

# Christian Fundamentalism as a Instrument of US Military Doctrine

## Snake Oil Sellers of the Christian Right?

By [Global Research](#)

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The U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs came under heavy criticism earlier this month from Muslim and religious freedom advocacy groups after it invited to a conference three self-professed “former terrorists” with strong links to the Christian right.

Collectively known as the “3-X Terrorists”, Walid Shoebat, Kamel Saleem and Zacharia Anani are front line soldiers in the U.S. “culture wars”, a discursive battle over “values” and hot-button issues ranging from abortion to radical Islam.

The men collected 13,000 dollars for their appearance at the 50th annual Academy Assembly, a four-day conference attended by 200 international students and Air Force cadets and organised under the auspices of the school’s political science department.

To supporters, the 3-X represent “moderate” voices; they are self-professed Muslim extremists who converted to evangelical Christianity and are now exposing Islam for what it really is. To critics, they are frauds, accused of fabricating much of their past exploits as mass murderers in order to peddle their Islamophobia on the lecture circuit and on cable news networks, including Fox News Corp. and CNN.

But it is their relationship with political leaders and organisations across the right-wing Christian spectrum that seems to have elicited the greatest concern from critics.

“These men are frauds, but that is not the point. They are part of a dark and frightening war by the Christian right against tolerance that, in the moment of another catastrophic terrorist attack on American soil, would make it acceptable to target and persecute all Muslims,” wrote former New York Times reporter Chris Hedges in a widely circulated online essay.

“They offer a window into a worldview that is destroying the United States. It has corrupted the Republican party. It has colored the news media. It has entered into the everyday clichés we use to explain ourselves to ourselves. It is ignorant and racist, but it is also deadly,” he said.

Controversy seems to follow Shoebat and his associates wherever they go. Members of the public and the news media were not allowed to attend a student-run forum featuring the three at Stanford University. Princeton University cancelled a scheduled talk by Shoebat in 2005 because it was perceived as being “too inflammatory”. In 2006, Columbia University restricted public attendance at a speech with Shoebat and former Nazi Hitler youth and German soldier Hilmar Von Campe only three hours before the event was to take place.

The Military Religious Freedom Organisation (MRFF), a group that is suing the federal government to combat what it describes as “creeping evangelism” in the armed forces, also denounced the visit.

The relationship between the evangelical Christian Right and 3-X runs deep, with connections to Reverend John Hagee’s Christian-Zionist Christians United for Israel (CUFI), as well as Focus on the Family, part of the para-church organisations that promote social conservative public policy in the U.S., and have maintained close relations with the George W. Bush administration.

Shoebat says claims to be a former Palestinian Liberation Organisation operative who attacked Jews, planted bombs in Israel, and in 1993 converted to Christianity. He released a book in 2007 entitled “Why We Want to Kill You”, and appeared in a purported documentary film called “Obsession: Radical Islam’s War Against the West.”

The film was marketed in part by self-described “pro-Israel” groups, and featured interviews with Harvard Law Professor Alan Dershowitz, dubious “investigative journalist” Steve Emerson, Itimar Marcus of the Israel-based Palestinian Media Watch, and Daniel Pipes, a controversial scholar of medieval Islamic history whose website campuswatch.com sparked criticism in 2002 for its alleged McCarthyesque attacks on Middle East studies professors.

Shoebat has received the support of other neo-conservative pundits too. His website features a quote from Frank Gaffney, of the Centre for Security Policy: “In the 25 years I have been in Washington I have never heard anything so extraordinary and the truth so eloquently told by someone like this [Walid Shoebat].”

In the summer of 2006, Shoebat also spoke at the “Night to Honour Israel”, a three-day event presented by Pastor Hagee’s CUFI, which aims to mobilise Christian Zionists as a political force, according to the San Antonio Express.

Shoebat, Saleem, and Anani are also slated to appear on a panel of ex-terrorists at the CUFI Washington convention in March. Other notable speakers include independent Connecticut Senator Joe Lieberman, Pipes, Gaffney, and Clifford May, president of the Foundation for the Defence of Democracies.

Saleem, who runs an organisation called Koome Ministries, says he was indoctrinated by the PLO as a child, and ran weapons into Israel via underground tunnels underneath the Golan Heights. But analysts argue there are no accounts of such an incident. Saleem also claims he was descended from the “grand wazir of Islam”, a nonsensical term that Saleem rebutted on his website.

“I take responsibility for choosing that inaccurate term. I did so to obscure both title and geographical location of a cleric to whom I am related,” he wrote.

The Koome Ministries website is quite clear on its purpose: first, to wake up, educate and train the Christian and Jewish communities on the impending dangers of radical Islam; second, to reach Muslims with the redemptive message of Christ; and third, to teach the Church “relationship evangelism” in order to reach Muslims with the Truth.

The site asks visitors to pray for specific Muslim nations, and provides videos of indigenous groups that are “ripe for the gospel”. The site currently features a video prayer appeal for a Berber group in southern Morocco, asking viewers to “pray for Southern Shilha Berbers will

truly become Africa's free men and women in Christ: pray against the spirits of Islam and mysticism that have kept them bound for generations."

Anani claims he has killed at least 223 people as a Lebanese militant during the early 1970s and was "almost beheaded" for converting to Christianity. A 2007 report in the Canadian Windsor Star cast doubts on his jihadi past; according to Tom Quiggin, a Canadian court-qualified expert of global jihadism, some of Anani's accounts did not correspond with actual historical events.

"Mr. Anani is not an individual who rates the slightest degree of credibility, based on the stories that he has told," said Quiggin, a senior fellow at the Centre of Excellence for National Security in Singapore.

Sheobat and Saleem are U.S. citizens, and Anani is Canadian.

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