## 9700 - Should You Pay Back an Interest-Based Loan?

**the question**

I had taken a government student loan to finance my studies, at the time I took it I was not religious but I've now come to know that it was a mistake. I thought of finishing my studies and paying it off, however recently a brother approached me saying that the scholars have given a fatawa that anyone in the west (Canada) who has a loan from the government should not pay it back because these governments are financing the attack against our brothers in Chechnya. Is this true? and please advise me as to what I should do regarding my loan?.

**Summary of answer**

In Islam, paying back an interest-based loan is only permissible if canceling it is impossible, and even then, interest must be avoided if feasible. Repentance, seeking forgiveness, and striving to avoid such financial transactions in the future are essential steps in maintaining one's faith and adherence to Islamic principles.

**Detailed answer**

Praise be to Allah.

### Understanding the Blessing of Guidance in Islam

Praise be to Allah Who has guided you to the truth and has made you become religiously-committed. This is one of the greatest blessings that Allah can bestow upon a Muslim.

### The Prohibition of Interest-Based Loans in Islam

If the loan involves paying interest when paying it back, then this loan is prohibited and it is not permissible to continue with it. Allah Says (interpretation of the meaning):

{O you who believe! Fear Allah and give up what remains (due to you) from Riba (from now onward) if you are (really) believers.} [Al-Baqarah 2:278]

If it is possible to cancel this loan, then you must do so.

## Steps to Repentance from Engaging in Riba

You have to repent and seek forgiveness, and feel regret for what you did, and resolve not to do it again. And be of good cheer, for Allah accepts the repentance of His slave when he repents. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “The one who repents of sin is like one who did not sin at all.” (Narrated by Ibn Majah, 4250; classed as sound by Al-Albani in *Sahih Ibn Majah*, 3427)

## What to Do if You Cannot Cancel the Loan

If you cannot get rid of this loan, then you have to pay it off. If you can get out of paying the interest without any negative consequences, then you must do that, because it is not permissible for you to pay interest (Riba), for the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) cursed the one who consumes Riba, the one who pays it, the one who records it and the two who witness it. He said they are all the same. (Narrated by Muslim, 1598)

If you cannot avoid paying this interest, then pay it because you are forced to do so, whilst hating it in your heart. Allah does not burden anyone beyond what he is able to bear. It is sufficient for you to repent and regret what you did, in sha Allah.

## Addressing Concerns about Government Financing and Prohibited Activities

The idea that these governments are financing the attacks against Chechnya is something which has to be proven. Even if it is proven, it does not mean that every dealing with them becomes prohibited. Rather with regard to what involves helping in falsehood or in waging war against Muslims –as the questioner mentioned – or in things that are forbidden in Shari`ah, it is not

permissible to help in that or to get involved in it.

And Allah knows best.