

Title:

Wanted: And It Had Better Be Alive!

Word Count:

977

Summary:

It's finally emerged that the USA had an opportunity to fire a robo-rocket at Osama bin Laden recently, except that he was in Pakistan and their government didn't give permission in time to do the deed. So, why should the Americans be thanking them?

Keywords:

Osama bin Laden, al-Qaida, al-Qaeda, war on terrorism, terrorism, anti-terrorism, Cyberiter

Article Body:

Pakistan did the USA a favor recently ...

All they got for it was a surprise rocket attack on their own soil.

The situation is well-explained by London's Sunday Telegraph in its 29 Jan 06 edition:

Pakistan 'delay let bin Laden escape US raid'

By Massoud Ansari in Karachi (Filed: 29/01/2006)

"Prevarication by the Pakistani government cost America the chance to kill Osama bin Laden in an airstrike near the Afghan border two years ago, the Sunday Telegraph has been told.

"A CIA lead that the al-Qaeda leader was hiding in a remote province was squandered because the Pakistani government delayed giving permission for the attack on its soil, according to a senior Western diplomat ...

"By the time US officials got the go-ahead, bin Laden had left the suspected hideout in Zhob, in the Baluchistan province of south-west Pakistan.

"The near-miss was cited by the diplomat as the reason why America chose not to consult Islamabad before the US missile strike in Pakistan's Bajaur region two weeks ago. The January 13 attack, prompted by a tip that bin Laden's deputy,

Ayman al-Zawahiri, was hiding in a local village, killed 13 civilians.

"According to his account, which was backed by sources within Pakistani intelligence, the CIA picked up electronic traffic suggesting that bin Laden and his bodyguards had sought temporary shelter in Zhob, which is dominated by Pathan and Baloch tribesmen sympathetic to al-Qaeda and the Taliban.

"Fearing that a commando raid would cause massive casualties to both sides, with no guarantee of success, the US decided to launch a strike by laser-guided missiles, fired from Predator drones.

"If he was in Zhob at the time it would have been the first known occasion that he had been firmly in America's sights since his escape from Tora Bora in Afghanistan, where he slipped through a cordon of US troops in 2001 ..."

Coincidentally, another article appeared in that same edition of the Sunday Telegraph which underscored the effect bin Laden's words can have:

Author shoots from obscurity to infamy after plug from bin Laden
By Philip Sherwell (Filed: 29/01/2006)

"To William Blum's surprise and apparent disappointment, he found that his name had not been added to the US 'no-fly' list when he travelled from his home in Washington DC to Ohio last week to deliver one of his frequent anti-American lectures on a campus.

"Mr Blum is revelling in what he calls his '15 minutes of fame.' To many of his compatriots, that should read 15 minutes of infamy after Osama bin Laden declared that he was a fan of the previously obscure Left-wing author and virulent America-basher.

"The 72-year-old writer admits he was delighted by the plug for his book, *Rogue State: A Guide to the World's Only Superpower*, in the Saudi terror mastermind's latest taped audio message. After bin Laden's recommendation, the book soared from 205,763rd to 26th place on Amazon.com's list of most-ordered books. 'I thought I might have ended up on the no-fly list after that. Anything is possible in this country today,' Mr Blum told the Sunday Telegraph, perhaps over-estimating his importance in the eyes of the US authorities. But he is strikingly honest about his new-found notoriety.

"'I am not at all sorry to have been mentioned by bin Laden,' he said. 'In fact, I'm pleased. I'm part of a movement whose goal it is to slow down if not stop the American empire from what it's doing around the world ...'

"In his taped message, bin Laden recommended that President George W Bush read Mr Blum's *Rogue State*, a sharp critique of US foreign policy.

"The al-Qaeda mastermind then quoted an extract in which the author wrote that, if he was president, he could stop terror attacks against the US permanently by apologising 'very publicly and very sincerely, to all the widows and orphans, the impoverished and the tortured, and all the many millions of other victims of American imperialism.'"

Mr Blum's agenda notwithstanding, the best thing that happened to America's war on bin Laden is that they didn't kill him. Anyone cognizant who has ever been even remotely exposed to the culture of bin Laden's target audience knows that his words would have a tenfold impact if he became 'martyred.'

If he can raise a fringe author's book almost 200,000 places in Amazon's world with a simple utterance, think of what would happen if his words became 'finite' by his demise. The term 'exalted' comes to mind. Their inspirational impact would be hugely amplified by the fact that he, too, died for his cause, just like he's urged his followers to do.

In their unilateral and so-called 'war on terror,' the USA has spent billions of dollars on revenge and the toppling of a dictatorial blowhard. The opposition has only spent thousands but seemingly has not lost much ground (Afghanistan and Iraq are still in relative states of anarchy, after all); they are fueled by the charisma of a man who, as I've said before, is nothing more than a common criminal who has wrapped himself in an extreme fundamentalist cause and then been elevated to celebrity status by his mighty adversary.

I don't think the USA can afford to kill him. They need to capture him alive. He never was the terrorist mastermind of al-Qaeda, he was only the banker and the face to their cause. Having him at large until he's captured is not going to significantly alter any of their activities. Only if bin Laden's empty agenda is exposed by being formally brought to justice will there be any chance of effectively revealing his true colors as a charlatan. There needs to be the ultimate occasion where he can be reviled by the true keepers of Muslim faith for perverting their religion. Only in a court of law can this happen, and if it comes to pass, it will happen.

So, thank you, Pakistan, regardless of your operatives' motives.