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**Recognizing and Developing Countermeasures to
Al Qaeda Resistance to Interrogation Techniques: A Resistance Training
Perspective**

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Recognizing and Developing Countermeasures to Al Qaeda Resistance to Interrogation
Techniques: A Resistance Training Perspective

By

James E. Mitchell, Ph.D.

John B. Jessen, Ph.D.

(S) Executive Summary

This paper discusses the techniques and strategies for resisting interrogation described in captured Al Qaeda training manuals and other documents. It suggests methods for recognizing when sophisticated resistance to interrogation techniques are being employed by captured Al Qaeda operatives from special terrorist cells and outlines strategies for developing countermeasures. It does so by placing Al Qaeda resistance to interrogation techniques within a metaphor that illustrates their operational use. Our perspective for reviewing this material is based on 32 years of combined experience in providing operational support to detained U.S. personnel, training special operations personnel in resistance to interrogation, and debriefing hostages, peacetime governmental detainees and prisoners of war. We are familiar with how hostile countries approach interrogation and knowledgeable about how trained captives organize their resistance efforts. We are not experts in Arab culture or the organizational structure of Al Qaeda. However, we have found that while culture does affect perception and behavior, the cardinal dynamics of resistance to interrogation and exploitation are not culturally dependent.

(S) Background

Judging from where the manual that served as a primary reference for this paper was found the Al Qaeda operatives most likely to employ these techniques are This manual describes in detail various resistance techniques and strategies.

In reviewing this material, we have tried to provide more than simply a static description of what the manual says. We have placed the material within the context of how others have historically employed these resistance techniques.

It is apparent from reading the manual that the thrust of the resistance training provided to operatives in special terrorist cells focuses on preparation for capture in countries

, the text in these documents converges to instruct captives to stick to a pre-coordinated cover story during interrogation, request legal council, complain about treatment and conditions, ask for medical attention, and then report that they have been tortured and mistreated regardless of actual events. In total, the information contained in the documents reveals that a sophisticated level of resistance training is available to high-risk Al Qaeda operatives.

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~~(S)~~ A Metaphor for Understanding Al Qaeda Resistance

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The Al Qaeda training manual asserts that the application of the resistance techniques can render a captor's use of coercion less effective.

We choose to use this metaphor not to imply that trained Al Qaeda operatives think of resistance in terms of circles, but rather to illustrate that the use of the circle concept is an effective way of thinking about resistance behavior. This metaphor can help make sense out of a complex and dynamic situation where sophisticated forms of resistance can be obscured.

(S) A Word About Resistance Posture

Resistance techniques are not used in isolation. They are woven into a consistent way of acting that blends resistance tactics with the demeanor they present to the captor; this is called a "resistance posture." A good resistance posture is a consistent, persistent, apparently logical way of acting that enables the captive to appear unattractive as a source of exploitation.

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~~(S)~~ Countermeasures

The point of using countermeasures is to distract captives from the primary focus of the interrogation, lead them to believe that it is futile to continue resisting, or gradually shape compliance. Skillfully crafted countermeasures can be developed in such a way that they do not violate the Geneva Conventions.

Crafting Countermeasures: Employing countermeasures is a dynamic process. It is not possible in this paper to provide a detailed cookbook; however, the following will provide a flavor for how this might be accomplished:

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