



It is important to understand this great historical figure and his jihad mission. Osama bin Laden was a close associate and student of respected Palestinian theologian, Abdullah Azzam, who coined the term "al-Qaeda." Azzam's work elaborated upon the ideas of Sayed Qutb, the Egyptian founder of modern Arab-Islamic political religious thought. Qutb is comparable to John Locke in Western political development. Both Azzam and Qutb were serious men of exceptional integrity and honor. Qutb predicted that the struggle between Islam and materialism would define the modern world. He embraced martyrdom in 1966 in rejection of Arab socialist politics. Drawing upon Qutb's ideas, Azzam preached mutual responsibility for each other among all Muslims worldwide. Azzam successfully organized an international volunteer effort to defend Afghanistan from the Soviet Union throughout the 1980s under the banner of Islam and with the US as an ally. He was killed in 1989.

To a large extent it was America's support of the Mujahideen in Afghanistan that created the spiritual fire behind the Islamic Renaissance of the 1980s. In the Battle of Jaji in May 1987, Osama's Muhajideen army of only 50 members resisted 200 Soviet and Soviet-backed Afghan troops for one week, taking 12 losses. Under the watch of the Arab media, the Mujahideen protected their complex system of tunnels and caves near the Pakistani border, named al-Masada, from Soviet capture. Osama bin Laden became an internationally respected war hero, while the Afghan freedom fighters became revered in America as "the bravest men in the world," according to former CIA agent and author, Eric Margolis. Every Muslim in the world, it seemed, wished they too could die for the sake of Allah. Every girl wished she could marry Osama bin Laden, even if he was already quite busy.

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