

The Second Letter

Osama bin Laden

January 29, 1995

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To Shaykh Abd al-Aziz,

We, at the Reform and Advice Foundation, have provided you with an open letter in our report, reminding you of Allah and your religious obligation towards the Ummah. We also called your attention to a variety of Fatwas and positions reflected by you, which inflicted harm on the Ummah and those working for Islam, such as scholars and preachers.

These latest Fatwas have scared Muslims in general as well as freedom fighters, weaker men, women and children of Palestine in specific. They showed a distinctive religious aspect to Arab leaders' political treason betraying Allah and his Messenger. You considered what these leaders did, from signing peace treaties consisting of turning Palestine over to Jews and recognising their eternal sovereignty over it, as permissible reconciliation with the enemy.

When this Fatwa reaches a dangerous level and scholars' voices inside and outside the country discredited it, along with our previous report regarding this issue, we expected you to take a stand and reverse course after the truth came out and evidence indicated the invalidity and misrepresentation of its contents.

Everyone was surprised, not because you confirmed your previous Fatwas according to what was published in the al-Muslimun newspaper on January 20 1995, Edition no. 520, but rather by the additional explanations of your understanding of having peace with the Jews. These explanations contained clauses that Jews and their agents did not even dream would be issued when they praised and clapped their hands at your previous Fatwa.

In this letter we would like to briefly draw your attention to some issues not covered in our previous report and other matters triggered by your second Fatwa. What we have stated earlier, in addition to the content of scholars' letters inside and outside the country, points out the invalidity of these Fatwas. This is sufficient enough not to lengthen our topic but to summarise it as follows:

1) Evidences you provided in your first and second fatwas are the ultimate proof to permit a truce with the enemy based upon the availability of necessary conditions.

Religiously speaking, scholars showed that what is currently going on in Palestine is not a truce because conditions have not been met, except for what the enemy wants. The second part of the deal came from a group of Apostate secular Arab leaders. The agreement was made on Palestinian territory, an Islamic land, where the Prophet ascended to Heaven. The agreement's content indicates the Jews' eternal ownership of this land - thus permanently calling off jihad.

Since the agreement was based on an invalidity, it means that any agreement of ownership of any part of Islamic land is void, knowing full well that the so-called "Peace" is invalid in its entirety.

Strange is your description of the president of the so-called *Palestinian National Authority* and his secularists group as being "in charge of Muslim affairs in Palestine." For this reason, it has to honour its obligations and treaties with the enemy. It is known that Fatwas from scholars indicate that secularism amounts to atheism; you were among those who called for it on many occasions. Those individuals never did conceal their secular ideology, whether in their actions, sayings or writings. How can this be right in light of how they describe themselves as being in charge of "Muslim affairs in Palestine"?

2) This Fatwa's claim of Muslims' weakness and inability to fight Jews is invalid, because on the one hand subject experts did not issue it. Whoever is not knowledgeable in these matters does not have the right to arbitrate, even if he is correct. On the other hand, it does not make sense; who among these these experts said that more than a billion Muslims who own the largest natural resources in the world with strategic locations are unable to defeat five million Jews in Palestine?

Today, the Muslims' ailment is not military weakness or financial poverty, but rather their leaders' betrayal, regimes' failures and scholars' acceptance of current situations and befriending bad leaders. The Islamic nation does not have a shortage money, manpower or equipment. It did not win its historic wars based on that; but it is missing scholars such as [Bin Taymiyah](#) and leaders like [Salah al-Din](#), may God have mercy on their souls.

The heroic operations conducted by young Palestinians confirm this theory. It has created fear and inflicted harm on the enemy. What would it be like if the nation's efforts were geared towards this objective?

3) Regarding your statement about having peace with the Jews, including an exchange of diplomatic representations and economic cooperation; this contradicts what you declared when you said that Jewish ownership of Palestine is a "temporary one". According to international law, a diplomatic exchange, which "peace" includes, is considered to be a legitimate representation forbidding one country from intervening in another country's internal affairs, which could undermine its sovereignty and total control of its territories.

Jews never dreamed of invading the Islamic nation nor exploiting its resources more than what you have provided them by giving religious consent to establish embassies, Islamic commercial centres in front of their embassies, espionage centres and launching immorality and ideologies. This is a necessary step leading to the establishment of Greater Israel, extending from the [Nile](#) to the [Euphrates](#) and through large portions of the Arabian peninsula.

4) According to this alleged peace, you stated that Jews ownership of Palestine is a "temporary one", which contradicts reality. Most of these treaties' clauses including the Camp David Accord with Egypt, Gaza and Jericho Accords with Palestine, Liberation Organisation and Wadi 'Araba's Accord with Jordan, indicate an eternal ownership. Most of these accords were the ones that called for a return of what was occupied in Palestine during the [1967 war](#) in return for Arab relinquishment of what was occupied during the 1948 war. This is what they mean by "land for

peace". Let us assume that Jews give up what they occupied in 1967, which is unlikely because they insist that Jerusalem, occupied in 1967, is their eternal capital. Under what authority can they insist on having what was occupied in 1948, knowing that any agreement for which Muslims give up land is invalid?

If you want to confirm this, you can review all accords; then you will know what you are talking about. It is a direct knowledge of Jewish eternal sovereignty over what was occupied in 1948. Without such recognition, Jews would not have land; hence no country with which to reconcile, have diplomatic exchange, commercial cooperation and other things that you said were permissible. It is known that any so-called Israeli land was either occupied in 1948 or 1967. It does not possess any additional land. So how could it be stated that their land ownership is temporary knowing that all parties describe what is going on as "total and eternal peace"?

The Ummah in general, and Palestinian people specifically, were expecting you to honour your religious duties by instigating jihad and supporting members and groups behind it. They did not expect you to announce such a Fatwa that accuses freedom fighters of a sin for wanting to liberate Jerusalem and Palestine. You accused them because they conducted jihad operations against Jews breaching the Gaza and Jericho Accords signed by "The Governor of Muslim Affairs in Palestine" as you claimed. Breaching such an accord signed by the governor would be prohibited.

This Fatwa has frustrated those who provided their sons, brothers and husbands as martyrs for Allah's sake to liberate Jerusalem and Palestine. According to this Fatwa, these individuals died as sinners since they breached an Accord signed by "The Governor of Muslim Affairs in Palestine". That is what your Fatwa meant. Are you aware of what you are saying? Or are you saying about Allah what you do not know? If you happen not to know, that is a problem. However, if you knew, it is even worse.

5) What is frightening is not this Fatwa's issuance, but rather the procedural basis that you followed in such issuance. What distinguishes these Fatwas is the following:

1) It starts with the principle of conforming with leaders in their policies and approving their behaviour.

2) For this reason, truth gets twisted to meet these wishes

3) If it is not appropriate, leaders would find a way around it

4) It is prohibited to issue a Fatwa based on lack of knowledge

5) In response to leaders' ever-changing desires, this Fatwa is characterised by contradiction and opposition

We have stated examples in our previous letter that confirm what we are saying.

This method is invalid because the issuance of a Fatwa is based on aspiration. As Bin al-Qa'im said, God bless his soul, and as judge Abu al-Walid al-Baji noted to his friend about some people during his time who claimed credit for issuing Fatwas, "If something good comes from it, he would claim to have issued the Fatwa. This is not acceptable. This is not acceptable as agreed upon by those who specialise in this area."

If this were the judgment of those who choose what serves their needs, what would it be like for those who make up Fatwas that oppose that what scholars have agreed upon?

The purpose of this critique is to show mistakes to be avoided. This is the scholars' right approach. Imam al-Nawawi says "Show what is preferable, discredit what is not right, falsify what has already been and exaggerated in discrediting its author. I mean to warn against deception."

We are warning the Ummah of the danger of such discredited Fatwas that do not meet the requirements. We are asking the Ummah to go back to Fatwas that have been approved by those who combined religious knowledge with current affairs, who believe in the word of Allah and who did the right thing and did not fear anyone by not speaking out. The regime became uncomfortable with them. It put them in jails, expelled them from their jobs and banned them from voicing their concerns.

We are calling on you to stay away from those corrupt leaders who used you for their own purposes, against preachers and reformists. We are making you fear with what Allah has frightened his most preferred creatures and his last messenger when he said "And their purpose was to tempt thee away from that which he has revealed unto thee, to substitute in our name something quite different in that case, behold! they would certainly have made thee their friend! And had we not given thee strength, thou wouldst nearly have inclined to them a little. In that case we would have never made thee taste a double portion of punishment in this life, and an equal portion in death: and moreover, those wouldst have found none to help thee against us!"

If this threatening language was from God to his most preferred creature so he would not befriend them, even a little bit, what will it be like for the one who befriends them a lot?

We also remind you of those of whom Allah says, "They may bear on the day of judgment, their own burdens in full, and also some of the burdens of those who are without knowledge, those whom they mislead. Alas, how grievous the burdens they will bear!"

Despite the seriousness of this issue, the Ummah began to move away from these Fatwas that you issued as many voices of condemnation and refusal rose against them, inside and outside. Trust has been put upon those scholars and preachers, those behind bars, upon whom these Fatwas have inflicted harm for speaking out against them, such as Shaykh Salman al-'Awdah, Shaykh Safar al-Hawali and their brothers, may Allah relieve them.

This disinterest in your Fatwas, even of people less dangerously misguided, does not excuse you from the responsibility that has been put upon you to speak the truth.

Finally, we tell you, if you cannot bear the consequences of speaking the truth and of supporting those who speak out against leaders, then you should remove yourself from official positions in which the regime has placed you, and leave those leaders who declared war against Allah. In this way you will not suffer as they will. Follow the right path as determined by the Prophet, Peace be upon him, when he said "Watch your tongue, let your house be spacious and cry over your mistakes"

We ask Allah with his 99 attributed names to provide this Ummah with sincere scholars, Imam and freedom fighters so that this Ummah will reclaim its glory and be the best. We also ask him to guide us to do the right thing.

Usamah bin Muhammad bin Ladin

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