

# Anwar al-Awlaki's Fictitious Attachment to Salafism

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Reply to Jarrett Brachman's Post Fort Hood Comments

Sunnah Publishing Editorial Staff

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## Anwar al-Awlaki's Fictitious Attachment to Salafism

On November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2009, Jarrett Brachman, author of *Global Jihadism: Theory and Practice* and former director of research at West Point's Combating Terrorism Center, was interviewed by National Public Radio's *All Things Considered*, about the Fort Hood shooting and Nidal Hasan; especially his connection to the radical extremist, Anwar al-Awlaki. In the midst of this interview, Brachman was asked whether Nidal Hasan's communications with al-Awlaki should have 'raised a red flag' with the authorities and investigators. He replied,

"The fact is its indicative of somebody who has bought into this - the hard line understanding of Islam known as *Salafism*. And so again, that's not inherently problematic, it means that you are a very ultra-conservative Muslim. But, you know, when you start talking about - Muslims are under attack - that kind of walks you down this certain path where - well then, what are you going to do about it? It should have at least raised some eyebrows and it sounds like it did, but they just didn't go up the chain. There is a lot of gaps here that should have been, you know, filled, but weren't."<sup>1</sup>

The reality is that Anwar al-Awlaki has nothing to do with Salafism and has never – to our knowledge – claimed such for his self. The statement above by Brachman is extremely irresponsible to say the least. At the most, this is alarmist propaganda that puts the thousands of *Salafi* Muslims who currently live peaceful and productive lives in the United States under suspicion.

What makes the above statement even more puzzling than Brachman erroneous attribution of al-Awlaki to Salafism, is his own admission uttered merely a couple of minutes earlier in the broadcast,

"Anwar al-Awlaki really represents kind of the new generation of fire-breathing, radical, jihadi clerics."<sup>2</sup>

So we will show that the designation of "jihadi" is worlds away from Salafism and a man of Brachman's calibre should not be making such erroneous utterances.

### Anwar al-Awlaki's True Ideology:

The truth of the matter is that al-Awlaki has not made his affiliations a secret. Rather, it was the *Salafis* who challenged al-Awlaki's purported Islamic scholarship and demanded to know who his teachers were, so the embattled Awlaki replied to the *Salafi* objections as follows,

"In 2002 I was given permission from the administration of the University of Eman in Yemen to attend any class at any level and I took advantage of this and

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<sup>1</sup> Listen to his words: <http://www.sunnahpublishing.net/audio/brachman1.mp3>.

<sup>2</sup> Listen to his words: <http://www.sunnahpublishing.net/audio/brachman2.mp3>.

attended classes in Tafsir and Fiqh for a period of a few months. I have also benefited from the teachings of Shaykh Abdul Majid al Zindani the Rector of the University.”<sup>3</sup>

Anyone slightly aware of the *Salafis* and their modern-day Scholars – and most certainly a former director of research at West Point's Combating Terrorism Center – should be aware that the *Salafis* have been condemning al-Zindānī and his university of Eman for years! In fact, the prominent *Salafī* Scholar of Yemen, Shaykh Muqbil Ibn Hādī al-Wādī'ī (d.1421H) was asked, “Do you allow enrolment into the University of Eman?” So he answered,

“If the University of Eman had been *Sunnī, Salafī*, they would not have expelled the Algerian brothers for merely manifesting the *Sunnah*. Also, 'Abd al-Majīd al-Zindānī took those in the university to *Jamā'ah al-Tablīgh* for the sake of learning good character from them. Indeed, al-Bukhārī (d.256H) has inserted a chapter (in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*) about the manners of undertaking a journey to seek knowledge. So the journey must be for the sake of beneficial knowledge. And Allāh is the One from whom aid is sought.”<sup>4</sup>

So the *Salafī* Scholar not only condemned al-Zindānī, but he also condemned al-Zindānī's university and rebuked him for taking the university students to a group other than the *Salafis* from whom to learn ‘beneficial knowledge.’ Anwar al-Awlaki boasts of his tutelage under al-Zindānī and the University of Eman – to whom the *Salafis* are opposed – so how does Jarrett Brachman then attribute the calamity of al-Awlaki to the *Salafis*?! He (i.e. al-Awlaki) further outlined his ideological allegiances,

“I have spent a short time with Shaykh Salman al Odah.”<sup>5</sup>

This further distances al-Awlaki from all things *Salafī*, as the *Salafī* Scholars have been at the forefront of condemning Salmān al-'Awdah. Shaykh Ṣāliḥ Ibn Fawzān al-Fawzān – a member of the Committee of Major Scholars in Saudi Arabia and another prominent *Salafī* cleric – was asked about al-'Awdah's term, *al-Ummah al-Ghā'ibah* (the absent nation – referring to the masses of Muslims around the world),<sup>6</sup> to which al-Fawzān replied,

“The statement that the Muslim *Ummah* (nation) is absent necessitates *takfīr* (excommunication) of all the Islāmic nations. Since, its meaning is that there is no Islāmic state and this is in opposition to the statement of the Messenger (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*), “There shall never cease to be a group from my *Ummah* victorious upon the truth. They will not be harmed by those who

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<sup>3</sup> Al-Awlaki, Anwar. “A Question from a Reader on my Islamic Education.” [Anwar al-Awlaki On-Line](http://www.anwar-alawlaki.com/?p=42). 12 August 2008 <<http://www.anwar-alawlaki.com/?p=42>>

<sup>4</sup> Refer to the treatise, *al-Durar al-Bahiyyah min Kalām Imām al-Diyār al-Yamaniyyah* (p. 62).

<sup>5</sup> Al-Awlaki, Anwar. “A Question from a Reader on my Islamic Education.” [Anwar al-Awlaki On-Line](http://www.anwar-alawlaki.com/?p=42). 12 August 2008 <<http://www.anwar-alawlaki.com/?p=42>>

<sup>6</sup> Salmān al-'Awdah expounded upon this phrase in a lecture by the same name! In fact, mass excommunication is a recurring theme in the lectures of Salmān, as he also said, “Eminent Shaykh, some of them say: the banners which are raised in the length and width of the Islāmic world are but secular banners.” Refer to his recorded lecture, entitled, *Yā li Jirāhah al-Muslimīn*.

forsake them, nor by those who oppose them until the affair of Allāh the Blessed and Exalted comes whilst they are in this state.”<sup>7</sup> So regardless of how much misguidance, disagreement and disbelief may occur, then this safe and secure group will always remain. Therefore, there is no such thing as the absence of the Islāmic *Ummah*, and the praise is for Allāh, nor is it a required condition for this Islāmic group, or this victorious group to be devoid of sins. Since, sins were found in the time of the Prophet (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*) and also in the time of his Caliphs. However, they were faced and rejected.”<sup>8</sup>

So yet another of al-Awlaki's teachers – whom he himself admitted to having as a teacher in defence of his own feigned scholarship has been condemned by the major *Salafī* authorities today. In fact, it was the Saudi Arabian *Salafī* cleric, Shaykh 'Abd al-'Azīz Ibn Bāz (d.1420H) who condemned al-'Awdah and his counterpart, Safar al-Hawālī when he wrote,

“The two aforementioned (i.e. Salmān al-'Awdah and Safar al-Hawālī) are to be faced with their errors that were presented before the Committee - along with other errors forwarded by the Government, and in which two of the people of knowledge are to participate - to be chosen by his excellency, the Minister for Islamic Affairs, *Awqāf* (endowments), *da'wah* (invitation to Islām) and *Irshād* (guidance).

So if the two of them excuse themselves from their transgressions and agree to comply with not returning to any of them, nor to the like of them, then the praise is for Allāh, and that is sufficient. However, if they will not comply, then they are to be prevented from giving lectures, seminars, sermons, public lessons, and from making cassettes - in order to protect the society from their errors: may Allāh guide them both, and direct them both to right conduct.”<sup>9</sup>

And al-'Awdah and al-Hawālī were jailed for years by the government of Saudi Arabia. Furthermore, Salmān al-'Awdah's concept of mass excommunication of all Muslims is not his own creation. Rather, he adopted this creed from the exegete of the Muslim Brotherhood, Sayyid Quṭb, who said,

“The *Ummah* has ceased to exist (*ghābat al-Ummah*) and has not been perceivable for a very long time.”<sup>10</sup>

Anwar al-Awlaki also tells on his blog about his study of the books of Sayyid Quṭb (k.1966H) – the catalyst for all modern day ideologies that carry out terrorist acts in the name of Islām, he says,

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<sup>7</sup> Related by Muslim (no. 1920).

<sup>8</sup> See Jamāl Ibn Furayḥān al-Ḥārithī, *al-Ajwibah al-Mufīdah 'an As'ilah al-Manāhij al-Jadīdah* (Cairo: Dār al-Minhāj 2003C. E./1424 A.H.) pp. 151.

<sup>9</sup> 'Abd al-Mālik Ramaḍānī al-Jazā'irī, *Madārik al-Naḥr fī al-Siyāsah* (Dammam: Dār Sabīl al-Mu'minīn li al-Nashr wa al-Tawzī' 1428A. H.) pp. 431.

<sup>10</sup> Refer to *Ma'ālim fī al-Ṭarīq* (p. 18) of Sayyid Quṭb.

“Having had the chance to spend that time with the book of Allah and to contemplate on it, I wanted to read what our scholars had to say about Quran so I ordered Tafsir Ibn Kathir which is a proper classical tafsir along with “In the Shade of the Quran” which is more about thoughts and insights on the book of Allah in addition to it being a contemporary tafsir. Sayyid is a very prolific and eloquent writer. His style is unique. If someone has read for him then he could recognize his writings without having to be told who the author is... I would be so immersed with the author I would feel that Sayyid was with me in my cell speaking to me directly. There was something about my reading in prison: I could feel the personality of the author through his words... I lived with “In the Shade of the Quran” for over a month.”<sup>11</sup>

So al-Awlaki learned this destructive ideology of his from the leaders of terrorist thought in modern times, such as Sayyid Qutb, Salmān al-'Awdah, 'Abd al-Majīd al-Zindānī and others.

It should be noted here that it was the *Salafīs*, whom Brachman oppressively connects to al-Awlaki, who were challenging al-Awlaki's alleged scholarship in Islām and his creed. In fact, a cursory check of *Salafī* internet sites and forums will show warnings to the Muslims against al-Awlaki's methodology and warnings against al-Awlaki by name, so how could the Director of Research for the Combating Terrorism Center at West Point make such a gaffe? We have no choice but to conclude that it was either a gross error or a deliberate twisting of the facts to demonize the thousands of peaceful *Salafī* Muslims residing in the United States. And Allāh knows best.

### **The Ultimate Goal of *Khārijī* (Renegade) *Jihādists* like Anwar al-Awlaki, Usāmah Ibn Lādin and Others of Their ilk:**

If one analyzes the main focus of al-Awlaki's speech, he will find that it is criticism directed against the rulers of the Arabian Peninsula and the other Muslim countries and this theme is consistent within al-Awlaki's mentors and ideologues alike. The real goal of modern-day terrorists (in the name of Islām) such as Usāmah Ibn Lādin and al-Qaida and their guides like Sayyid Qutb, Salman al-Awdah, Anwar al-Awlaki is to overthrow the Muslim governments in Arabian peninsula and the United States and other western powers are merely a stepping stone towards this goal. In fact, these barbarous antagonists – especially those that reside in the western countries - will at times say quite openly that they have no qualms with the non-Muslim populations of the west.

The imprisoned inciter of terrorism and violence, Abū Qatādah al-Filistīnī, was interviewed by Sami Haddad on the al-Jazeera satellite channel on 4/9/1421H, on the program entitled, *Akthar min Ra'yī*. What follows is Abū Qatādah's position on his life in England,

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<sup>11</sup> Al-Awlaki, Anwar. “Book Review 3: In the Shade of the Quran by Sayyid Qutb.” [Anwar al-Awlaki On-Line](http://www.anwar-alawlaki.com/?p=28). 22 June 2008 <<http://www.anwar-alawlaki.com/?p=28>>

**Sami Haddad:** Then tell me – O Abū Qatādah – how many years exactly have you been in Britain?

**Abū Qatādah:** Approximately five...six years.

**Sami Haddad:** Five years... How many babies have you killed? And how many disbelievers have you entered into Islām? You want to establish...

**Abū Qatādah:** I will answer you. Of course this is a personal question – as you see it. The first point is that I did not come here except for one thing. That was to protect myself from fighting and punishment. I do not fight in Britain. And my problem is not with Britain!! British and American journalists come and ask: Do you have goals in Britain? Britain does not signify anything to me right now!! My issue is connected to the capital in our country!! My issue is with those systems... My issue is with these *ṭāghūtī* (of false deities) systems. They represent the capital according to me...

**Sami Haddad:** Then you chose the home of disbelief to reside within... There is lewdness found in this land...in any area you live, there are bars, televisions. How can you be pleased with yourself when you are an Islāmic preacher? Instead, you should go, for example, to wage war in Kashmir, to wage war in Palestine. And you are from Palestine, wage war in Palestine...

**Abū Qatādah:** I will answer you. The first point is: I do not think that our countries differ very much from this current situation in which we are living. And you are able to answer, and I would accept your answer if there was a difference between what we are living in and our countries...<sup>12</sup>

Indeed, the contention of people like Abū Qatādah, Usāmah Ibn Lādin and al-Awlaki is with Muslim countries – and at the head of them is Saudi Arabia. They are content to live in non-Muslim countries – like al-Awlaki and Abū Qatādah have done in the United States and in the United Kingdom respectively – where they benefit from the protection of the American and British governments and launch internet tirades inciting violence and rebellion in the Muslim lands. As for the presence of non-Muslim armies in the Muslim lands, then these armies are only an obstacle for them in front of their ultimate goal of toppling the Muslim governments.

Many non-Muslim historians, such as Dr. Juan Cole – a collegiate professor of history at the University of Michigan – have realized the true goals of these terrorists. Dr. Cole said,

“Likewise, al-Qaeda was attempting to push the United States out of the Middle East so that Egypt, Jordan, Israel and Saudi Arabia would become more vulnerable to overthrow, lacking a superpower patron.”<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> See Dār al-Kitāb wa al-Sunnah Research Department, *Kalimah Haqq fī Usāmah Ibn Lādin* (Cairo: Dār al-Kitāb wa al-Sunnah al-Miṣriyyah al-Salafiyyah 2007C. E.) pp. 65-66.

<sup>13</sup> Cole, Juan. “Osama bin Laden’s Scary Vision of a Grand Muslim Super State.” [History News Network](http://hnn.us/articles/7378.html). 4 Oct. 2004 <<http://hnn.us/articles/7378.html>>

So the true goal of terrorists like al-Awlaki and his likes to overthrow the Muslim governments, whom they believe – contrary to the *Salafīs* – have become disbelievers.

## A Comparison between the *Salafī* Methodology for Social Change and the Bloodthirsty Method of Anwar al-Awlaki:

Anwar al-Awlaki said,

“Third, the rulers in the Arabian Peninsula are playing a central role in the fight against Islam especially the al Saud family. The al Saud of today are the Abdullah bin Ubay of yesterday.”<sup>14</sup>

He also said,

“May this be the beginning of the greatest Jihad, the Jihad of the Arabian Peninsula that would free the heart of the Islamic world from the tyrants who are deceiving the ummah and standing between us and victory.”<sup>15</sup>

In these statements, al-Awlaki has laid bare his methodology of mass *takfīr* of the Muslim rulers, particularly those ruling over the Arabian peninsula. However, this is the farthest notion from the *Salafī* methodology, as espoused by the leading *Salafī* Scholars of modern times. From them are the noble Shaykhs: 'Abd al-Azīz Ibn 'Abdullāh Ibn Bāz (d.1420H) and Muḥammad Ibn Ṣāliḥ al-'Uthaymīn (d.1421H). So let us contrast their advice and instruction to the Muslim *Ummah* with the violent ideology of al-Awlaki above.

The noble Imām, 'Abd al-Azīz Ibn 'Abdullāh Ibn Bāz (d.1420H) praised the rulers of Saudi Arabia and acknowledged giving him the oath of allegiance and he declared it unlawful (*ḥarām*) to rebel against them. He said, “And I am upon certainty that the *Sunnī* government of Saudi Arabia – may Allāh grant it success upon what He is pleased with and victory upon the truth – will not become negligent in supporting your admonitions and affirmations of that which serves Islām and the Muslims, as has been its practice in this affair... And that is from the blessing of Allāh upon it and that for which this state (*dawlah*), which is established upon the *madhhab* of the *Salaf* and which establishes it within its society, deserves to be thanked.”<sup>16</sup>

And Shaykh 'Abd al-Azīz Ibn Bāz stated whilst discussing the Muslim armies who fought against Saddam Hussein in the first Gulf war, “And these armies are not (fighting) under the banner of *kufr* (disbelief). Rather, every army is under the

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<sup>14</sup> Al-Awlaki, Anwar. “Could Yemen be the Next Surprise of the Season?” *Anwar al-Awlaki On-Line*. 7 Oct. 2009 < <http://www.anwar-alawlaki.com/?p=213>>

<sup>15</sup> Al-Awlaki, Anwar. “The Army of Yemen Confronts the Mujahideen.” *Anwar al-Awlaki On-Line*. 1 August, 2009 < <http://www.anwar-alawlaki.com/?p=182>>

<sup>16</sup> Refer to *Majmū' al-Fatawā wa Maqālāt al-Mutawwi'ah* (1/383) of Ibn Bāz.

leadership of its leader. So the Saudi armies are under the leadership of Khālid Ibn Sulṭān and under the higher leadership of the custodian of the two holy mosques.”<sup>17</sup>

He also said, “And in these times of ours – and the praise is for Allāh – there are many groups inviting to the truth, as has occurred in the Arabian peninsula: there is the Saudi government, and in Yemen and the Gulf and in Egypt and *al-Shām* (Jordan, Syria) and in Africa and Europe and America and in India and Pakistan and other than these from the areas of the world. You will find many groups and Islamic centres and Islamic charitable organizations calling to the truth, giving glad tidings with it and warning against whatever opposes it.”<sup>18</sup>

He further stated about Saudi Arabia, “And this Saudi state is a blessed state.

- With it Allāh has aided the truth;
- And with it He has aided the Religion;
- And with it He has untied the word.
- And with it He has removed the causes of corruption.
- And with it Allāh has brought security to the land.
- And with it great blessings have been obtained, which none can enumerate except for Allāh.

And it is not infallible and it is not perfect. Everything has a defect. So it is obligatory to:

- Co-operate with it to rectify the defect;
- And to remove the defect;
- And to fill the gap.

This must be done through mutual advising and counseling towards the truth and righteous written correspondence and righteous visitations; not by spreading evil and fabrication and not by relaying what was said from falsehood...”<sup>19</sup>

He further spoke about following Saudi Arabia for the moon sighting of *Ramaḍān*, “And the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is the first of the nation states to be followed in this due to its diligence in ruling by the *Sharīʿah*. May Allāh increase it in success and guidance.”<sup>20</sup>

And he said, “The obligation upon all of the Muslims in this Kingdom is to listen and to obey the rulers in goodness... And it is not permissible for anyone to be at variance with obedience. Rather, it is obligatory upon everyone to listen and to obey the rulers in goodness... And this Saudi state is an Islāmic state – and the praise is for Allāh:

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<sup>17</sup> Refer to *Majmūʿ al-Fatawā* (6/150) of Ibn Bāz.

<sup>18</sup> Refer to *Majmūʿ al-Fatawā* (8/181) of Ibn Bāz.

<sup>19</sup> Refer to *Majmūʿ al-Fatawā* (9/98) of Ibn Bāz.

<sup>20</sup> Refer to *Majmūʿ al-Fatawā* (15/106) of Ibn Bāz.

- It enjoins the good;
- And it prohibits the evil;
- And it commands with *Sharī'ah* rule;
- And it judges between the Muslims.”<sup>21</sup>

And he commented upon those – like al-Awlaki – who do not hold the obligation of the oath of allegiance to the rulers in Saudi Arabia, “Rather, this is from the great evils. Rather, this is from the way of the *Khawārij*.<sup>22</sup> This is the way of the *Khawārij* and the *Mu'tazilah*.<sup>23</sup> rebelling against the rulers and not listening to them, nor obeying them if there is any sin found amongst them.”<sup>24</sup>

And the noble Scholar Muḥammad Ibn Ṣāliḥ al-'Uthaymīn (d.1421H) stated, “I say that from the blessing of Allāh the Glorified and Exalted upon this country is that Allāh the Glorified and Exalted caused the '*aqīdah* (creed) of *Tawḥīd* in *al-Rubūbiyyah* (Lordship), *al-Ulūhiyyah* (Divinity) and *al-Asmā' wa al-Ṣifāt* (Names and Attributes of Allāh) to remain herein. And they did not know those innovations that expel one from the Religion and those that do not expel an individual, except after the foreigners began to arrive and mix with them or when people would leave and then come back to them...”<sup>25</sup>

And he - *raḥimahullāh* – spoke about the strangeness of the Religion, so he said, “Now – and the praise is for Allāh – that is not strange in our country. So the *dā'ī* (caller to Islām) preaches, the one who prays can pray, the one who desires to give in charity can give it and the worshipper can worship Allāh. And there is no strangeness in that. However, there are some in the Muslim lands who have become peculiar... And the strangeness – according to us – does not exist in our country and the praise is for Allāh...”<sup>26</sup>

The likes of al-Awlaki lament the detention and jailing of activist callers and proponents of violence in the name of Islām – like of the example of Salmān al-'Awdah,

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<sup>21</sup> Refer to *al-Fatāwā al-Shar'iyyah fī al-Qaḍāyā al-'Aṣriyyah* (p. 53).

<sup>22</sup> **Khawārij:** They are the sect that revolted against 'Alī Ibn Abī Ṭālib (*raḍiyallāhu 'anhu*), though they used to be with him beforehand. From that which they claimed was that the perpetrator of a major sin was a disbeliever, they rebelled against the leader of the Muslims and they performed *takfīr* (declaring someone a disbeliever) of 'Alī and 'Uthmān (*raḍiyallāhu 'anhumā*). They split up into an abundance of sects, up until they reached twenty seven in number. Every one of them had a different name, such as the *Harūriyyah*, the *Shurāh*, the *Nawāsib* and the *Māriqah*. Refer to *al-Milal wa al-Nihal* (1/132) of ash-Shahrastānī and *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn* (1/167) of Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī.

<sup>23</sup> **Mu'tazilah:** They say that the one who commits a major sin is at a level between two levels (i.e. he is neither a Muslim, nor a disbeliever). The founder of this sect was Wāṣil Ibn 'Aṭā'. He was a student of al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (d.110H). So when this deviant statement of his became apparent, al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī banned him from his gathering. So Wāṣil went into isolation (*i'tazala*). From their statements is the level between two levels, denial of the Attributes of Allāh, declaring it impossible to see Allāh the Mighty and Majestic with the eyes, that people determine their own actions, that Allāh does not have fore-knowledge and other than these from deviant, misguided views. Refer to *al-Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn* (p. 420) of Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī.

<sup>24</sup> Refer to *al-Fatāwā al-Shar'iyyah fī al-Qaḍāyā al-'Aṣriyyah* (p. 54).

<sup>25</sup> Refer to *al-Liqā' al-Bāb al-Maftūḥ* (1/364/question no. 499).

<sup>26</sup> Refer to *al-Liqā' al-Bāb al-Maftūḥ* (1/441/question no. 584).

who was jailed at the advice of Shaykh Ibn Bāz mentioned above – but look at what Shaykh Ibn al-'Uthaymīn stated about this affair, “How can it be said that we are destroying this security, under which we are living, with our own hands? How have we aided the destruction of security, comfort and peace and removed it with our own hands?

Do you not know that there are from the people those who have established the call to take up arms against the governments that are not like our government? However, they are governments that have stated clearly that they do not rule by what Allāh has revealed and they implement the man-made laws of France, or England, or America, or Russia to judge between the Muslim servants of Allāh with these laws.<sup>27</sup> And the result has been that these governments have increased in the use of force and authoritarianism and this has resulted in a lack settlement and security...”<sup>28</sup>

And Shaykh Ibn al-'Uthaymīn was asked, “What is your reply to those who say: The source for most of the evil in the land of *Tawhīd* is the government and that the rulers are not *Salafīs*?”

He replied, “Our reply to this is like those who said the Prophet (*ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*) was a madman and a poet. And it is said,

*‘The barking of dogs does not harm the clouds.’*

The likes of this country (i.e. Saudi Arabia) in terms of *Tawhīd* and ruling by the *Shari'ah* is not found anywhere – and the praise is for Allāh. And it is not free from evil, like the rest of the countries of the world. Rather, even in the time of the Prophet (*ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*), evil people existed in al-Madīnah al-Nabawīyah – thievery and adultery occurred there.”<sup>29</sup>

There you have it – O reader – the stark contrast between the violent methodology of Anwar al-Awlaki and the peaceful methodology of the *Salafī* Scholars.

As for our situation as *Salafī* Muslims currently residing in non-Muslim countries, then Shaykh al-'Uthaymīn advised as follows,

“Likewise, I invite you to have respect for those people who have the right that they should be respected, from those between you and whom there is an agreement of protection (i.e. non-Muslims). For the land in which you are living is such that there is an agreement between you and them. If this were not the case, they would have killed you or expelled you. So preserve this agreement, and do not prove treacherous to it, since treachery is a sign of the hypocrites, and it is not from the way of the Believers...

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<sup>27</sup> Take note – dear reader – that it is al-Awlaki and his likes who call to toppling these governments and it is the *Salafīs* who condemn such calls! So how can it be said that Anwar al-Awlaki follows Salafism?!

<sup>28</sup> Refer to *al-Liqā' al-Bāb al-Maftūh* (3/496/question no. 1526).

<sup>29</sup> Refer to *al-Fatāwā al-Shar'iyyah fī al-Qaḍāyā al-'Aṣriyyah* (p. 58).

Do not be fooled by those sayings of the foolish people, those who say, 'Those people are non-Muslims, so their wealth is lawful for us (i.e. to misappropriate or take by way of murder and killing).' For by Allāh - this is a lie. A lie about Allāh's Religion, and a lie in Islāmic societies...

O my brother Muslims. O youth. Be true in your sayings with your brothers, and with those non-Muslims whom you live along with - so that you will be inviters to the Religion of Islām, by your actions and in reality. So how many people there are who first entered into Islām because of the behaviour and manners of the Muslims, and their truthfulness, and their being true in their dealings.<sup>30</sup>

So we hope that this meagre effort has clarified the true aims of al-Awlaki and his hooligan ideologues and shown the immense differences between them and the *Salafīs*. And the success is with Allāh.

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<sup>30</sup> Muḥammad Ibn Ṣāliḥ al-'Uthaymīn, *Advice to Muslims Living in Non-Muslim Countries* (Birmingham: Salafi Publications July 28<sup>th</sup>, 2000C. E.) audio cassette, side A.