



## Al-Qaida's "A Bailout Plan for Germany": A NEFA Analysis February 10, 2009

A NEFA analysis of the Bekkay Harrach video  
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### **Context**

The Al-Qaida video, "A Bailout Plan for Germany", featuring Bekkay Harrach, is the third German-language video issued by Islamic terror groups since October 2008. It was published on January 16, 2009, the same day that an assault in Kabul targeted the German Embassy and killed five people.<sup>1</sup>

The first video of this kind was published in October 2008 by German Islamic convert Eric Breininger. The 21-year-old Breininger has been one of Germany's most-wanted men since he joined the Islamic Jihad Union (IJU) terror organization. The six-minute-long clip was posted on the IJU web site and titled "A Call from Hindu Kush".<sup>2</sup>

Around January 10, 2009, a man calling himself "Abu Adam from Germany" released another video in which he, with nearly accent-less German, calls on the German "brothers" to join the jihad. In the video, titled "Good Message from Afghanistan", three other men appear who likely come from Germany as well. The 30-minute film was allegedly produced by the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, a group with no prior known links to Germany.<sup>3</sup>

Bekkay Harrach's video was published only a few days later on January 16 and purportedly was sent from Afghanistan. In the video, Harrach underscores his membership in Al-Qaida, worships Usama Bin Laden, and threatens to carry out his own suicide bombing. Harrach is the first individual with ties to Germany who has released an As-Sahab video; As-Sahab is Al-Qaida's media arm.<sup>4</sup>

German security services judge these videos as authentic. Heinz Fromm, head of the German domestic intelligence service known as the Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz (Federal Office for Protection of the Constitution), called these videos

<sup>1</sup> The NEFA Foundation transcript of Harrach's tape is available at <http://www.nefafoundation.org/documents-original.html#harrach0109>.

<sup>2</sup> Yassin Musharbash, "German Islamist Resurfaces by Video from Afghanistan," *Spiegel Online*, October 22, 2008. Note: The NEFA Foundation provided a transcript and the video at <http://www.nefafoundation.org/multimedia-prop.html>.

<sup>3</sup> "Video: Islamisten wollen Nachwuchs in Deutschland werben," *Spiegel Online*, January 10, 2009. See: <http://www.nefafoundation.org/documents-original.html#imu0109>.

<sup>4</sup> "Al-Qaidas Werber aus dem Rheinland," *Spiegel Online*, January 19, 2009. Note: For more on As-Sahab, see the NEFA Special Report "Inside As-Sahaab: The Story of Ali al-Bahlul and the Evolution of Al-Qaida's Propaganda" at <http://www.nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/FeaturedDocs/nefabahlulsahaab1208.pdf>.

a “new quality” of Islamist propaganda.<sup>5</sup> In view of the forthcoming German elections in autumn 2009, Interior Ministry State Secretary August Hanning said that Harrach’s detailed knowledge of the country is worrying.<sup>6</sup>

Currently, German officials believe that Bekkay Harrach is living in the Afghan-Pakistani border area. All together, a few dozen Islamists from Germany are allegedly in various terror camps in Afghanistan or Pakistan.



*Bekkay Harrach*

Another important case was that of Cüneyt Ciftci, a member of the IJU, who is referred to as the first suicide bomber from Germany. He left Bavaria (a state in South Germany) around April 2007 and went to Pakistan. In March 2008, a website celebrated his death in an attack that targeted U.S. soldiers in the eastern Afghan province of Khost.<sup>7</sup>

### **Who is Bekkay Harrach?**

On January 19, 2009, the German Interior Ministry officially identified the creator of the video, “A Bailout Plan for Germany”, as German citizen Bekkay Harrach. According to the officials, Harrach is a former resident of the city of Bonn. He reportedly made contacts with militants in the German cities of Frankfurt, Braunschweig, and Ulm, and has been under surveillance by German officials since 2001.<sup>8</sup>

German officials believe that Harrach has been living in a training camp on the Pakistan-Afghanistan border since 2007. They also think that Harrach has access to senior Al-Qaida leadership. On January 23, the German Attorney General announced

<sup>5</sup> Gotteskrieger nehmen Deutschland ins Visier - DIE WELT - WELT ONLINE  
[http://www.welt.de/welt\\_print/article3056785/Gotteskrieger-nehmen-Deutschland-ins-Visier.html](http://www.welt.de/welt_print/article3056785/Gotteskrieger-nehmen-Deutschland-ins-Visier.html)

<sup>6</sup> Gotteskrieger nehmen Deutschland ins Visier - DIE WELT- WELT ONLINE  
[http://www.welt.de/welt\\_print/article3056785/Gotteskrieger-nehmen-Deutschland-ins-Visier.html](http://www.welt.de/welt_print/article3056785/Gotteskrieger-nehmen-Deutschland-ins-Visier.html)

<sup>7</sup> Terror in Afghanistan: Cüneyt C. - Der erste Selbstmordattentäter aus Deutschland? - SPIEGEL ONLINE - Nachrichten - Politik  
<http://www.spiegel.de/politik/ausland/0,1518,541140,00.html> Note: The NEFA Foundation has made available video of the attack at  
<http://www.nefafoundation.org/multimedia-prop.html#nefagermanafghan>.

<sup>8</sup> Bonner Islamist mit Planung von Qaida-Anschlägen betraut - DER SPIEGEL - SPIEGEL ONLINE – Nachrichten, <http://www.spiegel.de/spiegel/vorab/0,1518,603285,00.html>

that legal action was initiated against him because of membership in a foreign terrorist organization.<sup>9</sup>

On January 24, *Spiegel Magazine*, citing German security authorities, asserted that Harrach has been entrusted with the planning of attacks and holds a leading position within Al-Qaida. Harrach is said to be active in the “Department of Foreign Operations”, the group that is responsible for planning terrorist attacks.<sup>10</sup>

The report also states that, according to German security authorities, Harrach was personally trained by Abu Ubaida al Masri, the Al-Qaida planning chief who was linked to the 7/7 London bombings and the foiled 2006 liquid bomb plot targeting transatlantic flights; al Masri died in Pakistan in April 2008. Al Masri is likely the same individual who *The New York Times* reported had built up a network of contacts while residing in Germany.<sup>11</sup> Harrach, who is said to be living in Waziristan, is allegedly under the protection of local warlord Siraj Haqqani. A commander of the Haqqani clan told *Spiegel Magazine* that the “German guest” is involved in almost every major attack plan in the region.<sup>12</sup>

*Spiegel* further reports that Harrach traveled twice to Iraq and was injured in an unidentified 2003 incident with the Israeli army in the West Bank. The currently detained Islamist, Aleem Nasir, from Germersheim, is reported to have connected Harrach with Al-Qaida and given him a letter of recommendation. With that, Harrach is said to have traveled via Turkey to Iran, where a smuggler brought him to Waziristan.<sup>13</sup>

*Spiegel* says that as Harrach settled into Pakistan in 2007, the Federal Office for Protection of the Constitution tried to clarify, through “Operation Toledana”, what Harrach’s activities at the Hindu Kush may portend for the threat situation in Germany.<sup>14</sup>

According to the Berlin-based daily paper *Tagesspiegel*, there is evidence that points to at least an indirect connection between Harrach and Eric Breininger, who had links to the “Sauerland Group”, a terrorist network that planned to carry out car bomb attacks in Germany.

The paper reported that Harrach was mentioned in the media in September 2008, when the Federal Police arrested a Somali and a German Somali at Cologne-Bonn airport who were suspected of wanting to join the jihad. The Somali’s residence was in Bonn, and he was supposedly in contact with Breininger, *Tagesspiegel* says. The paper also notes that like Harrach, one member of the “Sauerland Group” also used the combat name Abu Talha.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> BKA sieht "erhebliche Drohkulisse" - DIE WELT - WELT ONLINE

[http://www.welt.de/welt\\_print/article3075664/BKA-sieht-erhebliche-Drohkulisse.html](http://www.welt.de/welt_print/article3075664/BKA-sieht-erhebliche-Drohkulisse.html)

<sup>10</sup> Terrorermittlungen: Deutsch-Marokkaner plant Anschläge für al-Qaida - SPIEGEL ONLINE - Nachrichten – Politik, <http://www.spiegel.de/politik/deutschland/0,1518,603314,00.html>

<sup>11</sup> Eric Schmitt, “Attack Planner for Al Qaeda Reported Dead,” *The New York Times*, April 10, 2008.

<sup>12</sup> Terrorermittlungen: Deutsch-Marokkaner plant Anschläge für al-Qaida - SPIEGEL ONLINE - Nachrichten – Politik, <http://www.spiegel.de/politik/deutschland/0,1518,603314,00.html>

<sup>13</sup> Terrorermittlungen: Deutsch-Marokkaner plant Anschläge für al-Qaida - SPIEGEL ONLINE - Nachrichten – Politik, <http://www.spiegel.de/politik/deutschland/0,1518,603314,00.html>

<sup>14</sup> Terrorermittlungen: Deutsch-Marokkaner plant Anschläge für al-Qaida - SPIEGEL ONLINE - Nachrichten – Politik, <http://www.spiegel.de/politik/deutschland/0,1518,603314,00.html>

<sup>15</sup> Jeder kennt jeden – irgendwie

According to various newspaper reports, Harrach was born in 1977 in Morocco and came to Germany in 1981. He received German citizenship in 1997 in the former German capital Bonn in the western State of Nordrhein-Westfalen.

The Cologne-based *Tabloid Express* reports that Harrach “for years has lived an inconspicuous life with his family” in Bad Godesberg, a wealthy quarter of Bonn. The paper also says that as a teenager, Harrach moved in the same circles as those at the King Fahd Academy in Bonn, a controversial Saudi school which came to public attention in 2003 because of its alleged ties to Al-Qaida and other radical Islamic groups.<sup>16 17 18</sup>

From 2002 to 2004, Harrach studied laser technology and business mathematics at the Technical College in the town of Remagen. The college reportedly would not provide details on Harrach’s 2004 expulsion. After ending his studies, Harrach allegedly worked at a call center and in a scrap yard in Bonn.<sup>19</sup>

Harrach is married to Elisabeth Harrach, a German convert to Islam who gave birth to their son in 2007. *Spiegel* magazine says that in Spring 2008, she followed him and left the Federal Republic together with their infant son.<sup>20</sup>

## The Speech in the Context of Germany

### The Challenge and the Threat

Bekkey Harrach begins his 30-minute message to the German people with a lesson about the financial crisis and the German bailout plan. He makes a connection to the war in Afghanistan, saying that a withdrawal of German troops could help the German economy recover.

“The financial crisis swept away German pride. It depends on the Germans whether the billion-laden stimulus package only calms down the crisis or whether the economy, following stagnation, gets back on its feet. If the people would withdraw their soldiers from Afghanistan, the expectations of the government might possibly come true. However, if the people insist on this unnecessary war, the entire tax revenue for a year would be in vain.”

Otherwise, he says, it would cost the Germans even more money and jobs could be lost:

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<http://www.tagesspiegel.de/politik/deutschland/Terrorismus;art122,2711997>

<sup>16</sup> Bad Godesberg - Deutscher El-Kaida-Terrorist - Spur führt nach Bonn - EXPRESS online - Bonn  
[http://www.express.de/nachrichten/region/bonn/deutscher-el-kaida-terrorist—spur-fuehrt-nach-bonn\\_artikel\\_1225960154920.html](http://www.express.de/nachrichten/region/bonn/deutscher-el-kaida-terrorist—spur-fuehrt-nach-bonn_artikel_1225960154920.html)

<sup>17</sup> Bekkey Harrach (31) - Von Bonn an die Spitze von El Kaida - EXPRESS online - null  
[http://www.express.de/nachrichten/news/politik-und-wirtschaft/von-bonn-an-die-spitze-von-el-kaida\\_artikel\\_1232796949939.html](http://www.express.de/nachrichten/news/politik-und-wirtschaft/von-bonn-an-die-spitze-von-el-kaida_artikel_1232796949939.html)

<sup>18</sup> Authorities To Close Muslim School in Bonn | Germany | Deutsche Welle | 11.10.2003  
<http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,,994052,00.html>

<sup>19</sup> Rheinland-Pfalz: Terror-Spur nach Remagen,  
<http://rhein-zeitung.de/on/09/01/23/rlp/t/rzo525626.html>

<sup>20</sup> Bonner Islamist mit Planung von Qaida-Anschlägen betraut - DER SPIEGEL - SPIEGEL ONLINE – Nachrichten, <http://www.spiegel.de/spiegel/vorab/0,1518,603285,00.html>

“What I want to say with that is that not only human life is at stake but jobs as well. An export world leader cannot not only be damaged at home. Thanks to the networked and well intertwined economy, it is not so difficult anymore.”

After this opening, Harrach states his determination to carry out a suicide mission, preferably in Germany, but he first wants to fulfill his “aims” that are not further identified. As a reason for targeting Germany, he refers to the “unlimited solidarity” of the country.

“It has been my wish to blow myself up for Allah since 1993. Germany, with its ‘unlimited solidarity’, has become my biggest wish. I will execute after first fulfilling my aims. Whether I need four or seven years is secondary.”

This same expression was used by former German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder when he addressed the Americans after 9/11. In 2001, Schröder guaranteed the “unlimited solidarity” of Germany in the fight against terrorism.

### **Gerhard Schröder’s Politics**

Harrach cites Schröder’s statement about solidarity one more time and refers to Gerhard Schröder – directly or indirectly – four times during his 30-minute speech. Certain knowledge of German politics is necessary to understand Harrach’s remarks.

Gerhard Schröder is a member of the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD), who became Chancellor in 1998, replacing Helmut Kohl, who led the country for 16 years. Schröder established a new government together with the Green Party. His close political friend and long term SPD member, Oskar Lafontaine, became the new Finance Minister. Only three month later, in March 1999, Lafontaine withdrew from his cabinet post after internal struggles and left the political stage.

Harrach appears familiar with these developments. When he talks about the “true love between Muslims” he says: “These are not empty sayings like the declaration of love from Schroeder to Lafontaine...”

In November 2001, the German government, under Schroder’s leadership, initiated a ballot in the Federal Parliament concerning the deployment of the German army to Afghanistan. Schröder connected this ballot with a vote of confidence; if the ballot had failed, he would have had to withdraw from his position as Chancellor.

During the next campaign in the summer and autumn of 2002, Schröder and his SPD party promised the voters that if they won, Germany would not support the Iraq war planned by the U.S. The SPD won the election and Schröder became Chancellor again.

Schröder soon became unpopular because of harsh cutbacks in social programs, and, after a risky internal political maneuver in the parliament, he withdrew as Chancellor in 2005 following early elections. Currently, Schröder is working for Russian energy companies, namely Russian-state-owned Gazprom. Harrach connects Schröder’s post-government employment with Schröder’s earlier statements when he says:

“Schröder with his ‘unlimited solidarity’ has brought the Germans into this conflict and gotten away with very lucrative businesses.”

Schröder’s former friend and later political enemy, Oskar Lafontaine, returned to politics in 2005, first as member, and since 2007, as the popular leader of the socialistic party “Die Linke” (The Left). Currently, it is the only political party in the German parliament that strongly opposes the German military engagement in Afghanistan.

The fourth and last time Harrach mentions Schröder, he criticizes Schröder’s alleged dishonesty:

“Honesty has already become a completely strange word and is no longer in the dictionary of the democrats. Let me give some example for the true picture of the democrats. Schröder caught votes with an antiwar campaign then called Bush and apologized for the circumstances because otherwise one could not have won the election. As compensation, he sent two BND officials that co-decided the battle of Baghdad. Democracy has many doors though. If you cannot come in orderly through the front entrance; there is always the back entrance. Catching two birds with one stone, winning elections and also being an active part of the Iraq war. So the scientific result that you cannot win the elections with the truth is confirmed again.”

In fact, in February 2003, Schröder did promise Germany's lower house of parliament that there would be "no direct or indirect participation in a war". But in January 2006, media reports appeared describing two agents of the German Federal Intelligence Service BND (Bundesnachrichtendienst) who had been in Baghdad during the first phase of the Iraq war in 2003. The two allegedly delivered important information about targets in the Iraqi capital to U.S. intelligence. After further investigations by journalists, the incident was confirmed.<sup>21</sup> Political struggles followed as a result of the matter and a parliamentary investigative committee was established. The question remains unclear whether or not, as Harrach alleges, the BND information was decisive for the campaign. The BND said in a written statement that the service had reported to Berlin "information about the actual development of the war and its effects and aftermath". However, in no case had the two agents delivered "target documents or coordinates for bomb targets".<sup>22</sup>

However, former U.S. General James Marks said in an interview: “The German information was of extreme importance and value for us ... the information they provided was detailed and reliable.”<sup>23</sup>

### **The Spy Story**

Harrach continues for five minutes, reporting that the Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz had contacted and later tried to hire him as a spy.

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<sup>21</sup> John Goetz, Marcel Rosenbach and Holger Stark, “‘Those Guys Are Heroes’: How German Agents Helped Pave the Way into Iraq,” *Spiegel Online*, December 16, 2008.

<sup>22</sup> Bomben auf Bagdad: BND soll USA im Irak-Krieg unterstützt haben - SPIEGEL ONLINE - Nachrichten – Politik, <http://www.spiegel.de/politik/deutschland/0,1518,394787,00.html>

<sup>23</sup> “US General on Berlin Agents in Baghdad: ‘The Germans Were Invaluable to Us,’” *Spiegel Online*, December 16, 2008.

“My mobile rings. It is the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution. They want to meet me in the Maritim Hotel in Bonn ... Therefore he handed me over to his colleague who tried to reverse Karov’s remarks and offered me 200 Euros an hour. I hung up and never heard from them again.”

Harrach does not say when this incident purportedly took place, but he does mention the name of the alleged German official, Thilo Karov, and also underscores the use of his own name several times.

“I was received by two men, one was Thilo Karov. At least, that is what his identification said ... He said ‘Mr. Harrach, you with your character ... He said, ‘Mr. Harrach please tell us ... ‘Harrach, now tell us ... ‘Harrach, talk now and realize ...”

To date, no German official has commented on this story, and there is no further information about this operation. Also there has been no information about an official with the name Thilo Karov.

### **The Anger and the Cartoons**

Following the “Spy Story”, Harrach begins an almost 22-minute diatribe; his first topic is the cartoons lampooning the Prophet Mohammed that were published by the Danish newspaper, *JP*, in September 2005.

“Der Spiegel, Welt, and ZDF as with many others, under cover of reporting or because of solidarity with the Danes, published the cartoons.”

He points out that German media groups (*Spiegel* magazine; *Welt* newspaper; and ZDF, a public German TV station) embedded the actually cartoons in their respective reports about the protests. Harrach criticizes that decision as “solidarity with the Danes.” Continuing his tirade, he seems to be even more upset about an incident surrounding a performance of Mozart’s opera *Idomeneo* at the Berlin Opera house, stating: “Crowning this was *Idomeneo*.”

In September 2006, the Deutsche Oper Berlin, one of the leading German opera houses, canceled performances of the Mozart opera because of security fears stirred by a scene that depicted the severed head of the Prophet Mohammed. The Opera pulled *Idomeneo* from its fall schedule after the police warned of a risk to the performers and the audience. Kirsten Harms, the company’s director, said she was told in August that the police had received an anonymous threat.<sup>24</sup>

Political and cultural figures throughout Germany condemned the cancellation and compared it with the decision of many European papers not to publish the Mohammed cartoons. Not so for Bekkay Harrach, who welcomed Harms’ decision, stating:

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<sup>24</sup> Judy Dempsey and Mark Landler, “Opera Canceled Over a Depiction of Muhammad,” *The New York Times*, September 27, 2006.

“Maybe the day will come when you will wish to be South Koreans or to have Opera leader Kirsten as Chancellor. Reasonable people that estimate the situation accurately, make the right decisions, and are not guided by arrogance or presumption are today obviously only a few.”

In his speech, Harrach says that the Danish cartoons were a provocation and made the Muslims “hyperactive”. He calls the argument that the publication of even critical cartoons is allowed due to freedom of press, “double morality”. As justification, he refers to an incident during the June 2008 European soccer championship:

“One incident shows this double morality. Before the match against Poland during the European football championship, the Germans used a caricature showing the severed heads of Löw and Ballack to beat the Poles for so long until the Polish Ambassador to Berlin officially distanced himself from it. Haven’t you always demonstrably stated that freedom of the press should not buckle before censorship? Or do the weaker still have to apologize or they will feel the German Iron Fist?”

Before the soccer match between Germany and Poland, the Polish tabloid *Super Express* (owned by German media Company Axel Springer, publisher of leading tabloids in Germany) showed a harsh photomontage: The Polish coach Leo Beenacker was holding the severed heads of German national coach Joachim Löw and team leader Michael Ballack in his hands. The headline read: “Bring us their heads, Leo”.

Although the report provoked some public anger, it never became more than a soccer-heated media battle. In fact, the Polish Ambassador, Marek Prawda, has never officially distanced himself from that incident as Harrach says. Prawda instead talked to the newspaper *Die Welt* (also owned by Springer) and called the photomontage an “idiotic tastelessness”.

### **Afghanistan, the Taliban, and the German Army**

Harrach then returns to his main topic and begins with a threat:

“With 3,500 soldiers, Germany provides the third largest contingent in Afghanistan. The British, with the second largest contingent, got a foretaste. And if the Germans, something I don’t expect, gullible and naively mean that as the third biggest troop provider they will get away scot-free, the German politicians in the Bundestag are in the wrong place. Whoever always hopes and believes that that he can divide the Taliban and Al Qaida has still not understood the enemy after seven years.”

In reality, Germany has about 3,500 soldiers in the relatively safe area of northern Afghanistan and serves as part of NATO’s 50,000-strong International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). The extension of the engagement was last decided by the German parliament in October 2008.

Harrach continues with a story that first appeared in the German media around August 2007:

“According to [the tabloid] *Bildzeitung* in autumn 2007, the BND [German external intelligence] has started talks with some Taliban and

has made offers to them under the condition they distance themselves from Al Qaida. Whoever cannot beat their enemy militarily has to be content with something bad tasting. Wasn't your motto always, 'no negotiations with terrorists?'"

These alleged meetings have not been confirmed by German officials, but there were several media reports with regard to the subject. For example, *Spiegel Magazine* published a long and detailed background article about a meeting of BND agents and Taliban representatives in Zurich in 2005.<sup>25</sup>

At this point in the video, Harrach begins a history lesson, explaining to the Germans how the Afghan mujahideen "paved the road for the German reunification".

"October 3rd is an important date for Germany. November 9 a more important pre-event. If somebody asks a German who you should thank for the reunification, the answer comes promptly- Helmut Kohl [former Chancellor of Germany]. It is objectively a wrong statement, like the one pretending that the current economical upswing is something to thank Dr. Merkel [current Chancellor of Germany] for. But it seems to be a Christian Democratic characteristic to harvest the fruits of others.

The German unity came after the fall of the Berlin wall. But the abolition of the wall was only a something that was decided after the Red Army suffered a bad defeat in Afghanistan and the Soviets had lost face in the world of superpowers. This collapse was perfect thanks to the readiness to sacrifice of the mujahedeen of the Islamic nation, Osama an important one among them, were those who freed the world from a monster and paved the way for the German reunification. History has given credit for that to the mujahedeen. As thanks, the West has destroyed the conflict zone and left it in chaos. If the Germans don't appreciate the mujahedeen, then they should at least not ignore the fighting power of the mujahedeen and never become enemies with them."

Since 1990, October 3 has been a national holiday in Germany known as the Day of Unity. November 9 is seen as a fateful day for Germany as several important events in German history took place on that day: the 1918 November revolution, the so-called "Kristallnacht" in 1938 where Jewish property was destroyed, and the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 which made the 3<sup>rd</sup> of October possible.

### **Harrach's Endorsement for the Next German Election**

After communicating his personal interpretation of history, Harrach again conveys the picture of a permanent Al-Qaida threat to Germany.

"I ask the German people what do the German secret services really know and do they believe that they can really protect the German people? Or have they not already admitted that they cannot put anything up against Al-Qaida. If you analyze a constantly repeated sentence of the secret services and the terror experts, especially by the toppled Bavarian

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<sup>25</sup> BND trifft Taliban: Geheimtermin in Zürich - SPIEGEL ONLINE - Nachrichten - Politik  
<http://www.spiegel.de/spiegel/0,1518,500682,00.html>

'Landesvater', I come to the conclusion that this sentence has many shattering effects and more messages. But unfortunately this passes many Germans by. The Franconian Mr. Safety used to repeat often he is not asking the question whether it will happen but when. If you look at the strategy of Al-Qaida, you conclude that only those who were aggressive became targets. Second, if somebody admits that something is happening in any case, admits that he unfortunately failed in combating a threat. In that predicament, have the Germans any other choice then looking for the fastest way home? Time is running out for the Germans."

It is a fact that German terror experts and politicians often repeat the phrase that a terrorist assault in Germany is not a question of if but a question of when. Günther Beckstein, Minister of the Interior in the state of Bavaria from 1993 until 2007, is a well-known politician who supported strong legislation, especially with respect to terrorism.

Beckstein also served as the Prime Minister of Bavaria from 2007-2008. After his conservative party suffered heavy losses in the Bavarian elections of 2008, Beckstein declared that he would not seek to run as a candidate for the office of Prime Minister again. Although one would not call this form of withdrawal from government "toppling", Harrach is clearly referring to Mister Beckstein in the phrase "toppled Bavarian 'Landesvater' (national father) above.

Harrach wants to convince the Germans that there is no other protection against Al-Qaida except the withdrawal of their forces from Afghanistan. Having an understanding of both the democratic system and politics in Germany, he endeavors to manipulate them into making the "correct voting choices," but not without threatening them at the same time:

"I appeal to the German people, finally stand up and become reasonable. In some cases, one might think that the people have no choice because both parties want the same thing, no matter whether you will vote soon for McCain or Obama. But in autumn 2009, the Germans have a unique and reachable chance to show that until now they did not have an alternative. I think that the German people will make a right choice and will avoid unnecessary aggravation. The Germans have a new hope, to live again in safety, to sleep and go shopping without being constantly accompanied by the fear that the black head or the bearded blond could be a bomb. It's only alone and in your hand. Should the Germans this time not go the right way, they have sealed their own verdict."

Currently, there is only one party in the German parliament that openly opposes the German military engagement in Afghanistan, "Die Linke" (The Left) party. As such, Harrach is essentially endorsing Die Linke in the September 2009 German federal election.

### **The Weak, Human Democracy**

After a strong appeal to the Germans, Harrach speaks for about 18 minutes, seemingly without reading the text, and his speech loses a bit of its stridency. During the following 5 minutes, he rushes to reveal various scandals that took place in Germany in recent years. His purpose appears to be to demonstrate that the German government does not care about the good of the German people.

He begins with a lament that politicians are only interested in making money for themselves:

“The suffering in this democracy is the taxpayer and not the tax recipient. If he fails, the tax administrator will at maximum have his job taken away or he might even be promoted. Schröder with his ‘unlimited solidarity’ has brought the Germans into this conflict and gotten away with very lucrative businesses. Merkel steers the same course. Bush will get away with a fat and overweight bank account and the people have to bleed for it. Great are the democrats who only care about the welfare of their citizens.”

Then he praises the people he would prefer to see in political positions:

“Maybe the day will come when you will wish to be South Koreans or to have Opera leader Kirsten as Chancellor. Reasonable people that estimate the situation accurately, make the right decisions, and are not guided by arrogance or presumption are today obviously only a few. As soon as somebody wants to grapple with the problems of the country with the right reforms and solutions, a hate campaign is initiated against them. We say: Good for the future of the mujahedeen that Eva Hermann is not leading the Ministry of Family.”

His satisfaction that Eva Herman is not the Minister of Family in Germany is an ironic sideswipe. Eva Herman is a former TV personality who, between 2006 and 2007, published controversial books in which she argues for the traditional role models of the working man and the housekeeping woman. Harrach seems to mean that as long as such opinions like hers are not official politics, extreme Islamists will easily find sympathizers in Germany.

He briefly covers other topics such as the German telecom scandal which concerned spying on the telephone data of important journalists. Although he jumps from one topic to another, he always returns to his main topic: the German army in Afghanistan.

He mentions an incident that became public in October 2006:

“And if the German government sends characterless soldiers to the front that by disturbing the silence of the dead bring more unnecessary trouble home then it is really urgent to teach them a lesson.”

In autumn 2006, photos appeared in the German media that showed German soldiers in Afghanistan posing with human bones and skulls. After investigations by journalists, it turned out that these pictures had been taken in 2004 in Afghanistan. The soldiers said that they had found the remains on an old graveyard and took the pictures with them for fun.

Harrach then talks about how former Chancellor Schröder allegedly betrayed the Germans over the involvement of Germany in the Iraq war, discussed earlier in this report, before he mentions another incident that became public in April 2008:

“Press freedom is holy: a German journalist in contact with an Afghan government minister was spied on. These examples are only the tip of the iceberg.”

In autumn 2006, the BND had intercepted the email traffic of Amin Farhang, the Afghan Minister for Trade and Industry. The BND had installed a so-called Trojan horse on the Minister’s computer that had monitored all communications and sent it to the BND. Since emails to and from the *Spiegel* journalist Susanne Koelbl were amongst the information gathered, the scandal became public. The Service denied that she had been the target of the operation, but rather the Minister himself had.<sup>26</sup>

For Harrach, this incident showed yet again, how weak democracy seemed to be and how badly it protects its values, such as the freedom of press. Instead, he praises the “perfect” Quran:

“... our beloved constitution, the Quran, remained untouched for 1400 years despite enemies and conflicts. It [the Quran] is perfect and appropriate for every time and place. It is a divine and complete revelation and not of human origin like democracy.”

Towards the end of his video, Harrach interprets a more or less administrative action as a significant conspiracy perpetrated by the government.

“This year, the mandate of the German Army in Afghanistan will be extended for 14 instead of 12 months. The government recognized that this unpopular decision could upset the calculation because the next extension would be at the same time as the elections. To prevent anybody from winning the elections again with an antiwar campaign, the government has postponed the next extensions until after the elections. Does this decision not show again the true face of the democrats? With all tricks and instruments, even the only possibility in four years to be an active part in important political questions is denied to the people.”

Following, he illogically interprets the job the German army is doing in Afghanistan:

“Since when are German soldiers part of civil reconstruction programs? What is then the job of a civil institution? At home, the German army was only engaged with catastrophes and disasters like floods that could not be coped with. But if the German Army in Afghanistan is part of the civil reconstruction and fearfully chickens out of combat, then the German Army also has a new definition. Well, and if you then also proudly present that the drinking water supply for 500,000 Afghans in Herat was secured then we say: Thank you for the investment.”

While welcoming the new drinking water supply that the Germans installed in Herat, Harrach simultaneously chides them for being afraid of active combat.

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<sup>26</sup> Journalisten-Spitzelaffäre: BND beobachtete afghanischen Minister Farhang - SPIEGEL ONLINE - Nachrichten – Politik, <http://www.spiegel.de/politik/deutschland/0,1518,549434,00.html>

During the conclusion of the speech, and before providing longer religious explanations, he draws the picture of a German army that, in his opinion, acts cowardly in Afghanistan and therefore would not be able to protect the German people.

“Why don’t German soldiers seek battle with us and let not only Murat Kurnaz hear that they are the German power. I am seriously asking myself the question, can the German people feel really safe at home with an army with such an amount of fear.”

Murat Kurnaz, born in 1982 and raised in Germany, is a Turkish citizen (in Germany, those born in the country do not automatically receive German citizenship) who was held at Guantanamo Bay from January 2002 until August 2006, after he was arrested in Pakistan in November 2001, and handed over to U.S. forces. After he returned to Germany, he claimed that in late 2001, in Afghanistan, he had been mistreated by members of the Special Forces Command of the German Army in Afghanistan.

### **Conclusions**

“A Bailout Plan for Germany” is not the first German-language video produced by an Islamic terror group. Additionally, Bekkay Harrach, the 32-year-old speaker, is not the first extremist to travel from Germany to terror camps in the Afghan-Pakistan border area. However, Harrach’s video seems to be the first that contains a direct threat against Germany, and it also seems to be the first German-language and Germany-targeted message from Al-Qaida.<sup>27 28</sup>

The central message is stated in the first minutes of the video and repeated again several times: Germany must pull its troops out of Afghanistan. To advance that goal, Harrach appeals to the German people to vote for a party that supports the withdrawal during the next elections in autumn 2009.

Harrach explicitly and repeatedly addressed the German people as a whole, not the German government. As he demonstrated detailed knowledge about Germany, German officials evaluated the video message as a serious threat, especially in view of the upcoming federal elections on September 27, 2009.<sup>29</sup> Interior Ministry State Secretary August Hanning called Harrach “a very serious Islamist.”<sup>30</sup> Hanning also said that Harrach “by his intellectual level” has a higher potential than wanted German convert Eric Breininger.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> After the attack on a synagogue in Djerba, Tunisia, in 2002 Bin Laden deputy Aiman al-Sawahiri threatened Germany, the “dose to increase.” In Djerba 21 tourists died, 14 of them from Germany

<sup>28</sup> Terrorvideo: Al-Qaidas Werber aus dem Rheinland - SPIEGEL ONLINE - Nachrichten - Politik  
<http://www.spiegel.de/politik/deutschland/0,1518,602104,00.html>

<sup>29</sup> [http://www.welt.de/welt\\_print/article3056785/Gotteskrieger-nehmen-Deutschland-ins-Visier.html](http://www.welt.de/welt_print/article3056785/Gotteskrieger-nehmen-Deutschland-ins-Visier.html)

<sup>30</sup> Gotteskrieger nehmen Deutschland ins Visier - DIE WELT  
[http://www.welt.de/welt\\_print/article3056785/Gotteskrieger-nehmen-Deutschland-ins-Visier.html](http://www.welt.de/welt_print/article3056785/Gotteskrieger-nehmen-Deutschland-ins-Visier.html)

<sup>31</sup> Geheimdienst besorgt: “Jetzt tickt die Uhr für einen Terroranschlag” - WELT ONLINE  
<http://www.welt.de/politik/article3053909/Jetzt-tickt-die-Uhr-fuer-einen-Terroranschlag.html>

Harrach has a deep and detailed knowledge of the political background of the German military engagement in Afghanistan, and he seemingly closely monitored relevant developments in Germany and Afghanistan over many years.

He also spends a good deal of time criticizing various political decisions and scandals in Germany. He exhibited a broad knowledge of German news and politics, and his oratory skills – his speech, arguments and phrases – conveyed a familiarity with the German debate culture.

In comparison to Eric Breininger, who in his video could hardly complete a sentence without mistakes, Harrach spoke more eloquently and appeared to be better educated. He was articulate and his German was nearly perfect and accent-less.

Harrach's attitude came across as arrogant and he was strongly convinced his statements and positions were correct. He also displayed bitterness and deep frustrations about developments in Germany. He repeatedly criticized German political parties, but expressed more anger against the Social Democrats SPD and their former Chancellor Gerhard Schröder than against any other political group.

Harrach described all afore-mentioned politicians as corrupt and dishonest, and he denegrates democracy several times. Equally, he showed a profound adoration for Usama Bin Laden as a leader and praises the Quran as perfect and appropriate for every time and place.

Harrach's video has alarmed German officials. On January 25, German Interior Ministry State Secretary August Hanning said to the German television station ARD: "For the first time we are seeing that Germany is addressed very clearly, and namely from someone who knows our home affairs, who knows the internal conditions here and who grapples very specifically with us here in Germany. We regard this as a new quality of threat."<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Neue Terrorvideos - Sicherheit im Superwahljahr | tagesschau.de  
<http://www.tagesschau.de/dev/bab618.html>