

Calls for carrying out terrorist attacks against Danish targets, following news of a book with caricature drawings of the Prophet Muhammad to be published in December 2008

On November 12, 2008, the "Hanein"¹ online forum published a post by an internet user named Abu Salem warning against the publication of new caricature drawings in Denmark.² Abu Salem quoted an Arabic article published on a Danish news website on November 11³, which discussed a new book about to be published in Denmark of caricature drawings of the Prophet Muhammad. In response to these new caricatures, the Danish Imam, Abdul Wahid Pedersen, described the drawings as part of a "storm" facing Danish Muslims over the past several years, in which a war of words and letters has transformed into one of caricatures.

Danish sources said the 73-year-old Danish caricaturist, Kurt Westergaard, has provided new caricatures for a soon-to-be published book in Denmark by Danish Historian Lars Hedegaard. The new caricature drawings depict the Prophet, politicians, and religious leaders. The book will contain 26 drawings by Westergaard, whose caricatures in the "Jyllands Posten" newspaper in September 2005 triggered a local and international crisis.

¹ <http://94.75.200.163/vb/index.php>. The forum serves as a mouthpiece for Al-Qaeda and other Jihad organizations, despite its proclamation that: "Hanein Forum Network would like to express that it is an independent network that seeks to preach for Allah as well as for what is best to serve the Islamic nation. Hanein has no geographic state, hence it doesn't belong to a country, a territory or a nationality." See:

<http://94.75.200.163/vb/main.php>.

This proclamation was added only in a recent upgrade to the website and did not appear previously. The Hanein forum may have been seeking to disassociate itself from Al-Qaeda following the blocking of the main Jihadi websites "Al-Firdaws" and "Al-Ikhlaas".

² <http://94.75.200.163/vb/showthread.php?s=f743b4062168ab9a0b9d45bda848e495&t=80273>.

³ http://www.akhbar.dk/ar/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=410:2008-11-11-02-40-36&catid=87:denmar-news&Itemid=308.

This is a Danish news website in the Arabic language dealing with political, social and economic developments in Denmark, with a focus on the state of the Arab-Muslim community in the country. It is an independent website that does not receive financial aid from any entity. The website's address is: <http://www.akhbar.dk>.

Historian Lars Hedegaard heads an organization supporting freedom of speech and invited Geert Wilders, producer of the controversial movie "Fitna,"⁴ to Denmark in June 2008. According to the online post, Hedegaard's book is set to be published at the beginning of December 2008.

In his post, Abu Salem requests that all who love the Prophet Muhammad help spread the news of the upcoming publication and notify religious leaders of what "these pigs" are attempting to do. One forum visitor responded to the post, suggesting that Bin Laden attack Copenhagen, repeating the call: "Bin Laden, Copenhagen!" several times. Another forum visitor wrote: "Our blood... our souls... our children... our money... all that we have... the entire world... anything so that a single hair of your distinguished head [i.e. Muhammad] is not harmed."⁵

Abu Salem's call provoked a significant response by internet users, also appearing in discussions on several of the main Jihadi online forums. On November 13, the "Al-Hesbah" forum quoted a report by the Jihad Press⁶ titled "Due to the silence of the Muslims, Denmark is preparing for a new crime against the Muslims – a book offending Islam."⁷ The report describes the intended publication of Hedegaard's book and reminds readers that in June 2008 al-Qaeda carried out a "successful" attack on the Danish embassy in Pakistan in retaliation for the publication of caricatures in September 2005. In addition, the report

⁴ "Fitna" is a short, 16-minute movie, presenting Suras from the Koran combined with news segments and video clips describing the duty of Jihad – a duty described as a directive to fight and kill all the infidels. The movie uses segments from anti-Semitic speeches made by Muslim religious leaders calling for the slaughter of Jews and Christians, alongside photographs from terrorist attacks and acts carried out by Muslims.

⁵ <http://94.75.200.163/vb/showthread.php?s=f743b4062168ab9a0b9d45bda848e495&t=80273>.

⁶ An online publication identified with Al-Qaeda.

⁷ <http://www.al-hesbah.info/v/showthread.php?t=198788>.

claims that Bin Laden had threatened to attack Danish targets even before news of the publication of the new book.⁸

An internet user named Saqr Al-Islam Al-Maqdasi cynically wrote that if the book is in fact printed and distributed, small demonstrations would arise protesting the import of Danish cheese and meat productions. However, "the best defense is offence," he wrote. Al-Maqdasi explained that the best defense of the Prophet Muhammad does not come from boycotting Danish products, but rather:

"[...] by attacking Denmark everywhere so that it be known we are a nation sacrificing itself for Islam and its Prophet [...] this cattle doesn't understand anything but the language of rage, and we will decapitate the heads and set fire to the ground underneath their feet. They do not understand anything but the language of blood and scattering of body parts. I ask that Allah make successful the way of the loyal Jihad warriors, in order to blow up and set fire to Denmark."

In response, an internet user called for the complete halt of imports from Denmark, suggesting that they "begin exporting some of our products! Such as car bombs, suicide terrorists and missiles."

News of book's upcoming publication has also been reported in the "Al-Faloja" online forum. A forum user that identified himself as "Jil Al-Qaeda Al-Qadim" (Al-Qaeda's next generation), registered since September 2008, requested that the news be published widely and added that if he had any money, he would have killed every Danish person in his country.⁹

⁸<http://www.reuters.com/article/worldNews/idUSN1933824120080320?feedType=RSS&feedName=worldNews&rpc=22&sp=true>.

⁹<http://al-faloja.info/vb/showthread.php?t=34569>.

Background: The Affair of the Muhammad Caricature



The page from the Danish newspaper depicting the 12 caricatures for the first time

Following the publication of 12 caricatures depicting the Prophet Muhammad in a Danish newspaper, a crisis erupted between Denmark and the Muslim World, dubbed "The Affair of the caricatures."

The caricatures were published in the cultural and satire section of the popular Danish newspaper "Jyllands Posten" on September 30, 2005, and

later appeared in more than 20 newspapers around the world. Response to the caricatures was far more extensive than had been expected, spreading beyond Denmark and the European continent, ranging from murder threats against reporters and the caricature artists to attacks against Danish targets around the world.¹⁰

¹⁰ An example from recent months: in June 2008 a car bomb exploded at the gates of the Danish embassy in Pakistan.