



The Power Behind Bin Laden

As we go to press, Osama bin Laden is on the run. The terrorist and his al-Qaeda troops have gone into hiding, and the Taliban regime in Afghanistan that sheltered and supported him has been almost completely overthrown. Yet the elusive bin Laden looms larger than life. Although he has at most several thousand men under his command, he has put the world's most powerful superpower on a full-scale war footing.

The September 11th attacks on New York and Washington, D.C., have had their intended effect: There is widespread — and justified — fear that bin Laden's global network of terrorists might retaliate anywhere. Possibly with another attack as deadly and spectacular as we witnessed on Black Tuesday. Possibly with biological or chemical weapons. Possibly with a nuclear weapon. After the devastation of "9-11," none of these possibilities seem farfetched.

If, however, bin Laden and al-Qaeda were to be captured or destroyed today, would the terrorist threat be eliminated? Unfortunately and most assuredly not.

Consider these somber facts:

- Osama bin Laden is only one of many leaders of terrorist groups throughout the world.
- Virtually all terrorist groups, including bin Laden's al-Qaeda, are state sponsored, and the level of danger they present is dependent upon the arms, training, supplies, funding, and support infrastructure they receive from state intelligence services.
- Russia, China, Syria, Iran, Pakistan, Yemen, and other states we are embracing as "allies" against terrorism have been the prime sponsors of terrorism for decades and have been key supporters of bin Laden and his extended network up to the present time.
- In sharing intelligence, military training, and technology with these "allies," we are guaranteeing that they will be able to keep a steady stream of "bin Ladens" rolling off the assembly line and better assist them in carrying out even more sophisticated and more deadly acts of terror against us.

Genesis of a Terrorist

Osama bin Laden is not your run-of-the-mill terrorist. His immense personal wealth alone makes him unusual. Born in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, around 1957, he is the son of Muhammad bin Laden, reputedly the biggest construction magnate in the Middle East. Osama's militant Islamic activities put him at odds with the ruling House of al-Saud and caused his family publicly to disown him. Some observers believe the disinheritance was purely for show; at any rate, it didn't seem to preclude Osama from making off with a reported \$200 million.

Personal wealth, even of that magnitude, however, is not sufficient — by itself — to establish and provide for all the needs of an international terrorist operation. Like every other terrorist organization, bin Laden's al-Qaeda has been dependent upon sponsoring states — for training camps, sanctuary, arms, intelligence, technical expertise, logistical support, passports, and funding. Revolutionary Iran and the Afghan Taliban have been his chief sponsors, though Sudan, Pakistan, Syria, and Iraq have also played important roles.

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 apparently struck young bin Laden hard, as it did many Muslim youths. He left immediately for Pakistan and Afghanistan to help the Afghan mujahideen drive out the Soviet atheists. Ironically, like so many other Afghan volunteers, he has since ended up



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completely co-opted by the same Communist forces he originally went to fight. Although the Iranian regime to which he has been so closely tied for many years is commonly referred to as an “Islamist” government, it is more accurately described as a Marxist-Leninist one.

Incredibly, the Establishment foreign policy “experts” in the Bush administration are dispensing the same patently false line on Iran adopted by their predecessors in the Clinton administration. Iran’s President Mohammed Khatami, they insist, against overwhelming evidence to the contrary, is a “moderate” with whom we can cooperate in the war against terrorism.

Thankfully, not all have adopted this outrageous and demonstrably fraudulent position. According to Iranian scholar Dr. Azar Nafisi, a visiting professor at the Johns Hopkins University, “It is worth noting that the Iranian mullahs are not purely Islamic. Many of their ideas are based in Marxism.” “The idea of a decadent Western culture, the division of the world between the imperialists and their internal agents and their colonial victims — between the oppressed and the oppressor — and even many of the plans, economic and otherwise, for the creation of an ideal state were lifted out of Marxist dictums,” Dr. Nafisi told a forum of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy in February 1999. “Many of President Khatami’s supporters were ardent Islamist leftists who actively participated in the taking of the American hostages.”

It’s actually much worse than that, of course. Khatami’s thugocracy is run not by mere “ardent Islamist leftists,” but full-fledged, Moscow-directed terrorists in clerical garb. The authoritative, London-based *Soviet Analyst* and its sister publication, *Arab-Asian Affairs*, have provided many documented, detailed reports over the past several years showing precisely that.

In a special August 1999 report, *Soviet Analyst* noted that “the Iranian President, far from being a ‘moderate’ and ‘reformist’ ... is the long-serving Leninist operator and one-time Minister of Islamic Guidance — a cover for the chief organizer of terror operations.” Khatami, it asserted, “is the Kremlin’s Number One servant of terror in the Middle East sector.”

The U.S. State Department’s own *Patterns of Global Terrorism — 2000*, released in April 2001, states: “Iran remained the most active state sponsor of terrorism in 2000. Its Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) and Ministry of Intelligence and Security (MOIS) continued to be involved in the planning and the execution of terrorist acts and continued to support a variety of groups that use terrorism to pursue their goals.” That was a dramatic understatement.

The State Department’s February 2000 posting on Iran’s human rights practices notes: “Systematic abuses include extrajudicial killings and summary executions; disappearances; widespread use of torture and other degrading treatment, reportedly including rape; harsh prison conditions; arbitrary arrest and detention, and prolonged and incommunicado detention. Perpetrators often committed such abuses with impunity.”

Khatami, along with the hardline Communists in the Tudeh Party, the PLO, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), and other Soviet-backed terrorists, helped overthrow the Shah of Iran and replace him with the maniacal Ayatollah Khomeini. In May 1984, while serving under Ayatollah Khomeini, Khatami issued a memorandum marked “TOP SECRET” to high-level Iranian officials concerning a meeting in which he presided over the creation of a brigade-sized (1,500-2,000 man) terrorist group to strike targets throughout the Middle East. The memo, issued and signed by Khatami, also called for a “Combatant Clergy Organization” and “Friday Mosque prayer leaders” to stir up the Muslim faithful in support of Iran’s revolutionary agenda.



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Which countries were designated for attack? Not the Soviet Union, which was then slaughtering Iran's fellow Muslims in Afghanistan, and continuing its decades-long oppression and persecution of millions of Muslims in its various "republics." Not Communist China, which was also persecuting Muslims, particularly in Xinjiang province. No, according to the memo, the "target countries" were Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, and Jordan — the same comparatively moderate Islamic countries that also had long been the Soviet Union's prime targets in the Middle East.

Developing Network

In 1991, Osama bin Laden moved to Sudan, just as Iran struck a strategic alliance with Sudan's spiritual leader, Sheikh Hassan Abdallah al-Turabi. Bin Laden and Turabi became very close as meetings multiplied between Iran's terror experts and their Sudanese students. Because of his financial acumen, personal fortune, and access to wealthy Gulf Arabs, it fell to bin Laden to set up a banking network based in Khartoum to launder tens of millions from Tehran and other sources.

Yossef Bodansky's *Bin Laden: The Man Who Declared War on America*, the most comprehensive biography of Osama bin Laden, reports that early in 1992, officers from Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) "took over Kabar prison in Khartoum and converted it into its central headquarters in Sudan — a clear indication of Tehran's long-term intentions." This was soon followed by a secret visit by General Muhsin Rezai, commander in chief of the IRGC, who inspected the headquarters and the IRGC-run terrorist training camps in Sudan. On his recommendation, Tehran poured massive support into the burgeoning Sudanese terrorist operations.

At the very center of these operations was Osama bin Laden. Many high-level, secret meetings with world terrorist leaders and intelligence agencies ensued, the most important of which took place in Sheikh Turabi's headquarters. An important series of meetings in March-April 1995 was a veritable rogues' gallery of terror chieftans: Imad Mughaniyah of HizbAllah, Fathi Shikaki of Palestinian Islamic Jihad, Mussa Abu Marzuk of HAMAS, Adrian Saadedine of the Muslim Brotherhood, and, of course, bin Laden, as well as others. The primary subject of the meetings was the establishment of regional headquarters all over the globe to advance the world revolution. Rome, Karachi, Khartoum, Mogadishu, Tehran, London, and New York were the main cities chosen. Iran pledged \$120 million to pay for the new centers. Members of Pakistan's InterService Intelligence (ISI) also attended. They had been assisting terrorist groups for many years and working closely with the bin Laden-Turabi-Iranian network. Their concerns at these meetings centered on creating better camouflage and "deniability" for Pakistan's involvement. Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto would soon be visiting the United States, where she would be denouncing terrorism and assuring all that Pakistan had no part in such things. The ISI wanted that lie to be as convincing as possible.

Another very important gathering took place in June 1996 in Tehran. Besides many of those mentioned above at the Khartoum meetings, also in attendance were such hardcore MarxistLeninists as Ahmed Jibril (chief of the PFLP General Command), Abdallah Ocalan (head of the terrorist Turkish Peoples Party), and a representative of George Habash (head of the PFLP).

Out of this terror summit came the new HizbAllah International, headed by the Committee of Three. The Committee members were Osama bin Laden, Imad Mughaniyah, and Ahmad Salah — very important players, but not the ultimate source of terrorist power. Over this "top" Committee of Three is Dr. Mahdi Chamran Savehi, Iran's chief of External Intelligence and supervisor of its global terror operations. Mahdi Chamran and his brother Mustafa were both educated in the United States. Active in radical-left politics in the 1960s in California, they established a Marxist front known as the Muslim



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Students' Association of America and an Iranian terrorist organization called Red Shiism.

In *Bin Laden*, Yossef Bodansky notes that since 1968 Mahdi Chamran "had served as an active Islamist terrorist and *intelligence operative* for radical Palestinians *and their Soviet sponsors*. In the meantime he received a Ph.D. in nuclear physics." (Emphasis added.) Throughout his book, Bodansky minimizes or ignores these crucial Soviet/Russian connections; his emphasis is completely on the "Islamist" threat emanating from Iran, Pakistan, Sudan, etc.

Mahdi Chamran and other top Iranian leaders like him are in their positions of power because they are *still* "intelligence operatives" for their "Soviet sponsors." Russia would not have provided, and would not continue to provide, Iran and other regimes with missile technology and scientific and material assistance for the creation of nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons unless it had very strong confidence in their "operatives" in those regimes.

As Bodansky correctly observes: "Virtually all major and spectacular terrorist strikes are state sponsored, and they are not hasty undertakings. The key perpetrators of these terrorist strikes are dedicated and disciplined operatives completely under the control of the intelligence services of the terrorism-sponsoring states." Quite obviously, bin Laden has functioned as a controlled operative of Iran and the intelligence agencies of other countries. These regimes and agencies have many others who can take his place: Ramadan Shallah, Imad Mughniyeh, Ayman al-Zawahiri, etc. It is these state sponsors who would be held accountable if the U.S. really were fighting a war against terrorism. But who are the ultimate state sponsors? That is the crucial issue that our nation's elected officials and policy makers have been avoiding for many years.

Russian Connection

In 1984, a very important study on international terrorism was released that has grave bearing today on our national security and our survival as a free people. Unfortunately, that study, by two eminent experts on terrorism, was largely ignored.

"As 1984 begins, the year George Orwell long ago made synonymous with political oppression, the odds increase in favor of Soviet-sponsored revolutionary warfare and spectacular terrorist incidents, many of the latter involving Americans." So wrote Dr. Ray S. Cline, former deputy director of intelligence for the Central Intelligence Agency, and Dr. Yonah Alexander, director of the Institute for Studies in International Terrorism, in *Terrorism: The Soviet Connection*. They continued: "Americans are the primary targets of terrorism in most foreign countries, particularly in regions destabilized by revolutionary violence. And the United States is not immune from such attacks within its own borders."

Drs. Cline and Alexander pointed out that the beginning of the modern-day international terrorist movement can be traced to a 1964 decision of the Soviet Politburo to increase spending on terrorism by one thousand percent. Boris Ponomarev, at that time head of the International Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (which Cline and Alexander have called "the most important Soviet agency for the spread of terrorism"), told his comrades in 1964 what was expected of the International Department:

We understand our international duty as consisting in support for all the revolutionary, democratic movements of modern times.... We Soviet Communists call upon all the fraternal parties and all the revolutionary forces to close their ranks more tightly, to overcome all difficulties, to rally under the banner of Marxism-Leninism in the name of the triumph of the working class.

As we have shown in previous articles (see, for instance, "Terrorism's True Roots," December 3, 2001),



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Islamic movements, organizations, and countries were especially targeted for penetration and exploitation in the Soviet terror offensive.

While the Establishment media and its chorus of anointed “experts” dismissed or covered up the overwhelming evidence of Soviet orchestration of international terrorism, a few courageous voices spoke out to join those of Cline and Alexander. Dr. Hans Josef Horchem of West Germany’s antiterrorist Office for the Defense of the Constitution warned: “The KGB is engineering international terrorism. The facts can be proven, documented, and are well known to the international Western intelligence community.” Senator Jeremiah Denton (R-Ala.), whose Senate Subcommittee on Security and Terrorism held more than 60 hearings on this issue, stated:

The hearings ... documented extensive involvement and complicity by the Soviet Union and its surrogates in a worldwide network of terrorism, much of which takes place in the name of “national liberation” movements. The hearings demonstrated that Soviet exploitation of those movements included military and political training in the Soviet Union and its proxy states; furnishing equipment, including special weapons, money, documents, and escape mechanisms; furnishing advisers, some of whom participated in the selection of civilian targets; and furnishing propaganda support directly in the Soviet and satellite press as well as through stories planted in the international press. The hearings also disclosed Soviet use of U.N. organizations to help promote and legitimize “national liberation” organizations that employ terrorism to accomplish their goals.

Congressmen Lawrence P. McDonald (D-Ga.), John Ashbrook (R-Ohio), Admiral Thomas Moorer, General George Patton III, and other patriots warned of the terrible catastrophes we would reap if we failed to confront the true perpetrators of the global terror wave.

In Terrorism: The Soviet Connection, Cline and Alexander reported the “grim facts of life about the prevalence of terrorism today and its use as an expedient tactical and strategic tool in the political struggle for power within and among nations.” They warned that the terrorism offensive “points up the increasing lack of distinction between peace and war. As we begin the year 1984, Orwell’s famous Newspeak dictum that ‘peace is war’ assumes greater reality. It is essential for Americans to understand that this is the kind of world we are living in, and why.”

Unfortunately, Americans still do not understand the nature of this war, and, as a result, our world is becoming ever more Orwellian. While Russia and China continue to build weapons of mass destruction for Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Syria, and Libya, and to fund, train, arm, and supply “Islamist” terrorist armies worldwide, our elected officials and media mavens embrace Vladimir Putin and Jiang Zemin with smiles and open arms and pretend that “war is peace.”

During the 1960s, ’70s and ’80s American leaders turned a blind eye toward overwhelming evidence of Soviet and Red Chinese sponsorship of global terrorism. Then, during the 1990s the Soviet “Evil Empire” disappeared altogether with the “collapse of Communism.” Or so we were told, over and over again by the Establishment experts. A decade of propaganda emanating from Moscow, Beijing, and Washington, D.C., has lulled Americans into the belief that Russia and China have changed so fundamentally that we can adopt them as genuine friends and partners.

How can this be? China is still officially and overtly a totalitarian Communist dictatorship that openly denounces the United States as its “main enemy,” supports terrorist organizations and state sponsors of terrorism, and verbally threatens us with nuclear annihilation. Meanwhile, the “new” Russia is ruled by the same old *nomenklatura*, the life-long Communist elite who now claim to be “reformers.” The same



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nomenklatura has continued to control all the levers of power: the government structures; the military; the secret police. And for the past decade it has continued to supply and support the same terrorist organizations and terror states that it did during the 1960s, '70s, and '80s. During the 1980s, Yevgeniy Primakov was the Soviet Union's KGB paymaster and controller of terrorist assets in the Middle East. In the 1990s, in the "new" Russia, under Yeltsin, Primakov continued his terror duties. The same pattern of Russian support for terror has continued under "President" Vladimir Putin, a career KGB officer.

It is much easier and politically expedient to focus all attention on Osama bin Laden, rather than to confront his sponsors. But it is also far more dangerous. As September 11th demonstrated, we have already paid a terrible price for this cowardice, ignorance, and treachery. Ultimately, we will pay a far greater price, unless the American people awaken and force their leaders to change the suicidal policies that reward the masters of terror.



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