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Algeria Attack and the al-Qaeda Penetration of Africa

Wednesday April 11th 2007, 10:00 pm



It is sincerely mysterious “al-Qaeda” has a knack of showing up in places targeted by the neocons. For instance, Africa, in particular Somalia and, more recently, Algeria. “Terrorist bomb attacks in Algeria yesterday show al-Qaeda and its allies pose a ‘very real threat’ in North Africa, the U.S. State Department said,” reports [Bloomberg](#). “Al-Qaeda is a ‘current and persistent’ threat in the region, department spokesman Sean McCormack told reporters in Washington yesterday.... Islamic militants are becoming more active in North Africa, particularly in the Maghreb region of Tunisia, Morocco and Algeria where they have joined forces with al-Qaeda.”

Does AFRICOM ring a bell? It should, that is if you bother to read the newspaper beyond horoscopes and celebrity gossip. Back in February, Defense Secretary Robert “Iran-Contra” Gates “announced the creation of AFRICOM, which will ultimately be responsible for all of Africa except Egypt, which has existing military ties with U.S. Central Command,” according to [Stars and Stripes](#). “AFRICOM’s purpose is to make Africa the primary concern of one combatant command instead of a ‘secondary or tertiary’ concern for three other commands.” In other words, the neocons have a keen interest in expanding the WOT into Africa.

“AFRICOM came into being shortly before the United States used the Ethiopian armed forces, supported by US air power and small teams of special forces, to destabilize the Islamic Courts Union which had stabilized most of Somalia and, for the first time in years, brought a semblance of normalcy to the country,” writes [Matthew Good](#). “U.S. Special Forces accompanied the Ethiopian Army when it stormed across the border in late December to support the besieged and isolated Transitional Federal Government (TFG). The United States also provided the Ethiopians with “up-to-date intelligence on the military positions of the Islamist fighters in Somalia,” Pentagon and counterterrorism officials told *The New York Times*,” adds [Conn Hallinan](#), writing for *Foreign Policy In Focus*. “The ostensible reason for U.S. participation in the invasion was the ICU’s supposed association with al-Qaida, a charge that has never been substantiated. U.S. warplanes and ships shelled and rocketed parts of southern Somalia where, according to Oxfam and the UN Refugee Center, 70 civilians died and more than 100 were wounded.”

Hallinan continues:

The White House’s plans for Africa, which reach far beyond the Horn, are part of a general militarization of U.S. foreign policy. A recent congressional report found that “some embassies have effectively become command posts, with military personnel in those countries all but supplanting the role of ambassadors in conducting American foreign policy.” The United States is already pouring \$500 million into its Trans-Sahel Counterterrorism Initiative that embraces Morocco, Tunisia, and Algeria in North Africa, and nations boarding the Sahara including Mauritania, Niger, Mali, Mauritania, Chad, and Senegal. A major U.S. base in Djibouti houses some 1,800 troops and played an important role in the Somali invasion.

With Africa expected to provide a quarter of all U.S. oil imports by 2015, a major focus of AFRICOM will be the Gulf of Guinea. The gulf countries of Nigeria, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Angola, and the Congo Republic all possess enormous oil reserves. Some of them are plagued by exactly the kind of “instability”

that AFRICOM was created to address.

It hardly comes as a surprise the usual suspects are behind AFRICOM, most notably Elliot Abrams, yet another Iran-Contra criminal. Abrams is not only a schoolbook version of a neocon—hooked up with PNAC, CSP, the American Jewish Committee, and the Hudson Institute—but he is also a former member of the Council on Foreign Relations, thus demonstrating once again the kissing cousin aspect between neocon and neolib. As the Deputy National Security Adviser for Global Democracy Strategy at the National Security Council and point person on Israel, it is an understatement to declare Abrams has pull.

“In 2002 he was appointed senior director of Near East and North African Affairs, just as the Bush Administration began basing troops in Djibouti on the strategic Horn of Africa,” writes [Conn Hallinan](#) elsewhere. “Some of those forces took part in the recent invasion of Somalia. Abrams also helped launch the Trans-Sahel Counterterrorism Initiative that has drawn a number of countries in North Africa and areas bordering the Sahara into a web of military alliances.”

And, of course, military alliances are pointless without strife and conflict, thus the fortuitous “al-Qaeda” attack on Algerian PM Abdelaziz Belkhadem’s office and a police station in the suburbs of Algiers. “Al-Jazeera television reported yesterday that a man identifying himself as al-Qaeda’s spokesman in North Africa called the station’s Rabat bureau to say the group carried out the bombings,” Bloomberg informs us. “The attacks come before Algeria’s May 17 parliamentary elections, and after a week of gun battles in coastal mountains between security forces and the GSPC, or Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat, Algeria’s largest remaining Islamic guerrilla group which is closely allied to al-Qaeda.”

“Collusion between the GSPC and al-Qaeda is not a new phenomenon,” the [CFR](#) explains. “According to a report by Emily Hunt of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, Osama bin Laden provided funding for Algerian Islamists in the early 1990s and was involved in the GSPC’s early formation. Many of the group’s founding members trained in al-Qaeda camps in Afghanistan. The GSPC declared its allegiance to al-Qaeda as early as 2003, but al-Qaeda’s second-in-command, Ayman al-Zawahari, officially approved GSPC’s merger in a videotape released on September 11, 2006. The GSPC claimed responsibility for February 2007 attacks against Algerian police stations under its new name.”

A bit of clarification is required: the Washington Institute for Near East Policy was established to expand AIPAC’s control over U.S. foreign policy, as its founding director, Martin Indyk, is the onetime research director of AIPAC, and WINEP’s methodical process of foreign policy colonization began during the Clinton years.

As for Afghanistan, a well-read ninth grader will tell you that’s where “al-Qaeda” was formulated out of selected Mujahideen remnants (i.e., the “Afghan Arabs”), the result of a well-honed collaboration between the CIA and Pakistan’s ISI.

Thus, when the CFR and WINEP tell us “Osama bin Laden provided funding for Algerian Islamists” and “Ayman al-Zawahari ... officially approved GSPC’s merger,” we can rest assured this relationship was not engineered in a cave or hovel located somewhere in Pakistan’s wild frontier.

Naturally, the GSPC, teamed up with “al-Qaeda,” is a threat to white people far and wide. “Analysts point to thwarted attacks in France and several arrests of GSPC-linked groups as evidence the group is capable of attacks in Western Europe. Authorities arrested a London-based GSPC militant who conspired to launch a chemical attack, and arrested four members of a GSPC cell in Frankfurt for possession of chemicals and arms,” the CFR warns.

And thus the “al-Qaeda” threat keeps on rolling, out of the Middle East and right into the midst of Africa, where there happens to be no shortage of strategic minerals and such. Of course, for the neocons, the mineral wealth of Africa is secondary to making certain Muslims are demonized far and wide and making sure the WOT has a very long shelf life, maybe a hundred years or more.

Obviously, there is no shortage of “bad guys,” that is to say useful patsies and dupes, and Africa is their new designated stomping ground, within convenient striking range of Europe from Algeria, Morocco, and the entire Maghreb north of the Sahara Desert and west of the Nile.

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