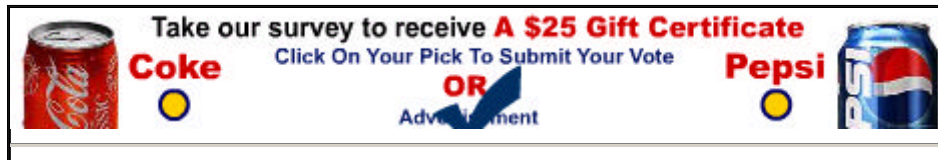


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Al Qaida claims responsibility for blackout

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Al Qaida's Abu Hafs Brigades has claimed responsibility for the blackout last week in the Northeast and Midwest United States. A communiqué by the Abu Hafs Brigades made reference to Operation Quick Lightning in the Land of the Tyrant of this Generation."

It was published as "the third communiqué by the "Brigades."

In the first, they accepted responsibility for the downing of an airplane in Kenya. The second accepted responsibility for the Jakarta bombing of the Marriott hotel on August 5, 2003.

The new communiqué says that in compliance with the orders of Osama bin Laden to strike at the American economy, the Brigades struck two important electricity supply targets on the East coast, according to the [Middle East Media Research Institute](#). The Brigades say that they cannot reveal how they did it, because they will probably have to use the same method again soon. The communiqué also claimed that the operation was meant as a present for the Iraqi people.

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The following are excerpts from a report by the London-based Arabic daily Al-Hayat about the communiqué: [1]

The Blackout was 'a Realization of Bin Laden's promise to offer the Iraqi people a present'

"A communiqué attributed to Al Qaeda claimed responsibility for the power blackout that happened in the U.S. last Thursday, saying that the brigades of Abu Fahes Al Masri had hit two main power plants supplying the East of the U.S., as well as major industrial cities in the U.S. and Canada, 'its ally in the war against Islam (New York and Toronto) and their neighbors.'

"The communiqué assured that the operation 'was carried out on the orders of Osama bin Laden to hit the pillars of the U.S. economy,' as 'a realization of bin Laden's promise to offer the Iraqi people a present.'

'The Americans lived a black day they will never forget'

"The statement, which Al-Hayat obtained from the website of the International Islamic Media Center, didn't specify the way the alleged sabotage was carried out. The communiqué read: 'let the criminal Bush and his gang know that the punishment is the result of the action, the soldiers of God cut the power on these cities, they darkened the lives of the Americans as these criminals blackened the lives of the Muslim people in Iraq, Afghanistan and Palestine. The Americans lived a black day they will never forget. They lived a day of terror and fear... a state of chaos and confusion where looting and pillaging rampaged the cities, just like the capital of the caliphate Baghdad, and Afghanistan and Palestine were. Let the American people take a sip from the same glass.'

'The U.S. will not live in peace until our conditions are met'

"It added: 'we heard amazing statements made by the American and Canadian enemies which have nuclear physics universities and space agencies, that lightning hit and destroyed the two plants. And we are supposed to believe this nonsense. If the blackout occurred in one or two cities, their lie would have been credible. But the fact is that the blackout hit the entire East and part of Canada.'

"The communiqué continued: 'one of the benefits of this strike is that the U.S. will not live in peace until our conditions are met, such as releasing all the detainees including Sheikh Omar Abdulrahman, and getting out of the land of the Muslims, including Jerusalem and Kashmir.'

"The authors of the communiqué said that the strikes aimed at 'hitting the major pillar of the U.S. economy (the Stock Exchange)... [and] the UN, which is opposed to Islam, and is based in New York. It is a message to all the investors that the U.S. is no longer a safe country for their money, knowing that the U.S. economy greatly relies on the trust of the investor...'

'The gift of Sheikh Osama Bin Laden is on its way to the White House'

"The communiqué mentioned that some economists said the blackout in the U.S. and Canada would cost the U.S. Treasury no less than ten billion U.S. dollars and in order to 'break the hearts of U.S. officials, just know that the cost paid by the Moujahideen to sabotage the power plants was a mere seven thousand dollars. Die of sorrow!'

"The communiqué ended with: 'we tell the Muslims that this is not the awaited strike, but it is called the war of skirmishes (to drain the enemy), and that the American snakes are enormous and need to be consumed and weakened to be destroyed. We tell the people of Afghanistan and Kashmir that the gift of Sheikh Osama bin Laden is on its way to the White House; then the gift of Al Aqsa, and do we know what is the gift of Al Aqsa, where and when? The answer is what you are seeing!'

[1] *Published in English on Dar Al-Hayat website, August 18, 2003, http://english.daralhayat.com/arab_news/08-2003/Article-20030818-14bdd659-c0a8-01ed-0079-6e1c903b7552/story.html*



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