
© Theophyle Politeia 2008 - 2011
Osama bin Laden (1957-2011)

Arabic: Usâmah bin Muhammad bin 'Awad bin Lâdin born March 10, 1957 known as Osama bin Laden or Usama bin Laden is the founder of the al-Qaeda Islamist paramilitary organization. Bin Laden is a member of the prestigious and wealthy bin Laden family and issued a 1998 edict that Muslims should kill civilians and military personnel in the United States and allied countries until they withdraw their forces from Muslim countries and Israel.

He has been indicted in United States federal court for his alleged involvement in the 1998 U.S. embassy bombings in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania and Nairobi, Kenya and has been linked to the 2000 USS Cole bombing, the Bali nightclub bombings, the Madrid bombings, as well as bombings in the Jordanian capital of Amman and in Egypt's Sinai peninsula.

Bin Laden and al-Qaeda allegedly carried out a number of violent attacks worldwide, including the September 11, 2001, attacks on the World Trade Center in New York City, The Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia, and the hijacking of United Airlines Flight 93, which together killed at least 2,986 people. Bin Laden himself has not been indicted for those attacks and is not wanted by the FBI, CIA, or Interpol regarding those events.

Osama bin Laden was born in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. In a 1998 interview, later televised on Al Jazeera, he gave his birth date as March 10, 1957. His father was the late Muhammad Awad bin Laden, a wealthy businessman involved in construction and with close ties to the Saudi royal family. Before World War I, Muhammad, originally poor and uneducated, emigrated from Hadhramaut, on the south coast of Yemen, to the Red Sea port of Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, where he began to work as a porter. Starting his own business in 1930, Muhammad built his fortune as a building contractor for the Saudi royal family during the 1950s. Although it had distanced itself from their brother and former company employee, The Saudi Binladin Group's corporate website, expired on September 11, 2001, the same day as the attacks in the United States.

There is no definitive account of the number of children born to Muhammed bin Laden, but the number is generally put at 55. In addition, various accounts place Osama as his seventeenth son. Muhammed bin Laden was married 22 times, although to no more than four women at a time per Sharia law. Osama was born the only son of Muhammed bin Laden’s tenth wife, Hamida al-Attas, nee Alia Ghanem, who was born in Syria.

Osama's parents divorced soon after he was born, according to Khaled M. Batarfi, a senior editor at the Al Madina newspaper in Jeddah who knew Osama during the 1970s. Osama's mother then married a man named Muhammad al-Attas, who worked at the bin Laden company. The couple had four children, and Osama lived in the new household with three stepbrothers and one stepsister.

Bin Laden was raised as a devout Sunni Muslim. But from 1968 to 1976, he attended the relatively secular Al-Thager Model School, the most prestigious high school in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, called "the school of the elite." However, during the 1960s, King Faisal had welcomed exiled teachers from Syria, Egypt, and Jordan, so that around 1971 or 1972, at Saudi high schools and universities, it was common to find many of whom had become involved with dissident members of the Muslim Brotherhood. During that time, bin Laden was exposed to those educators’ banned political teachings during after-school Islamic study groups.

As a college student at King Abdulaziz University in Jeddah, bin Laden studied civil engineering and business administration. He earned a degree in civil engineering in 1979 and also one in economics and public administration, in 1981.

At the university, bin Laden was influenced by several professors with strong ties to the Muslim Brotherhood. Among them was Muhammad Qutb, an Egyptian, whose brother, the late Sayyid Qutb, had written one of the Brotherhood's most important tracts about anti-Western jihad, "Signposts on the Road." The university at Jeddah is also where bin Laden met Dr. Abdullah Yusuf Azzam. Azzam was a teacher there while bin Laden was in attendance, and he would later play a crucial role working with bin Laden in the Afghanistan resistance against the Soviets.
In 1974, at the age of 17, bin Laden married his first wife, Najwa Ghanem, his mother's niece, and a first cousin, who was from Syria. The marriage ceremony took place in Najwa's native land, at Latakia, in northwestern Syria. After the birth of his first son, Abdallah, they moved from his mother's house to a building in the Al-Aziziyah district of Jeddah.

Although Bin Laden reportedly married four other women, he divorced one, Umm Ali bin Laden (i.e., the mother of Ali), a university lecturer, who studied in Saudi Arabia, and spent holidays in Khartoum, Sudan, where Osama later settled during his exile in the years 1991 to 1996. According to Wisal al Turabi, the wife of Sudan's ruler Hassan Turabi, Umm Ali taught Islam to some families in Riyadh, an upscale neighborhood in Khartoum. The three latter wives of Osama bin Laden were all university lecturers, highly educated, and from distinguished families. According to Wisal al Turabi, he married the other three because they were "spinsters," who "were going to go without marrying in this world. So he married them for the Word of God." According to Abu Jandal, bin Laden's former chief bodyguard, Osama's wife Umm Ali asked Osama for a divorce when they still lived in Sudan, because she said that she "could not continue to live in an austere way and in hardship."

Bin Laden has fathered at least 24 children. His wife, Najwa reportedly had 11 children by bin Laden, including Abdallah (born c. 1976), Omar, Saad and Muhammad. Muhammad bin Laden (born c. 1983) married the daughter of the late al-Qaeda leader Mohammed Atef in January 2001, at Kandahar, Afghanistan. Omar and Abdallah reportedly organized the U.S. branch of the World Congress of Muslim Youth in Falls Church, Virginia during the 1990s. Abdallah runs his own firm, called Fame Advertising, which has offices near a Starbucks in a two-story strip mall on the busy Palestine Street, in Jeddah.

In 1994 bin Laden's family publicly disowned him, shortly before the Saudi Arabian government revoked his citizenship for anti-government activity. He attended his son's wedding in January 2001, but since September 11, he is believed only to have had contact with his mother on one occasion.

Bin Laden is often described as lanky; the FBI describes him as tall and thin, being 6' 4" (193 cm) to 6' 5" (195 cm) tall and weighing about 160 pounds (75 kg). He has an olive complexion, is left-handed, and usually walks with a cane.

In terms of personality, Bin Laden is described as a soft-spoken, mild mannered man, and despite his rhetoric, he is said to be charming, polite, and respectful.

Osama's name is transliterated in many ways. Osama bin Laden is used by most English-language mass media. The FBI and Fox News use Usama bin Laden, which is often abbreviated to UBL. Less common renderings include Ussamah Bin Ladin and Oussama Ben Laden (French-language mass media). The latter part of the name can also be found as Binladen or Binladin.

Strictly speaking, under Arabic linguistic conventions, it is incorrect to use "bin Laden" in a similar manner as a Western surname. His full name means "Osama, son of Mohammed, son of 'Awad, son of Laden". However, the bin Laden family (or "Binladin," as they prefer to be known) generally use the name as a surname in the Western style. Although Arabic conventions dictate that he be referred to as "Osama" or "Osama bin Laden", using "bin Laden" is in accordance with the family's own usage of the name and is the near-universal convention in Western references to him.

Bin Laden also has several commonly used aliases and nicknames, including the Prince, the Sheikh, Al-Amir, Abu Abdallah, Sheikh Al-Mujahid, the Director, and Samaritan.

1979 was a pivotal year for Islamic fundamentalism, with three huge events in the Muslim world. Osama bin Laden was connected, at least indirectly, to the latter two of them. First, on January 16, 1979 the Iranian Revolution began with the forced exile of the Shah, Mohammed Reza Pahlavi, which then brought about the world's first modern Muslim theocracy under the rule of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini. Second, a half-brother of Osama was implicated in the November 20, 1979 Grand Mosque Seizure at Mecca, in western Saudi Arabia, the holiest site in Islam. The hostage-taking, two week siege, and bloody ending shocked the Muslim world, as hundreds were killed in the ensuing battles and executions. The event was explained as a fundamentalist dissident revolt...
against the Saudi regime. The Iran hostage crisis had begun only weeks earlier, on November 4, 1979 when a mob of students stormed and seized the U.S. embassy. Immediately following the Mecca event, Iran blamed the U.S., and angry Islamic mobs then burned two more U.S. embassies to the ground, in Islamabad, Pakistan, and at Tripoli, Libya. And then in the third major event of the year, on December 25, 1979 the Soviet Union, attempting to suppress an Islamic rebellion, deployed the 40th Army into Afghanistan, in support of advisers it already had in place there.

Bin Laden's wealth and connections assisted his interest in supporting the mujahdeen, Muslim guerrillas fighting the Soviet Union in Afghanistan following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. By 1980, his old teacher from the university in Jeddah, Abdullah Azzam, had relocated to Peshawar, a major border city of a million people in the North-West Frontier Province of Pakistan. From there, Azzam was able to organize resistance directly on the Afghan frontier. Peshawar is only 15 km east of the historic Khyber Pass, through the Safed Koh mountains, connected to the southeastern edge of the Hindu Kush range. This route became the major avenue of inserting foreign fighters and material support into into eastern Afghanistan for the resistance against the Soviets, and also in later years.

After bin Laden graduated from the university in Jeddah in 1981, he also came to live for a time in Peshawar, according to Rahimullah Yusufzai, executive editor of the English-language daily The News International in 2001. "Azam prevailed on him to come and use his money" for training recruits, reported Yusufzai. In the early 1980s, bin Laden lived at several addresses in and around Arbab Road, a narrow street in the University Town neighborhood in western Peshawar, Yusufzai said. Nearby in Gulshan Iqbal Road is the Arab mosque that Abdullah Azzam used as the jihad center, according to a Reuters inquiry in the neighborhood. Years later, in 1989, Azzam was blown up in a massive car bombing outside the mosque. Bin Laden is thought to be a suspect in that assassination, because of a rift in the direction of the jihad at that time.

By 1984, with Azzam, bin Laden had established an organization named Maktab al-Khadamat (MAK, Office of Order in English), which funneled money, arms and Muslim fighters from around the world into the Afghan war. Through al-Khadamat, bin Laden's inherited family fortune paid for air tickets and accommodation, dealt with paperwork with Pakistani authorities and provided other such services for the jihad fighters. In running al-Khadamat bin Laden set up a network of couriers traveling between Afghanistan and Peshawar, which continued to remain active after 2001, according to Yusufzai.

“Bin Laden was, though, a product of a monumental miscalculation by western security agencies. Throughout the 80s he was armed by the CIA and funded by the Saudis to wage jihad against the Russian occupation of Afghanistan. Al-Qaeda, literally "the database", was originally the computer file of the thousands of mujahideen who were recruited and trained with help from the CIA to defeat the Russians”

“The story about bin Laden and the CIA –

that the CIA funded bin Laden or trained bin Laden -- is simply a folk myth. There's no evidence of this. In fact, there are very few things that bin Laden, Ayman al-Zawahiri and the U.S. government agree on. They all agree that they didn't have a relationship in the 1980s. And they wouldn't have needed to. Bin Laden had his own money, he was anti-American and he was operating secretly and independently…”

“...The real story here is the CIA didn't really have a clue about who this guy was until 1996 when they set up a unit to really start tracking him...”

For a while Osama worked at the Services Office working with Abdullah Azzam on Jihad Magazine, a magazine that gave information about the war with the soviets and interviewed mujahideen. As time passed, Aymen Al Zawahiri encouraged Osama to split away from Abdullah Azzam. Osama formed his own army of mujahideen and fought the soviets. One of his most

1 Robin Cook, former leader of the British House of Commons and Foreign Secretary from 1997-2001, The Guardian, July 8, 2005
significant battles was the battle of Jaji, which was not a major fight, but it earned him a reputation as a fighter.

By 1988, bin Laden had split from the MAK based on strategic differences. While Azzam and his MAK organization acted as support for the Afghan fighters and provided relief to refugees and injured, bin Laden wanted a more military role in which the Arab fighters would not only be trained and equipped by the organization but also be commanded on the battlefield by Arabic. One of the main leading points to the split and the creation of al-Qaeda was the insistence of Azzam that Arab fighters be integrated among the Afghan fighting groups instead of forming their separate fighting force.

After Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1990, bin Laden offered to help defend Saudi Arabia (with 12,000 armed men) but was rebuffed by the Saudi government. Bin Laden publicly denounced his government's dependence on the U.S. military and demanded an end to the presence of foreign military bases in the country. According to reports (by the BBC and others), the 1990/91 deployment of U.S. troops in Saudi Arabia in connection with the Gulf War profoundly shocked and revolted bin Laden and other Islamist militants because the Saudi government claims legitimacy based on their role as guardians of the sacred Muslim cities of Mecca and Medina. After the Gulf War cease-fire agreement left Saddam Hussein remaining in power in Iraq, the ongoing presence of long-term bases for non-Muslim U.S. forces in Saudi Arabia continued to undermine the Saudi rulers' perceived legitimacy and inflamed anti-government Islamist militants, including bin Laden. Bin Laden's increasingly strident criticisms of the Saudi monarchy led the government to expel him to Sudan in 1991. Bin Laden was accepted in Sudan by the ruling National Islamic Front (NIF), which may have hoped he could aid them through his wealth and construction company.

Assisted by donations funneled through business and charitable fronts such as Benevolence International, established by his brother-in-law, Mohammed Jamal Khalifa, bin Laden established a new base for mujahideen operations in Khartoum, Sudan to disseminate Islamist philosophy and recruit operatives in Southeast Asia, Africa, Europe, and the United States. Bin Laden also invested in business ventures, such as al-Hajira, a construction company that built roads throughout Sudan, and Wadi al-Aqiq, an agricultural corporation that farmed hundreds of thousands of acres of sorghum, gum Arabic, sesame and sunflowers in Sudan's central Gezira province. Bin Laden's operations in Sudan were protected by the powerful Sudanese NIF government figure Hassan al Turabi. While in Sudan, bin Laden married one of Turabi's nieces.

Sudanese officials, whose government was under international sanctions offered to extradite bin Laden to Saudi Arabia in the mid-1990s. However, Saudi Arabia refused because of the political difficulties of accepting such a controversial figure into their custody. Consequently, in May 1996, under increasing pressure from Saudi Arabia, Egypt and the United States, Sudan expelled bin Laden to Afghanistan. He chartered a plane and flew to Kabul before settling in Jalalabad after being invited by leading Afghan Mujahedin figure, Abdul Rasuul Sayyaf. After spending a few months in the border region hosted by local leaders, bin Laden forged a close relationship with some of the leaders of Afghanistan's new Taliban government, notably Mullah Mohammed Omar. Bin Laden supported the Taliban government with financial and paramilitary assistance and, in 1997, he moved to Kandahar, the Taliban stronghold.

Bin Laden is suspected of funding the November 1997 Luxor massacre, Egypt conducted by Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya, an Egyptian militant Islamist group. The Egyptian government convicted bin Laden's colleague, one of the leaders of Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya, Dr. Ayman al-Zawahiri, and sentenced him to death in absentia for the massacre.

It is believed that Bin Laden's first strike against United States citizens was the December 29, 1992, bombing of the Gold Mihor Hotel in Aden, Yemen, which killed a Yemeni hotel employee and an Austrian national and seriously injured the Austrian's wife. About 100 U.S. soldiers, part of Operation Restore Hope, had been staying at the hotel for two weeks but had left two days earlier for Somalia. U.S. investigations have allegedly established financial and logistical links between bin Laden and Ramzi Yousef, prime suspect of the February 1993 World Trade Center bombing. Bin Laden is also connected to the 1993 Battle of Mogadishu that killed 18 U.S. troops
in Somalia and the 1996 bombing of the Khobar military complex in Saudi Arabia that left 21 U.S. soldiers dead.

It is widely believed that Al-Qaeda was responsible for plots in Asia orchestrated by Ramzi Yousef, who was later arrested in Pakistan, brought to the United States and convicted in November 1997 for masterminding the World Trade Center bombing. The plots in Asia, including those to assassinate the Pope, during his late 1994 visit to the Philippines, and President Clinton, during his visit there in early 1995, all failed; also included among the plots were those to bomb the US and Israeli embassies in Manila in late 1994 and to bomb US flights across the Pacific in 1995. Bin Laden and the Indonesian militant, known as Hambali, allegedly funded, then aborted the Operation Bojinka conspiracy when police discovered the plot in Manila, Philippines, on January 6, 1995.

In 1998, Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri, co-signed a fatwa (binding religious edict) in the name of the World Islamic Front for Jihad Against Jews and Crusaders, declaring:

"The ruling to kill the Americans and their allies civilians and military - is an individual duty for every Muslim who can do it in any country in which it is possible to do it, in order to liberate the al-Aqsa Mosque (in Jerusalem) and the holy mosque (in Makka) from their grip, and in order for their armies to move out of all the lands of Islam, defeated and unable to threaten any Muslim. This is in accordance with the words of Almighty Allah, 'and fight the pagans all together as they fight you all together,' and 'fight them until there is no more tumult or oppression, and there prevail justice and faith in Allah.'"  

In response to the 1998 United States embassy bombings following the fatwa, President Bill Clinton ordered a freeze on assets linked to bin Laden. Clinton also signed an executive order, authorizing bin Laden’s arrest or assassination. In August 1998, the U.S. launched an attack using cruise missiles. The attack failed to harm bin Laden but killed 19 other people.

On November 4, 1998, Osama bin Laden was indicted by a Federal Grand Jury and the U.S. offered a US $25 million reward for information leading to bin Laden's apprehension or conviction.

Immediately after the September 11, 2001 attacks in the United States, most U.S. government officials named bin Laden and the al-Qaeda organization as the prime suspects.

On June 8, 1998 a United States grand jury indicted Osama Bin Laden for the Five Americans and two Indians were killed in the 13 November 1995 truck bombing of a US-operated Saudi National Guard training center in Riyadh. Bin Laden was charged with "conspiracy to attack defense utilities of the United States" and prosecutors further charged that bin Laden is the head of the terrorist organization called al-Qaeda, and that he was a major financial backer of Islamic terrorists worldwide. Bin Laden denied involvement but praised the attack. On November 4, 1998 Osama Bin Laden was indicted by a Federal Grand Jury in the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York, on charges of Murder of U.S. Nationals Outside the United States, Conspiracy to Murder U.S. Nationals Outside the United States, and Attacks on a Federal Facility Resulting in Death for his alleged role in the 1998 United States embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania. The evidence against Bin Laden included courtroom testimony by former AL Qaeda members and satellite phone records. Attempts at assassination and requests for the extradition of Bin Laden from the Taliban of Afghanistan were met with failure. In 1999, U.S. President Bill Clinton convinced the United Nations to impose sanctions against Afghanistan in an attempt to force the Taliban to extradite him. The U.S. Department of State currently offers a $25 million reward for information leading directly to his apprehension or conviction.

Claims of sightings of Osama bin Laden have been made since December 2001, however these sources are typically not verifiable, and have at times placed Osama in different locations during overlapping time periods.

---

3 Text of Fatwa Urging Jihad Against Americans.
Osama Bin Laden is often stated to be residing within fortified caves in the rugged Tora Bora region that straddles the border between Pakistan and Afghanistan. The latest reported claim regarding his location occurred on May 24, 2006, when ABC News reported about rumors that Bin Laden was sighted in the Kumrat Valley in the Kohistan District of Pakistan. The region is 40 miles east of the Afghan–Pakistani border. Claims have been made that Osama Bin Laden may be hiding somewhere in the Chitral area.

On July 3, 2006, it was reported that late 2005 the CIA closed a unit called Alec Station dedicated to the search for and capture of Osama Bin Laden. According to the New York Times, Michael Scheuer, a former senior CIA official who was the first head of the unit, said the move reflected a view within the agency that "Mr. Bin Laden" was no longer the threat he once was.

**NOTES:**

- **1 – Osama bin Laden Chronology:**

  1957  
  Osama bin Muhammad bin Awad bin Laden is born in Riyadh. He is 17th of 52 children sired by Muhammad Bin Laden--Saudi Arabia's wealthiest construction magnate.

  1979  
  Bin Laden graduates from King Abdul Aziz University in Jeddah with a degree in civil engineering.

  12, 1979  
  Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Bin Laden leaves Saudi Arabia to join the Afghan resistance (mujahedeen).

  1980-86  
  From the Pakistani border, bin Laden raises funds and provides the mujahedeen with logistical and humanitarian aid.

  1986-89  
  According to Islamic sources, bin Laden participates in numerous battles during the Afghan war against the Soviets as a guerilla commander, including the fierce battle of Jalalabad which led the Soviets to finally withdraw from Afghanistan.

  1988  
  Bin Laden establishes "al Qaeda," an organization of ex-mujahedeen and other supporters. Its mission is to channel fighters and funds to the Afghan resistance.

  6, 1989  
  The National Islamic Front (NIF) stages a military coup and takes control of the Sudan.

  1989  
  After the Soviets pull out of Afghanistan, bin Laden returns to Saudi Arabia a hero. He becomes involved in opposition movements to the Saudi monarchy while working for his family construction firm, the Bin Laden Group.

  8, 1990  
  Iraq invades Kuwait.

  4, 1991  
  Bin Laden flees Saudi Arabia, after being confined to Jeddah for his opposition to the Saudi alliance with the United States. He moves first to Afghanistan and then to Khartoum, Sudan by 1992 (Source: Newsweek 2/1/99). Sudan had begun to allow any Muslim into the country without a visa, in a display of Islamic solidarity. Allegedly, hundreds of suspected terrorists and ex-mujahedeen come to Sudan as a safe haven (Source: New York Times 9/21/98).

  1991  
  US troops fight Persian Gulf War. After victory, the US establishes a large permanent military presence in the region, including Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia is the land of "the two most holy places" in Islam--Mecca and Medina.

  1992  
  According to the current indictment against bin Laden, from 1992 on, bin Laden and other Al Qaeda members stated privately within the organization that a) Al Qaeda should put aside its differences with Shiite Muslim terrorist organizations, including Iran and its affiliated terrorist group Hezbollah, to cooperate against the perceived common enemy, the United States and its allies; b) the US forces stationed on the Saudi peninsula, including both Saudi Arabia and Yemen, should be attacked; and c) the US forces stationed in the Horn of Africa, including Somalia, should be attacked.
Bin Laden begins to set up legitimate businesses in the Sudan, including a tannery, two large farms, and a major road construction company. When Saudi Arabia began pressuring Pakistan to get rid of the mujahedeen near the border with Afghanistan, bin Laden reportedly paid for 480 Afghan vets to come work with him. The Sudanese leaders liked this wealthy Saudi who was enthusiastic about investing in their fledgling Islamic state.

12, 1992 A bomb explodes in a hotel in Aden, Yemen, where US troops had been staying while en route to a humanitarian mission in Somalia. The bomb killed two Austrian tourists; the U.S. soldiers had already left. Two Yemeni Muslim militants, trained in Afghanistan and injured in the blast, are later arrested. US intelligence agencies allege that this was the first terrorist attack involving bin Laden and his associates (Source: New York Times 8/21/98).

1993 Sudan is placed on State Department’s list of countries that sponsor terrorist activities (Source: Washington Post 8/23/98).

According to US government charges, bin Laden's followers try to obtain components of nuclear weapons and begin to work with Sudan's NIF to develop chemical arms (Source: US News and World Report 10/5/98).

2, 1993 World Trade Center bombing.

10, 1993 Eighteen US troops are killed in an urban attack in Mogadishu, Somalia. American law enforcement, intelligence and national security officials are divided as to whether, as a federal indictment charges, bin Laden and his adherents helped train and arm the men who killed the US troops (Source: New York Times 2/8/99).

1, 1994 According to US intelligence analysts, by January 1994, bin Laden was financing at least three terrorist training camps in North Sudan, where rebels from a half-dozen nations received training. (Source: New York Times 8/14/96)

4, 1994 The Saudi government revokes bin Laden's citizenship and moves to freeze his assets in Saudi Arabia because of his support for Muslim fundamentalist movements. (Source: New York Times 4/10/94)


2,3 1995 Ramzi Yousef, mastermind of the World Trade Center bombing, is captured in Pakistan and extradited to the United States. A search of his former residences leads investigators to believe he is financially linked to bin Laden. Also, he had stayed at a bin Laden financed guest house while in Pakistan.

6, 1995 Unsuccessful assassination attempt on the life of the President of Egypt, Hosni Mubarak, in Addis Ababa. U.S. intelligence sources believe bin Laden was somehow linked.

8, 1995 Bin Laden wrote an open letter to King Fahd of Saudi Arabia calling for a campaign of guerrilla attacks in order to drive U.S forces out of the kingdom.


5, 1996 The Sudan expels bin Laden because of international pressure by the United States and Saudi Arabia. Bin Laden then moves back to Afghanistan. (Source: Jane's Intelligence Review 10/1/98)

5, 1996 The four Saudi men accused of bombing the Saudi National Guard training center in Riyadh are beheaded in Riyadh’s main square. Before their execution, they are coerced by the Saudi’s into a public confession. In the confession, they claim to have read bin Laden communiqués.

Spring 1996 President Clinton signed a top secret order that authorized the CIA to use any and all means to destroy bin Laden's network.
6, 1996 A large truck bomb devastates the US military residence in Dhahran called Khobar Towers, killing 19 servicemen. The US military initially linked bin Laden to the attack but now believe a Saudi Shiite group was responsible (Source: Washington Post 8/23/98). U.S. investigators still believe bin Laden was somehow involved.

8, 1996 A secret grand jury investigation begins against Osama bin Laden in New York.

8, 1996 Bin Laden signed and issued a Declaration of Jihad outlining his organization's goals: drive US forces from the Arabian Peninsula, overthrow the Government of Saudi Arabia, liberate Muslim holy sites, and support Islamic revolutionary groups around the world. He declares that Saudis have the right to strike at US troops in the Persian Gulf.

11, 1996 Gwynne Roberts conducts interview of bin Laden for the British documentary program Dispatches. Bin Laden threatens to wage an Islamic holy war against the United States and its allies if Washington does not remove its troops from the Gulf region (Source: Reuters 2/20/97).

5, 1997 CNN airs an interview with bin Laden in which he criticizes US "occupation of the land of the holy places."

7, 1997 According to Islamic sources, a US-backed multinational mercenary force is formed with the aim of abducting or killing bin Laden. Witnesses claim to see 11 black Land Cruisers crossing into the Afghan city of Khost along with 2 helicopters. A source said force was composed of 1000 non-US mercenaries. (Source: Mideast Mirror 7/14/97--al-Hayat & al-Arab)

2, 1998 Bin Laden issues joint declaration with the Islamic Group, Al Jihad, the Jihad Movement in Bangladesh and the "Jamaat ul Ulema e Pakistan" under the banner of the "World Islamic Front," which stated that Muslims should kill Americans including civilians--anywhere in the world.

5, 1998 ABC's John Miller interviews bin Laden in Afghanistan.

6, 1998 A raid is conducted in Albania against a cell of an Islamic terrorist movement by security personnel from the U.S. and Albania. Two suspected employees of bin Laden are arrested. The CIA takes custody of a van-load of documents and computer gear. Two weeks later, another raid was conducted and two more suspected bin Laden associates arrested. They were Egyptian nationals and were turned over to anti-terrorist officials in Egypt. All were associated with the Islamic Revival Foundation. (Source: Washington Post 8/12/98)

6, 1998 The grand jury investigation of bin Laden, initiated in 1996, issues a sealed indictment, charging Bin Laden with "conspiracy to attack defense utilities of the United States." Prosecutors charge that bin Laden heads a terrorist organization called al Qaeda, the base, and was a major financier of Islamic terrorists around the world.

6, 1998 ABC Nightline John Miller interview with bin Laden broadcast.

8, 1998 The Egyptian Jihad group sent the United States a warning: they would soon deliver a message to Americans "which we hope they read with care, because we will write it, with God's help, in a language they will understand." (Source: New York Times 8/21/98)

8, 1998 This is the eighth year anniversary of United Nations sanctions against Iraq and the ordering of U.S. troops into the Gulf region. Iraq informed the US Security Council that it was not going to tolerate the continuation of the sanctions beyond the eighth year anniversary. (Source: Daily Telegraph 8/12/98)

Two simultaneous explosions at US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. The bomb in Nairobi, Kenya kills 213 people, including 12 US nationals, and injure more than 4,500. The bomb in Dar es Salaam kills 11 and injures 85. No Americans died in the Tanzania bombing.

The Small Group of presidential advisors meet with Clinton, reportedly with evidence that bin Laden is looking to obtain weapons of mass destruction and chemical weapons to use against US installations (Source: New York Times 9/23/98). US intelligence also reportedly intercepted a mobile phone conversation between two of bin Laden's lieutenants that implicated them in the embassy bombings. (Source: Newsweek 8/31/98)
8, 1998 US retaliation against bin Laden--cruise missiles attack a suspected terrorist training camps in Afghanistan and Al Shifa, a pharmaceutical plant in Khartoum. US intelligence claims that Al Shifa is tied to the production of chemical weapons for bin Laden. The Sudanese government vehemently denied these claims.

US adds bin Laden's name to list of terrorists whose funds are targeted for seizure by US Treasury in order to shut down the financial pipelines that allegedly subsidize bin Laden's terrorist activities. (Source: Washington Post 8/28/98)

9, 1998 US senior administrative officials admit that they had no evidence that directly linked bin Laden to the Al Shifa factory at the time of retaliatory strikes on Aug 20. Intelligence officials found financial transactions between bin Laden and the Military Industrial Corporation--a company run by the Sudan's government. (Source: New York Times 9/23/98)

10, 1998 The Sunday Times of London reports that bin Laden is sending Islamic mercenaries to Kashmir to support an Islamic secession campaign.

10, 1998 Arabic newspaper al-Hayat claims bin Laden has acquired nuclear weapons from Soviet Central Asian countries using a network of "influential friends". Others are skeptical. (Source: UPI 10/7/98)

11, 1998 A new superseding indictment is issued against bin Laden, Muhammad Atef and a host of other suspects. They are charged with bombing of two US embassies and conspiring to commit other acts of terrorism against Americans abroad. Two rewards of $5 million each are offered for Atef and bin Laden. Atef is described as bin Laden's chief military commander.


12, 1998 TIME correspondent conducts interview with Osama bin Laden.

12, 1998 ABC's second interview with Osama bin Laden is broadcast on ABC News.

1, 1999 TIME and Newsweek publish interviews with Osama bin Laden that were conducted in late December.

1, 1999 The US Attorney's office files its most complete indictment to date of Osama bin Laden and 11 other suspected members of his terrorist organization. The grand jury charges the men for conspiring to kill American nationals. The first count of the indictment charges that several of the co-defendants, acted with other members of "al Qaeda," a worldwide terrorist organization led by bin Laden, in a conspiracy to murder American citizens. The objectives of the terrorist group allegedly include: killing members of the American military stationed in Saudi Arabia and Somalia; killing United States embassy employees in Nairobi, Kenya, and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania; and concealing the activities of the co-conspirators by, among other things, establishing front companies, providing false identity and travel documents, engaging in coded correspondence, and providing false information to the authorities in various countries.

5, 2001 Four followers of Osama bin Laden are found guilty of charges stemming from the 1998 US embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania. Mohamed Rashed Daoud Al-Owhali, Khalfan Khamis Mohamed, Mohammed Saddiq Odeh, and Wadih El Hage are convicted of charges including murder, conspiracy and perjury after a nine-week federal trial during which prosecutors called over 90 witnesses, including al Qaeda informants and survivors of the bombings. Owhali and Mohamed face the death penalty at their sentencing, while Odeh and El Hage face life in prison.

9-11, 2001 Following the terrorist attack on World Trade Center and the military headquarter, Pentagon in Washington DC, USA, Osama sends a messenger to his biographer in Pakistan, Hamid Mir, telling that he claims not to have been involved.

9-12, 01 Osama is accused by US authorities of being the main suspect of the terrorist attacks the day before.
According to Arab newspapers, Osama takes refuge in the Afghani mountains together with his closest comrades, in order to escape US special units soldiers.

From 2002 Evidence of any movements of Osama is no longer available, but there are 3 theories: he has been killed during US/Afghan actions against his hideouts in Afghanistan, he is still hiding in the Afghan mountains, he is hiding in the Pakistani mountains.

2 – US government denial of CIA connection:

Did the U.S. "Create" Osama bin Laden?

Allegations that the U.S. provided funding for bin Laden proved inaccurate.

The United States did not "create" Osama bin Laden or al Qaeda. The United States supported the Afghans fighting for their country’s freedom -- as did other countries, including Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, China, Egypt, and the UK -- but the United States did not support the "Afghan Arabs," the Arabs and other Muslims who came to fight in Afghanistan for broader goals. CNN terrorism analyst Peter Bergen notes that the "Afghan Arabs functioned independently and had their own sources of funding." He notes:

"While the charges that the CIA was responsible for the rise of the Afghan Arabs might make good copy, they don’t make good history. The truth is more complicated, tinged with varying shades of gray. The United States wanted to be able to deny that the CIA was funding the Afghan war, so its support was funneled through Pakistan’s Inter Services Intelligence agency (ISI). ISI in turn made the decisions about which Afghan factions to arm and train, tending to favor the most Islamist and pro-Pakistan. The Afghan Arabs generally fought alongside those factions, which is how the charge arose that they were creatures of the CIA.

Former CIA official Milt Bearden, who ran the Agency’s Afghan operation in the late 1980s, says, "The CIA did not recruit Arabs," as there was no need to do so. There were hundreds of thousands of Afghans all too willing to fight, and the Arabs who did come for jihad were "very disruptive . . . the Afghans thought they were a pain in the ass." Similar sentiments from Afghans who appreciated the money that flowed from the Gulf but did not appreciate the Arabs’ holier-than-thou attempts to convert them to their ultra-purist version of Islam.

Freelance cameraman Peter Jouvenal recalls: "There was no love lost between the Afghans and the Arabs. One Afghan told me, 'Whenever we had a problem with one of them we just shot them. They thought they were kings.'"

... There was simply no point in the CIA and the Afghan Arabs being in contact with each other. ... the Afghan Arabs functioned independently and had their own sources of funding. The CIA did not need the Afghan Arabs, and the Afghan Arabs did not need the CIA. So the notion that the Agency funded and trained the Afghan Arabs is, at best, misleading. The ‘let’s blame everything bad that happens on the CIA’ school of thought vastly overestimates the Agency’s powers, both for good and ill." [Holy War, Inc.: Inside the Secret World of Osama bin Laden (New York: The Free Press, 2001), pp. 64-66.]

Al Qaeda’s number two leader, Ayman al-Zawahiri, confirmed that the "Afghan Arabs" did not receive any U.S. funding during the war in Afghanistan. In the book that was described as his last will, Knights Under the Prophet’s Banner, which was serialized in December 2001 in Al-Sharq al-Awsat, al-Zawahiri says the Afghan Arabs were funded with money from Arab sources, which amounted to hundreds of millions of dollars:

"While the United States backed Pakistan and the mujahidin factions with money and equipment, the young Arab mujahidin's relationship with the United States was totally different."

"... The financing of the activities of the Arab mujahidin in Afghanistan came from aid sent to Afghanistan by popular organizations. It was substantial aid."

"The Arab mujahidin did not confine themselves to financing their own jihad but also carried Muslim donations to the Afghan mujahidin themselves. Usama Bin Ladin has apprised me of the size of the popular Arab support for the Afghan mujahidin that amounted, according to his

4 Source: US Government Information Web (USINFO.STATE.GOV)
sources, to $200 million in the form of military aid alone in 10 years. Imagine how much aid was sent by popular Arab organizations in the non-military fields such as medicine and health, education and vocational training, food, and social assistance ...."

"Through the unofficial popular support, the Arab mujahidin established training centers and centers for the call to the faith. They formed fronts that trained and equipped thousands of Arab mujahidin and provided them with living expenses, housing, travel and organization." (Al-Sharq al-Awsat, December 3, 2001, Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS), GMP20011202000401)

Abdullah Anas, an Algerian who was one of the foremost Afghan Arab organizers and the son-in-law of Abdullah Azzam, has also confirmed that the CIA had no relationship with the Afghan Arabs. Speaking on the French television program Zone Interdit on September 12, 2004, Anas stated:

"If you say there was a relationship in the sense that the CIA used to meet with Arabs, discuss with them, prepare plans with them, and to fight with them -- it never happened."

Milt Bearden served as the CIA station chief in Pakistan from 1986 to 1989, where he was in charge of running the covert action program for Afghanistan. In his memoirs titled "The Main Enemy: The Inside Story of the CIA's Final Showdown with the KGB," Bearden says the United States, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, China, Egypt, and the UK were "major players" in the effort to aid the Afghans. Bearden writes:

"[President Jimmy] Carter's national security adviser, Zbigniew Brzezinski, had in 1980 secured an agreement from the Saudi king to match American contributions to the Afghan effort dollar for dollar, and [Reagan administration CIA director] Bill Casey kept that agreement going over the years." (The Main Enemy, p. 219)

From 1983 to 1987, Brigadier Mohammad Yousaf was in charge of the Afghan Bureau of Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), which ran Pakistan's covert program to aid the Afghan mujahidin. In his book The Bear Trap: Afghanistan's Untold Story, Brigadier Yousaf confirms the matching U.S.-Saudi arrangement, stating:

"For every dollar supplied by the US, another was added by the Saudi Arabian government. The combined funds, running into several hundred million dollars a year, were transferred by the CIA to special accounts in Pakistan under the control of the ISI." (The Bear Trap, p. 81)

Bearden makes it clear that the CIA covert action program did not fund any Arabs or other Muslims to come to the jihad:

"Contrary to what people have come to imagine, the CIA never recruited, trained, or otherwise used Arab volunteers. The Afghans were more than happy to do their own fighting -- we saw no reason not to satisfy them on this point." (The Main Enemy, p. 243)

Marc Sageman worked closely with the Afghan mujahideen as one of Milt Bearden's case officers, from 1987 to 1989. In his book, Understanding Terror Networks, he writes:

"No U.S. official ever came in contact with the foreign volunteers. They simply traveled in different circles and never crossed U.S. radar screens. They had their own sources of money and their own contacts with the Pakistanis, official Saudis, and other Muslim supporters, and they made their own deals with the various Afghan resistance leaders. Their presence in Afghanistan was very small and they did not participate in any significant fighting." (Understanding Terror Networks, pp. 57-58.)

The Central Intelligence Agency has issued a statement categorically denying that it ever had any relationship with Osama bin Laden. It stated, in response to the hypothetical question "Has the CIA ever provided funding, training, or other support to Usama Bin Laden?":

"No. Numerous comments in the media recently have reiterated a widely circulated but incorrect notion that the CIA once had a relationship with Usama Bin Laden. For the record, you should know that the CIA never employed, paid, or maintained any relationship whatsoever with Bin Laden (emphasis in original)."

In summary:
- U.S. covert aid went to the Afghans, not to the "Afghan Arabs."
- The "Afghan Arabs" were funded by Arab sources, not by the United States.
- United States never had "any relationship whatsoever" with Osama bin Laden.
- The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Arab backing for the "Afghan Arabs," and bin Laden's own decisions "created" Osama bin Laden and al Qaeda, not the United States.

3 – The "Other" point of view - Centre for Research on Globalisation (CRG), Montréal, Prof. Michel Chossudovsky 5:-

Few hours after the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon, the Bush administration concluded without supporting evidence, that "Osama bin Laden and his al-Qaeda organization were prime suspects". CIA Director George Tenet stated that bin Laden has the capacity to plan "multiple attacks with little or no warning." Secretary of State Colin Powell called the attacks "an act of war" and President Bush confirmed in an evening televised address to the Nation that he would "make no distinction between the terrorists who committed these acts and those who harbor them". Former CIA Director James Woolsey pointed his finger at "state sponsorship," implying the complicity of one or more foreign governments. In the words of former National Security Adviser, Lawrence Eagleburger, "I think we will show when we get attacked like this, we are terrible in our strength and in our retribution."

Meanwhile, parroting official statements, the Western media mantra has approved the launching of "punitive actions" directed against civilian targets in the Middle East. In the words of William Saffire writing in the New York Times: "When we reasonably determine our attackers' bases and camps, we must pulverize them -- minimizing but accepting the risk of collateral damage" -- and act overtly or covertly to destabilize terror's national hosts".

The following text outlines the history of Osama Bin Laden and the links of the Islamic "Jihad" to the formulation of US foreign policy during the Cold War and its aftermath.

Prime suspect in the New York and Washington terrorists attacks, branded by the FBI as an "international terrorist" for his role in the African US embassy bombings, Saudi born Osama bin Laden was recruited during the Soviet-Afghan war "ironically under the auspices of the CIA, to fight Soviet invaders". In 1979 "the largest covert operation in the history of the CIA" was launched in response to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in support of the pro-Communist government of Babrak Kamal6:

With the active encouragement of the CIA and Pakistan’s ISI [Inter Services Intelligence], who wanted to turn the Afghan jihad into a global war waged by all Muslim states against the Soviet Union, some 35,000 Muslim radicals from 40 Islamic countries joined Afghanistan's fight between 1982 and 1992. Tens of thousands more came to study in Pakistani madrasahs. Eventually more than 100,000 foreign Muslim radicals were directly influenced by the Afghan jihad. 7

The Islamic "jihad" was supported by the United States and Saudi Arabia with a significant part of the funding generated from the Golden Crescent drug trade:

In March 1985, President Reagan signed National Security Decision Directive 166,...[which] authorize[d] stepped-up covert military aid to the mujahideen, and it made clear that the secret Afghan war had a new goal: to defeat Soviet troops in Afghanistan through covert action and encourage a Soviet withdrawal. The new covert U.S. assistance began with a dramatic increase in arms supplies -- a steady rise to 65,000 tons annually by 1987, ... as well as a "ceaseless stream" of CIA and Pentagon specialists who traveled to the secret headquarters of Pakistan's ISI on the main road near Rawalpindi, Pakistan. There the CIA

---

5 Michel Chossudovsky, War and Globalisation - The Truth behind 9-11
6 Fred Halliday, "The Un-great game: the Country that lost the Cold War, Afghanistan, New Republic, 25 March 1996
specialists met with Pakistani intelligence officers to help plan operations for the Afghan rebels.\(^8\)

The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) using Pakistan's military Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) played a key role in training the Mujahideen. In turn, the CIA sponsored guerrilla training was integrated with the teachings of Islam:

*Predominant themes were that Islam was a complete socio-political ideology, that holy Islam was being violated by the atheistic Soviet troops, and that the Islamic people of Afghanistan should reassert their independence by overthrowing the leftist Afghan regime propped up by Moscow.*\(^9\)

**Pakistan’s Intelligence Apparatus** - Pakistan's ISI was used as a "go-between". The CIA covert support to the "jihad" operated indirectly through the Pakistani ISI, -i.e. the CIA did not channel its support directly to the Mujahideen. In other words, for these covert operations to be "successful", Washington was careful not to reveal the ultimate objective of the "jihad", which consisted in destroying the Soviet Union.

In the words of CIA's Milton Beardman "We didn't train Arabs". Yet according to Abdel Monam Saidali, of the Al-aram Center for Strategic Studies in Cairo, bin Laden and the "Afghan Arabs" had been imparted "with very sophisticated types of training that was allowed to them by the CIA"

CIA's Beardman confirmed, in this regard, that Osama bin Laden was not aware of the role he was playing on behalf of Washington. In the words of bin Laden (quoted by Beardman): "neither I, nor my brothers saw evidence of American help". Motivated by nationalism and religious fervor, the Islamic warriors were unaware that they were fighting the Soviet Army on behalf of Uncle Sam. While there were contacts at the upper levels of the intelligence hierarchy, Islamic rebel leaders in theatre had no contacts with Washington or the CIA. With CIA backing and the funneling of massive amounts of US military aid, the Pakistani ISI had developed into a "parallel structure wielding enormous power over all aspects of government". The ISI had a staff composed of military and intelligence officers, bureaucrats, undercover agents and informers, estimated at 150,000. Meanwhile, CIA operations had also reinforced the Pakistani military regime led by General Zia Ul Haq:

'Relations between the CIA and the ISI [Pakistan's military intelligence] had grown increasingly warm following [General] Zia's ouster of Bhutto and the advent of the military regime,'... During most of the Afghan war, Pakistan was more aggressively anti-Soviet than even the United States. Soon after the Soviet military invaded Afghanistan in 1980, Zia [ul Haq] sent his ISI chief to destabilize the Soviet Central Asian states. The CIA only agreed to this plan in October 1984..., 'the CIA was more cautious than the Pakistanis.' Both Pakistan and the United States took the line of deception on Afghanistan with a public posture of negotiating a settlement while privately agreeing that military escalation was the best course.\(^10\)

**The Golden Crescent Drug Triangle** - The history of the drug trade in Central Asia is intimately related to the CIA's covert operations. Prior to the Soviet-Afghan war, opium production in Afghanistan and Pakistan was directed to small regional markets. There was no local production of heroin. In this regard, Alfred McCoy's study confirms that within two years of the onslaught of the CIA operation in Afghanistan, "the Pakistan-Afghanistan borderlands became the world's top heroin producer, supplying 60 percent of U.S. demand. In Pakistan, the heroin-addict population went from near zero in 1979... to 1.2 million by 1985 -- a much steeper rise than in any other nation":

CIA assets again controlled this heroin trade. As the Mujahideen guerrillas seized territory inside Afghanistan, they ordered peasants to plant opium as a revolutionary tax. Across the border in Pakistan, Afghan leaders and local syndicates under the protection of Pakistan Intelligence operated hundreds of heroin laboratories. During this decade of wide-open drug-

---

\(^8\) Steve Coll, Washington Post, July 19, 1992  
\(^9\) Dilip Hiro, Fallout from the Afghan Jihad, Inter Press Services, 21 November 1995  
dealing, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency in Islamabad failed to instigate major seizures or arrests ... U.S. officials had refused to investigate charges of heroin dealing by its Afghan allies 'because U.S. narcotics policy in Afghanistan has been subordinated to the war against Soviet influence there.' In 1995, the former CIA director of the Afghan operation, Charles Cogan, admitted the CIA had indeed sacrificed the drug war to fight the Cold War. 'Our main mission was to do as much damage as possible to the Soviets. We didn't really have the resources or the time to devote to an investigation of the drug trade,'... 'I don't think that we need to apologize for this. Every situation has its fallout.... There was fallout in terms of drugs, yes. But the main objective was accomplished. The Soviets left Afghanistan.'

In the Wake of the Cold War - In the wake of the Cold War, the Central Asian region is not only strategic for its extensive oil reserves, it also produces three quarters of the World's opium representing multibillion dollar revenues to business syndicates, financial institutions, intelligence agencies and organized crime. The annual proceeds of the Golden Crescent drug trade (between 100 and 200 billion dollars) represents approximately one third of the Worldwide annual turnover of narcotics, estimated by the United Nations to be of the order of $500 billion.

With the disintegration of the Soviet Union, a new surge in opium production has unfolded. (According to UN estimates, the production of opium in Afghanistan in 1998-99 -- coinciding with the build up of armed insurgencies in the former Soviet republics-- reached a record high of 4600 metric tons. Powerful business syndicates in the former Soviet Union allied with organized crime are competing for the strategic control over the heroin routes.

The ISI's extensive intelligence military-network was not dismantled in the wake of the Cold War. The CIA continued to support the Islamic "jihad" out of Pakistan. New undercover initiatives were set in motion in Central Asia, the Caucasus and the Balkans. Pakistan's military and intelligence apparatus essentially "served as a catalyst for the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the emergence of six new Muslim republics in Central Asia." 16.

Meanwhile, Islamic missionaries of the Wahhabi sect from Saudi Arabia had established themselves in the Muslim republics as well as within the Russian federation encroaching upon the institutions of the secular State. Despite its anti-American ideology, Islamic fundamentalism was largely serving Washington's strategic interests in the former Soviet Union.

Following the withdrawal of Soviet troops in 1989, the civil war in Afghanistan continued unabated. The Taliban were being supported by the Pakistani Deobandis and their political party the Jamiat-ul-Ulema-e-Islam (JUI). In 1993, JUI entered the government coalition of Prime Minister Benazzir Bhutto. Ties between JUI, the Army and ISI were established. In 1995, with the downfall of the Hezb-I-Islami Hektmatyar government in Kabul, the Taliban not only instated a hardline Islamic government, they also "handed control of training camps in Afghanistan over to JUI factions..."

And the JUI with the support of the Saudi Wahhabi movements played a key role in recruiting volunteers to fight in the Balkans and the former Soviet Union.

Jane Defense Weekly confirms in this regard that "half of Taliban manpower and equipment originate[d] in Pakistan under the ISI"

In fact, it would appear that following the Soviet withdrawal both sides in the Afghan civil war continued to receive covert support through Pakistan's ISI.

In other words, backed by Pakistan's military intelligence (ISI) which in turn was controlled by the CIA, the Taliban Islamic State was largely serving American geopolitical interests. The Golden Crescent drug trade was also being used to finance and equip the Bosnian Muslim Army (starting in the early 1990s) and the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA). In last few months there is evidence that Mujahideen mercenaries are fighting in the ranks of KLA-NLA terrorists in their assaults into Macedonia.

11 Alfred McCoy, Drug fallout: the CIA's Forty Year Complicity in the Narcotics Trade. The Progressive; 1 August 1997
No doubt, this explains why Washington has closed its eyes on the reign of terror imposed by the Taliban including the blatant derogation of women's rights, the closing down of schools for girls, the dismissal of women employees from government offices and the enforcement of "the Sharia laws of punishment".

The War in Chechnya - With regard to Chechnya, the main rebel leaders Shamil Basayev and Al Khattab were trained and indoctrinated in CIA sponsored camps in Afghanistan and Pakistan. According to Yossef Bodansky, director of the U.S. Congress's Task Force on Terrorism and Unconventional Warfare, the war in Chechnya had been planned during a secret summit of HizbAllah International held in 1996 in Mogadishu, Somalia. The summit, was attended by Osama bin Laden and high-ranking Iranian and Pakistani intelligence officers. In this regard, the involvement of Pakistan's ISI in Chechnya "goes far beyond supplying the Chechens with weapons and expertise: the ISI and its radical Islamic proxies are actually calling the shots in this war".

Russia's main pipeline route transits through Chechnya and Dagestan. Despite Washington's perfunctory condemnation of Islamic terrorism, the indirect beneficiaries of the Chechen war are the Anglo-American oil conglomerates which are vying for control over oil resources and pipeline corridors out of the Caspian Sea basin.

The two main Chechen rebel armies (respectively led by Commander Shamil Basayev and Emir Khattab) estimated at 35,000 strong were supported by Pakistan's ISI, which also played a key role in organizing and training the Chechen rebel army:

[In 1994] the Pakistani Inter Services Intelligence arranged for Basayev and his trusted lieutenants to undergo intensive Islamic indoctrination and training in guerrilla warfare in the Khost province of Afghanistan at Amir Muawia camp, set up in the early 1980s by the CIA and ISI and run by famous Afghani warlord Gulbuddin Hekmatyar. In July 1994, upon graduating from Amir Muawia, Basayev was transferred to Markaz-i-Dawar camp in Pakistan to undergo training in advanced guerrilla tactics. In Pakistan, Basayev met the highest ranking Pakistani military and intelligence officers: Minister of Defense General Aftab Shahban Mirani, Minister of Interior General Naserullah Babar, and the head of the ISI branch in charge of supporting Islamic causes, General Javed Ashraf, (all now retired). High-level connections soon proved very useful to Basayev.12

Following his training and indoctrination stint, Basayev was assigned to lead the assault against Russian federal troops in the first Chechen war in 1995. His organization had also developed extensive links to criminal syndicates in Moscow as well as ties to Albanian organized crime and the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA). In 1997-98, according to Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB) "Chechen warlords started buying up real estate in Kosovo... through several real estate firms registered as a cover in Yugoslavia"

Basayev's organisation has also been involved in a number of rackets including narcotics, illegal tapping and sabotage of Russia's oil pipelines, kidnapping, prostitution, trade in counterfeit dollars and the smuggling of nuclear materials (See Mafia linked to Albania's collapsed pyramids), alongside the extensive laundering of drug money, the proceeds of various illicit activities have been funneled towards the recruitment of mercenaries and the purchase of weapons.

During his training in Afghanistan, Shamil Basayev linked up with Saudi born veteran Mujahideen Commander "Al Khattab" who had fought as a volunteer in Afghanistan. Barely a few months after Basayev's return to Grozny, Khattab was invited (early 1995) to set up an army base in Chechnya for the training of Mujahideen fighters. According to the BBC, Khattab's posting to Chechnya had been "arranged through the Saudi-Arabian based [International] Islamic Relief Organization, a militant religious organization, funded by mosques and rich individuals which channeled funds into Chechnya".

Concluding Remarks - Since the Cold War era, Washington has consciously supported Osama bin Laden, while at same time placing him on the FBI's "most wanted list" as the

12 Levon Sevunts, Who's calling the shots?: Chechen conflict finds Islamic roots in Afghanistan and Pakistan, 23 The Gazette, Montreal, 26 October 1999..
World's foremost terrorist. While the Mujahideen are busy fighting America's war in the Balkans and the former Soviet Union, the FBI --operating as a US based Police Force-- is waging a domestic war against terrorism, operating in some respects independently of the CIA which has --since the Soviet-Afghan war-- supported international terrorism through its covert operations. In a cruel irony, while the Islamic jihad --feated by the Bush Adminstration as "a threat to America"-- is blamed for the terrorist assaults on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, these same Islamic organizations constitute a key instrument of US military-intelligence operations in the Balkans and the former Soviet Union. In the wake of the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington, the truth must prevail to prevent the Bush Administration together with its NATO partners from embarking upon a military adventure which threatens the future of humanity.