

JORDAN: CIA ATTACKER WAS PISSED ABOUT CIVILIAN DEATHS

As Time admits, the story the Jordanians are telling about the CIA suicide bomber, Humam Khalil Abu-Mulal al-Balawim may simply be their attempt at spin. Nevertheless, they're saying that al-Balawi was not a double agent; rather he attacked the base because he was angry about all the civilian deaths

The Jordanians say that in December, al-Balawi requested an urgent meeting with the CIA and his Jordanian go-between, Captain Sharif Ali bin Zeid, reportedly a relation of the royal Jordanian family. To whet their appetite, al-Balawi dangled a tantalizing piece of information: he claimed to have "some information" on the whereabouts of al-Zawahiri, these sources say.

[snip]

So why did al-Balawi, a seemingly trusted agent, switch sides? The Jordanian intelligence sources who spoke to TIME speculate that al-Balawi had become enraged at the Americans for killing a high number of civilians in their hunt for al-Qaeda and Taliban leaders. And al-Balawi, who felt partly responsible for these deaths because of his role in pointing out the targeted villages in which al-Qaeda militants had been hiding,

*may have been consumed by
guilt. "It's very possible
that he decided to take
revenge for the death of
these Muslim civilians," says
a senior Jordanian official.*

I expect these stories are going
to remain very fluid for some
time.