-Zayyat, who witnessed the altercation in the prison, explained that many of the jihadists felt a sense of failure because of “several rushed and ill-conceived” operations, which exacerbated tensions further. In fact, “many heated discussions raged in prison over the causes of these failures. Some members were accused of negligence and of not having completed the tasks with which they had been entrusted.”³⁸

Al-Zawahiri, among others such as Esam al-Qamari, did not think that Rahman was fit to lead the new group because he was blind. According to them, a leader should have unimpaired senses.³⁹ Refai Taha believed that “[al-]Zawahiri was fanning the fire of dissension by encouraging Esam al-Qamari to argue against Abdel Rahman’s leadership.”⁴⁰ Rahman was later convicted for his role in the 1993 World Trade Center attack and is currently in prison in the United States.

Al-Zawahiri confessed in prison (he claims under torture), revealing the details of his associations, and he also told them the hiding place of al-Qamari. Al-Qamari was arrested and executed.⁴¹ Interestingly, the authorities never did realize the extent of al-Zawahiri’s involvement in the jihad movement, although he didn’t have direct involvement in Sadat’s assassination. Al-Zawahiri had always been extremely secretive and cautious with regard to his clandestine activities and remains so today.⁴² Because he was relatively unknown, he was only convicted of a firearms charge and received three years in prison.

Al-Zawahiri was released from prison in 1984 and went to work in Saudi Arabia at the Ibn Al-Nafis Hospital, and then went to Pakistan to work as a surgeon in the Kuwaiti Red Crescent Hospital. At this time, the war against the Soviets in Afghanistan was in full swing. “[H]e would go to the war zone for three months at a time to perform surgery on wounded fighters, often with primitive tools and rudimentary medicines. At the same time, he opened the ‘Islamic Jihad’ bureau in Peshawar to serve both as a liaison point for new Mujahideen and a recruitment agency.”⁴³ Al-Zawahiri was not only in charge of the group but sought to establish its clear presence in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

In 1988, three leaders of the Islamic Group settled in Peshawar. One of them was Khaled al-Islambuli, the brother of the man who assassinated Anwar el-Sadat. The point of their trip was to challenge al-Zawahiri.⁴⁴ Their fight was revealed in publications by the Islamic Group (*al-Fath*) and by al-Zawahiri (*al-Murabitoon*). For example, the IG accused al-Zawahiri of selling arms and using the money to buy golden nuggets. He was also accused of depositing money in a Swiss bank account. “In the face of these accusations, some relief agencies decided to cut off their aid to al-Zawahiri, and the need for funds forced him to seek assistance from Iran.”⁴⁵

Al-Zawahiri was also accused by Abdullah Azzam of causing problems. Azzam complained to his son-in-law that al-Zawahiri was a troublemaker and that he, along with others, only intended to create discord among the mujahideen.⁴⁶ Azzam was killed by a car bomb in 1989 and some rumors have suggested that al-Zawahiri played a role to move Azzam out of the way so that he could be the key influencer of bin Ladin. When all was said and done, al-Zawahiri “emerged the winner from this conflict [with the Islamic

Group], largely because of bin Laden's support and because of the murder of Abdallah Azzam, the spiritual leader of bin Laden."⁴⁷

There are several things to keep in mind when considering al-Zawahiri's personal characteristics and operating environment during the time period of his life as a child to his work in Pakistan and Afghanistan. Al-Zawahiri was not an extrovert and leadership qualities were not self-evident. He educated himself in jurisprudence, thus carving out for himself the art of argument. And there is evidence that he used the art of argument to speak out against his and others' detention while in prison. He instructed and gave advice surreptitiously if it served his own interest. He also challenged those who he believed did not serve the purposes of the movement, as depicted by him, and it seems he found others expendable if it served his own purposes. He also had conflicts with many individuals and groups by pursuing his own agenda. The role he carved for himself even behind the scenes gave him power and when the time was right, he got the power he was seeking and took control over the Islamic Jihad (IJ), successfully maneuvering his way out of conflicts and emerging as the winner.

Thus, it was indeed a calculated move when he merged his own group, the IJ, with al-Qaida in 1998, joining "The Global Front for Fighting Jews and Crusaders." This official partnership resulted in a reorganization of al-Qaida into four committees: military, religion, finance, and the media.⁴⁸ He pragmatically shifted his focus from the "near enemy," which to him was Egypt, to the "far enemy," the United States and anyone seen as supporting the United States. This was a change from his thinking in 1996 when he stated that the near enemy took precedence because it was closer.⁴⁹ In 1998 the far enemy became the focus of the Global Front for Fighting Jews and Crusaders. Usama bin Ladin was al-Zawahiri's ticket for a greater role in the transnational movement against the crusaders and Jews. There was fallout over al-Zawahiri's decision as well, and he had to be aware of the repercussions of abandoning his group's goals in order to serve his own interests. According to one account, "fundamentalist sources maintain that al-Zawahiri's signing of the statement of 'Global Front for Fighting Jews and Crusaders' in February 1998 was an ill-omened act for al-Jihad Organization because it caused the rapid downfall of the most prominent leaders of the group who were residing abroad, and members of the group who were living in other Arab countries were extradited to Egypt."⁵⁰ Obviously, the fate of the group wasn't his concern.

Al-Zawahiri served bin Ladin well and is often heralded as the man behind bin Ladin who crafted the arguments and gave him direction—he is the power behind the throne, a notable personal characteristic that comes up time and again. Bin Ladin had the charisma to be in the forefront and al-Zawahiri wanted his own power to grow and to get his message out through whatever means necessary.

Al-Zawahiri knew what he wanted despite protestations of other members of his group. However, during the summer of 1999, members of the IJ were becoming uncomfortable with al-Zawahiri's growing ties to bin Ladin. As a result, al-Zawahiri was ousted as their leader. Thartwat Shehada took control of the group and wanted to get back to the original work of the group, the focus on Egypt. Shehada didn't have the financial backing to achieve this goal and by spring of 2001, al-Zawahiri was able to reassert control over the group.⁵¹ Al-Zawahiri made another calculated move and packed the leadership of

al-Qaida with his trusted Egyptian allies. The Egyptians were clearly in control of al-Qaida.

Here we can see more elements of the framework, mainly in the areas of personal characteristics, operating environment, and his way of finding advisers that agreed with him, and elements of his information environment. In political-psychological terms, al-Zawahiri is “director”; his preference is for direct control, he prefers his own advice to others’, and he advocates his own views. For example, when members of his group disagreed with him, he went ahead with his own agenda and made decisions to their detriment. He also found trusted individuals to run the organization who would not disagree with him. Additionally, his drive for power manifested itself in the type of maneuvering that would put him back on top. Al-Zawahiri was not a man to be challenged or crossed. He was a man seeking power and control.

After the September 11 attacks on the United States perpetrated by al-Qaida, the United States struck back with the U.S.-led Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan in December 2001. After the United States successfully disrupted al-Qaida’s operating base in Afghanistan, it seems al-Zawahiri became geographically separated from bin Ladin. Bin Ladin was remarkably silent from his statement in 2004 until September 2007 when a tape was released where he made a general statement to the American public that did not talk about operational matters but rather appeared as a lecture to the American public on U.S. culture, politics, history, and the merits of Islam. The statement reads like a lecture on what Americans have done and seems as though he is painting a picture of blame squarely on Americans and their support for their leaders. He also made a great appeal for Americans to embrace Islam.

In the meantime, al-Zawahiri pressed on in his quest for relevance and power. The network became more diffuse, and al-Zawahiri was becoming less and less important as a hands-on director. He began making more statements to demonstrate his operational and leadership relevancy. He maintained a self-image as a powerful and important leader, decided he liked power, and remained relevant to the network. He commented on operational matters and offered direction to those he perceived as part of his followers: the members of the global jihad.

Al-Zawahiri views the United States as an imperial power that can be challenged.⁵² In September 2004, al-Zawahiri released a statement in which he commented on Afghanistan, Iraq, and other issues. “The defeat of America in Iraq and Afghanistan has become just a matter of time, with God’s help. . . . Americans in both countries are between two fires. If they carry one, they will bleed to death—and if they pull out, they lose everything.”⁵³ In an interview conducted with Montasser al-Zayyat on Al-Jazeera, al-Zayyat was asked by an anchorwoman what he thought about the al-Zawahiri statement. He replied,

The main thing I read in this statement is the smartness and shrewdness of this man, who has come up with the statement at the time where there is uproar over his disappearance and reports speaking about his death and that of his colleague and brother Shaykh Usama Bin Ladin. He has made it a point to choose the proper timing, while the whole world is getting ready to speak about the third anniversary of the 9/11 incidents. He preceded all the heresies and tales that would be told and came out to us confident, clear, composed,

and determined in his mobilization discourse. He challenges the United States and the coalition armies and says the question of evicting the invasion forces from Afghanistan is just a matter of time. He also defies Pervez Musharraf. I say that Dr. Ayman al-Zawahiri is managing an open match with modest resources despite the world security alert against him. He is managing an open match with the United States with all its huge resources and intelligence services.⁵⁴

In another statement, released in July 2007, al-Zawahiri again berated the United States and blamed the country for the loss of Muslim security in Palestine, Afghanistan and Iraq, the Philippines, Chechnya, Kashmir, “and other places where America strikes us directly or support[s] our enemies by all the possible means so they can replace America in striking us.” Al-Zawahiri called on others to “surround America with horror.” As he put it, “Why not chase them like they chase us? Why not terrorize them like they terrorize us? And we possess the means to do that. Is it not our right to make bombs out of our bodies when we lack the weapons of mass destruction, that they have used to kill our children with? If these murderers cannot feel that their security cannot be achieved at the expense of our security, we will never taste security.”⁵⁵

Obviously, al-Zawahiri made his move to be in the forefront of power. What this may point to is that he is now preparing everyone to consider him the next leader of al-Qaida. According to some, al-Zawahiri is pushing for more operational control (some have argued that bin Ladin has already stepped aside)⁵⁶ and sees fit to comment on and assert his influence over everything from the war in Iraq, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Egyptian elections, oil production in Saudi Arabia, and Muslim theology.⁵⁷ And for his personal pet project, he has also become singularly focused on President Pervez Musharraf, the leader of Pakistan, the satellite of the far away enemy.

Zawahiri has been on an almost personal crusade to assassinate or overthrow the Pakistani leader. In his latest video, which is among at least 10 audio and video spots he has released this year [2007], and which was produced and put on a jihadist Web site in record time, Zawahiri condemned the Red Mosque raid and urged Pakistani Muslims to “revolt” or else “Musharraf will annihilate you.” (The mosque apparently served as a safe house for foreign and jihadist militants moving between urban areas and the tribal agencies until Pakistani security forces stormed it on July 10, killing about 70 militants and students holed up inside.)⁵⁸

However, many in the jihad movement do not welcome al-Zawahiri’s agenda and multitude of comments. According to Osama Rushdi, who was imprisoned with al-Zawahiri, “he is risking his credibility among Islamic radicals by speaking out on so many subjects. . . . ‘He’s trying to stay in control and give the impression that he’s behind everything in the Middle East and everywhere else, fighting against the Americans in Iraq. . . . But he knows, and everyone knows, that that is not true, that he has nothing to do with anything in Iraq.’”⁵⁹

His focus on Pakistan has created further rifts among the network members. In fact, many in al-Qaida believe that he has become too powerful and is literally obsessed with Musharraf.

In [pushing his own agenda], Zawahiri has provoked a potentially serious ideological split within Al Qaeda over whether he is growing too powerful, and has become obsessed with toppling Musharraf. . . . The anti-Zawahiri faction in Al Qaeda fears his actions may be jeopardizing that safe haven [in Pakistan], according to the two jihadists interviewed by NEWSWEEK. Both have proved reliable in the past: they are Omar Farooqi, the *nom de guerre* for a veteran Taliban fighter and chief liaison officer between insurgent forces in Afghanistan's Ghazni province, and Hemat Khan, a Taliban operative with links to Al Qaeda. They say Zawahiri's personal jihad has angered Al Qaeda's so-called Libyan faction, which intel officials believe may be led by the charismatic Abu Yahya al-Libi, who made a daring escape from an American high-security lockup at Baghram air base in 2005. The Libyan Islamists, along with bin Laden and other senior Qaeda leaders, would love to see Musharraf gone, too. But they fear that Zawahiri is inviting the Pakistani leader's wrath, prematurely opening up another battlefield before the jihadists have properly consolidated their position.⁶⁰

Interestingly, bin Ladin would later make a statement that in fact bolstered al-Zawahiri's views on Pakistan. He seemed to be following the dictates of al-Zawahiri and not the other way around.

Al-Zawahiri also attempted to assert control over Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, the now-deceased leader of al-Qaida in Iraq. In a letter intercepted by the U.S. military, al-Zawahiri lectured him on al-Zarqawi's leadership and operating style, as well as his need to take direction from those who know better. Obviously, al-Zawahiri is a prime candidate to give that direction.

In all of al-Zawahiri's statements there are instructive elements with regard to his operating environment. We see that al-Zawahiri has attempted to control his operating environment. His own beliefs have taken precedence over those of others in his own group or the wider network and he has proceeded with actions despite the consequences to the wider jihadist movement or other Muslims whom he considers part of his "constituency."

In his statements we also see a clear description of his enemies, and the degree of distrust and ethnocentrism he has with regard to his enemies. He has black-and-white depictions of the in-groups and out-groups in his operating environment. There are those who are with him and those who are against him. There are those who agree with him and those who do not. One can either support him, his views, and his tactics or be considered an enemy. In an e-mail exchange that took place in 2006 between al-Zawahiri and two Egyptians who were publicly critical of al-Zawahiri, there is information that bolsters the fact that al-Zawahiri does not like to be questioned about his methods, nor does he welcome being criticized, especially by other Muslims. In fact, he wrote two e-mails to his detractors despite the security risk in doing so.⁶¹ For example, in one of the e-mails, al-Zawahiri wrote to Montasser al-Zayyat, "I beg you, don't stop the Muslim souls who trust your opinions from joining the jihad against the Americans." As al-Zayyat later explained about the e-mail, "Let's put it this way: Tensions had been building between us for a long time. . . . He always thinks he is right, even if he is alone."⁶²

All of this harkens back to al-Zawahiri's motivation for power, a key personal characteristic that has seemed to develop more strongly over time. He views himself as important, wants things done his way, and does not take threats to his power kindly. He does not respect constraints. When he is threatened he tends to lash out, becoming more

abrasive and contentious. Therefore, his focus on Musharraf is not that surprising. Al-Zawahiri is obviously threatened by the proactive stance that his enemy Musharraf has taken in the tribal areas in which al-Zawahiri purportedly resides, and of course Musharraf is perceived to be supporting the quest to find al-Zawahiri himself. Musharraf is a pawn of the imperial West, notably the United States. Al-Zawahiri views these actions against him as a personal affront and, in return, he will try to get even.

Of further note, we have learned a lot more about al-Zawahiri's information environment. Al-Zawahiri does not demonstrate any degree of cognitive complexity. He is very rigid and dogmatic and is not likely affected by information that doesn't fit into his rigid worldview. He does have access to information and follows current events and, because of his perception of his own importance, very likely pays attention to information written about him specifically. In each of his proclamations he mentions current events, analyzes them through his worldview, and gives his advice. He is also concerned with whether or not his statements are publicly released, a further indication of his need to be seen as important. However, while he may be able to release statements quickly, as evidenced by his commentary on the Red Mosque raid, it is clear that his access to information may, at times, be delayed. This could be a function of where he is hiding and it is likely that he is periodically moving based on his own security concerns. For instance, in his letter to al-Zarqawi, al-Zawahiri wrote about his own lack of knowledge about his released statement on Al-Jazeera and mentioned that he was aware of the arrest of a network member Abu Faraj al-Libi, as well as Pakistani operations in the tribal areas.

DISRUPTING AL-ZAWAHIRI

Having learned about al-Zawahiri by focusing on his personal characteristics, operating environment, advisory system, and information environment, we are now ready to take this information and construct an influence and disruption campaign. We begin with al-Zawahiri's depiction of himself as a jihadist leader, note the hypocrisy this unveils, and use his own words against him.

In the letter to Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, al-Zawahiri writes that he wishes he too could join the fight if only there was a secure way to do so. Of course we know that al-Zawahiri has made numerous statements urging people to fight, but he does not himself, while other operational leaders are risking their safety and their lives. These types of proclamations give us glaring opportunities to discredit him. His behavior is not consistent with his words, and those who are proved inconsistent are seen to have personality flaws.⁶³ What we need to focus on is that al-Zawahiri doesn't want to fight and puts his protection above the fight for global jihad. Clearly, he isn't joining the fight due to his own view that he is a great and important leader, not a fighter. The important point is that everyone who participates in extremism is at risk. This is the nature of the work they do and al-Zawahiri should be equal, not better than everyone else. Therefore, the key is to use his own words to discredit him.

Consider the effect of a fictitious letter written as part of an influence and disruption (covert action) strategy. Leveraging all the capabilities of human-source-intelligence avenues, it should be written in the exact style of al-Zawahiri. The intended recipient of the letter would be bin Ladin.

This fictitious letter could say something to the effect that al-Zawahiri is lamenting the type of individuals now in charge of the global struggle. They are ignorant and clearly do not meet the standards he and bin Ladin set for the network. This plays upon his views that he is the leader, that he is always right, and that everyone should conform and follow his dictates. The letter might also say that al-Zawahiri would never fight for the present network but will keep supporting them with rhetoric only. It might suggest that other avenues of support be cut off, particularly in the areas of funding. All efforts should be put toward Pakistan, the most important target. The letter might also mention the grumbling by others about his focus on Pakistan, but they should be dismissed as heretics. He knows what is best. Furthermore, the fictitious letter might state that he believes that the only way to rescue al-Qaida from its present malaise is to follow his dictates laid out in many of his statements over the last few years.

Another key point in the letter might be derogatory comments about the ethnic composition of the core group. It is not a secret that al-Zawahiri packed the original group with Egyptians, all in leadership positions, his trusted “advisers.” We know that al-Zawahiri is not even handed when dealing with groups outside the Egyptian ethnicity.⁶⁴ Of course, the real letter from al-Zawahiri to al-Zarqawi, a Jordanian, about his unpopular methods in Iraq, and his instructions for change in this area among others, is a thematic precedent that has already been set. For our disruption campaign, we need to key in on al-Zawahiri’s thinking that if one leaves the job to those other than the Egyptians, then the network goes haywire. Thus, al-Zawahiri, in our fictitious letter, or in a follow-on letter, should tell bin Ladin that the entry of these barbarians (non-Egyptians), like al-Zarqawi and members of al-Qaida in the Maghreb, into the network has brought shame upon it. Nonetheless, they are serving the wider interests of the network and will be supported in his future proclamations. Additionally, he is considering sending more Egyptians to take charge. Other leaders who don’t follow the rule of law laid out by him should be replaced as well.

Human-source networks are the perfect venue to release the fictitious letter and also start confirming rumors about its content and authorship. Coordinated fabrication using signals and imagery releases would give the appearance of consistency. Ideally, perception management plans must offer the target several confirming bits of information to increase the credibility of the invented scenario. We also have to remember here that social proof and scarcity are powerful influence tools.⁶⁵ Once the letter gets into the hands of some, everyone will want it. When one source disseminates it, everyone else will follow suit. Here again, well-coordinated HUMINT activity will ensure success of propagation, especially in the tribal areas of Pakistan where U.S. analysts believe al-Zawahiri is hiding.

To support the subterfuge, the U.S. government should first ask that the letter not be released. This is solely for credibility purposes.⁶⁶ Once released, unwitting policy makers and analysts alike will appear as if in a frenzy, ask for intelligence analysis of the letter, talk to the media, and bring in pseudoexperts to authenticate the letter. Examples can be clerical leaders and others who had a relationship with al-Zawahiri before he went into hiding. The bogus letter might be posted in the online jihad chat rooms, where debates will be started.

If the ruse is successful, this will be a turning point for al-Zawahiri. He will be challenged and discredited. He will not be liked.⁶⁷ A bonus of course is that al-Zawahiri will have to emerge. Knowing that he sees himself as a powerful and exalted leader, he will need to respond to the challenge against him. He already demonstrated with the e-mail to al-Zayyat that he is willing to take risks when his credibility is on the line. He also, as we learned, is singularly focused on Musharraf, a man he perceives as intent on capturing him.

Soon after the letter is made public, we might monitor the areas where we believe he is likely hiding and watch for commotion. We already know from his speeches that there will be a delay in his responding. But, when all is said and done, he will demand a way to get his own message out.

Knowing what we know about al-Zawahiri's personal characteristics, advisory system, and operating and information environments, can we influence him? In other words, can we change the way he thinks? Currently, it will be almost impossible to influence al-Zawahiri because he is constantly reinforcing and confirming his belief system. He is by now entirely entrenched in his rigid convictions. However, there are always incentives and here al-Zawahiri's characteristics prove instructive. We will not change his views, but if he were backed into a corner, he will do what is in his own best interest. This is where we may have some leverage. The incentives for his giving up and quietly disappearing can only work when he is near capture or when his power has been dissipated and his influence has become nominal.

That fact that he has an entrenched worldview should also not stop us from creating a perception that he is being influenced by foreign governments. First of all, evidence suggests that al-Zawahiri is self-interested, seeks power, and has his own agenda. Therefore, using HUMINT networks, a rumor could be started that al-Zawahiri is in negotiations with the Pakistani intelligence services for his surrender. The story could be that he was provided enticements such as cash and a guarantee of his safe passage and protection in a new country. Such a rumor plays upon perceptions of self-absorption. What also might be released is the discovery of a bogus bank account with a significant amount of money in it that can be credibly tied to al-Zawahiri. The precedent has already been set by the Islamic Group, which accused him of hoarding funds for his own personal gain.

While we are churning up the rumor mill, another tactic could be to play off the problems that al-Zawahiri is having with other individuals and groups in the network. The rumor already exists that al-Zawahiri got rid of Azzam and sold out al-Qamari and discredits critics. Let's take his conflict with al-Libi as an illustration. There might be another rumor that al-Libi and others he disagrees with are going to be eliminated. This will send some running to protect themselves, and if all goes well, they will turn on al-Zawahiri in the process. A network focused on perceptions of internal enemies is better than a network focused on external enemies. This could lead to his capture or to his elimination by members of his own network—as evidenced by the CIA's successful campaign that caused Abu Nidal to murder his own people.⁶⁸

In conclusion, this chapter provided a framework for the analysis of leaders in armed groups. Understanding individual biographies and personalities is central to providing the means to influence or disrupt their activities. Human-source-intelligence activity and

covert action are the key methods to learn about leaders as well as to manipulate their perceptions through active influence and disruption campaigns. Going about breaking any network requires a variety of methods, careful planning and consideration, a bit of deviousness, and, above all, creativity. But, as we have demonstrated, leaders of armed groups do have vulnerabilities. Focusing our campaign on these vulnerabilities and exploiting them to our advantage is one way to begin to break the network, individual by individual. Men like Duane “Dewey” Clarridge did it throughout the cold war, and we can do it again.⁶⁹

NOTES

1. For a review of the literature see Martha Cottam, Beth Dietz-Uhler, Elena Mastors, and Tom Preston, *Introduction to Political Psychology* (NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum and Associates, 2004).
2. For more in-depth coverage of traits and motivation see *ibid.*
3. This framework was originally proposed in Elena Mastors, *Breaking al-Qaida* (forthcoming). Also presented is a more in-depth profile of al-Zawahiri.
4. Political psychologists define locus of control as the view of the world in which individuals do or do not perceive some degree of control over situations they are involved in. Self-confidence is an individual’s sense of self-importance or image of ability to cope with the environment. For further discussion see Cottam et al., *Introduction to Political Psychology*.
5. Political psychologists define the need for power as the concern with establishing, maintaining, or restoring one’s power, i.e., one’s impact, control, or influence over others. The need for affiliation is concern with establishing, maintaining, or restoring warm and friendly relationships with other persons or groups. Task-interpersonal emphasis is the relative emphasis on getting the task done versus focusing on the feelings and needs of others. For further discussion see *ibid.*
6. Beliefs are defined as “associations people create between an object and its attributes.” For further discussion see *ibid.*
7. Values are types of beliefs; they are “deeply held beliefs about what is right and wrong.” For further discussion see *ibid.*
8. Whether or not a leader challenges constraints is especially relevant to the discussion of a leader’s cognitive complexity. Determining both of these will allow further discussion of a leader’s style. This is more fully addressed in the information environment section of the framework.
9. Image theory provides a framework for this analysis of perceptions of other groups. The theory encompasses perceptions about capabilities, culture, and the role of perception of threats and opportunities. It then explains strategic choices made by decision makers based on these perceptions of other groups. For further discussion see Martha Cottam, *Images and Intervention* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1994); and Cottam et al., *Introduction to Political Psychology*.
10. Political psychologists define distrust of others as a general feeling of doubt, uneasiness, and misgiving about others; inclination to suspect and doubt others’ motives and actions. Ethnocentrism is defined as a view of the world in which one’s own nation holds center stage; strong emotional ties to one’s nation or group and emphasis on national or group honor and identity. For further discussion see Cottam et al., *Introduction to Political Psychology*.
11. Here the image model is also relevant.
12. Political psychologists define cognitive complexity as the ability to differentiate the environment, that is, the degree of differentiation a person shows in discussing other people, places, policies, ideas, or things. For further discussion see Cottam et al., *Introduction to Political Psychology*.
13. *Ibid.*

14. For further discussion see M. G. Hermann, T. Preston, and M. D. Young, "Who Leads Can Matter in Foreign Policymaking: A Framework for Leadership Analysis" (paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Studies Association, San Diego, CA, 1996); and Cottam et al., *Introduction to Political Psychology*.
15. Mark M. Lowenthal, *Intelligence: From Secrets to Policy* (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2000), 67.
16. Stansfield Turner, *Terrorism and Democracy* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1991), xii.
17. Stansfield Turner, *Ten Steps to Fight Terrorism without Endangering Democracy* (College Park: Center for International and Security Studies at Maryland School of Public Affairs, 2001), 18.
18. Some of the key legal boundaries to which American intelligence agencies must adhere are articulated in Executive Order no. 12,333, "United States Intelligence Activities," available at www.archives.gov/federal-register/codification/executive-order/12333.html; Department of Defense, *DoD Intelligence Activities*, DoD Directive 5240.01 (27 August 2007); *National Security Act of 1947*, U.S. Code 50, sec. 401; *Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) of 1978*, U.S. Code 50, secs. 1801–11, 1821–29, 1841–46, and 1861–62.
19. Finding and vetting various people is an ongoing process for human intelligence officers. The more recruited sources one has, the greater success at having the right one at the right time. "People may not have access [to leaders], but they do have access to others who have such access. They are potential 'spotters' of potential agents. And never forget that an officer running a spy program for whatever service always needs support agents—accommodation addresses, couriers, dead drop servicers, surveillants, safe house keepers, strong-arm men, etc." William R. Johnson, *Thwarting Enemies at Home and Abroad: How to Be a Counterintelligence Officer* (Bethesda: Stone Trail Press, 1987), 91.
20. Lowenthal, *Intelligence*, 211.
21. Duane Clarridge, speech about covert action (Smithsonian Associates, 27 January 1997), available at bss.sfsu.edu/fischer/IR%20360/Readings/Clarridge.htm (accessed 2 January 2008).
22. See Duane R. Clarridge, *A Spy for All Seasons: My Life in the CIA* (New York: Scribner, 1997), for an autobiographic memoir.
23. *Ibid.*, 333–36.
24. Duane Clarridge, interview by Jeff Norwitz, July 2007.
25. For an excellent overview see Robert Cialdini, *The Psychology of Influence* (New York: Collins, 2007).
26. Nimrod Raphaeli, "Ayman Muhammad Rabi' Al-Zawahiri: The Making of an Arch-terrorist," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 14, no. 4 (Winter 2002): 1–22.
27. *Ibid.*
28. Montasser al-Zayyat, *The Road to Al-Qaeda* (London: Pluto, 2004), 16.
29. Raphaeli, "Ayman Muhammad Rabi' Al-Zawahiri," 3–5.
30. *Ibid.*
31. *Ibid.*, 10.
32. *Ibid.*, 12.
33. BBC News, "Profile: Ayman al-Zawahiri," 27 September 2004, news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/1560834.stm (accessed 11 September 2007).
34. Robert Windrem, "Who Is Ayman al-Zawahiri?" MSNBC, 25 March 2004, www.msnbc.msn.com/id/4555901/ (accessed 11 September 2007).
35. Raphaeli, "Ayman Muhammad Rabi' Al-Zawahiri," 4.
36. *Ibid.*, 7.
37. Al-Zayyat, *The Road to Al-Qaeda*.
38. *Ibid.*, 29.

39. Y. Carmon, Y. Feldner, and D. Lav, "The Al-Gama'a Al-Islamiyya Cessation of Violence: An Ideological Reversal; MEMRI Inquiry and Analysis No. 309, December 22, 2006," Middle East Media Research Institute, available at memri.org/bin/articles.cgi?Page=archives&Area=ia&ID=IA30906 (accessed 21 September 2007).
40. Al-Zayyat, *The Road to Al-Qaeda*, 30.
41. Al-Zayyat, *The Road to Al-Qaeda*.
42. Raphaeli, "Ayman Muhammad Rabi' Al-Zawahiri," 6.
43. *Ibid.*, 7.
44. *Ibid.*, 8.
45. *Ibid.*, 1–22.
46. Lawrence Wright, "The Man behind Bin Ladin," *The New Yorker*, 16 September 2002, available at www.lawrencewright.com/art-zawahiri.html (accessed 11 September 2007).
47. Raphaeli, "Ayman Muhammad Rabi' Al-Zawahiri," 9.
48. Rohan Gunaratna, *Inside Al Qaeda* (New York: Columbia, 2002).
49. Al-Zayyat, *The Road to Al-Qaeda*.
50. *Al-Sharq al-Wasat*, "Ayman al-Zawahiri's Book Knights under the Prophet's Banner," 12 December 2001.
51. Alan Cullison, "Inside Al-Qaeda's Hard Drive," *Atlantic Monthly*, 2004.
52. Specifically, al-Zawahiri views the United States through the imperial image. This image occurs when there is a perceived threat from another group that is perceived as superior in both capability and culture. For further discussion see Cottam et al., *Introduction to Political Psychology*.
53. "Al-Zawahiri: U.S. Faltering in Afghanistan," CNN, 9 September 2004, www.cnn.com/2004/WORLD/meast/09/09/zawahiri.tape/index.html (accessed 6 December 2007).
54. "Al Jazirah TV Airs Comments on Al-Zawahiri's 9 Sep Statement," 10 September 2004 (FBIS Document NES-2004-0910), available at cryptome.org/al-four.htm#Al-Jazirah%20Carries%20Al-Zawahiri's%20Recorded%20Videotape (accessed 11 September 2007).
55. Ayman al-Zawahiri, "Sheikh Ayman al-Zawahiri: The Hateful British and Their Indian Slaves (English Translation)," The Unjust Media, 17 July 2007, theunjustmedia.com/Islamic%20Perspectives/Sheikh%20Ayman%20al-Zawahiri (accessed 1 September 2007).
56. Bruce Hoffman, "Outlook: Worse Than Bin Laden," *Washington Post*, 11 September 2007, available at www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/discussion/2007/09/07/DI20070907209 (accessed 12 September 2007).
57. Craig Whitlock, "Keeping Al-Qaeda in His Grip: Al-Zawahiri Presses Ideology, Deepens Rifts among Islamic Radicals," *Washington Post*, available at www.shockandawe.us/cms/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=32&Itemid=2 (accessed 11 September 2007).
58. Sami Yousafzai, Ron Moreau, Michael Hirsh, Jeffrey Bartholet, Mark Hosenball, Zahid Hussain, "Al Qaeda Family Feud," *Newsweek*, 30 July 2007.
59. Whitlock, "Keeping Al-Qaeda in His Grip."
60. Yousafzai et al., "Al Qaeda Family Feud."
61. Whitlock, "Keeping Al-Qaeda in His Grip."
62. *Ibid.*
63. Social psychologist Robert Cialdini argues that one of the key principles of influence is consistency. As Cialdini explains, "Once we have made a choice or taken a stand, we will encounter personal and interpersonal pressures to behave consistently with that commitment. Those pressures will cause us to respond in ways that justify our earlier decision." This comes straight out of the psychological literature on balance and

consistency as advanced by Leon Festinger, Fritz Heider, and others. Dissonance is considered an aversive state that results when an individual's behavior is inconsistent with his or her attitudes. Obviously, then, people are motivated to reduce the dissonant state once it occurs. Cialdini goes on to explain that commitment is also integral to consistency. As he argues, "If I can get you to make a commitment (that is, to take a stand, to go on record), I will have set the stage for your automatic and ill-considered consistency with that earlier commitment. Once a stand is taken, there is a natural tendency to behave in ways that are stubbornly consistent with the stand." For further discussion see Cialdini, *The Psychology of Influence*.

64. "How Did Al Qaeda Emerge in North Africa?" *Christian Science Monitor*, 1 May 2007, available at www.csmonitor.com/2007/0501/p12s01-wome.htm (accessed 5 May 2007).
65. Social psychologist Robert Cialdini argues that social proof is important to influence. Social proof is essentially the phenomenon that to find out what is indeed correct, we look to others. He goes on to elaborate: "This principle applies especially to the way we decide what constitutes correct behavior. We view a behavior as more correct in a given situation to the degree that we see others performing it. Whether the question is what to do with an empty popcorn box in a movie theater, how fast to drive on a certain stretch of highway, or how to eat chicken at a dinner party, the actions of those around us will be important in defining the answer." Scarcity is the phenomenon of "opportunities seem[ing] more valuable to us when their availability is limited." When something is scarce, we want it even more. "If something is rare, or it is becoming rare, we perceive it to be more valuable." For further discussion see Cialdini, *The Psychology of Influence*.
66. For a discussion about the importance of credibility of sources see Gerry Spence, *How to Argue and Win Every Time* (New York: St. Martin's, 1995).
67. Social psychologist Robert Cialdini argues that likability is important. For further discussion see Cialdini, *The Psychology of Influence*.
68. Clarridge, *A Spy for All Seasons*, 334–36.
69. Clarridge, interview.