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

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### **Chapter 6: Genealogy of Islamic terrorism**

#### **6-3(46) Shuddering September 11 attacks**



The 21st century began with "September 11 attacks". Islamic terrorism frequently took place in the last 10 years at the end of the 20th century, but the September 11 attacks could not compare with any of previous terrorism with the size of the scale and the influence given to the world.

Listing the main terror incidents during the last decade of the 20th century, two Austrian tourists died in hotel bombing in Aden of Yemen in 1992. In 1993 eight people died and more than 1,000 injured by the bombing of New York World Trade Center Building. Furthermore, terrorist 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 caused more than 200 dead.

The criminals of these terror attacks were all Muslims. The incidents could be roughly divided into three categories according to the criminal organization and the background of the incidents. 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 anti-government organizations. Terrorist attacks in Moscow by Central Asian Islamic organizations was this case. Both of two terror attacks were domestic problems by domestic offenders.

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 and international terrorist activities by the Al Qaeda led by Osama bin Laden targeting the United States. It was "September 11 attacks" that Al Qaeda revealed its nature in early 21st century. It was a famous incident that anyone knew. Let's review the attacks.

In the morning of 11th September 2001, American Airlines Flight 11 from Boston to Los Angeles was hijacked at 8:14 am. The criminal grasped the control stick and changed the course to the south and crashed into the North Tower of the New York World Trade Center Building at 8:46. At first people could not understand what happened, and many people thought that the small aircraft crashed with the manipulation in error. However, immediately after the American Airlines, United Airlines Flight 175 headed to the same destination from the same airport was hijacked in the same way. It crashed into the South Tower of the World Trade Center Building in a manner to follow. The television news covering the first incident relayed the next incident. Not only citizens of New York but people around the world witnessed live footage. It was a truly unbelievable scene. This made people understand that violent terrorist incident was happened.

Incidents 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 who knew about the incident of the World Trade Center Building tried to stop hijacking and crashed on the ground at 240 KM northwest of Washington DC. It was at 10:03 am. The perpetrators seemed to aim 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 Bush (then) concluded that the incidents were the crimes committed by Islamic extremist group Al Qaeda led by Osama Bin Laden. Bin Laden's subordinate Khalid Sheikh Muhammad was arrested in charge of a planner of terrors. The incident took place in less than two hours from the first hijacking at 8:14 am to the fall of the fourth aircraft at 10:03 am. Prior to this two hours 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 in 1993. But US Government could not catch in advance the symptom of simultaneous multiple terrorism. Terrors planned and implemented by Al Qaeda were far beyond the predictions of authorities. Nineteen offenders led by Egyptian Muhammad Atta were identified. Eleven of the 19 offenders were Saudi.

This incident triggered US counterterrorism operations. President George W. Bush set the eradication of terrorism as the most important issue of diplomacy and showed a hard line stance that the first-strike for self-defense would be the essential alternatives. The US caused military action against the Taliban regime of Afghanistan, where the Al Qaeda was based in, and overthrew 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. At that time he was 54 years old.

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

(To be continued ----)