



The Project for the Research of Islamist Movements (PRISM) Herzliya, ISRAEL

www.e-prism.org

THE PROJECT FOR THE RESEARCH OF ISLAMIST MOVEMENTS (PRISM)

Global Research in International Affairs (GLORIA) Center

ISLAM IN AFRICA NEWSLETTER



Volume 1 (2006), Number 5 (September 2006)

By Moshe Terdman

Director and editor: Reuven Paz

The Project for the Research of Islamist Movements is part of the Global Research in International Affairs (GLORIA) Center. Site: www.e-prism.org. Email: reupaz@netvision.net.il. All material copyright Reuven Paz unless otherwise stated. Credit if quoting; ask permission to reprint. GLORIA is part of the Interdisciplinary Center, Herzliya, ISRAEL

****_****_****_****_****_****_****_****_****_****

Islam in Africa Newsletter provides and analyzes information, political, religious, and social developments, events, or documents on Radical Islam and Islamic movements in Africa.

Inside this Issue:

News Briefs from Around the Continent

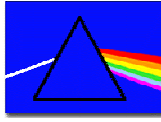
Islamization among Blacks in the United Kingdom – the Unknown Role of the British Branch of the Nation of Islam

The Chadian Community in Saudi Arabia and its Involvement in Terrorism

News Briefs from Around the Continent

Jigawa Riots between Muslims and Christians in Nigeria

The tension created by the religious crisis in Jigawa State has threatened to spill over to Kaduna and Bauchi states, but the authorities in these states are determined to prevent this from happening. At least 12 churches and scores of shops belonging to Christians were looted and set ablaze by Muslim youths in Dutse, Jigawa State capital, on September 22, 2006, following an altercation between a male Muslim and a female Christian over an alleged blasphemous act against Prophet Muhammad.



The Project for the Research of Islamist Movements (PRISM) Herzliya, ISRAEL
www.e-prism.org

Malawian Muslims Appoint First Grand Mufti

On September 18, 2006, the Ulama Council of Malawi appointed Sheikh Abbas Cassim as the country's first grand mufti, the highest religious Muslim post. He will serve as the spiritual leader of the Malawian Muslims and will act as a link to other faiths and international Muslim organizations.

Muslims in Kenya Demand to Cut Ties with US

On September 21, 2006, Kenyan Muslim leaders have urged the Kenyan government to cut off diplomatic ties with the United States until it explains why President Bush discussed Kenya's political stability with the Tanzanian President, Jakaya Kilwete. They also demanded that Tanzania's foreign affairs ministry give a detailed report on this meeting, which was contrary to tenets of the East African Community (EAC). The Council of Imams and Preachers of Kenya (CIPK) said that President Bush's comments were an attempt to scuttle EAC relations and create animosity among its leaders.

Iranian Ambassador to Sierra Leone Calls Muslims to Believe in Jesus as Prophet

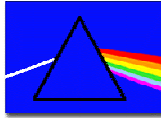
Iranian ambassador to Sierra Leone called on all Muslims to yield to the fact that Jesus Christ was a true messenger of god and further said that every Muslim should practice good relationship with Christians for peaceful coexistence. He made this statement during a one-day seminar organized by the Missionary Church of Africa in Sierra Leone in collaboration with the Cultural Consulate of the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran at the Miatta conference Hall in Freetown on September 19, 2006.

Muslim Leaders in Kenya Move to Remove Terrorism Tag from Schools

Muslim leaders have agreed on September 19, 2006, to streamline the *madrassa* system of education to dispel the feeling that the schools are a breeding ground for terrorists. It will be done through a national Muslim education policy. Previous government efforts to regulate the system raised objections, especially after the bombing in 1988 of the US Embassy in Nairobi and the 2002 attack on an Israeli owned hotel at Kikambala, and against an Israeli plane.

Islamization among Blacks in the United Kingdom – The Unknown Role of the British Branch of the Nation of Islam

On September 14, 2006, two Ugandan brothers living in Norwood, South London, were being charged with a string of terror offences in the United Kingdom. Yassin and Hassan Mutegombwa originate from Kygawe County, Mukono district. Yassin, 22-years-old, is accused of receiving weapons training at camps in the heart of the countryside in the New Forest and Berkshire. He is the first suspect to face British courts under the new Terrorist Act of 2006. He was arrested two weeks earlier in a Scotland Yard operation, targeting the recruitment and training of would-be Islamist terrorists. He faces three counts of attending weekend training sessions for terrorism during the months of April, May, and June this year. He is accused of another charge of receiving terrorism training.



The Project for the Research of Islamist Movements (PRISM) Herzliya, ISRAEL
www.e-prism.org

The Terrorism Act 2006 became law only in March and also makes it an offence for one to be at a place where training is taking place and includes controversial clauses banning the glorification of terrorism. Thus, each of the three charges alleges that Mr. Mutegombwa was at site and "whilst there instruction of training of the type mentioned in the Terrorism Act 2006 or the Terrorism Act 2000 (weapons training) was provided wholly or partly for the purposes connected with the commission or preparation of acts of terrorism, and the accused knew or believed that the instruction or training was being provided there wholly or partly for purposes connected with the commission or preparation of acts of terrorism".¹

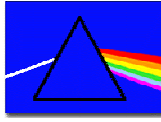
Yassin's 20-years-old brother Hassan was also arrested in the same Scotland Yard raids and faces a single charge of procuring funds for terrorism in July 2006, contrary to the terrorism Act of 2000. The brothers will stay in custody until October 10, 2006, when they will appear at the Old Bailey. They were among 14 suspects arrested on September 6, 2006 in connection with investigations into alleged attempts to recruit and train would-be-terrorists. Two men were released without further action last week and ten other suspects are still being questioned by police in London.

Black Africans are not the only ones who are involved, or suspected to be involved, in terrorism in Great Britain. Afro-Caribbeans are involved in terrorism activity too. The most famous of them was Germaine Maurice Lindsay, also known as Abdullah Shahid Jamal, who was one of four suicide bombers who detonated bombs on three trains on the London Underground and one bus in central London on July 7, 2005, killing 56 people and injuring more than 700. He was born in Jamaica, moved to the UK when he was five months old and converted to Islam at age 15.

Another example was Richard Reid, who was born in Bromley, Kent to a British mother and to a father of Jamaican origin. He was actually recruited to the cause of Islam when in Feltham Young Offenders' Institute in Middlesex, than won over to its militant wing later in a mosque in Brixton. People like him abound in Britain's penal institutions. There is now a huge non-White population pool in the UK from which Islamic militants can be recruited. Thus, many Black Africans and Afro-Caribbeans are ripe for conversion to Islam.

An important role in this conversion process plays the Nation of Islam (NOI) branch in the UK. The NOI was very active in towns and neighborhoods where African and Afro-Caribbean Diasporas are densely populated in Great Britain. This conversion activity can be traced back to the mid-1960s when Malcolm X, having defected from the Nation of Islam in the US, visited Britain twice seeking to arouse the Black nationalist sentiments in Britain and France. Nowadays, the NOI may have as many as 10,000 members, supporters and sympathizers in the UK.

¹ See on-line in: <http://allafrica.com/stories/200609140014.html>



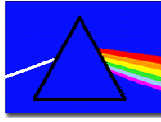
The Project for the Research of Islamist Movements (PRISM) Herzliya, ISRAEL
www.e-prism.org

In the 1960s, Black power and nationalist thinking enjoyed a relative short but notable era of notoriety in the UK, primarily through two Black organizations—the Racial Adjustment Action Society (RAAS) and the Universal Colored People's Association (UCPA). The ruling bodies of these two organizations were heavily influenced by revolutionary, military and radical Black Power movements' teachings, objectives and agendas in the US. Both the RAAS and UCPA gradually lost their popularity among Afro-Caribbeans because of their deprived loci of authority and lack of clear ideological and organizational directions and structures. British Black Power movements, however, were important to the genesis and development of awareness necessary for the growth of later socio-religious protest and political Black movements like the Rastafarian in the 1970s and the NOI's from the mid-1980s onwards.

Later, when Imam Wallace Mohammad became leader upon his father's death in 1975, he gradually transformed his father, Elijah Muhammad's NOI from Black nationalist and political lines to the mainstream of Islam by introducing reforms and changes in beliefs and practices and moderating the political and organizational policies of the movement. Simultaneously, he aimed to spread this true version of Islam to the Black Diasporas. Thus, by the late 1970s, he sent some of his imams to the Caribbean, Belize, Trinidad, Guyana, Jamaica, and also to the UK.

Imam Wallace Mohammad sent two envoys to the UK to teach and spread Islam among the Afro-Caribbeans: Imams B. D. Murad Deen and Abdul Aziz. The latter defected and rejoined Farrakhan's NOI in the early 1980s and changed his name to Akbar Muhammad, and now is Farrakhan's and the NOI's International Representative. The former has remained loyal to Imam Wallace Mohammad and was sent as his special emissary in the UK for two different periods, one was from 1979 to 1983 and the other was from 1985 to May 1999. During his stay he has been employed by the London branch of the Saudi Muslim World League as an Imam and to teach Islam, its basic beliefs and principles to new Muslim converts at the London Central Mosque and the Muslim World League. He organized and designed some courses at weekends at those centers for newly converted Muslims. Since the early 1990s Murad Deen has worked as a prison Imam in the Holloway Prison mostly teaching Afro-Caribbean inmates. Numerous people became Muslims and interested in Islam, mostly Afro-Caribbeans, through his *Da'wah* activities, courses, speeches and programs. Consequently, Murad Deen's successful *Da'wah* activities and efforts bore fruit and with the financial support of Muslim organizations like the Muslim World League and others he played significant role in opening the first Muslim prison masjid in the UK at the Holloway Prison, London, in June 1998.

However, during his stay in the UK, Imam Murad Deen has sometimes received suspicious treatment from some Muslim leading figures and organizations due to his former religious/Islamic experience in the NOI. He especially received harsh and negative treatment from Salafi groups like Jami'at Ihyaa' Minhaj al-Sunnah. In early May 1999, he resigned from the position he held over eight years in prison and left for good to Egypt to improve his Islamic knowledge and take courses in Islamic studies and Arabic language in Al-Azhar



The Project for the Research of Islamist Movements (PRISM) Herzliya, ISRAEL
www.e-prism.org

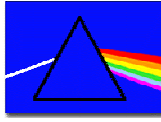
University. In autumn 1999 he finally returned to the US from Egypt. He is currently resides in Atlanta, Georgia, and works at Imam Wallace Mohammad's the Muslim American Society's programs like prison ministry and education.

Lewis Farrakhan, NOI's current leader, was banned from entry into the UK in 1986 and the ban is still valid today. Since the issue of the ban, the word has gone out in the Black community and aroused the awareness and sympathy for Farrakhan and his message. The NOI's literature and tapes began circulating among young Afro-Caribbeans and were displayed in densely populated Black towns. In 1988, young Afro-Caribbeans began holding small meetings at homes to study and discuss the NOI's teachings. These early activities gradually attracted more people through racial, color and social milieus and networks. In February 1989, the NOI UK members participated in Savior's Day in Chicago where they were personally welcomed by Farrakhan. They returned to the UK with a special mission authorizing them to establish their first Study Group in Brixton. From this first study group eventually three mosques and one study group were established in the London area, and other Study groups were established in big industrial cities where Afro-Caribbeans' numbers were significant like Birmingham, Manchester, Leeds, and Nottingham.

One of the NOI's mosques in London was located and formed in 1994 in Stoke Newington and Dalston areas of East London and is headed by Wayne Muhammad. The second was formed in 1991 in Shepherd Bush area of West London and headed by Michael Muhammad and Leo Muhammad. The third mosque is located in Brixton where the majority of its residents is Afro-Caribbeans and is headed by Hilary Muhammad. In February 1997, the North London group formed a Study Group in Tottenham and Enfield areas, which is headed now by Bertram Muhammad. On February 27, 1997, Farrakhan ordained the East London group as the NOI's first mosque in Europe. The mosque supervises other study groups outside London in Birmingham, Manchester and other industrial cities. It also helps and monitors a study group in Paris and NOI's interests in Belgium, Holland, Denmark and Germany.

Apart from the above religious centers and groupings, the NOI has also other institutions like educational, economic, and business enterprises. The NOI has three schools; in Brixton, which offers courses at weekends, in Shepherd Bush and in Hackney, offering full-time nursery, primary and secondary schooling with a distinctive dress codes and curriculum. With its traditional self-help and self-reliance economic teachings, the NOI displayed a very positive image for Blacks in the UK. Restaurants, shops and groceries, bookstores and clothing began to appear in Black neighborhoods. To supplement the *final call*, the NOI's official newspaper, the UK members publish newspapers and magazines to spread the movement's teaching and agendas, and approach news dealing with Black issues and problems from Black perspectives.

Up until April 1998, the UK NOI branch, like the French and African branches, was attached to the NOI's International Representative Office based in Accra, Ghana. From May 1998 onward, the NOI's European chapters are under the administration of the NOI's East Coast



The Project for the Research of Islamist Movements (PRISM) Herzliya, ISRAEL
www.e-prism.org

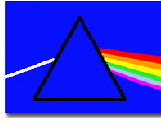
Regional Representative, Minister Benjamin Muhammad. Currently, each mosque and study group in the UK is directly responsible to Chicago and receives religious, spiritual and moral instructions and directives from there.

To sum up, the NOI finds a very fertile ground in places where unemployed, dischanted Black youths are in search of something that will offer them identity and security and deal with life issues. Thus, the NOI offered real alternatives and practical solutions for Black youths in the UK. With its distinctive religious beliefs, racial pride and self-love mottos, self-help and do for self economic principles, and its members' clean and respectful role models in manners and appearances, the NOI has successfully attracted mostly Black youth since the early 1990s. For these youths, the NOI offers a formula for Black people's empowerment, doing for themselves, gives self-esteem and dignity, trains Black youths how to become productive, industrious and respectable people, and reforms and rehabilitates people by turning them away from crime, drugs and alcohol. However, many consider their joining the NOI as a direct reaction to the ineffectiveness of Christianity, or more specifically, the Black churches' lack of interests and programs. For them, Christianity is seen as a White man's or Europeans' religion vis-à-vis Islam, which is regarded an ancestral faith. From there, the way is open for the newly converted Muslims to further convert to radical Islam.

The Chadian Community in Saudi Arabia and Its Involvement in Terrorism

On September 26, 2004, Laurent Barbot, a French employee of a defense electronics firm, was shot dead in his car in Jeddah. On June 16, 2005, security services announced the arrest in Riyadh of five Chadians who were described as "members of a deviant group", the term used by the Saudi authorities to describe al-Qaeda militants. The detainees confessed to the murder of Laurent Barbot in September 2004 as well as to a number of armed robberies. On June 29, 2005, the security services issued two new lists of wanted persons in connection with domestic terrorism. List A included 15 names of persons suspected of terrorist affiliations and who were thought to be in the Kingdom. List B included 21 names of persons suspected of terrorist affiliation, who were thought to be outside the kingdom. Three of them were Chadians: Nur Muhammad Mousa, 21-years-old; Manour Muhammad Yusuf, 24-years-old; and Othman Muhammad Kurani, 23-years-old.

Nowadays, there are about 100,000 Chadian residents in Saudi Arabia, most of whom were born in the kingdom but are increasingly denied the rights to basic education and emergency healthcare. It must be noted, that the overwhelming majority of them was born in Saudi Arabia and have never lived in Chad; many have never even visited Chad. Moreover, under Saudi naturalization law, it is almost impossible for Chadians to acquire Saudi citizenship because they generally do not fulfill the educational and financial requirements.



The Project for the Research of Islamist Movements (PRISM) Herzliya, ISRAEL
www.e-prism.org

For the past two years, Saudi officials have been routinely, and without explanation, refusing to issue the customary two-year renewal of Chadian residency permits, including those who have the sponsorship of their long-time Saudi employers. Without permits, Saudi employers are required by law to dismiss the Chadians, who often work as laborers in the Islamic Port of Jeddah or as office secretaries. Public schools have also expelled Chadian children because their parents could not renew their permits.

Human Rights Watch obtained a copy of a circular sent by the Saudi Ministry of Education's Girls Branch to schools, informing them of the Ministry's study of "the issue of the Chadian nationality". The circular, marked "important and urgent" and dated December 26, 2004, said that "the crimes [of Chadians] had multiplied". It instructed teachers to return an accompanying questionnaire, providing information about Chadian schoolgirls such as their family's monthly income, employment status and type of work, as well as any history of violence in the family and of violent behavior by the girls themselves.² Beginning in March 2005, the government began to target Chadian children for expulsion from public schools. After six weeks, they were allowed to return if they had a valid residency permit as well as a personal letter of clearance from the Ministry of Education. As the authorities prevented more and more Chadian families from renewing their residency permits, however, the schools made the expulsions permanent, and Chadian schoolchildren have been unable to attend school since then.

The cut-off of residency renewals has also endangered the lives of Chadians by compromising their access to emergency medical care. The police detains people who lack a valid residency permit and place them in deportation centers. Those holding Chadian passports are deported to N'djamena, the capital of Chad, even if they have never been there before. Deportations were halted in April and May 2006 because of increased instability in Chad, however.

Chadians in Saudi Arabia rejected any notion of linking them as a group to terrorism. They rejected the government's measures as collective punishment and pointed out that there was nothing distinctively Chadian about these three names in the wanted list that grew up in Saudi culture and appear next to Saudi names. This Chadian involvement in al-Qaeda's terrorist activity within Saudi Arabia against the French employee reveals the scope of al-Qaeda activity within Saudi Arabia amongst the non-Saudis residents, such as the Chadians and others from the Sahel countries of Africa. It seems like al-Qaeda wins some of those residents to its cause, especially by flying the flag of war against the foreigners, specifically against the French, who ruled the Sahel until the 1960s. Furthermore, it should be noted, that the Saudi wanted lists include more people from the Sahel, which may be a sign to possible al-Qaeda's inroads into the Sahel countries of Africa.

² See on-line in: <http://allafrica.com/stories/200609070006.html>