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Terrorism Conflict:: How The United States Responds To Al Qaeda Violence And Expressed Grievances

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TERRORISM CONFLICT:
HOW THE UNITED STATES RESPONDS TO AL QAEDA VIOLENCE AND
EXPRESSED GRIEVANCES

A Thesis

Presented to
The Faculty of the
University of Denver

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by

Richard C. Rosthauser

March 2010

Advisor: Dr. Karen Feste

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Advisor: Dr. Karen Feste

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Abstract

This study analyzes how the United States responds to Al Qaeda's messages and expressions of grievances and how America's responses escalate the conflict between the United States and Al Qaeda.

After its first two attacks against America, Al Qaeda devised a strategy to draw America into a guerrilla war in Afghanistan, stating its intentions in its "Declaration of War" in 1996. Before this declaration, Al Qaeda worked from the shadows and denied reports it was either funding terrorism or participating in terrorism. Bin Laden continued his denials but took responsibility for some terrorist acts in his messages. President Clinton did not mention Osama bin Laden's name until the two US Embassy bombings in East Africa, which was the only terrorist act to which President Clinton responded militarily. Al Qaeda escalated its rhetoric and violent actions with each successive message and attack. After the September 11th attacks, Al Qaeda changed its rhetoric by offering peace overtures to the United States and its allies. Osama bin Laden continued his peace overtures throughout President Bush's two terms in office and into President Obama's first year. The peace overtures are discounted by both President Bush and President Obama, who say that Al Qaeda is not an organization that will negotiate peace. The rhetoric from Al Qaeda is that the long war will continue as long as the United States

continues to occupy Arab and Muslim land, which is their primary grievance against America and its allies.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Research Problem

With the fall of the Soviet Union, the world was relieved that the threat of nuclear war between the US and Soviet Union was over and expected a new era of peace and prosperity. The American government and public spoke of a “peace dividend” that would result from a reduced military budget. This “peace dividend” could be used to lower the national debt and to pay for other programs to benefit American society. The election of Bill Clinton as president came with high hopes of moving the country in a new direction while the world enjoyed a long period of peace. That peace did not materialize because terrorists in Yemen attacked American targets in the last months of George H. W. Bush’s administration. Those attacks were perpetrated by a group of Muslim men who would become known as Al Qaeda. Their leader was Osama bin Laden.

Since the fall of the Soviet Union and the destruction of the twin towers of the World Trade Center, Islamic terrorism—specifically, the terrorist group Al Qaeda—has become the foremost foreign policy issue facing the US. Osama bin Laden expressed his views about US intervention in the Arab and Muslim world for several years before his “Declaration of War” in August, 1996¹, which brought him to the attention of inattentive American leaders and a surprised and equally inattentive American public. Bin Laden continued expressing his grievances in his speeches and interviews and continued his

¹ Usama Bin Laden: “Declaration of War Against the Americans”, August 1996, [on-line]; available from <http://www1.nefafoundation.org/documents-aqstatements.html> ; Accessed 2 January 2009.

attacks against American interests throughout the world. American leaders continued to ignore him, except to demonize him, falsely conveying that he and his followers hated American freedom and way of life.

The predominant approach among the foreign policy establishment and the America public was to ignore bin Laden to avoid elevating his stature among his followers and the rest of the world. Tied to this approach was the belief that a small group of terrorists could not hurt a superpower like the US; there was no reason to address him or his grievances. This belief was supported by the US policy of not negotiating with terrorists to avoid granting them legitimacy. It was widely believed that bowing to the demands of terrorists only encouraged them to act illegally. Brian Michael Jenkins points out that after Osama bin Laden offered a truce to the United States and Europe, both rejected the offer. “American officials repeated the long-standing policy that we do not negotiate with terrorists.”²

Bin Laden continued to convey his message “in words and deeds”³ as the US continued to uphold its non-negotiation policy. When the US did respond, its responses took the form of military action, diplomatic action, legal action, or verbally expressed outrage; it never addressed bin Laden’s grievances in a meaningful manner. Analyzing how America addressed Al Qaeda’s “words and deeds” reveals a pattern of behaviors that will enable policymakers to choose an effective strategy for addressing terrorist grievances. The central question in this study is how does the United States respond to Al

² Brian Jenkins, *Unconquerable Nation: Knowing our Enemy Strengthening Ourselves*. (Santa Monica, California: Rand Corporation, 2006), p. 69. [Online]; available from: http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/2006/RAND_MG454.pdf ; Accessed June 3, 2007.

³ Bruce Lawrence, *Messages To The World: The Statements Of Osama Bin Laden*. (New York, New York: Verso, 2005), p. 240.

Qaeda's messages and grievance expression, and do those responses lead to conflict escalation between the two parties?

Literature Review

Every terrorist group pursues a purpose uniquely suited to its organization, the most apparent being political motives. At the top of Al Qaeda's political agenda are the international foreign policy initiatives of the United States. Some commentators believe the main purpose of a terrorist attack is emotional response. Michael Stohl explains that the victims of a terrorist attack are not the main targets; it is the "rest of us"⁴ who are. He goes on to say that: "It is always the case that how the audience reacts and the political effects of the reactions and response to the acts that are the core of the process of terrorism. The victims are the instrument of the terrorist."⁵ Stohl continues this thought with an observation by Brian Jenkins of Rand that "...terrorists want a lot of people watching, not a lot of people dead."⁶ Many scholars believe that is not the case today because of the use of suicide terrorism. They cite Al Qaeda's attacks in Africa on two US embassies, the USS Cole attack, the 9/11 attacks in the United States and other terrorist attacks around the world as evidence that the terrorists were looking to kill as many people as possible.

Stohl cites the November 8, 2001 Osama bin Laden interview with Pakistani journalist Hamid Mir, in which bin Laden was not concerned with the death toll but with the symbolism of attacking America on its own soil. This self-description of bin Laden

⁴ Michael Stohl, *The Mystery of the New Global Terrorism: Old Myths, New Realities? In The New Global Terrorism: Characteristics, Causes, Controls*, by Charles W. Kegley, Jr., (Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2003) p. 85.

⁵ Ibid., p. 85.

⁶ Ibid., p.85.

fits with his rhetoric, before and after the attack on September 11, in which he antagonizes America, hoping to bait the superpower to fight him in Afghanistan. It also fits with the gradual escalation in violence, sophistication, and audacity of each additional terrorist attack against the United States during the second term of the Clinton administration and the beginning of the Bush administration's first year in office. Stohl sums up his thought on this purpose of terrorism by saying: "So this terrorist act on September 11 was similar to many acts of the past; however, what was different was its scope and intensity."⁷

In addition to its expanded scope and intensity, Al Qaeda added sophistication to the complexity of the tactics it employed to draw America into Afghanistan. As Al Qaeda became increasingly frustrated that their message to America to get out of Saudi Arabia was going unanswered, its tactics became more sophisticated in an effort to elicit a response from American officials to its expressed grievances.

In his "Strategic Objectives of Terrorism," Gregory A. Raymond describes political terrorism in three categories: agitational, coercive, and organizational. The first category is "agitational," in which it promotes other terrorist groups, "advertises its agenda" and discredits its rivals. The second category is "coercive," in which it engages in "disorienting a target population", exerting its "perceived power", "wringing concessions from authorities", and "provoking... overreaction" from authorities. The final category is "organizational" in which it engages in "acquiring resources", "forging

⁷ Michael Stohl, *The Mystery of the New Global Terrorism: Old Myths, New Realities? In The New Global Terrorism: Characteristics, Causes, Controls*, by Charles W. Kegley, Jr., (Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2003) p. 85.

group cohesion” and “maintaining an underground network of supporters.”⁸ Al Qaeda engaged in most of the activities described by Raymond. Al Qaeda worked from the shadows from 1988 to 1996 trying to hide its involvement in terrorist activities. The American public did not know Al Qaeda’s agenda until bin Laden delivered the Declaration of War on August 23, 1996. During those years Al Qaeda did not advertise its agenda because it had the Arab-Afghan fighters to carry out its agenda without having to recruit from the wider Arab and Muslim community. Wringing concessions, such as leaving Arab and Muslim countries, from the United States remains quite elusive for Al Qaeda at the present time in Afghanistan and Iraq. Even though Al Qaeda has embarked on its long war strategy against America, the United States still remains in the Persian Gulf region, the Horn of Africa, Central Asia and other Arab and Muslim countries. It’s anybody’s guess when or if the US will leave as the Soviets did after their defeat in Afghanistan, which is the result Osama bin Laden hopes for. Raymond talks about “political terrorism” as a calculated and strategic act that terrorists engage in to accomplish their strategic objectives. Al Qaeda is the calculated and strategic actor that Raymond talks about. Working from the shadows Al Qaeda was very strategic in its growth from inception to present day operations.

The purposes of terrorism merge with what Robert Pape believes are the strategic causes of terrorism. Pape believes that the main cause for Islamic terrorism against the United States is that America is occupying Arab and Muslim land. While America is

⁸ Gregory A. Raymond, *The Evolving Strategies of Political Terrorism. In The New Global Terrorism: Characteristics, Causes, Controls*, by Charles W. Kegley, Jr., (Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2003) pp. 72-74.

occupying these countries, it is trying to change their culture through economic, social, and governmental policies (spreading American style democracy). He also believes that the terrorism against America is not a product of Islamic fundamentalism but a product of Arab and Islamic nationalism. The main reason suicide terrorism as well as conventional terrorism is used against America is because it has worked in the past to have their grievances met. The success of this terrorism leads to copy-cats using the same tactics to have their grievances met.

According to Pape, America's "core interest" in Saudi Arabia and the Persian Gulf region is oil.⁹ Because of oil, the American foreign policy and national security apparatus are convincing the President and Congress to implement policies, such as "democratic, economic, and social-development programs,"¹⁰ in those countries that they believe will benefit American economic needs. Some of these policies have America deploying troops to the region to establish American military bases, which gives the impression America is occupying these countries, even in cases where they were invited by the government, as Saudi Arabia invited the US prior to the first US-Iraq War. The "core interest" involves the America military protecting the host governments from outside interference and from domestic interference in these countries. The protection of these governments is felt by the population to be an occupation by America for American interests but not for the interests of the domestic population. This perception by Arab and

⁹ Robert Pape, *Dying to Win: The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism*. (New York, New York: Random House, 2006) p. 249.

¹⁰ Congress Passes Billions in Aid for Pakistan. *The Denver Post*, October 1, 2009 p. 11A.

Muslim populations is not going to diminish or go away if America continues to establish military bases in those countries to exert American influence and power.

Implementing democratic, economic and social development programs are essential to spreading democracy, which the US believes will help end the Islamic terrorism perpetrated against the United States. Pape points out that terrorism will not be stopped by this program but instigate more terrorism against America because the terrorists as well as their supporters see this as American occupation of their country. As long as this perception is held, suicide terrorism will continue until America leaves their countries. Attempts to transform Arabic and Islamic culture into American culture are among the grievances bin Laden, as well as the Arab and Muslim community, have against America.

Pape points out that Richard Perle and David Frum believe that regime change is the only way to deal with terrorists. Removing the current governments in these countries by installing leaders that would implement democratic reforms would create the “Muslim transformation” needed to change the society to end Islamic terrorism against America.¹¹ Their goal was to transform all of the Middle East based on their belief that Muslim fundamentalism is monolithic. The data that Pape presents shows that none of the terrorist groups have conducted terrorist attacks for one another or work in conjunction to have simultaneous attacks with one another; “Al Qaeda has never attacked Israel;” “ Hamas has never attacked” America, and the only time Hezbollah attacked American

¹¹ Robert Pape, *Dying to Win: The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism*. (New York, New York: Random House, 2006) p. 241.

targets was in Lebanon.¹² Pape believes the most striking bit of information gleaned from the data about these three groups is not that they may “share military resources” but their “nationalist goal” to expel the occupier from each of their homelands.¹³

Those who believe Muslim fundamentalism is monolithic do not take into consideration that the Sunnis and the Shiites do not like one another and that they will do what’s best for their individual interests; at the present time, that is to tend to their own goal of self-preservation. Both groups are concerned about taking care of their own needs, not helping the other. That may change at some point for many reasons, but it will not be because Islamic fundamentalism is monolithic. If the United States continues to try to spread democracy in the Middle East as if it were butter, Middle East terrorism will not be diminished but increased.

In his “Declaration of War,” Osama bin Laden points to three countries-- Lebanon, Yemen and Somalia--that the United States left in humiliation after terrorist attacks. Pape conveys that there is a positive relationship between terrorist attacks and the gains obtained against foreign occupiers. Those gains encourage more terrorism, which creates a copy-cat effect by which the terrorists use each other’s tactics. In other speeches and messages, bin Laden belabors the point that terrorism convinced the American military to leave the above three countries. An examination of Al Qaeda’s attacks shows its operatives used the same tactic of simultaneous attacks on US embassies in East African as Hezbollah used against the Americans in Lebanon.

¹² Ibid., p.243.

¹³ Ibid.

Hezbollah used suicide attackers in the Lebanon attack just as Al Qaeda used suicide attackers to blow up the two American Embassies in East Africa. Conventional wisdom says that suicide bombers are mentally disturbed with no future, with no job prospects, uneducated, poor, and with fundamentalist religious views. Marc Segman's data on terrorists in Al Qaeda conflicts with this conventional wisdom. Terrorists' backgrounds showed stable environments; the majority came from upper and middle income class; 17% had primary and secondary religious education and the rest had a secular education; over 60% had some college, more than 42% were professionals, more than 32% were semiprofessionals and only about 24% were unskilled. Only one had "probable mild mental retardation" and two had "some form of psychotic disorder in early adulthood."¹⁴ Pape concludes that suicide terrorists are driven by nationalist goals. It's the nationalist fervor that has terrorists attacking foreign occupiers to expel them from their homeland.

The long war that bin Laden wanted to wage against America continues and there is no sign of Al Qaeda leadership except for occasional speeches and messages to let the world know they are still alive and willing to wage their guerrilla war on the United States and its allies. Al Qaeda is not afraid of America's perceived power. America's power is based on many things, but the fatigue factor it is facing will determine how long it can continue the long war. When America realizes it can't continue, it will have to negotiate with the Taliban and Al Qaeda.

¹⁴ Marc Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks*. (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004) p. 73-81.

Background

Al Qaeda was formed through discussions among Arab-Afghan jihadists following the end of the Afghan jihad against the Soviets. In April 1988, Sheikh Abdullah Azzam, Osama bin Laden's mentor, wanted to create an Islamic community to continue the jihad to help the Palestinians in their fight, while Ayman al-Zawahiri wanted to take the new organization in a different direction by continuing the jihad in Islamic countries, such as Egypt, with the goal of creating an Islamic government. Bin Laden wanted to continue the jihad in Kashmir, the Philippines and against communism in Central Asia countries.¹⁵ Infighting among the jihadists over the direction of their strategy and resources continued in meetings in August and September of 1988 and beyond, but the direction of Al Qaeda narrowed when Azzam was assassinated on November 24, 1988.¹⁶ Many people and countries benefited from the assassination, but it is unclear who murdered Azzam. The immediate beneficiaries were Ayman al-Zawahiri and Osama bin Laden because they were able to narrow Al Qaeda's strategy to fit their preferences. Even though there were fewer people vying for bin Laden's financial resources, the direction of Al Qaeda was peripatetic.

Moving from cause to cause throughout Arab and Muslim countries, attacking the US in Yemen in 1992 and in Somalia in 1993, bin Laden and the Arab-Afghans finally settled on the United States as their number one enemy in 1996, voicing their grievances in the "Declaration of War" message delivered from Al Qaeda's new home base in

¹⁵ Lawrence Wright, *The Looming Tower: Al-Qaeda And The Road To 9/11*. (New York, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006), pp. 130-131; Michael Scheuer, *Through Our Enemies' Eyes: Osama bin Laden, Radical Islam, and the Future of America*. (Washington, D.C.: Potomac Books Inc., 2007) p. 110.

¹⁶ Lawrence Wright, *The Looming Tower: Al-Qaeda And The Road To 9/11*. (New York, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006), pp. 131-144.

Afghanistan. Bin Laden stated that the United States was occupying Saudi Arabia with the presence of the American military on Saudi soil as well as other Arab and Muslim countries; exploiting Saudi and Arab and Muslim resources through the control of Arab and Muslim regimes; supporting Israel at the expense of Arab and Muslim lives (Muslim blood is cheap); trying to change the culture of Arab and Muslim countries in the image of Western culture—these are the grievances that bin Laden and other jihadists believe and express in messages to the public.

Al Qaeda set upon a strategy to maneuver the United States into a position to address Al Qaeda's expressed grievances, escalating rhetoric and violence in order to draw America to either address the grievances (which was unlikely) or escalate the violence to the point where it lured the United States into a guerrilla war in Afghanistan. Bin Laden's hope is that the war turns into another defeat for the lone superpower, such as the Soviet defeat in 1989. The long war would drain American resources, bankrupting it and forcing a withdrawal of American forces from the umma (Arab and Muslim countries), complying with Al Qaeda's wishes.

Al Qaeda engaged in terrorism against US interests for a number of years before expressing its grievances against America; during these years it also denied its participation in these terrorist acts. Though the US believed Al Qaeda was behind these attacks, it had no "conclusive evidence of bin Laden's involvement with terrorism."¹⁷ Bin Laden did not take responsibility for any of the six bombings that were carried out in

¹⁷ Scott MacLeod, "The Paladin of Jihad," *Time*, May 6, 1996, [on-line]; available from <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,984493,00.html> ; Accessed 6 January 2009.

1992 in the country of Yemen,¹⁸ but still intended the bombings to send a message to the US. That message was made clear by his statements in an interview with Robert Fisk on July 10, 1996 regarding later bombings in Riyadh and Al Khobar, Saudi Arabia. In that interview, he stated:

I believe sooner or later the Americans will leave Saudi Arabia...Resistance against America will spread in many, many places in Muslim countries. Our trusted leaders, the ulema, have given us a fatwa that we must drive out the Americans. The solution to the crisis is the withdrawal of American troops...their military presence is an insult for the Saudi people.¹⁹

This was the first time bin Laden had made his message clear to the Western public. He repeated the message in August of 1996 by issuing a fatwa (religious ruling) through the ulema (the religious-legal scholars of Islam) called “Declaration of War Against the Americans Occupying the Land of the Two Holy Places.”²⁰ The declaration addressed Al Qaeda’s grievances with the “Zionist/Crusaders alliance and their collaborators.”²¹ In this “alliance” he included Israel, America, and their allies. He also described what would transpire if the grievances were not addressed. In later interviews and speeches, bin Laden also began to take responsibility for various attacks: the Yemen hotel bombings, the East African bombings, the Riyadh and Khobar Tower bombings, the USS Cole bombing, and eventually the 9/11 attacks.²²

¹⁸ Edward F. Mickolus with Susan L. Simmons, *Terrorism, 1992-1995: A Chronology of Events and A Selective Annotated Bibliography*. (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1997), pp. 122, 148, 208-209,224,250)

¹⁹ Robert Fisk, In his last recorded interview, Usama bin Laden tells Robert Fisk why he so despises America. *The Independent*, Issued July 10, 1996. [Online]; available from http://www.robert-fisk.com/fisk_interview3.htm ; Accessed May 9, 2005.

²⁰ “Declaration of War Against the Americans Occupying the Land of the Two Holy Places.” August 23, 1996, [Online]; available from <http://www.daveross.com/binladen.html> ; February, 24, 2008.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Bruce Lawrence, *Messages To The World: The Statements Of Osama Bin Laden*. (New York, New York: Verso, 2005), p. 240.

The 1998 bombings were considered crimes by the new Clinton administration.

Martha Crenshaw explains how the new administration approached these bombings:

The Clinton administration entered office holding to the principle that terrorism best fit into a category of “modern” problems such as global organized crime, epidemics of disease, and environmental disasters. These dangers were not represented as threats directed specifically against Americans interests but common perils all states face...the Clinton administration[’s]... policy was based on four simple principles: no concessions or rewards for terrorists, sanctions against state sponsors, international cooperation, and implementation of the rule of law.²³

The American public did not perceive Al Qaeda as a threat. As Brian Jenkins points out:

[The] terrorists were hardly considered superpower foes...they were nuisances, tiny handfuls of men with bombs and machine guns who created distracting crises. Should the commanders of the world’s mightiest military power be obliged to listen to the political pretensions and Byzantine clan connections of some obscure little band in the back alleys of Beirut?²⁴

Coming out of the Cold War triumphant, the US did not see Al Qaeda or any terrorist group as a severe threat to national security because they lacked the military power to hurt America. Yet the Cold War had produced bin Laden and Al Qaeda; they were the mujahidin that defeated the Soviets in Afghanistan with military and humanitarian aid from the US. The Soviet/Afghan war taught bin Laden that he could

²³ Martha Crenshaw, *Terrorism, Strategies, and Grand Strategies*, In A. Cronin & J. Ludes, Editors, *Attacking Terrorism: Elements of a Grand Strategy*. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2004). Chapter 3. P. 81.

²⁴ Brian Jenkins, *Unconquerable Nation: Knowing our Enemy Strengthening Ourselves*. (Santa Monica, California: Rand Corporation, 2006), p. 58. [Online]; available from: http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/2006/RAND_MG454.pdf ; Accessed June 3, 2007.

fight the Western superpower with “guerilla warfare,” to which he alluded in his 1996 “Declaration of War.”²⁵

After defeating the “atheist Russians,” bin Laden and his Afghan Arabs used their training and war experience to confront “the next target, [which] was America.”²⁶ It’s popular to believe that Osama bin Laden is an American creation, and, had we not funded the Afghan resistance, Al Qaeda would not exist. This is not true because bin Laden’s own statements indicate he disliked America as much as he disliked the Soviet Union; once the Soviet Union was defeated, he viewed America as the next country to defeat.

Whether Al Qaeda was a creation of US policy is immaterial; American leaders still have to deal with the reality of Al Qaeda and its grievances against American foreign policy. During the 1990s, the threat from Al Qaeda increased as its terrorist acts increased. The US response varied after each attack; between acts the grievances expressed by Al Qaeda were not addressed because of the “we do not talk to terrorists” policy. The high-context communication style²⁷ of bin Laden did not help American leaders to address Al Qaeda’s grievances because they were expressed in a non-direct and evasive manner. In “The Towers of Lebanon” speech on October 29, 2004, bin Laden states that “we repeatedly tried to convey to you in words and deeds, years before

²⁵ “Declaration of War Against the Americans Occupying the Land of the Two Holy Places.” August 23, 1996, [Online]; available from <http://www.daveross.com/binladen.html> ; Accessed February, 24, 2008.

²⁶ Frontline, Hunting Bin Laden: Who Is Bin Laden & What Does He Want? French Journalist April 1995 Interview of Osama bin Laden. April 1999. [Online] available from <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/binladen/who/edicts.html> ; Accessed February 20, 2009.

²⁷ Raymond Cohen, *Negotiating Across Cultures: International Communication in an Interdependent World*. (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2002).

September 11.”²⁸ The Clinton administration could not address Al Qaeda’s grievances because they were not stated until bin Laden’s “Declaration of War” in August, 1996, four years after Al Qaeda had begun attacking America and its interests overseas.

The grievances were expressed publicly many times, but the administration refused to address them in a meaningful manner until the end of 2000. As the Clinton administration grew to a close, Clinton grew concerned as the attacks by Al Qaeda increased. He relayed those concerns to the incoming Bush administration. Clinton’s concerns were also conveyed by Richard Clarke to Condoleeza Rice, Steven Hadley, Dick Cheney, and Colin Powell in “stark” terms: “Al Qaeda is at war with us; it is a highly capable organization, probably with sleeper cells in the US, and it is clearly planning a major series of attacks against us.”²⁹

Clarke asked Rice if a “principals or Cabinet-level” meeting could “review the imminent Al Qaeda threat.”³⁰ Rice responded that the Deputies would have to review the issue before bringing it to the Principals. The Deputies’ meeting was held in April, 2001, four months into the new administration’s term and five months before Al Qaeda’s attack on September 11. Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz believed “too much credit” was being given to bin Laden and that other sponsors of terrorism, such as Iraq, were more dangerous than this single man without state sponsorship.³¹ The other

²⁸ Bruce Lawrence, *Messages To The World: The Statements Of Osama Bin Laden*. (New York, New York: Verso, 2005), p. 240.

²⁹ Richard A. Clarke, *Against All Enemies: Inside America’s War on Terror*. (New York, New York: Free Press, 2004), p. 277. Tim Weiner, *Legacy of Ashes: The History of the CIA*. (New York, New York: Doubleday Broadway Publishing Group, 2007), pp. 475-476.

³⁰ Richard A. Clarke, *Against All Enemies: Inside America’s War on Terror*. (New York, New York: Free Press, 2004), pp. 230-231.

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 231-232.

members of the new administration shared this same attitude toward Al Qaeda, an attitude exhibited in their failure to act until the 9/11 attack. The new administration believed America's military might would deter any would-be terrorists. After the 9/11 attack, Bush continued the policy of no negotiations with terrorists and failed to address Al Qaeda's grievances, downplaying them as insignificant or illegitimate, until he left office in 2009.

Analysis Strategy

To answer the central question, the analysis will focus on three time periods during Al Qaeda's rise to prominence. The first time period analyzed will be from the December 29, 1992 Yemen hotel bombings to the Somalia confrontation between US troops and the Arab Afghans on October 3, 1993. During this period, Al Qaeda's grievances were not widely expressed or known in the West. During the first time period, the analysis will focus on the actions/re-actions between Al Qaeda and the United States in the four months before the December 29, 1992 Yemen bombings and the four months after the October, 1993 confrontation with US troops in Mogadishu, Somalia. The Yemen bombing was Al Qaeda's first attack against America; bin Laden intended to disrupt "Operation Restore Hope" in Somalia, which bin Laden viewed as a ploy for the United States to spread American influence in Muslim and Arab countries. The US military was using Yemen as a layover station for troops on their way to Somalia. Another reason for focusing on Yemen is that it indicates future attacks against the US homeland: Yemen was attacked in the last year of last three presidential administrations and in the first year of each new presidential administration. The United States' homeland was attacked in

1993 and 2001. One final reason is the oil connection between Somalia and Yemen; an oil-bearing geographical formation runs under the Gulf of Aden between Yemen and Somalia.³² Al Qaeda begins an elusive dynamic in this period that runs through the other periods.

During this first period, Osama bin Laden denied involvement in any terrorist attacks on the US and its interests. US intelligence and law enforcement officials did not have “conclusive evidence” of his involvement but did suspect his involvement in terrorist attacks around the world.³³ MacLeod also points out that the US State Department saw bin Laden as “one of the most significant financial sponsors of Islamic extremist activities in the world today.”³⁴ American leaders believed the capability of Al Qaeda to inflict damage on the US was nowhere near the capability of state-sponsored terrorists. This belief kept the Clinton administration in an old belief system, a Cold-War-era way of thinking that could not recognize threats materializing from entities such as Al Qaeda, even as Al Qaeda’s prominence was becoming evident to the intelligent officers assigned to assess terrorist threats. The Clinton Administration was focused on countering terrorist threats from Islamic fundamentalists such as Hezbollah and its sponsoring state, Iran. It was not until bin Laden’s “Declaration of War” that the American government and public knew of bin Laden’s grievances with the United States. The Clinton Administration likely knew what bin Laden’s grievances were. The CIA had

³² Mark Fineman, “The Oil Factor In Somalia”. *The Los Angeles Times*. Issue January, 18, 1993.

³³ Scott MacLeod, “The Paladin of Jihad,” *Time*, May 6, 1996, [on-line]; available from <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,984493,00.html> ; Accessed 6 January 2009.

³⁴ Ibid.

thirty-five volumes of data on bin Laden³⁵ when Alec Station, the CIA/FBI bin Laden unit, was started at the end of 1995.³⁶

The second time period analyzed will be from bin Laden's Declaration of War in August, 1996 to the East African embassy bombings in August, 1998 and the USS Cole bombing in October, 2000. During this period, bin Laden came out of the shadows to openly voice his grievances in declarations, speeches, and interviews. Bin Laden expressed his views to a wider audience and directed his comments to the Clinton Administration, as he did by addressing Defense Secretary William Perry in his Declaration of War. During this period, the Clinton Administration finally realized that Osama bin Laden would not be going away and that Al Qaeda was becoming a clear and present danger to American security worldwide.

The second time period starts with the Declaration of War on August 23, 1996, when bin Laden was forced out of Sudan and returns to Afghanistan. At this point, bin Laden started to deliver his declarations, speeches, and interviews to the world at large instead of just to the Arab and Muslim world. His public demeanor and rhetoric became more antagonistic when addressing the United States and its allies. All of his messages in 1997 contained threats on Americans and warnings of attacks on US forces; he apparently hoped to bait the US military to come fight his forces in Afghanistan. The Declaration of War came after the bombings in Riyadh and Dhahran, Saudi Arabia. In 1998, he backed or urged jihad against America on March 23, May 14, and May 19. On

³⁵ Lawrence Wright, *The Looming Tower: Al-Qaeda And The Road To 9/11*. (New York, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006), p. 3.

³⁶ Michael Scheuer, *Through Our Enemies' Eyes: Osama bin Laden, Radical Islam, and the Future of America*. (Washington, D.C.: Potomac Books Inc., 2007) pp. 287, note 22.

May 28 he declared jihad, about two months before the East African bombings on August 7, 1998. On August 21, he called for jihad against the Americans and the Jews; on the following day, he warned President Clinton “the battle has not yet started” in his response to the Cruise missile attacks on Afghanistan³⁷, which were the US response to the East African bombings. In June, 2000, bin Laden calls on Muslims to declare jihad against American and in September pledges jihad to release prisoners, almost a month before the USS Cole bombing on October 12.

The first attack to be analyzed is the East African bombing of the US Embassy in Kenya, to which the US responded with Cruise missile attacks in Afghanistan and the Sudan. The second attack to be analyzed is the USS Cole bombing in Aden, Yemen, to which there was no response by either the Clinton administration or the new Bush administration. The Al Qaeda speeches to be analyzed are those that express Al Qaeda grievances and acknowledge responsibility for past bombing attacks. The Clinton responses to be analyzed are those in the four months preceding the attack and the four months after the attack.

The last time period analyzed will be the eight years of the Bush Administration, September 11, 2001 to September, 2008, focusing on its dealings with Al Qaeda to discern any differences between its treatment of Al Qaeda’s grievances and how previous administrations dealt with those same grievances. In this period, bin Laden informed the American people of his reasons for conducting a jihad against American; he claimed the

³⁷ ‘Abd-al-Bari ‘Atwan, “Usama Bin Laden Responds to US Cruise Missile Strike. *Al-Quds Al-Arabi*. London. August 22, 1998. [Online]; available from <http://www1.nefafoundation.org/documents-aqstatements.html> ; Accessed September 24, 2008.

jihad had nothing to do with American freedoms but with the foreign policy implemented by American leaders.

The analysis of the third time frame will include the four months prior to the September 11, 2001 attack and the four months following the attack, to which the US responded by invading Afghanistan on October 7, 2001. Also analyzed is the September 17, 2008 bombing of the US Embassy in Yemen, focusing on the action/reaction between Al Qaeda and the US in the four months preceding and following the bombing. Bin Laden changes tactics between the Clinton and Bush Administrations: during the Clinton Administration, the majority of his communications were interviews. During the Bush Administration, the majority were in the form of audio-taped speeches, videotaped speeches, or Internet transcripts. There was another change in bin Laden's rhetoric during the Bush era: he addressed the American people about the reasons for the 9/11 attack and he gave peace overtures.

The analysis will focus on the actions and reactions within each of the three identified time frames between Al Qaeda and the United States in a four month period preceding a terrorist act or declaration of demands, following the last event within the time period.

The following is a list of sources for Al Qaeda's messages, terrorism events, and gathered for the project:

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Chapter 2: Al Qaeda Strategy

This chapter examines how Al Qaeda conveys its messages to its enemy to make an impact to receive a desired response. The first section describes how Al Qaeda sends messages as a way of airing its grievances in public. The second section describes how Al Qaeda determines if America provided the desired response, then either escalates the rhetoric or resorts to violence. The third section describes how America decides to respond to Al Qaeda's grievances or to escalate the conflict between the parties.

Al Qaeda leadership learned valuable lessons during their Afghanistan jihad and the fight against the "near enemy." These lessons enabled the groups to disseminate its message to its supporters and the public, employing a communication strategy that circumvented the typical channels of communication. Speaking in mosques and private homes enabled bin Laden to get his message out to the people. As the Arab-Afghans began to feel more confident in their abilities and their new role, they came out from the shadows to confront their principal "far enemy," America. By communicating the grievances of the Arab and Muslim "street," Al Qaeda garnered public support for its goal of curbing American influence in the region.

The following section examines when and why Al Qaeda decided to deliver its message in the form of violence. Osama bin Laden's war experiences enabled him to make the decision to engage in violence. In addition, historical international events resulting from the end of the Cold War meant one superpower met its demise, leaving the

other believing its position gave it the power to influence the rest of the world. Saudi Arabia's rejection of bin Laden's war plans to expel the communists from South Yemen and to defend Saudi Arabia from Saddam Hussein soured bin Laden's relationship with the Saudi regime. America's defense of Saudi Arabia convinced Al Qaeda to target its violence and grievances against America.

The third section looks at how the United States and its leaders decided to respond to bin Laden and Al Qaeda's grievances. Al Qaeda's grievances were not publicly known for the first eight years of Al Qaeda's existence. That changed when bin Laden expressed Al Qaeda's grievances in his "Declaration of War" in August, 1996; he continued to communicate those grievances in messages in interviews and speeches in the media and on websites. American leaders from the last three administrations had ignored bin Laden's grievances in the belief he was not a legitimate conveyer of the messages from the Arab and Muslim people. Bin Laden believed he had been given legitimacy by the Arab and Muslim Street because their grievances were one and the same, enabling him to serve as the legitimate voice of the umma. For America to deal with Al Qaeda's strategy of dragging it into a long war, American leaders would either have to fight Al Qaeda to the death or devise a strategy to end the conflict peacefully.

Message Dissemination by Small Groups

This section looks at how Al Qaeda disseminates its messages to its followers and its enemies. Osama bin Laden learned the art of communicating his messages to the Arab and Islamic community during the Jihad against the Soviets in the Soviet-Afghan war. While working with Prince Turki al-Faisal Saud, the head of the Saudi General

Intelligence Agency³⁸, bin Laden learned to recruit jihadists, not only from Saudi Arabia but all over the Middle East, for the fight in Afghanistan. Bin Laden went to mosques and private homes to deliver his speeches as to why it was important to expel the non-believers (Russians) from Afghanistan. As the war continued Osama bin Laden became a very effective communicator, disseminating the jihadist message needed to attract more recruits and fundraising resources for the fight to free Afghanistan. Over the course of the struggle in Afghanistan, bin Laden learned a plethora of skills that benefited him in his next jihad against the other superpower, America.

Coming back from Afghanistan victorious over the Soviets, bin Laden was a hero to the Saudi people. He was in demand to speak about his experiences and he began delivering messages in mosques and homes about boycotting American goods because America was supporting Israel.³⁹ These messages were recorded messages and circulated throughout Saudi Arabia.⁴⁰ This was the first time bin Laden utilized his experiences after the Soviet-Afghan jihad but it was not the first time bin Laden had espoused anti-American rhetoric. That began in 1982 during the war in Afghanistan.⁴¹ These messages were not broadly disseminated outside Arab and Muslim countries. American intelligence agencies knew of these messages but the American people did not know of bin Laden's antipathy toward America until the Gulf War to expel Saddam Hussein out of Kuwait. Bin Laden believed his war experiences gave him the skills to move into the foreign policy and national security arena. He approached the members of the royal family with a

³⁸ Peter Bergen, *Holy War: Inside the Secret World of Osama bin Laden INC.* (London, England: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2002), p.60.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p.84.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p.70.

plan to expel the communists from South Yemen but the Saudi regime turned down his plan. The regime also turned down his plan to expel Saddam Hussein from Kuwait. Bin Laden believed he had earned the privilege to be involved in Saudi foreign policy and national security matters because of his working relationship with Prince Turki al-Faisal, Chief of Saudi Intelligence, and Ahmed Badeeb, Prince Turki's Chief of Staff, during the Soviet-Afghan war.⁴² This was the turning point for bin Laden, who came to believe he could work within the Saudi political system to make changes he believed would protect his country. The government revoked bin Laden's passport for disobeying the government when he sent his Arab-Afghans to fight in South Yemen after the Saudi government had said no to the plan. Revoking the passport was a message to leave the governing to the regime and go back to construction. This was the point at which bin Laden changed from being the "controller" segment to the "controlled" segment in R D Crelinsten's model depicting "Terrorism as Political Communication."⁴³ Bin Laden operated between the Controller and the Controlled when he sent his Arab-Afghans to South Yemen. He may have believed he was working in the Controller role but the Saudis disagreed, finally revoking his passport. Crelinsten would probably side with the Saudis and say bin Laden was in what he called the "problem area differentiating between dissent and subversion" of the Controlled segment of the model.⁴⁴

Bin Laden did not heed the regimes message because he left the country for Sudan with some help from family members. Sudan is where bin Laden transformed his

⁴² Steve Coll, *Ghost Wars: The Secret History of the CIA, Afghanistan, and Bin Laden, From the Soviet Invasion to September 10, 2001*. (New York, New York: Penguin Books, 2004) pp. 86-88.

⁴³ R D Crelinsten, *Terrorism as Political Communication: The Relationship between the Controller and the Controlled*. (Aberdeen, Britain: The University Press Aberdeen, 1987) p. 10.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p.12.

message and position to the Controlled segment of Crelinsten's model. If he could not make legitimate changes within the Saudi Arabian political system, he was going to set up his own system to make the changes and be seen as the Controller. Bin Laden's first messages sent from Sudan to America were sent in the form of terrorist attacks against US Marines at two hotels in Aden Yemen on December 29, 1992. That attack put bin Laden further down Crelinsten's continuum to the terrorism segment of the model. Since this is a mirror image model, bin Laden would say that the US Military was an insurgent force in Yemen and deserved to be expelled. The next terrorist message was sent to the Americans in Somalia when the Arab-Afghans and Aidid's fighters killed eighteen soldiers and wounded many more in the Black Hawk Down incident in October 1993. These terrorist attacks on American military personnel were the first and were followed by Americans being killed in two terrorist attacks on the Saudi National Guard facility in Riyadh in November 1995 and Khobar Towers in Dhahran in June 1996. The message of all of the attacks was for America to leave the umma. During this first time frame, bin Laden did not send America and its leaders written messages to leave Yemen, Somalia and Saudi Arabia. The Americans knew they were not welcome in Saudi Arabia but insisted that since the Saudi government invited them they would stay no matter what anybody else had to say. Bin Laden used subversive tactics he learned in his Afghan days to hide his involvement until he believed he was strong enough to confront America and its allies in the open. The attacks in Yemen and Somalia were the first terrorist messages sent to America; he changed the form of communication to the written word in the next

message he sent to the Saudi regime and their Chief Mufti through two letters from the Board of Advise and Reformation set up by bin Laden and his allies.

December 1994, was the first written message bin Laden sent after basing his operation in Sudan went to bin Baz; it stated his displeasure with bin Baz's ruling in favor of the Saudi regime for letting the Americans base troops in Saudi Arabia. The bin Baz letter was followed with a letter to King Fahd expressing bin Laden's displeasure with the King's lack of leadership of the Kingdom's economy, foreign policy, national security and other issues. Bin Laden questioned the alliance with America and its allies and called for the over throw of the King and his regime. In the Crelinsten model, these letters fall in the Protest area under Subversion between Politics and Crime; bin Laden would not see that connection for his activities but he would see the connection in the King's actions.⁴⁵ Bin Laden had not crossed what Crelinsten calls the "violence threshold [that] separates [C]rime from [P]olitics"⁴⁶ in the Controlled area of the model. Influencing the Saudi population was the intent of the open letter to King Fahd; it also served as notice to the King to change his policies or Al Qaeda would force a regime change in Saudi Arabia.

Before the two letters were sent, Bin Laden began introducing himself to the world in international media interviews. His first western interview was with Robert Fisk from *The Independent* in December, 1993. In that interview, Bin Laden introduced himself as a multi-business owner trying to move on with life after his war experiences in

⁴⁵ R D Crelinsten, *Terrorism as Political Communication: The Relationship between the Controller and the Controlled*. (Aberdeen, Britain: The University Press Aberdeen, 1987) p. 15.

⁴⁶ Ibid. p. 17.

Afghanistan; he stated he was hiring his fellow mujahidin to help them move on with their lives, too. He also talked of his disdain for America. This is the first time Americans were introduced to their future number one enemy.

The Crelinsten model starts out with Social Deviance, which includes dropouts, the unemployed, the unskilled, and the poor and religious heretics. Social Deviance is the category that bin Laden and his fellow dissenters are supposed to come under.⁴⁷ Bin Laden, however, does not fall under any of these descriptors. He is well-educated, comes from a wealthy family, has a fairly stable family background, and is a business owner. His fellow Al Qaeda members have similar backgrounds, according to Marc Sageman:

1. Two-thirds were from solid upper or middle-class background;
2. The Average age when joining Jihad was 25.69 years;
3. They Came from caring families;
4. Their Education was overwhelmingly secular;
5. A slight majority of the Southeast Asian cluster was educated in Muslim boarding schools and was not ignorant;
6. 60 per cent had some college education;
7. Three-quarters had good occupational training;
8. The majority were members of a profession;
9. Only one-quarter were considered unskilled with few prospects;
10. Three-quarters were married and a majority had children.⁴⁸

In December, 1993, bin Laden introduced himself and Al Qaeda to the western public, though he had already acted as a terrorist by attacking the American military in late 1992 and October 1993.

While in Sudan, bin Laden and Al Qaeda's standard operating procedure was to work in the shadows and deny any involvement in terrorism. This operating procedure

⁴⁷ Ibid. p.15.

⁴⁸ Marc Sageman, *The Bonds of Terror: The Rise of the Global Jihad*. (Singapore: Marshall Cavendish International, 2005) pp. 39-40.

helped him to build his organization. The Clinton administration saw terrorism as a law-and-order issue and tried to compile evidence to bring charges against bin Laden and Al Qaeda operatives but could not find overwhelming evidence that would indict bin Laden or Al Qaeda on terrorism charges. Bin Laden and Al Qaeda hid their actions from those they committed terrorism against. Bin Laden continued his subversive activities even after he declared war on the United States on August 23, 1996.

The “Declaration of War” was the message that marked the beginning of the second timeframe and was the first expression of bin Laden and Al Qaeda’s grievances with America and its allies. It was also the first time bin Laden took responsibility for attacking the American military in Somalia, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen. In this interview with ‘Abd-al-Bari ‘Atwan on November 27, 1996, bin Laden refers to “signals” he is sending to the American government but states the Americans don’t understand the signals. Peter Suedfeld and Dana C. Leighton refer to R. Jervis’s description of:

“[S]ignals which ‘are issued mainly to influence the receiver’s image of the sender,’ and *indices*, which are believed to be accurate communications of the source’s true intentions or capabilities. The latter include ‘patterns of behavior that disclose, unknown to the actor, important information’.”⁴⁹

President Clinton had no remarks pertaining to bin Laden’s “Declaration of War” message or about the interview with Atwan that occurred in August and November, 1996. It is not that the United States was not listening; the CIA had more than 37 volumes of material on bin Laden. Ignoring bin Laden was the standard procedure followed by President Clinton and his administration. The national security and foreign policy teams

⁴⁹ Peter Suedfeld and Dana C. Leighton, Early Communication in the War Against Terrorism: An Integrative Complexity Analysis. *Political Psychology*, Vol.23, No. 3, 200., pp. 585-586.

advised all presidents to ignore the terrorist in order not to give legitimacy to the individual or organization. President Clinton ignored all of bin Laden's messages until bin Laden sent another message, the East African bombings of two US Embassies in August 1998, signaling that he was not going anywhere and that the US ignored him at its own peril. Bin Laden had sent 29 messages since he delivered the "Declaration of War" speech on August 23, 1996. The eighteenth message was a new declaration against America that he delivered on February 23, 1998. The indices described by Suedfeld and Leighton indicate intentions and capabilities that were completely ignored by the national security and foreign policy team President Clinton assembled out of his belief that bin Laden did not have the capability to harm the United States and did not have the legitimacy to warrant dialogue with the United States. Bin Laden, however, believed he had the legitimacy to speak for Arab and Muslim people and continued to press his grievances in the media. Crelinsten explains "legitimacy" in this way:

A legitimacy threshold seems to lie within the grey zone of terrorism itself [which lies between crime and revolution]. In this zone, the legitimacy of the controller and the controlled come into direct conflict in a kind of zero-sum game of winner take all.⁵⁰

The zero-sum game is exactly what bin Laden had in mind when he continued to antagonize American leaders to come after him in Afghanistan. He said he would fight the United States in a guerrilla war that would turn into a long war that would eventually bankrupt America, forcing it to withdraw from the umma. He believes that was the end result of the jihad against the Soviet Union in the Soviet-Afghan war; the Soviet Union

⁵⁰ R D Crelinsten, *Terrorism as Political Communication: The Relationship between the Controller and the Controlled*. (Aberdeen, Britain: The University Press Aberdeen, 1987) p. 17.

had to withdraw from Afghanistan and the country itself eventually collapsed. The Americans, on the other hand, believed it was their destiny to spread democracy around the world and would not let some terrorist impede their imperialistic venture. They believed bin Laden was too small to have the power to stop the US military without state backing.

When bin Laden bombed the two embassies on August 7, 1998, President Clinton and Sandy Berger cited quotes from his February 23, 1998 message concerning the targeting of civilians. Bin Laden's message to President Clinton was "Do you remember this date when American troops first landed on Saudi Arabian soil in 1990 for the Gulf War?⁵¹" Civilians were a target in the defense of the umma; the sophistication and complexity of Al Qaeda's operations indicated Osama bin Laden had upped the stakes to prove he was an adversary the United States would have to deal with in the long run. The unintended result of the American strike against bin Laden in Sudan and Afghanistan was a rise in bin Laden's popularity in the Arab and Muslim world, which gave him more legitimacy on the Arab Street that the Americans were trying to deny him by adhering to their standard policy of ignoring him and not engaging in dialogue.

Twenty-two messages were delivered before bin Laden sent another signal by blowing up the *USS Cole* in Aden, Yemen on October 12, 2000. He had delivered a *fatwa* pertaining to the *Cole* bombing not quite six months prior to the event. His previous written message was delivered on July 15, 1999 to cover the Millennium bombing that was foiled at the Canadian-US border and the missed bombing of the *USS Sullivan* in

⁵¹ Lawrence Wright, *The Looming Tower: Al-Qaeda And The Road To 9/11*. (New York, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006), p. 270.

Aden, Yemen, in which the suicide bombers' boat sank after they left the dock. Neither *fatwa* was addressed by the administration and bin Laden was not addressed after the *Cole* bombing. There was no retaliatory strike by the Clinton administration or the incoming Bush administration. The *Cole* incident was at the end of the second timeframe.

The third timeframe started with eight written messages sent by bin Laden delivered after the *fatwa* of June 26, 2000. In these eight messages, bin Laden never addressed President Bush. Instead, Osama bin Laden discussed the issue of the United States putting pressure on the Taliban to turn him over to American authorities in his April 3, 2001 message.⁵² The next message sent was the attack on September 11, 2001. Prior to all the previous attacks against America, bin Laden delivered a *fatwa*, but he did not deliver a *fatwa* prior to the 9/11 attack. He received criticism for not giving America fair warning, as called for in the Koran.

Like the Clinton administration before the East African US Embassy bombings, the Bush administration completely ignored bin Laden and did not see him and Al Qaeda as a serious threat to the overwhelming power of the American military.⁵³ The Bush administration did not believe bin Laden had legitimacy in the international arena, let alone in the Arab and Muslim world. Legitimacy was reserved for heads of state.

M. Tugwell describes terrorism as a “sub-species of revolution” that is a struggle for power that inevitability leads to legitimacy:

The key to that power is popular allegiance, whether given voluntarily or out of fear. Allegiance is transferred from regime to revolutionaries by shifts in the

⁵² FBIS, “Usama Bin Ladin Regrets Restrictions Imposed by Taleban” April 3, 2001. [On-line] Available from <http://www.fas.org/irp/world/para/ubl-fbis.pdf> ; Accessed September 23, 2009, pp. 150-151.

⁵³ Richard Clarke, *Your Government Failed You: Breaking The Cycle Of National Security Disasters*. (New York, New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2008) pp. 159-165.

popular conception of relative credibility and legitimacy. Credibility rests on demonstrated ability to control events—being in command, running a government or an alternative power structure, winning small battles. Legitimacy is the public perception of a right to rule based on whatever values the public may associate with that right. The legal definition of legitimacy, which sides with the incumbent regime, cease to apply once the government’s credibility is eroded. Consequently the fight for allegiance consists of myriad small battles over credibility and legitimacy, in which the two issues become inextricably mixed.⁵⁴

Bin Laden believes his struggle with the United States will be won when the American people become fatigued with the war in Afghanistan, as the Soviets became fatigued in Afghanistan. He believes that the American public is not willing to be entangled in a guerrilla war for years with no end in sight. He also believes this will happen with American allies. His attitude did not change when the Bush administration decided to invade Iraq, he saw it as an opportunity to make international events work in Al Qaeda’s favor. The Bush alliances began to experience defections because of public pressure. Bin Laden did not let this opportunity slip by; he tried to influence the vote in Spain with a bombing in Madrid. Right after the bombing and the vote, he delivered a message to the European allies that their security would be upheld if the allies pulled out of Iraq. They all declined, which prompted bin Laden to send signals in the form of several bombings in a single day in England. His truce offers were a new message bin Laden sent to the American people and the allies’ population in order to divide the ruling class from the general population of the coalition countries. He said this in a letter to Mullah Omar just after the American invasion of Afghanistan started.

⁵⁴ M. Tugwell, *Terrorism and Propaganda: Problem and Response*. (Aberdeen, Britain: The University Press Aberdeen, 1987) p. 409.

Bin Laden's strategy was working in part because of the animosity the rest of the world held for President George W. Bush. He was not respected by the populations of American allies nor by some foreign leaders; for this reason, bin Laden started sending messages of truce offerings to the American people and its allies in the last year of President Bush's first term. He sent a total of eight truce offerings, including a recent offering on September 13, 2009. The first offering came on October 26, 2002 while the Bush administration was gearing up for invading Iraq. The next truce offering came days before the American presidential election. In his first truce offering, bin Laden told the American people why he attacked the United States and what the American people could do to stop the attacks. If those issues were not resolved, he vowed to continue to attack the US until the issues were resolved. Many believe the message just before the 2004 election was designed to influence the election, but in fact bin Laden did not care who was in office because he believed that the foreign policy and national security apparatus were the same under both the Democrats and the Republicans. He again offered truces in 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2009. These offerings provided the reasons for the conflict between Al Qaeda and the United States and its allies. American foreign policy issues were the cause of the conflict, not freedom, voting rights, and other excuses American leaders from both political parties used to justify the fight against Al Qaeda and the Taliban in Afghanistan. Included in the seven truce offerings were two individual messages sent to the European people in 2004 and 2007. The third message was delivered to all the people of the West in 2008. According to a BBC News report, the 2006 truce offer was dismissed by the White House. On *Fox News*, Vice President Dick Cheney said it was

“unlikely” that Al Qaeda would “ever sit down and sign a truce” and Cheney added “I think you have to destroy them. It’s the only way with them.”⁵⁵

Bin Laden expected the truce offering to be dismissed, as previous offerings had been dismissed during the course of the conflict with the United States and its allies. Cheney’s response shows that the White House did not want to engage in dialogue with Al Qaeda. The Bush Administration believed it would be appeasement to talk to Al Qaeda, so they put doubt in the public’s mind by saying that Al Qaeda would not sit down and talk or sign a truce. Putting doubt in the public’s mind about the trustworthiness of the enemy meant the administration did not have to engage in dialogue with Al Qaeda. The war continued because the enemy (“them”) had to be “destroyed.” It’s the “only” responsible way of dealing with a fanatical enemy like “them.” Al Qaeda’s response was to deliver more “words and deeds” in an effort to engage in a dialogue with the United States. Al Qaeda was more than willing to continue their fight in order not to be dismissed and to have their grievances addressed.

Why Al Qaeda Turned to Violence

When did bin Laden decide to use violence and why did he feel violence was the only way to get America to leave Saudi Arabia and other Arab and Muslim countries? Bin Laden came from a very wealthy family; that would give him a reason not to be involved in an organization that wanted to overthrow countries. His background is inconsistent with conventional thinking about the variables associated with terrorist

⁵⁵ BBC News, US rebuffs Bin Laden ‘truce call’, January 20, 2006. [On-line] Available from http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/4630314.stm ; Accessed January 5, 2009.

activity.⁵⁶ He is not conventional to begin with; he went to war for his *umma* when no one else in his family did. Because of that experience, he became an inspirational leader to his followers. As time has progressed, he has become an inspiration to people on the Arab Street.

Al Qaeda began during the winding down of the Soviet-Afghan war. Al Qaeda was established August 20, 1988 in Peshawar, Pakistan. At the time, bin Laden was not sure where he wanted to focus the organization's energies. He believed Central Asia was the place to continue the fight against the Soviets. Sheikh Abdullah Azzam, however, wanted to focus on helping the Palestinians against Israel. Others, such as Ayman Zawahiri, wanted to focus on the governments of Islamic countries, such as Egypt. The country that was not on any of these members enemies list was America.⁵⁷ Bin Laden was prepared to carry on the fight against the communists in Central Asia and South Yemen, where he funded the Arab-Afghan efforts to expel the communist government in his ancestral homeland. He was also ready to carry on his fight with the secular Saddam Hussein. Bin Laden believed the Saudi regime would back him to some degree in his fight against these enemies of Islam. Bin Laden disobeyed the King when he sent fighters and money to South Yemen, however, the irritated royal family revoked bin Laden's passport. His naïve understanding of Saudi foreign policy became apparent when his combat credentials were questioned by the royal family members who listened to his plans to rid the enemies from the land of the two holy mosques.

⁵⁶ R D Crelinsten, *Terrorism as Political Communication: The Relationship between the Controller and the Controlled*. (Aberdeen, Britain: The University Press Aberdeen, 1987) p. 15.

⁵⁷ Lawrence Wright, *The Looming Tower: Al-Qaeda And The Road To 9/11*. (New York, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006), pp. 130-134.

When the Saudis refused to allow bin Laden and his Arab-Afghans to eject Saddam Hussein from Kuwait and allowed America to base its military in Saudi Arabia while pushing Saddam Hussein out of Kuwait, humiliation and anger must have overwhelmed bin Laden as his combat experience and love for his country were belittled by allowing the Americans to defend his country when he was capable and more than willing. He was shut out of the system after he had given his war plans. Sitting by and watching the Americans and the Coalition countries defend his country was a maddening experience for bin Laden; he made the West and America in particular, the number one enemy of Al Qaeda. Bin Laden watched in safety from behind the front lines in Kuwait and Iraq as the American military destroyed Iraq and drove its troops out of Kuwait in record time. Cynthia McClintock observes that "...politics cause revolutions only when authoritarian systems shut challengers out."⁵⁸

At the time bin Laden left Saudi Arabia, he criticized the regime but did not advocate its overthrow until after he had attacked the American military in Yemen and Somalia. Instead of challenging the regime, bin Laden decided to move his family, his Arab-Afghan fighters, and Al Qaeda to Sudan, weary of his country's unwillingness to defend itself and of American boasting about its quick victory over Iraq.

The Al Qaeda leader settled into Sudan, starting a multitude of businesses to employ his Arab-Afghans and to plan their next venture for Al Qaeda. They began sending fighters to Arab and Islamic countries to implement their philosophy. America

⁵⁸ James Ron, Ideology in Context: Explaining Sendero Luminoso's Tactical Escalation, *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 38, No. 5, 2001, p. 579.

involved itself in Somalia's civil war when the international media was filled with images of starving and dead children in Somali towns and villages toward the end of 1992.

Al Qaeda's leaders did not view American intervention as a humanitarian mission but an expansion of American Imperialism. The mission eventually turned into a mission to disarm the leading clans, especially General Aidid. Mission creep took over and the mission turned into an exercise in nation-building that would help the Somalis transition into a democracy. James Ron and other scholars point out that "conventional wisdom in revolutionary theory ... suggests that elections and partial democracy are powerful disincentives to armed struggle."⁵⁹ Democracy was a pipe dream of the Americans and it was years away from even being implemented. Democracy was not a factor in bin Laden's decision to attack the American military in Somalia. He stated that he was afraid that the United States wanted to put permanent bases in Somalia and Yemen and that he was not going to allow that to happen. Around a year passed before bin Laden attacked the Americans in Yemen in December, 1992 and in Somalia in September, 1993.

James Ron adds that "[m]any theorists of revolution have observed that interaction effects between ideology, political and social context are vital, as neither ideas nor social structure alone can explain movement trajectories and tactics."⁶⁰ Broad contextual issues explain why bin Laden decided to use violence against the Americans before he explained his grievances in his "Declaration of War" message almost four years after his first attack in Yemen.

⁵⁹ James Ron, Ideology in Context: Explaining Sendero Luminoso's Tactical Escalation, *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 38, No. 5, 2001, p. 570.

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 571.

Another theory that may explain why bin Laden and Al Qaeda decided to use violence to confront the Americans is the “political opportunity theory” that James Ron discusses:

[M]any political opportunity theorists recognize that the broader political changes must fruitfully interact with movement ideologies if new movement trajectories are to occur. In their discussion of movement escalation towards violence, for example, political opportunity theorists argue that radical ideology is a necessary but insufficient explanation for tactical escalation.⁶¹

A perfect storm of events brought bin Laden and Al Qaeda to be the counter weight to American foreign policy in Arab and Muslim countries. No one in the region had the military power to confront America, let alone the courage to defy the world’s sole superpower. Bin Laden as well as the other Arab-Afghans believed that their war experiences gave them the mettle to do what others feared. The experiences bin Laden accumulated forged an atmosphere that enabled him to rise as an inspirational leader the Arab Street and Muslim communities were longing for to confront the superpower imposing its will on the Middle East and other regions of the world. Bin Laden over the years built an organization that became more popular as the American military tried to kill him. M. Tugwell points out that the three key ingredients for revolutions are leadership, organization, and inspiration, the last being the most important ingredient because it is regarded as the “foundation of the struggle”.⁶² There were other leaders in the jihadist movement that were good leaders, but bin Laden’s accumulated war experiences and the fact that he was the son of a billionaire made the man an inspiration to others.

⁶¹ Ibid., p.579.

⁶² M. Tugwell, *Terrorism and Propaganda: Problem and Response*. (Aberdeen, Britain: The University Press Aberdeen, 1987) p. 410.

Over the course of the Soviet-Afghan war, Osama bin Laden developed and cultivated a number of skill sets that enabled him to build Al Qaeda into an effective organization, something many of his fellow jihadists did not believe could be done. The biggest disbeliever was the American government. The skills that America, Pakistan and the Saudi Arabian governments helped Osama build were:

1. Fundraising
2. Recruiting
3. Training
4. Intelligence
5. Diplomacy
6. Combat Experience (Guerrilla Tactics)
7. Working in the Shadows (Subversive Activities)
8. Inspirational Leadership
9. Inspirational Speaking

Other individuals who helped nurtured the above skills in bin Laden during this same timeframe, include Abdullah Azzam, who was Osama's mentor throughout the jihad and taught him invaluable lessons. Ayman al-Zawahiri was another mentor who helped bin Laden refine his skills over the years of their close relationship. Still other unknown jihadist members assisted bin Laden in becoming the inspirational leader that he is today.

Bin Laden convinced enough jihadists that America was in a vulnerable state that it would be advantageous to attack America, eliminating the far enemy before taking on the near enemy. Because the far enemy was the supporter and defender of the near enemy, it would be easier to engage America in a guerrilla war to drain their resources and eventually bankrupt them, forcing them to leave the *umma* humiliated and defeated.

Another theory that explains bin Laden, his fellow jihadists and, even more importantly, the Arab Street was the “rising-but-frustrated-expectation” theory that Hubert M. Blalock discusses in *Power and Conflict: Toward a General Theory*. This theory helps explain why bin Laden and his fellow jihadists felt frustrated with the foreign policy initiatives the United States had implemented since the end of World War II in Arab and Muslim countries: and the reality of those policies had not met their expectations. Blalock explains what Barrington Moore and other scholars subscribe to:

[T]he over all thesis that an important explanatory factor is the *gap* between expectations and actuality, rather than the absolute *levels* of deprivation or inequality that may exist in any given society. There also appears to be a general consensus that it is not the most deprived, at the very bottom of a social hierarchy, who are the instigators of revolutions, though they may constitute supporting forces once it is underway and though they may, from time to time, engage in relatively isolated and usually abortive revolts over particular local grievances.⁶³

Marc Sageman provides statistical data on individuals in Al Qaeda and other jihadist organizations that supports the theory that the deprived are not the instigators of a revolution. A recent news report from Saudi Arabia supports Sageman’s findings. The Saudis arrested 44 suspected Al Qaeda militants; of those 44 militants, 30 “university degrees, mostly in the field of science.” That is, 68% of Al Qaeda members have a higher education, usually in a science-related field.⁶⁴ If that statistic holds true in a larger sampling of Al Qaeda members today, it means that Al Qaeda is recruiting 8% more college educated members than when Sageman reported his findings in 2005.

⁶³ Hubert M. Blalock, Jr., *Power and Conflict: Toward a General Theory*. (Newbury Park, California: Sage Publications, 1989) pp. 14-15.

⁶⁴ Saudis accuse 44 of ties to al-Qaeda, *The Denver Post*, August 20, 2009, p.11A.

Blalock explains that other authors, including Tillys, do not believe the “expectation-gap” theory can explain “specific conflicts and rebellions”⁶⁵ over grievances that have been around for a considerable amount of time. Tillys is correct that the grievances have been around in the Middle East for some time, but the Political Opportunity Theory and the Expectations-Gap Theory help explain why Osama bin Laden’s experiences led him to decide to attack the United States.

The first two attacks gave bin Laden and the other Al Qaeda leaders plenty of data to digest and learn from in order to develop a strategy to go against a far superior power that could annihilate the organization in a conventional war. The failed hotel bombings in Yemen gave them a chance to see where their weaknesses were in the tactics, materials, training and personnel; they implemented their lessons in other bombings throughout the Arab and Muslim region before Al Qaeda operatives attacked American targets. They made the same evaluation during and after the attack on the American military in Somalia, reviewing their guerrilla tactics, training, arms and personnel to see how they performed against some of the most highly trained American soldiers. Al Qaeda’s leadership also analyzed how foreign policy directives were implemented in regards to General Aidid and the Somalis. General Aidid traveled to Sudan during Operation Restore Hope, so it is reasonable to assume that he and the Al Qaeda leadership discussed the negotiating tactics used by the Americans and the United Nations to force Aidid from power. In addition, they looked at the negotiations for the captured Black Hawk pilot and

⁶⁵ Hubert M. Blalock, Jr., *Power and Conflict: Toward a General Theory*. (Newbury Park, California: Sage Publications, 1989) p. 15.

the message President Clinton sent to Aidid to release the pilot, upon which the United States would leave Somalia.

All of this revealed that the Americans only wanted to negotiate from a position of power so the Somalis would be forced to follow American demands. The Americans and the UN set the agenda without Somali input, even when the Somalis requested to be involved in the negotiations to disarm the militias. Bin Laden concluded that when the pain and death are sufficient, the Americans will negotiate to leave.

Al Qaeda took several years to develop a strategy based on their findings before bin Laden emerged from the shadows to openly confront the sole superpower, express his and Al Qaeda's grievances, and to state what the United States must do. Deeds followed to show the world what Al Qaeda was capable of; he let the world know in his videotaped messages, media interviews and internet postings what he expected from the United States and its allies if they wanted peace and security.

He told the world and American leaders that his strategy was to confront the superpower in a guerrilla war that would bankrupt America. Al Qaeda was open to dialogue about its grievances against America, but the opportunity never presented itself, so bin Laden stuck to his strategy of dragging America into a guerrilla war in Afghanistan. Al Qaeda was pleasantly surprised and elated that the Bush administration decided to expand the war into Iraq, which of course helped drain American resources quicker than expected. In the meantime, Al Qaeda leadership was hidden somewhere in the world, dispatching operatives to attack targets all over the world to show its

capabilities had not been diminished. Now the United States military was carrying out two guerrilla wars but was not actively fighting Al Qaeda forces in Iraq or Afghanistan.

How Large Political Organizations Deal With Grievances

Before Osama bin Laden attacked the US military in Yemen and Somalia he did not air his grievances publicly. His grievances were not heard by the West until bin Laden delivered his “Declaration of War” some three years after his first attack against Americans. Al Qaeda operatives attacked the American military twice in Saudi Arabia before he delivered his “Declaration of War” message. He was sending signals, but the American leadership did not understand the signals as he surmised in his November 27, 1996 interview with Abd al-Bari Atwan. At that time, he made the American government aware that he was responsible for the attacks in Yemen and Somalia and the bombings in Saudi Arabia. In the “Declaration of War” he referred to how quickly the Americans left Yemen and Somalia and expressed his grievances with the United States. The grievances pertained to the impact American foreign policy had on Arab and Muslim countries and their citizens. An indication of how the United States was going to respond to bin Laden’s grievances about US foreign policy initiatives was given on March 4 1993, about nine days after terrorists had attacked the World Trade Center in February. President Clinton answered a question asking if the American people should be “afraid about foreign policy decisions that might affect us domestically through terrorism” and the president answered “No, I don’t think the American people can afford to be afraid.”⁶⁶

⁶⁶ William J. Clinton, Remarks on Signing the Emergency Unemployment Compensation Amendments of 1993 and an Exchange With Reporters, *The American Presidency Project*. March 4, 1993, [On-line] Available from <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=46295> ; Accessed March 5, 2008.

President Clinton was not going to alter American foreign policy for anyone, not even if the blowback from those policies was going to bring terrorism to the home front. A new world order was on the way and that meant globalization was going to reach every country no matter what the consequences. Osama bin Laden had stated repeatedly that American foreign policy is his main criticism of America; and when that policy changes in respect to Arab and Muslim countries, the United States will live in security. He is not at odds with American freedoms and liberties. To paraphrase bin Laden: Just leave us alone and we will leave you alone.

The earliest time that bin Laden was mentioned by President Clinton was August 20, 1998, the day US Cruise missiles struck Al Qaeda camps in Afghanistan and mistakenly demolished a pharmaceutical plant in Sudan. Bin Laden delivered twenty-nine messages before the East African embassy bombings and before President Clinton commented on bin Laden's second fatwa in "World Islamic Front,"⁶⁷ delivered February 23, 1998 which called for targeting civilians. In the President's Address to the Nation on August 20th, he referenced an ABC News John Miller interview that aired June 10, 1998 pertaining to the fatwa on killing civilians.⁶⁸ The President also referred to the Bojinka Plot⁶⁹, which called for blowing up 6 American 747 airliners over the Pacific, and to bin Laden's killing of peacekeepers in Somalia. The President's strategy was to portray bin

⁶⁷ Bruce Lawrence, *Messages To The World: The Statements Of Osama Bin Laden*. (New York, New York: Verso, 2005) pp. 58-62.

⁶⁸ William J. Clinton, Address to the Nation on Military Action Against Terrorist Sites in Afghanistan and Sudan, *The American Presidency Project*. August 20, 1998. [On-line] Available from <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=54799> ; Accessed March 5, 2008.

⁶⁹ Simon Reeve, *The New Jackals: Ramzi Yousef, Osama bin Laden and the future of terrorism*. (Boston, Massachusetts: Northeastern University Press, 1999) pp. 71-93; Daniel Benjamin and Steven Simon, *The Age of Scared Terror*. (New York, New York: Random House, 2002).

Laden as a monster wanting to kill civilians along with military personnel from different countries that were only acting in a peacekeeping role in Somalia carrying out a humanitarian mission.

Once the administration was informed by Al Qaeda, it could no longer say it did not have the evidence that Al Qaeda was committing acts of terrorism and it could no longer deny that Al Qaeda was communicating their grievances with the United States. The policy of the United States was to ignore Al Qaeda's communication attempts, no matter how crude and angry they appeared and sounded. President Clinton and his advisors believed the power the United States projected with its military force and the economic power it projected in the world entitled it not to respond to the grievances Al Qaeda voiced, plus it was US policy and it had worked in previous terrorist incidents. Responding to the grievances would only give Al Qaeda legitimacy. The grievances of Al Qaeda were US goals for the Middle East region and to give legitimacy to those grievances would undercut US foreign policy goals.

In Blalock's second chapter on *Power and Dependency*, he discusses the "definition of power, namely of control and domination." He uses Dahl as an example where "A [the United States] has power over B [Somalia or Al Qaeda] to the extent that he [the United States] can get B [Somalia or Al Qaeda] to do something that B [Somali or Al Qaeda] would not otherwise do."⁷⁰ In Somalia, American and UN diplomats began negotiating from a level of strength that the US and UN believed General Aidid did not possess. The US believed it could either dictate or impose its demands on General Aidid

⁷⁰ Hubert M. Blalock, Jr., *Power and Conflict: Toward a General Theory*. (Newbury Park, California: Sage Publications, 1989) p. 28.

backed by the force of the military, which would force Aidid to follow the demands of the world leaders. Critics of this policy of negotiating from strength say "...one does not compromise with a man with a gun, and getting a gun oneself does not assist the process of compromise either. One does not negotiate from strength; one may dictate from strength, but one does not negotiate."⁷¹ The US strategy reflects what Peter Carnevale noted from Bell (1962, *Negotiating from Strength*) that, "There are two possible reasons for not negotiating: because one is weak and cannot afford to, or because one is strong and does not need to."⁷² President Clinton and his foreign policy and national security team believed they had all the power in Somalia. Military power and economic power is what the American and UN teams believed would convince General Aidid to compromise his own goals and beliefs to follow the demands of the international force.

Carnevale talks about the "legitimate power"⁷³ of the mediator but has a narrower meaning for a negotiator because the opposite side (General Aidid) only has the ability to decide if the negotiator (the United States) has the legitimacy to dictate demands. In Somalia, General Aidid and bin Laden did not believe the United States or the United Nations had the legitimate power to make any demands on the clans and tribes in Somalia.

When General Aidid and Osama bin Laden decided the international force in Somalia did not have the legitimate power to impose its demands on them, they began to fight back, which changed the situation very quickly for the international force. The

⁷¹ Peter J. Carnevale, *Mediating from Strength*, in Jacob Bercovitch, *Studies in International Mediation* (New York, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002) p. 25.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid., p.28.

more Aidid and bin Laden fought back, the more the US tried to use more coercive power on Aidid and bin Laden's forces. Blalock explained that for "special cases it may not matter whether power is defined in terms of the achievement of goals, controlling another party, or overcoming resistance."⁷⁴ He says that if a controlling party, such as the United States, is trying to control the behavior of the other party, such as General Aidid and Al Qaeda, then the definition of achievement of goals is identical to controlling another party. This is exactly what the United States tried to accomplish as it tried to dictate the terms of the international forces' goals onto Aidid and bin Laden. The goal of the United States was to disarm and remove Aidid. Bin Laden and Aidid believed the US did not have the legitimacy to impose those goals on Aidid and or to impose its will on an Islamic country.

Dictating of terms by the United States continued until the Black Hawk Down incident occurred in October 1993. Just prior to the incident, the United States escalated the conflict by adding Special Forces troops after four US military personnel were killed in early August 1993⁷⁵ and six more wounded in late August.⁷⁶ This showed Aidid and especially Osama bin Laden that when negotiations are not proceeding in favor of the Americans, the Americans will escalate the conflict by adding more military force to enhance the coercive power in the negotiations. It also showed bin Laden that if the Americans take enough casualties, they will escalate the conflict.

⁷⁴ Hubert M. Blalock, Jr., *Power and Conflict: Toward a General Theory*. (Newbury Park, California: Sage Publications, 1989) p. 29.

⁷⁵ Kenneth Rutherford, *Humanitarianism Under Fire: The US and UN Intervention in Somalia*. (Sterling, Virginia: Kumarian Press, 2008), pp. 148-150; Elizabeth Drew, *On the Edge: The Clinton Presidency*. (New York, New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994), p. 321.

⁷⁶ Kenneth Rutherford, *Humanitarianism Under Fire: The US and UN Intervention in Somalia*. (Sterling, Virginia: Kumarian Press, 2008), pp. 150.

After the Black Hawk Down incident, President Clinton continued demanding concessions from Aidid. He demanded the release of a captured American pilot backed by the threat of whatever military force was necessary to get the pilot back. The President also stated that the United States would pull its troops out of Somalia if Aidid's men returned the pilot.

In the Somali conflict, Osama bin Laden learned the United States does not negotiate but dictates terms it wants from a perceived weaker foe. It will escalate a conflict to add to its coercive power when it takes casualties and when negotiations are not proceeding in its favor. The US will negotiate when the casualties reach a critical mass and when it becomes fatigued. Fatigue for the US meant a waning of public support for the war; the military unable to recruit enough willing civilians to be soldiers; soldiers' desertions and suicides impeding the performance of the military; allies beginning to withdraw their forces from the conflict because of no public support; and the United States unable to borrow the financial resources to fund its military and diplomatic initiatives. From these lessons, Osama bin Laden devised a strategy to take on a foe stronger in the military sense but not stronger in the sense of righteousness and justice. Bin Laden believed this sense of righteousness and justice gives him and his followers the will power to continue on even when the United States had become fatigued. He stated this in his September 13, 2009 message called "Statement to the American

People,” where he referred to American service members committing suicide while none of his fighters did because of the righteousness and justice of their fight.⁷⁷

After the Somali conflict, the United States had stopped different terrorists’ plots against US interests around the world and continued to implement its foreign policy initiatives around the world. In 1995 and 1996, American service members were killed and injured in Saudi Arabia from terrorist bombings of their facilities. In 1996, Osama bin Laden came out of the shadows to publicly announce his “Declaration of War” against America and its allies. He declared his grievances and stated he was waging a guerrilla war that would turn into a “long war” to bankrupt the last standing superpower as the Soviet Union had been bankrupted by the Arab-Afghans. The United States ignored Osama bin Laden words of warning, believing he was not backed by any state power that would enable him to carry out his stated goals. Over time the United States saw that bin Laden was involved in financing terrorist activities, so its intelligence and federal law enforcement agencies began collecting intelligence on him and Al Qaeda. Taking in all of Al Qaeda’s activities, the United States was somewhat unconcerned about these escalating events because it felt that terrorism was a nuisance that was part of the territory a superpower had to deal with in foreign affairs.

Blalock describes the US attitude like this: “A powerful but largely indifferent party [America] may attempt to conciliate a hostile weaker party [Al Qaeda] by lowering

⁷⁷ Usama Bin Laden, *Usama Bin Laden’s 9/11 Message to the American People*, September 14, 2009, [Online] Available from <http://www1.nefafoundation.org/documents-aqstatements.html> ; Accessed September 16, 2009.

its level of punitive acts in response to aggression by that weaker party [Al Qaeda].”⁷⁸ Indifference pretty much describes the Clinton administration’s attitude toward Al Qaeda’s grievances as the terrorist organization aired its messages and succeeded in attacking the two US Embassies in East Africa. President Clinton only mentioned bin Laden’s statements six months after bin Laden delivered the speech in February, 1998. In a press briefing on August 21, 1998, Sandy Berger referenced bin Laden’s message about targeting civilians and his interview with John Miller of ABC News; Mr. Berger thought it was a re-issuance of the original fatwa delivered in February. When Mr. Berger answered the questions in the press conference, his responses resembled a student that had crammed for a test; all the information became jumbled when he answered the questions. Nowhere did the President or Sandy Berger address the grievances that bin Laden has aired in his twenty-nine messages and interviews since delivering the “Declaration of War” in August of 1996.

This official indifference led Al Qaeda to escalate its responses in order to get some type of feedback from America. After the embassy bombings, American law enforcement stopped the Millennium Attack in the United States, but even though the US Navy knew Al Qaeda was specifically targeting a naval ship in Aden, Yemen, they were unable to stop the attack in October of 2000. The US strategy of not responding to Al Qaeda communiqués presented a dilemma of how to respond when bin Laden escalated the conflict once again with the bombing of the *USS Cole*. Blalock presents the “social control model” of Salert and Sprague where a more powerful party, the United States,

⁷⁸ Hubert M. Blalock, Jr., *Power and Conflict: Toward a General Theory*. (Newbury Park, California: Sage Publications, 1989) p. 73.

tries to find the “appropriate” “level of punitiveness” in order to retain control.⁷⁹ The Principles also discussed a retaliatory response to the embassy bombings in East Africa; the discussion intensified after bad CIA intelligence resulted in the bombing of a pharmaceutical plant in Sudan and the bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade, Yugoslavia. The White House and the Pentagon became reluctant to use CIA intelligence again.

The new Bush administration was just as indifferent to Al Qaeda and Osama bin Laden as President Clinton had been when he started dealing with Al Qaeda and bin Laden at the beginning of his administration. The Bush administration did not believe he was a threat to be worried about because he was not being sponsored by a state. The attack on September 11, 2001 did not change President Bush and his foreign policy and national security team’s indifference to Al Qaeda. It took them a month to go after bin Laden because the Pentagon did not have a plan to attack Al Qaeda even though the Pentagon knew bin Laden was in Afghanistan and had been at war with the United States for five years. “Completely indifferent” describes the attitude of the US national security apparatus through two different administrations. There was no reason to engage bin Laden when the United States believed its superior military power could not be challenged by anybody.

The administration’s retaliatory strike after September 11 was designed to be done on the cheap. Air strikes were the main element, with covert operators from the CIA and Special Forces from the Army and Marine Corps. A major military buildup was not

⁷⁹ Hubert M. Blalock, Jr., *Power and Conflict: Toward a General Theory*. (Newbury Park, California: Sage Publications, 1989) p. 84.

used because the Principles decided to hold the bulk of the military force back for their next engagement: Iraq. After driving Al Qaeda and the Taliban into the mountains to their hideout in Tora Bora, the US did not have enough troops to seal the escape route of Al Qaeda leaders into Pakistan. While the United States arrogantly bragged about killing most of Al Qaeda's leadership, the United States decided to take on another Muslim country and Al Qaeda built its organization back up into a force that was as lethal as the old organization.

Regime change in Iraq indicated the administration did not understand it had let its largest foe escape into Pakistan. The policy team did not know the difference between Sunni and Shiite or even which Arab country these sects populated. Disdain and disrespect for their enemy was the order of the day. Not only was the administration and its department heads clueless about Al Qaeda and the people it represented, but Congress⁸⁰ was just as ignorant about the enemy America faced in the Middle East. Not knowing the enemy and how its grievances play out in the rest of the Arab and Muslim world was very apparent in the administration's engagement policy with Al Qaeda. One of bin Laden's grievances was that America wanted to invade a Middle Eastern country for its oil resources; the administration proved bin Laden was right about America. Because the Bush team did not care what Al Qaeda's grievances were, it did not care how a US invasion of another Muslim country would affect those grievances. The insurgency grew in Iraq as thousands of Sunni Muslims went there to fight the Americans. Insurgents learned American tactics and improved upon their suicide bombing and IED tactics. Iraq

⁸⁰ Jeff Stein, "Can You Tell A Sunni From a Shiite?" *The New York Times*, October 17, 2006. p. A23.

became a quagmire for the US military, draining financial resources and straining human resources, bringing the nation closer to bankruptcy than the public realized.

During this time Osama bin Laden was sending the American People direct messages to explain his grievances and the reasons he has decided to fight America. His messages were also filled with truce offerings for the American and European public. As noted in the first section of this chapter, Vice President Cheney rejected Osama bin Laden's truce offering outright. Cheney demonized bin Laden, saying the only way to deal Al Qaeda is to kill them all. Cheney implied that America's grievances were so severe that extreme measures needed to be taken to deal with Al Qaeda because there was no basis for trusting Osama bin Laden's word. Blalock's model explains the Cheney's response this way:

Grievances refer to attitudes stemming from X's [America's] interpretations of Y's [Al Qaeda's] prior behaviors. Outside observers may or may not take such grievances to be "legitimate," since such attitudes may be filtered through an ideological system that may distort Y's [Al Qaeda's] actual past behaviors or interpret them in the light of X's [America's] own peculiar interests, perhaps ignoring X's [America's] own role in the process.⁸¹

The United States ignored Al Qaeda's grievances because they were, in effect, American foreign policy goals the US does not want to abandon. The foreign policy and national security establishment believed that if America abandoned its initiatives, it would show the US was abdicating its responsibility as a world leader and would show that the world's sole superpower was surrendering to a weaker foe that would severely damage the United States' standing as a world leader. The Obama administration believes

⁸¹ Hubert M. Blalock, Jr., *Power and Conflict: Toward a General Theory*. (Newbury Park, California: Sage Publications, 1989) p. 126.

Osama bin Laden's words cannot be trusted because of the eighteen year history of dealing with Al Qaeda's words and deeds. President Bush and his advisors believed the only means of victory over terrorism was to kill them all. President Obama is reaching the beginning of the fatigue factor because he is beginning to receive push back on his war policy.

Trust is the issue facing America: it can recognize Al Qaeda's grievances as legitimate or continue the conflict to a point of no return. Blalock describes the point the United States is facing this way:

[A] long history of grievances against an opponent is likely to make an initial consensus on conflict more likely and to reinforce those ideological features that simplistically tend to place the blame for nearly all unfavorable events on the opposing party. This will of course undermine efforts by moderates to discourage the engagement in the conflict and will also make it far more difficult to terminate once costs have begun to mount.

Trust of the opponent is a critical variable in this connection. A party that is perceived to have caused a long list of prior grievances can hardly be expected to behave favorably in the future, regardless of any promises it may have made. Indeed, a period of prolonged prior conflict may induce both sides into a "do or die" frame of mind in which the total destruction of the opponent may appear to be the only realistic alternative.⁸²

Bin Laden will continue to deliver his truce offerings because he knows America is on the brink of calculating its fatigue factors to establish a reason to continue the fight or to negotiate. He believes that America is close to where President Clinton was after the Black Hawk Down incident and where the Soviet Union was when they withdrew from Afghanistan. President Obama has to decide which direction to take American foreign policy because Al Qaeda is no longer in Afghanistan, which means America is just

⁸² Ibid., pp. 208-209.

fighting the Taliban and trying to nation-build in Afghanistan. In addition, America has taken the fight into Pakistan to rid the country of Al Qaeda and Taliban fighters by giving Pakistan \$7.5 billion over the next “five years focused on democratic, economic and social-development programs.”⁸³ So, now eight years after attacking Al Qaeda in Afghanistan, America is faced with nation-building functions and spreading democracy in Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan along with fighting conflicts in all three of those Islamic countries, which are the basis for bin Laden’s grievances.

⁸³ Congress Passes Billions in Aid For Pakistan, *The Denver Post*, October 1, 2009 p. 11A.

Chapter 3: Al Qaeda Terrorism Phase 1: December 1992 to October 1993

The first time frame includes Al Qaeda attacks in Yemen and Somalia. These events were chosen because they are believed to be the first attacks against the United States, and because Osama bin Laden takes responsibility for these acts of terrorism. There seems to be a trend with Yemen being hit the year before America is attacked. This trend will continue if Al Qaeda attacks within the United States in 2009. The trend also includes the fact that Al Qaeda has attacked the US under three different administrations. Somalia is considered a major attack because US military personnel were killed and injured, where as there were no injuries of American military personnel in Yemen. In 1996 bin Laden took responsibility for the Yemen and Somali attacks, some three years after the initial attacks in 1992 and 1993 respectively. Osama bin Laden was very secretive during this time frame, enabling him to grow the Al Qaeda organization with little interference from the United States, its allies and Muslim and Arab countries. He obscured all of Al Qaeda's actions and denied all accusations of terrorist activities. He made no speeches to indicate his actions until he delivered his Declaration of War speech in 1996. The US did not respond to the declaration of war and it did not verbally respond to the Hotel attack in Yemen. The US response was consistent with each attack; the military pulled out of each country shortly after the attacks. America's attention was not focused on bin Laden because it still believed that state-sponsored terrorism was the most significant threat of the time. Conventional wisdom held that lone terrorists, such as bin

Laden, could not be an organized strategic leader of his own terrorist organization without the sponsorship of a state.

The Cold War ended with the US hoping for a peace dividend and the Soviets and their allies struggling to survive. The Americans exhibited a sense of triumph, which was apparent in both their foreign policy behavior and in their discourse about the now-defunct Soviet Union. American supremacy was second to none; no other country could challenge it on the world stage. The defeat of Communism enhanced the legitimacy and power of American foreign policy, enabling the US to establish a “new world order.”

Americans drove the Iraqis out of Kuwait in one hundred days, faster than their critics believed possible, a feat made more impressive by the low casualty rate. The first Gulf War was essentially over before it begun. The US triumphed in a war with the potential to become a quagmire; instead, the quick victory symbolized the end of the “Vietnam syndrome.”

Osama bin Laden and his followers also emerged from the Cold War with a sense of triumph. In their eyes, they had defeated the Soviet Union in Afghanistan with the help of Allah, not with the help of the US, even though the US delivered aid through Saudi Arabia and Pakistan. Osama bin Laden and his followers believed they could defeat the US in a guerilla war, just as they had defeated the Soviet Union. They knew they could not defeat the US in a conventional war because of America’s superior military technology, so bin Laden and his followers initiated a secret guerilla war against the US, obscuring their actions from the world and denying any involvement in terrorist acts. As a result, the US could find no concrete evidence of bin Laden’s involvement in these

terrorist acts. In August, 1996, bin Laden finally came out of the shadows and declared war on the US in his “Declaration of War Against the Americans Occupying the Land of the Two Holy Places.” In that document he described “fast moving light forces that work under complete secrecy.”⁸⁴ Bin Laden’s legitimacy and power were established through his secrecy and repeated denials of involvement in the terrorist acts committed by his followers.

Bin Laden and the Americans have very different perceptions of power, differences born out of the reality of the wars each fought. Bin Laden fought in a guerilla war that lasted ten years; the Americans fought a conventional war that lasted one hundred days. These perceptions helped shape the events of the time period discussed in this chapter:

- The December 22, 1992 bombing in Aden, Yemen of two hotels housing American troops on their way to Somalia
- The October 3, 1993 confrontation in Somalia between American troops and General Aidid’s followers (which also included Al Qaeda fighters)

At no time during this period did the US address Al Qaeda’s grievances, even though they knew what those grievances were. Both the George H. W. Bush and the Clinton administration’s ignored bin Laden because they neither perceived him as a threat nor regarded him as a legitimate spokesman for the Arab and Islamic people. The public in the West was unaware of bin Laden, but he was a hero in Saudi Arabia. As Scott

⁸⁴ Usama Bin Laden: “Declaration of War Against the Americans”, August 1996, [on-line]; available from <http://www1.nefafoundation.org/documents-aqstatements.html> ; Accessed January 2, 2009.

MacLeod observed, he was “a towering figure among Islamic fundamentalists.”⁸⁵ During this time, bin Laden was starting to confront America from the shadows while in Saudi Arabia and in Sudan establishing Al Qaeda’s direction. US intelligence agencies were well aware of bin Laden and his political views. The 9/11 Commission Report stated the following about bin Laden:

Bin Laden began delivering diatribes against the United States before he left Saudi Arabia. He continued to do so after he arrived in Sudan. In early 1992, the al Qaeda leadership issued a fatwa calling for jihad against the Western “occupation” of Islamic lands. Specifically singling out US forces for attack, the language resembled that which would appear in Bin Laden’s public fatwa in August 1996. In ensuing weeks, Bin Laden delivered an often-repeated lecture on the need to cut off “the head of the snake”.⁸⁶

While in the Sudan he began targeting US companies, US government installations, and US military personnel in both the Somalia and Yemen. He escalated from words to actions, directing his followers to stage terrorist acts that he funded from the shadows. Bin Laden portrayed himself as “a devout Muslim businessman” while the US State Department regarded him as “one of the most significant financial sponsors of Islamic extremist activities in the world today [1996].”⁸⁷ The Yemeni government saw him as an extremist that financed Islamist movements and accused him of other deeds:

He is accused of opening several Islamist extremist camps in Sa'dah. His relations with the Yemeni Government have been tense since it accused him and other

⁸⁵ Scott MacLeod, “The Paladin of Jihad,” *Time*, May 6, 1996, [on-line]; available from <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,984493,00.html> ; Accessed 6 January 2009.

⁸⁶ *The 9/11 Commission Report: Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States*. Authorized Edition. (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, First Edition), p. 59.

⁸⁷ Scott MacLeod, “The Paladin of Jihad,” *Time*, May 6, 1996, [on-line]; available from <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,984493,00.html> ; Accessed 6 January 2009.

Arab mujahidin of being responsible for blowing up oil installations and attacking a hotel in Aden in 1992.⁸⁸

This chapter analyzes two terrorist attacks that Al Qaeda committed against the United States in Yemen in December 1992 and in Somalia in October 1993. The analysis provides an overview of the political context of the events, descriptions of the terrorist events, the US response to the terrorist events, and a discussion of whether Al Qaeda achieved its goals.

The Yemen political overview covers the end of the Cold War and the ramifications that contributed to the conflict between Al Qaeda and the United States. The American foreign policy initiatives that brought it into the Arab and Muslim countries are the policies that Osama bin Laden sees as a grievance and a reason to attack America and its interests. Bin Laden's beliefs motivated him to orchestrate the Yemen terrorists' attacks on US military personnel. America's response to the attacks was to evacuate all American military personnel in two days to keep the Americans safe and to keep the flow of equipment and personnel for the humanitarian mission to Somalia on schedule by assigning the Yemen mission to another base of operations in the region. The speed at which the Americans left Yemen and the very fact that they left was all Osama bin Laden needed to proclaim a victory over the superpower. He used these facts in his messages to demean America and to show that he could drive the American military out of Arab and Muslim countries.

⁸⁸ Usama Bin Laden Interview with Rose Al-Yusuf, June 17, 1996, [on-line]; available from <http://www1.nefafoundation.org/documents-aqstatements.html> ; Accessed 2 January 2009.

The political overview of the Somalia Black Hawk Down incident also takes into account the ramifications of the Cold War foreign policy initiatives and how they affected the American and UN humanitarian mission to feed the starving Somali people. Those ramifications caused a Somali warlord and Osama bin Laden's Arab-Afghans to fight against the American and UN coalition on different occasions. The major incident between America and bin Laden and the Somali warlord was the Black Hawk Down incident where many Americans were killed and wounded and American helicopters were shot down. That incident convinced the Americans to withdraw its forces from Somalia within six months. The fact that the Americans left again had bin Laden claiming victory for driving Americans out of another Muslim country.

Terrorist Event: Yemen Hotel Bombings

Political overview.

Yemen was a divided nation with North Yemen partnered with the United States and South Yemen partnered with the Soviet Union. This division ended in 1990 with unification of the two Yemens on May 22, 1990 to form the Republic of Yemen.⁸⁹ The division was a product of a cold war doctrine that the United States implemented after World War II in order to impede the spread of Soviet style communism.

President Harry Truman, on March 12, 1947, called for the United States to give economic aid to Turkey and Greece in order to keep these two countries from falling under communist rule. Truman's initiative distributed financial and economic aid to

⁸⁹ Almadhagi, Ahmed Noman Kassim, *Yemen and The United States: A Study of a Small Power and Super-State Relationship 1962-1994*. (New York: I.B. Tauris Publishers, 1996) p. 1.

countries in order to stabilize their societies. The initiative known as, The Truman

Doctrine, states:

One of the primary objectives of the foreign policy of the United States is the creation of conditions in which we and other nations will be able to work out a way of life free from coercion...I believe that it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures. I believe that we must assist free peoples to work out their own destinies in their own way. I believe that our help should be primarily through economic and financial aid which is essential to economic stability and orderly political processes...⁹⁰

Even though this foreign policy doctrine was initially for Turkey and Greece the United States implemented it worldwide fighting the spread of communism. The aid included military aid and a variety of aid packages as well as treaties enabling US business interests to operate safely and safeguarding the “world oil reserves” in the Middle East.⁹¹

American involvement in Yemen and the rest of the Middle East grew as the Soviet threat expanded and America’s consumption of oil grew past its own production capacity to where it had to rely on the rest of the world to fill that void. 70% of the world oil reserves in 1990 came from the Persian Gulf ⁹²so it was a natural tendency for the US as well as the rest of the world to depend on the Middle East to supply their demand for oil. The Iranian Hostage Crisis and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan caused the United States to expand its foreign policy even further toward the Middle East.

⁹⁰ Paul R. Viotti, *American Foreign Policy and National Security: A Documentary Record*. (Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2005), p. 198.

⁹¹ Almadhagi, Ahmed Noman Kassim, *Yemen and The United States: A Study of a Small Power and Super-State Relationship 1962-1994*. (New York: I.B. Tauris Publishers, 1996) p. 6.

⁹² Daniel Yergin, *The Prize: The Epic Quest For Oil, Money & Power*. (New York, New York: Simon & Schuster, 1991), pp. 769-770.

President Carter's 1980 State of the Union Address put forth a policy to use military force to repel the Soviet Union or any outside aggressors from dominating the Persian Gulf. The policy came to be known as the "The Carter Doctrine" and stated clearly what America was willing to do to protect its interests in the Middle East:

Let our position be absolutely clear: An attempt by any outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region will be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of the United States of America, and such an assault will be repelled by any means necessary, including military force.⁹³

These two foreign policy doctrines forged a path for each consecutive US president to George H.W. Bush to involve America in Yemen's affairs. The treaties and pacts between the two countries allowed President Bush to help North Yemen resist communist rule in South Yemen. The conflict between the competing ideologies turned into two armed conflicts that ended with the eventual reunification of North and South Yemen to form the Republic of Yemen in 1990.⁹⁴

Before Yemen unification took place, Osama bin Laden, the Saudi war hero, came back from fighting the Soviets in Afghanistan and wanted to continue fighting the communists in Yemen. He returned as a confident leader of warriors, the Arab-Afghans, ready to expel the communists out of his father's homeland. He was so confident in his ability to defeat the Soviet-backed government, he proposed a plan to the head of Saudi Intelligence, Prince Turki al-Faisal, to use what bin Laden called "my mujahideen".⁹⁵ Even though the prince told him no, bin Laden continued with his plans to oust the

⁹³ Paul R. Viotti, *American Foreign Policy and National Security: A Documentary Record*. (Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2005), p. 237.

⁹⁴ Almadhagi, Ahmed Noman Kassim, *Yemen and The United States: A Study of a Small Power and Super-State Relationship 1962-1994*. (New York: I.B. Tauris Publishers, 1996), pp. 192-193.

⁹⁵ Lawrence Wright, *The Looming Tower: Al-Qaeda And The Road To 9/11*. (New York, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006), p. 153.

communist-backed government in South Yemen. According to Abdel al-Bari Atwan, many of bin Laden's mujahedin came from South Yemen and were "already installed with arms and funding"; "bin Laden had already entered favorable negotiations with tribal leaders"; and that bin Laden intended to use South Yemen as a base for the Arab-Afghans, according to a "well-placed source".⁹⁶ The Saudis were not pleased with bin Laden's foreign policy ventures in Yemen because the two countries have had their disputes in the past and they did not want or need a self-proclaimed warrior and his brothers-in-arms making more trouble that could complicate the Yemen reunification of 1990 and Saudi relations. Bin Laden's activities in Yemen and other activities in Saudi Arabia concerned the Saudis so much that they revoked his passport.⁹⁷ Osama left the kingdom in 1991 and eventually ended up in Sudan, where he and his Arab-Afghans plotted attacks in Yemen and Somalia against the United States.

Bin Laden truly believed that the US "had a secret agreement with the socialists" to establish military bases in Yemen.⁹⁸ The attacks on America in Yemen were the first deployment of Al Qaeda's guerrilla campaign to drive the Americans out of Yemen. Bin Laden had no problem finding fighters for his campaign because Yemen had no "security restrictions on wanted jihadi fugitives" that came from Arab and Muslim countries.⁹⁹ Al-Fadli, from the Muslim Brotherhood, was assigned to lead the attack on the Gold Mohur Hotel where as bin Laden used other jihadist groups to attack the Aden airport where

⁹⁶ Abdel Bari Atwan, *The Secret History Of Al-Qa'ida*. (London, England: Saqi Books, 2006), pp. 160-161.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 161.

⁹⁸ Lawrence Wright, *The Looming Tower: Al-Qaeda And The Road To 9/11*. (New York, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006), p. 153.

⁹⁹ Brynjar Lia, *Architect of Global Jihad: The Life of al-Qaida Strategist Abu Mus'ab al-Suri*. (New York, New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), p. 107.

American Air Force cargo planes were loading and unloading men and material for the Somali humanitarian operation.¹⁰⁰

Attacks against American oil services companies started on February 5, 1992. The first site attacked in 1992 was Western Geophysical's Sana storage compound; no one was hurt.¹⁰¹ The second attack came on April 1, when employees of Nabors Drilling Company were fired on with small arms; one American was hurt.¹⁰² On August 20, a Yemeni politician was attacked with weapons of the type used by the "Afghan mujahedin".¹⁰³

No one took responsibility for bombing the US Embassy in Sana, which was bombed twice. The first bombing took place on September 23; there were no injuries or damage to the embassy.¹⁰⁴ The second took place on November 9; no one was injured but the perimeter wall was scarred by flying debris.¹⁰⁵ The violence subsided for more than a month before the December 29th attacks, which were planned by Yislam Abu-Ra'sayn and Jamal al-Nahdi on December 23rd.¹⁰⁶ Osama bin Laden and his followers were sending a message: it is not safe for Americans to be here. He was demanding that the Americans leave Yemen. Sometime around the end of 1992 it is believed that Al Qaeda issued a fatwa concerning the American presence in Yemen.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁰ Abdel Bari Atwan, *The Secret History Of Al-Qa'ida*. (London, England: Saqi Books, 2006), p. 166.

¹⁰¹ Edward F. Mickolus with Susan L. Simmons, *Terrorism, 1992-1995: A Chronology of Events and A Selective Annotated Bibliography*. (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1997), p. 122.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 148.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 194.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 208-209.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 224

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 250-251.

¹⁰⁷ Testimony of Jamal Ahmed Mohammed Al-Fadl, *United States of America v. Osama Bin Laden et al. Defendants*, transcript of trial, February 6, 2001, [On-line], available from <http://cryptome.org/usa-v-ubl-02.htm> ; Accessed July 29, 2008, pp. 264-267.

Terrorism event.

On December 29, 1992, Islamic fundamentalists detonated two bombs in Aden, Yemen. The bombings took place at two hotels, the Movenpick, and the Gold Mohur. At the Movenpick, the bombers missed their intended target when their device exploded prematurely in the parking lot, killing no one. At the Gold Mohur, the bomb exploded as planned, killing two people. Before the hotel bombs went off, security authorities apprehended a terrorist, Yislam Faraj al-Khabanshi, near the Aden airport with a rocket-propelled-grenade launcher; the intended target was a “United States Navy Galaxy aircraft.”¹⁰⁸

Being housed in the Aden area were US Marines on their way to Somalia to aid in the humanitarian effort “Operation Restore Hope.” Two days after the bombings, the US withdrew its troops from Yemen. *Keesing’s Record of World Events* explained the withdrawal this way: “Approximately 100 US soldiers, in Aden since mid-December under a bilateral agreement to provide facilities in support of ‘Operation Restore Hope’ in Somalia were withdrawn on Dec. 31 after bombs exploded at two Aden hotels on Dec.29.”¹⁰⁹

The Yemen bombing and the Somali conflict are connected in a number of ways. Bin Laden believed the UN was helping America, under the guise of humanitarian relief, to establish a base of operations for invading Sudan and Yemen, so he attacked US troops

¹⁰⁸ Edward F. Mickolus with Susan L. Simmons, *Terrorism, 1992-1995: A Chronology of Events and A Selective Annotated Bibliography*. (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1997), pp. 250-251.

¹⁰⁹ *Keesing’s Record of World Events*, 1993, News Digest for December 1992. Vol. 38 No. 12, p. 39248.

as they passed through Yemen and when they arrived in Somalia.¹¹⁰ There is an oil connection as well. Mark Finerman of the *Los Angeles Times* reported that Hunt Oil of Texas had discovered oil in Yemen and that the geological formation in which the oil was trapped ran from Yemen under the Gulf of Aden into Somalia, Sudan and the surrounding countries.¹¹¹

American response.

Did the US understand Osama bin Laden's demand to leave Yemen? The answer was yes. On December 31, American personnel supporting Operation Restore Hope were removed.¹¹² On January 2, 1993, a DOD spokesman announced the US would no longer use Yemen as a support base for the Somali operation because the safety of military personnel could not be guaranteed.¹¹³ Michael Scheuer reports that in 1998 bin Laden summarized his thoughts on the bombing and its aftermath:

The United States wanted to set up a military base for US soldiers in Yemen so that it could send fresh troops to Somalia, bin Laden told the daily Pakistan. The Arab mujahedin related to the Afghan jihad carried out two bomb explosions in Yemen to warn the United States, causing damage to some Americans staying at the hotels. The United States received our warning and gave up the idea of setting up its military bases in Yemen. This was the first al Qaeda victory scored against the Crusaders.¹¹⁴

While bin Laden was feeling triumphant over the Americans leaving Yemen, the Yemen authorities were arresting suspects in the bombing. On January 4, they arrested

¹¹⁰ Michael Scheuer, *Through Our Enemies' Eyes: Osama bin Laden, Radical Islam, and the Future of America*. (Washington, D.C.: Potomac Books Inc., 2007) p. 146.

¹¹¹ Mark Finerman, The Oil Factor in Somalia. *The Los Angeles Times*. Issue of 18 January 1993.

¹¹² Patterns of Global Terrorism: 1992 Middle East Overview. [on-line] available from http://www.fas.org/jrp/threat/terror_92/mideast.html ; Accessed 29 May 2008.

¹¹³ Edward F. Mickolus with Susan L. Simmons, *Terrorism, 1992-1995: A Chronology of Events and A Selective Annotated Bibliography*. (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1997), p. 250.

¹¹⁴ Michael Scheuer, *Through Our Enemies' Eyes: Osama bin Laden, Radical Islam, and the Future of America*. (Washington, D.C.: Potomac Books Inc., 2007) p. 147.

500 people. On January 5, they arrested “36 other fundamentalists” in Aden. On January 8, they arrested Shaykh Tariq Nasir Abdullah al-Fadli, leader of Yemen’s Afghans, for questioning about the hotel bombing and an assassination attempt on a Yemeni politician.

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On February 2, the Yemen army engaged in a firefight with Rashid al-Umayshi, suspected leader of the Islamic Jihad Movement in Yemen; Yemeni authorities suspected al-Umayshi of being behind the bombings in Aden. The firefight ended in his death and the arrest of several of his followers.¹¹⁶ On February 8, Hunt Oil and other US oil companies were asked by Salih Abu Bakr bin Hussain, Oil and Mineral Resources Minister, to shut down operations because the Yemeni government could not secure their safety from the violence occurring in the country, especially from Yemeni tribes.¹¹⁷ On March 10, a bombing occurred at the British Embassy, damaging a perimeter fence.¹¹⁸ For the rest of 1993, violence continued against US Embassy personnel and Hunt Oil employees. A Hunt employee was kidnapped on May 25th and released on May 29th after negotiations with the Daham tribesmen.¹¹⁹ On November 14th the Deputy Cultural Attaché was beaten up by armed men in Sanaa¹²⁰ and on November 25th the Director of

¹¹⁵ Edward F. Mickolus with Susan L. Simmons, *Terrorism, 1992-1995: A Chronology of Events and A Selective Annotated Bibliography*. (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1997), pp. 250-251.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 289.

¹¹⁷ Keesing’s Record of World Events, 1993, News Digest for February 1993. Vol. 39 No. 2, p. 39343.

¹¹⁸ Edward F. Mickolus with Susan L. Simmons, *Terrorism, 1992-1995: A Chronology of Events and A Selective Annotated Bibliography*. (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1997), p. 345.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 408.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 503.

the United States Information Service in Yemen was kidnapped and released on December 1st after successful negotiations with the, kidnapping, Jahm tribe.¹²¹

The Bush administration wasted no time in ending the American Military presence in Yemen. With the holiday they had no time to waste in deciding what to do about the Yemen contingent for the Somali humanitarian operation. There were other bases in the region to take over operations that were conducted in Yemen. The quicker the military was sent to one of these alternate bases the quicker the Yemen detachment could resume its mission. The administration wanted to protect US personnel from undue risks while continuing with the American objective of aiding Somalia. In addition, the departing Bush administration wanted to leave office without involving the military in an escalating conflict, leaving the incoming Clinton administration in an untenable situation.

Bin Laden and his group were not even considered the threat to the operation, it was the Iranians. The American mindset was that the Iranians were trying to enlarge their sphere of influence in the region. The Bush administration was not even thinking of bin Laden or even knew that they had just been defeated by Al Qaeda for leaving Yemen.

Analysis.

Osama bin Laden gave no warnings he was going to attack the American military in Aden. He covertly assembled Al Qaeda from its inception in 1988 in Afghanistan to the December 1992 hotel attacks. When he returned to Saudi Arabia in 1989 he began assembling the Arab-Afghans into a guerrilla fighting force to continue fighting the communists in Yemen. He also financed Islamic movements throughout Arab and

¹²¹ Ibid., pp. 505-506.

Muslim countries. He provided training in Yemen and in Sudan, his new base of operations, for his fighters to attack the “near enemy” before eventually attacking America and its interests in Yemen.

The warning signs did come in a non-direct manner and those signs came from bin Laden’s “diatribes” he delivered when he came back from Afghanistan. While in Saudi Arabia bin Laden’s popularity rose as he delivered his anti-American speeches throughout the country. His military proposals to fight the communists in Yemen and to fight Iraq were flat out turned down by the Saudi leadership. These proposals were a way for bin Laden to be involved in Saudi affairs which he believed he earned that right from his participation in defending Afghanistan, a part of the umma. Even though bin Laden saw himself as a legitimate actor the Saudi leadership as well as American leadership did not. The only legitimacy bin Laden and his fellow Arab-Afghans had was when they were fighting in Afghanistan. That denial of legitimacy drove bin Laden into building his secret guerrilla force in Sudan.

As bin Laden built Al Qaeda in secret, America’s old view of the world blinded it from seeing bin Laden as a rising threat to its security. The Bush administration knew the fundamentalists in Saudi Arabia were totally against the United States deploying troops on Saudi soil. Which generated an immense amount of anti-American rhetoric that came from Islamic clerics as well as bin Laden himself. They knew that bin Laden presented a military plan to the Saudi leadership to expel Saddam Hussein from Kuwait and that bin Laden fled to Sudan after his passport had been revoked for interfering in Saudi and regional relations. The American Embassy in Sudan was still open, and the CIA had its

personnel performing their usual duties while assigned at the embassy, when Al Qaeda launched its attacks on the US in Yemen. The view of the administration was that Iran was the perpetrator of Islamic violence throughout the Middle East. Only Iran, the state sponsor of terrorism, could be responsible for this type of violence because no individual, such as bin Laden, has the expertise or resources to execute a well organized attack that occurred in Yemen.

Even though bin Laden was now living in Sudan and conducting his activities in relative obscurity the Iranians activities in Sudan were believed to be the overriding factor for who was conducting the terrorist activity in Africa and the Middle East. Relative obscurity, meaning: that the American intelligence agencies were aware of bin Laden and his activities but still thought that Iran had a hand in his activities. No consideration was given to the fact that Al Qaeda and Iranian backed terrorist groups are different and have different agendas. The fact that they are both Muslim does not mean that they are working together in every terrorist act or in any terrorist act that is committed against the west. There is a deep mistrust between Sunni Al Qaeda and Shiite Iran. That mistrust has them work together on some issues but not to the point that either group would lose their independence. Their working together is to further each of their agendas. The Iranian example for Al Qaeda is building the umma in a nationalistic sense, without the interference of the west. That is what bin Laden and his associates learned from the Iranian revolution where as the American lesson learned was Iran was a rogue state that was involved in funding and supporting fundamentalist Islamic terrorism. At one time Iran was involved in a lot of this terrorist activity but that era was changing with

bin Laden and Al Qaeda coming on to the scene, and Yemen was the first example of this sea change in international terrorism that the United States was too entrenched in its cold war mentality to notice that a change in terrorism was occurring.

US personnel in Yemen were clearly a target before the US itself was attacked on February 23, 1993 and September 11, 2001. The attacks in Yemen included the December 29, 1992 bombings and the attack on the USS Cole on October 12, 2000. Most recently, the US embassy was attacked September 17, 2008. Even though American military personnel were targeted in attacks in Yemen and bin Laden succeeded in driving the US military out of Yemen, Al Qaeda grievances were not addressed. The early diatribes that were referenced by the 9/11 Commission indicate that the US government knew what grievances were being expressed by bin Laden but decided to ignore him since the Bush administration felt he did not have the legitimacy to speak for the Arab and Muslim community.

Terrorist Event: Somalia “Black Hawk Down”

Political overview.

Somalia is a clan culture that is broken down further into sub-clans. The clans protect their own from other clans but the clans do come together to protect the country from outside intervention, a nationalistic trait that is found in all countries. This clan culture was a major factor in how the United Nations and the United States were treated while implementing their policies.

In the mid to late 1800s the colonial powers of France, Britain, and Italy had a hand in dividing Somalia up amongst themselves and border countries which is major

factor in unifying the clans.¹²² Colonel involvement in Somali affairs continued into the late 1960s when the Soviet Union appeared on the scene. The Soviets gave military and economic aid so they could expand their presence in the region. Their involvement continued until 1977 when Somalia attacked Ethiopia¹²³, a major ally of the Soviets. The Soviets choice to back Ethiopia in this conflict angered the Somalis so much so that they terminated the Soviet naval-basing rights.¹²⁴ Once the Soviets left America positioned itself to acquire navel-basing rights in Somalia and Kenya some years later in order to have a wider presence in the region.¹²⁵

US military aid at the end of the Carter administration was \$20 million, it grew in the Reagan administration to \$34.1 million and steadily decreased to less than \$1 million in 1989, the first year of the George H.W. Bush administration.¹²⁶ As the cold war drew to an end so did America's interest in Somalia. The humanitarian crisis that was televised across the world by news agencies brought Somalia to the forefront for the UN and the US to feed the starving population.

The United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM I) began in the beginning of April 1992 to deliver relief supplies to the Somali people.¹²⁷ More time passed before the United States decided to get involved. 1992 was an election year so whatever course of action President Bush pursued was going to have repercussions. The administration was

¹²² Kenneth Rutherford, *Humanitarianism Under Fire: The US and UN Intervention in Somalia*. (Sterling, Virginia: Kumarian Press, 2008), p. 2.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

¹²⁴ Paul Kennedy, *The Rise And Fall Of The Great Powers: Economic Change And Military Conflict From 1500 To 2000*. (New York, New York: Random House, 1987), p. 396.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 397.

¹²⁶ Paolo Tripodi, *The Colonial Legacy In Somalia: Rome and Mogadishu: from Colonial Administration to Operation Restore Hope*. (New York, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999), p. 4.

¹²⁷ Helen Fogarassy, *Mission Improbable: The World Community on a UN Compound in Somalia*. (Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 1999), p. xii.

reluctant to get involved with Somalia. It was a failed state that had its dictator deposed a year earlier and the administration saw a long commitment in reestablishing a functioning government, mean while trying to deal with warlords and establishing a logistical system to feed Somalia's starving citizens. The conflict--a war between tribes that had turned into a civil war was of great concern for the president. It was a task that President Bush did not want if he was reelected and did not want to saddle the new incoming president with this very precarious foreign policy issue. The humanitarian crisis, with thousands dying of starvation and thousands more escaping to bordering countries, forced the reluctant Bush administration to act. Public pressure to get involved forced the president to start air lifting aid into the starving country. The president dispatched the military without congressional approval or an invitation from the acting Somali representative.¹²⁸

The US involved itself in the UN effort to provide humanitarian aid to Somalia when it announced on August 14th that it would command an airlift to deliver food to the starving people of Somalia. On August 17th, a Pentagon team went to Mombasa, Kenya, which was meant to be the main base for the US aid operation, but on August 20th, US officials and the Kenyan president had to iron out differences over the use of Kenyan airspace.¹²⁹ While the US was preparing to move forward with its humanitarian operation by establishing air logistics support in surrounding countries, bin Laden moved fighters into the area. It is not known whether they were attacking relief planes during the early stages of the operation. In late 1993, bin Laden sent Ali Mohamed, a former supply

¹²⁸ William G. Hyland, *Clinton's World: Remaking American Foreign Policy*. (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Publishers, 1999), p. 53.

¹²⁹ Keesing's Record of World Events, 1993, News Digest for August 1992. Vol. 38 No. 7-8, p. 39035.

sergeant from the Special Forces Warfare School in Fort Bragg, North Carolina, to Nairobi to conduct surveillance on American installations and those of its allies.¹³⁰ The use of Kenya as a base for the Somali humanitarian operation was likely a motive for bin Laden's attack against the US Embassy in Kenya in August, 1998.

“In an operation code-named “Restore Hope,” sanctioned unanimously 24 hours earlier by the UN Security Council, US President George Bush on December 4, 1992, ordered 28,000 US troops into Somalia to ensure safe delivery of international aid to the starving.”¹³¹ As the troops deployed, however, it was unclear whether troops would be “securing the flow of aid” or attempting to disarm the militant factions; plus the operation end date would remain unclear.¹³²

The US military had to find additional bases in the Middle East from which to operate because the strain on the air crews would be enormous, causing refueling issues and the constant need for fresh crews for the transport operation. On December 18, 1992, the *New York Times* reported that “about 12 countries had agreed to provide the United States with over-flight rights, basing rights, and refueling rights to construct an air bridge between the United States and Somalia”.¹³³ Michael Scheuer reports bin Laden believed the United States was using the UN effort in Somalia as a ploy to “capture Sudan and

¹³⁰ Lawrence Wright, The Man Behind Bin Laden. *The New Yorker*. Issue of 16 September 2002.

¹³¹ Keesing's Record of World Events. News Digest of December 1992. 1993, Vol. 38 No. 12, p. 39225.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Michael Gordon, African and Mideast Bases Aid Somalia Airlift. *The New York Times*, Issue of 18 December 1992.

Yemen”.¹³⁴ He made similar comments to Al Qaeda followers when he issued a fatwa concerning Somalia at the end of 1992 or sometime in the beginning of 1993.¹³⁵

Violence during the early days of the operation was sporadic, with only three Americans killed by January 25, 1993¹³⁶, other UN forces were killed or wounded in clashes with Somali warlords and bin Laden’s fighters. The probability that Al Qaeda’s fighters were training Aidid’s army in all or most of the battles against the American and UN forces is very high. Bin Laden has indicated that his Arab-Afghan fighters trained Aidid’s forces but never elaborated on the extent to which battles they participated in other than the battles in Mogadishu. Bin Laden answered a question posed to him by chief editor, ‘Abd-al-Bari ‘Atwan from the London based Al-Quds Al-‘Arabi news paper:

The only non-Somali group which fought the Americans was the Arab mujahidin brothers who had come from Afghanistan. The US Government knew for certain that we were fighting it. And it had announced that there were extremist non-Somali forces fighting [against it], and they meant us. These were successful battles in which we inflicted big losses on the Americans. We used to hunt them down in Mogadishu. Aidid denied any responsibility, and he was telling the truth. The war in which we are currently engaged with the United States is not [sic] tee first, and we pray to God to grant us victory over them just as He did before.¹³⁷

Terrorist event.

Unknown to the Americans, Osama bin Laden had issued a fatwa earlier in the year to fight the Americans in Somalia. That fatwa brought seasoned fighters to train

¹³⁴ Michael Scheuer, *Through Our Enemies’ Eyes: Osama bin Laden, Radical Islam, and the Future of America*. (Washington, D.C.: Potomac Books Inc., 2007) pp. 146, 48.

¹³⁵ Testimony of Jamal Ahmed Mohammed Al-Fadl, *United States of America v. Osama Bin Laden et al.* Defendants, transcript of trial, February 6, 2001, [On-line], available from <http://cryptome.org/usa-v-ubl-02.htm> ; Accessed July 29, 2008, pp. 267-270.

¹³⁶ Edward F. Mickolus with Susan L. Simmons, *Terrorism, 1992-1995: A Chronology of Events and a Selective Annotated Bibliography*. (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1997), p. 265.

¹³⁷ ‘Abd-al-Bari ‘Atwan, *Usama Bin Laden Interview with Al-Quds Al-‘Arabi*, November 27, 1996, [online]; available from <http://www1.nefafoundation.org/documents-aqstatements.html> ; Accessed: January 2, 2009.

Aidid's men and fight alongside them. Aidid's militia contained its own seasoned fighters that fought in the Somali civil war¹³⁸. Their fighting experiences enabled them to learn new skills and tactics from the Arab-Afghans. One tactic was to turn the local population against outsiders through the use of inflamed rhetoric. To raise Somalis' anger Aidid would broadcast on his radio station that the "foreign-interventionist[s]"¹³⁹, the UN and the Americans, were there to "colonize Somalia" and "burn the Koran"¹⁴⁰. This rhetoric is reminiscent of what bin Laden was saying about America in his communiqués to his followers around this time, that America is determined to take Somalia, Sudan and then other Islamic countries.¹⁴¹ Another tactic the Arab-Afghans knew was fighting against helicopters. The helicopter was one of the main pieces of equipment that the Americans used in their tactics to accomplish their missions.

On October 3, 1993, a contingent of Navy Seals, Rangers and Delta Force soldiers were planning on apprehending two of General Aidid's lieutenants in downtown Mogadishu. The Americans headed from their base at the Mogadishu airport in their Blackhawk helicopters and a convoy of ground vehicles carrying backup forces. This was not going to be an easy task, as Aidid was a seasoned fighter and, like all Somali warlords, was unwilling to give up his leadership role without a fight. A fight is exactly what the Americans ran into when they arrived at Aidid's headquarters in Blackhawk

¹³⁸ Mark Bowden, *Black Hawk Down: A Story Of Modern War*. (New York, New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1999), p. 109.

¹³⁹ Helen Fogarassy, *Mission Improbable: The World Community on a UN Compound in Somalia*. (Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 1999), p. 46.

¹⁴⁰ Mark Bowden, *Black Hawk Down: A Story Of Modern War*. (New York, New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1999), p. 75.

¹⁴¹ Testimony of Jamal Ahmed Mohammed Al-Fadl, *United States of America v. Osama Bin Laden et al.* Defendants, transcript of trial, February 6, 2001, [On-line], available from <http://cryptome.org/usa-v-ubl-02.htm> ; Accessed July 29, 2008, p. 268.

gunships. The Somalis and the Arab-Afghans fired their RPGs and AK-47s at the hovering Blackhawks, causing the Americans to go on the defensive. It is unknown if the Americans knew they were also fighting Bin Laden's "Arab mujahidin brothers". The "six previous missions" did not strike fear into the Somalis like the "Task Force Ranger" commander, Major General William F. Garrison, had anticipated¹⁴², it was anger at how they were being treated. The angry Somali fighters looked for weaknesses in the rangers' tactics that they could exploit and used the training that they received from the Arab mujahidin which enabled them to shoot down two Blackhawks.¹⁴³ The Americans overestimated their military ability over Aidid's military experience as a guerrilla leader that had accumulated Soviet training and combat experience to see a pattern in the previous Ranger raids that enabled him and his men to make America and its military realize they were not dealing with a "camel driver".¹⁴⁴ Al Qaeda's military commander, Abu Ubaydah al-Banshiri headed the attack in Mogadishu.¹⁴⁵

The battle lasted for 2 days. There were many Somalis killed, estimated at one thousand,¹⁴⁶ in this incident to capture two of Aidid's men. The Americans lost eighteen soldiers seventy-three were wounded and one captured POW.¹⁴⁷ The Somalis shot down two Black Hawk helicopters in Mogadishu and damaged two more that crash landed back

¹⁴² Mark Bowden, *Black Hawk Down: A Story Of Modern War*. (New York, New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1999), p. 22.

¹⁴³ Ibid., pp. 108-111.

¹⁴⁴ Colonel David N. Hackworth with Tom Mathews, *Hazardous Duty: America's Most Decorated Living Soldier Reports From The Front And Tells It The Way It Is*. (New York, New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1996), p. 186.

¹⁴⁵ Abdel Bari Atwan, *The Secret History Of Al-Qa'ida*. (London, England: Saqi Books, 2006), p. 49.

¹⁴⁶ Elizabeth Drew, *On the Edge: The Clinton Presidency*. (New York, New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994), p. 318.

¹⁴⁷ Mark Bowden, *Black Hawk Down: A Story Of Modern War*. (New York, New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1999), p. 329.

at the American base.¹⁴⁸ A humanitarian mission turned into a personal mission to do away with a warlord, Aidid, which angered the population. Somalis' national pride brought them together to fight the American and UN contingent when they decided to change their mission to arrest Aidid and his militia.

The news played in America to a stunned and angry nation wanting to know how a humanitarian mission had turned into a drawn-out battle that needlessly killed their American military men. One reason was “mission creep”, which meant going after Aidid and taking on the task of “nation building”. The other was the shadowy Osama bin Laden, who believed the Americans were in Somalia to use it as a base for spreading American influence in Yemen, Sudan, and other Arab and Muslim nations.

American response.

It did not take President Clinton long to get engaged now that his foreign policy was falling apart. He called a cabinet meeting for all of the pertinent “Principles” to attend to go over the president’s options pertaining to Somalia. They gave him four options which he was not enthused about any of them but he had to do something fast because Congress was very angry and would try to set a date of withdrawal on their own if the president did not act quickly. His four options were explained first to him by General Hoar for the military perspective:

1. A big increase in the military presence and an effort to clean out southern Mogadishu, which could involve heavy fighting;
2. To build up troops in Somalia and keep the pressure on Aideed, being prepared to fight him militarily but trying to negotiate a settlement with him;
3. To drop the military approach and try to find a face-saving way to get out;

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 333.

4. To extend the deadline for getting out and try to negotiate a political settlement, without much of a military effort.¹⁴⁹

The President wanted some combination of the second and forth option, which eventually worked out to look like this:

The Plan was for an interim buildup of troops, to protect the forces already there, and to apply political pressure while [Robert] Oakley worked for a political settlement and the US disengaged—to be out by March 31 [1994]¹⁵⁰the case for sending more troops—1,700 soldiers, with 104 additional armored vehicles; and an aircraft carrier with 3,600 combat Marines offshore.¹⁵¹

The American public and Congress wanted out of Somalia no matter how it looked to the rest of the world. Even though America knew that there were foreign fighters in Somalia they thought they were backed by the Iranians and not by Osama bin Laden that perceived the withdrawal of the American military from Somalia as the second defeat of America by Al Qaeda and the third by Muslims, by including Lebanon. Richard Clarke, counterterrorism czar for both Presidents George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton, had asked the CIA repeatedly for six months “to track down rumors in the foreign press about terrorists who might have trained Aideed’s militia” and the CIA responded by discounting the rumors.¹⁵² Clarke also said that the Clinton administration did not include the events in Somalia as terrorism in 1993; “nor did they think about bin Laden or al Qaeda, because they had not been told that that terrorist or his organization existed”.¹⁵³

¹⁴⁹ Elizabeth Drew, *On the Edge: The Clinton Presidency*. (New York, New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994), p. 326.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 329.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 330.

¹⁵² Richard Clarke, *Against All Enemies: Inside America’s War on Terror*. (New York, New York: Free Press, 2004), p. 87.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 88.

Analysis.

The UN and US humanitarian mission started off in the right direction wanting to feed the Somali people, but as the operation moved forward, mistakes occurred making the relationship with the warlords tenuous at best. To begin with UN Secretary General, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, and General Aidid did not like one another. The rocky relationship started when Boutros-Ghali was Egypt's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, and was funding Somali dictator, Mohamed Siad Barre, against General Aidid or at least that is how Aidid saw the situation.¹⁵⁴ Neither of these men trusted one another to deal in good faith. Boutros-Ghali appointed an old friend, Algerian diplomat Mohamed Sahnoun to his special representative on April 28 1992.¹⁵⁵ Sahnoun was able to negotiate with both warlords, Aidid and Ali Mohamed Mahdi, to see how aid could be distributed and tried to get a reconciliation process started.¹⁵⁶ As the mission moved forward Sahnoun kept trying to get the sides to reconcile, but mistakes by the UN such as: flying arms to Mahdi in a Russian plane, painted in UN colors¹⁵⁷, delivering currency to Mahdi and other mistakes that made Aidid angry and suspicious of the UN's motives.¹⁵⁸ Sahnoun was unable to recover from these mistakes that UN headquarters had made. Aidid no longer trusted him and the reconciliation process slowed to a crawl which was impeding the whole mission. Sahnoun criticized the UN which did not help his cause at

¹⁵⁴ John Hirsch and Robert Oakley, *Somalia and Operation Restore Hope: Reflections on Peacemaking and Peacekeeping*. (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace, 1995), p. 19.

¹⁵⁵ Kenneth Rutherford, *Humanitarianism Under Fire: The US and UN Intervention in Somalia*. (Sterling, Virginia: Kumarian Press, 2008), p. 28.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

¹⁵⁷ John Hirsch and Robert Oakley, *Somalia and Operation Restore Hope: Reflections on Peacemaking and Peacekeeping*. (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace, 1995), p. 22.

¹⁵⁸ Kenneth Rutherford, *Humanitarianism Under Fire: The US and UN Intervention in Somalia*. (Sterling, Virginia: Kumarian Press, 2008), p. 57-58.

the UN. He eventually resigned which made dealing with the warlords, especially Aidid, problematic. Aidid and Mahdi did not talk to the UN much after Sahnoun's resignation. The trust that Sahnoun had built up over the course of his negotiations was gone and the new UN representative was going to find strained relations that would not be repairable. Ismat Kittani did not negotiate as well as Sahnoun and the warlords would not have face to face meetings which meant he had to negotiate with lower level clan representatives.¹⁵⁹

In early December, President Bush's Special Envoy to Somalia, Robert Oakley, Former Ambassador to Somalia, stated that it would not be desirable to be in Somalia for an extended period and that the US would not want be involved with disarming the warlords.¹⁶⁰ Since Oakley was familiar with Somali culture he was able to negotiate with the warlords and gain their trust. When the Navy Seals and Recon Marines made their landing the Somalis kept away from that area of Mogadishu.¹⁶¹ That conflict free landing was made possible because Oakley believed if you treated the warlords like warlords that is how they will react but if you treat them like statesmen then they will act like statesmen.¹⁶² Once Bill Clinton was sworn into office Oakley was replaced in late January by Robert Gosende. Clinton and Boutros-Ghali replaced Ismat Kittani with retired Admiral Jonathan Howe. Neither of these replacements had the negotiating skills to deal with the warlords.

¹⁵⁹ John Hirsch and Robert Oakley, *Somalia and Operation Restore Hope: Reflections on Peacemaking and Peacekeeping*. (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace, 1995), p. 32.

¹⁶⁰ Kenneth Rutherford, *Humanitarianism Under Fire: The US and UN Intervention in Somalia*. (Sterling, Virginia: Kumarian Press, 2008), p. 82.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.* p.84.

¹⁶² David Halberstam, *War In A Time Of Peace: Bush, Clinton And The Generals*. (New York, New York: Simon & Schuster, Inc., 2002), p. 252.

As the situation grew worse in Somalia Aidid became the problem according to the UN and the United States. The United States changed the mission to what the UN had always wanted, disarming the warlords, from securing the humanitarian convoys to allow them to reach food distribution centers.

This new mission was a critical mistake because it changed the United States position to the Somalis. The US is now no longer there to help feed the population but there to dictate to the Somalis how to run their country. The Somalis wanted the disarming of the militias but they told the UN and the US that Somalis should be the ones disarming the people because if outsiders try it a confrontation will occur.¹⁶³ There was “no direct Somali input” in the UN Plan for Somalia.¹⁶⁴ With no direct input from the Somalis it is understandable how the mission started to go off in a more violent direction. Feeling that their homeland was being occupied by outsiders Somali unrest and anger replaced the thanks they initially felt for being helped. Aidid felt that the UN and the US were trying to take away his rightful position as leader of Somalia. His anger made him an adversary the coalition underestimated. The more the US targeted him the more determined he became to holding on to his position in Somali politics. He was a determined seasoned guerrilla fighter that was willing to take on the most powerful military in the world. Aidid and his men put their new training and seasoned combat experience to work on October 3rd and 4th against the American Special Forces and came out victorious. President Clinton negotiated a settlement to have the American POW

¹⁶³ John Hirsch and Robert Oakley, *Somalia and Operation Restore Hope: Reflections on Peacemaking and Peacekeeping*. (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace, 1995), p. 33.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., p.33.

released and all of Aidid's men that had been captured by all the previous raids released. The United States discontinued the disarmament policy it was conducting against Aidid and planned to pull out of Somalia by March 31, 1994.

Observing from the shadows, bin Laden was in Aidid's corner sending him Arab-Afghan fighters to foil the UN and the United States' humanitarian mission. He had given his fatwa to his followers behind closed doors to enable him to train against, to fight and observe his new enemy. Working behind the scenes enabled bin Laden to be seen as a terrorist financier, where as Iran was seen as the entity involved in providing the fighters for Aidid to "destabilize Somalia" in order "to put pressure on Saudi Arabia".¹⁶⁵ America saw the world from the cold war perspective, the only perspective it knew, was distorting its view to see other trends around the world occurring. The trends that bin Laden observed in Somalia were not the trends that America and its foreign policy and national security establishment saw and learned.

Osama bin Laden observation of the victory in Somalia coincided with his vision of Al Qaeda. He saw his fourth example of a super power defeated militarily by a small guerrilla force that was perceived to be weaker and that super power withdrew from the country in which it had invaded. The examples are Lebanon, Afghanistan, Yemen, and Somalia. The second observation bin Laden noticed was that America was unwilling to negotiate in good faith or negotiate at all with a perceived weaker power. His third observation was that once the super power is defeated it is willing to negotiate to extricate itself from the untenable situation.

¹⁶⁵ Christopher Whalen, In Somalia, the Saudi Connection. The Washington Post, Issue October 17, 1993. A19

Osama bin Laden's stated goal was to drive the United States out of Somalia. He achieved that goal with the help of General Aidid's militia and his Arab mujahidin. The militia kept the pressure on the coalition forces as they raided Aidid's hideouts. The test came when twenty-four Pakistanis were killed in a search for Aidid.¹⁶⁶ The ultimate test came when American Special Forces' operators tried to capture more of Aidid's men. Learning from previous raids the militia put their newly gained knowledge to work on October 3rd in an ambush to take out as many American troops and equipment as they could. Even though the American's mission was a success in capturing two of Aidid's men the eventual outcome was a defeat for American foreign policy and showed an American weakness to guerrilla tactics that Osama bin Laden set out to exploit in the future.

America's initial mission was to feed starving Somalis. That mission was a success until it changed to disarming the warlords and focusing on one warlord and not the other. The initial US special envoy to Somalia knew the Somali culture and how its citizens would react if an outside force tried to disarm them. The Somalis also warned the coalition about the same issue but the coalition partners ignored the warnings and continued with the policy anyway. All of Aidid's negotiations with Sahnoun and Oakley were examples for bin Laden to see that initial negotiations with America are a wasted effort. Negotiations from a power stand point were to America's favor or that is how it perceived the negotiations. Aidid and bin Laden, on the other hand, did not perceive themselves as the weaker party because they believed they could fight America and win.

¹⁶⁶ Edward F. Mickolus with Susan L. Simmons, *Terrorism, 1992-1995: A Chronology of Events and A Selective Annotated Bibliography*. (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1997), p. 416.

In essence Aidid and bin Laden saw negotiating with America, at best no faith bargaining and at worst not a negotiation at all. Bin Laden's experience in Somalia showed him Americans do not really want to negotiate. General Aidid did not produce the results quick enough for the Americans so they decided to use the carrot and stick approach. Believing that the power of America's stick will encourage Aidid to take what the Americans are offering Bin Laden's mindset had set the stage for escalating violence between his followers and the Americans, as he had decided not to engage the Americans in dialogue.

Believing that the Americans are not interested in dialog Bin Laden decided to continue his fight in the Shadows against his "Far Enemy". Knowing the United States will not talk to him, bin Laden has decided to fight the Americans at different places across the globe and at different times of his choosing because the Somalia experience taught bin Laden that when America was defeated, from bin Laden perspective, it will negotiate a settlement to extricate itself from the situation. So the course bin Laden has set for Al Qaeda is to confront the United States at some point in the future "to force a war of attrition against them".¹⁶⁷ Bin Laden continued Al Qaeda's collision course after Somalia to his native country Saudi Arabia.

Since the Clinton administration did not know of bin Laden and Al Qaeda attacked it in Somalia, it could not start any kind of dialogue with the organization. This did not stop bin Laden because he believed he would have to escalate the conflict to draw

¹⁶⁷ Abdel Bari Atwan, *The Secret History Of Al-Qa'ida*. (London, England: Saqi Books, 2006), p. 49.

America into a long war. The escalation was to begin in words first and then in violence in Saudi Arabia against the Saudis and America together.

Chapter 4: Al Qaeda Terrorism Phase 2: August 1996 to October 2000

The second time frame will analyze the US Embassy bombings in East African and the USS Cole bombing, which shows that conventional wisdom did not hold true. These two attacks occurred after bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri moved to Afghanistan and merged their two groups. At this point Al Qaeda targeted military personnel and began a new strategy of targeting civilians. In the previous time frame only military personnel were targeted and killed, and in this time frame both were targeted and killed. Al Qaeda demonstrated that they are a highly capable and high organized enemy that has the ability to strike the US anywhere in the Middle East. Bin Laden and Zawahiri used this ability to send the US State Department a clear message to leave Kenya and Tanzania. Al Qaeda was escalating their threats by increasing the intensity in which they delivered that violence. In this time frame bin Laden delivered his first speech directed toward the United States in the “Declaration of War.” In this speech he denigrates the US military, saying they are cowards for leaving Beirut, Aden and Mogadishu. Bin Laden continued by berating Defense Secretary William Perry about how humiliating a defeat Mogadishu was for the US, and how Clinton’s threats of revenge ended up with America’s withdrawal from Somalia. Bin Laden delivered warnings in the declarations of war before he attacked the United States or its interests. His speeches contained denigrations of the US and baiting the US to come after him. Clinton administration officials responded to some of Osama bin Laden’s remarks as well as attacking Al

Qaeda's infrastructure. The Clinton administration's response to the East African Embassy bombings was to launch Cruise missiles at Al Qaeda's Afghan training sites and at a pharmaceutical plant in Khartoum. The attacks in Afghanistan did very little to impede Al Qaeda's plans to continue targeting the United States. The attack on the pharmaceutical plant in Khartoum was disastrous for US policy because it raised the status of Osama bin Laden. Throughout the Arab and Muslim world, bin Laden was seen a hero that the West could not kill. Two years passed before Al Qaeda attacked the USS Cole in Aden, Yemen and there was no US response from the departing Clinton Administration and the incoming George W. Bush Administration.

The analysis in this chapter will cover three events, the "Declaration of War" in August 1996, the East African Embassy bombings in August 1998, and the *USS Cole* bombing in October 2000. The analysis will include a political overview, the incident itself, America's response to the incident, and an analysis of the incident.

The political climate at the time of the dissemination of the "Declaration of War" included bin Laden in a somewhat victorious mood over America's withdrawal from Somalia and Yemen. When the United States left Somalia it turned its foreign policy apparatus to other parts of the world, not knowing of bin Laden's existence, according to Richard Clarke. Bin Laden continued to target America from the shadows until he delivered his fatwa message on August 23, 1996. That communiqué had a message for the Saudi regime and the United States that they were being targeted for various reasons. The United States basically ignored the declaration by continuing its foreign policy initiatives throughout the Arab and Muslim world because it did not recognize Osama bin

Laden as a legitimate Muslim leader nor as a spokesman for the Arab and Muslim community. The analysis will look at how bin Laden sees himself as a legitimate spokesman for Arabs and Muslims and how the US tried to undercut and dismiss bin Laden and his grievances.

The political atmosphere before the embassy bombings was one of conflict for President Clinton in his domestic and foreign affairs. Bin Laden was coming out from the shadows slowly. The CIA was helping Arab and Muslim countries apprehend jihad fighters; that put pressure on Al Qaeda, not only from the “far enemy” but from their critics who were only fighting the “near enemy”. Bin Laden and Zawahiri responded by a sophisticated double bombing of US embassies in East Africa. America’s response was to attack Al Qaeda facilities in Afghanistan and Sudan with Cruise missiles. Analyzing the aftermath of the bombings and America’s response showed unintended consequences that favored Al Qaeda, enabling bin Laden and Zawahiri to prepare for the next terrorist attack in the harbor of Aden, Yemen.

After the embassy bombings political tensions between Al Qaeda’s Afghan host, Mullah Omar, and Osama bin Laden had the Al Qaeda leader trying to repair the relationship to keep his new base of operations. Even with tensions between the two organizations bin Laden and Zawahiri decided to attack America again. Al Qaeda succeeded in attacking the *USS Cole* even though the US Navy had prior knowledge of an Al Qaeda attack at the Aden, Yemen port. Political reasons as well as intelligence reasons kept America from retaliating against Al Qaeda for the *Cole* attack. The analysis

goes into intelligence mistakes the Americans made enabling Al Qaeda to succeed in its attack and why the Americans still did not see Al Qaeda as a serious threat.

Terrorist Event: Declaration of War

Political overview.

Osama bin Laden came away from Somalia in a victorious mood, believing he was going to succeed in his quest to have the United States withdraw from the *umma*. He continued his subversive activities to hide his involvement in terrorism against the United States and other countries. Bin Laden was perceived by the United States and other countries as a financier of terrorism. They did not believe he was capable of running a terrorist organization, but the skills he honed during his years in Afghanistan enabled him to build Al Qaeda.

His endeavors made him a target of both his birth country and the countries where his Arab-Afghans were fighting the governments. There were attacks on his life while he lived in Sudan. Many states and groups wanted to see him eliminated but all their attempts failed.¹⁶⁸ Saudi Arabia was being pressured by the countries bin Laden was targeting to do something about him and his group. The Saudis finally decided to go after dissenters inside their country as well as the main agitator, bin Laden, who was out of their reach in Sudan. In April of 1994 they revoked his citizenship, froze his assets, and began to arrest members of the *ulema* in Saudi Arabia.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁸ Abdel Bari Atwan, *The Secret History Of Al-Qa'Ida*. (London, England: Saqi Books, 2006), pp. 166-167; Usama Bin Laden Interview with Al-Quds Al-'Arabi. March 9, 1994, [Online] available from <http://www1.nefafoundation.org/documents-aqstatements.html> ; Accessed January 2, 2009.

¹⁶⁹ Abdel Bari Atwan, *The Secret History Of Al-Qa'Ida*. (London, England: Saqi Books, 2006), pp. 167-168.

During this time the United States was preoccupied with a number of problems in other parts of the world. Haiti was a problem country that the United States believed could be managed with little problems, but Rwanda presented a bigger problem--the United States was unwilling to commit its military to stop the Rwandan genocide so soon after the Somalia debacle. Bosnia was a foreign policy problem that the Clinton administration had successfully solved through United States involvement. Finally, the administration was diligently pursuing the 1993 World Trade Center bombers to bring them to justice.

At the close of 1994 bin Laden released an open letter that expressed his displeasure with “the Chief Mufti, the foremost juridical authority, in the kingdom of Saudi Arabia, bin Baz” for issuing the fatwa that King Fahd required to allow American and NATO troops to occupy Saudi land in order to protect Saudi Arabia from a possible attack from Saddam Hussein’s troops in Kuwait.¹⁷⁰ This open letter to bin Baz was followed by another to King Fahd from the “Advice and Reform Committee” (ARC) that was formed by bin Laden in response to the repression of the Sahwa (dissident theologians). In further support of the Sahwa, bin Laden orchestrated the bombing of the “US-operated National Guard Training Centre in Riyadh” Saudi Arabia in November, 1995.¹⁷¹

¹⁷⁰ Bruce Lawrence, *Messages To The World: The Statements Of Osama Bin Laden*. (New York, New York: Verso, 2005), p. 3.

¹⁷¹ Ibid., pp. 3-4; Abdel Bari Atwan, *The Secret History Of Al-Qa’ida*. (London, England: Saqi Books, 2006), pp. 167-168; Usama Bin Laden, Usama Bin Laden: “An Open Letter to King Fahd” August 11, 1995. [Online], available from <http://www1.nefafoundation.org/documents-aqstatements.html> ; Accessed January 2, 2009.

Bin Laden expressed his displeasure with the king for running Saudi Arabia into debt, failing to utilize the country's resources to their maximum, and for being a puppet of the Americans. At the end of bin Laden's letter he told the King he should be dethroned and all of his cabinet should resign. The tone of bin Laden's letters to bin Baz and King Fahd indicate his pent-up anger. The anger was expressed in the form of bombing attacks on the National Guard Base in Riyadh and on the Khobar Towers in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia in June 1996. These two terrorist attacks were also meant to signal America to withdraw its military from Saudi Arabia.

The low-level US intelligence field agents and analysts who were sounding the alarm about the potential threat that Osama bin Laden posed for the United States were ignored or down played by senior intelligence personnel and administration officials. The countries targeted by bin Laden hoped to force Sudan to expel him. The pressure came from Egypt because Al Qaeda terrorists had bombed the Egyptian Embassy in Pakistan in November, 1995 and made an attempt on Hosni Mubarak's life.¹⁷² The United States was also threatening more economic sanctions if Sudan did not stop supporting terrorists. Sudan was trying to encourage more investment in developing its oil resources; being a supporter of terrorism jeopardized their ability to attract investors, so the Sudanese began to believe that bin Laden was becoming a liability and a threat to the country. Saudi Arabia also continued its pressure to expel bin Laden.¹⁷³ Bin Laden and Al Qaeda finally left Sudan in May, 1996 for Afghanistan, which made him even more aggressive in both

¹⁷² Lawrence Wright, The Man Behind Bin Laden. *The New Yorker*. Issue September 16, 2002. [Online] available from <http://www.lawrencewright.com/art-zawahiri.html> ; Accessed October 14, 2008.

¹⁷³ Daniel Benjamin and Steven Simon, *The Age Of Sacred Terror*. (New York, New York: Random House, 2002), pp. 131-133.

words and deeds.¹⁷⁴ Bin Laden was now back in the land of his fighting youth, where he felt safe and secure and was able to carry out his plan to take on his main enemy. He believed that from Afghanistan he could defeat America just as he defeated the Soviet Union. Conducting the same type of war that he waged against the Soviets, he could be just as lethal and sophisticated in his fight against America. He called his Arab-Afghan fighters to arms by issuing fatwas against Islam's enemies.

Terrorist event.

On August 23, 1996, bin Laden came out from the shadows to deliver his "Declaration of War" against the United States and its allies. His remarks were direct and clearly pointed at Saudi Arabia and the Clinton administration's foreign policy in the Middle East, but he also directed his remarks to all Muslim and "Arab Peninsula" countries. He was sending a clear signal to Saudi Arabia that he was angry at the Saudi Kingdom for its handling of domestic and foreign policy matters. Bin Laden specifically belittled President Clinton's, Defense Secretary William Perry, and the American military in the address.

Bin Laden believed the Saudi regime was allowing Islam's enemies to steal its resources and treat the people of Islam unfairly. He goes on to say that suspending Shari'ah law (Islamic law) and replacing it with man-made law is against the traditions of Islam. The policy of funding and supporting the communists in South Yemen against Islamic people was another irritant to bin Laden. He voiced his disgust over the wasted resources spent on a military that was incapable of defending its homeland. Buying

¹⁷⁴ Bruce Lawrence, *Messages To The World: The Statements Of Osama Bin Laden*. (New York, New York: Verso, 2005), p. 23.

military aid from the United States, with the result that Saudi money could be used against Islam, is seen by bin Laden as an inefficient use of Saudi resources. US critics of buying Saudi oil used the same logic: the US was funding the very Islamic extremists that were attacking the United States. Bin Laden also believed that the United States influenced the Saudi regime to round up and arrest the *ulema* that were dissenting against the regime. The injustices perpetrated against the Saudi people that bin Laden describes cause the resonating anger that leads bin Laden to mastermind Riyadh and Khobar bombings. He warns the Saudi regime of a “volcanic eruption emerging as a result of the severe oppression, suffering, excessive iniquity, humiliation and poverty.”¹⁷⁵

The main issue for bin Laden pertaining to the United States was its occupation of the land of the two holy mosques (Saudi Arabia), an occupation anathema to the tenets of Islam. This offended him and many of the Islamic traditionalists, but just as offensive to him was the Saudi regime requesting the United States to come defend Saudi Arabia and letting the American military stay after it had defeated Saddam Hussein. The humiliation that bin Laden felt over the US occupying Saudi Arabia was the same humiliation he was trying to make the Americans feel over leaving countries after they were attacked. He called Defense Secretary William Perry out when Perry called the terrorists who attacked Riyadh and Khobar “coward terrorists”.¹⁷⁶ Bin Laden wanted to know where that “false courage” was when America left Beirut, Lebanon, Aden, Yemen and Somalia. Somalia was the “most disgraceful case,” according to bin Laden, because “Clinton appeared in

¹⁷⁵ “Declaration of War Against the Americans Occupying the Land of the Two Holy Places.” August 23, 1996, [Online]; available from <http://www.daveross.com/binladen.html> ; February, 24, 2008.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

front of the whole world threatening and promising revenge, but these threats were merely a preparation for withdrawal.”¹⁷⁷ Bin Laden went on to describe how he was going to fight the American military in a guerrilla war because he knew he could not beat them in a conventional war. Toward the end of the fatwa, bin Laden explained that Muslim youth would be willing to die for the *umma* and used the example of the Riyadh bombing that humiliated America, whereas the Americans would have to “convince” their troops to fight.¹⁷⁸

American response.

The United States responded in its standard fashion, saying the US would not respond to terrorist demands. President Clinton did not mention bin Laden’s “Declaration of War” in his press conferences and was not asked a question about the Declaration by any reporters. Ignoring bin Laden was not a departure for President Clinton or his senior department heads. Senior officials let lower level personnel answer questions to allow the administration an out if there was any contradiction with administration policy. The administration knew of bin Laden’s financial backing of jihadist activities in the Middle East and Muslim countries but did not believe that his involvement went any further. Lower-level administration officials were asked about the declaration but no names were used to identify the officials. In a *New York Times* article on August 31, 1996, “an Administration official said the threats had not prompted any new orders for American forces in Saudi Arabia” and the State Department’s perception of bin Laden was summarized as follows: “He has generally been viewed as a behind-the-scenes financier

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

of militant Islamic movements rather than someone who controls his own group.”¹⁷⁹ Bin Laden counters this official US view in a London interview in London in which he stated, “He who has funds owns the mujahidin!”¹⁸⁰

Comments like this from bin Laden were ignored or played down by the administration. A case in point is a press conference with Mike McCurry and a Mr. Johnson on July 26, 1996, during which a question was asked about the United States’ response to an Egyptian minister’s saying that the presence of US military forces in the Saudi Arabia was the reason for the unrest and tension. Mr. Johnson answered the question this way:

I’m unfamiliar with the remarks you refer to and I’m not going to respond directly to that. I am sure that they will have a discussion of terrorism and a discussion of the role that the United States plays in the region in order to be a force for stability. I have no doubt that the government of Egypt believes that the United States presence in the Gulf, a long-term presence although a shorter term one in Saudi Arabia itself is something that’s been a force for stability throughout the entire post-war period.¹⁸¹

President Clinton and Egyptian President Mubarak were meeting in Washington at this time and Mr. Johnson was answering questions pertaining to Egypt in this press conference.

The United States viewed its presence in the Middle East as a force for stability that spread democracy and capitalism. It minimized or ignored those who questioned

¹⁷⁹ Saudi Militant Is Said to Urge Force Ouster of US Troops, *New York Times*, August 31, 1996. [Online] available from <http://www.nytimes.com/1996/08/31/world/saudi-militant-is-said-to-urge-forced-ouster-of-us-troops.html> ; Accessed: Friday, July 24, 2009.

¹⁸⁰ Usama Bin Laden Interview with Rose Al-Yusuf, “Usama Bin Laden Reportedly Interviewed in London”, June 17, 1996, [Online]; available from <http://www1.nefafoundation.org/documents-aqstatements.html> ; Accessed: January 2, 2009.

¹⁸¹ William J. Clinton, Press Briefing by Mike McCurry, *The American Presidency Project*. July 26, 1996. [On-line] Available from: (<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=48809>) ; Accessed July 29, 2009.

America's presence just as it has done with the Egyptian minister and Osama bin Laden. President Clinton and his advisors did not see bin Laden as a serious threat because President Clinton saw terrorism as a problem that all countries face, so he treated it like organized crime. The president and his advisors got an anti-terrorism bill passed that funded security measures to make government facilities safer from terrorism, which meant not removing American military forces from Saudi Arabia or any other country.

By treating Osama bin Laden as a common criminal, the U. S. was trying to delegitimize him in the eyes of the proverbial "Arab Street," not giving him the power he was seeking. The United States kept its forces in place, unlike its actions in Yemen and Somalia, to show it would not be intimidated and to keep itself aligned with the Carter Doctrine.

Analysis.

Osama bin Laden sought legitimacy when he proposed fighting the communists in South Yemen and defending Saudi Arabia from Saddam Hussein, but Saudi Arabia refused his help and told him to leave foreign policy to the professionals. This belittling experience helped to legitimize him and his Arab Afghans in the eyes of the Arab street. He confronted the United States from the shadows until he made his public Declaration of War. He continued to deny responsibility for any acts of terrorism; he believed he already had the legitimacy to speak on these issues because he fought and survived the fight for the *umma*. He believed that the Muslim and Arab people gave him that stature since he was considered a hero in the public's eyes. So, he delivered the Arab and Muslim grievances to the wider world and to the enemies of the Muslim and Arab world.

He used a London-based Arab paper to deliver his declaration to the world to ensure his base of support would receive his message. He used a major western city's Arabic paper to ensure that the western press disseminated his message to the west. By using the Arab press, bin Laden believed the complete declaration would be available for all to read, whereas if he had given the western press the declaration directly, it might not have been shown to the public. Bin Laden was enhancing his power by controlling who, how and where his message is distributed.

He was beginning to come out of the shadows during this time when he was voicing his and the Arab street's grievances. He was just beginning, however, as he does not take responsibility for terrorist attacks about which he is questioned and believed to be behind. At this point, he was trying to get a feel for his new role as the number 1 enemy of the United States and its allies.

Even though Osama bin Laden was hinting in media interviews of what his organization was shaping up to be, the American government was clinging to its preconceived ideas of who could run an international terrorist organization. The administration and all the American think tanks missed these clues because they were unwilling to think beyond state sponsors of terrorism even though low level analysts and field officers in the intelligence community were sounding the alarm about Osama bin Laden's capabilities. New York Times' reporters David Johnston and Todd S. Purdum said the 9/11 Commission reported that the urgency of some in the intelligence community was not shared by others in the government:

Although this information was disseminated in many reports, the unit's sense of alarm about bin Laden was not widely shared or understood within the

intelligence and policy communities. ... Employees in the unit told us they felt their zeal attracted ridicule from their peers.¹⁸²

The “unit” was the bin Laden unit (Alec Station) that both the CIA and FBI had worked together, gathering intelligence and disseminating reports, since January of 1996.

The ridicule the bin Laden unit experienced dampened the urgency of the situation and the dampened energy was passed up along the chain of command, which lead to the apathy that the senior leaders felt about Osama bin Laden. The apathy was a product of the US belief that bin Laden was too insignificant of a terrorist to hurt the United States because he did not have a state sponsor to warrant the urgency the bin Laden unit was showing. The Americans were not going to leave Saudi Arabia or the Middle East no matter what an Egyptian minister thought or what some unknown wanna-be terrorist thought because America was a force for stability and good in the region.

Osama bin Laden and his followers had a different view of American presence in the region. His followers believed, as he believed, that the United States needed to leave Saudi Arabia and the region and they intended to use guerrilla warfare to signal the United States to leave. Khalid bin Abdel Rahman al-Fawaz, a close associate of bin

¹⁸² David Johnston and Todd Purdum, THREATS AND RESPONSES: PURSUING INTELLIGENCE; Missed Chances In a Long Hunt For bin Laden. *The New York Times*. Issue March 25, 2004. [Online] Available from <http://www.nytimes.com/2004/03/25/us/threats-responses-pursuing-intelligence-missed-chances-long-hunt-for-bin-laden.html?scp=158&sq=Osama%20bin%20Laden%20and%20Bill%20Clinton&st=cse> ; Accessed July 24, 2009.

Laden, expressed his view of the United States: "The Americans don't understand that they are not wanted," and "[t]hey only understand the language of violence."¹⁸³

America did understand that other countries didn't want them in their countries, but it was going to protect what it believed were American interests in the region, mainly oil. For these reasons, Mr. Johnson down played the Egyptian minister's concerns about US military presence in Saudi Arabia and the US ignored Osama bin Laden. Plus, America believed its way of life was so exceptional that others would want it to be their way of life, which is why the US exported democracy and capitalism.

Osama bin Laden, Khalid bin Abdel Rahman al-Fawaz, and other extremists believed that the only approach left for them was to carry out a guerrilla war against the United States. Al Qaeda had learned that America's military could be challenged. Bin Laden stated the examples in his "Declaration of War" and vowed to continue the fight against American imperialist expansion in the *umma*. It is apparent Al Qaeda had decided to carry out its stated mission of expelling the American military from Saudi Arabia using the only language America understood—only the language of violence would make the superpower withdraw from the region. The stage was set for Al Qaeda to escalate the way in which it sent its signals to America. Bin Laden and Al Qaeda were set to up the tone of their rhetoric and the force with which its signal was sent to America and its allies. With America ignoring bin Laden's grievances, he stated in the declaration that he believed he had no choice but to escalate the conflict with a terrorist attack that would get the

¹⁸³ Douglas Jehl, In Saudis' Heartland, Unrest Is Aimed at Rulers and US *The New York Times*, Issue November 5, 1996. [Online] Available from <http://www.nytimes.com/1996/11/05/world/in-saudis-heartland-unrest-is-aimed-at-rulers-and-us.html> ; Accessed: July 28, 2009.

Americans to either address his grievances or be drawn into the guerrilla war, “w[h]ere sons of the nation, and not the military forces, take part in it”¹⁸⁴ with terrorist attacks on two US Embassies in East Africa.

Terrorist Event: East African US Embassy Bombings

Political overview.

Osama bin Laden’s confidence in himself and Al Qaeda began to show when he came out of the shadows a little more by taking responsibility for the attack on the US military in Somalia and the bombings in Riyadh and Dhahran, Saudi Arabia.¹⁸⁵ During this time frame, bin Laden denied responsibility for or answered evasively when asked about a bombing he had taken responsibility for in an earlier interview. He tried to keep America guessing as to what he had done or was actually doing around the world. During this period he gave about 29 speeches and interviews informing the United States what his grievances and demands were. He talked about the place his Arab-Afghan fighters were fighting. He applied more and more political pressure on the United States with his speeches, interviews and deployment of the Arab-Afghans into hotspots.

President Clinton ran for his second term in office during the beginning of this time period. The president was involved in a scandal that occupied a good amount of his valuable time. He was unable to devote the time needed to concentrate on national and international issues without being interrupted by the Kenneth Starr’s Independent

¹⁸⁴ “Declaration of War Against the Americans Occupying the Land of the Two Holy Places.” August 23, 1996, [Online]; available from <http://www.daveross.com/binladen.html> ; February, 24, 2008.

¹⁸⁵ ‘Abd-al-Bari ‘Atwan, *Usama Bin Laden Interview with Al-Quds Al-‘Arabi*, November 27, 1996, [online]; available from <http://www1.nefafoundation.org/documents-aqstatements.html> ; Accessed: January 2, 2009;

Counsel Investigations and the Monica Lewinsky scandal. The US Congress was busy investigating President Clinton on a wide array of issues, some partisan, some not. Neither body of the government was able to devote the time needed to assess the danger that lurked ahead for the United States. The administration at the time was involved with helping Bosnia implement the Dayton Peace Accords. The old Soviet Union was another area the US involved itself, helping the government convert to a capitalistic economy and helping to dispose of the Soviet nuclear weapons in order to keep them out of the hands of terrorists and rogue governments.

Bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri had gone separate directions when they departed Sudan. Zawahiri traveled during this early time period to spread jihad. His ventures took him to the Middle East, Southeast Asia, Asia, Europe and the Caucasus, where he was arrested with two of his top lieutenants by the Russian authorities for crossing the border illegally sometime in late 1996 or early 1997.¹⁸⁶ Lawrence Wright reports that Zawahiri was trying to get to Chechnya to establish an Islamic Jihad base to spread jihad throughout Central Asia, which turned out badly. A six-month prison sentence in Russia made Zawahiri realize he was going to have to join bin Laden and Al Qaeda to fight the far enemy, America.

He joined Osama bin Laden on February 23, 1998 as one of the signatories to the fatwa that authorized the killing of Americans, military and civilian, and their allies anywhere in the world.¹⁸⁷ Around the time that Zawahiri joined Al Qaeda, infighting

¹⁸⁶ Lawrence Wright, The Man Behind Bin Laden. *The New Yorker*. Issue September 16, 2002. [Online] available from <http://www.lawrencewright.com/art-zawahiri.html> ; Accessed October 14, 2008.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

among the jihad groups started to divide them into two different camps. One wanted to go after the “far enemy,” America and its allies, and the other wanted to continue fighting the “near enemy,” Arab and Muslim countries.¹⁸⁸ Those that wanted to continue fighting the near enemy believed that with bin Laden attacking America, the security agencies in their countries as well as American agencies were kidnapping jihadis throughout the world.¹⁸⁹ Those in the jihad had to go underground and hope that their fellow fighters did not give up their names.

In the summer of 1998, after the February fatwa for jihad, the CIA and some of its allies saw a new urgency to go after the terrorists. They began kidnapping Jihad members in Central Asia and sent the Egyptians back to Cairo to be interrogated.¹⁹⁰ Their new urgency paid off in the apprehension of Ahmad Salama Mabruk and the recovery of a computer with files of European cell members and other important information that could be used to indict the Zawahiri brothers and break up other terrorist cells.¹⁹¹ Zawahiri and bin Laden continued to encourage Muslims to follow the February fatwa throughout the preceding months by using follow-up communiqués to the public.

The message that the jihadis were receiving was that the US and its allies were cracking down on terrorists. This turn of events was what the near enemy jihadis were afraid of and this is why they did not back bin Laden and Zawahiri’s plan to go after the far enemy. The turn of events did not deter bin Laden and Zawahiri from their plans to

¹⁸⁸ Fawaz Gerges, *The Far Enemy: Why Jihad Went Global*. (New York, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

¹⁹⁰ Lawrence Wright, The Man Behind Bin Laden. *The New Yorker*. Issue September 16, 2002. [Online] available from <http://www.lawrencewright.com/art-zawahiri.html> ; Accessed October 14, 2008.

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

get America to attack them in Afghanistan. According to Lawrence Wright, Zawahiri was so angered by the round up of his jihadi cell in Albanian that Zawahiri called an Arabic newspaper in London on August 6, 1998:

We are interested in briefly telling the Americans that their message has been received and that the response, which we hope they will read carefully, is being prepared, because, with God's help, we will write it in the language that they understand.¹⁹²

Bin Laden and Zawahiri sent their message to the United States in the only language that they believed the US understood: extreme violence, massive carnage, and death.

Terrorist event.

August 7, 1998 started out as a typical morning for the people of Nairobi, Kenya and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, but that would soon change in a very big way for the people in and around the US Embassies. What the people did not know was that the two US Embassies had been under surveillance since late 1993 by bin Laden and Zawahiri.¹⁹³ They picked this day for the bombings because it was the anniversary date of US military forces landing in Saudi Arabia in 1991.¹⁹⁴

Elaborate planning went into the bombing of the US Embassies, a hallmark of Al Qaeda the rest of the world soon came to recognize. The extent of Al Qaeda's terrorist network was also becoming apparent to American analysts and to terrorism analysts

¹⁹² Ibid.

¹⁹³ Lawrence Wright, The Man Behind Bin Laden. *The New Yorker*. Issue September 16, 2002. [Online] available from <http://www.lawrencewright.com/art-zawahiri.html> ; Accessed October 14, 2008.

¹⁹⁴ Daniel Benjamin and Steven Simon, *The Age of Sacred Terror*. (New York, New York: Random House, 2002), p. 29.

worldwide; their preconceived idea that a state was required to sponsor terrorism would soon be considered out dated thinking.

In the *Age of Sacred Terror*, Daniel Benjamin and Steven Simon describe the network of planners, technicians, and implementers that spanned across Europe, Central Asia, the Middle East, and Africa. This network carried out the objectives of the February Fatwa with two simultaneous bombings: the first bomb exploded at 10:35AM in Nairobi and killed 213. The second exploded at 10:39AM in Dar es Salaam and killed 11. Combined, the bombs also wounded a total of 5000 in both cities.¹⁹⁵

Bin Laden and Zawahiri escalated their words first and followed through with deeds. The American analysts were stunned at the planning and technical sophistication that was made apparent in the investigation to follow, a trait of Al Qaeda that American senior leadership was very slow to appreciate in their new formidable foe. Al Qaeda honed their tactics with each new terrorist attack to show that state-sponsored terrorism was not the only threat facing America.

American response.

America was shocked and angry at the death and destruction that occurred in Kenya and Tanzania. The Clinton administration got the message: Al Qaeda was a terrorist organization with the ability to strike anywhere it decided. The American government began to see Al Qaeda as a serious threat that needed to be dealt with in a firm manner. The intelligence agencies, the Pentagon, and the National Security Council

¹⁹⁵ Ibid., pp. 26-30.

designed a retaliatory strike that would indicate that the United States was serious about dealing with terrorism.

The US agencies jumped into action as soon as they received word of the bombings. FBI personnel from Washington and New York investigated the bombings. The designated personnel boarded planes with their necessary equipment to aid them in their job to find the perpetrators and bring them to justice. The investigators caught a break when one of the perpetrators was injured in the blast and was found in a hospital; another was arrested in Pakistan, a third man was arrested in Texas, and a fourth was arrested in South Africa.¹⁹⁶

President Clinton needed to respond to the embassy bombings in a forceful manner to satisfy those who believed that a strong military strike would show the terrorists we have the fire power and the will to use it when we are threatened. Seventy-five cruise missiles¹⁹⁷ were launched on August 20, 1998 to attack a Sudanese chemical plant and six Afghanistan training camps resulting in sixty deaths.¹⁹⁸ The attack did not kill bin Laden or any of the senior leadership of Al Qaeda.

Once the dust settled on the two strikes, there were rumblings that the Sudanese chemical plant was not being used for illegal activities as put forth by the US government. Poor intelligence was used in the assessment on which President Clinton based his decision to attack the chemical plant, which turned out to be a pharmaceutical

¹⁹⁶ Daniel Benjamin and Steven Simon, *The Age of Sacred Terror*. (New York, New York: Random House, 2002), p. 258.

¹⁹⁷ Murray Weiss, *The Man Who Warned America: The Life and Death of John O'Neill The FBI's Embattled Counterterror Warrior*. (New York, New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2003), p.216.

¹⁹⁸ Daniel Benjamin and Steven Simon, *The Age of Sacred Terror*. (New York, New York: Random House, 2002), p. 260.

plant.¹⁹⁹ America began closing embassies and other American installations around the world whenever there was a hint of a threat and hardened installations against possible future terrorist attacks.²⁰⁰

Not wounding or killing Osama bin Laden or other senior Al Qaeda leaders and bombing a legitimate business in Sudan made the United States look weak and incompetent in the eyes of the world, but this perception was magnified even more in the Arab and Muslim world. Bin Laden's popularity rose as the result of the retaliatory strike against Al Qaeda, which made it harder for America to portray Al Qaeda as a terrorist organization without the legitimacy to speak for the Arab and Muslim people.

Analysis.

Bin Laden's popularity grew as a result of the embassy bombings. Abdel Bari Atwan reports that "more than 11,000 [Saudi] recruits headed for the training camps in Afghanistan between 1998 and 2001;" he also reported that 80% of the Saudi interior ministry's security police were "sympathetic" to bin Laden and Al Qaeda.²⁰¹ Atwan went on to say that the interior ministry police were "charged" with the task of "countering" bin Laden with support from the FBI.²⁰² Osama bin Laden had always believed he had the legitimacy to speak for the Arab and Muslim people, but his new found popularity

¹⁹⁹ Tim Weiner, *Legacy of Ashes: The History of the CIA*. (New York, New York: Doubleday, 2007), pp. 468-470; Gary Berntsen and Ralph Pezzullo, *Jawbreaker: The Attack on Bin Laden and Al-Qaeda: A Personal Account by the CIA's Key Field Commander*. (New York, New York: Crown Publishers, 2005), p. 32.

²⁰⁰ Daniel Benjamin and Steven Simon, *The Age of Sacred Terror*. (New York, New York: Random House, 2002), pp. 261, 264-267.

²⁰¹ Abdel Bari Atwan, *The Secret History Of Al-Qa'ida*. (London, England: Saqi Books, 2006), p. 169.

²⁰² *Ibid.*

and notoriety has given him a new sense of power that emboldened him and Al Qaeda to press on with their strategy to take on the world's lone superpower.

Bin Laden and Zawahiri escalated the conflict between Al Qaeda and America by deciding to include civilians in the fight because they believed they were not being taken seriously. Including his 1996 "Declaration of War," he delivered twenty-nine messages to a world audience before he directed Al Qaeda to attack the East African US Embassies. There were 11 messages between the February, 1998 fatwa and the bombing of the embassies. Not one of those messages was responded to by President Clinton until the horrific bombing took place.

President Clinton responded on August 20th with a major address to the nation about ordering retaliatory strikes, then again on August 22nd in a radio address talking about the retaliatory strikes and in a letter to Congress on August 20th. This is the first time the president mentioned Osama bin Laden's name since bin Laden had declared war on the United States on August 23, 1996. The two public addresses referred to bin Laden's interview with John Miller of ABC News where bin Laden said he did not distinguish between American civilians and the military. Bin Laden considered all of them to be legitimate targets since they supported the military policy of their government. The letter to Congress refers to bin Laden's February 23rd fatwa, in which bin Laden stated all Muslims have a duty to "liberate the Al-Aqsa Mosque and Holy Mosque."²⁰³

²⁰³ William J. Clinton, "Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting the Executive Order on Terrorist Who Threaten to Disrupt the Middle East Peace Process August 20th, 1998", *The American Presidency Project*. [Online] Available from <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=54809> ; Accessed March 5, 2008.

President Clinton used Executive Order 12947 as a vehicle for expressing his concern that bin Laden was trying to disrupt the Middle East Peace Process.

The President pointed out that bin Laden was targeting the military and civilians and trying to disrupt the Middle East Peace Process, but he did not address the complaints of American troops still on the Arabian Peninsula. American policy makers avoided addressing Al Qaeda's grievances either by ignoring the grievances altogether or saying something about our "freedom" or our "ideals," such as the President did during his radio address: "The ultimate target of these terrorist attacks is our ideals."²⁰⁴ He hoped to keep the American public believing in the country's foreign policy. The United States was not going to talk to a terrorist, in line with the country's policy of not negotiating with terrorists. Sandy Berger, National Security Advisor, discouraged talking to bin Laden because it would not be productive. Berger said in a news briefing on August 21st that "I don't think the talks with bin Laden to suggest to him he should not target a fatwah against the United States would have been terribly productive."²⁰⁵ Berger and the other foreign policy advisors conveyed their belief that talking to bin Laden would be non-productive for the president. This belief was not based in fact because they did not talk to bin Laden. The belief assumes that if the United States asserts enough violence and pain on the terrorists, they will stop their campaign. The August 20th American retaliatory strikes were a campaign designed to send that message.

²⁰⁴ William J. Clinton, "The President's Radio Address August 22nd, 1998" *The American Presidency Project*. [Online] Available from <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=54811> ; Accessed March 5, 2008.

²⁰⁵ Sandy Berger, "Press Briefing by National Security Advisor Sandy Berger and Mike McCurry August 21st, 1998" *The American Presidency Project*. [Online] Available from <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=48360> ; Accessed March 13, 2008.

This assumption did not take into account how or by whom Al Qaeda was formed. The ten-year struggle to free Afghanistan from the Soviet occupation provided the inoculation to violence and pain that the members of Al Qaeda required. Al Qaeda's ability to endure hardship was a way of life for those who fought the Soviets, for those who fought the near enemy, or for those who did both. The use of American military might could not persuade Al Qaeda to see the world from the American perspective. Whether or not the Americans responded with force or ignored Al Qaeda, the experience was nothing new for Al Qaeda, as they saw how the Americans had treated Aidid in Somalia and how the United States had treated their allies. Al Qaeda did not wait long for a response from the US before it issued another call for jihad against America. Ayman al-Zawahiri spoke to an Islamabad newspaper to deliver a fatwa to continue the jihad an hour and a half before the American retaliatory strike on August 20th.²⁰⁶ "Abd al-Bari 'Atwan reported in the London based al-Quds al-'Arabi that bin Laden through his media spokesman warned President Clinton that 'the battle has not yet started and that the answer is what you see, not what you hear'".²⁰⁷

America did not address any of the grievances after this attack or after any of bin Laden's messages. Al Qaeda did not believe that the United States would talk to them, which is why bin Laden had set the stage to escalate the conflict with his warning of more yet to come in deeds not words. The "yet to come" and "deeds not words" meant violence, a "language the Americans understand." Bin Laden and Zawahiri had conveyed

²⁰⁶ FBIS, "Bin Ladin Calls For 'Jihad' Against Jews, Americans" August 21, 1998. [Online] Available from <http://www.fas.org/irp/world/para/ubl-fbis.pdf> ; Accessed August 18, 2009, pp. 74-75.

²⁰⁷ FBIS, "Bin Ladin Warns Clinton 'Battle Has Not Yet Started'" August 22-23, 1998. [Online] Available from <http://www.fas.org/irp/world/para/ubl-fbis.pdf> ; Accessed August 18, 2009. pp. 75-76.

the same message before to America and its allies. The unintended consequences of the American retaliatory Cruise missile strikes enabled bin Laden to accumulate more resources for his next attack by selling “unexploded missiles to China for more than \$10 million.”²⁰⁸ The next confrontation was to begin somewhere in the world where America had an installation and interests in order to get the Americans to address Al Qaeda’s grievances or achieve their stated goal of driving America out of Arab and Muslim countries.

Terrorist Event: USS Cole Bombing

Political overview.

After the embassy bombings in East Africa, the United States stepped up its attempts to harden its installations around the world and to increase its law enforcement activities against terrorist. It continued to apprehend terrorists wherever it found them hiding. The US strengthened its cooperation with other countries and world organizations to fight terrorism. The administration’s cooperation with other countries enabled it to continue with its law enforcement approach to fighting terrorism by indicting Osama bin Laden for his terrorist activities that the Justice Department could prove bin Laden had orchestrated.

The United States also continued its foreign policy initiatives to spread democracy and capitalism throughout the world. The US military continued the enforcement of the no-fly zones over Iraq and tried to exert pressure on Iraq to allow the UN inspectors to hunt for Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs). The United States

²⁰⁸ Lawrence Wright, *The Looming Tower: Al-Qaeda And The Road To 9/11*. (New York, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006), p. 285.

military and foreign policy establishment were involved in Kosovo's struggle for independence. The President's personal problems continued as the Congress and the special prosecutor continued to investigate the administration for wrong doing. All these events took the administration's focus off Al Qaeda and the threat it posed for the United States.

Al Qaeda escalated its rhetoric and actions before it bombed the US Embassies in East Africa, killing and wounding thousands of civilians. Zawahiri had just joined forces with bin Laden to make Al Qaeda the Islamic terrorist organization with the sole purpose of fighting the far enemy, America and its allies.

Zawahiri wanted to use WMDs if he could make them or find them to buy. In April 1999, Zawahiri embarked on a scientific mission, called "Curdled Milk," to build a chemical and biological weapons program.²⁰⁹ Al Qaeda embarked on this program while training its members in their camp for other terrorist attacks. Bin Laden and Zawahiri escalated their violence in the US Embassy attacks in East Africa and were looking for ways to keep this trend in each new attack. They had new recruits pouring in from the successful embassy mission, which enabled them to form new cells or add to existing cells to forge ahead with new and existing programs.

While Al Qaeda was moving on with their plans for attacking the US, bin Laden had to repair his relationship with his Afghan host. Relations were strained in 1998 and he was trying to repair them in order to keep a home for Al Qaeda. Whenever the Taliban

²⁰⁹ Alan Cullison and Andrew Higgins, "Files Found: A Computer in Kabul Yields a Chilling Array Of al Qaeda Memos --- Talk of 'Hitting Americans' And Making Nerve Gas; Spats Over Salaries, Rent --- A Guide to 'The Company'", *The Wall Street Journal*. December 31, 2001, p. A1.

could not gain ground in their fight with opposition warlords, bin Laden would send his Arab fighters to take the ground.²¹⁰ According to a file retrieved in a computer found by Alan Cullison, a *Wall Street Journal* reporter, bin Laden began to do what was needed to keep on the good side of the Taliban. He praised Mullah Omar and Afghanistan by praising “Omar as Islam’s new caliph” and simultaneously praising “Afghanistan as the kernel of a new caliphate”.²¹¹ Alan Cullison and his colleague Andrew Higgins also reported that three months after the embassy bombings Mullah Omar rebuffed the US request to evict bin Laden from Afghanistan because of Al Qaeda’s role in the embassy bombings; Omar described bin Laden as a “man without sin.”²¹²

Bin Laden and Al Qaeda were not expelled from Afghanistan and the relationship between the Taliban and Al Qaeda became closer. Bin Laden and Zawahiri continued their quest to take on the far enemy that the other jihadists did not want to attempt. As a result of the split between far and near enemy jihadists, Ayman al-Zawahiri stepped down as the leader of the Egyptian Jihad in the summer of 1999.²¹³ This split from the near enemy jihadists enabled bin Laden and Zawahiri to continue with their present plans without any interference from their critics.

On July 25, 1999, bin Laden issued a fatwa for jihad against the United States. He said that “the United States’ journey towards destruction will start before the arrival of

²¹⁰ Alan Cullison and Andrew Higgins, “Strained Alliance: Al Qaeda’s Sour Days in Afghanistan --- Fighters Mocked the Place; Taliban, in Turn, Nearly Booted Out bin Laden --- A Fateful US Missile Strike”, *The Wall Street Journal*. August 2, 2002, p. A1.

²¹¹ Ibid.

²¹² Ibid.

²¹³ Andrew Higgins and Alan Cullison, “Terrorist’s Odyssey: Saga of Dr. Zawahri Illuminates Roots Of al Qaeda Terror --- Secret, Failed Trip to Chechnya Turned Key Plotter’s Focus To America and bin Laden --- Sojourn in a Russian Prison”, *The Wall Street Journal*. July 2, 2002, p. A1.

21st century because this is the century of Islam and therefore the Muslim Ummah should declare a jihad against the United States.”²¹⁴ The fatwa corresponded with the US Millennium Bombing Plot that was stopped by a US border agent on the Canadian border. Ahmad Ressam looked suspicious, so the border agent questioned him and inspected his car and found his terrorist materials. Ressam’s target was LA International Airport. The other bombing target around the millennium was the USS Sullivan, which was ported in the harbor of Aden, Yemen. Al Qaeda planned to strike the ship on January 3, 2000, to correspond to “the Muslim ‘Night of Power,’ when the opening verses of the Quran were revealed to the Prophet”.²¹⁵ The target of January 3 had to be rescheduled for another date because the skiff was over loaded with explosives and sank in Aden harbor, unbeknownst to the Americans.²¹⁶ Al Qaeda learned from their mistakes and began training to strike other targets in the future. Because bin Laden was unsuccessful in striking his intended targets at the beginning of 2000, he renewed his fatwa for jihad against the United States on June 26, 2000,²¹⁷ planning a future attack.

Terrorist event.

The US Navy needed a port-of-call for refueling ships in the Middle East region to allow them easy access to the surrounding regions of the world. The port of Aden, Yemen gave them easy access from the Indian Ocean, Horn of Africa, Suez Canal and

²¹⁴ FBIS, “Bin Ladin Calls On Muslims To Declare Jihad Against US” July 25, 1999. [Online] Available from <http://www.fas.org/irp/world/para/ubl-fbis.pdf> ; Accessed August 18, 2009, pp. 133-134.

²¹⁵ Daniel Benjamin and Steven Simon, *The Age of Sacred Terror*. (New York, New York: Random House, 2002), p. 154.

²¹⁶ Peter Bergen, *Holy War: Inside the Secret World of Osama bin Laden INC*. (London, England: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2002), p.202.

²¹⁷ FBIS, “Usama Bin Ladin Renews Call for Jihad” June 26, 2000. [Online] Available from <http://www.fas.org/irp/world/para/ubl-fbis.pdf> ; Accessed August 18, 2009, p. 143.

the Persian Gulf. General Anthony Zinni pointed out in congressional testimony that the United States needed a refueling station in that region of the world because there were not enough oilers to refuel individual ships.²¹⁸ He also told Congress that Aden was vetted for all the security issues and was chosen over Djibouti and Jeddah to be the safest place for refueling operations.²¹⁹ The United States signed a formal agreement with Yemen to use the port of Aden for refueling and re-supplying US Naval Ships in December, 1998.²²⁰

The *USS Cole* came into the port of Aden, on October 12, 2000, to take on fuel and supplies. It tied up along the pier to refuel. The crew took their appointed duty stations to aid in the process of refueling and re-supplying the *Cole*. This process of refueling US warships had been undertaken on an informal basis before the December, 1998 contract was signed, which gave Al Qaeda a very long time to prepare for an attack against the United States.²²¹ After the US embassy bombings in East Africa, Mohammed Omar al-Harazi “informed his Yemen cell that our next target [was] a US Navy warship.”²²² On that October day in 2000, two Al Qaeda members launched their explosive-laden boat and made their way across the harbor to finish the task they had not completed back in January. The two members saw their target at the refueling station. They got as close as they could without rousing suspicion from the crew. They came alongside the *Cole* and greeted the crew members, who saw them with waving hands, as

²¹⁸ Peter Bergen, *Holy War: Inside the Secret World of Osama bin Laden INC.* (London, England: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2002), p.207.

²¹⁹ Ibid.

²²⁰ Ibid., p. 201

²²¹ Peter Bergen, *Holy War: Inside the Secret World of Osama bin Laden INC.* (London, England: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2002), p.201.

²²² Ibid.

though to say we are friendly people giving a warm greeting.²²³ The suicide bombers blew up the *Cole* with a shaped-explosive charge, blowing a forty foot hole in the side of the \$1 billion American warship killing seventeen sailors.²²⁴ The explosion was directed straight at the *Cole* in order ensure that the ship received the maximum impact of the explosion to cause as much damage as possible. The quick actions by the crew kept the destroyer from sinking in the harbor that horrible day. Their actions also saved the lives of many of their crew mates. The explosion wounded forty sailors and caused \$250 million in damages to the *Cole*.²²⁵

American response.

The United States was shocked, stunned and angry that an American warship could have been bombed and almost sunk and the Navy did not get a shot off at the attackers. How could a warship with all of its armaments and radar not see the danger coming and respond in kind. The country was angry and it wanted to strike out at the perpetrators.

The country was in the middle of a presidential race and the president's critics were saying the president couldn't protect the country. "Wag the Dog" accusations caused apprehension in the senior leadership when it came time to decide to retaliate against Al Qaeda. Richard Clarke reported that President Clinton's personal problems were making the principals rethink their options of retaliating against Al Qaeda because

²²³ Murray Weiss, *The Man Who Warned America: The Life and Death of John O'Neill The FBI's Embattled Counterterror Warrior*. (New York, New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2003) pp. 289-290.

²²⁴ Daniel Benjamin and Steven Simon, *The Age of Sacred Terror*. (New York, New York: Random House, 2002), p. 323.

²²⁵ Tim Weiner, *Legacy of Ashes: The History of the CIA*. (New York, New York: Doubleday, 2007) p. 476.

they did not want to be “charged with ‘wagging the dog,’ using a military strike to divert attention and affect domestic politics.”²²⁶ He also reported that Mike Sheehan, the State Department’s leading counterterrorism official, could not believe that the principals did not want to attack Al Qaeda and was particularly dismayed that the Pentagon would not allow the Army Delta Force or the Air Force to strike Al Qaeda.²²⁷ Mike Sheehan responded to Clarke with a question: “Does al Qaeda have to attack the Pentagon to get their attention?”²²⁸ Al Qaeda would answer that question in due time.

The Principles were not only constrained by “Wag the Dog” concerns; they had lost confidence in the CIA’s intelligence. Sudan’s pharmaceutical factory intelligence failure²²⁹ was a factor in their analysis, as was the bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade, which was thought to be the Yugoslav military procurement facility that made the White House and Pentagon rethink their retaliation plans against bin Laden and Al Qaeda.²³⁰ The failure to eliminate Al Qaeda made the organization more popular than the American leadership could imagine. Now that the United States was not going to strike bin Laden in Afghanistan, he became even more popular. Lawrence Wright reports that the *Cole* attack was seen as a great victory for bin Laden and that “Al Qaeda camps in Afghanistan filled with new recruits, and contributors from the Gulf states arrived carrying Samsonite suitcases filled with petrodollars, as in the glory days of the Afghan

²²⁶ Richard Clarke, *Your Government Failed You: Breaking The Cycle Of National Security Disasters*. (New York, New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2008) p. 161.

²²⁷ Richard Clarke, *Against All Enemies: Inside America’s War On Terror*. (New York, New York: Free Press, 2004) pp. 223-224.

²²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 224.

²²⁹ Tim Weiner, *Legacy of Ashes: The History of the CIA*. (New York, New York: Doubleday, 2007) pp. 468-470.

²³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 472-474.

jihad.”²³¹ The Principles eventually ruled out any retaliatory strikes against Al Qaeda for many different reasons. The decision was not greeted well by those who were working day and night to counter bin Laden and Al Qaeda terrorist activities. The political environment constrained the President and his administration from engaging in any military strike.

Analysis.

Osama Bin Laden, Zawahiri and Al Qaeda came away from the *Cole* bombing with a boost to their confidence in their abilities that they could take on the superpower. They believed even more so that America was a paper tiger and that Al Qaeda would win a guerrilla war against the aging superpower. America’s inability to stop Al Qaeda had caused America to be viewed in the Middle East as impotent and weak, which delighted its critics in the region and boosted empathy, recruitment and donations to Al Qaeda. Bin Laden was seen as the “David” in his campaign against the “Goliath,” America.

America knew from its intelligence gathering in 1998 after the East African embassy bombings that Al Qaeda was going to attack a warship. Time was a weapon that Al Qaeda had used to its advantage. Even though the United States Navy “possessed virtually the entire body of intelligence on Al Qaeda”²³² and knew from interrogations of the Kenyan cell²³³ in 1998 that an attack was coming, complacency had crept into its security measures over time. Al Qaeda’s patience in following “Allah’s time frame” wore

²³¹ Lawrence Wright, *The Looming Tower: Al-Qaeda And The Road To 9/11*. (New York, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006), p. 331.

²³² Daniel Benjamin and Steven Simon, *The Age of Sacred Terror*. (New York, New York: Random House, 2002), p. 324.

²³³ Peter Bergen, *Holy War: Inside the Secret World of Osama bin Laden INC*. (London, England: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2002), p.200.

down their target's security vigilance and allowed them to strike at a point and time that was not expected. The *Cole* attack illustrates how the vigilance of security forces wanes over time, which helps a persistent and patient adversary such as Al Qaeda to carry out an attack the US Navy was expecting.

Bin Laden's fatwas give the target country, America, a warning that Al Qaeda was going to attack, but on Al Qaeda's time line. Bin Laden issued his fatwas for the embassy bombings and the millennium bombings about six months prior to the actual events. The fatwa for the *Cole* bombing was issued about three and a half months prior to the bombing. During that time, bin Laden and Zawahiri gave interviews or distributed press releases to inform their followers and their enemies that an action was in progress. Bin Laden continued his policy of denying involvement in the embassy bombings at the end of 1998, whereas in the November 1996 Abdel Bari Atwan interview bin Laden took responsibility for the Saudi Arabian bombings in 1995 and 1996. His intent was to keep the Americans guessing about his involvement in the attacks. He also knew that individual terrorists that had been apprehended were talking about his involvement, but yet he continued a cat-and-mouse game by denying his involvement.

Al Qaeda's use of time, fatwas, and denials of involvement, combined with their attack methods, helped them in conducting their terrorist campaign. The Al Qaeda operatives learned from their mistakes when they failed in their attempt to attack the USS *Sullivans* in January, 2000 and then implemented the lessons learned in the *Cole* bombing. In the *Cole* bombing they used a shaped explosive charge to direct the explosion toward the ship to maximize death and destruction.

Al Qaeda' tactics kept the Americans guessing as to what bin Laden and Al Qaeda's involvement was in the terrorist attacks committed against the United States. Richard Clarke said that the CIA thought it had broken up the cell in Nairobi, Kenya but found out it had not after the embassy bombings. He also stated that "neither the CIA nor I thought then that al Qaeda was the most significant terrorist threat to the United States."²³⁴ The American national security establishment did not think that Al Qaeda was a significant threat because it was not backed by a state; one man, bin Laden, could not have a terrorist network that could operate worldwide. This was inconceivable in the security establishment's mindset because Iran had been the threat since 1979. Iran permeated their thinking to the point that they could not believe that an individual could hold that much power to organize and run a worldwide terrorist organization that could threaten a superpower. Richard Clarke substantiates this mindset when he said "I thought in the mid-1990s that the greatest threat of foreign terrorism was that of Iran and its front groups."²³⁵ Even though Clarke may have changed his thinking about bin Laden and Al Qaeda, others in the security establishment had a very hard time viewing the terrorist threat from a different vantage point. Lawrence Wright points out that some time after Michael Scheuer was dismissed as head of Alec Station,²³⁶ in May 1999, the remaining analysts, mostly women, were demeaned by others in the CIA, who called them "the Manson Family" for constantly raising the alarm about bin Laden and Al Qaeda.²³⁷ (The

²³⁴ Richard Clarke, *Your Government Failed You: Breaking The Cycle Of National Security Disasters*. (New York, New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2008) p. 158.

²³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 159.

²³⁶ Lawrence Wright, *The Looming Tower: Al-Qaeda And The Road To 9/11*. (New York, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006), pp. 290-292.

²³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 313.

“Manson Family” remark referred to Charles Manson and his gang, which was responsible for the killing of Sharon Tate and others in California.) The Alec Station analysts were viewing the Al Qaeda threat through non-cold war eyes; they recognized that the world had changed and bin Laden was the new evolving threat. The old-guard was still stuck in the cold war mind set, unwilling to listen.

The Cold War policy of not talking to or not negotiating with terrorists was followed to the letter by the Clinton administration and the foreign policy establishment. President Clinton did not mention bin Laden or Al Qaeda when he talked about the *USS Cole*. Neither President Clinton nor National Security Advisor Sandy Berger referenced any of bin Laden’s speeches or interviews, as they did after the embassy bombings. Even though President Clinton and some in the foreign policy establishment saw Al Qaeda as a serious threat to the United States, they decided to ignore it and its leaders and refrain from authorizing a retaliatory strike in response to the *USS Cole* bombing. The outgoing Clinton administration officials conveyed the severity of the bin Laden Al Qaeda threat to the incoming Bush administration officials. Tim Weiner reports that George Tenet, CIA Director, and President Clinton briefed President-elect George W. Bush:

Tenet personally briefed the president-elect on bin Laden. Bush remembered specifically asking Tenet if the CIA could kill the guy; Tenet replied that killing him would not end the threat he represented. Bush then met alone with Clinton for two hours to talk about national security. Clinton remembers telling him: “Your biggest threat is bin Laden.” Bush swore that he never heard those words.²³⁸

²³⁸ Tim Weiner, *Legacy of Ashes: The History of the CIA*. (New York, New York: Doubleday, 2007) p. 476.

Ignoring Al Qaeda and bin Laden was designed to de-legitimize the organization and its leaders in the eyes of the world. Up to this point, ignoring bin Laden had only angered him and his leadership and allowed them to become bigger, more violent, and to boost their popularity in the Muslim and Arab world. New president or not, bin Laden was continuing to push forward with Al Qaeda's plans to drive the Americans out of Saudi Arabia and other Arab and Muslim countries. Whether the US ignored him and his grievances or bombed him, he was still committed to his plan of drawing America into a guerilla war in Afghanistan in order to bankrupt America so it would exit Arab and Muslim countries as the Soviets withdrew first from Afghanistan and then from the Soviet Republics.

Chapter 5: Al Qaeda Terrorism Phase 3: September 2001 to September 2008

In the third time frame the United States homeland was attacked for the second time in eight years. Bin Laden eventually took responsibility for 9/11 but has always denied responsibility for the Twin Towers attack in 1993. Following the Yemen trend, the US Embassy in Sana'a, Yemen was attacked in 2008 at the end of the departing Bush administration. The escalation in violence in the 9/11 attack was used to draw America into a fight where Al Qaeda and its leadership felt most confident in waging a guerrilla war, in Afghanistan. Osama bin Laden felt the United States would not attack since they had withdrawn troops in earlier incidents and had not attacked after the Cole incident. That did not turn out to be the case for the Bush administration because the president ordered the military to start bombing Al Qaeda and Taliban targets almost a month after the 9/11 attack. The Al Qaeda leadership survived the bombing attack and retreated to their hideouts in the mountainous Tora Bora region of Afghanistan, where they continue to lead their guerrilla war against the invading Americans and their allies. This started a new trend for Al Qaeda in how it delivered its message. After the American invasion of Afghanistan bin, Laden and his associates no longer conducted interviews to get their message out. Couriers delivered their message to media outlets or posted the message on the Internet. The messages continued Al Qaeda's defiant tone but also started to send peace overtures, messages to the American public, and messages to the European allies.

These messages were designed to split the American government from its own citizens and from its allies.

The events to be analyzed in this chapter are the 9/11 attacks, bin Laden's message to the American people just before the 2004 presidential elections, and the American Embassy bombing in Sana, Yemen in September 2008. Each of the events will start out with the political overview before the incident occurred. Then the incidents will be described individually, followed by the American response, and finally an analysis of the separate events.

The political environment before 9/11 was not focused on terrorism and the new administration saw state sponsors of terrorism as more of a threat than Osama bin Laden and Al Qaeda. The administration's willful ignorance of Al Qaeda's capabilities played a role in the two aircraft hitting the World Trade Center Towers, one aircraft striking the Pentagon, and one aircraft plowing into a field in Pennsylvania. The Pennsylvania aircraft was downed by its passengers trying to take control of the aircraft. America's response was about a month in coming before attacking Afghanistan with a CIA war plan that the administration believed was a model of American military superiority implementing its foreign policy initiatives. The analysis looks at the US war strategy and how bin Laden responds to the strategy.

The political context of bin Laden's October 2004 message before the 2004 American Presidential Election goes over the administration's attempts to kill or capture bin Laden and its decision to embark on a regime change policy in Iraq that changed the effort and outcome in the Afghan War. Bin Laden's message explains his reasons for

attacking America and that American security is in the hands of the American people because they vote for the politicians that implement its foreign policy. America's response to bin Laden's message was very generic. The President and his people did not address any of the issues that Osama bin Laden laid out pertaining to American foreign policy. The analysis looks at how bin Laden disseminates his messages, why American foreign policy is Al Qaeda's main issue of complaint, and how bin Laden tries to persuade the American people that American foreign policy, not their freedom, is the source of tension between him and America.

The political overview points out the political climate after the 2006 Congressional elections along with Al Qaeda's terrorist activities from the beginning of the Iraq War to the September 2008 US Embassy bombing in Yemen. The event occurred when suicide bombers exploded their bombs near the gate of the embassy, killing some people and damaging the embassy. Al Qaeda eventually claimed responsibility for the terrorist act. President Bush mentioned the bombing and stated how important the Middle East was to the United States while others in the administration mentioned Al Qaeda's fingerprints on the attack. The media did not press the issue of the embassy bombing because their focus was the faltering US economy. The analysis touches on the economic crisis that kept Americans from seeing specific trends that the Yemen bombing represented. Al Qaeda has continued to carry out attacks and to recruit young fighters that the old guard believes is too willing to use violence that could jeopardize the existence of Al Qaeda.

Terrorist Event: 9/11 Attacks

Political overview.

It was the Fall of 2000. The presidential race between George W. Bush and Al Gore was in full swing. Part of the country wanted a change from the scandalous Clinton years; the other wanted Al Gore to lead the country in a new direction. Election Day produced no clear winner. Florida became the deciding factor in the election. A recount of votes was begun to decide the winner. Tensions rose during this process as accusations of fraud in the recount surfaced against both political parties. The country's attention was focused on the recount and not on terrorism or the USS Cole attack. Eventually the US Supreme Court ruled George W. Bush was the new president.

George W. Bush and his administration received the reins of power on January 20, 2001. Administration officials got down to business, implementing their president's initiatives. Holdover officials, such as Richard Clarke, explained to the new security team the threats facing the last administration: Osama bin Laden and Al Qaeda were the number one threat to the country's security. However, Cold War thinking was the norm for the new administration, which failed to recognize the threats from a new era of international terrorism, which was dominated by a group of Sunni Islamic fundamentalists without the traditional state sponsorship, a group lead by a rich business man from Saudi Arabia, a long-time American ally. The United States' old terrorist foe, Iran, was a Shiite state that sponsored terrorism. The new Bush administration, like the Clinton administration, thought that fundamentalist Islamic terrorists all worked together as one monolithic organization. In the new administration, the Principles and their

deputies organized their departments to accommodate this view of the world, which reflected the realities of the Cold War era. Condoleezza Rice and her deputy Steven Hadley had a difficult time understanding Richard Clarke's explanation for devoting time and staffing resources to terrorism issues that crossed foreign and domestic boundaries.²³⁹

Terrorism was demoted, a topic to be discussed in deputies' meetings instead of the Principles' meetings, which is where it was discussed in the Clinton administration, according to Clarke. The first deputies' meeting on terrorism took place in April, 2001, when some of the participants sided with Clarke's urgency and his concern regarding bin Laden and Al Qaeda. Paul Wolfowitz, on the other hand, was not convinced that bin Laden was as much of a threat as terrorism from Iraq. Clarke explained the seriousness of the Al Qaeda threat to the United States. Wolfowitz replied: "Well, there are others that do as well, at least as much. Iraqi terrorism for example."²⁴⁰ Wolfowitz could not break away from his Cold War mindset to comprehend a new threat even though the Cold War had concluded almost a decade ago. While this mindset was not held by everyone, it was pervasive in the top decision makers' worldview. The CIA, for example, provided no evidence of Iraqi terrorism against the United States.²⁴¹ State Department Deputy Secretary Richard Armitage, however, voiced his concerns that Al Qaeda and bin Laden posed a serious threat that warranted the urgency that Richard Clarke was expressing.²⁴² But the Wolfowitz worldview seemed to prevail in the thinking of the administration.

²³⁹ Richard Clarke, *Against All Enemies: Inside America's War on Terror*. (New York, New York: Free Press, 2004) pp. 299-230.

²⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 231.

²⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 231.

²⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 232.

As spring turned into summer, the threat assessments continued to roll in daily, all indicating that an attack was imminent. The threats were not specific. The holdover staff, convinced that Al Qaeda was a threat, took the mounting alerts in stride, while personnel from the new administration became irritated by the constant threat assessments and remained frustrated and skeptical. Steve Coll points out that President Bush told Condoleezza Rice, “I’m tired of swatting flies” after receiving another threat assessment pertaining to Al Qaeda and bin Laden.²⁴³ Others in the administration were also tired of hearing the threats. Here’s how Coll describes it:

CIA leaders such as deputy director John [sic] McLaughlin said later that some Bush Administration officials, who had not experienced prior surges of threat and panic, voiced frustrating skepticism about the validity of the threat intelligence, wondering aloud if it were disinformation. Hadley told Tenet in July that Paul Wolfowitz had doubts about the threat reports.²⁴⁴

Frustration and skepticism were exactly what Al Qaeda would want the new administration to feel if it had planned a disinformation campaign. There is no evidence that Al Qaeda was spreading disinformation to confuse the United States. Al Qaeda was using time as their weapon of choice as they did in the USS Cole bombing. The new administration was fatiguing just after a couple of months, whereas the Navy security team in Yemen fatigued over the course of two years. Allowing fatigue to set in so early in the course of events gave Al Qaeda the advantage it needed to succeed in its planned attack. Off course, the administration pursued the agenda that it planned to establish when it got into office.

²⁴³ Steve Coll, *Ghost Wars: The Secret History of the CIA, Afghanistan, and Bin Laden, From the Soviet Invasion to September 10, 2001*. (New York, New York: Penguin Books, 2004) p.564.

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p.569.

Terrorism was a concern, but it was not on the top of the list, where Clarke and others thought it belonged. The issues pertaining to China, Iraq and Russia were on the top of the agenda, along with missile defense and reorganizing the military to defend against the threats that the Principles believed to be the most vexing for the United States. Tracking and trying to kill bin Laden was an old policy brought over from the previous administration by the CIA and the Air Force, which hoped to pursue the Predator Drone program. But killing bin Laden would not extinguish the threat that Al Qaeda and bin Laden represented. This belief in exterminating the problem instead of dealing with the grievances persisted in the both the Clinton and Bush administrations.

Bin Laden knew his grievances were not going to be addressed, so he continued with his plan to draw the United States into a guerrilla war he believed he could win. Attacking America directly was sure to get a response from the new administration because they were more than willing to use military force. An attack on the American homeland was a sure way to get the “wag the dog” critics of the Clinton administration to defend the United States.

Terrorist event.

Al Qaeda members were following their last instructions to board their assigned planes in Boston, Washington D.C. and Newark, New Jersey with passengers who were unaware these flights were going to be the end of their life. The flights took off for their destination cities without a problem. The flight crews were performing their regular duties after takeoff to get ready to serve their passengers.

The nineteen hijackers were ready to perform their duty as they saw it. Their probing of security measures on earlier flights across the country told them they would be able to overcome any obstacles that might appear. The passengers and crew would be docile, which would enable them to complete their suicide mission. When the hijacking occurred, the passengers and crew believed it to be a typical hijacking where negotiations would result in the hijackers releasing everyone, as happened in the majority of previous hijackings. The difference was not noticed until the first planes hit their targets. First, American Airlines Flight 11 out of Boston's Logan Airport hit the North Tower of the World Trade Center at 8:46 am;²⁴⁵ second, United Airlines Flight 175 out of Boston's Logan Airport struck the South Tower of the World Trade Center at 9:03 am;²⁴⁶ third, American Airlines Flight 77 out of Washington's Dulles International Airport crashed into the Pentagon at 9:37 am;²⁴⁷ fourth, United Airlines Flight 93 out of Newark, New Jersey's Liberty International Airport crashed into a field in Shanksville, Pennsylvania at 10:06 am.²⁴⁸ The South Tower collapsed at 9:59 am and the North Tower collapsed at 10:28am.

The passengers on Flight 93 were getting cell phone reports from family members and friends that other planes had been hijacked and flown into the World Trade Center

²⁴⁵ Complete 911 Timeline: American Airlines Flight 11. September 11, 2001. [Online] Available from http://www.historycommons.org/timeline.jsp?timeline=complete_911_timeline&day_of_9/11=aa11 ; Accessed September 3, 2009.

²⁴⁶ Complete 911 Timeline: United Airlines Flight 175. September 11, 2001. [Online] Available from http://www.historycommons.org/timeline.jsp?timeline=complete_911_timeline&day_of_9/11=ua175 ; Accessed September 3, 2009.

²⁴⁷ Complete 911 Timeline: American Airlines Flight 77. September 11, 2001. [Online] Available from http://www.historycommons.org/timeline.jsp?timeline=complete_911_timeline&day_of_9/11=aa77 ; Accessed September 3, 2009.

²⁴⁸ Complete 911 Timeline: United Airlines Flight 93. September 11, 2001. [Online] Available from http://www.historycommons.org/timeline.jsp?timeline=complete_911_timeline&day_of_9/11=ua93 ; Accessed September 3, 2009.

and the Pentagon. The passengers mounted an assault on the hijackers to retake control of the plane because they feared it was going to attack the White House or the Capitol. The passengers' attempt to retake control of the plane failed when Flight 93 crashed in a field in Shanksville, Pennsylvania, but the passengers were successful in stopping the hijackers from crashing into the US Capitol or the White House, striking the ultimate psychological blow to the United States.

Pride is what the American people felt when they heard of the attempts of Flight 93 passengers to retake control of the plane. The country needed a boost after it saw the World Trade Center towers collapse, fearing tens of thousands of people had been killed in the collapse. New York did lose a very high number of emergency response workers when the towers collapsed that September day.

Not only was there a loss of life, but the economy faltered after the attacks, with Wall Street closing until it could get its computer system back up and functioning. The air transportation system was shut down until government officials believed there was no longer a threat of hijacking.

The country was in a state of shock and fear that eventually turned into anger and revenge. The country had known about Osama bin Laden and Al Qaeda but its willful ignorance of his capability to carry out his threats had the country trying to reevaluate how it could have allowed a relatively unknown group of terrorists to attack America.

American response.

The September 11th attacks caught the Bush administration completely off guard. Hold-over personnel from the Clinton administration and the CIA/FBI bin Laden unit

warned the Bush Administration of the danger Al Qaeda and bin Laden posed to the United States, but those warnings were given short shrift or ignored. Ron Suskind describes President Bush's reaction after he got an intelligence briefing from a "panicked CIA briefer" in the summer of 2001: "'All right" he said "You've covered your ass, now."²⁴⁹ There was not much the government personnel sounding the Bin Laden and Al Qaeda alarm could do if the President didn't believe there was nothing to worry about.

It was the "perfect storm" for the Bush administration and Al Qaeda. Bin Laden was trying to drag the United States into a guerrilla war in Afghanistan and the hawks in the administration were looking to get a war under their belt. The hawks saw a war in Afghanistan against bin Laden and Al Qaeda as an "in-and-out" war that would be over quickly. As described in *The Price of Loyalty*, by Ron Suskind and Paul O'Neill, Afghanistan was going to be the administration's "demonstration model" for what countries and terrorists harboring ill will against the United States "might face."²⁵⁰ The neoconservatives got the war they were looking for against Al Qaeda, showing the world the United States was back and that it was going to flex its military muscles to implement its foreign policy initiatives of spreading American democracy and capitalism around the world. The intimidation threatened by the demonstration model would not have the desired effect on Al Qaeda. Al Qaeda and the Taliban were built by men with thirty years' experience of war, pain, and death. Their experiences had trained them to not fear or be intimidated by superpowers.

²⁴⁹ Ron Suskind, *The One Percent Doctrine: Deep Inside America's Pursuit Of Its Enemies Since 9/11*. (New York, New York: Simon & Schuster, 2006) p. 2.

²⁵⁰ Ron Suskind, *The Price of Loyalty: George W. Bush, the White House, and the Education of Paul O'Neill*. (New York, New York: Simon & Schuster, 2004) p. 187.

War with Al Qaeda and the Taliban started on October 7, 2001. The invasion plan came from the CIA and was to be implemented in three stages: paramilitary CIA operatives would infiltrate the country first to work with friendly Afghan tribes to lay the ground work for the entry of US Special Forces, followed by air strikes on Taliban strongholds, followed by a small number of US troops²⁵¹ that would clean up after the air strikes and Cruise missiles destroyed Al Qaeda and the Taliban encampments. Attacking Al Qaeda right after 9/11 would have been far more beneficial for the US because bin Laden might not have escaped, but the Pentagon had no plans to go into Afghanistan even though bin Laden had been threatening and attacking the United States since late 1992. A Pentagon plan should have been in place at least by the time of the East African US Embassy bombings, but certainly an invasion plan should have been a top priority after the USS Cole bombing. As Michael Scheuer points out in *Imperial Hubris*, the Pentagon had many years to draw up battle plans but it did not and when the United States did implement a plan it did not use any of its experienced hands or its accumulated knowledge from the Afghan-Soviet conflict to devise a plan that took advantage of what he calls “the list of ‘checkables’.”²⁵² On September 12th, Donald Rumsfeld requested a Pentagon plan; he received one on September 21st but returned the plan on October 1st “for more target sets and force requirements.” On October 2nd the President approved the

²⁵¹ Ron Suskind, *The One Percent Doctrine: Deep Inside America's Pursuit Of Its Enemies Since 9/11*. (New York, New York: Simon & Schuster, 2006) pp. 18-21; Ron Suskind, *The Price of Loyalty: George W. Bush, the White House, and the Education of Paul O'Neill*. (New York, New York: Simon & Schuster, 2004) pp. 190-193.

²⁵² Michael Scheuer, (Anonymous), *Imperial Hubris: Why the West Is Losing the War on Terror*. (Washington, D.C.: Brassey's Inc., 2004) Chapter 2, pp. 21-58.

plan.²⁵³ With the plan coming out so late, the military would not have any conventional units ready for deployment. Special Forces units are always ready to deploy at any moment and their close working relationship with the CIA made the “Tenet Plan”²⁵⁴ workable for the Principles.

The war plan from either the Pentagon or the CIA did not have what Scheuer called the “checkables,” with neither implementing a common sense strategy that took into account Afghani culture, ethnic issues, tribal issues, and any other elements of Afghan society that would give the US planners some idea of what policy makers were getting the country into by invading Afghanistan. There was no mention at all of engaging the Taliban or Al Qaeda in negotiations or a dialogue. Instead, President Bush did give the Taliban demands which he expected to be met in no uncertain terms. In the address to the nation on October 7th the President stated that combat actions had begun against Al Qaeda and Taliban forces and that he had given demands to the Taliban:

More than 2 weeks ago, I gave Taliban leaders a series of clear and specific demands: Close terrorist training camps; hand over leaders of the Al Qaida network; and return all foreign nationals, including American citizens, unjustly detained in your country. None of these demands were met. And now the Taliban will pay a price. By destroying camps and disrupting communications, we will make it more difficult for the terror network to train new recruits and coordinate their evil plans.²⁵⁵

²⁵³ Ibid., p. 25.

²⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 29.

²⁵⁵ George W. Bush, Address to the Nation Announcing Strikes Against Al Qaida Training Camps and Taliban Military Installations in Afghanistan. October 7, 2001, [Online] Available from <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=65088&st=Taliban&st1=>; Accessed September 10, 2009.

Analysis.

Dialogue with Al Qaeda was out of the realm of possibility; the Bush administration was not going to talk to a terrorist organization that had just attacked America. Giving demands to the Taliban through diplomatic channels was the preferred strategy of the Bush administration. The administration believed zero-sum negotiations by the United States would pressure the Taliban into complying with US demands. Bin Laden had witnessed the same American negotiating tactic when the United States dealt with Aidid in Somalia. Pressure was applied to force Aidid to comply with American demands of disarming his militia and allowing the United States and the United Nations to establish a government to their liking. When Aidid resisted and forced the Americans to leave, bin Laden saw a weakness that he could exploit. This observation convinced bin Laden he could draw America into a guerrilla war in Afghanistan by attacking America. A protracted war in Afghanistan would eventually result in America leaving Afghanistan as the Soviets had done. In the end, the US would leave the Middle East as it had left Somalia.

With the retaliation delayed, bin Laden mistakenly assumed the Americans were not going to retaliate or, if they did, that they would only strike with Cruise missile as they had done after the East African embassy bombings. He misjudged the new administration, especially the neo-conservative members that had the President's ear and were more than willing to use military power to push their agenda. Alan Cullison and Andrew Higgins reported in the *Wall Street Journal* that bin Laden misjudged the United

States' response to 9/11 based on information stored on an Al Qaeda computer the two reporters bought in Afghanistan:

Some of the computer messages indicate Mr. bin Laden miscalculated America's resolve in the wake of the Sept. 11 terror attacks. Shortly before the US bombing campaign, he wrote a soothing message to Mullah Omar, advising the Taliban leader that Washington might shy from military action. Even if America did strike, he added, it would quickly retreat, humiliated like the Soviet Red Army in the 1980s. Either way, he said, America would end up a "third-rate power like Russia."²⁵⁶

According to Cullison and Higgins, bin Laden's letter to Mullah Omar was dated October 4, 2001, three days before the sustained air bombing campaign that had the Taliban and Al Qaeda searching for safe sanctuary in the mountains.

American war planners thought they could inflict enormous amounts of pain, suffering and death on Al Qaeda and the Taliban that would drive them into extinction through an extended bombing campaign followed by the deployment of troops to mop-up and finish the campaign. Initially America thought it had dealt a death blow to Al Qaeda and the Taliban but Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri escaped from their sanctuary in the Tora Bora region near the Afghan-Pakistani border to the mountains in Pakistan. The whereabouts of Al Qaeda's leadership is still unknown.

American leaders went to war not knowing their enemy or knowing the enemy's hosts. Michael Scheuer points out that there was a plethora of classified and unclassified information and information in the public domain that the war planners overlooked completely. United States agencies that took part in aiding the resistance

²⁵⁶ Alan Cullison and Andrew Higgins, Suicide Watch: Al Qaeda Acolyte, One of Many, Vows To Die for the Cause --- Elusive Agents Like Mr. Yusuf Confound Efforts to Judge Progress in War on Terror --- Macabre Poems for bin Laden. *The Wall Street Journal*. December 30, 2002, p. A 1.

during the Afghan-Soviet war had information about Al Qaeda and the Taliban; the Soviet after-action report from the Soviet-Afghan war had been translated into English and should have been required reading for all participants from a private to the president. This particular report was available in a trilogy with the first two volumes translated and republished in English in 1996 by the National Defense University and the US Marine Corps Combat Development Command. The third volume, *The Soviet-Afghan War: How a Superpower Fought and Lost*, was published in 2002.²⁵⁷ The Bush administration went to war in Afghanistan on the cheap with insufficient forces to accomplish their desired goal and without knowing their enemy they were fighting. Not understanding the consequences of fighting a country that had been in some form of war for the past 22 years was not a wise approach for an elite military. Fighting the Taliban and Al Qaeda was not like going to war in Grenada. American troops did not know the terrain, language, culture, ethnic groups, religions, tribes or customs of Afghanistan and were setting out to fight a guerrilla war that Osama bin Laden had lured them into.

Al Qaeda was prepared for a long fight—what bin Laden called the “long war”—to accomplish their goals. They prepared to sacrifice for what they believed to be a worthy goal, the umma. Osama bin Laden and Al Qaeda, with the support of Mullah Omar, had their own “demonstration model” based on luring the United States into a war of attrition in a country that they knew could defeat another superpower. The Taliban and Al Qaeda would and could prolong the conflict to drain the United States and NATO of

²⁵⁷ Milan Hauner, *The Soviet-Afghan War: How a Superpower Fought and Lost*. Naval War College Review, Spring 2002. [Online] Available from http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m0JIW/is_2_55/ai_88174239/; Accessed September 14, 2009.

their resources, cash, troops, and, most importantly, the will to fight a war that could not be sustained for as long as it would take the US and NATO to defeat the Taliban and Al Qaeda. When the West realized this fact, bin Laden believed they would have to negotiate a settlement with the Taliban and Al Qaeda. This is what Osama bin Laden and Zawahiri observed in Somalia, so they believed the United States would eventually leave Afghanistan and the Middle East.

At this point, with the Taliban and Al Qaeda on the run and looking for safe sanctuary, the United States ignored the comment a Soviet General made to the CIA while advising the United States' on their Afghan war plans: "With regret," the Russian said, "I have to say that you are going to get the hell kicked out of you."²⁵⁸

Al Qaeda accomplished one of its major goals by luring the United States into a guerrilla war in Afghanistan, but it has not convinced the US to respond to its grievances. The course of the long war will determine if Al Qaeda's strategy will work before its leadership is killed or captured.

Terrorist Event: Bin Laden Message to the American People

Political overview.

Osama bin Laden started out denying involvement in the 9/11 attacks when asked a question on the subject in an interview on September 28, 2001.²⁵⁹ He continued to deny his involvement until he decided to take responsibility for the acts. Bin Laden talks about the 9/11 attacks in his message on October 7 2001. In his February 1, 2002 message, bin

²⁵⁸ Michael Scheuer, (Anonymous), *Imperial Hubris: Why the West Is Losing the War on Terror*. (Washington, District of Columbia: Brassey's Inc., 2004) p. 31.

²⁵⁹ FBIS, "'Exclusive' Interview With Usama Bin Ladin on 11 Sep Attacks in US." September 28 2001. [Online] Available from <http://www.fas.org/irp/world/para/ubl-fbis.pdf> ; Accessed September 14, 2009, p. 178.

Laden takes responsibility in a round-about way by saying that if inciting people to act is terrorism, then “I am a terrorist.” About this time, the Pentagon released the transcript of a video tape found in Kandahar, Afghanistan, in which Osama bin Laden described the timing of the 9/11 attacks, what he calculated would happen to the towers when they were hit, and how he and Al Qaeda listened on the radio to coverage of the attacks in New York and Washington.²⁶⁰ Now that he had drawn the United States into Afghanistan, his antagonizing and baiting rhetoric against the US stopped. Even though bin Laden became America’s number one enemy, his status was kept low by the administration to take away his legitimacy. President Bush did not mention Osama bin Laden’s name in the State of the Union Address, though he mentioned his name twice in 2006 and once each in 2007 and 2008.²⁶¹ The administration thought bin Laden’s legitimacy was stripped away by not recognizing him, but bin Laden’s legitimacy wasn’t established by the United States. Legitimacy was afforded to him by the backing he received from the Muslim and Arab world. That legitimacy was boosted when American and NATO forces went after him in Afghanistan.

The American military bombed Al Qaeda and the Taliban in the mountainous region along the Pakistani border from air bases in the capital of Afghanistan. Al Qaeda leadership escaped from the Tora Bora region in Afghanistan and traveled into Pakistan for safe sanctuary where they could continue to orchestrate their terrorist activities and deliver messages to the world. The military’s success in capturing Taliban and Al Qaeda

²⁶⁰ Osama Bin Laden, Bin Laden Speech Archive, December 13, 2001. [Online] Available from <http://www.nisleerskov.com/2004/06/bin-laden-speech-archive.html> ; Accessed: November 11, 2008; Usama Bin Laden, *Usama Bin Laden Claims Responsibility for the 9/11 Attacks*, November 2001, [on-line]; available from <http://www1.nefafoundation.org/documents-aqstatements.html> ; Accessed: January 2, 2009.

²⁶¹ Mathew Ericson, The Words That Were Used. *The New York Times*. Issue January 29, 2008. A18.

planners created a need for housing the captured fighters at the US naval base in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. The prisoners were taken there because the administration could do anything they wanted to the detainees, including torture. These acts of torture by US military personnel, CIA personnel and contractors from both agencies would not be known until CBS News and Seymour Hersh reported on torture in Iraq in 2004.

In the meantime, the administration pursued its agenda of regime change in Iraq. They fabricated a story of Al Qaeda and Saddam Hussein working together on the 9/11 plot and stated that Hussein had weapons of mass destruction.²⁶² In the very beginning, the war in Iraq went well, but as Iraqi nationalism rose, an insurgency was born to throw out the occupiers. Then Al Qaeda entered Iraq to go after the American military and start a civil war among the Sunni and Shiite religious factions. The Iraqi war drained resources from the war in Afghanistan and took that war off the headlines. Iraq became a training ground for Al Qaeda to experiment with new tactics using Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs). When the Americans countered the new tactics, the Iraqis and Al Qaeda changed their tactics again.

America's victory in World War II served as an example of why the United States would quickly win in Iraq: the US would be seen as liberators and be given flowers by the Iraqis according to administration officials and their supporters. That hubris was apparent in its preparations for going into Iraq. The US had first entered Afghanistan "on the cheap" so the equipment and troops could be saved for going into Iraq. The administration believed the American military was second to none, which meant it would

²⁶² Peter Eisner and Knut Royce, *The Italian Letter: How the Bush Administration Used a Fake Letter to Build the Case for War in Iraq*. (New York, New York: Rodale Inc., 2007) pp. xvii-xix.

have no problem winning in Afghanistan and in Iraq. The “Demonstration Model” was well underway, so preparation for the next war was unnecessary as America was predestined to win both conflicts. Preparations to go into Iraq did not include learning the culture, language, customs, religions, ethnic groups and history of the country so the occupying army could relate to the Iraqi people. Civilians fought back against the US military and the American military security contractors. Casualties on all sides increased as the conflict dragged on.

Al Qaeda was safe in the mountains of Afghanistan or Pakistan, as no one in the West knew their actual location. While the Iraqi and Afghan wars dragged on, Al Qaeda was deploying its operatives to conduct more bombings. In 2002 there was a bombing in Bali; in 2003 there were two bombings in Istanbul, Turkey; in 2004 Al Qaeda carried out the Madrid train bombings. They were also preparing for bombings in London. Al Qaeda was not put out of commission as the Bush Administration hoped when they went to war in Afghanistan half-heartedly so they could save their resources for Iraq.

The Iraqi war and US security were big issues in the 2004 presidential election between the incumbent President Bush and the Democratic Presidential nominee John Kerry. The race was a bitter battle for a country at war. Did the country want to change leaders in the middle of two wars? The country apparently chose to stick with Bush--but did it? According to some, President Bush and his people stole the election in Ohio. The Democrats believed bin Laden gave the election to President Bush with his “Message for

the American People” on October 29, 2004.²⁶³ Republicans, on the other hand, believed that bin Laden was trying to sway the vote in favor of Kerry because bin Laden was afraid of consequences if President Bush and Vice-President Cheney won the election. It really did not matter to bin Laden who won the election because U.S foreign policy was not going to change in respect to Al Qaeda.

Terrorist event.

Osama bin Laden changed his rhetorical tone in this message. He did not challenge the United States military to come and fight him anymore but he still implied that the Soviet military was a tougher adversary than the American military. He continued to issue threats against the United States and its allies and deny responsibility for the 9/11 attack even though the United States had a video tape of him bragging about Al Qaeda’s involvement in the attacks. In the October message, bin Laden gives the reasons for the 9/11 attack and he addresses the American people by telling them that their security is in their hands--if they want security, they need to convince their elected representatives to leave the Middle East. He tells them that when the Islamic and Arab people have peace, the Americans will have peace. If not, then for every action there would be a reaction.

Bin Laden wanted to have a dialogue with the American people to explain his views about the tensions between him and America. Hating freedom has nothing to do

²⁶³ Osama bin Laden, The Full Version of Osama bin Laden’s Speech. No. 811. October 29, 2004. [Online] Available from <http://www.memri.org/bin/opener.cgi?Page=archives&ID=SP81104> ; Accessed November 11, 2008.

with the conflict, he states, because he believes he is free and he wants to free his country from the restraints of American foreign policy.

He explains that the event that most influenced his thinking was the invasion of Lebanon by Israel in 1982. He believes that whatever Israel does, it gets the full backing of the US government. When Israel uses its military power, it is actually using American power because the Israeli weapons are American-made. In the case of Lebanon, ships from the US Sixth Fleet were bombing the cities and towns killing civilians in their homes and hi-rise apartment buildings. He said this is where the idea came from to go after the World Trade Center Towers to let the Americans feel what it is like to have their security and lives shattered with death and destruction.²⁶⁴

He went on to say that it was because of this event that he took up the cause to defend himself and the Islamic and Arab community with “reprehensible terrorism” because he says, “We have no other choice.”²⁶⁵ Messages in the form of terrorism is what he was sending to American leaders and the American people because no one was understanding the message he sent through interviews with American, British and Arab journalists before 9/11. He referenced interviewers like Scott MacLeod’s May 6, 1996 *Time Magazine* interview, Peter Arnett’s 1997 *CNN* interview and John Wiener, who produced John Miller’s 1998 *ABC News* interview; bin Laden went on to say, “observe it, if you will, in the deeds of Nairobi and Tanzania and Aden, and observe it in my

²⁶⁴ Osama bin Laden, The Full Version of Osama bin Laden’s Speech. No. 811. October 29, 2004. [Online] Available from <http://www.memri.org/bin/opener.cgi?Page=archives&ID=SP81104> ; Accessed November 11, 2008.

²⁶⁵ Ibid.

interview with ‘Abd A-Bari ‘Atwan and in interviews with Robert Fisk.”²⁶⁶ In the November 27, 1996 interview with Atwan, he also took responsibility for the two Saudi Arabian bombings in Riyadh and Dhahran and for fighting the Americans in Somalia.

Atwan goes into much more detail in his book about his interview with bin Laden in the mountains of Afghanistan. The results of 9/11 “surpassed all expectations”; the most important result was that the Bush administration followed the bait into Afghanistan. Dealing with President Bush was like dealing with the military dictators from the Arab countries with whom they were familiar.²⁶⁷ By dragging the Bush administration after it (al Qaeda) into Afghanistan in a guerrilla war of attrition, Al Qaeda hoped to slowly bankrupt America just as it did the Soviets in the ten year Soviet-Afghan war. He talks about how the military contractors as well as other contractors in the Iraq and Afghanistan war zones are bleeding the American treasury of its resources, assisting Al Qaeda in its war of attrition.

At the end of bin Laden’s message, he refers back to security and the casualties of both sides of the conflict. He says to the American people, “Keep in mind that every action has a reaction.”²⁶⁸ He hoped to make the American public aware that it was American foreign policy that he was disputing, not freedom, as American politicians liked to imply was the problem. He comes out and states that security is the responsibility of the American people. In his last statement about security he states “Your security is not in the hands of Kerry or Bush or Al-Qa’ida. Your security is in your own hands, and

²⁶⁶ Ibid.

²⁶⁷ Ibid.

²⁶⁸ Ibid.

any [US] state [*wilaya*] that does not toy with our security automatically guarantees its own security.”²⁶⁹

Would the American people try to understand what Osama bin Laden was conveying to them or would they blow it off as an attempt to influence the 2004 presidential elections?

American response.

The American people did think bin Laden was trying to influence the election. Each political party and its backers believed that bin Laden wanted the other guy to win. Even though bin Laden stated that the security of the American people was not in Kerry’s or Bush’s hands, it did not matter. Using examples of only President Bush did not help him get his message across to the American public. The press continued to bring up the political ramification to the bin Laden message concerning the election.²⁷⁰

The President did not remark on the specifics of the taped message aired on Al Jazeera; he only referenced it in his remarks at a campaign rally in Columbus, Ohio when he countered Senator Kerry’s remarks that the Bush administration let Osama bin Laden escape from Tora Bora.²⁷¹ At the President’s next campaign stop he made a very short statement regarding Osama bin Laden’s message:

²⁶⁹ Osama bin Laden, The Full Version of Osama bin Laden’s Speech. No. 811. October 29, 2004. [Online] Available from <http://www.memri.org/bin/opener.cgi?Page=archives&ID=SP81104> ; Accessed November 11, 2008

²⁷⁰ George W. Bush, Press Gaggle by Scott McClellan. October 29, 2004, [Online] Available from <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=66090&st=bin+Laden&st1=>; Accessed September 15, 2009.

²⁷¹ George W. Bush, Remarks in Columbus, Ohio. October 29, 2004, [Online] Available from <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=63323&st=bin+Laden&st1=>; Accessed September 15, 2009.

Let me make this very clear: Americans will not be intimidated or influenced by an enemy of our country. I am sure Senator Kerry agrees with this. I also want to say to the American people that we're at war with these terrorists, and I am confident that we will prevail.²⁷²

After October 29th the president did not mention the message but he did talk about the hunt for bin Laden when a question arose in a press conference.

Scott McClelland was speaking about the bin Laden message in short sentences. He did not respond directly to the foreign policy issues that were raised in the message nor did he respond to any of the issues that Osama bin Laden raised. When answering two of the questions, he specifically mentions bin Laden's name and he said he was speaking directly for the White House. McClelland specifically states that America will "defeat the ideology of hatred that bin Laden articulates in this tape."²⁷³ An informed reader will find that Osama bin Laden did not espouse any hatred toward America or Israel. He articulates American foreign policy issues with specific examples of how it was experienced in the Arab and Muslim world.

Once, the election was over it was on to a new issue. The administration did not want to comment on the subject any further and the press did not pursue it either.

Analysis.

Al Qaeda in this timeframe discontinued interviews with journalists to post their messages on websites catering to jihadists and to send their messages through couriers to Islamic and Arab media outlets. *Al Jazeera* aired this message for Al Qaeda, which bin

²⁷² George W. Bush, Remarks on Departure From Toledo. October 29, 2004, [Online] Available from <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=72808&st=bin+Laden&st1=>; Accessed September 15, 2009.

²⁷³ George W. Bush, Press Gaggle by Scott McClellan. October 29, 2004, [Online] Available from <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=66090&st=bin+Laden&st1=>; Accessed September 15, 2009.

Laden used because he knew it would be aired and he felt more confident in the Arab press than he did in the western press outlets.

Robert Fisk is a London-based reporter that bin Laden believed understood his cause. He was the first Western reporter to interview bin Laden and so bin Laden granted him several interviews. In his message, he spoke of Robert Fisk's "unbiased" reporting on himself and Al Qaeda and stated that he was a Westerner and that he was a Christian.²⁷⁴ Bin Laden believes that the Western press answers to the White House and therefore would not air Robert Fisk in the dominant media outlets to gain a Western perspective of Al Qaeda and bin Laden's grievances. Bin Laden thinks that if Robert Fisk had a chance to speak to the American people about the causes of the conflict, they would have chosen a different path that would have guaranteed their security to be pre-9/11. The willful ignorance the American people and American political leadership displayed concerning this issue was astounding and too deep-seated to be dislodged by one reporter. This message was intended to dispel the American public's misperceptions concerning the causes behind Al Qaeda's actions.

Foreign policy issues are the causes for Al Qaeda actions against America, not freedom as so many politicians and political pundits espouse. Bin Laden articulated America's close relationship with Israel, which can do whatever it wants and not suffer any consequences, unlike the Arabs. He used examples of Israel killing civilians in Lebanon and Palestine. Other foreign policy examples he included were the killing of

²⁷⁴ Osama bin Laden, The Full Version of Osama bin Laden's Speech. No. 811. October 29, 2004. [Online] Available from <http://www.memri.org/bin/opener.cgi?Page=archives&ID=SP81104> ; Accessed November 11, 2008.

children in Iraq in the hopes of opening up the more caring side of the American public. Appealing to the more practical side of the American public, he gave examples of political connections and corruptions concerning the wars America is fighting. In both wars, he explained, Al Qaeda fighters were gaining invaluable guerrilla war experience which helped him in his war of attrition to achieve his goal of bankrupting America. The corruption of war contractors also helped his cause to accomplish his goal sooner. He touched on the United States wanting Iraq's oil and the lie about Saddam Hussein possessing WMDs as two of the reasons for the start of the Iraq war.

By pointing out these examples, bin Laden was not hoping to split the American political parties apart wider. Even though it does appear that way when he refers to President Bush's foreign policies, an analysis of his messages pertaining to President Clinton's eight-year term shows he referred only to Clinton's foreign policies. Bin Laden sees both of these presidents as the same, just as he saw President George H.W. Bush, all enforcing American foreign policy on bin Laden's umma. He was hoping to split the American public apart from the American political class that runs the country by pointing out the corruption of politically connected corporations, the bankrupting of America by continuing to fight in two guerrilla wars, and the pursuit of a foreign policy that hinders American security. He said: "Just as you violate our security, we violate yours."²⁷⁵ Your action (American foreign policy in my umma) creates my reaction (terrorist attacks, 9/11 etc.) but if you leave my umma, America will be secure.

²⁷⁵ Osama bin Laden, The Full Version of Osama bin Laden's Speech. No. 811. October 29, 2004. [Online] Available from <http://www.memri.org/bin/opener.cgi?Page=archives&ID=SP81104> ; Accessed November 11, 2008.

American society was so divided politically that the public was unwilling to look at Al Qaeda from a different perspective. It would take an emotionally overwhelming event to get the American public to break away from the willful ignorance it engages in with almost every issue they face. Time will tell if bin Laden will be the instigator of the emotional event, such as another terrorist attack on American soil, or if he will continue his “long war” in the hopes of bankrupting America.

Delivering this message did not persuade the American public to listen to Al Qaeda’s grievances or influence their leaders to reconsider their foreign policy initiatives. And so the conflict in Iraq and Afghanistan continues while American financial resources are being drained but the fatigue factors have not reached a point at which the US is willing to negotiate with Al Qaeda. This being the case, escalations in violence will continue.

Terrorist Event: US Embassy Bombing In Yemen

Political overview.

The war in Afghanistan was on the back pages of news papers and not talked about much on radio and television media outlets all over the world. On the other hand, the war in Iraq was raging. The casualty count got bigger and bigger everyday with IEDs causing the majority of deaths and injuries. There were calls for the United States to withdraw from Iraq but the administration decided to stick it out, not admitting that their strategy was not working. After the 2006 congressional elections, Rumsfeld was fired and replaced by Robert Gates. The country was ready for a new direction and voted the Democrats into Congress to steer the country in that new direction. Now, a majority of

the Americans wanted out of Iraq and changed the makeup of both houses of Congress. The country was fixated on Iraq and the war in Afghanistan where the United States originally went after Al Qaeda's leaders was languishing in the background needing more resources that Iraq was using. By the time 2008 rolled around, the country was in a housing and financial crisis that took both wars off the country's mind. The furthest thing from the country's mind was other countries, such as Yemen and its problems with Al Qaeda, and what we could do to aid them in their fight.

Starting after the USS Cole bombing, U.S. military units in the Special Forces and Navy SEALs participated in counterterrorism training exercises with the Yemen military forces.²⁷⁶ Even though the training has continued, Yemen was attacked in 2004 when the French oil tanker Limburg was attacked in a bombing outside a harbor oil facility in Al Mukalla.²⁷⁷ Al Qaeda had a presence in Yemen which enabled them to launch attacks and to hide in the country. Sympathetic followers are present in many parts of the society, who may have aided the escape of 23 Al Qaeda convicts in 2006, four of which took part in a "foiled attempt to bomb two Yemen oil facilities."²⁷⁸

Al Qaeda showed the western allies that it could still attack where it wanted and when it wanted. It struck targets throughout the world in President George W. Bush's first term in office and in the last year of his first term it set off a bomb in Madrid, Spain as a "demonstration model" for giving Europeans a truce offering. In 2005, London was attacked to show the Europeans Al Qaeda was serious when European leaders refused bin

²⁷⁶ Federal Research Division, Country Profile: Yemen December 2006. Library of Congress, pp. 21-22.

²⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 24.

²⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 24.

Laden's truce offering. Bin Laden's first truce offering came on April 14, 2004,²⁷⁹ a month after the Madrid bombing and Spain's elections; the offer was explicitly for the Europeans if they pulled their troops out of Muslim and Arab countries the result would be security. Bin Laden's other peace offerings came when he addressed the American people on October 29, 2004, on January 19, 2006, and on September 7, 2007²⁸⁰. The most current message of bin Laden's was on September 14, 2009.²⁸¹ The peace overtures had been ignored by Western leaders who believe they will prevail in their fight against terrorism and Al Qaeda. In the intermittent years, Al Qaeda has continued to voice threats, support of Palestinians, messages to its followers, and the reasons for its continued fight against the west.

In March of 2008, the U.S. Embassy in Yemen came under attack from terrorists, believed to be Al Qaeda operatives, who killed two people and wounded 19. In April 2008, a housing complex of U.S. oil workers came under attack. The embassy attack prompted the U.S. Embassy to evacuate all non-essential personnel from the embassy.²⁸² Terrorists were involved in more violence in Yemen but none were committed against American until the second attack on the U.S. Embassy in September 2008.

²⁷⁹ Osama Bin Laden, Bin Laden Speech Archive, April 14, 2004. [Online] Available from <http://www.nislerskov.com/2004/06/bin-laden-speech-archive.html> ; Accessed: November 11, 2008.

²⁸⁰ Ibid.

²⁸¹ Usama Bin Laden, *Usama Bin Laden's 9/11 Message to the American People*, September 14, 2009, [online]; available from <http://www1.nefafoundation.org/documents-aqstatements.html> ; Accessed: September 16, 2009.

²⁸² Al Jazeera English, Mortars land in Yemen capital. April 30, 2008. [Online] Available from <http://english.aljazeera.net/news/middleeast/2008/04/200861501835332884.html> ; Accessed September 16, 2009.

Terrorist event.

Al Qaeda and their followers in Yemen continued the fight. Sympathizers in the country aided the fighters in their fight with the Americans and their allies. Al Qaeda operatives trained for their assault on the embassy “at Al Qaida camps in the southern Yemen provinces of Hadramut and Marib.”²⁸³ A total of six attackers “disguised as soldiers”²⁸⁴ approached the embassy around 9:30 am; some used “two suicide car bombs,”²⁸⁵ probably from a car bomb factory that authorities uncovered,²⁸⁶ to carry out the attack near the embassy gate, detonating the explosives and catching the embassy on fire²⁸⁷, while the other armed attackers, three of which had suicide vests, firing on the security guards, killing 17 people including the 6 terrorists.²⁸⁸

According to Bernard Haykel, jihadist websites were full of warnings that Al Qaeda was going to attack the embassy in Yemen in response to the killings of Al Qaeda operatives in Hadramawt province that occurred in August of 2008.²⁸⁹ Osama bin Laden’s activities in Yemen go back to 1989; upon returning from the Soviet-Afghan

²⁸³ Associated Press, Yemen identifies US embassy attackers: Official: Suicide squad had links to al-Qaida, some even fought in Iraq. *MSNBC.com*, November 1, 2008. [Online] Available from <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/27484975/>; Accessed November 1, 2008.

²⁸⁴ Jeremy M. Sharp, Yemen: Background and US Relations, *Congressional Research Service*, January 22, 2009. [Online] Available from <http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/117797.pdf>; Accessed September 17, 2009, p. 5.

²⁸⁵ Ibid.

²⁸⁶ Associated Press, Yemen identifies US embassy attackers: Official: Suicide squad had links to al-Qaida, some even fought in Iraq. *MSNBC.com*, November 1, 2008. [Online] Available from <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/27484975/>; Accessed November 1, 2008.

²⁸⁷ Al Jazeera English, US embassy in Yemen bombed. September 18, 2008. [Online] Available from <http://english.aljazeera.net/news/middleeast/2008/04/200861501835332884.html>; Accessed September 16, 2009.

²⁸⁸ Jeremy M. Sharp, Yemen: Background and US Relations, *Congressional Research Service*, January 22, 2009. [Online] Available from <http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/117797.pdf>; Accessed September 17, 2009, pp. 5-6.

²⁸⁹ Bernard Haykel, Yemen’s Steep Descent, *The New York Times*. September 18, 2008, [Online] Available from <http://topics.blogs.nytimes.com/2008/09/18/yemens-steep-descent/?pagemode=print>; Accessed November 1, 2008.

war, he sent Arab-Afghans with money and arms to drive the communists out of South Yemen, the ancestral homeland of his father. He has kept close ties to the jihadists by funding their activities, keeping a safe-house and providing training at Al Qaeda training camps. Two months after the embassy attack, Al Qaeda claimed responsibility²⁹⁰ to show its supporters and enemies that it can strike where and when it desires.

American response.

CIA Director Michael Hayden conveyed his thoughts on Al Qaeda in a speech at the Atlantic Council of the United States that “Yemen is another country of concern, a place where Al Qaeda is strengthening. We’ve seen an unprecedented number of attacks this year... Plots are increasing not only in number, but in sophistication, and the range of targets is broadening.”²⁹¹

President George W. Bush expressed his outrage over the attack after a meeting with David H. Petraeus discussing his transfer of command from Iraq Commander to CENTCOM Commander. The president did not name Al Qaeda or Osama bin Laden as the perpetrators of the embassy attack but the US Department of State’s spokesman Sean McCormack said “I think it is safe to say ... the attacks bear all the hallmarks of an al-Qaeda attack.”²⁹² The president referenced the importance of the Middle East, which is

²⁹⁰ Jeremy M. Sharp, Yemen: Background and US Relations, *Congressional Research Service*, January 22, 2009. [Online] Available from <http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/117797.pdf> ; Accessed September 17, 2009, p. 6.

²⁹¹ Jeremy M. Sharp, Yemen: Background and US Relations, *Congressional Research Service*, January 22, 2009. [Online] Available from <http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/117797.pdf> ; Accessed September 17, 2009, p. 6.

²⁹² Al Jazeera English, US embassy in Yemen bombed. September 18, 2008. [Online] Available from <http://english.aljazeera.net/news/middleeast/2008/04/200861501835332884.html> ; Accessed September 16, 2009.

now General Petraeus' responsibility as CENTCOM Commander when he began speaking about the embassy bombing in Yemen:

This attack is a reminder that we are at war with extremists who will murder innocent people to achieve their ideological objectives. One objective of these extremists is to try to cause the United States to lose our nerve and to withdraw from regions of the world. And our message is, is that we want to help governments survive the extremists. We want people to live normal lives. We want mothers to be able to raise their sons and daughters in a peaceful environment so they can realize the hopes and dreams of a better world.²⁹³

The economic events facing the country pushed the embassy bombing in Yemen off the front pages. Reporters were more concerned with the economic crisis than terrorists in the Middle East bombing, the security of the embassy or the 17 people killed. In the daily press briefing, Dana Perino said the US condemned the terrorist act and expressed condolences to the affected families of the terrorist bombing of the US Embassy in Yemen. She also stated the president would make a statement to the press pool once he concluded his meeting with General Petraeus.²⁹⁴ There were no questions pertaining to the bombing when Dana opened the floor to questions. The issue of the day was which financial institution or mortgage institution was going to receive a bail out from the taxpayers. AIG, Fannie, Freddie and Bear Stearns were some of the institutions mentioned by reporters asking questions.

²⁹³ George W. Bush, Remarks Following a Meeting With Multi-National-Iraq Former Commander General David H. Petraeus, *The American Presidency Project*, September 17, 2008. [Online] Available from <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=78655&st=US+Embassy&st1=Yemen> ; Accessed: September 17, 2009.

²⁹⁴ George W. Bush, Press Briefing by Dana Perino, *The American Presidency Project*, September 17, 2008. [Online] Available from <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=78666&st=US+Embassy&st1=Yemen> ; Accessed September 17, 2009.

Analysis.

The economic crisis that had been brewing since the end of 2007 had the public focused on its economic security; once the crisis took hold in September, the American people wanted answers. Everyone's attention was focused on which Wall Street firms were going to get bailed out by the government. Dealing with or talking about a terrorist bombing that killed all the terrorists involved and that only lasted two days in the new cycle was not an event worthy of public attention. Public attention was not on the War on Terror because the majority of Americans were not involved and didn't want to be involved; this new economic crisis enabled the public to disengage even more. The administration was in crisis mode over the financial meltdown; with the end of his last term four months away, the President's handling of the embassy bombing was similar to his father's handling of the first two Al Qaeda attacks in Yemen in 1992. The forces were withdrawn and nothing said in 1992; in 2008, the embassy withdrew all nonessential personnel and nothing of substance was said about Al Qaeda.

Al Qaeda has grown stronger since the War on Terror began on October 7, 2001 in Afghanistan, which is a reason the American public and the outgoing administration should be more concerned with the attack on the US Embassy in Yemen. The organization has shown how resilient and versatile they've become by attacking different American allies over the last eight years. This attack is significant because Al Qaeda had attacked US property and personnel in Yemen the year prior to a new US President taking office and prior to attacking within the United States. The attack in December 1992 was prior to the first World Trade Center attack in February 1993 and the USS Cole

attack in 2000 was prior to 9/11, establishing a pattern of attacks. With a new administration in office, Al Qaeda has a third of the year left to attempt another attack within the United States. Only time will tell if the trend plays out.

Al Qaeda franchises terrorist activity all over the world using different countries as bases of operation. The organization usually goes into countries with weak governments, such as Somalia or Yemen. In some of those countries, such as Yemen, sympathetic followers can be found in the government and the general public. Al Qaeda has grown in Yemen because of these sympathies, establishing training bases in the remote regions of the country. The mountain regions, the remoteness of the country, and the tribal culture enable Al Qaeda the freedom to conduct their operations without too much central governmental interference. Having an operation situated in Yemen also allows Al Qaeda to enter African countries, such as Somalia. In a reference to a new generation of terrorists, Bernard Haykel states that “[t]hey now wish to use Yemen as a base for attacks on Western targets and to spread Al Qaeda’s influence into the Horn of Africa and even Saudi Arabia.”²⁹⁵ Haykel said the younger terrorists did not abide by the agreements that Al Qaeda leadership had established with the Yemen government not to attack targets in the country. Some in Al Qaeda’s old guard believe that the young militants, some just back from Iraq, would engage in undisciplined and wild actions that will destroy Al Qaeda, according to Haykel.

²⁹⁵ Bernard Haykel, Yemen’s Steep Descent, *The New York Times*. September 18, 2008, [Online] Available from <http://topics.blogs.nytimes.com/2008/09/18/yemens-steep-descent/?pagemode=print> ; Accessed November 1, 2008.

Ignoring bin Laden and Al Qaeda has not diminished their determination to have their grievances addressed. Playing down Al Qaeda as a terrorist organization has not diminished its popularity in the Arab and Muslim world either. Grievances expressed by bin Laden and Al Qaeda are the grievances perceived and expressed by the Arab and Muslim public. Ignoring the issues and employing more military solutions will not quell the Arab and Muslim youth from migrating to Al Qaeda and other militant organizations to fight for what they believe to be an assault on the umma, a form of Muslim nationalism. By failing to address Al Qaeda's grievances, the United States drives a sympathetic "Arab Street" into helping jihadist groups accomplish their goals.

The proof that Al Qaeda has revived itself in Yemen can be seen in the on-line magazine *The Echo of Battles*, which the younger and more militant members started in January 2008.²⁹⁶ Al Qaeda has spread itself across the world in the form of a franchise. Sympathetic followers decide to take action one way or another to help bin Laden in his cause, which the followers believe is their cause. It doesn't seem to matter how many Al Qaeda leaders the Americans kill; there is always another supporter more than willing to fill the vacated spot. While the US strategy of military solutions to the Al Qaeda problem is draining US financial resources, it's even more devastating to the human problems the military is facing with suicides, low morale and recruiting. Bin Laden relishes the fight, which drives him to disseminate his message out in many ways, one being *The Echo of Battles*. His followers are more than willing to assist in disseminating Al Qaeda's message. Legitimacy is what the American strategy is trying to deny Osama bin Laden

²⁹⁶ Ibid.

but he has received his legitimacy from his sympathizers in Arab governments and the “Arab Street,” which is where Al Qaeda has built its longevity over the twenty-plus years of its existence.

The escalation of violence on another American target has not produced the results Al Qaeda had hoped would transpire. Grievances have not been addressed by former President Bush or by newly elected President Barack Obama. More troops are on their way to Afghanistan for the second surge following the new administration’s first year in office. What has worked in Al Qaeda’s favor is the splitting of military resources in Afghanistan and Iraq. The longer Iraq drags on, resource depletion hinders America’s war effort in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Time is the most precious resource and is in short supply for both conflicting parties, but it is in shorter supply for the United States because their fatigue factors are mounting.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

Summary

The collapse of the Soviet Empire started the stormy winds of change in international affairs; the triumphalism of the US so preoccupied its mindset it was unable to see the dangers this historical event set into motion. The withdrawal of the Soviets from Afghanistan was met in kind with the withdrawal of US support from the mujahedeen and from Afghan social needs. Arab-Afghans saw the signs of Soviet collapse and began planning for the change by starting an organization called Al Qaeda, the Base, to continue their jihad to expel non-Muslim regimes from other Muslim and Arab countries. The founding members were all focused on their individual agendas when discussing the organization's direction; none of those agendas included the United States. The United States did not appear on any of their agendas until it was invited by the Saudi government to establish military bases to defend the Saudi regime from a possible attack from Saddam Hussein. The rejection of Osama bin Laden's war plans to expel the communists from South Yemen and the defense of Saudi Arabia put the United States and the Saudi regime squarely in bin Laden's crosshairs. He and the other Al Qaeda founders started to examine US foreign policy initiatives in Muslim and Arab countries, which enabled them to build a list of grievances against the US and its intervention in foreign and domestic policies in the region.

Al Qaeda has resorted to terrorism as a weapon of choice to counter America's overwhelming military superiority. So the question is, does terrorism work? Terrorism has worked for Al Qaeda in five separate instances to achieve its goals of expelling the United States from a country, forcing the US to acknowledge Al Qaeda, and drawing the United States into a guerrilla war. Thus far, the strategy has not worked in other situations. Answering the question of when terrorism worked and when it did not work can be answered by looking at Al Qaeda's strategy.

Al Qaeda developed its strategy for fighting the United States between 1992 and 1996, when Osama bin Laden outlined his grievances with Saudi Arabia, America and its allies. Al Qaeda's strategy of using terrorism to exert enough pain on America and its allies to leave Arab and Muslim countries (the umma) and to draw the United States into a guerrilla war in Afghanistan has not changed; they have, however, exerted more force and pain to achieve their goal. In his "Declaration of War," bin Laden gave hints about his strategy, as he did in other speeches and interviews over the years.

Yemen and Somalia were the first two countries where Al Qaeda attempted to implement its strategy of expelling the United States from the umma through the use of terrorism. The 1992 hotel bombings in Aden, Yemen resulted in the American military leaving two days after the terrorist attacks. The second instance where terrorism worked is Somalia, where bin Laden's Arab-Afghans trained and fought together with General Aidid's fighters in Mogadishu against American forces. President Clinton negotiated for the release of the downed Black Hawk pilot. The negotiations ended with General Aidid releasing the pilot in exchange for the release all of his jailed fighters and the condition

that the Americans leave Somalia. In these two instances, terrorism paid off for bin Laden even though the Americans did not know at the time that they were fighting Al Qaeda.

Al Qaeda's third success came with President Clinton addressing and acknowledging bin Laden and Al Qaeda. The win was small, however, even though bin Laden was acknowledged, Al Qaeda's grievances were ignored. Michael Scheuer points out how US leaders responded to Al Qaeda's messages:

Bin Laden issues a starkly specific attack on a U.S. foreign policy, and Washington responds with defiant words defending a right or liberty that bin Laden has not mentioned and that has nothing to do with his assertion. Thus, bin Laden says: Get U.S. forces out of the Arabian Peninsula; Washington responds: You will not prevent our women from going to school.²⁹⁷

President Clinton and National Security Adviser Berger made public snippets of bin Laden saying civilians could be killed but ignored his grievances; the President would also insinuate that bin Laden was trying to disrupt the Middle East Peace Process. When the President addressed terrorism in general, he talked about liberty and freedom but never about the terrorists' grievances. After Somalia, Al Qaeda worked in the shadows until bin Laden delivered his fatwa in 1996, coming out of the shadows to escalate his rhetoric and actions in order to get a response from America. He got a response which did not address his grievances, but his goal since before his July 6, 1997 interview²⁹⁸ (in which he dared and baited American forces to come to Afghanistan to capture him) was to draw America into a guerrilla war in Afghanistan. Bin Laden's escalation in rhetoric and violence was a strategy to accomplish that goal.

²⁹⁷ Michael Scheuer, *Marching Toward Hell: America and Islam After Iraq*. (New York, New York: Free Press, 2008), p. xiv.

²⁹⁸ FBIS, "Usama Bin Ladin Dares US Commandos To Come To Afghanistan" July 6, 1997. [Online] Available from <http://www.fas.org/irp/world/para/ubl-fbis.pdf> ; Accessed August 18, 2009, p. 52.

Al Qaeda attacks were foiled when one operative was apprehended at the American Canadian border on his way to complete his mission for the Millennium bombing plot. The other plotters foiled their own mission when they overloaded their boat with explosives and could not successfully attack the USS Sullivans.

The second Yemen bombing was meant to expel the American military from the port of Aden where they were conducting refueling operations. Al Qaeda's strategy kept the American military out of Yemen for about five years until the United States started to use Yemen as a refueling port for the US Navy sometime in 1997 or 1998. The second bombing drove the Navy from using Yemen as a refueling port. This was the fourth successful attack by Al Qaeda.

The fifth successful attack was September 11, 2001 which drew America into a guerrilla War with Al Qaeda and the Taliban. The war is in its ninth year and the Americans have escalated the conflict just as they did in Somalia in the hopes of wearing down the enemy. America's illogical turn into Iraq has drained financial resources and stretched and is straining the American military to a point where tours of duty reached to three, four, five and possibly more for some soldiers. The extended tours are creating so much strain that suicides in the military have risen to exceed civilian suicides; even veterans from these two wars are committing suicide at an alarming rate. Bin Laden did not anticipate the Iraq war but it was a huge blessing because it created a recruitment surge for Al Qaeda and tied the American military down in another guerrilla war, taking its attention from the enemy that attacked it in 2001.

The third Yemen attack in September 2008 is a little tell-tale sign that the American homeland was being targeted. As in the past, after the last two Yemen attacks the next target was inside America. The recent arrest of Al Qaeda operative Najibullah Zazi in Denver²⁹⁹ may indicate an attack was planned for 2009 but was disrupted by the FBI. The table at the end of the chapter shows Yemen's three attacks and the fatwas or declarations of war before the attacks of the Millennium and Cole bombings.

Table 1 below shows the majority of Al Qaeda attacks and bin Laden speeches, messages, and interviews that have been discussed in the text above. The table starts out with the first Al Qaeda attack against the US and ends with the last attack against America in Yemen. Included is the first attack on the World Trade Center as a reference point. Even though there is a belief by the US and Saudi governments that Iranian-backed groups had a hand in the two bombings in Saudi Arabia, the analysis here indicates that bin Laden perpetrated the bombings because two reasons: he claimed responsibility for the attacks and it is in Saudi Arabia's interest to convince the Saudi population that an outside enemy (Iran) was responsible for the attacks rather than Osama bin Laden, who was regarded by many Saudis as a hero. Also included are Bin Laden's fatwas that he issued before all of Al Qaeda's bombings prior to the September 11th bombing, for which he did not deliver a fatwa to warn America he was going to attack. Bin Laden's peace overture to the American people before the 2004 Presidential elections is included in the table. The table shows US actions corresponding to each of the attacks, speeches, and interviews.

²⁹⁹ Bruce Finley, Post-9/11 tools a help in Zazi case, *The Denver Post*, September 27, 2009, pp. 1A, 20A.

Table 1
U.S. Responses to Al Qaeda Terrorism and Messages

U.S. Responses to Al Qaeda's Attacks and Speeches				
<i>Type of Actions Taken</i>	United States Military Actions	United States Legal Actions	United States Diplomatic Actions	United States Verbal Responses
Al Qaeda: Yemen Bombings 12/29/1992	U.S. Military Personnel Withdrawn 12/31/1992 (1)	536 Suspects Arrested by Yemen Authorities (1)	US DOD to Stop Using Yemen as Support Base 1/2/1993 (1)	US DOD to Stop Using Yemen as Support Base 1/2/1993 (1)
Al Qaeda: WTC Bombing 2/26/1993	None	6 Individuals Convicted (2)	"Cooperation...Combating International Terrorism" (3)	"American people can [not] afford to be afraid" of US foreign Policy 3/14/1993 (4)
Al Qaeda: Mogadishu, Somalia 10/3/1993	Military Withdrawn 3/25/1994 (5)	(6) Bin Laden claims responsibility on Nov 27, 1996 for training Afghan-Arabs. In 1996 Bin Laden indicted for training soldiers (7)	Withdrawal of remaining US and UN Forces 9/15/1994 (8)	President, "reacted with anger and horror" over desecrated soldiers body 10/7/1993 (9)
Al Qaeda: Saudi Military Base 11/13/1995 Riyadh, Saudi Arabia	None	"al Qaeda played some role, yet unknown". 9/11 Commission Report, p. 60.	1996 U.S. & Saudi Arabia pressured Sudan to expel Bin Laden (2)	President, "attack in Riyadh against an American facility is an outrage" 11/13/1995 (10)
Al Qaeda? Khobar Towers 6/25/1996 Dhahran, Saudi Arabia	None	"al Qaeda played some role, yet unknown". 9/11 Commission Report, p. 60.	Inability of Pres. Clinton to get the Saudis to cooperate with the FBI. (11)	President: "The cowards who committed this murderous act must not go unpunished" 6/25/1996 (12)
8/23/1996 Bin Laden Declaration of War	None	None	None	"The threats had not prompted any new orders for American forces" (13)
2/23/1998 Bin Laden Fatwa	None	None	None	President Letter to Congress 8/20/1998 (14)
Al Qaeda: U.S. Embassy Bombings 8/7/1998 East Africa	Cruise Missile Attack in Afghanistan & Sudan 8/20/1998 (7)	11/1998 Bin Laden indicted for master minding the attack. 4 supporters convicted & life in prison 5/29/2001 (7)	US worked with Allies to Track Down Terrorists (15)	President: "These acts of terrorist violence are abhorrent; they are inhuman." 8/7/1998 (16)

Table Sources: (1) Edward Mickolus, (1997) *Terrorism 1992-1995: A Chronology of Events*; (2) CNN.com, Osama Bin Laden Timeline; (3) William J. Clinton, April 6, 1993 Document 46410; (4) William J. Clinton, March 4, 1993 Document 46295; (5) William J. Clinton March 15, 1994 Document 49813; (6) Abd-el-Bari 'Atwan Usama bin Laden Interview November 27, 1996; (7) CNN.com Bin Laden, millionaire with a dangerous grudge, September 12, 2001; (8) William J. Clinton March 1, 1995 Document 51048; (9) William J. Clinton October 7, 1993 Document 47180; (10) William J. Clinton November 13, 1995 Document 50769; (11) Murray Weiss, *The Man Who Warned America*, p. 135; (12) William J. Clinton June 25, 1996 Document 52988; (13) Saudi Militant Is Said to Urge Force Ouster of US Forces, *NYT* August 31, 1996; (14) William J. Clinton August 20, 1998 Document 54809; (15) Murray Weiss, *The Man Who Warned America*, pp. 203-227; (16) William J. Clinton, August 7, 1998 Document 54752.

U.S. Responses to Al Qaeda's Attacks and Speeches Continued				
<i>Type of Actions Taken</i>	United States Military Actions	United States Legal Actions	United States Diplomatic Actions	United States Verbal Responses
7/25/1999 Bin Laden Fatwa	None	None	None	None
Al Qaeda: Millennium Bombing Plot 12/14/1999 Port Angeles, Washington	None	Ahmed Ressay Pleaded Guilty Claimed he Was Trained by Bin Laden in Afghanistan (7)	None	President OBL Threatens Middle East Peace Process 1/19/2000 (17)
USS The Sullivans 1/3/2000	None	None	None	None
Bin Laden Fatwa 6/26/2000	None	None	None	President Letter to Congress National Emergency Concerning Taliban allows Al Qaeda Base 6/30/2000 (18)
Al Qaeda: USS Cole 10/12/2000	None	DOD, State & FBI Investigated (19)	State & FBI Investigated Animosity between Ambassador Bodine & FBI Investigators (20)	President: "it was despicable and cowardly act" 10/12/2000 (20)
Al Qaeda: WTC, Pentagon. Pennsylvania 9/11/2001	Invasion of Afghanistan 10/7/2001 (21)	Allies Arresting Terrorists in "38 Countries" (21)	Worked with Allies to Build Coalition (21)	President: "we will not fail. Peace and freedom will prevail." (21)
Bin Laden Peace Overture To American People 10/29/2004	None	None	None	"Americans will not be intimidated or influenced by an enemy of our country." 10/29/2004 (22)
9/17/2008 US Embassy Bombing	None	None	None	"This attack is a reminder that we are at war with extremists who will murder innocent people to achieve their ideological objectives." 9/17/2008 (23)

Table Sources Continued: (17) William J. Clinton January 19, 2000 Document 58565; (18) William J. Clinton June 30, 2000 Document 1619; (19) William J. Clinton October 12, 2000 Document 73957; (20) Murray Weiss, *The Man Who Warned America*, pp. 293-332; (21) George W. Bush October 7, 2001 Document 65088; (22) George W. Bush October 29, 2004 Document 72808; (23) George W. Bush September 17, 2008 Document 78655.

Policy Implications

Robert Pape was quite correct in stating that the main reason for suicide terrorism is the occupation of Arab and Muslim land by Americans. Osama bin Laden and his followers, whether “far enemy” jihadists or “near enemy” jihadists, have the same grievances concerning the American occupation of their homelands, which Pape rightly believes is the main reason for Islamic nationalist terrorism against America. To stop terrorist attacks, he believes America will have to leave those countries. To protect its oil interests in the region, America will have to use the US Navy to show a force of readiness to exert American power if its interests are in jeopardy in the region. Regime change and nation building are designed to change the Arab and Muslim society, which is the grievance these two groups of jihadists and the Arab and Muslim Street have with America and its allies. These policies will only create more terrorism. Regime change and nation building are to become new functions of the US military, according to the Army’s new Stability Operations Field Manual FM 3-07, which was released to the public October 6, 2008. According to a *Washington Post* article, “nation-building missions probably will become more important than conventional warfare and defining ‘fragile states’ that breed crime, terrorism and religious and ethnic strife as the greatest threat to U.S. national security.”³⁰⁰ This nation-building policy is in direct conflict with the analysis here and with Pape’s findings.

If any agency in the United States should have this function it should be either the State Department or the Institute of Peace. Changing another nation’s culture and society

³⁰⁰ Ann Scott Tyson, Army to shift focus to rebuilding nations. *The Denver Post*. October 5, 2008, p. 22A.

from the barrel of a gun and at the tip of a bayonet will only create more terrorism, not eliminate it. Civilian organizations such as Central Asian Institute (CAI) founded by Greg Mortenson³⁰¹ have shown how valuable their work is in building peace through building schools. CAI does not try to change the communities it works in; it adds to their benefit. It is based on the concept of paying it forward. The idea is to not become attached to the outcome but to build the school, supply it, fund it, and to allow the community to run it for their benefit, recognizing that building lasting relationships equates to peace. If the United States wants to stop terrorism, it will have to build relationships, not nations in its image.

Challenges

The world has changed since the collapse of communism in ways the United States' political leadership, national security and foreign policy apparatus, political pundits, media and public have not been able to understand. America thinks it can deal with the world community the way it did during the Cold War. An analogy that fits this situation is that of rich domineering parents controlling their children with money to get their children to do what's in the parents' best interest. Just after the fall of communism American allies were calling for the American military to leave their countries, but the Gulf War between Saddam Hussein and America quieted those rumblings. Even though the ally rumblings stopped, there was another rumbling that America discounted completely with contempt—that the fundamentalist Muslims did not want them in Saudi

³⁰¹ Greg Mortenson and David Oliver Relin, *Three Cups of Tea: One Man's Mission to Promote Peace One School at a Time*. (New York, New York: Penguin Books, 2006); Greg Mortenson, *Stones into Schools: Promoting Peace with Books, Not Bombs, in Afghanistan and Pakistan*. (New York, New York: Viking, 2009).

Arabia or any other Arab or Muslim country. At the behest of America, or so bin Laden believed, Saudi Arabia quickly quieted the fundamentalists' dissent by arresting and jailing them while other dissenters, such as bin Laden and his Arab-Afghans, who took offense to American intervention in their country's internal matters, left Saudi Arabia after the short Gulf War ended. This suppression of dissent was cited by Al Qaeda as one of its main grievances about American intervention in the internal affairs of Saudi Arabia and the rest of the umma. Al Qaeda used this issue and many others to build a following to counter America's intervention in the region. Al Qaeda's strategy based on these grievances was to draw America into a long war in Afghanistan but it was not expecting America's invasion of Iraq. This unexpected turn of events helped Al Qaeda illustrate America's propensity to invade Arab and Muslim countries for their natural resources--oil in this case--and to expand American imperialistic power in the region.

Other countries in the world were rejecting American intervention in their internal affairs now that Al Qaeda had shown it was possible to counter American military power. Countries in Central and South America, such as Nicaragua, Venezuela and Bolivia, are rejecting American intervention as bin Laden did when he spoke about the fight against American interventionism. How America interacts with the rest of the world is changing in small increments that are being ignored by American leaders and American society as a whole. How much it changes depends on how the national debt inhibits American borrowing to fund American foreign policy and military ventures that intervene in other countries' domestic and foreign affairs. These resource issues will eventually make America re-evaluate its role in the world and its negotiating behaviors with Arab and

Muslim countries, with the umma, and with the rest of the world, just as Russia did after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

American diplomats and political leaders will have to devise new strategies to negotiate in this changing world. Employing a publicity campaign to convince the Arab and Muslim world they just misunderstand US intentions while continuing to spread democracy, spread US economic and social development programs and deploying American troops around the region is only going to antagonize Arabs and Muslims who will continue the use of terrorism against America and its interests. The Arab and Muslim Street is ready for the day when America is not involved in their countries' domestic and foreign affairs. The hearts and minds of the Arab Street have been lost to America for some time to come. Michael Scheuer discusses this loss in *Imperial Hubris* in regard to the US State Department "Shared Values" campaign (which was designed by a "Madison Avenue advertising executive") and how the campaign would be received in the Middle East. Scheuer used this quote from Shibley Telhami:

I do not think that US policy right now can be oriented at "winning hearts and minds" of the Middle East in the short term. That is not going to happen. The US has a legacy of decades that is based in part on our policy and in part on impression; it is not going to be able to change the paradigm overnight simply by a charm campaign.... People are not going to trust the message if they don't trust the messenger.³⁰²

America has received a reprieve for the time being with the election of President Barack Obama. Muslims and Arabs are willing to give President Obama some time to change American foreign policy to the liking of the Arab Street. Speeches by the

³⁰² Michael Scheuer, (Anonymous), *Imperial Hubris: Why The West Is Losing The War On Terror*, (Dulles, Virginia: Brassey's Inc., 2004) pp. 14-15.

president have shown the Arab Street there is a different leader in Washington that is willing to admit to American mistakes in the region and wants to start a dialogue to resolve conflict instead of dictating American demands. Now that the words have been spoken, it's time for President Obama to engage the conflicting parties in talks as a neutral mediator because the region's Arab and Muslim population is expecting action, not just words and one-sided support for Israeli and American interests.

Time is the most precious element and it is in short supply for President Obama. The only way he can extend his time constraint is to begin negotiations as an honest and open communicator that is interested in resolving the grievances of the Arab street, which are expressed by Osama bin Laden, Ayman al-Zawahiri and other jihadists.

America is at a crossroads now. Will President Obama decide to leave Iraq or stay? What will his policy decision be for Afghanistan? An escalation in troops and development personnel for nation-building and spreading democracy? Or some other policy? The hawks in the foreign policy and national security establishments are advising the president to implement the latter policy and the moderates in the administration are advising the president to devise another strategy that will end the conflict. Bin Laden has positioned Al Qaeda for the long war, which will enable his grievances to be recognized and accepted, resulting in the eventual withdrawal of US forces from Islamic and Arab countries. America will have to decide if the long war is in its best interests; the only way to assess that is to look at Al Qaeda's grievances and America's goals (they are the same) along with a consideration of the fatigue factors' impact on America. That assessment should bring them to a new strategy to deal with Al Qaeda.

Analyzing Al Qaeda's grievances will enable President Obama to come up with a strategy to end the conflict but not in a way that will satisfy the hawks and probably some moderates. The strategy will make American policy makers and the public redefine the role America has in the world. Osama bin Laden's grievances are as follow:

1. US Support for Israel over the Palestinians;
2. US Occupation of Arab and Muslim Countries;
3. US Supporting Dictators in Arab and Muslim Countries;
4. US Exploiting Arab and Muslim Resources, such as oil;
5. US Occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan;
6. US Military Actions in Pakistan;
7. US Supporting Russia, China and India oppression of Muslims.

Michael Scheuer recognizes these as grievances in his book *Imperial Hubris*³⁰³, with the exception of Pakistan, where the US has moved its fight to go after Taliban and Al Qaeda forces hiding and regrouping in the country. All of these grievances will have to be addressed for Islamic terrorism to be reduced and eventually stopped. Even if Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri are killed or jailed today, someone will replace them because the grievances run deeply within the Arab and Muslim society. The cause these two men created will continue because it restored Arab and Muslim nationalism, which was missing in the region for generations. Osama bin Laden has produced a movement that has restored the pride of Arab and Muslim nationalism that Gamal Abdel Nasser could not produce. Al Qaeda has shown the world, especially the imperialistic and colonial powers, that it's possible to embroil a superpower in a guerrilla war with small bands of men and bring America to reconsider its strategy after eight years of war. If the

³⁰³ Michael Scheuer, (Anonymous), *Imperial Hubris: Why the West Is Losing the War on Terror*, (Dulles, Virginia: Brassey's Inc., 2004) p. 241.

near enemy jihadists are willing to pick up the fight, bin Laden's nationalist movement will continue in his absence.

President Obama has begun addressing the Palestinian and Israeli grievances, with former Senator George Mitchell serving as the special envoy shuttling between the occupied territories, Tel Aviv, Europe and America, in an effort to bring the assorted parties to the negotiating table. President Obama's speech in Cairo helped show that new American leadership is willing to admit mistakes in the past and is willing to learn from those mistakes. He is also willing to put pressure on Israel over the settlement problem in the occupied territories that leaders before him were unwilling to do. Movement on this grievance will be measured by Palestinian gains that are visible and tangible. The longer the issue languishes without a resolution for Palestinians and Israelis, the less time America is seen in the region as a neutral party, which inhibits American efforts to resolve the conflict. This revelation will have the parties looking to other countries for leadership. The Palestinians will seek guidance from Europe, Russia or China since the United States will be seen as a party that is no longer able or is unwilling to assist Palestinians. The Israelis are already feeling betrayed by the United States by America's harder stance on settlements and will fight to keep what they have gained over the years of the conflict. Israel is in a very precarious position with its only support coming from the United States. If future US credit worthiness is in jeopardy Israel will either have to find a new ally or face a very difficult change in their Palestinian policy as they resist that change every step of the peace process.

That resistance to change will enable terrorist attacks to continue allowing the Palestinians to say their grievances are still not resolved. The United States will have to pressure both sides equally to implement policies that extremists will resist. The Israelis will have to stop the settlements and move from occupied territory and Hamas will have to be included in the peace process. Hamas and Fata will have to settle their disagreements to enable the Palestinians to be united in the peace process. If Hamas is not included in the negotiations, the peace process will fail and terrorism will continue. The excuse put forward for not negotiating with Hamas is that it is a terrorist group therefore Israel and America will not negotiate with terrorists. This excuse does not hold true in the light of recent events.

Recently, Hamas and Israel negotiated a release of female prisoners in exchange for a video of an Israeli soldier captured in 2006 to verify he was still alive. In an interview with *Der Spiegel*, Hamas leader Mahmoud Zahar talks about the negotiations that lead to the release of twenty female Palestinian prisoners in exchange for the video of Galid Shalit, who was kidnapped from a tank.³⁰⁴ Negotiations do take place between Hamas and Israel, so the Americans cannot use the standard response of “we don’t negotiate with terrorists” anymore. This means Palestinian and Israeli negotiators will ask for concessions from both sides that extremists will oppose but should not be able to stop the process. Not allowing the extremists to control the negotiations is the only way the

³⁰⁴ Shalit Release ‘Is a Question of Weeks—Maximum a Few Months’, *Spiegel Online*. October 5, 2009, [On-line] Available from <http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/0,1518,653279,00.html> ; Accessed October 5, 2009.

Israeli and Palestinian conflict has a chance to reach a settlement and work toward peace. This will help America resolve this grievance with Osama bin Laden and Al Qaeda.

Addressing the second grievance will help in addressing the third and fourth grievances. Occupying Arab and Muslim land props up the dictators in those countries, which enables the American oil companies to exploit the oil resources of those countries. Osama bin Laden believes this to be the case where American troops are stationed in Muslim and Arab countries to support the dictators who give the American oil companies exceptional terms on oil resources. His messages are consistent with his belief that America's only reason for being in the Middle East is oil. In an interview with *Al Jazeera* pertaining to the Soviet-Afghan Jihad, bin Laden denies America and the CIA help and the reason he believed America supported the Soviet-Afghan War:

They [America] supported this war not for the sake of God Almighty, as they claim, but for fear of losing their positions of power and privilege from Russian advance. Carter, The American president at the time, was unable to utter anything of any value whatsoever for over twenty days. On the 20th of January he made a statement that any Russian interference in the Gulf region would be considered as a direct act of aggression against America. This is because they had already occupied this area and appropriated its oil. He also said that they would use military force if such an invasion took place.³⁰⁵

Carter's major address pertaining to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan became known as the "Carter Doctrine." America has not weaned itself from foreign oil as President Carter suggested; instead its leaders have opted to use military, diplomatic and economic forces to enable the country to live off low energy prices. The American reasons for the first Gulf War were eventually explained: the country could not allow

³⁰⁵ Bruce Lawrence, *Messages To The World: The Statements Of Osama Bin Laden*. (New York, New York: Verso, 2005), p. 87.

Saddam Hussein to control Saudi Arabian oil resources. The country's political and business leadership are afraid to release control of foreign oil resources, which is what bin Laden is calling for when he expresses outrage over the second, third and fourth grievances.

Osama bin Laden talked to Abdel Bari Atwan about oil when Atwan visited bin Laden in Afghanistan in 1996 for three days. In the course of Atwan's visit, the subject of oil resources came up in a conversation between the two men. American leaders do not want to even consider bin Laden's request for the US to leave the oil-producing countries out of fear that bin Laden or other extremists would either not sell the oil to America or sell it at a high price. Atwan said that bin Laden became angry when talking about why there was an American military presence in the "Arabian Peninsula" as well as in the other Arab and Muslim countries in the Persian Gulf region:

[H]e [bin Laden] said their [America's] main interest was obviously oil, but that this did not require military pressure: 'Of course we are going to sell them the oil anyway,' he said. 'After all, we cannot drink it.'³⁰⁶

The only way to resolve the second, third, and fourth grievances is to get the country behind an energy policy that includes energy conservation, renewable energies, and alternative energy technologies that would include transportation, new and old buildings and homes, national energy infrastructure and other aspects of the society would help the nation become more energy independent. The Europeans use fuel tax policies to make vehicle manufactures employ technology to get good fuel mileage on vehicles sold in Europe. The United States needs to utilize its tax policies to acquire the

³⁰⁶ Abdel Bari Atwan, *The Secret History Of Al-Qa'ida*. (London, England: Saqi Books, 2006), p. 31.

same type of fuel savings. Policies need to be geared to incentivize new technologies to create more jobs and move the country to being less dependent on foreign oil.

Less dependent is what America will eventually be, not totally independent. Dependent means that American leaders will have to treat other countries that have natural resources America needs as equals in order obtain those natural resources. The countries that have the natural resources that are in demand by the rest of the world will sell the resources, but it will be on market terms, as bin Laden refers to when he said he could not drink the oil. If the supply and demand model of economics that is so highly preached by American politicians and business leaders is to work, they will have to let the model work without trying to control the outcome. The only way that this will be accomplished is by the United States leaving the Muslim and Arab countries in order to let the countries decide what kind of leaders they want. The distribution and sale of their resources will be left to the new leaders and the market forces to establish an equitable price. Oil and gas resources are at play in Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan and the Southwest Asian region. After the Soviet-Afghan war, the United States was trying to help UNOCAL organize a gas pipeline project with the permission of the Afghan Taliban. The pipeline would extend from Turkmenistan through Afghanistan, stopping in Pakistan.³⁰⁷

The fifth and sixth grievances are connected because the United States is directing the fight against Al Qaeda and the Taliban in Pakistan and Afghanistan. Al Qaeda has moved its operation to Pakistan, leaving the Taliban to defend its own country. In a

³⁰⁷ Steve Coll, *Ghost Wars: The Secret History of the CIA, Afghanistan, and Bin Laden, From the Soviet Invasion to September 10, 2001*. (New York, New York: Penguin Books, 2004) pp. 301-305.

recent documentary called *Rethink Afghanistan*, General David Petraeus positively confirmed that Al Qaeda was no longer in Afghanistan. A segment of the documentary showed General Petraeus answering a question pertaining to Al Qaeda in a May 10, 2009 interview with CNN: “No Al Qaeda at all in Afghanistan? Is that an exaggeration General Petraeus?” [General Petraeus answered] “No. I would agree with that assessment.”³⁰⁸

The original goal has changed from defeating Al Qaeda to defeating the Taliban to installing a democracy and nation-building in a country that is known as the “Graveyard of Empires.” Projecting US military power into Pakistan to eliminate Al Qaeda and the Taliban is the new policy goal and is actually destabilizing Pakistan, creating even greater anti-American fervor. In Pakistan, 76% of the population opposes “Pakistan’s partnering with the United States in drone attacks against Al Qaeda and other extremists.”³⁰⁹ Ms. Rubin reported that a recent Pew Research Center Poll shows that only 16% of the Pakistani population has a favorable view of America and that President Obama has a 13% favorable view, whereas President George W. Bush was at 7%. Pakistanis, like the Afghans, do not want outsiders--America in this case--intervening in their domestic and foreign affairs. The populations of either country do not appreciate America trying to change their cultures with democratic, economic and social-development programs that the US Congress approved.

Afghanistan is also reversing its view of American involvement in its country, with unfavorable views increasing from 14% in October 2005 to 52% in February

³⁰⁸ Robert Greenwald, *Rethink Afghanistan Part 6: Security*, 2009, Documentary Film. [On-line] Available from <http://www.rethinkafghanistan.com> ; Accessed October 7, 2009.

³⁰⁹ Trudy Rubin, US must strengthen relations with Pakistan, *The Denver Post*. October 7, 2009, p. 11B.

2009.³¹⁰ The poll also shows that the Afghan public does not have much confidence in President Obama to make things better for Afghanistan. American support for the Afghanistan War is at a low of 40%, while 69% of Republicans favor a surge in troops as General McChrystal is suggesting and 57% of Democrats oppose a surge in troops, according to a new Associated Press-GfK poll.³¹¹ At the present time, Iraq is not even on the presses' radar with the nation's attention focused on whether to add the 40,000 troops the Pentagon is requesting to stem the Taliban's resurgence.

American military presence is winding down in Iraq because of agreements to withdraw from the country by 2011. The American public is tired of being there and will not support another troop surge in Iraq if violence gets out of control as the military leaves the country. Nor will the Iraqi people support the American military staying any longer than the agreement allows. Factions in the country are maneuvering for power in order to control various segments of Iraq's government; accomplishing their goals will require the use of violence. The withdrawal of American equipment and troops for Afghanistan will hinder America's ability to respond to and quell violence in Iraq, making it likely more American soldiers will be killed, increasing the American public's demands that American troops be brought home. The US will end up withdrawing even if it wants to stay in Iraq because of the fatigue factors that the US is now facing with two wars straining resources and straining the American public's will to continue. As

³¹⁰ ABC NEWS/BBC/ARD Poll - Afghanistan: Where Things Stand, February 9, 2009, [On-line] Available from <http://abcnews.go.com/images/PollingUnit/1083a1Afghanistan2009.pdf> ; Accessed October 7, 2009, p. 2.

³¹¹ Ben Feller, Obama rules out big cutback: President listens to varied views on 8-year-old war, deliberates buildup, *The Denver Post*, October 7, 2009, p. 19A.

Afghanistan and Pakistan continue to require more resources, American leaders will divert what little resources are left to counterinsurgency.

President Obama is engaged in a lively discussion about present Afghanistan and Pakistan war strategies in which some policy makers believe a counterterrorism strategy should be employed due to finite resources and public discontent over the war while others want to continue with some variation of the counterinsurgency strategy.³¹² President Obama said he is not withdrawing from Afghanistan or just going after terrorists³¹³, which means he is continuing his policy of drone attacks on Taliban and Al Qaeda leadership. Withdrawing from Afghanistan is going to happen when the fatigue factors strain America's ability to continue its foreign policy initiatives in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Osama bin Laden anticipated this policy decision by the US policy makers because it mirrors the decision of President Clinton to send in Special Forces to capture or kill General Aidid when his forces and the Arab-Afghans began escalating their attacks against American and UN forces.

Taliban and Al Qaeda resurgence is requiring American leaders to escalate their efforts to constrain and pushback the gains of these two ideologically separate groups. Taliban forces will continue to improve and adapt their military tactics in Afghanistan, requiring the United States to increase its footprint and convince NATO to expand its

³¹² Rajiv Chandrasekaran, Civilian, Military Officials at Odds Over Resources Needed for Afghan Mission, *The Washington Post*, October 8, 2009, [On-line] Available from http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/10/07/AR2009100704088.html?nav=rss_email/components ; Accessed October 8, 2009.

³¹³ Peter Baker and Jeff Zeleny, Obama Rules Out Large Reduction in Afghan Force, *The New York Times*, October 7, 2009 [On-line] Available from <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/10/07/world/asia/07prexy.html?partner=rss&emc=rss> ; Accessed: October 7, 2009.

presence. American and NATO forces lost their opportunity when they invaded Iraq. The diversion wasted an opportunity to make a real change in Afghanistan because now, the Afghan population sees American presence as an occupation. The civilian deaths have worked against the coalition forces, driving more of the population to believe they are better off with the Taliban. The Afghan population also believes that the Americans are going to leave anyway, so why invest their lives with them when the Taliban are here to stay.

America is eventually going to withdraw from Afghanistan and Pakistan. When that happens, the conflict in Afghanistan will continue as a civil war until the dominant party wins the support of the people. There is nothing another country's military can do to stop this war. Pakistan will keep their nukes safe but it's anybody's bet if a civil war erupts there. The United States created a mess with its regime change strategy that Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan and their neighbors have to fix without Western—especially American--intervention in the region.

In a March 15, 2008 interview with the *Guardian*, Jonathan Powell, former chief of staff for Tony Blair, stated:

There's nothing to say to al-Qaida and they've got nothing to say to us at the moment, but at some stage you're going to have to come to a political solution as well as a security solution. And that means you need the ability to talk.³¹⁴

American policy makers and politicians are unwilling to talk to Al Qaeda or the Taliban because it is their belief that to do so is a sign of weakness. This belief has the political leadership escalating the conflict rather than trying to find a peaceful solution.

³¹⁴ Ian Katz, Top Blair aid: we must talk to al-Qaida, *Guardian News and Media Limited*, March 15, 2008, [On-line] Available from <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2008/mar/15/uksecurity.alqaida/print> ; Accessed March 15, 2008.

Eventually there will be backdoor lines of communication to feel out where Al Qaeda and the Taliban are in respect to American security. The Taliban will say they want America out of Afghanistan and that they have no plan or inclination to attack the United States. Al Qaeda will tell the Americans that they want America out of the Arabian Peninsula and other Arab and Muslim countries and ask America to address its other grievances in order to call off the Declaration of War against America and its allies. Negotiations with Al Qaeda are inconceivable for American society but Israel is negotiating with Hamas. America will come to the very hard realization that negotiations will be the only solution to its security problem with Al Qaeda.

The process of rebuilding trust on both sides will be a critical starting point. As Blalock points out, both sides are in the “do or die” phase of the conflict. The United States has decided to escalate the conflict, believing it can and must destroy Al Qaeda because it’s the only way to eliminate extremists and protect America. Getting past zero-sum thinking is going to be a high hurdle for American political leadership to jump over but the fatigue factors will push the United States to eventually make the transition from war to negotiations.

Fatigue factors will push the US to trust the Taliban and recognize the legitimacy of its grievances before it reaches that point with Al Qaeda. Once the United States decides to negotiate, it will need to learn how to get past the idea it no longer has the power it once enjoyed. The US can employ a negotiating strategy, such as “The Five Steps of Breakthrough Negotiation” William Ury discusses in *Getting Past No*:

1. Go to the Balcony (Don’t React);
2. Step to Their Side (Don’t Argue);

3. Reframe (Don't Reject);
4. Build Them a Golden Bridge (Don't Push);
5. Use Power to Educate (Don't Escalate).³¹⁵

The interesting thing here is no one knows Al Qaeda's negotiation style. They know the style America uses firsthand from General Aidid and secondhand accounts from Arab-Afghans in the Somali negotiations before and after the Black Hawk Down incident. Initially US negotiators will have to quickly learn Al Qaeda's style, but the hard reality is that the US will not be in its usual power position. Whether the US will retreat from the world stage as Russia did is unclear, but the power and influence America once enjoyed is now waning.

The last grievance America will have to address is giving Russia, India and China support in the UN to counter Muslim extremists. This decision will be dealt with throughout the negotiation process, so this last grievance will be connected with the prior grievances. It is unclear how the Arab Street sees the grievance and whether it will support terrorism to have this grievance addressed.

Arab and Muslim sentiment will be a key factor in determining whether Al Qaeda will be able to continue its terrorist campaign against America. As the United States begins to resolve these grievances, the Arab and Muslim Street will decide if the American effort is genuine and whether to withhold its support from Al Qaeda and other far enemy groups. If the American effort is not considered genuine, Al Qaeda will receive the support from the Street. Genuine effort is the standard the Arab and Muslim Street have set to see their grievances resolved and the Americans as well as the rest of the

³¹⁵ William Ury, *Getting Past No: Negotiating Your Way from Confrontation to Cooperation*, (New York, New York: Bantam Books, 1993).

world will have to meet that standard in order for the Arab and Muslim Street to refrain from supporting terrorism against America and its allies. Generations have seen their hopes for resolution shattered after peace negotiations fail. The present society of young Arab and Muslim men and women are no longer tolerating the excuses their parents and grandparents endured under the UN and American leadership. Younger Muslims and Arabs are demanding their grievances be addressed or they will take action and not stand by as their elders did in the hopes the world community would resolve the conflicts in the region. America has a choice to either help solve the grievances genuinely or the Arab and Muslim Street will look for another neutral mediator, as Hamas used Egypt and Germany to mediate a negotiated settlement with Israel for the release of the twenty Palestinian women prisoners and the video of Galid Shalit.³¹⁶ America's involvement in world affairs will be different as a result of the conflict with Al Qaeda and the result of other historical events that have created a perfect storm that brought these parties together.

Historical factors are what the president and his Foreign Policy and National Security team have ignored while reviewing the US Afghan strategy. The main element of the strategy calls for an escalation of troops, which is what Al Qaeda is expecting. The United States believes it is losing in Afghanistan that is why it has escalated the conflict twice in this administration's first year in office. This behavior mirrors America's military strategy in the Somali conflict and the Vietnam War. America is losing its War

³¹⁶ Shalit Release 'Is a Question of Weeks—Maximum a Few Months', *Spiegel Online*. October 5, 2009, [On-line] Available from <http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/0,1518,653279,00.html> ; Accessed October 5, 2009.

on Terror against Al Qaeda and the Taliban by letting itself be drawn into the guerrilla war without knowing its enemy. Not knowing the relationship between Al Qaeda and the Taliban and not taking into consideration the “checkables,” as Michael Scheuer points out, has America losing and complying with Al Qaeda’s wishes of a long war to bankrupt the superpower.

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