

How to Survive in the West: A Mujahid Guide

On March 19, 2015 the Twitter account @Shahadastories distributed a link to an e-book titled "How to Survive in the West: A Mujahid Guide." This is the latest in a series of e-books compiled by supporters of and recruiters for the Islamic State (ISIS), that provide practical guidance to young Muslims in the West who wish to join ISIS or to wage jihad in their countries.

This e-book's chapter titles include: "Hiding the Extremist Identity," "Earning Money," "Internet Privacy," "Training," "Bomb-Making," "Transporting Weapons," and "What Happens When You Are Spied On And Get Raided."

The following is a review of the main topics in the e-book:



E-book cover page



Chapter 1: "Hiding The Extremist Identity"

Chapter 1 provides various instructions for both converts to Islam and for those born into the faith. To the former, the guide notes: "By not showing you're Muslim, you've already excluded yourself being in the 'Terrorist watchlist.'" The latter group is cautioned: "Don't make it too obvious you have become a practicing Muslim. For example: If you haven't grown a beard, don't grow it now, because you will bring unwanted attention onto yourself. Mujahideen in Muslim lands remove their beards for deceptive purposes." In addition, "Practicing Muslims" are instructed "not remove their beard if they already have one. This would only draw unwanted attention to yourself from friends and family, and this will in turn lead

them to spy on you.”

The e-book recommends to women: “If you wear a hijab and go to a place where Muslims are searched (i.e. airports) then do not wear a black hijab, but a colored one instead. Muslim women who wear black hijabs are searched more in airports than those wearing other colored hijabs. This is merely due to a stereotype of fully black-clothed Muslim women being stricter in their religion.”

Chapter 2: “Disguise”

The e-book suggests that extremists should disguise themselves and alter their appearance to resemble non-Muslims in the West. In addition, they should change their first name or their nickname. “When a Muslim goes out in public, he wants to fit into society to make himself look as normal as possible. Remember this isn’t because he fears his Islamic identity, but he is doing this so he is not suspected of being an outsider enemy.”

It is also recommended that Muslims in the West change their behavior and go out of their way to appear more friendly: “Making yourself look more friendly and open minded to the Western public – For example: Muslims who call themselves by a Western nickname gain more acceptances by their non-Muslim colleagues.”

According to this chapter, having a Western name carries additional advantages: “People with Islamic names get less jobs than those with Islamic names. This alias might be important if you need an important position in a specific job, i.e. Mujahideen send people to work in power plants or enemy governmental positions to spy on and leak reports to the Islamic State leadership (as double agents).”

The book even suggests that agents change their voices, for example, when speaking anonymously to others they should put a cloth over the telephone receiver, or use a different tone or

accent.

Chapter 3: “Easy Money Ideas”

This chapter lists ways in which people in the West can steal money to finance terror operations. “If you are an expert in credit card fraud, Paypal/Ebay scams, phishing, [or] hacking, or you know the secret of a big company, then take advantage of your skills. If you can claim extra benefits from a government, then do so. If you can avoid paying taxes, then do so. There is a report that a Muslim accountant ‘took’ \$50 million from his boss and fled to the Islamic State. Other Muslims ‘borrowed’ a loan as maximum as they could and used it to emigrate to the Islamic State. Another Muslim hacked some Israeli credit cards and used the money to go to the Islamic State.”