

*This is an ICSR Insight by Senior Research Fellow, Shiraz Maher*

A speech by the father of Anwar al-Awlaki, Dr Nasser al-Awlaki, was released on 2 December 2011 in the United Kingdom by a group calling itself 'United Ummah'. This group is an incarnation of the now banned 'Muslims Against Crusades' which was itself one of many successor groups to al-Muhajiroun first established by Omar Bakri Mohammed in the mid-1990s.

The group led protests outside the American embassy in London following Anwar al-Awlaki's death in September and performed funeral prayers for the al-Qaeda preacher there. To express his gratitude, Nasser al-Awlaki sent the group a message which has now been published on YouTube.

For authoritative analysis on Anwar al-Awlaki see *As American As Apple Pie: How Anwar al-Awlaki Became the Face of Western Jihad* by ICSR Research Fellow Alexander Meleagrou-Hitchens.

### **Key points**

- The six minute video urges Muslims in the United Kingdom to "spread his [Anwar al-Awlaki's] knowledge and keep it alive".
- Nasser underscores the enduring nature of Awlaki's threat by stating, "Anwar will [God willing] continue to be alive by spreading his teaching, sermons, and lectures. It is the precise thing that he lived and died for...It is the job of all of us to spread his knowledge and keep it alive". The recent arrest of Jose Pimental, a New Yorker who allegedly planned to bomb returning American servicemen from Afghanistan and Iraq is testament to the ongoing potency of Awlaki's message.
- Awlaki is the primary ideologue for so-called 'lone wolves'; individuals who self-radicalise through the internet before committing acts of terrorism. Their self-starting and isolated nature makes it particularly difficult for authorities to identify and stop these individuals. For more on lone wolves see *A Typology of Lone Wolves: Preliminary Analysis of Lone Islamist Terrorists* by ICSR Associate Fellow, Raffaello Pantucci.
- It would appear that Nasser is now endorsing his son's message, stating, "My son's blood did not, and will not, go in vain".
- This is a significant development given that Nasser al-Awlaki previously maintained some distance from his son's position and instead worked with the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and the Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR), to try and prevent the American government from targeting him as part of its controversial drone programme.

**Full text of Nasser al-Awlaki's speech**

In the name of Allah, the most gracious, the most merciful,

My dear Muslim brothers and sisters of the UK,

May God's peace and blessings be upon you,

The Most High [i.e. Allah] says:

And never think of those who have been killed in the cause of Allah as dead. Rather, they are alive with their Lord, receiving provision [Quran 3:196]

When the United States assassinated my beloved son Anwar al-Awlaki, he was far from any battlefield. No one was concerned about justice, even their justice. Anwar was assassinated because of his teachings, as one senior official said bluntly when Anwar was in prison, "we want to shut him up". No evidence was ever presented against him, and no evidence will ever be.

They knew that Imam Anwar al-Awlaki carried an effective message, a message that was simple and straightforward. Its target was Muslims in the West. They considered a fluent, convincing Muslim preacher as a threat so they tried everything to silence him. First they forced him to leave the United States and tried to obstruct his work there. Then they imprisoned him in Yemen, and finally they killed him after several failed attempts. They were so determined to annihilate his dawah [call/proselytising] that they fired more than half a dozen missiles on his car. Two weeks later the greatest military power on earth has done the same to my 16 year old grandson. When the American missiles came, he was having dinner with his teenage friends in our homeland, Shawba province in Yemen. Abdurrahman was not [a] 21 years old militant as they claimed, he was not an operational figure, and he was not travelling with any high value target, as the Obama administration continues to lie. Not many in America or elsewhere have shown interest in these two cases of murder by a state gone mad. The US administration led by the so-called Nobel Peace Prize laureate continues its hypocrisy and is trying to swipe the entire episode under the carpet. My son's blood did not, and will not, go in vain.

Alhamdulillah [Praise be to God], Anwar and his son are inshallah [God willing] alive in Jannah [paradise], and Anwar will inshallah [God willing] continue to be alive by spreading his teaching, sermons, and lectures. It is the precise thing that he lived and died for. It is the dawah [call/proselytising] to Allah. My son Anwar was intelligent, sharp, eloquent, educated, charismatic, and brave. He had qualities and traits that could have taken him places in this world but he chose this path and gave it his best – the path of Allah. It is the job of all of us to spread his knowledge and keep it alive.

At the end, I would like – and on behalf of my family – to thank you all from the bottom of my heart. I remember how our spirits as a family was raised right after my son's martyrdom when we watched footage of salat al-Janazah [funeral prayers], that you did in the UK, we watched with glee; the students of Anwar, his friends, his brothers and sisters, families and youth, all over, gathering to pray for him.

These are the people that matter the most to Anwar and to us. You are the people that matter the most to Anwar. Please keep the message alive.

May God's peace be upon you.

Dr Nasser al-Awlaki, the father of Anwar al-Awlaki, and the grandfather of Abdurrahman al-Awlaki.

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