

**Advanced Analytic Rigour**

**Seminar 7 – Practice Exercises**

The Hunt Laboratory for Intelligence Research

December 2020

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# LFG planning Attack on Abaddon Military Base

Assessment: It is highly probable (80-95%) that the LFG insurgency group is planning to attack the Abaddon Military Base.

The LFG are clearly planning an attack in the Quazar region in the near future. Our agents on the ground report a clear influx of men of fighting age into the LFG stronghold city of Puktragar. (Special Operations Brigade. Tactical Intelligence Report #547OP, 2019. Classified.) Furthermore, imagery from surveillance drones also shows approximately 40% more people at a nearby training camp. At this time of year there is no other explanation for this build-up, and our agents don’t report any event or activity that would explain it.

Furthermore, our surveillance of the digital communication of the Dreger criminal organisation confirms that the gang has been selling weapons, including RPGs and grenades, to the LFG. Recently intercepted ZeeChat communication between the groups shows that the LFG is purchasing drastically more munitions than they have previously. This arrangement with the Dreger gang has also been verified with our informant within the gang, and to date his information has generally proved to be correct. (Signals Intelligence Bureau. Dreger Gang Intercepts. Classified 2019; Special Operations Brigade. Informant 254 Report, 2019. Classified.)

Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, our assets in the regional villages and towns report that the LFG contacts are increasing active intel collection, collecting intel on our military bases in the area and on our recent operations, and reinforcing their connections with the local people.

Thus, our assessment is that it is highly likely (90-95%) that the LFG is planning an attack in the Quazar region.

As for the actual target, there are 3 military bases in the Quazar region: Abaddon, Orlando, and Damour. There are no other targets of strategic importance. Abaddon and Orlando are the closest bases to the LFG city of Puktrager, and as such are the most heavily fortified, but also the most strategically important. Furthermore, a recently recruited informant (Special Operations Brigade. Informant 213 Report, 2019. Classified.) claims that Damour is not a top priority for the LFG, so it appears that their current strategic planning is not to attack Damour anytime soon. The open terrain surrounding Orlando would make any assault extremely costly. Additionally, attacking Orlando would require crossing territory held by the warlord Brion Ruikzer, who regards the LFG with great suspicion, and there have been minor firefights between LFG scouting parties and Ruikzer’s men. Even with the influx of men, it is hard to imagine that the LFG would have the strength to mount more than one major attack, and so far the LFG has proved to be a very cautious adversary (Special Operations Brigade. Tactical Assessment 45A - Orlando, 2019. Classified.). Given these considerations, we therefore believe that if an attack is carried out, it is close to certain (90-95%) that Abaddon will be the target.

Thus, our primary finding is that it is highly probable (80-95%) that the LFG insurgency group is planning to attack the Abaddon Military Base.

As an aside, while we lack the information required to determine when the LFG will be able to carry out their plan, or if anything is likely to interfere with it, recent analysis suggests that it is extremely unlikely that the LFG will abandon any planned attack because it is abundantly clear that a quick victory is required to boost the morale of their supporters and revive their PR campaign to attract more support. (LFG Strategic Assessment, #6757, 2019, Classified).

# Reasoning Stress Test Form

1 Review Reasoning

**What is the structure of the reasoning?**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Main conclusion: | |
| Summarise the main steps or parts of the argument: | Type of reasoning: |

2 Identify Flaws

**What are the most important reasoning flaws in the text?**

Use the reasoning flaw taxonomy to help find them.

* Is it hard to identify a clear argument?
* Check the Primary Judgements
* Does the argument use a reasoning stratagem poorly?
* Check the relevant category to do with Sources, Causal or Explanatory reasoning, Probability and Statistics, Predictions, or Evidence such as case studies and examples.
* Is there a more general problem with the logical consistency of the argument?
* Check Logic, Assumptions, Uncertainty

*Write down the flaws in the table below and describe where they occur in the argument.*

3 Evaluate Impact

**Do the flaws weaken the argument?**

In other words:

* Do the flaws prevent the reasoning from establishing the conclusion as stated?
* Do the flaws mean that reasoning doesn’t imply the level of certainty the author attributes to the conclusion?
* Do the flaws undermine the support the auther intends the argument to provide to the conclusion?

Determining the impact a flaw has on an argument involves thinking about where it appears in the structure of the argument, how badly it weakens that part of the argument, and how essential that part of the argument is the entire reasoning.    
   
*Describe how seriously the flaws impact the reasoning in the table below. Order the flaws in the priority of what should be fixed.*

4 Fix Flaws

**What is the best way to fix the flaws?**

* Should the flaws be fixed by changing the reasoning that supports the conclusion, the conclusion itself, or both?
* If you are changing the reasoning that supports the conclusion, what part of the argument should be changed?
* Do you currently have sufficient information to fix the flaw in question?
* If so, suggest the required fix
* If not, make recommendations as to what the author needs to determine, find out or consider ahead of fixing the flaw

*Suggest fixes in the table below*

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# SECONDhand smoke linked to tooth decay in children

## Reasoning

Children exposed to secondhand smoke have twice as many cavities as those who are not, according to a study. The research, published in yesterday’s edition of the Journal of the American Medical Association, adds to the litany of woes caused by smoking and gives more ammunition to proponents of smoking restrictions. “Reduction of passive smoking is important not only for the prevention of many medical problems, but also for the promotion of children’s dental health,” said Andrew Aligne, a paediatric researcher at the University of Rochester and lead author. He noted that tooth decay is the single most common chronic childhood disease, so any measure that would reduce cavities would have a significant economic impact. The researchers estimated that at least one quarter of children’s cavities would be eliminated if they were not exposed to secondhand smoke.

## Background information

American Medical Association study published by Dr Andrew Aligne, University of Rochester, 2003, found:

* Approximately twofold increase in cavities among children exposed to secondhand smoke over 5-year period with sample size of 12,400 children
* Children in the study did not themselves smoke
* Children were randomly assigned into each condition
* Children came from a representative and diverse sample of families which were controlled for:
  + Cultural background
  + Socioeconomic background
  + Family situation
* The study was peer reviewed and pre-registered
* All children selected underwent an initial dental test and only those with healthy teeth were chosen to commence in the study
* Children’s diets were controlled throughout the duration of the study; children were provided with a diet hat would not harm their dental health
* All children selected had had adequate access to dental care previously and received regular dental checkups throughout the study
* At least one quarter of children’s cavities would be eliminated if they were not exposed to secondhand smoke.

Dr Aligne provided the following information:

* Cavities can be the result of: lack of access to dental care; exposure to smoking or second hand smoking; an excessively sugary diet
* “Reduction of passive smoking is important not only for the prevention of many medical problems, but also for the promotion of children’s dental health”
* Tooth decay is the single most common chronic childhood disease, so any measure that would reduce cavities would have a significant economic impact.

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# SIMON SMITH

## Reasoning

We have begun preliminary investigations into Simon Smith because of extremist comments he has been posting online. In our assessment, Simon Smith is likely a member of the dangerous extremist group ZAK. A key indicator is belonging to extremist groups on social media. We conducted a preliminary investigation to determine whether he belongs to extremist groups and found that Smith has joined the Brain Fight (BF) group on Facebook, an extremist group which has thousands of members dedicated to discussing highly unusual conspiracy theories and extremist views. 90% of ZAK members we have investigated are members of the BF Facebook group, while of those who following investigation are found not to be members of ZAK, only 30% belong to the BF group. Therefore, it is likely that Smith is a member of ZAK.

## Background information

This year we have investigated 10,000 potential extremists, i.e. individuals we have identified who have made extremist comments online and exhibited other similar behaviour.

One popular group we have identified in our investigations is ZAK, where we have had 1,000 confirmed cases from our investigations.

We have also looked into online social media groups and identified “Brain Fight” (BF) as a group of interest. There is additional information about these below

**ZAK**

* Total number of members: unknown
* Of members identified in our investigations above, 90% belong to BF
* Members espouse extremist ideology and views and have been responsible for over 5 terrorist attacks in the past two years
  + These attacks were resulted in the deaths of a total of 12 people, all innocent of any wrongdoing
  + In addition, 17 people, all bystanders, were injured in these attacks

**Brain Fight group**

* Facebook group
* Total number of members as of 20 November 2020: 12,400
* Active since January 2011
* Includes a variety of posts
* Posts regularly include espousal of conspiracy theories and support for extremist ideologies and views

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# Recommendation to Deny Passport for Dylan Weinholt

From: Director, Antipodean Security Organisation  
To: Minister for Foreign Affairs, Antipodes  
Subject: Recommendation to Deny Passport for Dylan Wienholt

The applicable legislation cites that the Minister for Foreign Affairs has the power to cancel or to deny a passport based on a recommendation form a Competent Authority. The ASO is a Competent Authority. A Competent Authority can reccomend cancellation or to deny if it suspects and has reasonable grounds that a person would be likely to engage in conduct contrary to security, or might infringe Antipodean law when a person is overseas.

The ASO recommends that the Minister deny Dylan Weinholt’s application for a passport, on the grounds diseminated below.

The ASO suspects Dylan John Weinholt, DOB 12/4/98, likely to engage conduct contrary to security outside the Antipodes. The ASO has been undertaking monitoring on Weinholt for 10 months. (Antipodean Security Office. Investigation #5687CT- subject: Weinholt. Classified.)

1. Weinholt has become radicalised in the International Cryptocurrency Union, a group intent to replace all major currencies around the world with distributed cryptocurrency - their own currency Randanium. They conceive of this as a crucial step toward a worldwide Anarcho-Libertarianism where all forms of Government have been terminated. Their strategy for terminating major currencies is to use cyber-warfare - hacking- to disrupt he software systems maintaining of existing currencies. The ASO has currently two undercover assets in the union, and monitors communications of union members.

* + - Weinholt is an active member of the Antipodean branch of the International Cryptocurrency Union, and he attends weekly gatherings and is participating in their forum on the Dark Web
    - Rules of the International Cryptocurrency Union require the members to have a signed agreement to the union objectives with a number members as witnesses. (Antipodean Security Office. Investigation #5687CT- subject Weinholt. Classified.)

2. Weinholt intends to travel overseas to coordinate a cyber warfare assault on all the major currencies.

* + - Our assets in the union have reported to us the the leaders of the branch have agreed that to evade the possible occurrence of eavesdropping by security services, critical planning for global cyber strike on major currencies needs to be conducted in “face-to-face” meetings. Weinholt has been given this role, this is because, as a relatively new member and somebody who has not travelled to other countries, he has the most capacity to fly “under the radar.” (Antipodean Security Office. Investigation #5687CT- subject Weinholt. Classified.)

3. Wienholt has been arranging to meet with people in the US, Ukraine, Montenegro. (Antipodean Security Office. Investigation #5687CT- subject Weinholt. Classified.) We have extensive knowledge of Weinholt’s background and we can find no plausible explanation for this travel plan except pursuing the agenda stipulated above.

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