

POST-FATWA PRESS CONFERENCE IN KHOST, AFGHANISTAN  
1998-05-26

RAHIMULLAH YUSUFZAI [in English]: Dr. Ayman do you have got this impression that Abdullah is different than Fahd—that he is more anti-American, anti-West...he is a good Muslim? Is it true, or just an impression?

AYMAN AL-ZAWAHIRI [in English, translating Usama bin Ladin's reply]: He says that the Americans, the Americans don't like Abdullah—they don't like Abdullah, because he is much less worse than Fahd. He is a nationalist...[inaudible]

JOURNALIST [in English, laughing]: When...if you come to Pakistan do...you may want to see if he can address that?

AYMAN AL-ZAWAHIRI [in English, translating Usama bin Ladin's reply]: He says if you work hard...

[Ayman al-Zawahiri is asked to repeat the question]

AYMAN AL-ZAWAHIRI [continuing in English]: Brother is saying why not to come to visit in Pakistan. The Shaykh says if you work hard for this then the people can put pressure over the government to accept us in Pakistan.

JOURNALIST [in English]: Have you ever been to Pakistan?

AYMAN AL-ZAWAHIRI: Yes, yes, for many years...

RAHIMULLAH YUSUFZAI: In Peshawar, the Pakistan government has closed one of the roads where the American consulate is located because they say Shaykh Usama is going to attack the American consulate. For three months, this road is closed! All traffic.  
[Gestures at Ayman al-Zawahiri] Tell him!

AYMAN AL-ZAWAHIRI [in English, translating Usama bin Ladin's response]: He is saying it is your duty, that actually you are the teacher...or you can express the feelings of the Muslim nation in Pakistan. If you work hard against our enemy-the American and Jews-then the Americans...we will expel them from our lands. And at that time we can make this model to provide our nation...[inaudable]...and we will be a unified Muslim world. And move freely, anywhere.

RAHIMULLAH YUSUFZAI: What is your estimate about the number of American troops in Saudi Arabia, and also the British and French troops?

AYMAN AL-ZAWAHIRI [in English, translating Usama bin Ladin's response]: He says that the...issue, post estimations, are that the Americans are around 40,000...We have information that they are around 120,000.

RAHIMULLAH YUSUFZAI: Including the Americans?

AYMAN AL-ZAWAHIRI: Yes. The French are few. And also the British are few.

RAHIMULLAH YUSUFZAI: There are also American women there, among the troops?

AYMAN AL-ZAWAHIRI [in English]: Because of this, this means that there are no men among Muslims to defend Arab peninsula...or Khana Kaaba [Urdu for Kaaba]. And among the one thousand million and two, one billion...

RAHIMULLAH YUSUFZAI [interjecting]: Two hundred thousand...

AYMAN AL-ZAWAHIRI [in English]: Two hundred thousand million Muslims in the world, there are no enough men to defend the Holy Kaaba...

RAHIMULLAH YUSUFZAI: Shaykh Usama, do you approve of Taliban policy on the education of girls and the right of the women to work outside their homes? What do you say about that policy?

AYMAN AL-ZAWAHIRI: [Inaudible]...as a doctor that teaches, and he says that, even in poems...

[Usama bin Ladin adds more to his response in Arabic]

AYMAN AL-ZAWAHIRI [translates, in English]: ...he says that in this part...there is no difference between him and Taliban, because he knows from them that they don't prevent education and they...want an honorable education for women.