ESSAYS

What Really Happened in Mumbai?*

Alyssa A. Lappen

On Thanksgiving 2009, as police worldwide continued arresting Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT) 1 collaborators1 and Home Box Office2 plan[ned] to release a film quoting a Pakistani terrorist mastermind—victims,3 families4 and others mourned5 the massive Mumbai terrorist attacks precisely one year earlier6 on Nov. 26, 2008. Doubtless few Americans realized that in July 2008 a Chicago Pakistan-born jihadist had posed as Jewish7 to case LeT’s key target, Nariman Chabad House. That David Coleman Headley and his Chicago peers, arrested in a giant October FBI Muslim slaughter-

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house raid,\textsuperscript{8} planned to bomb Denmark’s \textit{Jyllands-Posten} news offices too.\textsuperscript{9} They
that they allegedly attempted to assassinate Kurt Westergaard,\textsuperscript{10} whose satirical 2005 Mohammed cartoons\textsuperscript{11} lent Islamic radicals an excuse to launch worldwide riots actually planned months earlier.\textsuperscript{12} Or that Hafiz Masood,\textsuperscript{13} while imam Boston’s Islamic Center of New England,\textsuperscript{14} had raised funds for LeT.\textsuperscript{15}

The consuming desire of Mumbai’s Muslim attackers to specifically target Jewish people (and Chabad’s Nariman House) was exposed January 5, 2009, by reporter Shomendra Sharma in India’s daily e-paper, \textit{DNA India}.\textsuperscript{16} The terrorists intended to send “a message to Jews across the world by attacking the ultra orthodox synagogue.” Imprisoned LeT predator Fahim Ahmed Ansari\textsuperscript{17} corroborated the report—but only ten months after


\textsuperscript{17} Praveen Swami, “Lashkar man’s arrest averted strike on BSE,” \textit{The Hindu},
his February 2008 capture for bombing a Rampur Central Police Reserve training camp—so as not to jeopardize the terrorists’ most secret and important Nariman House attack.

Unlike any mainstream U.S. journalists, AtlasShrugs founder and publisher Pamela Geller ran the story that morning.18 JihadWatch followed her lead early on January 6.19 Few others reported it at all.

The blackout was particularly shocking given the clarity of the news: LeT’s Pakistani handlers “were clear this operation [Nariman] should not fail under any circumstances,” DNA reported. The Taj Mahal, Oberoi, and Chhattrapati Shivaji Terminus targets, however, “were [merely] intended to amplify the effect.” After landing their dinghy, terrorist leader Ismail Khan again “intensely” briefed the assigned Nariman perpetrators—Imran Babar (a.k.a. Abu Akasha) and Nasir (a.k.a. Abu Umer)—personally instructing them on what to do. The results were intensely barbaric and bloody.20 Bodies were horrifically mutilated and eyes were gouged out. But for Atlas Shrugs, still fewer Americans would know these salient facts.21

While appalling, such revelations would hardly surprise those familiar with Islamic theocratic texts. Brown University’s Andrew Bostom published the most complete collection22 of Islamic texts, demonstrating the weighty evidence of Islamic Jew-hatred contained throughout foundational Islamic holy books, jurisprudence, and historical accounts—as propagated by Mohammed himself.

Islam’s founder began his anti-Jewish campaigns with his respective


624 and 625 expulsions of the Quaynuqa and Nadir Jewish tribes from Medina. He continued in 627 with the slaughter of all Qurayza Jewish men and enslavement of their women and children. In 628, he besieged and banished the Jews of the Khaybar oasis. On his deathbed, Mohammed instructed his heirs to ban Jews from Arabia—a goal consummated in 643 and 644 by Caliph Umar.

Bostom is not alone in observing essential facts concerning this foundational hatred. Hebrew University’s Robert Wistrich had previously noted that the Koran contains “notably harsh passages in which Muhammad brands the Jews as enemies of Islam and depicts them as possessing a malevolent, rebellious spirit.” Wistrich cites verses that purport to justify the Jews’ “abasement and poverty” and describes them as “laden with God’s anger” for disobeying Allah. Mohammed instructed Muslims to humiliate Jews, Wistrich observes, “because they had disbelieved the signs of God and slain the prophets unrightfully” (Sura 2:58/61). The Koran also claims that both David and Jesus cursed “the unbelievers of the Children of Israel” (Sura 5:78/82). The penalty for disbelieving God’s supposed signs and the miracles of Mohammed, Wistrich notes, was to be transformed into apes and swine (Sura 5:60/65). Moreover, Islamic oral tradition—the deeds and sayings of Mohammed (hadith)—claims that the Jews, in accordance with their purportedly perfidious nature, deliberately poisoned Muhammad, causing his painful, protracted death. Finally, Wistrich notes that according to tradition, the “malevolent, conspiratorial Jews are to blame for the sectarian strife in early Islam, for heresies and deviations that undermined or endangered the unity of the umma (the Muslim nations).”

Indeed, even modern Muslim clerics often cite these historical Islamic data in statements, judicial texts and charters, despite frequent attempts to whitewash that history. In June, 2009, at Cairo’s Al-Azhar university, for


26. Robert Wistrich, as quoted in Bostom, “Muhammad, the Qurayza Massacre, and PBS,” ibid.
example, President Barack Obama described the thousand-year-old institution as “a beacon of Islamic learning” that had “carried the light of learning” throughout the centuries.27

Yet, the Islamic paragon of tolerance28 and nearest Muslim “equivalent to a Pope,”29 Al-Azhar grand imam Mohammed Sayyid Tantawi, recently apologized30 for shaking hands with Israeli president Shimon Peres31—in far better keeping with his character than the handshake. As Bostom has often noted,32 Tantawi genuinely considers Jews “enemies of Allah, and descendants of apes and pigs;”33 actively supports Islamic “religious law” (his words) suicide bombings to kill Israeli civilians, women and children;34 and, after his 1997 meeting with Israeli chief Rabbi Israel Lau, urged Muslims to meet Jewish “enemies” in order “to counter their dubious claims and stick fingers into their eyes.”35 Moreover,

Tantawi derived this hatred directly from the Koran, “more than one-third of which deals with the Jews,” as he readily admits.

Indeed, Tantawi’s 1966 Ph.D. thesis, Banu Isra’il fi al-Qur’an wa al-Sunna [The Children of Israel in the Koran and the Sunna], which Bostom excerpted in English,\textsuperscript{36} states that the Jewish people “were cursed from aforetime and were exiled from his [Allah’s] mercy, and miserable wretchedness al-dhullah wal-maskana was decreed as their lot, for horrible punishment became their dominant trait” (p. 391). As hateful a 700-page screed as one is ever likely to read, the dissertation undoubtedly also earned Tantawi his Pope-like Islamic position. It further states,

[The] Koran describes the Jews with their own particular degenerate characteristics, i.e. killing the prophets of Allah [Koran 2:61/3:112], corrupting His words by putting them in the wrong places, consuming the people’s wealth frivolously, refusal to distance themselves from the evil they do, and other ugly characteristics caused by their deep-rooted lasciviousness. . . only a minority of the Jews keep their word. . . . all Jews are not the same. The good ones become Muslims [Koran 3:113], the bad ones do not.\textsuperscript{37}

As historian David Littman heroically began to note at the UN Human Rights Commission in January 1989,\textsuperscript{38} the Hamas Charter\textsuperscript{39} in the same


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spirit is a genocidal decree. Moreover, (as Bostom has also noted),\textsuperscript{40} even before its preamble, the Hamas document opens by quoting the most sacred of all Islamic texts,\textsuperscript{41} the Koran:

You [Muslims] are the best nation that has been brought out for mankind. You command good and forbid evil and believe in Allah. If only the people of the Book [i.e., Jews and Christians] had believed, it would have been well for them. Some of them believe, but most of them are iniquitous. They will never be able to do you serious harm, they will only be an annoyance. If they fight you, they will turn their backs and flee, and will not be succored. Humiliation is their lot wherever they may be, except where they are saved from it by a bond with Allah or by a bond with men. They incurred upon themselves Allah’s wrath, and wretchedness is their lot, because they denied Allah’s signs and wrongfully killed the prophets, and because they disobeyed and transgressed. (3:110-112).\textsuperscript{42}

Only within the context of the above information can one fully appreciate Right Side News’ exclusive fourth and final interview of Atlas, by this author, an investigative reporter. I have queried Atlas on her tireless efforts to expose the Muslim wars within the U.S. and Western world—on free speech, human rights of women, and non-Muslims generally [the series began Feb. 16, 2009].\textsuperscript{43} In this last segment, I concentrate on the November 28, 2008 Islamic terror attacks in Mumbai, which consolidated in all respects every front in the global Islamic jihad, through its special focus on the Jewish people.


Finally, the full meaning of these attacks has come home to roost in the U.S.—with the discovery that Pakistan-born, U.S.-based Islamic terrorists were involved in their planning. Indeed, on Tuesday, November 24, even a mainstream newspaper—in Barack Obama’s former Chicago political environs, no less—and informed readers of the troubling roles of U.S. terrorists in Mumbai.

Surprisingly, three days earlier, on November 21, the ultra-liberal Christian Science Monitor similarly had headlined an article on the “Islamic terror motive” of the November 5 Muslim massacre of thirteen people at Ft. Hood. CSM actually emphasized underlying Islamic facts—albeit while claiming they present an essentially “partisan divide.” Still, this too represented vastly improved mainstream reporting, in record time after a jihad strike, for on November 5 and 6, major news networks and newspapers (excepting Fox News and the New York Post) almost universally toed the politically correct line on the second such attack on U.S. soil since Sept. 11. They termed U.S. Army psychiatrist Major Nadal Malik Hasan a “suspect,” “shooter,” or “gunman” —and studiously avoided ref-

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2009] references to Islam or terrorism.

Since February 2009, Atlas increasingly has received well-merited public recognition for her ardent contributions to protecting U.S. Constitutional rights, including the freedoms of speech, press, and assembly, which inherently assume and include freedom from terror. In May 2009, Atlas began contributing frequently to American Thinker. Since August 2009, she has also often contributed articles at Newsmax, which recently granted her a Newsmax blog.

With this interview, Right Side News and I hope to demonstrate that ultimately, the fervor of Islamic attacks on the Jewish people reflect the fervor of Islamic hatred for all women and non-Muslims—and the universal freedoms of men and women that the Muslim leaders are determined to replace with Islamic law. But the exposure Atlas provided to the level of hatred expressed at Nariman House has all the better focused the ordinary eye on the depth of depravity dictating Islamic attacks of all kinds. Thus can mankind help summon a will exceeding that of its foes, a steel will, strong enough to utterly demolish jihad.

Alyssa A. Lappen: When did you first understand that the Jewish people and Chabad’s Nariman House were the focal point of the Mumbai attacks?

Atlas: Most of the details were out there, but not publicized. It wasn’t public that Chabad was targeted first—that according to the LeT central command in this operation, that was the most important. The terrorists had also targeted the Taj Mahal, Oberois, and Chhattrapati Shivaji Terminus. But Chabad was central because of Islamic hatred of Jews. In late December, it came out that Rabbi Gavriel Holtzberg and his wife, Rivka Holtzberg, were sexually mutilated. I was one of the few to report that.

Then on January 5, Somendra Sharma at the DNA India e-paper reported that the Pakistani fanatics had wanted to send a message to the


world. It was central to that operation. Everything besides Chabad was intended to amplify the effect, but they were not the central targets. A senior police official told the DNA on the condition of anonymity. Mohammed Ajmal, also known as Kasab, told them that Chabad House was their primary focus.

AAL: That is truly depraved. So these people murdered at least 166 people in at least six locations, just to amplify the message that “any Jews killed were worth fifty times as much as anyone else.” It boggles the mind. Why?

Atlas: You need to understand. At this point, U.S. Muslims mention Jews seventeen times a day in their daily prayers. Seventeen times a day, they invoke hatred against “those that incur the wrath of God,” that is, Jews. Even Jewish leaders in Israel have no idea of Dr. Bostom’s seminal work. People do not understand what these [jihadists] are doing. They do not understand.

AAL: You are saying that seventeen times a day, Muslims pray to kill Jews?

Atlas: Yes. I’m telling you about the prayers. I found this in researching a separate issue, from conversations with [JihadWatch director] Robert Spencer and Dr. Andrew Bostom. Robert reported that U.S. mosques have tacked on the dua qunoot—a prayer to destroy Allah’s enemies—to regular daily prayers. That dua qunoot prayer ends with a plea for “torment . . . to overtake infidels.” And it’s been added to every raka’ah, as it is called, the sub-unit of Islamic prayers, or salah. So Robert reports that pious U.S. Muslims pray seventeen times a day to destroy Allah’s enemies, which means Israel. But in this context, it also means Jews.


AAL: So, you’re saying that in the context of Mumbai, the terrorists’ message was, what, “We are coming to get you”?

Atlas: Yes. That’s the message that Jews are supposed to glean from this. This is what they were saying, by targeting a couple who do good work, who provided a force for good in the world. They brutally murdered Rabbi Holtzberg and his wife Rivki and seven other Jews there. And a fact little discussed is that the Rabbi and his wife were sexually mutilated. It wasn’t in the mainstream media. The *Mumbai Mirror* reported this. Their genitalia were mutilated.

When they landed in Mumbai, Ismail Kahn told the two Nariman perpetrators not to allow a single minimal glitch in finding and capturing the Chabad House. They wouldn’t even plant a bomb in a taxi to go there—in case the bomb exploded before they reached the target. They wanted to make sure Nariman House was destroyed and the people there were destroyed. Period.

The photos of the enormous amount of blood is one indication of how brutal those murders were. Another is the horrific torture sustained by Israeli captives at Nariman House before their murders. I’m pointing out that no one talks about it. Only one line in the *Mumbai Mirror* discussed the disturbing photos at the Taj Mahal or mentioned that the terrorists sexually assaulted their Jewish victims and then mutilated their genitalia. Some of the other guests were forced to strip, but the Rabbi and his wife were sexually assaulted. And that was from an official who refused to be identified.

AAL: What overarching message do you take from this?

Atlas: These people do not believe in “Give me liberty or give me death.” The terrorists themselves were in no doubt that Nariman House was the

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central target. It housed a Jewish center, and the fanatic Pakistani Muslims wanted to send a message to the world from there. And at all the locations, more Israelis were murdered than any other nationality.62

When he was asked why, Mohammed Ajmal, the one surviving terrorist, told police they wanted to send a message to the Jews across the world by attacking an Orthodox synagogue. So look, no matter how the press might try to twist this, it’s not about Israel. This is a message to all Jewish people of the world.

**AAL:** In answer, Chabad has sent Rabbi Avraham Berkowitz there to rebuild.63 We’ve obtained photos of Nariman House’s new Torah Ark, of memorial services at Chabad House, and of students wrapping Tefilin, Jewish prayer phylacteries enclosing parchments with portions of Exodus and Deuteronomy. But most important, Chabad will rebuild.

**Atlas:** That is the Jewish way. Until forced to leave, we Jewish people keep on keeping on. Maybe it is stupid in the context of the world we live in. We live in a culture of death. And by this I mean—everything. Look at the sides our president takes—in reaching out to Hamas, and Hezbollah. He supports the ethnic cleansing of Jews with this disgusting phrase, “no natural growth.” So if Jewish people in Judea and Samaria give birth to a baby, Grandma has to move out.

Islam is a culture of death also. And at the UN, here is the U.S. letting the world powers side with the evil forces.

However, not to rebuild is victory for Islam, and a victory for death. Judaism is a culture of life.

Chabad has to rebuild with heavy weaponry in the house, though. I’d never tell them not to build. I’m not Obama. However, God expects us to have brains. I believe in God. I believe God loves me and my children. But I still have to worry about them. We have to be responsible. Rabbi Holtzberg was very worried about security. And Chabad cannot rely on the [Indian] government to protect them. They have to rebuild a secure building. They should rotate retired IDF officers there at all times.

**AAL:** Do you believe Israeli leaders understand the importance of these Mumbai attacks?

**Atlas:** I don’t know. In February 2008, the Mumbai antiterrorism squad arrested Fahim Ansari64 for his role in a previous bombing at Lucknow.

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63. Gee, ibid.
64. “India questions citizen over Mumbai attack,” Pakistan Daily Times,
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This came at a high price for the Mumbai anti-terrorist squad, but Ansari also had some connection with the Mumbai terrorist attacks. He was arrested for his role in other bomb blasts, but had surveyed the Chabad house. And Ansari did not divulge that information because it would have compromised the most important operation of the Lakshar . . . He was warned by the LeT that Nariman house was their most secret operation and must not be compromised at any cost.

So if Israeli Jews are drinking [poisonous] Kool-Aid and believe that Islam will live peacefully with them, in a two-state genocide solution, then pass me the bomb water. Pass me the Kool-Aid too. Engaging in those conversations is like trying to rationalize the irrational. It’s impossible. It’s an impossible goal.

For Israel, the so-called two-state solution is a suicide pact. There can be no two-state solution. It’s in the Hamas charter.65 I don’t know what Islam would do without this hate. Muslims die for this hate. It’s their reason for living and their reason for dying.

AAL: Why don’t the general public, never mind only Jewish leadership, seem to understand the stakes?

Atlas: Here’s an example. Concerning Mumbai, last June, Britain’s Daily Mail got their hands on police intercepts from the LeT central command in Pakistan. Of course they invoked Allah every few sentences. But more importantly, the Daily Mail took down the posted transcripts66 almost immediately. The Daily Mail had it posted for a few hours, tops. I happened to have kept the whole article. It might jeopardize their outreach efforts.

AAL: (Laughs at irony.)

Atlas: You’re laughing. But in the U.S., outreach [to Muslims] has now become more important than investigating crimes.

There are days I feel like I am just shoveling shit against the tide. But look what will happen if [the government] shuts me down. Here, when they were on the phone, they intercepted and recorded the conversations. Wasi


[the Pakistani controller] says to the killers, “The manner of your death will
instill fear in the unbelievers. This is a battle between Islam and the unbel-
lievers.”67 Later on, Wasi tells them, “You are very close to heaven now.
You will be remembered for what you have done here. Stretch it out as long
as possible.”

There is no question this is Islamic jihad. This is Islam.

AAL: No of course, it’s not funny at all.

Atlas: No, you had the killers on the Rabbi’s phone, talking to Pakistan.
Wasi in Pakistan told them, “Just shoot them now. Get rid of them now.
You could come under fire at any time.” The killers replied, “Sure, we’ll
shoot as soon as we come under fire.” Wasi tells them, “No, now, you never
know when you might come under attack.”

What more can we say. Is there anything that could more stunningly
indict Islam? When will people talk about this, that they always target syna-
gogues? That a lone jihadi went into a Seattle Jewish center,68 shot up the
place, and killed a Jewish woman?69

AAL: But you’re saying it’s actually much more than that.

Atlas: Right. Mumbai was not the exception. Mumbai is the rule, and I
don’t think America will escape that kind of attack. That it has not already
happened [in the U.S.] does not mean it will not happen. I do not believe
that for a second.

Maybe the mainstream media is starting to communicate the reality.
Starting. A new Home Box Office film quotes a Mumbai attack mas-
termind, who controlled the November 26, 2008 terrorists by cell phone.
“This was just the trailer,” he said. “Just wait till you see the rest of the
film.” The LeT projected their intention of “liberating” Muslims. They’ll
conduct global jihad against “infidels,” beginning with Jews. “‘Just shoot
them now,’ says the controller, adding, ‘Go on! I’m listening. Do it.’”70

There are dozens of Islamic training camps in the U.S. with caches of
arms. The Central Islamic command worldwide is the Organization of the

67. Ibid.
68. Phoung Cat Le, Brad Wong, John Iwasaki, and Amy Rolph, “Six shot, one
danielpipes.org, February 8, 2005, http://www.danielpipes.org/blog/2005/02/more-
incidents-of-denying-islamist-terrorism; “Seattle killing not a hate crime,”
killing-not-a-hate-crime.html (both accessed October 15, 2009).
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Islamic Conference (OIC). And these people insist that non-Muslims “respect” Islam and subdue themselves before Islamic supremacism. And when Obama speaks to the Islamic world, he validates everything I’m saying: There is an ummah [Muslim nation]. They are just part of an ummah, not citizens of any country. And for non-Muslims to join, they have to follow Islamic law.

AAL: So, what’s the bottom line? What lesson should we take from Mumbai to help overcome this madness?

Atlas: That Mumbai happened—and why it happened. That this war is a reality. It will not go away. And that Islamic Jew hatred is very real and part of their basic doctrine. It cannot be ignored.

The other lesson is, don’t lose heart. You go knowing that you fought. You must fight. There is no other way. If you are not fighting this insanity, then you are part of the problem. And individuals can change parts of human history. [Edmund] Burke said evil prospers when good men do nothing. All that’s necessary for evil to triumph is that good men do nothing.

And Ayn Rand says that only its sanction is what makes evil possible.

