

The Peace on The Horizon - 70 Years after The World War 2 in the Middle East (46)

[\(Japanese Version\)](#)

[\(Arabic Version\)](#)

Chapter 6: Genealogy of Islamic terrorism

6-3(46) The world trembled with the September 11 attacks



The 21st century began with "September 11 attacks". Islamic terrorism frequently took place in the last decade of the 20th century. But the September 11 attacks could not be compared with any of previous ones about the scale and influence given to the world.

There were many terror incidents during the last decade of 20th century. In 1993 eight people died and more than 1,000 injured by the bombing of New York World Trade Center Building. Terrorists attacked on tourists in Luxor of Egypt in 1998. The United States embassies in Kenya and Tanzania were bombed simultaneously in 1998. In September 1999 two terror attacks in Moscow resulted in more than 200 death.

All terror attacks were done by Muslims. The attacks could be categorized into three according to the criminal entities. One was an attack by a lone wolf fanatic Islamist. Luxor incident was equivalent to this case. The second case was a resistance movement against the central government by Islamic organizations. Terrorist attacks in Moscow by Central Asian Islamic organizations was this case. Both of two terror attacks were domestic matters.

In contrast, the terrorist attacks of New York World Trade Centre Building in 1993 and US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998 were well controlled international terrors by the Al Qaeda led by Osama bin Laden and the victim was the United States. Al Qaeda opened the door of terrors in 21st century by September 11 attacks. It was a famous incident that anyone knew. Let's review the attacks roughly.

In the morning of 11th September 2001, American Airlines Flight 11 from Boston to Los Angeles was hijacked at 8:14 am. Hijackers grasped the control stick and changed the course to the south. The plane crashed into the North Tower of the New York World Trade Center Building at 8:46. At first people could not understand what happened. Many people thought that the small aircraft crashed with the manipulation in error. However, following the American Airlines, United Airlines Flight 175 headed to the same destination from the same airport was hijacked in the same manner. It crashed into the South Tower of the World Trade Center Building. TV news which covered the first incident

relayed the next incident. Not only citizens in New York but also people around the world witnessed live broadcast. It was an unbelievable scene never seen before. Only after a while they understood that violent terrorist incident had to be taken place.

Tragedies continued furthermore. American Airlines Flight 77 from Washington to Los Angeles was also hijacked at around 8:40. It crashed into the headquarter of the Department of Defense (commonly known as the Pentagon due to a pentagonal star shape). In addition, United Airlines Flight 93 from Newark to San Francisco was hijacked at 9:28. But passengers in the airplane had acknowledged what happened at the World Trade Center Building in New York. They struggled with hijackers in the plane. The plane was crashed on the ground at 240 KM northwest of Washington DC. It was at 10:03 am. Hijackers were believed to target at the White House or Parliament Building. The four terrorist attacks of simultaneous hijackings were the biggest disaster in the history with 3,000 death and 6,300 injuries.

President George W. Bush (then) concluded that the incidents were the crimes committed by Al Qaeda, Islamic extremist group led by Osama Bin Laden. Khalid Sheikh Muhammad who was the subordinate of Bin Laden was arrested in charge of a mastermind of terror activities. The attacks took place within less than two hours from the first hijacking at 8:14 am to the crash of the fourth aircraft at 10:03 am. Ahead of two-hours attacks, Al Qaeda had spent an enormous amount of time and money for detailed planning and careful preparations including the acquisition of the maneuvering method of a large jet aircraft. The United States had already recognized that Al Qaeda was targeting the mainland of the United States when the World Trade Center Building was bombed eight years ago. But US Government could not catch in advance the symptom of the September 11 attacks. Terrors planned and implemented by Al Qaeda were far beyond the predictions of authorities. Nineteen criminals led by Egyptian Muhammad Atta were identified. Eleven of the 19 criminals were Saudi.

The terror attacks triggered US counterterrorism operations. President George W. Bush decided the eradication of terrorism as the most important issue of diplomacy. He adopted a hardline policy that the first-strike for self-defense would be the essential alternatives. The US took place military action against the Taliban regime of Afghanistan, where the Al Qaeda was based in. US had overthrown them. Osama bin Laden escaped in a steep mountainous area of neighboring Pakistan. Running away from trackers he called for Islamic extremist groups around the world for resistance. Terrorist activities by his sympathizers took place in many parts of the world one after another. The United States desperately pursued him. At last the special forces raided to kill Bin Laden on the outskirts of Islamabad in May 2011. He was 54 years old.

In the 21st century, it was the beginning of the era of resistance by Islamic extremists.

(To be continued ----)

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