

Is Al Qaeda an “Existential Threat”? What is the Meaning of Al Qaeda in Arabic?

Al Qaeda: The Computer Data Base

By [Pierre-Henri Bunel](#), [Wayne Madsen](#), and [Prof Michel Chossudovsky](#)

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Global Research Introduction

This incisive article by Pierre-Henri Bunel, a former member of France’s Military Intelligence, initially published by Global Research in 2005, sheds light on the nature of Al Qaeda, an intelligence construct used by Washington to destabilize and destroy sovereign countries, while sustaining the illusion of an outside enemy, which threatens the security of America and the Western World.

What is the meaning in Arabic of Al Qaeda? □□□□□□□□

According to Major Pierre-Henri Bunel:

It’s “The Base”, namely the Computer Database of the Islamic Mujahideen (Reagan’s “Freedom Fighters”) recruited by the CIA.

“When Osama bin Laden was an American agent in Afghanistan, the Al Qaida Intranet was a good communication system through coded or covert messages.

The truth is, there is no Islamic army or terrorist group called Al Qaida. And any informed intelligence officer knows this.”



The above statement by Major Bunel, was confirmed by the late British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook (shortly before his passing) in a pointed article in *The Guardian*:

“Bin Laden was, though, a product of a monumental miscalculation by Western security agencies. Throughout the 80s he was armed by the CIA and funded by the Saudis to wage jihad against the Russian occupation of Afghanistan.

Al-Qaeda, literally “the database”, was originally the computer file of the thousands of mujahideen who were recruited and trained with help from the CIA to defeat the Russians. (Robin Cook, [The Guardian](#), July 8, 2005, see also [archive](#), emphasis added)



Ronald Reagan meets the Mujahideen in the Oval Office (1980s)

Michel Chossudovsky, Global Research, December 27, 2023

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Al Qaeda: The Data Base

by

Pierre-Henry Bunel

Excerpts from World Affairs Quarterly

I first heard about Al-Qaida while I was attending the Command and Staff course in Jordan. I was a French officer at that time and the French Armed Forces had close contacts and cooperation with Jordan . . .

Two of my Jordanian colleagues were experts in computers. They were air defense officers. Using computer science slang, they introduced a series of jokes about students' punishment.

For example, when one of us was late at the bus stop to leave the Staff College, the two officers used to tell us:

'You'll be noted in 'Q eidaat il-Maaloomaat' which meant 'You'll be logged in the information database.' Meaning 'You will receive a warning . . .'

If the case was more severe, they would used to talk about 'Q eidaat i-Taaleemaat.' Meaning 'the decision database.' It meant 'you will be punished.' For the worst cases they used to speak of logging in 'Al Qaida.'



In the early 1980s the Islamic Bank for Development, which is located in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, like the Permanent Secretariat of the Islamic Conference Organization, bought a new computerized system to cope with its accounting and communication requirements. At the time the system was more sophisticated than necessary for their actual needs.

Image right: Major Bunel

It was decided to use a part of the system's memory to host the Islamic Conference's database. It was possible for the countries attending to access the database by telephone: an Intranet, in modern language. The governments of the member-countries as well as some of their embassies in the world were connected to that network.

[According to a Pakistani major] the database was divided into two parts, the information file where the participants in the meetings could pick up and send information they needed, and the decision file where the decisions made during the previous sessions were recorded and stored.

In Arabic, the files were called, 'Q eidaat il-Maaloomaat' and 'Q eidaat i-Taaleemaat.' Those two files were kept in one file called in Arabic 'Q eidaat ilmu'ti'aat' which is the exact translation of the English word database.

But the Arabs commonly used the short word Al Qaida which is the Arabic word for "base." The military air base of Riyadh, Saudi Arabia is called 'q eidaat 'riyadh al 'askariya.' Q eida means "a base" and "Al Qaida" means "the base."

In the mid-1980s, Al Qaida was a database located in computer and dedicated to the communications of the Islamic Conference's secretariat.

In the early 1990s, I was a military intelligence officer in the Headquarters of the French Rapid Action Force. Because of my skills in Arabic my job was also to translate a lot of faxes and letters seized or intercepted by our intelligence services . . .

We often got intercepted material sent by Islamic networks operating from the UK or from Belgium.

These documents contained directions sent to Islamic armed groups in Algeria or in France. The messages quoted the sources of statements to be exploited in the redaction of the tracts or leaflets, or to be introduced in video or tapes to be sent to the media.

The most commonly quoted sources were the United Nations, the non-aligned countries, the UNHCR and . . . Al Qaida.

Al Qaida remained the data base of the Islamic Conference. Not all member countries of the Islamic Conference are 'rogue states' and many Islamic groups could pick up information from the databases. It was but natural for Osama Bin Laden to be connected to this network. He is a member of an important family in the banking and business world.

Because of the presence of 'rogue states,' it became easy for terrorist groups to use the email of the database.

Hence, the email of Al Qaida was used, with some interface system, providing secrecy, for the families of the mujaheddin to keep links with their children undergoing training in Afghanistan, or in Libya or in the Beqaa valley, Lebanon.

Or in action anywhere in the battlefields where the extremists sponsored by all the 'rogue states' used to fight. And the 'rogue states' included Saudi Arabia. When Osama bin Laden was an American agent in Afghanistan, the Al Qaida Intranet was a good communication system through coded or covert messages.

Meet "Al Qaeda"

Al Qaida was neither a terrorist group nor Osama bin Laden's personal property

. . . The terrorist actions in Turkey in 2003 were carried out by Turks and the motives were local and not international, unified, or joint. These crimes put the Turkish government in a difficult position vis-a-vis the British and the Israelis. But the attacks certainly intended to 'punish' Prime Minister Erdogan for being a 'toot tepid' Islamic politician.

. . . In the Third World the general opinion is that the countries using weapons of mass destruction for economic purposes in the service of imperialism are in fact "rogue states", specially the US and other NATO countries. Some Islamic economic lobbies are conducting a war against the 'liberal' economic lobbies. They use local terrorist groups claiming to act on behalf of Al Qaida. On the other hand, national armies invade independent countries under the aegis of the UN Security Council and carry out pre-emptive wars. And the real sponsors of these wars are not governments but the lobbies concealed behind them.

The truth is, there is no Islamic army or terrorist group called Al Qaida. And any informed

intelligence officer knows this.

But there is a propaganda campaign to make the public believe in the presence of an identified entity representing the 'devil' only in order to drive the 'TV watcher' to accept a unified international leadership for a war against terrorism. The country behind this propaganda is the US and the lobbyists for the US war on terrorism are only interested in making money.

(emphasis added by GR)

Comment by Wayne Madsen

French officer Maj. Pierre-Henri Bunel, who knew the truth about "Al Qaeda", the CIA's data base.

In yet another example of what happens to those who challenge the system, in December 2001, [Maj. Pierre-Henri Bunel was convicted by a secret French military court](#) of passing classified documents that identified potential NATO bombing targets in Serbia to a Serbian agent during the Kosovo war in 1998.

Bunel's case was transferred from a civilian court to keep the details of the case classified. Bunel's character witnesses and psychologists notwithstanding, the system "got him" for telling the truth about Al Qaeda and who has actually been behind the terrorist attacks commonly blamed on that group.

It is noteworthy that the Yugoslav government, the government with whom Bunel was asserted by the French government to have shared information, claimed that Albanian and Bosnian guerrillas in the Balkans were being backed by elements of "Al Qaeda."

We now know that these guerrillas were being backed by money provided by the [Bosnian Federation Train and Equip Defense Fund](#), an entity established under the Clinton Administration.

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