

The War Against Terror

Who is Osama bin Laden and al Qaeda?

- Born in Saudi Arabia in 1957. Father operated a massive construction company. Father died in helicopter crash when he was a young boy and bin Laden inherited over 300 million dollars. His net worth today is estimated at 5 billion.
- **1979** – Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan. Bin Laden moved to Afghanistan to help this Islamic people fight the Soviets. There he was trained by the CIA. To fight the Soviets the United States poured over 1 billion dollars a year in weapons, money and training.
- While in Afghanistan, bin Laden used his millions and American money to build training camps to train soldiers. It is estimated that bin Laden has trained over 10,000 men at these camps. These men, loyal to bin Laden, became known as **al Qaeda**. Al Qaeda means “the base”, and they are men loyal to bin Laden. They were trained to fight the Soviets but later to spread terror.
- **1989** – The Soviets withdraw from Afghanistan. Soon after the Soviet Union crumbles into over a dozen smaller countries, the largest of which today is Russia. The world celebrated, and in Afghanistan, bin Laden is a hero.
- **1991** – Iraq invades its southwestern neighbor Kuwait. There was great concern that Iraq would next invade neighboring Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia asked the United States for help, and the United States seeking to protect its oil supplies, sent hundred of thousands of troops to Arabia for Operation Desert Storm. The United States pushed Iraq out of Kuwait and U.S. troops still remain in Saudi Arabia. However Arabia is holy ground to Moslems. Radical Moslems, like bin Laden, are infuriated that U.S. troops are on Islamic holy ground. From this point on bin Laden makes it his goal to destroy the United States.

Quote from bin Laden – “to destroy Americans, their allies, their citizens and their military.”

His real goal? Bin Laden’s ultimate goal is created uprisings in Islamic countries around the world for the creation of an Islamic Empire with himself as ruler. The United States would be an obstacle to that goal.

What is the Taliban?

- After the Soviets left in 1989, Afghanistan fell into a bloody, horrific civil war with rival factions fighting each other. By 1996 the Taliban had taken control of most of the country.
- The Taliban were supported because they brought peace and order. However as time went on the Taliban imposed their view of Islam on the country. All forms of entertainment were banned. Women were forbidden to be educated. The penalty was death for conversion to any other religion. Today only the Pashtun ethnic group really supports them. The remaining majority of the country does not.
- The Taliban never took control of the northeastern corner of the country which is controlled by a coalition of groups known as the Northern Alliance.
- Because they share religious ideas the Taliban protects Osama bin Laden and the United States will seek to replace the Taliban after the fighting stops.

Want wacky laws of the Taliban? View them at www.rawa.org/rules.htm

What does Islam really say?

- Moslems believe in Moses and the Old Testament of the Bible. They follow the Ten Commandments including “Thou shalt not kill.”
- Jihad: holy wars to protect Islam. Used by radicals and bin Laden to war against whomever they chose. However jihad and Islam forbids the killing of women, children, and old people in war. It also forbids suicide.