

Usama bin Laden Says the Al-Qa'idah Group had Nothing to Do with the 11 September Attacks

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Interview published in newspaper Ummat Karachi

The Al-Qaidah group had nothing to do with the 11 September attacks on the USA, according to Usama bin Ladin in an interview with the Pakistani newspaper Ummat. Usama bin Ladin went on to suggest that Jews or US secret services were behind the attacks, and to express gratitude and support for Pakistan, urging Pakistan's people to jihad against the West. The following is the text of an interview conducted by a "special correspondent", published in the Pakistani newspaper Ummat on 28 September, place and date of interview not given.

UMMAT: You have been accused of involvement in the attacks in New York and Washington. What do you want to say about this? If you are not involved, who might be?

USAMA BIN LADEN: In the name of Allah (God), the most beneficent, the most merciful. Praise be to Allah, Who is the creator of the whole universe and Who made the Earth as an abode for peace, for the whole humankind. Allah is the Sustainer, who sent Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) for our guidance. I am thankful to the Ummat Group of Publications, which gave me the opportunity to convey my viewpoint to the people, particularly the valiant and momin (true Muslim) people of Pakistan who refused to believe the lies of the demon (Pakistani military dictator General Pervez Musharraf).

I have already said that I am not involved in the 11 September attacks in the United States. As a Muslim, I try my best to avoid telling a lie. I had no knowledge of these attacks, nor do I consider the killing of innocent women, children and other humans as an appreciable act. Islam strictly forbids causing harm to innocent women, children and other people. Such a practice is forbidden even in the course of a battle. It is the United States, which is perpetrating every maltreatment on women, children and common people of other faiths, particularly the followers of Islam. All that is going on in Palestine for the last 11 months is sufficient to call the wrath of God upon the United States and Israel. There is also a warning for those Muslim countries, which witnessed all these as a silent spectator. What had earlier been done to the innocent people of Iraq, Chechnya and Bosnia? Only one conclusion could be derived from the indifference of the United States and the West to these acts of terror and the patronage of the tyrants by these powers that America is an anti-Islamic power and it is patronizing the anti-Islamic forces. Its friendship with the Muslim countries is just a show, rather deceit. By enticing or intimidating these countries, the United States is forcing them to play a role of its choice. Put a glance all around and you will see that the slaves of the United States are either rulers or enemies of Muslims.

The U.S. has no friends, nor does it want to keep any because the prerequisite of friendship is to come to the level of the friend or consider him at par with you. America does not want to see anyone equal to it. It expects slavery from others. Therefore, other countries are either its slaves or subordinates. However, our case is different. We have pledged slavery to God Almighty alone and after this pledge there is no possibility to become the slave of someone else. If we do that it will be disregarding to both our Sustainer and his fellow beings. Most of the world nations upholding their freedom are the religious ones, which are the enemies of the United States, or the U.S. itself considers them as its enemies.

The countries which do not agree to become the U.S. slaves are China, Iran, Libya, Cuba, Syria [Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Iraq, Sudan, Indonesia, Malaysia] and Russia. Whoever committed the act of 11 September are not the friends of the American people. I have already said that we are against the American system, not against its people, whereas in these attacks, the common American people have been killed. According to my information, the death toll is much higher than what the U.S. Government has stated. But the Bush Administration does not want the panic to spread. The United States should try to trace the perpetrators of these attacks within itself; the people who are a part of the U.S. system, but are dissenting against it. Or those who are working for some other system; persons who want to make the present century as a century of conflict between Islam and Christianity so that their own civilization, nation, country, or ideology could survive. They can be anyone, from Russia to Israel and from India to Serbia. In the U.S. itself, there are dozens of well-organized and well-equipped groups, which are capable of causing a large-scale destruction. Then you cannot forget the American-Jews, who are annoyed with President Bush ever since the elections in Florida and want to avenge him.

Then there are intelligence agencies in the U.S., which require billions of dollars worth of funds from the Congress and the government every year. This [funding issue] was not a big problem till the existence of the former Soviet Union but after that the budget of these agencies has been in danger. They needed an enemy. So, they first started propaganda against Usama and Taleban and then this incident happened. You see, the Bush Administration approved a budget of 40 billion dollars. Where will this huge amount go? It will be provided to the same agencies, which need huge funds and want to exert their importance. Now they will spend the money for their expansion and for increasing their importance. I will give you an example. Drug smugglers from all over the world are in contact with the U.S. secret agencies. These agencies do not want to eradicate narcotics cultivation and trafficking because their importance will be diminished. The people in the U.S. Drug Enforcement Department are encouraging drug trade so that they could show performance and get millions of dollars worth of budget. General Noriega was made a drug baron by the CIA and, in need, he was made a scapegoat. In the same way, whether it is President Bush or any other U.S. President, they cannot bring Israel to justice for its human rights abuses or to hold it accountable for such crimes. What is this? Is it not that there exists a government within the government in the United States? That secret government must be asked as to who carried out the attacks.

UMMAT: A number of world countries have joined the call of the United States for launching attacks on Afghanistan. These also include a number of Muslim countries. Will Al-Qa'idah declare a jihad against these Islamic countries as well?

USAMA BIN LADEN: I must say that my duty is just to awaken the Muslims; to tell them as to what is good for them and what is not. What does Islam say and what do the enemies of Islam want. Al-Qa'idah was set up to wage a jihad against infidelity, particularly to counter the onslaught of the infidel countries against the Islamic states. Jihad is the sixth undeclared pillar of Islam. [The first five being the basic holy words of Islam ("There is no god but God and Muhammad is the messenger of God"), prayers, fasting (in Ramadan), pilgrimage to Mecca and giving alms (zakat).] Every anti-Islamic person is afraid of jihad. Al-Qa'idah wants to keep jihad alive and active and make it a part of the daily life of the Muslims. It wants to give it the status of worship. We are not against any Islamic country. We do not consider a war against an Islamic country as jihad. We are in favour of armed jihad only against those infidel governments, which are killing innocent Muslim men, women and children just because they are Muslims. Supporting the U.S. act is the need of some Muslim countries and the compulsion of others. However, they should think as to what will remain of their religious and moral position if they

support the attack of the Christians and the Jews on a Muslim country like Afghanistan. The orders of Islamic Shariah [jurisprudence] for such individuals, organizations and countries are clear and all the scholars of the Muslim brotherhood are unanimous on them. We will do the same, which is being ordered by the Ameer-ul-Momeneen [the commander of the faithful] Muhammad Omar [leader of the Taleban] and the Islamic scholars. The hearts of the people of Muslim countries are beating with the call of jihad. We are grateful to them.

UMMAT: The losses caused in the attacks in New York and Washington have proved that giving an economic blow to the U.S. is not too difficult. U.S. experts admit that a few more such attacks can bring down the American economy. Why is Al-Qa'idah not targeting their economic pillars?

USAMA BIN LADEN: I have already said that we are not hostile to the United States. We are against the [U.S. Government] system, which makes other nations slaves of the United States, or forces them to mortgage their political and economic freedom. This system is totally in the control of the American Jews, whose first priority is Israel, not the United States. It is clear that the American people are themselves the slaves of the Jews and are forced to live according to the principles and laws laid down by them. So the punishment should reach Israel. In fact, it is Israel, which is giving a blood bath to innocent Muslims and the U.S. is not uttering a single word.

UMMAT: Why is harm not caused to the enemies of Islam through other means, apart from the armed struggle? For instance, urging the Muslims to boycott Western products, banks, shipping lines and TV channels.

USAMA BIN LADEN: The first thing is that Western products could only be boycotted when the Muslim fraternity is fully awakened and organized. Secondly, the Muslim companies should become self-sufficient in producing goods equal to the products of Western companies. Economic boycott of the West is not possible unless economic self-sufficiency is attained and substitute products are brought out. You see that wealth is scattered all across the Muslim World but not a single TV channel has been acquired which can preach Islamic injunctions according to modern requirements and attain an international influence. Muslim traders and philanthropists should make it a point that if the weapon of public opinion is to be used, it is to be kept in the hand. Today's world is of public opinion and the fates of nations are determined through its pressure. Once the tools for building public opinion are obtained, everything that you asked for can be done.

UMMAT: The entire propaganda about your struggle has so far been made by the Western media. But no information is being received from your sources about the network of Al-Qa'idah and its jihadi successes. Would you comment?

USAMA BIN LADEN: In fact, the Western media is left with nothing else. It has no other theme to survive for a long time. Then we have many other things to do. The struggle for jihad and the successes are for the sake of Allah and not to annoy His bondsmen. Our silence is our real propaganda. Rejections, explanations, or corrigendum only waste your time and through them, the enemy wants you to engage in things which are not of use to you. These things are pulling you away from your cause. The Western media is unleashing such a baseless propaganda, which makes us surprise but it reflects on what is in their hearts and gradually they themselves become captive of this propaganda. They become afraid of it and begin to cause harm to themselves. Terror is the most dreaded weapon in modern age and the Western media is mercilessly using it against its own people. It can add fear and helplessness in the psyche of the people of Europe and the United States. It means that what the enemies of the United States cannot do, its media

is doing that. You can understand as to what will be the performance of the nation in a war, which suffers from fear and helplessness.

UMMAT: What will be the impact of the freeze of Al-Qa'idah accounts by the U.S.?

USAMA BIN LADEN: God opens up ways for those who work for Him. Freezing of accounts will not make any difference for Al-Qa'idah or other jihad groups. With the grace of Allah, Al-Qa'idah has more than three alternative financial systems, which are all separate and totally independent from each other. This system is operating under the patronage of those who love jihad. What to say of the United States, even the combined world cannot budge these people from their path. These people are not in hundreds but in thousands and millions. Al-Qa'idah comprises of such modern educated youths who are aware of the cracks inside the Western financial system as they are aware of the lines in their hands. These are the very flaws of the Western fiscal system, which are becoming a noose for it and this system could not recuperate in spite of the passage of so many days.

UMMAT: Are there other safe areas other than Afghanistan, where you can continue jihad?

USAMA BIN LADEN: There are areas in all parts of the world where strong jihadi forces are present, from Indonesia to Algeria, from Kabul to Chechnya, from Bosnia to Sudan, and from Burma to Kashmir. Then it is not the problem of my person. I am a helpless fellowman of God, constantly in the fear of my accountability before God. It is not the question of Usama but of Islam and, in Islam too, of jihad. Thanks to God, those waging a jihad can walk today with their heads raised. Jihad was still present when there was no Usama and it will remain as such even when Usama is no longer there. Allah opens up ways and creates loves in the hearts of people for those who walk on the path of Allah with their lives, property and children. Believe it, through jihad, a man gets everything he desires. And the biggest desire of a Muslim is the life after death. Martyrdom is the shortest way of attaining an eternal life.

UMMAT: What do you say about the Pakistan Government policy on Afghanistan attack?

USAMA BIN LADEN: We are thankful to the Momin and valiant people of Pakistan who erected a blockade in front of the evil forces and stood in the first file of battle. Pakistan is a great hope for the Islamic brotherhood. Its people are awakened, organized and rich in the spirit of faith. They backed Afghanistan in its war against the Soviet Union and extended every help to the mojahedeen (freedom fighters) and the Afghan people. Then these are very Pakistanis who are standing shoulder by shoulder with the Taleban. If such people emerge in just two countries, the domination of the West will diminish in a matter of days. Our hearts beat with Pakistan and, God forbid, if a difficult time comes we will protect it with our blood. Pakistan is sacred for us like a place of worship. We are the people of jihad and fighting for the defense of Pakistan is the best of all jihads to us. It does not matter for us as to who reforms Pakistan. The important thing is that the spirit of jihad is alive and stronger in the hearts of the Pakistani people.

End of Interview