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Transcript of Osama bin Laden tape

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Translation of the purported Osama bin Laden tape broadcast on al-Jazeera.

In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Beneficent: A Message to our Muslim brothers in Iraq. Alsalam Alikom Wa Rahmat Allah wa Barakato. (Koran verse) Oh Believers, be pious to God, and never die but when you are believers in Islam.

We are following with utmost concern the Crusaders' preparations to occupy the former capital of Islam (Baghdad), loot the fortunes of the Muslims and install a puppet regime on you that follows its masters in Washington and Tel Aviv like the rest of the treacherous puppet Arab governments as a prelude to the formation of Greater Israel.

We need to reassure - while we are close to the unjust war, the war of the bawds, America is leading with its allies and agents - on a number of important lessons:

First, to be honest in intention that the fighting would be for the sake of God, not to triumph for nationalism or pagan regimes in all the Arab countries, including Iraq. God said in his book, 'Those who are the believers fight for the sake of God. Those who are infidels fight for the sake of the juggernaut. Fight the followers of the devil. The devil's cause is weak'.

Second, remember that victory comes only from God. We have to exert all efforts with preparations, stimulation and jihad. God said, 'O believers, if you fight for the sake of God, God will grant you victory and make your standing firm'. Therefore, you are obligated to hurry up to ask for God's forgiveness from all sins, especially the great ones. The Prophet said, 'Avoid falling in the seven great sins, which are: believing in any but God, magic, murder, usury, stealing orphans' money, fleeing from battle, slandering believing women ... besides, drinking alcohol, adultery, not obeying the parents and false testimony'. You should be obedient in general.

Third, we recognised after fighting and defending ourselves from the American enemy that it depends on its fighting mainly in psychological war for the huge propaganda machine it has, and it also depends on the heavy air bombing. America uses these two in order to hide its soldiers' weaknesses, which are fear, cowardice, and lack of fighting spirit. These soldiers are totally convinced in their unjust cause and their unjust lying government. They also lack a just cause to fight for its sake.

They are fighting only to serve the interest of those who have the capital, arms dealers, oil owners, including the criminal gang in the White House. Adding to that, those who keep their personal

envoys, Bush the father.

We have recognised that one of the best, effective, and available means to devoid the aerial force of the crusading enemy of its content is by digging large numbers of trenches and camouflaging them in huge numbers, as I previously referred to in my past talk of the Tora Bora battle last year. Such a great battle where the faithful achieved victory over all material forces. We did that by holding firm our principles, and with God's help.

I will recall one part of such a great battle to prove how much they (American soldiers) are cowards, in one side, and how effective are these trenches in depleting them from another side. We were 300 mujahideen (holy fighters). We were digging 100 ditches spread over an area of one mile only. The range is one ditch for every three brothers. To avoid grave human losses during the air bombing as our centres were exposed - in the first hour of the American warfare in October 7, 2001 - to a heavy concentrated shelling, which then turned sporadic during the middle of Ramadan. Then on Ramadan 17, the shelling turned to a very heavy one, especially after the American command was certain that some of al-Qaeda leaders are in Tora Bora, including the poor slave (talking about himself) and the holy fighter doctor Ayman el-Zawahri.

The bombing lasted 24 hours a day. No second passed without aircrafts passing over our heads day and night, as the headquarters in US Defence Ministry with all other allies had nothing to do but to bomb and destroy that tiny spot and clear it from existence. The aircrafts were spilling bombs over us, especially after it finished its main mission in Afghanistan.

The American forces were bombing us with smart bombs, cluster bombs, and bombs which invade caves. B-52 aircraft were flying every two hours over our heads and throwing each time, 20 to 30 bombs. The modified Sinmo 13 aircrafts were bombing us daily with new bombs. Despite such a heavy shelling with the horrible propaganda, the first of its kind, on such a small zone surrounded from all sides, in addition to the forces of the hypocrites which were pushed to fight us for a continual half a month, which we faced their daily waves, despite all that, they (American soldiers) turned back carrying their killed and injured soldiers. The American troops couldn't dare to invade our bases, which indicates their cowardice, fear, and the false myths they spread concerning their military capabilities.

The conclusion is an enormous defeat for the coalition of the international evil with all its forces facing such a small group of mujahideen, 300 only in ditches in an area of one mile, in a temperature of 10 degrees below zero.

The result of that battle was six per cent injuries among the individuals, whom we ask God to consider as martyrs, and injuries inside the ditches were two per cent only, thank God.

If all the evil global powers were not capable of defeating one simple mile occupied by mujahideen using very poor equipment, how can such evil powers triumph over the Islamic world?

This is impossible, God willing, if they hold their faith in their religion, and were determined to fight for the sake of God.

Our mujahideen brothers in Iraq, don't worry about American lies concerning their power and their smart bombs and laser ones. Such smart bombs have no use among the mountains, trenches, plains, and forests. They need an obvious target.

As for the well-camouflaged trenches, the smart or the idiot bombs can't do anything to it. The only way is haphazard bombing which depletes the enemy's ammunition and the enemy's money. So go and dig many trenches as it was mentioned before in the holy book, 'Take the earth as your shelter.' Such a way will deplete all your enemy reserves in a few months. As for their daily production, that is easy to bear, God willing.

We advise about the importance of drawing the enemy into long, close and exhausting fighting, taking advantage of camouflaged positions in plains, farms, mountains and cities. The enemy fears the most the town fights and street fights. Such fighting would cause the enemy huge losses of souls.

We stress the importance of martyrdom operations against the enemy, these attacks that have scared Americans and Israelis like never before.

We also make it clear that anyone who helps America, from the Iraqi hypocrites (opposition) or Arab rulers, whoever fights with them or offers them bases or administrative assistance, or any kind of support or help, even if only with words, to kill Muslims in Iraq, should know that he is an apostate and that (shedding) his blood and money is permissible (in Islam).

God said (in the Koran): 'Oh believers, do not take Jews or Christians as your masters. They are loyal to each other. Those who follow them are one of them. God does not proselytise the unjust nations.'

I also assure those true Muslims should act, incite and mobilise the nation in such great events, hot conditions, in order to break free from the slavery of these tyrannic and apostate regimes, which is enslaved by America, in order to establish the rule of Allah on Earth. Among regions ready for liberation are Jordan, Morocco, Nigeria, the country of the two shrines (Saudi Arabia), Yemen and Pakistan.

You know that such a crusade war concerns the Muslim nation mainly, regardless of whether the socialist party and Saddam remain or go. So Muslims in general and Iraq in particular must pull up your pant legs for jihad against this unjust campaign. You should also keep the ammunitions and weapons, as it is an obligatory mission.

It is known before that you should not fight raising the pagan banners, but you have to, as a Muslim, to have a clear faith and banner during war for the sake of God, as the Prophet said, 'Whoever fights should raise the word of God'. It is not harmful in such conditions for the Muslims' interests and socialists' interests to come along with each other during the war against the crusade, without changing our faith and our declaration that socialists are infidels. Socialists' leadership had fallen down a long time ago. Socialists are infidels wherever they are, either in Baghdad or Aden. Such war which may take place these days is similar to the war between Muslims and Romans when the interests of the Muslims came along with the interests of the Persians who both fought against the Romans. Nothing was harmful for the Companions of the Prophet.

Before I conclude, I would like to assure on the importance of encouragement (for mujahideen) and raising their spirits and being alerted from flickering, confusion, and disinclining. The Prophet said once, 'Encourage them and don't discourage'.

(For three times he said) 'God, who sent down the book (Koran), who ran the clouds, who defeated the parties, defeat them (enemy) and grant us the triumph over them.'

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