

Appendix B

Osama bin Laden Chronology

The following are important dates in Osama bin Laden's personal, political, militant, and Islamic life from 1957 to 2009.

1957: Friday, February 15, 1957: Osama bin Mohammed bin Awad bin Aboud bin Laden *al-Qatani is born in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, in the early hours of the morning to Mohammed Awad bin Laden and Allia Ghanem. He is the eighteenth of twenty-two sons that will be born to Mohammed Awad bin Laden, and the first child born to Allia Ghanem. His paternal and maternal families hail from Hadramaut in Yemen. A young Mohammed bin Laden settled in Saudi Arabia and became a Saudi citizen. Allia Ghanem's family settled in Syria and became Syrian citizens. Their only child, Osama, is born a citizen of Saudi Arabia.

1959: Mohammed Awad bin Laden and Allia Ghanem divorce. Allia keeps physical custody of her son, Osama, although he remains a part of his father's family.

1959: Allia Ghanem marries Mohammed al-Attas and will have four children with her second husband.

1963: Osama is registered at the primary school at the Al-Thager Model School in Jeddah, considered to be one of the most progressive schools in Saudi Arabia.

**Omar bin Laden reports that his father told his family that their real family name was al-Qatani, but that his father, Mohammed bin Laden, had never registered the name. This is not documented by any other sources.*

1966: Osama's father purchases the family's first airplane.

1967: On September 3, there is an airplane crash at Oom, Saudi Arabia, and Osama's father, Mohammed bin Laden, is killed.

1974: Osama marries Najwa Ghanem. Najwa is fifteen and Osama is seventeen. Najwa is his mother's niece, and Osama's first cousin. A simple wedding is held in Syria, at the home of Najwa's parents. According to Najwa, media reports are wrong that she was coerced into the marriage. Her marriage with her first cousin Osama was a love marriage. After receiving official documents, Najwa joins her husband, Osama, in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. The young couple resides in the home of his mother and stepfather while Osama continues with his schooling.

1974: Osama assumes part-time duties in his father's huge multinational construction business, the Saudi bin Laden Group.

1976: Osama enrolls as a student at the King Abdul Aziz University in Jeddah. He studies economics and management. (Najwa says that her husband never studied engineering, although that is a popular myth.) During these years the Muslim Middle East undergoes an Islamic awakening, called the Salwa, which came about after the 1967 war with Israel, when Egypt, Jordan, and Syria suffered a demoralizing military defeat. Osama came of age during this political change.

1976: Osama and Najwa welcome their firstborn, a son they name Abdullah. From that time Osama will be known as Abu Abdullah, meaning father of Abdullah, to his closest friends and associates. Najwa become known to family and friends as Um Abdullah, or mother of Abdullah.

1978: Osama and Najwa welcome their second-born, a son they name Abdul Rahman.

1979: On the Muslim calendar, 1979 is the first year of a new century.

1979: Osama, Najwa, and their two sons travel through England and to the United States for Osama to meet with Abdullah Azzam, the man many call Osama's first mentor. Abdullah Azzam was on a speaking tour in America to recruit for Jihad. Osama, who had recently awakened to the passion of Jihad, met with Abdullah Azzam to discuss and make plans for his role in the movement. While on this trip, Abdul Rahman becomes ill, and Osama and Najwa consult a medical specialist for their second-born son.

1979: Osama and Najwa welcome their third-born, a son they name Sa'ad.

1979: Muslims the world over received a terrible blow on November 20, 1979. The annual Haj pilgrimage had ended and Haj worshippers were preparing to depart Mecca. Since there are always foreign Muslim worshippers in Mecca, the Grand Mosque was filled with people. At the moment the Imam concluded the first prayer of the day, gunshots were heard and worshippers attacked.

Three hundred rebels led by Juhayman al Uteybi, a formal corporal in the National Guard of Saudi Arabia, quickly overtook the men of religion and the worshippers, declaring them all as hostages. The rebels seized total control of the Grand Mosque, broadcasting their goals over the loudspeakers throughout Mecca.

The Saudi Army and National Guard poured into Mecca, ordering an evacuation of the city and surrounding the Grand Mosque. Since the Koran forbids violence within the Grand Mosque, the Saudi royal family first sought approval from the religious authorities to use deadly force against the insurgents, which was given.

The ensuing battle lasted for two weeks. Control of the Grand Mosque was finally achieved on December 4, 1979. Official reports say that 255 fanatics, troops and pilgrims were killed, while 560 were injured. The rebels who survived were imprisoned or beheaded, with reports claiming 63 beheadings.

1979: On December 26, Russia invades Afghanistan.

1980: Osama responds to what he calls the invasion by "Godless communists" by organizing charities to benefit the Afghan resistance fighters, known as the Mujahideen. His friend and mentor, Abdullah Azzam, founds an organization for this purpose. Osama, backed by his family wealth and the Saudi government's encouragement, becomes a chief financier.

1980: Osama begins the first of his travels to Pakistan to deliver supplies and offer assistance to his Afghan Muslim brothers. From this time on, Osama is heavily involved in the Afghan struggle against Russia, coordinating his trips to fit around his schooling and family responsibilities.

1980 or 1981: Due to his Jihadi responsibilities Osama drops out of the university, although he lacked only one semester to graduate.

1981: Osama continues to raise funds and to deliver supplies to Pakistan for the Afghan resistance against the Soviets.

1981: During the month of March, Osama and Najwa welcome their fourth-born, a son they name Omar.

1982: Osama bin Laden becomes more involved with the conflict in Afghanistan. The war between Russia and Afghanistan changed, with the Russians occupying the main cities and the Mujahideen (which were divided into many groups) waging a guerrilla war. From 1980 until 1985, there were nine main Russian offensives resulting in heavy fighting. While his friend and mentor, Abdullah Azzam, recruits Arab fighters to join the war, Osama bin Laden becomes further involved, collecting millions of dollars from wealthy Gulf donors for the purpose of contributing to the Mujahideen.

1982: While in Pakistan and Afghanistan, Osama meets some of the Egyptian Jihadists who will inspire the young Saudi. Later, they will become his followers. Five of these men are Mohammed Atef (Abu Hafs), Dr. Ayman al-Zawahiri, Abu Ubaidah al-Banshiri, Abdullah Ahmed Abdullah, and Omar Abdel Rahman.

1983: Osama purchases a large twelve-apartment building in Jeddah, where he moves Najwa and their children.

1983: Osama marries a second wife, a Saudi woman from Jeddah named Khadijah Sharif. The Sharif family is descended from the al-Hussain line. (The Prophet's daughter had two sons, one named al-Hassan and the other named al-Hussain. When a Saudi family is descended from the Prophet, they always clarify from which line, al-Hassan or al-Hussain.)

1983: Osama and Najwa welcome their fifth-born, a son they name Osman.

1984: On occasion, Osama takes both wives and his children with him on trips to Pakistan, where they live in a spacious villa in the city of Peshawar, close to the Afghanistan border.

1984: Osama and his second wife, Khadijah, welcome their first child, a son they name Ali. From that time Khadijah will be called Um Ali, although Osama will forever be called Um Abdullah.

1984: Osama helps Abdullah Azzam to set up the Services Office, which carries out placement of Jihad fighters from Arab nations into Afghan fighting units, or with relief organization responsible for collecting food and weapons for the Mujahideen.

1984: Osama further expands his participation in Jihad, helping to establish fighter training camps across the Afghanistan border. He begins to build tunnels, roads, and training camps needed to help his Muslim brothers fight the Russian invaders.

1985: Osama and first wife, Najwa, welcome their sixth-born, a son named Mohammed.

1986: Osama becomes even more involved in the Afghanistan-Russia conflict. He sets up his first military base in eastern Afghanistan, near a village called Jaji, which is located only ten miles from the border of Pakistan. The military base is for his Arab fighters, and is named the Lion's Den. During his frequent trips to Pakistan he routinely crosses the Pakistan border into Afghanistan to fight as a guerrilla commander, leading his Arab troops in a number of battles with the Russians.

1986: In order to introduce his firstborn to Jihad, Osama takes his eight-year-old son, Abdullah, with him to the fighting base Jaji. He receives unexpected criticism from family and other Jihadi leaders for exposing his young son to the danger of war. This is only the first of many instances when Osama will push his unenthusiastic sons to the forefront of his personal passion for Jihad.

1986: With many Muslim radicals joining the struggle in Afghanistan, Osama becomes more politically aware and active, leading him to think about his mission in life, which will expand to fighting for Islam on every front.

1987: Osama marries his third wife, a Saudi woman from Jeddah named Khairiah Sabar. With Osama's encouragement, Khairiah was selected by his first wife, Najwa.

1987: In the spring of 1987, Osama gains his reputation as the leading Saudi hero after the battle of Jaji, where his Arab fighters are pitted against the Russians.

1987: Osama marries his fourth wife, a Saudi woman from Medina named Siham whose family is from the al-Hassan line of the Prophet. Siham is the sister of Saad, a Saudi soldier under Osama, who was married to one of Osama's nieces in the bin Laden family.

1987: After undertaking a big bin Laden family construction project in Medina, Osama moves his three wives and children to that city.

1987: Osama and Najwa welcome their seventh child, a girl they name Fatima. Fatima is the first daughter born to the family.

1988: Osama and Siham, his fourth wife, welcome their first child, a girl they name Kadhija.

1988: In August of 1988, Osama turns to a global crusade, founding al-Qaeda al-Askariya (translates to “the military base,” later shortened to al-Qaeda, “the base,” or “the foundation”). By this time Osama has achieved hero status in the Arab press. Due to Osama’s prominence, fighters for his organization are easily recruited.

1988: Osama replaces his friend and mentor, Abdullah Azzam, as the leader of the Arab fighters in Peshawar, training for the conflict in Afghanistan.

1989: The Soviets withdraw from Afghanistan.

1989: Osama returns to Saudi Arabia, bringing approximately one hundred of his veteran fighters to live in Saudi Arabia.

1989: Abdullah Azzam and one of his sons are assassinated when they are targeted by a roadside bomb in Peshawar. With Abdullah Azzam’s death, Osama bin Laden is the undisputed leader of the Arab fighters.

1989: Osama and third wife, Khairiah, welcome their first child, Hamza.

1989: Osama and his fourth wife, Siham, welcome their second child, Khalid.

1990: On August 2, 1990, Saddam Hussein invades Kuwait. Osama approaches the Saudi royal family, volunteering his military expertise and holy warriors to fight and defeat Saddam Hussein. Confident of his ability to convince the royal family of the wisdom of his plan, Osama prepares his forces to defend the kingdom.

1990: The Saudi government allows the United States to form a coalition of many countries, including many Muslim countries, to battle Saddam Hussein. The United States begins sending troops to Saudi Arabia.

1990: Osama is so enraged at what he considers a royal slight in allowing infidel troops on Islamic holy land that he begins to speak out and write treatises against the Saudi regime, leading to an end to their previous friendly relationship.

1990: Osama and first wife, Najwa, welcome their eighth child, a girl named Iman.

1990: Osama and his fourth wife, Siham, welcome their third child, a girl named Miriam. (This child is born on the same day as Iman, Najwa's daughter.)

1990: Omar and his second wife, Khadijah, welcome their second child, a son named Amer.

1990: The Saudi government warns Osama to cease his criticisms of the royal family and their decisions. Osama refuses, increasing his opposition. The ruling family limits Osama's freedom, ordering that he confine himself to the kingdom.

1991: A coalition, led by the United States, fights the Persian Gulf War. Afterward, the United States establishes a permanent military presence in the kingdom. Osama and other intellectuals within the kingdom object to the infidel presence in the land of the two most holy places in Islam, Mecca and Medina. Opposition to the ruling family increases, resulting in the arrest and detention of a number of intellectuals.

1991: Osama flees the kingdom after convincing one of the royals to approve a one-time trip to Pakistan in order to complete and close down his businesses there. Osama promises that he will return to Saudi Arabia.

1991: Osama breaks his promise, and instead he arranges a move to Khartoum, in Sudan.

1991 or 1992: In late 1991 or early 1992, Osama moves to Khartoum, Sudan. His wives, children, and approximately one hundred of his veteran fighters who were living in Saudi Arabia join him there.

1992: With the approval of the Sudanese government, Osama sets up many businesses in Sudan.

1992: Osama begins to bring more Afghan veterans living in Pakistan into Sudan to work in his businesses, as well as setting up his al-Qaeda organization for future missions.

1992: Osama and his second wife, Khadijah, welcome their third and last child, a girl they name Aisha.

1992: On December 29, 1992, there is a terrorist attack in Aden, Yemen, on a hotel where American troops generally stay. On that day, however, the American soldiers had checked out of the hotel on their way to Somalia where the United States was conducting a humanitarian mission. The people killed were two Austrian tourists. Terrorism experts believe that this was the first attack organized by Osama bin Laden and his al-Qaeda organization, although it has never been proven.

1992: Osama and his fourth wife, Siham, welcome their fourth child, a daughter they name Sumaiya.

1993: In October, the U.S. government humanitarian mission is ambushed in Mogadishu, Somalia, and eighteen U.S. soldiers are killed. After the attack, Osama bin Laden admits that some of his fighters were involved in the attack. Osama ridicules the United States for withdrawing from Somalia after the ambush.

1993: Osama and Najwa welcome their ninth child, a son they name Ladin. Najwa is escorted to Saudi Arabia by her son Abdullah. After the birth, Najwa returns to Khartoum. Osama changes his mind and renames their son Bakr. From that time on the children and Najwa call their sibling Ladin, while Osama calls him Bakr, leading to much confusion.

1993: Other militant groups began to congregate in Sudan with Osama bin Laden's al-Qaeda, one of the few countries who would welcome them. There was the al-Jihad group, headed by Dr. Ayman Muhammad al-Zawahiri. There was also the al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya group, led by Omar Abdel Rahman. (After he was arrested and imprisoned in the United States, his son became the local organizer.) All three militant groups came together for the purpose of restoring Islamic Jihad. Their goal was to have the world ruled by Islam.

1993: Osama's second wife, Khadijah, asks for a divorce. Osama agrees and allows her to leave Sudan with her three children. Khadijah moves back to Saudi Arabia.

1993: The World Trade Center in New York is bombed. Six people are killed and one thousand injured. Authorities believe there is a link to al-Qaeda, but no charges are brought against Osama bin Laden or his organization for lack of evidence. However, Omar Abdel Rahman, a blind cleric and one of Osama's associates, is recorded issuing a fatwa encouraging acts of violence against U.S. civilian targets. (Omar Abdel Rahman is arrested on June 24, 1993,

tried and convicted of seditious conspiracy. In 1996 he was sentenced to life in prison.)

1993 or early 1994: After his divorce from his second wife, Khadijah, Osama bin Laden marries for the fifth time while in Khartoum. However the marriage is annulled before it can be consummated. The family does not want to say why the marriage was annulled, considering it a private matter.

1994: The government of Saudi Arabia revokes Osama bin Laden's Saudi citizenship. His bin Laden brothers renounce him. Osama's bank accounts in the kingdom are frozen.

1994: The Sudanese government gives Osama bin Laden and his family Sudanese citizenship and passports.

1995: On June 26 the two Islamic groups associated with bin Laden's al-Qaeda allegedly try to assassinate Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak when he was in Ethiopia for a meeting of the Organization of African Unity. The assassination attempt fails but brings pressure from the Egyptians, Saudis and, Americans for the Sudanese government to expel Osama and the other Islamic groups from the country.

1995: Osama bin Laden writes an open letter to King Fahd of Saudi Arabia. In the letter he calls for a campaign of insurgent attacks in the kingdom against the United States forces still stationed there.

1995: In Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, there is a truck bombing of a U.S.-operated Saudi National Guard training center. Five Americans and two Indians are killed. Although Osama denies responsibility, he praises the attackers.

1996: In May of 1996, the Sudanese government bends to international pressure and expels Osama bin Laden and his associates.

1996: In May of 1996, Osama bin Laden, his top commanders, and his son Omar fly out of Khartoum, to Jalalabad, Afghanistan. Regardless of other media reports, Omar bin Laden says he is the only son that accompanied his father. He also reports that their plane crossed Saudi Arabia, and that their only stop was for the purpose of refueling the airplane in Iran.

1996: Four Saudi men are arrested for the truck bombing in Riyadh that killed the Americans and Indians. They confess that they were motivated by Osama

bin Laden's militant activities. They are beheaded in Riyadh's Deira Square, more commonly known as "Chop-Chop Square."

1996: President Bill Clinton signs a top secret order authorizing the CIA to use any and all means to destroy Osama bin Laden's organization.

1996: A second truck bomb destroys Khobar Towers in Dhahran, killing nineteen U.S. soldiers. There is never any evidence that Osama and al-Qaeda was responsible, although the U.S. government believe he inspired the attack.

1996: Osama bin Laden signs and issues his "Declaration of Jihad," which outlines the goals of his network. He calls for the removal of the Saudi government from power; for the liberation of the Muslim holy sites from all foreigners; for the support all Islamic revolutionary groups; and for driving the U.S. government out of the Arabian Peninsula.

1996: In September 1996, Osama bin Laden brings his wives, children, and Afghan veterans and their wives and children from Sudan to Jalalabad, Afghanistan. (Important note: Najwa and Omar were unclear as to the exact dates that the family lived in the various locations in Afghanistan, or to the exact timing of Rukhaiya's birth. Arabs do not celebrate birthdays in the same manner as in the West. They do know that the personal events listed below were in the general time line of late 1996 to mid-1997.)

1996: Osama bin Laden moves his wives and children to Tora Bora Mountain, in Afghanistan.

1997: Osama's family temporarily moves to Jalalabad. While there, Osama and Najwa have their tenth child, a girl they name Rukhaiya. The child is born in a hospital in Jalalabad.

1997: Osama moves his family to the airport compound in Kandahar, where they live until October 2001. (The family did live for very short periods in other areas in Afghanistan, including Kabul and Jalalabad, during this same period, but their main residence was the airport compound at Kandahar.)

1998: Although Osama bin Laden is not a cleric, he issues a fatwa calling for attacks on Americans. His signed statement calls for the killing of Americans saying it is the "individual duty for every Muslim who can do it in any country in which it is possible to do it."

1998: On June 8, a U.S. grand jury investigation of Osama bin Laden, which was opened in 1996, finally issues a sealed indictment, charging Osama bin Laden with “conspiracy to attack defense utilities of the United States.” The United States prosecutors charge that Osama bin Laden is head of a terrorist organization named al-Qaeda, and is also a major financier of Islamic organizations around the world.

1998: A group calling themselves the Egyptian Jihad sends the Americans a warning, saying that they will soon deliver an important message to the Americans, “which we hope they read with care, because we will write it with God’s help, in a language they will understand.”

1998: On August 7, there are simultaneous bombings at the United States embassy in Kenya and the United States embassy in Tanzania. A total of 213 people are killed in Kenya, including twelve Americans. More than 4,500 people are injured. There are eleven people killed in Tanzania, and eighty-five injured. (There are no Americans killed in Tanzania.)

1998: U.S. intelligence agencies say that they have intercepted the telephone calls of two of Osama bin Laden’s commanders implicating al-Qaeda in the August 7 embassy attacks.

1998: Mullah Omar, the head of the Taliban, the group in charge of Afghanistan, turns down a Saudi extradition request for Osama bin Laden.

1998: On August 20, the United States retaliates against Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda, sending cruise missiles into al-Qaeda training camps. Two hours prior to the attacks, Osama, his sons, and commanders left one of the training camps near Khost to travel to Kabul to a safe house. Sources say that only six fighters were killed. Omar bin Laden reports that thirty fighters were killed.

1998: The United States issues a new indictment against Osama bin Laden, Mohammed Atef, listed as bin Laden’s chief military commander, and others. Osama and his commanders are charged with the bombing of the two United States embassies and conspiracy to commit other acts of terror against Americans living abroad. Rewards of \$5 million each are offered for Osama bin Laden and for Mohammed Atef.

1999: Omar bin Laden, Osama’s fourth son with his first wife, Najwa, is warned of an attack by Abu al-Haadi, one of Osama’s trusted fighters. Haadi believes the attack is going to be so big that the United States will retaliate with the

intention of killing everyone associated with Osama bin Laden. After many heated discussions with his father, Omar takes his pregnant mother, brother Abdul Rahman, and baby sister Rukhaiya out of Afghanistan to Syria.

Late 1999: Osama and Najwa have their eleventh and final child, who is born in Syria. The baby is a girl whom Osama names Nour in honor of Osama's half-sister, who had died a few years before.

Early 2000: Najwa returns to Kandahar with her two small daughters and son Abdul Rahman. Omar remains in Syria, seeking the return of his Saudi citizenship, which is forthcoming in four months.

2000: On the 12th of October, there is a terrorist attack on the U.S. warship *Cole* at the Aden, Yemen, seaport. The explosion kills seventeen American sailors. President Bill Clinton does not retaliate, saying there is no concrete evidence that al-Qaeda was behind the attack, although that is believed to be the case.

2000 (late) or early 2001: Osama bin Laden marries for the sixth time to Yemeni Amal al-Sadah. It is said that his bride is only seventeen years old. The marriage was held in Kandahar, Afghanistan. As of this writing it is thought that Osama and Amal have one daughter, named Safia.

2001: In early 2001, a worried Omar returns to Kandahar, Afghanistan, after his grandmother in Saudi Arabia tells him that his father is angry and has ordered him to return to Afghanistan.

2001: Late April 2001, after a brief stay, and a repeated warning of a big attack in the making, Omar tries to convince his mother to take her children and leave Afghanistan. Najwa remains in Kandahar while Omar leaves his father and Afghanistan for the final time.

2001: Between September 7 and 9, Najwa departs Afghanistan for the final time. Osama forbids her from taking her other children. A distraught Najwa travels to Syria to live in her mother's home. Najwa's other children, their wives, and grandchildren remain in Afghanistan with their father.

2001: On the 11 of September, approximately three thousand people lose their lives when nineteen al-Qaeda suspects hijack four American passenger planes and fly them into American targets. Two fly into the World Trade Center, killing thousands and destroying the buildings. One flies into the Pentagon near Wash-

ington, D.C. The final plane is stopped from its mission by the brave passengers who fight their hijackers. That plane crashes into a field in Pennsylvania.

2001: On October 7, six weeks after the attacks on American soil, the United States military begins a fierce air assault upon Afghanistan. The bombing attacks are so devastating that they cause a complete disruption of al-Qaeda and the training camps located in Afghanistan. Osama bin Laden, his commanders, and fighters hide in the mountains of Tora Bora before fleeing to Pakistan. It is believed that many hundreds of al-Qaeda fighters perished, including Mohammed Atef (Abu Hafs), who is killed at his home in Kabul. Osama bin Laden and Dr. Ayman al-Zawahiri make an escape into Pakistan. (Nothing is known of the fate of Najwa's children, or Osama bin Laden's other wives and children.) During this same assault, the notorious Mullah Omar and his Taliban government collapse, with Mullah Omar and his followers fleeing to Pakistan.

2004: In October, Osama bin Laden releases a recording taking credit for the September 11, 2001, attacks.

2008: Osama bin Laden releases an audiotape condemning the publication of drawings that he said insulted the Prophet Mohammed, and warned Europeans of a severe reaction to come.

2009: In January, Osama bin Laden releases an audiotape urging Muslims to launch a Jihad against Israel. The head of al-Qaeda vows to open new fronts against the United States and its allies. The twenty-two-minute audiotape includes an appeal for donations to support the fight he is waging.