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### The Full Version of Osama bin Laden's Speech

The following is the full version of Osama bin Laden's speech released on October 29, 2004, as broadcast by Al-Sahab Institute for Media Production, which is known to produce Al-Qa'ida's video messages. A link to the video was posted on the Islamist Al-Islah message forum, frequented by Al-Qa'ida supporters. [1]

"O American people, I address these words to you regarding the best way of avoiding another Manhattan, and regarding the war, its causes and its consequences. But before this, I say to you: Security is one of the important pillars of human life, and free men do not take their security lightly, contrary to Bush's claim that we hate freedom. Let him explain why we did not attack Sweden, for example. Clearly, those who hate freedom – unlike the 19, may Allah have mercy on them – have no self-esteem. We have been fighting you because we are free men who do not remain silent in the face of injustice. We want to restore our [Islamic] nation's freedom. Just as you violate our security, we violate yours. Whoever toys with the security of others, deluding himself that he will remain secure, is nothing but a foolish thief. One of the most important things rational people do when calamities occur is to look for their causes so as to avoid them.

"But I am amazed at you. Although we have entered the fourth year after the events of 9/11, Bush is still practicing distortion and deception against you and he is still concealing the true cause from you. Consequentially, the motives for its reoccurrence still exist. I will tell you about the causes underlying these events and I will tell you the truth about the moments this decision was taken, to allow you to reflect.

"I say to you, as Allah is my witness: We had not considered attacking the towers, but things reached the breaking point when we witnessed the iniquity and tyranny of the American-Israeli coalition against our people in Palestine and Lebanon – then I got this idea.

"The events that had a direct influence on me occurred in 1982, and the subsequent events, when the U.S. permitted the Israelis to invade Lebanon with the aid of the American sixth fleet. They started shelling, and many were killed and wounded, while others were terrorized into fleeing. I still remember those moving scenes – blood, torn limbs, and dead women and children; ruined homes everywhere, and high-rises being demolished on top of their residents; bombs raining down mercilessly on our homes. It was as though a crocodile swallowed a child, and he could do nothing but cry. But does a crocodile understand any language other than arms? The entire world saw and heard, but did not respond.

"In those critical moments, I was overwhelmed by ideas that are hard to describe, but they awakened a powerful impulse to reject

injustice and gave birth to a firm resolve to punish the oppressors. As I was looking at those destroyed towers in Lebanon, I was struck by the idea of punishing the oppressor in the same manner and destroying towers in the U.S., to give it a taste of what we have tasted and to deter it from killing our children and women. That day I became convinced that iniquity and the premeditated murder of innocent children and women is an established American principle, and that terror is [the real meaning of] 'freedom' and 'democracy,' while they call the resistance 'terrorism' and 'reaction.' America stands for iniquity and for imposing sanctions on millions of people, resulting in the death of many, as Bush Sr. did, causing the mass slaughter of children in Iraq, [the worst] that humanity has ever known. It stands for dropping millions of pounds of bombs and explosives on millions of children in Iraq again, as Bush Jr. did, in order to depose an old agent and to appoint a new agent to help him steal Iraq's oil, and other sorts of horrible things.

"It was against the backdrop of these and similar images that 9/11 came in response to these terrible iniquities. Should a man be blamed for protecting his own? And is defending oneself and punishing the wicked an eye for an eye – is that reprehensible terrorism? Even if it is reprehensible terrorism, we have no other choice. This is the message that we have tried to convey to you, in words and in deeds, more than once in the years preceding 9/11. Observe it, if you will, in the interview with Scott in Time Magazine in 1996, [2] and with Peter Arnett on CNN in 1997, then John Wiener [?] in 1998; observe it, if you will, in the deeds of Nairobi and Tanzania and Aden, and observe it in my interview with 'Abd Al-Bari 'Atwan and in interviews with Robert Fisk. The latter is of your own and of your religious affiliation, and I consider him to be unbiased.

"Would those who claim to stand for freedom in the White House and in the TV stations that answer to them, would they conduct an interview with him [Fisk] so that he might convey to the American people what he has understood from us concerning the causes of our fight against you? For if you were to avoid these causes, you would take America in the right path to the security it knew before 9/11. So much for the war and its causes.

"As for its results, they are very positive, with Allah's grace. They surpassed all expectations by all criteria for many reasons, one of the most important of which is that we had no difficulty dealing with Bush and his administration, because it resembles

the regimes in our [Arab] countries, half of which are ruled by the military, and the other half are ruled by the sons of kings and presidents with whom we have had a lot of experience. Among both types, there are many who are known for their conceit,  
95 arrogance, greed, and for taking money unrightfully.

"This resemblance began with the visit of Bush Sr. to the region. While some of our people were dazzled by the U.S. and hoped that these visits would influence our countries, it was he who was  
100 influenced by these monarchic and military regimes. He envied them for remaining in their positions for decades, while embezzling the nation's public funds with no supervision whatsoever. He bequeathed tyranny and the suppression of liberties to his son and they called it the Patriot Act, under the  
105 pretext of war on terrorism.

"Bush Sr. liked the idea of appointing his sons as state [wilaya] governors. Similarly, he did not neglect to import to Florida the expertise in falsifying [elections] from the leaders of this region  
110 in order to benefit from it in difficult moments.

"As previously mentioned, it was easy for us to provoke this administration and to drag it [after us]. It was enough for us to send two Jihad fighters to the farthest east to hoist a rag on  
115 which 'Al-Qa'ida' was written - that was enough to cause generals to rush off to this place, thereby causing America human and financial and political losses, without it accomplishing anything worthy of mention, apart from giving business to [the generals'] private corporations. Besides, we  
120 gained experience in guerilla warfare and in conducting a war of attrition in our fight with the iniquitous, great power, that is, when we conducted a war of attrition against Russia with Jihad fighters for 10 years until they went bankrupt, with Allah's grace; as a result, they were forced to withdraw in defeat, all praise and  
125 thanks to Allah. We are continuing in the same policy - to make America bleed profusely to the point of bankruptcy, Allah willing. And that is not too difficult for Allah.

"Whoever says that Al-Qa'ida triumphed over the White House administration, or that the White House administration lost this war - this is not entirely accurate, for if we look carefully at the results, it is impossible to say that Al-Qa'ida is the only cause for these amazing gains. The White House policy, which strove to open war fronts so as to give business to their various  
130 corporations - be they in the field of armament, of oil, or of  
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140 construction – also helped in accomplishing these astonishing  
achievements for Al-Qa'ida. It appeared to some analysts and  
diplomats as though we and the White House play as one team to  
score a goal against the United States of America, even though  
our intentions differ. Such ideas, and some others, were pointed  
out by a British diplomat in the course of a lecture at the Royal  
Institute for International Affairs; for example, that Al-Qa'ida  
spent \$500,000 on the event [9/11] while America lost in the  
event and its subsequent effects more than 500 billion dollars;  
145 that is to say that each of Al-Qa'ida's dollars defeated one million  
American dollars, thanks to Allah's grace. This is in addition to  
the fact that America lost a large number of jobs, and as for the  
[federal] deficit, it lost a record number estimated at a trillion  
dollars.

150 "Even more serious for America is the fact that the Jihad fighters  
have recently forced Bush to resort to an emergency budget in  
order to continue the fighting in Afghanistan and in Iraq, which  
proves the success of the plan of bleeding [America] to the point  
155 of bankruptcy, Allah willing.

"Indeed, all of this makes it clear that Al-Qa'ida won gains; but  
on the other hand, it also makes it clear that the Bush  
administration won gains as well, since anyone who looks at the  
160 scope of the contracts won by large dubious corporations like  
Halliburton and other similar ones that have ties to Bush and to  
his administration will become convinced that the losing side is  
in fact you, the American people, and your economy.

165 "We agreed with the general commander Muhammad Atta, may  
Allah have mercy on him, that all operations should be carried  
out within 20 minutes, before Bush and his administration would  
become aware. We never imagined that the Commander in Chief  
of the American armed forces would abandon 50,000 of his  
170 citizens in the twin towers to face this great horror alone when  
they needed him most. It seemed to him that a girl's story about  
her goat and its butting was more important than dealing with  
planes and their 'butting' into skyscrapers. This allowed us three  
times the amount of time needed for the operations, Allah be  
175 praised.

"It should be no secret to you that American thinkers and  
intellectuals warned Bush before the war: all that you [Bush] need  
in order to assure America's security by ridding [Iraq] of weapons  
180 of mass destruction, assuming there were any, is at your

disposal, and all the countries of the world are with you in the matter of carrying out inspections, and the U.S.'s interest does not require you to drive it into an unjustified war, whose end you cannot know.

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"However, the blackness of black gold blinded his sight and his perception and he gave preference to private interests over America's public interest. And so there was war and many died. The American economy bled and Bush became embroiled in the quagmire of Iraq, which now threatens his future.

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"His case is like that [described in the parable]:

"He is like the ill-tempered goat that dug out of the ground the sharp knife [with which it would be slaughtered]. [3]

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"I say to you: more than 15,000 of our people were killed and tens of thousands were wounded, just as more than 1,000 of you were killed and more than 10,000 wounded, and Bush's hands are sullied with the blood of all of these casualties on both sides, for the sake of oil and to give business to his private companies. You should know that a nation that punishes a weak person if he is instrumental in killing one of that nation's sons for money, while letting go free a high-class man who was instrumental in killing more than 1,000 of its sons, also for money [sic]. Similarly your allies in Palestine intimidate women and children and murder and imprison men. [inaudible]

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"Keep in mind that every action has a reaction, and finally you should consider the last wills and testaments of the thousands who left you on 9/11, waving their hands in despair. These are inspiring wills, which deserve to be published and studied thoroughly. One of the most important things I have read regarding their hand-waving signals before they fell is that they were saying 'We were wrong to let the White House carry out unchecked its aggressive foreign policy against oppressed people.' As though they were telling you, the American people, 'You should call to task those who caused our death.' Happy is he who learns a lesson from the experience of others. A verse that I have read is also relevant to their [last] signals:

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"Evil kills those who perpetrate it,

"And the pastures of iniquity are harmful.

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230 "There is a saying: a small amount spent on prevention is better than a great amount spent on treatment. You should know that it is better to return to that which is right than to persist in that which is wrong. A rational man would not neglect his security, property, or home for the sake of the liar in the White House.

235 "Your security is not in the hands of Kerry or Bush or Al-Qa'ida. Your security is in your own hands, and any [U.S.] state [wilaya] that does not toy with our security automatically guarantees its own security.

"Allah is our guardian but you have none.

"Peace be upon whoever follows the true guidance."

[1] For the video, see: <http://www2.vh-p.net/su/img/257.zip>.

For the message containing this link, see:

<http://www.islahi.net/vboard/showthread.php?t=116671>.

[2] The reference is apparently to the article "The Most Wanted Man in the World", to which the reporter Scott MacLeod contributed.

[3] This parable was put into verse by the famous 9th-century Arab writer Jahiz.