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Al-Zarqawi: The Second Generation of Al-Qa'ida, Book by Fu'ad Husayn

Al-Zarqawi's Life

[Part 1 of: "Al-Zarqawi. . .The Second Generation of Al-Qa'ida" by Fu'ad Husayn, Jordanian writer and journalist]

Forward

The main character of this book has affected its writing techniques. The scientific research method that involved reading, research, scrutiny, and summary was adopted in some sections. Other chapters included testimonies by people who knew or accompanied Al-Zarqawi at various stages of his life. This approach was time-consuming. It involved listening to these people, writing down notes, verifying information, and comparing testimonies with each other to make sure that the details were correct. Inaccurate information was excluded if it was not corroborated.

In other chapters, certain people were asked to formulate their answers to specific questions that we provided. The arduous part of this process was access to those who shaped Al-Zarqawi's thoughts and strategy. This was the most complicated process since communication with these individuals was so difficult, and sometimes impossible, in the wake of the 11 September attacks. Most of these people were jailed, wanted, or in hiding. Without their testimonies, however, the book would have lacked substantial facts. As a result, we opted to delay the publication of the book for several months to complete this process. The book included three testimonies that covered the various stages of Al-Zarqawi's life.

The first testimony came from Abu-al-Muntasir Billah Muhammad, the person with whom Abu-Mus'ab Al-Zarqawi established his first group, Al-Tawhid [Monotheism in Islam], in 1993. The group was later known as Bay'at al-Imam [Allegiance to the Imam]. Muhammad wrote down the dates, names, and events that took place before 1999. We summed up his testimony without interfering with the contents. Much of what he said was not a secret anymore since it was already published. However, we maintained the details that were made public for the first time and Muhammad's personal opinion vis-a-vis these particular events.

The second testimony was from Al-Zarqawi's godfather, Isam al-Barqawi, also known as Abu-Muhammad al-Maqdisi, who met Al-Zarqawi in Pakistan in 1989. There, the two men agreed to establish a

religious organization in Jordan. When Al-Maqdisi was jailed with Al-Zarqawi, he became his companion, shaykh, and mentor who drew up the platform of the organization. Al-Maqdisi was Al-Zarqawi's supporter when the latter became the group's amir in jail. From behind the bars in Jordan, Al-Maqdisi continued to provide critique and counsel to Al-Zarqawi in Iraq.

The third and most important testimony came from Muhammad Makkawi, better known as Sayf al-Adl, man number three in Al-Qa'ida. Sayf al-Adl shed light on Al-Zarqawi's second advent to Afghanistan in 1999. He discussed the reasons behind the dispute between Al-Zarqawi and Bin Ladin and the training camp that was established exclusively for Al-Zarqawi in Herat. He clarified the nature of the relationship that existed between Al-Zarqawi and the leadership of Al-Qa'ida at that juncture of time prior to the 11 September strike. Sayf al-Adl spoke of Al-Qa'ida's motives behind the strike, the occupation of Afghanistan, and the exodus to Pakistan and Iran. He disclosed the nature of the role that Tehran played then. Sayf al-Adl referred to the decision to send Al-Zarqawi to Iraq and preparations made in advance. In an attempt to examine the future of Al-Qa'ida in Iraq after the establishment of Qa'ida al-Jihad in the Land of the Two Rivers [Qa'ida al-Jihad fi Bilad al-Rafidayn], the book followed the development of Al-Zarqawi's character and modus operandi over the past three years. It obtained accurate information by means of painstaking research of everyone who was in touch with Al-Zarqawi during these years.

Furthermore, we interviewed a number of Al-Qa'ida ideologues in an endeavor to explore the future of the open war between Al-Qa'ida and Washington--labeled the war on global terrorism. Those interviewed either contributed to drawing up Al-Qa'ida's strategies at one time or later became its decision makers. We listened to everything that crossed their mind to give the reader an idea of Al-Qa'ida's strategy to the year 2020, the means it followed, and the plans it drew up to achieve this strategy.

Al-Zarqawi's Three-dimensional Character

Al-Zarqawi's real name is Ahmad Fadil al-Khalayilah, alias Abu-Mus'ab. He was nicknamed Al-Zarqawi after the city of Al-Zarqa, where he was born on 30 October 1966. The majority of the population of the city, located 25 kilometers east of the capital of Amman, came from poor and middle classes.

Al-Zarqawi was born to an underprivileged and conservative family of Bani-Hasan, one of the most popular clans in Jordan. The tribe has its roots in the Jordanian desert that extends from Jordan's border with Iraq and Syria to the cities of Al-Zarqa, Jarash, and their environs in the central part of the country.

The three dimensions that shaped the personality of Al-Zarqawi were linked to his early years, religious beliefs, and historical developments.

Al-Zarqawi's Early Years

The humble Bedouin childhood of Ahmad Fadil and his relationship with

his mother played a major role in shaping his personality. His kindness and love to help others were spontaneous. His Bedouin nature was apparent in his understanding and relations with others. Although a Bedouin is known for his courage and generosity, he is also nurtured to get his revenge. He never forgets the harm done by his enemy or rival, no matter how old it is. A Bedouin usually has extraordinary patience. In the folklore of Bedouins, a man is hasty if he waits 40 years to take revenge. The tradition illustrates profound Bedouin patience that is not confined to taking vengeance but to enduring hardships to reap the benefits.

Al-Zarqawi lived his childhood in the crowded Al-Zarqa neighborhood of Ramzi. He used to play with his peers in a nearby cemetery in the Ma'sum neighborhood, which was considered Al-Zarqa's oldest communal district. Al-Zarqa flourished when the Jordanian Army set up camps in the city soon after the kingdom was born. In view of the low cost of living, Al-Zarqa became populated by those who worked elsewhere. It expanded to become Jordan's third most-populated city. Employees and craftsmen made up the majority of the population of Al-Zarqa after it was once home to Bedouins whose sons enlisted in the army. The city, however, lacked public services as a result of its haphazard expansion. There were no parks or playgrounds and children had no place to play except at the cemetery. Al-Zarqawi, therefore, grew up with the good and evil at a place where opposites, like life and death, coexisted comfortably. It was at the cemetery that Al-Zarqawi made most of his friends.

Al-Zarqawi completed the Second Secondary Grade [Grade 11] and scored 87 out of 100 at the end of the scholastic year. However, he dropped out of school and worked at the maintenance department of the Al-Zarqa Municipality. One month later, he quit his job upon his father's request.

During that time, Abu-Mus'ab was the "Big Brother" in the neighborhood. No one dared to harm any of his friends or relatives. He was a person of pride who never tolerated injustice. He was bold. He never let his friends down whenever they needed him. He was looking for adventures to quench his thirst for manhood and rewarding accomplishments.

As an adolescent, Abu-Mus'ab grew in the city of Al-Zarqa where there was a mosque on every street. During his post-teen years, the nearby Abdallah Bin-Abbas Mosque became his second home. At this mosque, Al-Zarqawi made new friends, most of whom were affiliated with various Islamic groups. Despite their different opinions, all of these groups were in agreement about inciting young men to initiate jihad. Al-Zarqawi's beliefs in jihad and martyrdom grew deeper when worshipers became his closest friends. He abandoned the niceties of the childhood that he enjoyed at the cemetery without forsaking the relations that he established there.

His First Migration to Afghanistan

Similar to most Arab countries in that era, jihad against the communist occupiers of Afghanistan was an accessible route from Jordan for the lovers of jihad and martyrdom, although Palestine was closer to

Jordanians in general and Al-Zarqawi in particular, in view of the demographic makeup of Jordan's population.

In a message from Al-Zarqawi to members of his Bani-Hasan tribe, Al-Zarqawi called on his cousins to strive to raise the banner of Islam and initiate jihad against everyone who stands in the way of fighting the Israeli occupiers of Palestine. Declaring that his clan had roots in Jerusalem, Al-Zarqawi said:

"O kinfolk, return to your faith. It is your glory and pride and the glory of your fathers and forefathers who had the honor to fight alongside other tribes under the banner of Salah al-Din al-Ayyubi in Hittin to liberate Jerusalem. Salah al-Din allocated lands around Jerusalem to the tribes who took part in the battle to protect Jerusalem from the crusaders." He said: "Protect Jerusalem. It is the place from where your great grandfather--in reference to the prophet, peace and prayers be upon him--ascended to heaven." Bani-Hasan's share of land was the southwestern part of Jerusalem where the tribe lived and multiplied in such villages as Al-Waljah, Ayn Karim, and Al-Malihah.

"O folks, our forefathers then protected those lands and defended holy Jerusalem. They lived the pride and power of Islam in dignity," Al-Zarqawi said.

Similar to other young Muslim Jordanian men who were enthusiastic about going to Afghanistan, Al-Zarqawi left in the late '80s of the 20th century when Abdallah Azzam and Usama Bin Ladin were already there. Al-Zarqawi's departure came in the aftermath of a sermon by Abd-al-Rasul Sayyaf in Jordan. The sermon was a decisive factor that prompted Al-Zarqawi to make his decision to join mujahidin in Afghanistan.

Abdallah Azzam was one of the vanguards of Arabs who headed to Afghanistan to take part with Afghan mujahidin in fighting the troops of the Soviet Union that backed the communist regime of Afghanistan. Bin Ladin urged Azzam to join Afghanistan's mujahidin rather than study at a Saudi university. Afghan mujahidin viewed Azzam as a commander who inspired Arab and Muslim volunteers. Together with Bin Ladin, Azzam became the founder of the movement of Afghan Arabs that spread in Arab states following the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan. The movement was blamed for an escalation of armed confrontations with ruling Arab regimes. Abdallah Azzam was one of the key historic leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood group in Jordan. Since its establishment, the group has coexisted with the regime despite the ebb and flow of their relations every now and then.

At that point in time, ruling Arab regimes--most of whom cooperated with US policy one way or another--encouraged young men to join the mujahidin in Afghanistan when the Cold War was at its peak between the United States and the Soviet Union. Volunteers were leaving Jordan for Afghanistan openly and donations were collected at mosques and public places to finance the travel costs of large numbers of young men to Afghanistan. Meantime, funds from the Gulf, particularly Saudi Arabia, were flooding Afghan mujahidin in response to requests from Washington

that was adamant to defeat its archenemy, Moscow. Just then, pro-Muslim Brotherhood imams in the mosques of the West Bank and Gaza Strip excommunicated everyone who carried out suicide operations in the occupied Palestinian territories. As a result, Al-Zarqawi, who was looking for an opportunity for jihad, went to Afghanistan to join Abdallah Azzam in the late '80s of the 20th century.

Al-Zarqawi received military training in Afghanistan. His religious and political beliefs developed as ferocious battles took place between Arab and Afghan mujahidin on one side and Soviet occupation forces on the other side. Al-Zarqawi participated in the liberation of Khost in 1991 and witnessed the entry of mujahidin into Kabul. He fought on the fiercest battlefronts alongside Jalal al-Din Haqqani and Gulbuddin Hekmetyar--the two Afghan leaders, who, together with Abu-Mus'ab al-Zarqawi, were on the US lists of wanted men.

The Afghanistan Phase

The second dimension of Al-Zarqawi's personality was formed in Afghanistan. It became the cornerstone of his ideology. Abdallah Azzam's tenets contributed to one-half of this dimension while the other half was fostered by the beliefs of Isam al-Barqawi, also known as Abu-Muhammad al-Maqdisi, whom Al-Zarqawi met in Peshawar, Pakistan, in 1989.

Al-Zarqawi's engagement in the war in Afghanistan was in harmony with the policy of Abdallah Azzam, who was known as the shaykh of Arab mujahidin. Al-Zarqawi was influenced by him. He read his writings, listened to his lectures, and repeated his words very often.

In the aftermath of the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan and the flare-up of fighting among Afghan factions, Arab mujahidin had no enemy to fight anymore. Their jihadist dreams were about to vanish in Afghanistan. Therefore, those who had no security problems returned to their countries and began to look for a new enemy. Al-Zarqawi returned to Jordan with the intention of setting up a group to represent his ideas. In 1993, he agreed with the Palestinian-born Al-Maqdisi--who arrived from Kuwait where his family used to live--to mobilize young men in favor of their beliefs as a preliminary step toward collecting arms, first for training purposes and second for carrying out military operations against Israel.

Abu-Muhammad al-Maqdisi, the ideologue of the group, which they called Al-Tawhid, began to deliver lectures at mosques and youth gatherings with the aim of winning young men to the new group. However, the bulk of the young men and both Al-Maqdisi and Al-Zarqawi lacked organizational experience. As a result, they fell into the trap of Jordanian security services. On 29 March 1994, both men were put in jail with the other members of the group. They were taken to the State Security Court for trial in what the official Jordanian authorities called the Bay'at al-Imam case.

Bay'at al-Imam

The establishment of the Al-Tawhid group with Al-Maqdisi led Al-Zarqawi to a five-year term in prison, which was the first important step of his

journey. The prison, and not his first trip to Afghanistan, was the most significant phase in the development of his personality. In Afghanistan, he was no more than one of thousands of Arabs who converged on the country when fighting between mujahidin and Soviet armies was drawing to an end. The thrill of the battlefields faded and everyone, including Al-Zarqawi, lost an opportunity to demonstrate their skills and distinction. The prison left a clear mark on Al-Zarqawi's personality, which grew more intense. In his opinion, policemen, judges, and government members of all ranks were supporters of the regimes, which he believed were taghuts [illegitimate political powers] who should be fought. Following the interrogation phase, Al-Zarqawi was sent from one prison to another until he ended up in the desert prison of Suwaqah, located 85 kilometers to the south of the capital of Amman. Soon afterward, his fellow group members, who were detained for the same case, were brought to the same prison.

At that time, there were 6,000 inmates in the Suwaqah Prison including several political detainees of various Islamist tenets who were locked up in the sixth wing that was the most important section in the jail. Each group was given a separate room in the wing, which was located on the eastern tip of the prison. One of the rooms housed Ata Abu-al-Rishtah, the official in charge of the Al-Tahrir [Liberation] Party in Jordan. A number of Al-Tahrir leaders, mostly holders of university degrees, were imprisoned with Al-Rishtah, who is currently the party's chief amir. In the opposite room, there was Layth Shubaylat, an engineer and opposition Islamist deputy, with members of the so-called Afghan Arab Group, although none of them visited Afghanistan in his entire life. With this group, there were three university graduates from northern Jordan who were sentenced to prison in the so-called Algham Ajlun [Ajlun Mines] case. There were many other detainees held on charges of setting up various Islamist groups. Except for Al-Maqdisi and Abu-al-Muntasir, members of Al-Zarqawi's group did not hold university degrees. Al-Maqdisi studied Islamic shari'ah [canonical law of Islam] at a Saudi university and Abu-al-Muntasir had a BA degree in literature.

Since every Islamist group in or outside the prison should have an amir, Al-Maqdisi was the amir of Al-Tawhid, or Bay'at al-Imam. Everyone had to adhere to the final say of the amir, who would provide a crucial religious text. Violation of the amir's ruling would be viewed as disobedience.

Al-Maqdisi was not an ordinary man. He was a proponent of renowned theories and one of the leading ideologues of the fundamentalist salafist ideology in the Arab and Islamic world. He wrote many books including the famous "Millat Ibrahim wa Da'wah al-Anbiya wa al-Mursalin" [Followers of Abraham and the Propagation of the Message of Prophets]. He was dedicated to the philosophy of tawhid or absolute unity of God. He excommunicated everyone who failed to rule in harmony with the Islamic shari'ah or adopted manmade laws as a constitution. This concept was established on a precise understanding of tawhid that was not only confined to religious rites but also to everyday life, particularly legislation. This was the backbone of the salafist school of thought that excommunicated every ruling Arab and Islamic regime, its services, and its institutions including parliamentary councils.

Al-Maqdisi's second widely circulated book was "Al-Kawafir al-Jaliyyah fi Kufr al-Dawlah al-Sa'udiyyah" [The Evident Sacrileges of the Saudi State] that excommunicated Al-Sa'ud, the ruling Saudi family. The book played a key role in sowing the seeds of violence that Saudi Arabia was then witnessing. Perpetrators of the bombings that took place in Al-Khubar and Riyadh in the mid-1990's admitted that they were influenced by Al-Maqdisi's publications. Before his execution, one of the defendants, Abd-al-Aziz al-Mu'thim, confessed that he met with Al-Maqdisi in Jordan and obtained copies of his books, particularly the one on Al-Sa'ud. He said that he disseminated the book in the Arabian Peninsula and the Gulf. Al-Mu'thim revealed that he was so convinced by the book's arguments that he carried out the explosions. Al-Maqdisi strongly denied any involvement in the bombings despite several attempts to hold him responsible. In a written reply to our questions, he denied that he did anything more than research and writing based on independent judgment. If this was the case of those who read Al-Maqdisi's publications, what then would have been the situation of Abu-Mus'ab who set up a group with Al-Maqdisi and spent several years with him in jail? Al-Zarqawi spent the early period of his term in prison in Al-Maqdisi's company. In addition to what he previously learned from Abdallah Azzam, he gained knowledge of Al-Maqdisi's beliefs. He listened to the discussions between Al-Maqdisi and other leaders of various Islamic tenets in Jordan who were behind bars in the same prison. Meanwhile, Al-Zarqawi worked on developing his Islamic shari'ah education. He learned the Holy Koran by heart.

In Al-Zarqawi's opinion, Al-Maqdisi's hard-line beliefs were not enough. Al-Zarqawi's charismatic personality won the support of jailed members of his group who entrusted him with the amir post. Al-Zarqawi became the leader of the group in prison. He dictated his ideas on all members of the group including Al-Maqdisi, who devoted all his time to writing. This was in the summer of 1996.

My First Meeting with Al-Zarqawi

During that summer, a career of trouble led me to Suwaqah Prison after I published articles criticizing the domestic policy of then Jordanian Prime Minister Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti regarding public freedoms and his economic policy, which resulted in an increase in the price of bread, the basic food of the bulk of Jordanians. The price hike triggered violent protests across the country.

The large-scale arrest campaign that summer involved most political parties in Jordan including the ultra-left Marxists and the ultra-right Islamists. I spent more than one month in prison before I was released by royal mediation. When I was in jail, Abu-Mus'ab drew my attention very few times. On the other hand, his spiritual father and mentor, Abu-Muhammad al-Maqdisi, occupied the whole scene.

Deputy Layth Shubaylat, with whom I had close personal relations, was the first person who greeted me when I arrived in the Suwaqah Prison. Right away, Shubaylat advised me to stay away from the room of Al-Zarqawi and his group. He said: "They do not welcome me although I am an Islamist deputy. How then will they welcome you when you are not

an Islamist?" However, when Shubaylat sensed my curiosity to know them, he told me: "You do not want to listen to my advice. However, be cautious when you go there. You should feel safe if they serve you a cup of tea. Otherwise, try to get out of there as quickly as possible."

My journalistic curiosity was aroused and I went to their room on the first day. Abu-Muhammad al-Maqdisi and Al-Zarqawi were sitting in the center. I greeted them and introduced myself. "I am a reporter who follows political issues," I said. "I am not affiliated with any Islamic group, but I am interested in your case, which I followed via the media. I promise to publish your story in the media if you are willing to tell me everything in detail." They welcomed me. Al-Zarqawi served me a cup of tea that warmed my heart and made me feel safe. The meeting lasted for more than two hours during which Al-Maqdisi spoke about the political developments in the region. Al-Zarqawi interrupted him once when he asked me about the treatment I received during interrogation before I was sent to the Suwaqah Prison. After he listened to my reply, Al-Zarqawi narrated what happened to him when he was detained in solitary confinement for eight and a half months. He told me that he lost his toenails as a result of the infections that were caused by severe torture. I realized then that Al-Zarqawi would leave Jordan for good immediately if he was released from jail.

Solitary Confinement

One week after I arrived in Suwaqah, the prison administration placed Al-Zarqawi in solitary confinement as punishment for insulting one of the guards who offended him in front of his group. Al-Maqdisi and his companions tried to talk to the prison administration to bring Al-Zarqawi back to them. However, a week of procrastination went by and nothing happened. Therefore, Al-Zarqawi's group decided to stage a riot in jail. They asked us, the political detainees, to support them and we did. The situation became aggravated and tension heightened between the administration and all the detainees. When a clash became imminent, the political detainees suggested that I negotiate on behalf of everyone in jail to bring Al-Zarqawi back. Al-Maqdisi agreed to the proposal. I told the officer in charge that it was important to negotiate a deal before the issue escalated and caused regrettable consequences.

Abu-al-Muntasir of Al-Zarqawi's group accompanied me. We met with Ibrahim Khashashinah, then director of the prison, who did not show any flexibility. The situation went from bad to worse and a mutiny loomed on the horizon. The detainees shut down security cameras. They dismantled iron beds and turned them into sharp tools in preparation for a confrontation. They closed the main doors of the section and prevented public security men from drawing closer. Sharif Abu-Isam, head of the Prisons Administration, came at dawn when he learned of the situation. On behalf of the prisoners, I negotiated with him to set Al-Zarqawi free from solitary confinement. He agreed on condition that Al-Zarqawi would be released the next day to save the face of the prison's director. When Al-Zarqawi returned to the sixth wing the next day, he resumed his role as amir instantly while Al-Maqdisi, who took over during his absence, went back to research and writing.

In jail, Al-Zarqawi was cool, calm, and collected. He would not speak unless you talked to him. He used to spend his free time learning the Koran and other religious texts by heart. He always prayed and burned the midnight candle nurturing his spiritual self. Al-Zarqawi had no time to read literature or political issues that did not address religious topics. Other than reading, Al-Zarqawi practiced physical fitness exercises to build up his physical strength. In the morning, he used to pay visits to prisoners who were detained on civil or criminal charges. He wanted to strengthen his personal relations with them to pave the way for their return to God and repentance from their sins. He was implementing an important part of the faith--promoting virtue and preventing vice. His aim was to talk the inmates into embracing his ideas and joining his organization. He achieved tremendous success. He became popular among hundreds of detainees who had criminal backgrounds in the Jordanian cities of Al-Zarqa and Al-Salt. Most of them became ultra-religious and many were killed in battles in Afghanistan or Iraq.

Al-Zarqawi had two personalities in prison. He was more like a caring father to his fellow group members. He deprived himself of scarce funds of which he was in dire need to give them to any of his friends whom he felt needed them desperately. He used to take off his clothes to give them to any of his friends who needed them. At the same time, his commands to his group were heeded without discussion. Sometimes, a member of his group would be punished if he violated the group's opinion. Al-Zarqawi possessed leadership qualities that later qualified him to build the most powerful network in the Middle East region.

The other personality of Al-Zarqawi was the one with which he treated the official authorities in jail. He was boldly rude with them. He dealt with them within official limits. He did not allow the official authorities to address any member of his group except via his channel. Al-Zarqawi, however, favored isolation to the extent that he was nicknamed Al-Gharib [the stranger]. Al-Gharib was his nom de guerre when he volunteered to fight alongside mujahidin in Afghanistan. He preferred that others call him Al-Gharib. He used this name to sign his letters and cards to his family members.

Son-Mother Relationship

Al-Zarqawi's mother had a major influence on his early years. She raised him in a conservative environment under harsh economic circumstances for a family of three boys and seven girls.

While in jail, Al-Zarqawi used to count the minutes until his mother's visits. The world around him in prison, including his companions and his emirate, was not enough to quench his emotional thirst. The day when his mother was scheduled to visit him was exceptional. He used to put on his best clothes and if his comrades asked why, he would simply say: "It is my mother."

Al-Zarqawi's mother occupied a special place in his heart and mind. On religious occasions, he sent the kindest words and nicest cards to her. Nevertheless, his heartfelt feelings toward her did not prevent him from reiterating the need that she fully abide by strict religious behavior. When it was not possible for him to see her under the circumstances of

his detention, he told her that he would meet her in heaven.

"Dearest," he once wrote, "I am well. Praise be to God. I wish for nothing except to see your pure face. God knows, I wish for nothing more than I wish to be with you, my most beloved mother. I will never pay back your love no matter what I do."

Al-Zarqawi's letters and cards to his mother not only reflected his feelings toward her but also his religious beliefs. Despite her age, he used to remind her of the importance of abstaining from sitting with men or shaking hands with them if she wanted to go to heaven where he would meet her.

"Wish I were with you in Ramadan to make you happy and make it up to you for my imprisonment years. It is God's will, however. Praise be to God for his seen and unseen blessings. O mother, this is our dear faith. We have to do everything to protect it. Be patient, my loving mother. If we do not meet in this world, we will meet in heaven. God is the most benevolent, the most merciful. Be aware, my dearly loved mother. Obey God in everything. Do many good deeds in Ramadan and never sit or shake hands with men. Please do this, my mother. Obey God and avoid His grudge."

Al-Zarqawi not only sent letters, cards, and poetry to his mother and family members from jail. He missed them so much that he became an artist who wrote calligraphic words and used descriptive drawings to show his deep family ties with his mother and other family members. When he went to Pakistan after his release from prison, he sent for his mother and wife to join him. His mother visited him in Pakistan for a while before she returned to Jordan.

Al-Zarqawi has two wives. He has four children from his first wife. The eldest, Aminah, a female, is 14; the second daughter, Rawdah, is 11; his son, Muhammad, is 9; and the youngest, Mus'ab, a male, is 7.

The third dimension of Al-Zarqawi's personality has a historical background. Unless you study the character of Nur-al-Din Zanki, Al-Zarqawi's prime model, you will not be able to understand Al-Zarqawi, the future of his organization, or the steps he undertakes. Wherever he went, Al-Zarqawi used to look for books on Nur-al-Din. The best gifts he received were history books that dealt with the jihad and conquests of Nur-al-Din Zanki against the Crusaders. Hence, we can answer the following important question: Why was Al-Zarqawi the only Al-Qa'ida leader who opted to settle in Iraq after US forces occupied Afghanistan? Did he want to begin from Mosul to liberate Iraq, unify Bilad al-Sham, northern Iraq, and Egypt, and pave the way for the liberation of Jerusalem? When we read the history of Nur-al-Din Zanki, we were able to understand why Al-Zarqawi opted to go to northern Iraq and take Al-Jazirah area on the banks of the Euphrates as his first base to wage war on the US occupation forces in Iraq.

Al-Zarqawi's Political Literature in Jail

The sweet words and extreme kindness of Al-Zarqawi's correspondence to his mother and family differed entirely from his defense statement before the State Security Court in Jordan when he was accused of affiliation with the Bay'at al-Imam group. Instead of refuting the accusations, Al-Zarqawi's defense statement was an indictment against the jury and the political regime. He accused them of ruling in accordance with laws that were drawn up by man, and not in accordance with the Islamic shari'ah or God's rules.

"O judge, you pass judgment in harmony with rules other than God's.

You know that adherence to a legislature other than God -- whether such a legislature is a scholar, leader, member of parliament, or tribal chief -- is flagrant atheism and blatant polytheism. You are aware that God said: 'Allah forgiveth not (the sin of) joining other gods with Him; but He forgiveth whom He pleaseth.' [Koranic verse].

"You are aware that Article 26 of your constitution stipulates the following:

"a. The legislative authority shall be vested in the king and members of parliament.

"b. The legislative authority and other authorities shall exercise their powers and duties in accordance with the provisions of the constitution.

"You are aware that everyone who adopts this new faith and blatant atheism not only contravenes the faith and monotheism of God but also takes these legislatures, and not God, as their deities. He worships them as he worships God."

Al-Zarqawi was released from jail in March 1999 under a general amnesty issued by Jordan's King Abdallah II on the occasion of his assumption of power following the death of his father, King Husayn. King Abdallah wanted to clean up the prisons and shake off the political burden of opponents and rivals that he inherited from his father. Al-Zarqawi, apparently, was given two options: leave Jordan or go back to jail. Since he was yearning for freedom, he decided to leave Jordan six months after his release. His mentor, Abu-Muhammad al-Maqdisi, whose role was confined to propagation of his ideology, opted to stay. Al-Zarqawi, on the other hand, believed he was created for action. Therefore, he left the prison carrying with him the ideas he nurtured during his detention.

Attempt To Travel to Chechnya

Al-Zarqawi left Jordan for Pakistan to go to Chechnya, which he believed was in need of Arab mujahidin more than any other country was. At that point in time, the Afghan arena was a stage of civil war among the allies of yesteryear. Al-Zarqawi preferred to steer clear of the domestic conflict. However, the Pakistani authorities arrested him when his residence permit expired before he completed his travel arrangements to Chechnya. Following eight days of detention in the city of Peshawar, the Pakistani authorities decided to deport him. Since he could not return to Jordan, Al-Zarqawi had no other choice but to go to Afghanistan.

Al-Qa'ida welcomed Al-Zarqawi back in Afghanistan although he was not in full agreement with Bin Ladin. Al-Zarqawi, however, did not rejoin the network. Although he apologized for not being able to do so, he agreed with Al-Qa'ida to receive training in its camps until new arrangements could be made.

Muhammad Makkawi, better known as Sayf al-Adl, man number three in Al-Qa'ida, offered to help Al-Zarqawi and provide him with everything he would need if he decided to embark on a fresh course of action. Earlier, Sayf al-Adl agreed with Bin Ladin that it was important to accommodate people like Al-Zarqawi who did not fully agree with Al-Qa'ida. We will discuss this issue in detail later on. Al-Zarqawi entertained the offer and decided to set up his own camp in the western Afghan city of Herat on the border with Iran. A new stage of his journey began at the end of 1999 when his supporters, who were known as Jund al-Sham [Al-Sham Soldiers], began to converge on the camp. The Herat camp received full support from both Al-Qa'ida and the Taliban

movement.

Al-Zarqawi's independence from Al-Qa'ida was established prior to the US war on Afghanistan. Al-Zarqawi was not fully pleased with the network's modus operandi. He criticized Al-Qa'ida for not being fierce enough to deal more violent and more painful strikes to the enemy. Al-Zarqawi, therefore, was threatening doom over his enemy. Nevertheless, the disagreement between Al-Zarqawi and Al-Qa'ida did not sever their friendly ties.

Abd-al-Hadi Daghlas and Khalid al-Aruri, alias Abu-al-Qassam, were his right-hand men who helped him establish his camp in Herat. Both of them were his sincere friends in prison and during childhood. Al-Aruri did not stay in prison for a long time since the Jordanian security services were unable to provide the necessary material evidence to bring him to court. Al-Aruri was the only person who left Jordan for Pakistan in Al-Zarqawi's company. The two men, Al-Aruri and Daghlas, remained loyal to Al-Zarqawi when he set up his own network. Both of them recruited Arab volunteers -- particularly Jordanians and Palestinians -- who wanted to take part in jihad in Afghanistan.

Al-Zarqawi not only made personal achievements during his second trip to Afghanistan in terms of establishing his own network but he also initiated objective changes. When he went to Afghanistan the first time, he wanted to fight the Soviet occupiers of Muslim territories. The second time, the Americans became the enemy -- and not the Soviets, whose empire ceased to exist as a result of numerous factors including their involvement in the quagmire of Afghanistan. Consequently, a new conflict emerged in the aftermath of the major strike of 11 September that changed the history of the conflict in the region.

The United States developed its strategy of containment and deterrence into a preemptive strike policy, especially after the Soviet Union collapsed and neoconservatives took control of the White House. Way before such debates in Washington, salafist [Islamic reformist] and jihadist organizations, including Al-Qa'ida, had made up their minds and announced that they would carry out preemptive strikes before Washington would. Al-Qa'ida, therefore, staged the bombings of the US Embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam, attacked the US destroyer USS Cole in Yemen, and rounded that off with its 11 September strikes. Both the salafist jihadist organization and the US administration adopted the same strategy.

The US invasion of Afghanistan took place in late 2001 with the aim of eliminating the Taliban regime under the leadership of Mullah Omar in general, and Al-Qa'ida network under Usama Bin Ladin and Ayman al-Zawahiri in particular. At that time, no one paid attention to Al-Zarqawi as a leader who would pose a threat. In November 2001, Al-Zarqawi and his group left Herat camp after they came under the siege of pro-Northern Alliance Afghans who came from the border with Iran. Al-Zarqawi left for Kandahar in a convoy of scores of vehicles that carried the family members of his fighters, including women and children, and Afghan men affiliated with his network. During the three-day trip, the convoy encountered many difficulties and came under intense air bombardment. Moreover, the advance of the US-allied Afghan opposition made the passage of the convoy more difficult. In Kandahar and Tora Bora, Al-Zarqawi and his group took part in ferocious battles alongside Taliban and Al-Qa'ida. Al-Zarqawi was wounded in one of the battles in Kandahar. He suffered from a broken

bone in his left rib cage when parts of a building collapsed under air strikes. Contrary to rumors, Al-Zarqawi did not lose his leg in the battle. Despite the intensity of the battles in Tora Bora, Al-Zarqawi was able to withdraw with his group safely and escape the US bombardment and siege of the area. His supporters believed this was testimony to his military shrewdness. Following the fall of Kandahar and the shelling of Tora Bora, Al-Zarqawi had no alternative but to leave Afghanistan. It became obvious that the Taliban era had come to an end. Before leaving Afghanistan for good, Al-Zarqawi secured safe passage for the wives and children of his comrades to Pakistan.

In Tehran

Al-Zarqawi did not have many options. Pakistan was not a safe place for him since he was previously arrested and deported for violating the country's residence permit regulations. Moreover, Pakistan allied with the United States in its war on Afghanistan. At the same time, Al-Zarqawi could not return to Jordan where he was sentenced to death in absentia. Therefore, he decided to go to Iran.

Al-Zarqawi made arrangements to facilitate the passage of members of his group from Afghanistan to Iran. Before he went alone to Iran via Pakistan, he appointed Abd-al-Hadi Daghlas as commander of his group. He set up a logistics base in the Iranian city of Zahedan near the border with Pakistan with the help of Sunni Iranians with whom he enjoyed good relations at the Herat camp. Al-Zarqawi set up another base in Tehran at a farm owned by Afghan leader Hekmatyar. He used the center as his headquarters where he held a consultative council for the leaders of his network in which he informed them that he had decided to go to Iraq. He told them that he believed Iraq would be the forthcoming battlefield against the Americans. Al-Zarqawi made his decision in utter secrecy. No one of his group knew about their destination when they left for Pakistan and then to Iran.

Al-Zarqawi sent members of his group, particularly those who had official travel documents, to a number of hotels in Tehran. Those members who did not possess ID's were sent to private homes. At first, Al-Zarqawi arranged for the transfer of the families of his network's members by air to Turkey and then to Iraq. He made plans for those who did not possess official travel documents to travel to northern Iraq. During that time, Iranian intelligence stormed a number of hotels where members of Al-Zarqawi's group were staying. Up to 23 men were arrested on the eve of their departure for Turkey, including Khalid al-Aruri, his second in command. Al-Zarqawi left promptly for northern Iraq with the rest of his group after he entrusted Wirya Salih, also known as Abu-Abdallah al-Shafi'i, a Kurdish Iraqi leader of the Ansar al-Islam group, with providing his network with training and military support until it could fend for itself.

Kurdistan

In Iraq's Kurdistan, Al-Zarqawi set up two logistics bases. The first was located in Dar Ghayish Khan and the second in Sarghat. He appointed the Palestinian-born Abd-al-Hadi Daghlas, his childhood companion in Al-Zarqa, as amir of one base and entrusted him with coordinating between his network and the Kurdish Ansar al-Islam group. Daghlas was killed at the outset of the US attack on Iraq in March 2003. In his first sermon in Iraq called "Join the Line," Al-Zarqawi paid tribute to Daghlas by saying:

"O Lord, you chose many beloved men and deprived us of them. God, do

not deprive us of their reward. Help us to join them. I will never forget our fraternal martyrs. May their souls rest in heaven. They were with us for good and for worse. They endured hardships with us on the path of jihad. Foremost of these men is the dearest beloved fraternal brother, the eternal martyr, Abu-Ubaydah Abd-al-Hadi Daghlas. Ever since God guided me to the right path, I have never experienced a tragedy similar to the loss of this fraternal brother. His courage, patience, and good manners were unparalleled. I mourn him... I mourn him. Whenever I remember him I recall a hadith of the prophet, prayers and peace be upon him. The hadith was narrated by Ahmad and Ibn-Hayyan on the authority of Ibn-Mas'ud. The prophet said: 'Our Lord wonders at two men: One is he who got out of his bed and quilt from among his family and tribesmen to perform prayers. Our Lord says: O My angels! Look at this slave of Mine who got up from his bed and quilt from among his tribesmen to offer prayers desiring what is available with Me and fearing from what is with Me. Second is he who fought in Allah's cause and was defeated along with his fellow fighters. But he knew what punishment he would suffer in case of fleeing from the battlefield and what reward he would get in returning to the battlefield. So he returned (and fought against Allah's enemies) until he was killed desiring what is with Me and awing at what is with Me. Allah says to his angels: (wonderingly) Look at My slave who returned (to the battlefield) hoping for what is with Me and fearing what is with Me until his blood was shed.'

"When mujahidin were forced to withdraw from their positions as a result of nonstop shelling, Daghlas refused to withdraw. Together with a batch of his men he braved death and fought the enemy. We ask God to accept them as martyrs. Daghlas was a lion. He was a sincere worshiper of God. He fought courageously in war against the enemy. He was kind to his fraternal brothers.

"Abd-al-Hadi, May your soul rest in heaven. You were a beloved brother and a caring friend. You were my eyes. You were my ears. No one will fill your place. I lost part of my body when I lost you. I will never forget that day when you told me: 'I pray for you more than I pray for my father.' What a loss and what a tragedy. I lost you at a time when I needed you the most. I ask God Almighty to raise you in heaven and help us to join you and your fraternal brothers whom I did not mention as good martyrs."

When Khalid al-Aruri was taken captive in Iran and Abd-al-Hadi Daghlas was killed in northern Iraq, Al-Zarqawi took the Al-Jazirah region west of Al-Anbar as his headquarters. He entrusted Sulayman Khalid Darwish, better known as Abu-al-Ghadiyah, a Syrian dentist, with teaching members of his group to make explosive devices. Abu-al-Ghadiyah, whose second wife, a Palestinian, and their son Khalid were residing in Jordan, became one of the most important members of Al-Zarqawi's group who decided to take revenge on the United States. While building his network, Al-Zarqawi adopted foundations that were different from those of Bin Ladin and Al-Zawahiri who both depended on volunteers from the Arabian Peninsula and Egypt and huge funds from the Arabian Peninsula. Al-Zarqawi, on the other hand, relied on men from Bilad al-Sham -- Jordan, Palestine, and Syria -- and later Iraq and some other Arab countries. Members of his group were called Jund al-Sham. Al-Zarqawi took advantage of Syrians who were granted political asylum in various parts of the world following a crackdown on

the Muslim Brotherhood group and other Islamic movements in Syrian cities, including Aleppo and Hamah in the 1980s. In reaction to the violence that was exercised against them, these groups, once religious movements, began to adopt more extremist and more violent ideas. Some of them joined the mujahidin in Afghanistan bringing with them huge funds which they made in Europe, North America, South America, and other countries around the world. After Al-Zarqawi drew up a special strategy to guide the battle, he welcomed these men via his Syrian aide Abu-al-Ghadiyah.

People who are aware of the hierarchy of Al-Zarqawi's network doubted that the reward allocated for information leading to the arrest of its amir, Abu-Mus'ab, would work. When he was in Herat, Al-Zarqawi built a mini Islamic society that protected his network from penetration.

Al-Zarqawi married the daughter of Shaykh Yasin, who drove a booby-trapped ambulance car and assassinated Shiite leader Baqir al-Hakim.

Al-Zarqawi encouraged his sister to marry Khalid al-Aruri. Abu-al-Ghadiyah married the daughter of Abu-Muhammad, one of the fighters of the network. Thus, the main leaders of Al-Zarqawi's group were sons-in-law or brothers-in-law to each other

Despite the grave circumstances that surrounded him, Al-Zarqawi was not in the spotlight until Jordan accused him of involvement in the assassination of Lawrence Foley, a US diplomat, in the Jordanian capital of Amman on 28 October 2002. A second statement by a so-called Shurafa al-Urdun [honorable of Jordan] claimed responsibility for the assassination. The group's first statement on 6 August 2001 claimed responsibility for the assassination of Yitzhaq Snir, whom the statement described as an Israeli Mossad agent. Snir used to live near Foley's residence in the Jordanian capital.

Two years before Foley's assassination, Al-Zarqawi did not draw anyone's attention. In September 2001, the State Security Court sentenced Al-Zarqawi and 11 other men to 15 years in prison in absentia on charges of planning to stage attacks on archaeological and religious sites in Jordan on the occasion of the new millennium. This time, however, the assassinated was an American citizen. Moreover, then Jordanian Prime Minister Ali Abu-al-Raghib highlighted the incident and said it had an international dimension, not only because the assassinated was an American diplomat but also because Abu-al-Raghib hinted for the first time that Iraq was linked to Al-Qa'ida. He said Al-Zarqawi was most probably in northern Iraq and had affiliations with the Ansar al-Islam group.

Surprisingly, the prosecutor general said that Al-Zarqawi made telephone contacts via his aide, Abu-al-Ghadiyah, with the group that carried out the assassination. He said that Al-Zarqawi entered Jordan in September the same year, one month before the assassination, and met with the perpetrators. However, how did Al-Zarqawi enter and leave Jordan without the knowledge of the Jordanian authorities although he was sentenced in absentia for 15 years in prison?

The CIA was interested in the investigations into the assassination of Foley. Although US participation in the investigations contravened Jordanian laws, the FBI collected evidence that proved Al-Zarqawi was involved in the assassination. The defense attorney wrote down his objections to the investigations and its outcome, which he said was based on such participation. The US administration's concern about the issue and its attempts to link it to Al-Zarqawi coincided with the US

attempt to rally international public opinion and pave the way to invade Iraq under the pretext that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction and supported global terrorism.

On 6 April 2004, the State Security Court in Jordan issued its verdict against the defendants -- including Abu-Mus'ab -- who were accused of assassinating Lawrence Foley. Two weeks after the death sentence was issued against Al-Zarqawi, the Jordanian authorities announced that they had aborted a plan by Al-Zarqawi to carry out a chemical attack that would have targeted the general intelligence headquarters, the US Embassy, and the prime minister's office. An official government statement said the attack would have killed or wounded up to 70,000 people. The Jordanian security forces arrested Azmi al-Jayyusi -- the leader of the group that was going to carry out the attack -- and several members of his group when they stormed his house on the outskirts of the northern Jordanian city of Irbid. The security forces hunted and besieged other members at a house east of the capital of Amman. They killed four of them whom they said refused to hand themselves over and arrested the others. The Jordanian authorities published the confessions in which the defendants said that Al-Zarqawi planned and funded the operation and trained its members to make chemical weapons.

Such military action was planned in absolute secrecy. Al-Jayyusi arrived in Jordan six months before his arrest. The Syrian security services found out that Al-Zarqawi's group was using Syria as a logistics base to carry out an operation in Jordan. They informed Jordan of the details of the plan. Al-Zarqawi, therefore, was denied an important logistics base in Syria.

However, nine days after the Jordanian authorities published the confessions, a surprise came when Shurafa al-Urdun declared responsibility once again for the assassination of Foley. The group's third statement was sent to the defense attorney. The statement was sent with two empty bullets of the gun that was used in the assassination of Foley and the Israeli man before him. The group denied that the suspects had any involvement in this case.

UN inspectors began to probe Iraq's possession of weapons of mass destruction. However, the inspectors did not give the US administration final word on whether or not Iraq possessed these weapons. A statement by US Secretary of State Colin Powell on 4 April 2004 said that he was not sure of the evidence that he provided when he addressed the Security Council on 4 February 2003. This file was apparently closed and Washington began to focus on Iraq's involvement in global terrorism and specifically its links with Al-Qa'ida network. It found that Al-Zarqawi was the right person to accuse of facilitating contacts.

Occupation of Iraq, Embassy Bombing

The US assault on Iraq began at dawn on 20 March 2003. I arrived in Baghdad three days earlier to cover the news of the war. Since I thought that the war would last for several months, I made arrangements for my television crew and myself to stay for a long time. Journalists in Baghdad were mostly worried that the Iraqis would use weapons of mass destruction if they lost the war. They feared these weapons more than they feared the fierce US bombardment of Baghdad.

The seventh and eighth of April 2003 were the longest days of the war.

It became obvious that the ruling regime in Iraq had come to an end. Everyone thought that the regime would use the last bullet. However, the US forces entered Baghdad on 9 April 2003 without facing any significant resistance. Everyone then realized that there was no last bullet or weapons of mass destruction. Therefore, I decided to leave Baghdad with the bodies of our colleagues -- the journalists who were killed at the Al-Jazirah office and Palestine Hotel. Throughout the 1,000-kilometer trip from Baghdad to Amman, I was thinking of whether there was actually any link between Al-Zarqawi and Saddam Husayn's regime after it became clear that weapons of mass destruction did not exist in Iraq.

After the US forces entered Baghdad, the US administration did not provide evidence that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction. Furthermore, it failed to prove that the former Iraqi regime was linked to global terrorism in general and Al-Qa'ida, in particular -- two allegations that Washington provided to occupy Iraq and overthrow its regime, not to mention its promises to foster democracy and human rights.

When I left Baghdad on 9 April, there was a prevalent feeling that Iraq would remain under the occupation for a long time. Such a feeling was generated by the fact that Baghdad was occupied without resistance. During the war, Iraqi journalists and academics argued that they hoped the United States would help them to rebuild their country that suffered from long sanctions. However, two months after the US forces occupied Iraq, military resistance operations began against the US presence in Iraq. Once again, the US administration held Al-Zarqawi responsible for these operations.

During the war, I witnessed the influx of Arab volunteers to Iraq to fight the Americans. I visited them at their gathering places and I listened to their testimonies both in hospitals after they were wounded by the US shelling or after they ran away from Iraqi areas that denied them entry. However, this was during the war. The situation changed afterward, but none of those volunteers mentioned anything about Al-Zarqawi then. On 8 August 2003, a bomb explosion targeted the Jordanian Embassy in Baghdad. The UN Baghdad headquarters came under a similar attack on 19 August. Once more, Al-Zarqawi was held responsible for both operations. Al-Zarqawi, however, claimed responsibility for the second bombing but not the first one. In an audio recording broadcast eight months after he blew up the UN offices, Al-Zarqawi claimed responsibility for other operations.

"God has honored us," he said. "We harvested their heads and tore up their bodies in several places: the United Nations in Baghdad, the coalition forces in Karbala, the Italians in Al-Nasiriyah, the US forces on the Al-Khalidiyah Bridge, US intelligence at the Al-Shahin Hotel, the Republican Palace in Baghdad, the CIA at the Al-Rashid Hotel, and the Polish troops in Al-Hillah. This blessed operation at Al-Hillah was shrouded in an unprecedented media blackout in Iraq. The wicked media alleged that innocent people were the only victims of this operation. It did not say that four helicopters landed at the site of the explosion to carry the impure bodies of the crusader coalition forces. It did not say that more than 200 soldiers were killed. Last but not least, the Israeli Mosad was targeted at the Jabal Lubnan [Mount Lebanon] Hotel. There is a long list of targets. Some chapters were completed, but the upcoming chapters will be more violent and far more bitter, God

willing.

"We challenge the deceitful US media to reveal the real damage and casualties sustained by US forces. The Rambo of Hollywood does not have a place among the lions and heroes of Islam. God willing, we will have many rounds of combat against them. If John Abizaid escaped our swords this time, we will lie in wait for him, Bremer, and their generals, soldiers, and collaborators. We will take them by surprise everywhere and harm whoever succeeds them."

One month after the bombing of the UN offices in Baghdad, the US Department of the Treasury announced on 24 September 2004 that it froze the assets of Abu-Mus'ab Al-Zarqawi and five other people whom they labeled specially designated global terrorists. The next month, the US authorities in Iraq announced a \$5 million reward for information leading to the capture of Al-Zarqawi.

Al-Zarqawi was not only charged with masterminding the operations that took place in Iraq but he was also accused of standing behind the bombings in Istanbul on 20 November 2003. On 2 February 2004, a string of attacks hit Karbala and Al-Kazimiyah. In view of the enormity of the bombings, it was difficult to hold Al-Zarqawi responsible without providing evidence. The US authorities, therefore, disclosed that they seized a letter, which they said Al-Zarqawi sent to Al-Qa'ida leaders. They said that the letter was stored on a compact disk that they seized with an aide of Usama Bin Ladin.

A week earlier, and specifically on 24 January, the US authorities in Iraq announced that Hasan Jahl, a Pakistani, was captured in Iraq. A link was made between the arrest and the letter. The new thing, however, was the content of this letter that said Al-Zarqawi completed the establishment of his own network in Iraq.

The letter -- if it is truly Al-Zarqawi's -- raised many questions. Did the letter correspond to Al-Zarqawi's ideology and beliefs? How far did it reflect these beliefs and the so-called salafist jihadist methodology, particularly regarding the stance vis-a-vis the Shiites and whether or not they were viewed as Muslims?

Eight days after the explosions in Karbala and Al-Kazimiyah, the US authorities in Iraq announced on 11 February that the reward for information leading to the arrest of Al-Zarqawi rose to \$10 million in an attempt by the US authorities to give credibility that the letter they seized was written by the very Al-Zarqawi.

Al-Zarqawi not only threatened to fight the Shiites, but he also bluntly claimed responsibility for the assassination of Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim, head of the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, in the explosion that targeted him in Al-Najaf on 29 August 2003. Al-Zarqawi entrusted Shaykh Yasin, the father of his second wife, to carry out the assassination of Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim.

The Karbala and Al-Kazimiyah bombings targeted Shiites on their most important religious occasion. Did the war on Shiites, and not the Americans, become a priority for Al-Zarqawi in light of the emerging alliances following the escalation of resistance in the so-called Sunni triangle against the US presence in Iraq? Al-Zarqawi's hard-line positions were not confined to fighting the Shiites alone, but they were also aimed at Sunni Muslims, whether Arabs or Kurds. Al-Zarqawi believed that fears of sectarian violence were merely calls to keep silent over the occupation.

The statement in which Al-Qa'ida denied responsibility for the Karbala

and Al-Kazimiyah bombings corresponded to the tail of Al-Zarqawi's letter, which the US services seized in Iraq. Toward the end of the letter, Al-Zarqawi said that he was not part of Al-Qa'ida. He pointed out that each party had its own position on how to deal with the Shiites in Iraq although both of them shared the same religious opinion concerning the Shiites.

The first half of 2004 witnessed a major transition in the strategy of Al-Zarqawi and his so-called Al-Tawhid wa Al-Jihad group. A military statement, Number 1, signed by Al-Zarqawi, announced the birth of the group and claimed responsibility for the attack on Al-Basrah port. Military communiqués were issued one after the other, but they carried the signature of the military wing of the group. The Al-Tawhid wa Al-Jihad group had its own media office. This implied that Al-Zarqawi's network began to adopt an organized course of action.

Al-Zarqawi underscored his influential presence in Iraq. He offered material evidence that he was behind major bombings that took place in Iraq. In written statements, he declared responsibility for these bombings and said he was responsible for the assassination of senior officials of the interim Iraqi Governing Council and others. A videotape posted on the Internet showed Al-Zarqawi beheading Nicholas Berg, a US national. Al-Zarqawi read a statement in which he justified his act by saying it was in retaliation for abuses against prisoners at the Abu-Ghuryab Prison and elsewhere. He threatened to carry out more acts similar to the beheading of Berg and the Korean hostage.

Al-Zarqawi's statement on 25 April 2004 in which he claimed responsibility for the attack on the port of Al-Basrah in southern Iraq unquestionably proved that Al-Zarqawi had no ties with Al-Qa'ida. The statement was signed by Abu-Mus'ab al-Zarqawi, amir of the Al-Tawhid wa al-Jihad group. In other words, Al-Zarqawi decided to announce the establishment of his own network, which he set up at his special camp in Herat. The Al-Basrah statement meant that Al-Zarqawi had reached a dead end with Al-Qa'ida leaders concerning his position vis-a-vis the Shiites. His position was stated in the letter that the US authorities seized in Iraq. Al-Zarqawi said he would work under the banner of Al-Qa'ida if its leaders agreed to his position regarding the Shiites. The statement pointed out that the Al-Basrah operation "followed the example of his fraternal lions of Al-Qa'ida when they attacked the destroyer USS Cole." The straightforward statement underlined that Al-Zarqawi was not affiliated with Al-Qa'ida and that he was capable of doing the same or more.

This meant that both networks, Al-Zarqawi's and Al-Qa'ida, competed to deal more painful strikes to their mutual enemy. Each one of them wanted to prove that it deserved allegiance and obedience from everyone in its capacity as a symbol of all armed Islamic groups in the world, better known as the salafist jihadist groups.

US Media Coverage of Al-Zarqawi

The way the United States handled the Iraq issue poured Bin Ladin's oil on Al-Zarqawi's fire and aggravated the situation in Iraq. The enormous US media coverage and intentional exaggeration of Al-Zarqawi's activities in Iraq aimed to blame Al-Zarqawi for all the escalating military operations and give the impression that the Iraqis approved of the presence of foreign forces on their territory. Such coverage also aimed to emphasize that a few Arab fighters were behind these operations and that terrorists existed in Iraq prior to the US invasion.

However, without being aware of it, this approach was very much in favor of Al-Zarqawi. Such exaggeration created a champion in the eye of Arabs who were looking for a leader with whom they could initiate their long-awaited jihad. Every Arab and Muslim who wished to go to Iraq for jihad wanted to join Al-Zarqawi and fight under his leadership. The mentality in the Levant was used to creating a hero if there was not one. This hero would become a symbol who would shape history. The American Hollywood way of thinking met with such a mentality. They both created Al-Zarqawi as a hero and symbol although he did not do much to deserve the praise. There were a maximum of 30 people under his leadership at that point of time. Thanks to the US media ingenuity, Al-Zarqawi's followers are presently estimated in the thousands. The US authorities provided Al-Qa'ida leadership and cadres with an opportunity to unify ranks with Al-Zarqawi when they announced that they seized a letter, which they said Al-Zarqawi wrote to Al-Qa'ida leaders. The US authorities published the full text of the letter, which underlined that Al-Zarqawi was willing to merge with Al-Qa'ida and accommodate its ideology. Immediately afterward, pro-Al-Qa'ida Arab and Muslim fighters joined Al-Zarqawi's network even before the actual merging took place. Following the publication of the letter, wealthy Arabs and Muslims provided Al-Zarqawi with funds that reinforced his position in Iraq in terms of human resources and finance. As for Usama Bin Ladin, he was happy too. He contacted Al-Zarqawi to finalize the process of merging his group under Al-Qa'ida leadership. Al-Zarqawi became the amir of Al-Qa'ida in Iraq, where Al-Qa'ida is currently the key player.

Al-Zarqawi's merged tactics with Al-Qa'ida served both him and Bin Ladin. For Bin Ladin, it was a historical opportunity to stick a thumb in Washington's eye and tell the United States that the invasion of Afghanistan did not annihilate Al-Qa'ida. In other words, if a bullet does not kill me, it makes me stronger, as the saying goes. Iraq became a more important arena for Al-Qa'ida. The nature of the territory and the people was more appropriate for Al-Qa'ida than Afghanistan was. As for Al-Zarqawi, he had a supply of human resources, most of whom were recruits who came to Iraq to join Al-Zarqawi for the love of jihad. Previously, such a supply of human resources was undermined by an iron fist policy on the border. Al-Zarqawi's union with Al-Qa'ida provided him with a permanent and systematic influx of human resources. This was also true for financial and logistic support. Al-Zarqawi's political strategy in Iraq became more obvious following his statement in which he threatened to kill Iyad Allawi, head of the interim government in Iraq. Such a strategy, which focused on targeting Iraqi police, reflected his firm position vis-a-vis the police force when he was a prisoner in Jordan. Al-Zarqawi's military strategy became evident when he killed the Korean hostage. He wanted the Americans to be left alone in Iraq. He repeated what he did to the United Nations and hampered US plans to install a local Iraqi Government to run the country. He wanted to keep an open war between the US occupation forces and the mujahidin who fight to expel the crusader forces from the Muslim territory. This way, the experience of jihad in Afghanistan would stay alive. This time, however, developed techniques would be used to allow the jihad snowball to grow into an avalanche that would reach Iraq's neighboring countries and ultimately, the more sacred and more sensitive issue for Muslims, the issue of Palestine.

Al-Zarqawi's Ideology

First: His Methodology

In the aftermath of the 11 September events, the West wanted to know more about Islam, but it did not tell the difference between Islamic denominations or sects. Since there were 15 Saudis among those who waged the New York and Washington attacks, the West focused on Al-Salafiyyah or what it termed Wahhabism.

Wahhabism, which is called Al-Salafiyyah sometimes, is a movement named after Shaykh Muhammad Bin-Abd-al-Wahhab, whose ideas were termed the propagation of reforms. Wahhabism is the dominant religious sect in Saudi Arabia.

The Emergence of Al-Salafiyyah

Al-Salafiyyah is not the outcome of either current events or the contemporary understanding of Islam. According to researchers, it dates back to Shaykh al-Islam Ibn-Taymiyah and his apostle Ibn-al-Qayyim al-Jawziyah. Wahhabism is founded on the main principles that include reference to the Koran and Sunnah [Prophet Muhammad's teachings and practices] in all aspects of life, adherence to the path of virtuous ancestors, and renunciation of the ideas of philosophers, speakers, and pro-Sufism, since they contravene the spirit of Islamic da'wah. In his book "The History of Islamic Sects in Politics and Beliefs," Shaykh Muhammad Abu-Zahrah said Al-Salafiyyah is attributed to Imam Ahmad Bin-Hanbal. In the 10th century, a group of Hanbalites emerged and attributed their ideas to Imam Ahmad, who revived the faith of the ancestors and opposed everything else. The group emerged anew in the 15th century when it was reinvigorated by Shaykh al-Islam Ibn-Taymiyah. These ideas surfaced in the Arabian Peninsula in the 18th century with the establishment of the salafist reformist school that spread in the Islamic world at the hands of Muhammad Bin-Abd-al-Wahhab, who lived in the Arabian Peninsula in the 18th century. Bin-Abd-al-Wahhab focused his efforts on fighting innovations that harm monotheism in Islam, challenging people who attribute to God matters that should not be attributed to Him, and fighting polytheism, including visits to tombs or shrines to pray to the dead and ask for their help.

The victory of the armed movement of Wahhabism and its control over Mecca and Medina -- the two holy cities where millions of Muslims perform the pilgrimage every year -- substantially helped Wahhabism to spread beyond the Arabian Peninsula. Accordingly, the annual pilgrimage season became the most vital occasion for proponents of Wahhabism to promote their sect of monotheism and fighting innovations. In addition to sermons, seminars, and steady preaching during the pilgrimage season, proponents of Wahhabism published the books of the two shaykhs, Bin-Abd-al-Wahhab and Ibn-Taymiyah, not to mention the large number of studies and lectures that explained the fundamentals of the new monotheistic movement of Wahhabism. They offered all these publications to pilgrims for free.

The weird behavior of some proponents of Wahhabism and those in charge of the holy sites drew various reactions from pilgrims, particularly when Wahhabists prevented them from coming near the tomb of the prophet, prayers and peace be upon him, under the pretext that it was polytheism. Wahhabists maintained that a pilgrim would commit polytheism if he touched the tomb or the window surrounding

it. They would loudly say to this person: "O polytheist." Such behavior prompted pilgrims and educated people to ask many questions and carry out research. As a result, many of them were introduced to Wahhabism.

The spread of Wahhabism in Islamic countries was attributed to a group of scholars who visited Mecca and Medina to perform the pilgrimage. They were introduced to the beliefs of Wahhabism and they agreed with them concerning the issue of fighting innovations and common sectarian superstitions. These scholars formed the nucleus of Wahhabism in their own countries when they returned from their pilgrimage. Furthermore, a large number of students studied at Wahhabist religious universities that taught Hanbalite beliefs [strict school of Islamic jurisprudence]. These students actually became the ambassadors of this denomination in their countries. The tenets of Shaykhs Bin-Abd-al-Wahhab and Ibn-Taymiyah began to find their way toward becoming a global movement.

Moreover, the ruling regime in Saudi Arabia was associated with the religious political legitimacy of Wahhabism. It exerted tremendous efforts to support and disseminate this sect on the Arabian Peninsula and elsewhere. A huge budget was allocated for publishing books on the Hanbalite sect in its Wahhabist version. Since the era of King Abd-al-Aziz, the books of every Muslim scholar have been printed, published, and distributed for free. These books included a collection of Al-Rasa'il wa al-Masa'il al-Najdiyyah [Najd Messages and Issues], Al-Durar al-Sunniyah [Sunni Gems], a collection of Ibn-Taymiyah's fatwas [legal opinions], Ibn-al-Qayyim books, and books on fiqh [jurisprudence], interpretation of the Koran, and hadith [sayings and doings of Prophet Muhammad]. Publishing houses in Egypt, Beirut, Damascus, Baghdad, and India helped to circulate these books. Hence, the area of distribution expanded to include Arab and Islamic markets. Since the salafist Wahhabist books did not pose a censorship problem in the Islamic world, markets were flooded with huge quantities of them. It was impossible not to find some of these books at the libraries of the children of Islamic awakening. Cultural centers affiliated with the Saudi Government spread in all the Islamic countries. These centers played an effective role in supplying students with the fatwas of Shaykh al-Islam Ibn-Taymiyah. Furthermore, Saudi Arabia inaugurated Islamic centers in capitals around the world and supplied them with salafist books and Wahhabist preachers and scholars.

The emergence of salafist movements affiliated with the Saudi religious institution in the Islamic world promoted the salafist culture, which prevailed in Hijaz and the two holy cities and coincided with the emergence of the global Islamic awakening. Subsequently, Al-Salafiyyah emerged in various forms. It began to concentrate on education and social reforms, especially in the Arab Maghreb. Shaykh Muhammad Abduh [Egyptian religious reformer], who became known for his renewal movement, once said: "My voice was heard loud and clear for propagating two substantial issues: liberating thought from the restrictions of tradition and understanding religion the way the nation's ancestors did."

Such a call for political and social reform had a strong echo in the Arab Maghreb, where Al-Salafiyyah integrated into the national movement and adopted its contemporary objectives. Ultimately, Al-Salafiyyah and nationalism merged particularly when colonialists recruited some

religious groups and various forces to work with them. To tell the truth, the national liberal movement came from Al-Salafiyyah, reminiscent of the spread of Al-Salafiyyah in the entire Maghreb. Al-Salafiyyah defeated other denominations, particularly Sufism, when it integrated into the national movement and raised the banner of jihad against the colonialists and their collaborators. Thus, Al-Salafiyyah developed to include fighting colonialism, innovations, and predominant social traditions. Simultaneously, it called for the modernization of political and social conditions.

In today's world, salafist movements are the most significant Islamic reformist movements. Their influential calls for liberating religion from the impurities of tradition and innovations of backwardness are heard everywhere. In the 20th century, the modern salafist movement took various forms including liberalism, rationalism, and jihad. Eventually, however, it crystallized under the name Al-Salafiyyah, which is the Najd school of Hanbalite roots. We will focus on this form of Al-Salafiyyah since it extended beyond its habitat to affect all aspects of life and become a global Islamic phenomenon.

Until recently, Al-Salafiyyah was a strategic asset for Islamic political and jihadist movements. The movement itself did not shoulder the burden of political jihad that corresponded to its religious and social influence. Most Islamist politicians and leaders of various groups adopted the perspective of salafist scholars. They drew human resources from this perspective without depending so much on the movement itself for political jihad. Salafist scholars feared political action for fear of sedition. Apparently, however, the salafist movement is currently in labor to produce a change and break free from the loop with which it is associated.

Except for isolated pockets here or there, the current intellectual and political labor of the salafist movement gradually reduced the methodological shortcomings. Salafist thought drew closer to the concerns of the nation, liberated itself from the captivity of history, and disentangled itself from some regimes that rode the salafist wave to achieve their ambitions. With the advent of jihad in Afghanistan, salafists began to discard historical and rhetorical controversies and focus on current concerns and challenges of life. They were thirsty for modern political and organizational culture.

The development of Al-Salafiyyah is attributable to many factors including the following:

First, the number of recruits for jihad in Afghanistan increased.

Religious scholars who assumed the responsibility of interpreting the origins of jihad in harmony with the salafist denomination maintained that fighting in Afghanistan is defensive jihad, which did not require the difficult conditions that other kinds of jihad stipulated.

Second, some scholars defied the political authorities in the early 1990's and, for the first time, liberated salafist speech from the regimes that employed Islam in favor of authority, and not the other way around. Consequently, young salafist men began to examine the situation and absorb the requirements of religion in the modern age.

Third, some renowned salafist symbols took the political initiative in some Muslim countries and collaborated wisely with other Islamic movements and the masses. This phenomenon was very obvious in the experience of the Algerian Islamic Salvation Front in the early 1990's.

Fourth, expatriate salafist groups in Europe and the United States

played an enlightening role that contributed to promoting a new salafist speech characterized by awareness and maturity. The pragmatic culture of the West played a positive role in this field since the value of a principle is not measured by its theoretical aspect but rather by its pragmatic effectiveness. Toward the end of the 20th century, salafists realized that Islam faced greater challenges than disagreeing with Shiites, murji'ah [proponents of a doctrine that separates beliefs and actions and claims that any judgment should be deferred to the Day of Judgment], Ash'arites [proponents of a theology that believes that human beings are predestined in their actions and their fate in the hereafter], and Sufists. Salafists became aware that the current Islamic awakening needs a nation that lives up to the challenges of the age and is not enslaved by the past or its wars that wasted the time and efforts of Islamic forces.

This new strategy gave salafist movements momentum and organizational power. They began to enjoy unprecedented flexibility. The most evident example of such flexibility was Al-Qa'ida's support for Abu-Mus'ab al-Zarqawi in 1999 although he was not in full agreement with Bin Ladin's methodology. Both men had different understandings of some aspects of the faith concerning allegiance and subsequent issues of excommunication and deference. These were viewed as basic religious issues, particularly concerning the position vis-a-vis Al-Sa'ud -- the rulers of Saudi Arabia -- whether or not they were atheists, and what position should be adopted if they were. All such controversy did not prevent Al-Qa'ida from making concessions although it was the most powerful party in Afghanistan. Al-Qa'ida did without full allegiance from Al-Zarqawi. It supported him when he established a special camp on the foundation of coordination and integration. Muhammad Makkawi, better known as Sayf al-Adl, number three in Al-Qa'ida, will provide us with details in the testimony he sent to us.

Such flexibility began to pose a threat to all opponents and foes of the salafist movement. These opponents widened the gap between salafist movements and other Islamic movements to prevent the formation of a broad-based Islamic front in the face of challenges facing the Islamic nation. Salafists were liberated from the malady of theories and words. They opened their eyes to the challenges of the modern age and its complexities. Islamists began to release themselves from partisan ideas. The current events in Iraq are an example. They opened their heart to every factor even if it was not from within their movement or was not in full agreement with the fundamentals of Al-Salafiyyah. What are these foundations?

The Methodological Foundations of Al-Salafiyyah

Al-Salafiyyah is established on three major methodological foundations: Monotheism, adherence, and purification of one's heart. Monotheism is the backbone of religion. God sent his messengers to the universe to establish monotheism of lordship and worship in all kinds of rituals sanctioned by Him. These include seen rituals, such as praying, fasting, votive offering, slaughtering [of sheep], and circumambulation of the Ka'bah; and unseen rituals, such as fear, hope, love, trust, and request for assistance.

The following are the fundamentals of monotheism in Al-Salafiyyah:

First: Belief in the attributes and names of God Almighty without distortion. A salafist believes in the attributes and names of God

Almighty as mentioned in God's Book [the Koran] and the sayings of his messenger, prayers and peace be upon him.

Second: Worship of God Almighty alone. This not only means praying, paying alms, fasting, or performing the pilgrimage but it also implies everything meant by monotheism of worship. Foremost of all is invocation of God. No entity other than God shall be invoked regardless of whether such an entity is a messenger or a legitimate or alleged ruler. Kneeling, love, glorification, fear, slaughter, votive offering, and hope follow the invocation of God. All these issues are the right of God Almighty. Some people visit tombs to ask the dead for what should only be asked from God, such as healing the ill, achieving victory against the enemy, mediation with God, wealth, children, and fine living.

Third: Belief that God Almighty alone and no one else has the right to legislate for mankind. Legislation is the right of God Almighty. What is permissible is permitted by God alone and what is inadmissible is forbidden by Him solely. God and no one else sanctions the faith, methodology, and the way. Salafists believe that the majority of sultans and leaders nowadays challenge the legislation right of the Creator. They legalize what God prohibits and forbid what God permits. They draw up legislation different from God's under the pretext that God's rules do not accommodate the modern age, realize justice, equality, or freedom, or achieve pride and sovereignty.

Fourth: Al-Salafiyah believes that the aforementioned three fundamentals of monotheism are inseparable and can never be compromised since they are the cornerstone of understanding the right faith and the meaning of "there is no deity but God." A person who believes in one God believes that the Almighty is the one described in the Koran and the sayings of the messenger, prayers and peace be upon him. Faith in God should be in harmony with these attributes.

God Almighty alone should be invoked. All forms of worship should be for Him exclusively including slaughter, votive offering, fear, reverence, requests for assistance, trust, oath, glorification, and purification of the heart against everything that might harm monotheism. Faith and action should comply with the legislation of God. He rules the entire human race. There is no religion other than God's. God and no one else should be obeyed. In other words, no creature should be obeyed unless the Almighty says so. This creature, however, will not be obeyed if he contravenes God's commandments.

Al-Salafiyah adopts all these issues in unison to purify the hearts of its followers from polytheism. In the opinion of salafists, a person will not go to heaven if he invokes an entity other than God. They believe that distortion of the meanings of God's attributes and names is polytheism. A person who rules in contravention to God's shari'ah is an atheist. Someone who believes that a human being can draw up legislation for mankind in contravention of God's shari'ah is a polytheist. The three abovementioned issues are the cornerstone on which the first methodological foundation of Al-Salafiyah is established. They are the three conditions of monotheism. The foundation of monotheism will shake if one of these conditions is not met. This foundation is the basic introduction to Al-Salafiyah. Monotheism is the most important or rather the core issue of religion. Without it a Muslim is not considered a Muslim.

Adherence: When a follower of Al-Salafiyah is aware of monotheism in accordance with the aforementioned foundations, he should realize that

he should adhere to the prophet, prayers and peace be upon him. There is no legislation and no religion other than what the messenger said in achievement of: "I testify that Muhammad is the messenger of God."

This testimony can only be realized by the following:

First: A person should know that Muhammad, prayers and peace be upon him, is the messenger of God Almighty. He should learn that the messenger came with two revelations. The first is God's Book, the Koran, and the second is the Sunnah of the messenger, prayers and peace be upon him. The sayings of the messenger, prayers and peace be upon him, are similar to the sayings of God Almighty in belief and action. The messenger does not order, prohibit, or permit religious matters. He obeys God's commandments and says what God Almighty reveals to him.

Second: Religion is the methodology, way, and judgment. It is not merely cordial relations, as the majority of people predominantly think. This means that the prophet, prayers and peace be upon him, performs God's commandments. Defiance of the sayings of the messenger, prayers and peace be upon him, regarding commerce, marriage, divorce, governance, politics, and boundaries is defiance of issues of worship, including praying, fasting, paying alms, and performing the pilgrimage.

Third: In view of the two aforementioned issues, the status of the messenger, prayers and peace be upon him -- in terms of absolute obedience -- is unmatched. Thus, no other saying is approved whether it is by an imam, political leader, intellectual, or reformist if it contravenes the sayings of the messenger, prayers and peace be upon him.

Otherwise, this will harm and violate the nation's unison, God's Book, and the sayings of the messenger, prayers and peace be upon him.

Purification of one's heart is purification of the soul in accordance with the divine methodology. This can only be done by observing the rituals, doing more supererogatory deeds, and adhering to God and His messenger. There is no worship other than what God stipulates and His messenger reiterates.

Purification of one's soul is one of the missions for which the messenger, prayers and peace be upon him, is sent. It is the ultimate message. God blessed us when he sent the prophet, prayers and peace be upon him, with the mission of reading God's verses. This is a great blessing since we listen to God's words from a human being like us. The prophet purifies this nation when he reads what is revealed to him. He leads this nation out of the darkness of ignorance by teaching them the Book -- the Koran -- and offering them valuable knowledge.

The Objectives of Al-Salafiyah

According to salafists, Al-Salafiyah is not a call for one of the branches of faith or one issue of Islam. It is not a reformist, social, political, or partisan call. Rather, it is the call of Islam with all the meaning of this word, including pride, sovereignty, reform, justice, and success on earth and the hereafter. Salafists believe that Islam is God's religion for the universe. It is not the religion of a particular homeland or specific people. It is the religion of the entire world and peoples. Therefore, Al-Salafiyah is the sound methodology to understand and realize Islam. Since Al-Salafiyah is not a religious or political party, its objectives are the objectives of propagating Islam. It is a methodology, call, and means to understand and apply Islam in everyday life. Accordingly, the objectives of Al-Salafiyah are summarized as follows:

First: Creating a genuine Muslim. The making of men in Al-Salafiyah is

the duty of the Islamic call -- making Muslim men in the full sense of the word, humankind in the full sense of the word, and Muslim women in the full sense of the word. True Muslim men and women should meet the following conditions: Monotheism, adherence, and purification of the soul free of polytheism, fanaticism, superstition, and ignorance. The first mission of Al-Salafiyah is the mission of educating men after outlining the genuine understanding of Islam.

Second: Al-Salafiyah is the unification of Muslims under one faith and one legislative methodology to facilitate the establishment of one nation under one banner and one imam. God's word should prevail, and not the word of those who commit sins. A Muslim society should be built on the foundation of the faith and methodology of Islam free of polytheism, innovations, or profanity. A suitable environment should be provided to raise Muslim generations.

Third: God has the final say. Salafists believe that messengers are entrusted with alerting atheists and obstinate people and denying them excuses on the Day of Judgment. Followers of the messengers assumed this mission after the messengers went to meet their Maker. Their mission was to tell people what they should do to deny them any pretext on the Day of Judgment. The followers of the messenger, prayers and peace be upon him, succeeded him to perform his message. Jihad against the atheists, implementation of God's rules, invocation of God, and enlightening the human race are the missions of messengers. They are the duty of their followers.

A person follows the right path if he listens to this call. Thus, the third objective of the propagation of Islam is actually the first objective. A person should be denied excuses on the Day of Judgment. Al-Salafiyah, therefore, believes that all these branches meet with the main branch, which is showing Islam in its pure image throughout all ages. The moral fiber of Muslims should be distinguished until God inherits the world and everything on it.

Al-Salafiyah strives to reform politics and governance. It believes, however, that this is a less important priority. The efforts of those in charge of propagating Islam should deal with this issue accordingly. Al-Salafiyah prays for every virtuous sultan who seeks the well-being of people. It calls on all rulers to rule in accordance with God's shari'ah and salvage the Islamic world from the enemy of Islam who seeks to invade Muslim territories and tear them apart. Rulers should help Muslims establish their beloved nation.

Subsequently, Al-Salafiyah underscores monotheism of lordship and worship. Everything else follows including reforming the system of government, politics, and the judiciary, cleansing society of corruption, and raising men and women in harmony with the true faith, rituals, and ethics.

Al-Zarqawi's Ideas and Compliance With Al-Salafiyah in his Messages and Speeches

Al-Zarqawi wrote several letters and speeches between 1994 and 2005. The first was his defense statement before the State Security Court in Jordan in 1994. It was the only one he made in Jordan. The rest of his letters and speeches were all published in Iraq. Al-Zarqawi did not write any speeches or letters when he was in Afghanistan. Seven years later, he delivered a speech called "Join the Team," which was his first speech in Iraq. Several speeches and letters followed.

We have chosen six of Al-Zarqawi's speeches and letters, including two

written messages and four speeches that covered the whole period. The varied contents of the messages shed light on Al-Zarqawi's beliefs, way of thinking, and the development of his ideas and concerns. We analyzed Al-Zarqawi's written and audio speeches in an attempt to understand the nature of his Islamic and political address and the dogma on which he established his positions. We found mutual factors in his letters and speeches that highlighted his goals and strategy on the religious, political, and military fronts. The following are the most prominent features of his objectives:

First: Quotes From Koranic Verses, Prophetic Sayings, and Opinions of Scholars

Each of Al-Zarqawi's letters or speeches contained a large number of Koranic verses and prophetic sayings to prove that his methodology and tenets were right. He wanted to say that his religious group was guided by the holy Koran and Sunnah. He quoted the Koran and hadith frequently to support every idea or opinion that he conveyed to influence those whom he addressed in his letters and speeches. He established everything on the Koran and prophetic sayings and doings. He was not different from his Muslim peers or predecessors who used Koranic verses and prophetic sayings to support their ideas and beliefs. Thus, all his letters were flooded with quotations from the holy Koran, prophetic sayings, and the sayings of the companions and senior scholars who were more qualified and knowledgeable regarding adherence to God throughout the ages.

Al-Zarqawi's frequent citation of religious texts aimed to underscore the inevitability of the establishment of an Islamic state or caliphate. His recommendations to mujahidin clarified that the establishment of this state was a divine and certain promise. He urged his followers to pay no heed to hypocrites or highway robbers who maintained that they could not achieve what they wanted or that an Islamic caliphate or state would never be established since it was nothing more than a flight of the imagination. He recalled the Almighty's dictum: "Lo! The hypocrites say, and those in whose hearts is a disease: 'These people, -- their religion has misled them.' But if any trust in Allah, behold! Allah is exalted in might, wise." Al-Zarqawi told his supporters that God would help Muslims conquer Rome, as God's messenger, prayers and peace be upon him, mentioned in his hadith. He implored God to grant the mujahidin further victory when he said: "We pray God to conquer the White House, the Kremlin, and London. God's promise is with us." "Allah has promised, to those among you who believe and work righteous deeds, that He will, of a surety, grant them in the land, inheritance (of power), as He granted it to those before them." [Koranic verse].

Al-Zarqawi, however, believed that it was impossible to determine the date of the establishment of a caliphate or state. His mission, he said, was to do his best in favor of the faith to defend shari'ah. The outcome, he explained, would be determined by God Almighty. "A Muslim," he said, "has sold himself to God Almighty and therefore, he has one option only: to deliver himself to God. When the purchaser receives the merchandise, he can do whatever he wants. He can put him in jail, give him the best clothes to wear, or make him naked except for what will cover his genitals. He can make him rich or poor. He can hang him on a scaffold or let the enemy kill or mutilate him."

The Islamic state that Al-Zarqawi predicted would derive its legislation

from God's Book. Al-Zarqawi did not recognize any legislator other than God even if such a legislator was a scholar, ruler, member of parliament, or tribal chief. He considered everyone who acted in contravention of God's shari'ah and in accordance with civil laws and constitutions as polytheists, as he put it in his defense statement during his trial. Al-Zarqawi said that the establishment of an Islamic state was imminent. The enemy, he said, could feel it. In his message to his nation, Al-Zarqawi said that the United States sent its fleets to the territory of Islam when it was terrified of the rising Islamic tide that called for jihad to exalt Islam.

Second: His Calls for Monotheism and Adherence to the Values of the Islamic Faith

Since Al-Zarqawi believed in the inevitability of the establishment of an Islamic state, he said that monotheism was its principal element. In all his speeches and letters, he underlined the importance of adherence to the values of the Islamic faith since it was the most trustworthy handhold and life saver for every human being.

Al-Zarqawi emphasized that monotheism not only meant observance of the rituals of Islam including praying, fasting, or paying alms, but it also meant recognition and trust in the Creator and not a ruler or official. In his opinion, all rulers were tyrants who incited people to breach Islamic rules, abandon honesty, and praise injustice and sins. Accordingly, Al-Zarqawi said that monotheism stipulated telling the truth about the nation's tyrants and rulers regardless of the consequences since it would eventually gratify God. Therefore, Al-Zarqawi did not recognize all the civil laws and constitutions that were drawn up by governments. He viewed the Islamic shari'ah as an irreplaceable model that addressed every issue in life.

Third: Incitement Calls

Al-Zarqawi believed that the establishment of an Islamic state required relentless effort. His entire speeches and messages were outright incitement for his followers in particular and the Islamic nation in general to play their revolutionary role in outlining the features of the current stage in which the Islamic nation faced grave challenges from the United States and the Zionist entity, or what he called the enemy of Islam. He believed that the confrontation between the West and Islam had many objectives, which the enemy wanted to achieve after it dreaded the rise of the Islamic call for jihad to exalt the word of Islam. Moreover, he said, such a confrontation "holds a deep-rooted grudge, historical enmity, and religious fanaticism that was nurtured by Torah prophecies against Muslims."

Al-Zarqawi's incitement calls not only targeted the enemy of the Islamic nation but also Arab governments and regimes that he believed were nothing more than subservient entities for the West. Some of them, he said, supported and allied with Jews and Christians and helped them to usurp the holy sites and territories of Muslims.

Al-Zarqawi's provocative calls targeted the Shiites in Iraq. More than once, he threatened that he would not leave the Shiites in peace until they stopped desecrating mosques and killing Sunnis. Al-Zarqawi did not believe that the Shiites were an Islamic sect. He said Shiism had no connection with Islam whatsoever. Al-Zarqawi put his ideas into practice. He claimed responsibility for the assassination of Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim, head of the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq. Shaykh Yasin, the father of Al-Zarqawi's second

wife, detonated a booby-trapped ambulance near the tomb of Imam Ali Bin-Abu-Talib, God be pleased with him, in Al-Najaf. Al-Zarqawi claimed responsibility for other operations against Shiites in Karbala and Baghdad.

Fourth: His Jihad Call

Incitement was mobilization followed by Al-Zarqawi's call for jihad. In his recommendations to mujahidin, Al-Zarqawi intensified his call for jihad to obtain martyrdom for the cause of Islam. Jihad, he said, was the best on earth and in the hereafter. He said that a person would lose if he abandoned jihad. He referred to the Almighty's dictum: "Say: Can you expect for us (any fate) other than one of two glorious things- (Martyrdom or victory)?" Al-Zarqawi explained that a mujahid would enjoy life if he survived and would go to heaven if he died or got killed. Al-Zarqawi quoted the following saying of the prophet, prayers and peace be upon him: "A martyr has six bounties: he will be forgiven with the first drop of his blood that is spilt; he will see his place in Paradise (at the time of death); he will be saved from the 'great horror' (on the Day of Judgment): a crown of dignity will be placed on his head, which contains many conundrums, each one being more precious than this life and all that it contains; he will have 72 women of paradise; and, he will be allowed to intercede for 70 of his family members (who would have otherwise gone to hell)." Al-Zarqawi also quoted the following hadith: "Paradise has 100 grades which Allah has reserved for the mujahidin who fight in His cause, and the distance between each two grades is like the distance between heaven and earth." This amounted to 50,000 years in paradise for the proponents of jihad.

Hence, Al-Zarqawi believed that his supporters and himself were lucky since God honored them with fighting infidels in Iraq and offered them an opportunity to defend Islam and retaliate for the enemy's oppression. Religion, he said, was protected by powerful men and never by those who lived in luxury, as he put it. "The great faith," he said, "was shouldered by great men."

Fifth: His Belief in the Inevitability of Victory

In his recommendations to mujahidin, Al-Zarqawi said that victory for Muslims was imminent. He quoted the following Koranic verse: "Such was the practice (approved) of Allah among those who lived aforetime: No change wilt thou find in the practice (approved) of Allah."

Al-Zarqawi said that God's victory might be deferred to an undisclosed time and might be accompanied by defeats and wounds among the ranks of Muslims. He believed that the losses sustained by mujahidin were normal and a must to achieve victory no matter what the price was. He said patience and endurance of hardships would achieve victory. Al-Zarqawi said he was confident of victory at the end of the day since God would keep his promise and support His soldiers.

Al-Zarqawi said that victory would not be accomplished if it were not accompanied by faith, honesty, and virtuous deeds. "There is no doubt; for Allah never fails in His promise." [Koranic verse]. Muslims, he said, should have faith in God's will. They should know that he would test them. They should not look at the number and equipment of their enemy or forget God's promise. Al-Zarqawi quoted the following Koranic verses: "As to those who turn (for friendship) to Allah, His messenger, and the (fellowship of) believers, -- it is the fellowship of Allah that must certainly triumph." "And it was due for Us to aid those who believed." "Allah has promised to those among you who believe and

work righteous deeds that He will of a surety grant them in the land, inheritance (of power), as He granted it to those before them; that He will establish in authority their religion -- the one which He has chosen for them; and that He will change (their state), after the fear in which they (lived), to one of security and peace."

Sixth: His Criticism of Scholars

Al-Zarqawi blamed many scholars for abandoning their leading role in Islam that stipulated they should prompt Muslims to fight atheists and enlighten them about the dangers surrounding them. He said this stipulated that everyone should carry the banner of jihad in the cause of God against God's enemy. Scholars, he said, abandoned the field and withdrew from leading the masses. He said they found it difficult to sacrifice for the cause of God. "Scholars," Al-Zarqawi said, "blamed mujahidin for every shortcoming. Their voices are not heard except when they criticize mujahidin under the pretexts of politics or courtesy." Al-Zarqawi described it as the jurisprudence of defeat. He said the nation's scholars "were breastfed the milk of defeat. It runs in them. They will not change. They cover this reality with the cloak of jurisprudence and embroider it with the clothes of wisdom."

Al-Zarqawi said he was surprised at the position of some scholars who condemned the killing of Berg, the US hostage, who was beheaded by Al-Zarqawi. He said the scholars claimed that the operation tarnished the image of Islam in the West. "Some mediators," he said, "mediated to save this infidel. They offered to give us as much money as we would ask. Although we were in dire need of funds to pump in the body of jihad, we opted to take revenge for our fraternal brothers and nation." He said, "The beheading was the revival of an old tradition and adherence to the practice of Rashidin caliphs. The merciful messenger, prayers and peace be upon him said: 'I have allowed slaughter.' Ruthless men of Quraysh feared him and began to appease him after they used to deride him." One can say that Al-Zarqawi disputed every idea that was opposed to his beliefs including the judgment as long as scholars did not lift a finger concerning the situation in Muslim countries including Iraq, Palestine, Afghanistan, Indonesia, and Chechnya. They did not do anything more than lamentation, peaceful protests, and condemnation.

Seventh: His Hostile Position vis-a-vis Arab and Islamic Governments and Regimes

In his letters and speeches, Al-Zarqawi listed the enemies targeted by jihad in light of both objective and subjective circumstances. He placed ruling regimes at the top of the list. Al-Zarqawi built his enmity toward Arab and Islamic regimes and governments on a number of factors including their disobedience of God's shari'ah and their acquiescence in the forces of atheism to do whatever they wanted. These regimes, he said, favored their temporary life to their life in the hereafter.

Al-Zarqawi attacked his country's government in Jordan since "it kills people in the name of democracy, allows alcohol, adultery, and corruption, and views everyone who tells the truth as opposed to the state."

In his speech under "The Position Regarding Karzai's Government in Iraq," Al-Zarqawi attacked the US-installed interim government of Iyad Allawi. He said this government was formed to fool the world that the Iraqi experience had achieved success. He explained that the occupation authorities deceived the world by saying that they were able to form an Iraqi Government that represented the Iraqi people to reestablish law

and order, rebuild the country, and pave the way for free and democratic elections in Iraq.

The government of Allawi, or Iraq's Karzai, as Al-Zarqawi put it -- in reference to the similarity between Allawi's government and the government of Hamid Karzai which the occupation forces installed in Afghanistan -- was a tool in the hands of the occupiers to seize the wealth of the nation. Al-Zarqawi did not discriminate between such a regime and the occupiers. He said: "We do not differentiate between an atheist foreigner and a polytheist Arab. We will sacrifice for the reestablishment of a caliphate on earth."

Al-Zarqawi threatened to kill Iraqi Prime Minister Iyad Allawi. He said that Allawi would face the fate of Izz-al-Din Salim, head of the interim Iraqi Governing Council, who was assassinated by Al-Zarqawi's supporters when they detonated a booby-trapped car that targeted his motorcade at the entrance of the Green Zone.

Eighth: His Enmity Toward Shiites

Al-Zarqawi's enmity toward the United States and Israel was very obvious since both countries represented the forces of atheism and oppression against justice. He said that he did not fear their number, weapons, or alliance with other forces of evil against Muslims. Rather, he said, he feared that Muslims would become weak of sins.

In his speech regarding his position vis-a-vis the government of Iraq's Karzai, Al-Zarqawi pointed out that the United States installed a satellite government to seize the resources of the nation by means of hypocrites. Experience, he said, proved to the United States that indirect colonialism was the best weapon against a nation. Al-Zarqawi said the United States thought the causes of the Islamic nation were mere election chips to win the White House.

Abu-Mus'ab al-Zarqawi went through important stages in his life. Some people who shared these stages with him held different views and abandoned him once and for all. Others who worked with him became his mentors, but he surpassed them. Some others who worked with him shared his same beliefs, but were separated from him in the aftermath of 11 September. We contacted a number of these people to draw a detailed picture of the development of Al-Zarqawi's character throughout various stages. We took notes of their impressions of and experience with Al-Zarqawi. We collected their testimonies, each of which addressed a certain period of time. We are publishing these testimonies in chronological order to shed light on the personality of Abu-Mus'ab al-Zarqawi.

The first person was Abu-al-Muntasir, an individual who enjoys freedom at the present time. Abu-al-Muntasir recalled his experience with Abu-Mus'ab al-Zarqawi as a story that blemished his life, even though it came to an end. The second was Abu-Muhammad al-Maqdisi, who came to know Al-Zarqawi in Afghanistan's battlefields, in jail, and elsewhere. Al-Maqdisi remains in prison in Jordan, where he is satisfied with his scholarly role. The third was Muhammad Makkawi, better known as Sayf al-Adl, without whom Al-Zarqawi would not have become affiliated with Al-Qa'ida, in view of his disagreement with Usama Bin Ladin. The farsightedness of Sayf al-Adl enabled him to weave a special relationship between Al-Zarqawi and Al-Qa'ida in 1999. Such a relationship produced the alliance of Al-Zarqawi and Bin Ladin in 2005. There is no doubt that this relationship will have its

repercussions on the situation in the Middle East region and across the world. We leave these three testimonies in the hands of the readers, without interference in the content and without comment or clarification, since they are viewed as historical testimonies whose writers alone are responsible for their truth.

Testimony of Muhammad Abu-al-Muntasir

In August 1993, Sulayman Hamzah, a member of our Al-Da'wah and Al-Jihad Group, came to visit me with another member of the group, Sharif Abd-al-Fattah Jum'ah. Both men told me that a fraternal brother who came from Afghanistan wished to visit me after he learned about me from other fraternal brothers. I agreed. The next day, the two men came with Ahmad Fadil Nazzal al-Khalayilah, alias Abu-Mus'ab, and Khalid Mustafa al-Aruri, also known as Abu-al-Qassam. We discussed various issues for an hour, after which Abu-Mus'ab requested permission to leave. The other men left with him. While we were saying goodbye, he told me secretly that he would return the next day, God willing.

The next evening, Abu-Mus'ab came with Khalid al-Aruri, or Abu-al-Qassam. We talked about some previous experiences and events. Abu-Mus'ab was the main speaker. He frequently quoted Abu-al-Qassam, who agreed by nodding his head, whispering yes, or saying some words to show his agreement. A few times, Abu-al-Qassam referred to one or two incidents to support what Abu-Mus'ab was saying. We were enjoying the conversation when Abu-Mus'ab interrupted by telling me: "My brother, I came to you today with my fraternal brother Abu-al-Qassam to meet together for the call of tawhid [monotheism in Islam]. You are aware that the arena is in dire need for this methodology. We wish you could work with us for the cause of the faith and tawhid."

I replied: "It is my pleasure to meet with you to propagate God's faith on earth, to exalt God's word, and to bring down the word of the atheists." Abu-Mus'ab said: "Then we are together. Many fraternal brothers who agree on the importance of obedience to God wish to meet you. God willing, things will be all right. The nature of our call will focus on propagating monotheism in Islam. I will introduce you to a knowledgeable brother who wrote books on tawhid. He would like to meet with us to propagate this call."

I said: "Who is this fraternal brother?"

Abu-Mus'ab said: "He is Abu-Muhammad al-Maqdisi. His real name is Isam Muhammad Tahir al-Barqawi."

When I heard the name, I immediately said: "I know him from a booklet he wrote that we used to distribute when we worked with Abu-Humam. The title of the book was Abraham's Children [Millat Ibrahim]."

Abu-Mus'ab said: "Yes, he is the author of Abraham's Children."

Abu-Mus'ab was enthusiastic, but extremely hasty. I told him: "My brother, Ahmad, this is not Afghanistan. The arena is completely different, and certainly, the method of propagation will be different. In view of my former experience with the Jaysh Muhammad, the matter requires profound and accurate understanding and considerable examination of the situation. It requires patience and an outstanding ability to choose our brothers to avoid falling into a trap."

Abu-Mus'ab said: "Everything is taken into consideration, God willing. We will choose the right people, God willing. What do you think,

Abu-al-Qassam?"

Abu-al-Qassam said: "God willing, we are ready. Brother Abu-Mus'ab is right."

Abu-al-Qassam was very devoted to Ahmad. He never disagreed with him, regardless of the consequences. May God release him from captivity.

I said: "Abu-Mus'ab, can you identify the goals and framework of our action?"

Abu-Mus'ab: "The most important goal is to propagate the call of tawhid."

From Abu-Mus'ab's standpoint, tawhid means monotheism of governance in Islam. It is viewed as the most important feature of the tawhid of Lordship. The monotheism call that we seek to propagate stipulates the enforcement of God's shari'ah and the announcement that the regimes, laws, and constitutions that are drawn up by mankind are atheist, regardless whether these regimes were democratic or undemocratic.

Abu-Mus'ab continued: "We have a group of shari'ah messages that are exclusive to our call. We have to work vigorously to prevent people from participating in the forthcoming parliamentary elections particularly that the Islamic movement -- the Muslim Brotherhood -- is in favor of taking part in these atheist elections. God willing, we will drive them back to where they came from."

I said: "Could you mention some of these messages to me?"

Abu-Mus'ab said: "There is Abraham's Children, an audiotape, and a published message written by Abu-Talal al-Qasimi, a member of the Islamic movement in Algeria, concerning the illegitimacy of democratic elections. There are lessons of tawhid that you and brother Abu-Muhammad al-Maqdisi will give to the brothers."

I said: "Is there anything else, Abu-Mus'ab?"

Abu-Mus'ab said: "Yes."

He proposed some ideas. I had reservations, however, and I told him: "We are at the beginning of the way. We need to be patient until we become strong and then we can do things, God willing."

Abu-Mus'ab said: "God willing, we will take everything into consideration. We have faith in God."

Abu-al-Qassam said: "Do not worry. We will take everything into consideration, as Abu-Mus'ab said. We have faith in God."

I wanted to test the personality of both men, and therefore I said: "My brothers, it is not what you think. If Jordanian intelligence captures you, we will be in trouble. No one knows about Jordanian intelligence like those who tasted their treatment. We have to be very careful. God Almighty alone can save a person from the hands of the intelligence service."

Abu-Mus'ab said: "It will be all right, brother, God willing. They are nothing more than atoms to God."

Abu-al-Qassam said: "Yes, they are nothing more than atoms to God, as Abu-Mus'ab put it."

Abu-Mus'ab said: "My brother, are you willing to agree with us?"

I said: "Yes, we have faith in God."

Abu-Mus'ab said: "Give us your support, and we will entrust you to be our amir. You are eligible to be one, God willing."

I said: "Wait, brothers. Although the amirship is sanctioned by God, I have no desire to become an amir. You can appoint someone else."

Abu-Mus'ab said: "No, you will be the amir, God willing."

Abu-al-Qassam said: "Yes, you will be the amir."

I said: "No, I do not wish to be one. I wish you would stop saying that. I think it is better if we do not have these sorts of titles, since we have done nothing so far. Otherwise, let Abu-Mus'ab be the amir for the time being."

Abu-Mus'ab, however, insisted on the amirship issue. We agreed to go to Abu-Muhammad al-Maqdisi the next morning.

The next day, Abu-Mus'ab and Abu-al-Qassam came and accompanied me to Abu-Muhammad al-Maqdisi's home in the Al-Rashid neighborhood in the city of Al-Rusayfah. Abu-Mus'ab briefed Al-Maqdisi on our discussion of the previous day. He said: "We are together now, and we would like to clarify the amirship issue." We agreed that Abu-Muhammad al-Maqdisi would be the amir of the da'wah wing and Abu-Mus'ab the amir of the group. In their opinion, Abu-al-Qassam and myself will be the influential people of the group. During this session, we redistributed the roles of the da'wah action and initiated what we would be doing over the next days. The most important step we agreed on was the prompt publication of all shari'ah messages that dealt with the illegitimacy of democratic or parliamentary elections. We wanted to prevent the 1993 parliamentary elections that were scheduled to take place a few months later. We exerted further personal and collective efforts to clarify the shari'ah rule regarding governance. We decided to oppose everyone who issued a fatwa to dispute our stand.

Several days after this meeting, Ahmad Fadil -- Abu-Mus'ab -- and Khalid al-Aruri -- Abu-al-Qassam -- visited me. They were carrying a burlap bag. Abu-Mus'ab said: "I brought some hand grenades in this bag. They belong to Abu-Muhammad al-Maqdisi. He brought them with him from Kuwait after Saddam Husayn entered the country. He smuggled them in the van that transported his furniture. He has been hiding them at his home since then. He gave them to me to put them in a safer place."

I was surprised. I did not expect such a thing, let alone the haste. I fully realized that the possession of weapons meant the end of da'wah and its proponents. It was haste and recklessness. I was definitely aware that the state would not mind anything as much as it would mind such issues. No matter how substantial or dangerous an issue was, the regime would view it as trivial compared with the issue of weapons and explosive devices. The state was lying in wait to find the da'wah proponents guilty. Consequently, I adopted a firm stance. Following a discussion, Abu-Mus'ab changed his mind. He took the bag and left with Abu-al-Qassam.

Pro-da'wah and pro-tawhid action went on for months, but without a clear hierarchy or even a name for the group. Many young men who were fellow members of the Al-Da'wah and Al-Jihad Group agreed with us concerning our ideology. The Al-Da'wah and Al-Jihad Group ceased to exist, even though its objectives were more defined than this group's. The young men who joined us included Talal al-Badawi, alias Abu-al-Bara, who separated from the group after his release from jail. Al-Badawi established an ultra-fundamentalist movement.

The hastiness of brother Abu-Mus'ab was a problem for me. He wanted everything to be done quickly. He wanted to achieve all of his ambitions in a matter of months, if not hours. Such haste posed one of the most

dangerous threats to our call. Abu-Mus'ab made decisions unilaterally at the wrong time and place. More tragically, the majority of brothers used to agree with him.

An Infiltrated Meeting

I admired Abu-Mus'ab for his sincerity, but at the same time I was afraid of his over-enthusiasm. I told him that action in the Jordanian arena was almost impossible. First and foremost, I was worried that the intelligence service would infiltrate our group. One day, he came to tell me that Abu-Muhammad al-Maqdisi was giving lessons at gathering places. He said that Abu-Muhammad was giving a lesson on Al-Wasitiyah [Al-Wasitiyah is a religious study written by Ibn-Taymiyah for a group of religious intellectuals in Wasit (Iraq) before the arrival of the Mongols in Damascus] at the home of Nafiz Fayiz. I went to Fayiz's home, and I was horrified by what I saw. Al-Maqdisi was surrounded by 15 people. I left immediately. I did not stay, since I did not like the situation or some people there. It appeared to me that the meeting was infiltrated. In light of my former experience with the Al-Da'wah and Al-Jihad Group, I thought it would be better if these lessons were given at a mosque and not at gathering places. I was afraid of undesirable security repercussions, which actually happened.

Some people took advantage of the way I left the meeting and tried to drive a wedge between Abu-Mus'ab and me. We did not see each other for more than two months. Suddenly, Abu-Mus'ab came back to me. I welcomed him, and after he calmed down he told me that he was being hunted, along with a number of brothers, including Abu-al-Qassam, Al-Maqdisi, Abd-al-Hadi, and Sulayman Hamzah. Yes, they were hunted by the intelligence. Abu-Mus'ab said he could not find a safer haven than my home. I welcomed him and said I was ready to forget what had happened. I agreed to support them. Abu-Mus'ab was accompanied by Nasri Izz-al-Din al-Tahayinah. I asked Abu-Mus'ab if he trusted him. He said he was a trustworthy fraternal brother. I told him I was worried that he would not withstand the intelligence service. He told me it was just the opposite. They remained in hiding at my home for more than four months.

Detention

Toward the end of Ramadan 1414 of the Hegira, corresponding to the beginning of March 1994, I went on a trip with two friends to perform the minor pilgrimage. A fight erupted between the two men and an intelligence officer. As a result, we were arrested at the border on our return from the trip. We were taken into custody at the General Intelligence Department in the Amman neighborhood of Al-Abdali. In the evening, an interrogator summoned me and told me that I was detained as a result of the brothers' problem with the intelligence man at the border. I told him it was merely a quarrel between two people. The interrogator asked me about Ahmad Fadil al-Khalayilah. He also asked me about Isam Tahir al-Barqawi. I denied that I knew any of them. The interrogation lasted for 12 days. On my fifth day in detention, a representative of the Red Cross visited me. I gave him a letter to deliver to my wife and parents, telling them that I was detained at the General Intelligence Department. When Abu-Mus'ab, Abu-Muhammad, and other brothers learned of this, they left the house for safer places. On the last day of March, after 2000 [local time], the interrogator summoned me and wrote down my final affidavit. He told me that he would release me the next morning. I returned to my cell feeling happy

that I would leave. My cell was facing the main gate to the prison. It allowed me to see who was coming in or out. I was shocked to see Ahmad Fadil al-Khalayilah held by a big intelligence guard. There was a group of men with Abu-Mus'ab, including Nasri al-Tahayinah. This was unanticipated. I hoped that Abu-Mus'ab and Nasri would not say anything about me. Twenty minutes later, however, the blow occurred. One of the guards in charge of torture came running toward the cell, asking for me. He pulled me by the hand and took me to the torture yard. At the entrance to the yard, I saw Nasri al-Tahayinah, who was apparently beaten a bit. He was asked: "Is he the man?" He said: "Yes." I was taken into the torture yard. God knew what happened.

Later, they handcuffed me and covered my eyes. They took me home to see whether Al-Maqdisi was there. When they did not find anyone, they took me back to the General Intelligence Department. They put me, Ahmad Fadil, and Abu-al-Qassam in solitary confinement in another, underground building. We were deprived of sleep for 15 nights. They wanted me to confess about the explosive devices that the brothers possessed. I told them I was against these issues. I told them that I refused to take the weapons. They believed me. Abu-Muhammad al-Maqdisi was arrested a few days later. I learned afterward, via a close aide who rented an apartment for him in Amman, where he lived with Nasri, that Abu-Mus'ab had been detained. As for Abu-Muhammad al-Maqdisi, he handed himself over in exchange for the release of his brothers, who had been taken into custody.

During the torture period, the Red Cross was supposed to visit the intelligence prison on a certain day. We were taken away to the roof of one of the general intelligence buildings to hide us from the Red Cross. We stayed there from morning until late afternoon. Afterward, they took us back to our cells to torture us again. That day, I was with Abu-Mus'ab, Abu-al-Qassam, and other brothers.

After that, we were taken from the general intelligence prison in the old building in Al-Abdali to the general intelligence prison at the new premises in Al-Jandawil neighborhood in the Amman district of Bayadir Wadi al-Sir. We remained in custody until September 1994. During that time, we used to hear each other calling "God is Great" or "God is our Lord. You have no Lord." Everyone, including Abu-Muhammad, Abu-Mus'ab, myself, Abd-al-Hadi, and others used to say such expressions. We used to watch each other when we were let out in the yard. Things remained the same until the end of the month, when everyone was released, except for 14 [figure as published] people whom the General Intelligence Department said should be tried by the prosecutor general. The defendants were:

1. Isam Muhammad Tahir Muhammad, better known as Abu-Muhammad al-Maqdisi;
2. Ahmad Fadil Nazzal, alias Abu-Mus'ab;
3. Mustafa Hasan Musa;
4. Khalid Mustafa al-Aruri, also known as Abu-al-Qassam;
5. Sulayman Talib Ahmad Hamzah, alias Abu-al-Mu'tasim;
6. Muhammad Wasfi Umar Abu-Khalil;
7. Nasri Izz-al-Din Muhammad al-Tahayinah, also known as Abu-al-Izz;
8. Nabil Yusuf Ahmad Abu-Harithiyah, alias Abu-Mujahid;
9. Sharif Ibrahim Abd-al-Fattah Jum'ah;
10. Ahmad Abdallah Yusuf al-Zaytawi;
11. Muhammad Abd-al-Karim Ahmad al-Rawashidah;

12. Muhammad Fakhri Musa al-Salih;
13. Ala-al-Din Atif;
14. Sa'adat Abd-al-Jawad;
15. Talal Kayid al-Badawi;
16. Abd-al-Majid al-Majali, also known as Abu-Qutaybah.

Tremendous Capabilities, But Weak Planning

Before and during detention, the brothers' capabilities were very humble. Weak planning and infiltration were evident. I wished that the da'wah period had lasted longer to enhance the knowledge of the young men, since most of them were uneducated. Moreover, there was a need to foster the da'wah and find a suitable foundation to protect and support it. However, it was God's will. Following the detention period at the General Intelligence Department and the severity of the torture to which some brothers were exposed -- which made them tougher and more defiant -- the shortcomings of the action prior to the detention became a major lesson to learn.

On the last day of our detention in the intelligence cells -- where most of us were held for at least seven to nine months -- we were transferred to the Suwaqah Prison, located more than 80 kilometers south of Amman. A senior officer at the prison asked us to take off our clothes before we entered our rooms. We looked at each other, and I said: "We will not take off our clothes. No one is going to see our genitals." The brothers supported me, and we all refused to take off our clothes. I knew they were trying to rub our nose in the dirt. Therefore, we refused. Why did they insist on searching us, when we were coming from the General Intelligence, the most dangerous and authoritarian security department? What could we hide? Eventually, they searched us with our clothes on. We were led into the prison and put in a room that held the whole group. I remember it was room 204. Neither Abu-Mus'ab, nor Al-Maqdisi were with us then.

The first step we took was making a decision regarding the amirship of the group. It was important to install an amir to handle our affairs with the administration. Some brothers suggested that I become an amir. Some others nominated Abu-Qutaybah, but he refused. Finally, Nabil Abu-Harithiyah, alias Abu-Mujahid, was chosen, since he spent years in prison in connection with the Jaysh Muhammad case. I was selected as the official spokesman for the group to handle issues with the administration of the prison, with or without the amir. A rough stage began during which we fostered a new status quo in the prison. We had our prestige when dealing with the prison administration and guards, but it was not without grave sacrifices.

In the meantime, we followed the news of our brothers in various prisons until the first month of 1995, when a second stage began. Abu-Mus'ab arrived at the Suwaqah Prison with another Islamist who was detained separately on charges of possessing explosive devices and opening fire on an intelligence officer. The name of the man was Mahmud Kharyush, also known as Abu-Ubaydah. The prison administration put both men in a ward far from ours, but they sat with us that day. The next day, Abu-Mus'ab came to us without Abu-Ubaydah, since the prison administration did not allow him to come. We were reunited after a bitter struggle, particularly after the arrival of Abu-Muhammad al-Maqdisi. A month later, however, problems arose with the prison administration, and we were sent to

various prisons across the Kingdom. Abu-Muhammad al-Maqdisi, Mustafa Hasan, Nabil Abu-Harithiyah, Muhammad Salih Musa, and myself were taken to Ma'an Prison, 220 kilometers south of the capital of Amman. Abu-Mus'ab and another group were taken to the Qafqafa Prison. Other groups were taken to the prisons of Birin and Al-Juwaydah. Instead of dealing with our problem at one prison, there was an unsolvable problem in each of the prisons. Everyone was making his own judgment. Four months after being separated in different jails, we were taken back to the Suwaqah Prison in April 1995. We were given a ward to share with the Islamists. Another phase began.

Al-Takfir Group

The prison's administration used to call us the Al-Takfir [Excommunication] Group. One of the brothers asked me what we should answer when they called us by this name. I told them: "Tell them we are not the Al-Takfir Group. We are the Al-Tawhid group. Not only this, we are the group of Al-Tawhid and Al-Jihad." Thus, the group was later known as Al-Tawhid and Al-Jihad.

We were together with the Al-Tahrir [Liberation] Group in the ward. A group of Jordanian Afghans were in the opposite ward. Some of them joined us, and so did other Islamist who were imprisoned on individual charges. Another new group under the name of the Al-Tajdid al-Islami [Islamic Renewal] group joined us, as well.

The amirship issue began to surface again. Isam al-Barqawi was chosen as amir of the group. However, the way he dealt with the administration concerning our causes did not win the admiration of many of the brothers, including myself, Ahmad Fadil, and Abdallah Hashayikah. Several months later, the amirship went to Ahmad Fadil. I felt that Ahmad Fadil was acting in favor of his emirate. I also felt that Al-Maqdisi was acting in favor of his shaykhdom to win a title. I felt that the writings of Al-Maqdisi were not purely for God, but for fame, since he wanted everyone to say that he wrote or said something. Subsequent events prompted me to separate from both men and, consequently, from the entire group. However, I supported them in court until the sentences were issued, and I defended their outspoken hostility to the jury.

During the time in prison, a number of martyrdom-seeking operations took place in Palestine. The military wing of the Islamic Resistance Movement, HAMAS, carried out these operations. Some fraternal brothers in the prison and elsewhere asked for the opinion of Al-Maqdisi vis-a-vis the legitimacy or illegitimacy of these operations. Al-Maqdisi maintained that such operations were forbidden since they were tantamount to committing suicide. I argued with him and provided evidence from the shari'ah. I told him that these operations were legitimate. However, he refused what I said. Ahmad Fadil, alias Abu-Mus'ab, supported him, since he viewed Abu-Muhammad al-Maqdisi as his shaykh, scholar, and mufti. Al-Maqdisi issued a fatwa announcing that these operations were forbidden. Many people in the prison disagreed with him, including Al-Tajdid Group and engineer Ata Abu-al-Rishtah, who was then the official spokesman of the Al-Tahrir Group. Al-Maqdisi was confused, and therefore he issued a fatwa called "la'am" -- a combination of la [no] and na'am [yes].

I refuted Al-Maqdisi's fatwa. I published a letter in which I referred to shari'ah evidence that showed the legitimacy of such operations. In the letter, I pointed out that the person who carried out such an operation

was the best martyr after a man who stood in front of a tyrant imam, rebuked him, and killed him. I said that the latter was the master of martyrs, followed by the person who carried out the martyrdom-seeking operation. God knows best. I published this fatwa in prison and elsewhere in response to Al-Maqdisi's position.

A week after I was acquitted, the moment came for my release. The acquittal was announced after four years behind bars. What kind of justice was that? What did I reap from four years in prison? I ask God Almighty to consider them as my good deeds on Judgment Day. "(It will be) the Day when no soul shall have power (to do) aught for another: For the command, that Day, will be (wholly) with Allah." [Koranic verse].

The acquittal letter was issued and the prison's administration asked me and Nasri al-Tahayinah to get ready to return from where we came. Abu-Mus'ab came to say goodbye. He told me: "Let us forget the past. Let us be together in the future, God willing." I said: "God willing." Two years after my release, King Husayn Bin-Talal died. The rest of the brothers were released from prison following a general amnesty issued by King Abdallah II, King Husayn's son. When Abu-Mus'ab got out of jail, he visited me at home and asked me to open a new chapter with him, work together, and perhaps travel to Afghanistan. I welcomed him as a guest, but I refused to work with him again in any way in view of his narcissism, not to mention other traits. Abu-Mus'ab left my house and never came back again. It was the last contact between us.

Abu-Muhammad al-Maqdisi's Testimony

Isam Tahir al-Barqawi, better known as Abu-Muhammad al-Maqdisi, wrote a document in September 2004 about his knowledge of Al-Zarqawi and opinion regarding Al-Zarqawi's current acts in Iraq. We are publishing this document verbatim:

Al-Zarqawi: Support, Counsel, Suffering, and Hopes

Praise be to God, the Lord of the universe. Prayers and peace be upon the commander of mujahidin [Prophet Muhammad], his family, and honorable companions.

I first met Abu-Mus'ab [Al-Zarqawi] in Peshawar. We met briefly at the home of Abu-al-Walid al-Ansari, may God protect him. That was in the early 1990s. I did not know Al-Zarqawi before, because I was a newcomer to Jordan. When Al-Zarqawi returned from Afghanistan, he visited me at my home and expressed enthusiasm in support of tawhid and propagating the faith. Abu-al-Walid was the one who gave him my address in Jordan. He advised him to contact me if he wanted to work on behalf of religion in Jordan. This was almost 14 years ago.

We cooperated together in this field. I organized lessons in various parts of the country. We printed out some of my books and disseminated them among the people. Young men rallied around our call and circulated our books and messages. However, the security services became aware and stormed our homes at different times. The manhunt began, and we were arrested, one after the other. We were held in custody in the cells of the General Intelligence Department for different periods of time, the minimum of which was six months. The detention became the first experience against God's enemy in this country. I opted to come out openly with the truth and avoid fear. I faced them and told them straightforwardly that they were atheists and that their masters and tyrants in the cells and interrogation centers were atheists. I was

together with Abu-Mus'ab and a number of young men who were influenced by my call and writings.

Before the trials, we were taken from solitary confinement to other prisons. Since I was classified as the primary defendant, I was isolated in a prison in the north of the country. Abu-Mus'ab, the second defendant, was taken to a prison in central Jordan, and the other fraternal brothers were all taken to a prison in the south. A month later, they gathered us all in one prison in the south -- the Suwaqah Prison. The brothers chose me as their amir, a position I held for almost a year, after which I realized it was taking too much of my time. Therefore, I opted to dedicate my time to writing books and giving lessons, particularly because this group of young men who shared our suffering in jail were new to the call and in dire need to understand Islamic jurisprudence. After I convinced the majority of young men, I decided to abandon the amirship and to appoint Abu-Mus'ab as my successor. Some insensible writers tried to portray the issue as a dispute over the amirship, as if it was an emirate or a state. It was a confined emirate in prison to address the brothers' concerns and unify our policy vis-a-vis the prison's administration. The maximum number of members of this emirate was 30. During most of our periods of imprisonment, they did not exceed 15.

I did not abandon Abu-Mus'ab after I entrusted him to become an amir. I stood beside him in the face of the enemy. I took care of sermons on Fridays and holidays. I gave lessons to the young men and provided Abu-Mus'ab with counsel. I supported him against some of those who disputed his amirship, and I spared no effort to give him help and advice, since he asked me to do that before he succeeded me as amir. He also stood by my side in propagating the faith. He was compliant and enthusiastic about everything I wrote in support of tawhid and the renunciation of polytheism. We were in agreement concerning the foundations of the Islamic jurisprudence. We shared the same niche. He admired my writings and supported them. He urged every young man whom he knew in jail and elsewhere to photocopy, read, and circulate them. Thanks to God, the stage of trials passed, and we employed them successfully on behalf of our call, the excommunication of the regime, and the denunciation of its laws. We announced this outspokenly from the prisoner's dock in front of journalists and others in the audience. I prepared bill of indictment against the president of the court, his tyrants, and the state. I read it out to him when he asked me: "Guilty or not guilty?" Together with my brothers, we said: "You are guilty. You forestalled God's shari'ah and ruled in contravention of God's rules. You allied with the Jews and fought the mujahidin and proponents of tawhid." In the indictment, which I called the trial of the State Security Court and its jury in harmony with God's shari'ah, I provided him with evidence of his atheism and the atheism of his regime. I declared that my brothers and myself did not believe in their courts, laws, idols, or state. Abu-Mus'ab and the other defendants were present and took part in it all. It cooled their eyes and boosted their spirits. They felt the blessing of our call and rejoiced in the fruits we harvested every day we were in prison. The enemy wanted to silence this call, but the sorcery turned against the sorcerer. The prison and the trials became a podium from where we propagated our ideology. Thanks to God, the dilemma became a reward.

"Then they sought a stratagem against him: but We made them the

ones who lost the most!" [Koranic verse]

These were blessed days, during which we strived to propagate the faith in jail among the soldiers, officers, officials who used to visit the prison sometimes, and inmates who circulated my books. They used to pray with us and attend my sermons on Fridays and holidays. God helped me, and I wrote many books during my term in prison. Praise be to God Almighty. The good seeds were sown everywhere. I ask God Almighty to accept them and reward me on Judgment Day.

The regime sensed the danger of this call among the prisoners. They became afraid that it would spread from behind the bars. They were concerned that my writings would be published, even though I was locked up. Therefore, they tried to isolate us from the other inmates. They prevented them from praying with us. Everyone who used to talk to us or even shake hands with us was punished. They isolated us in special wards where no one was allowed to enter. They relocated us from one prison to another, the last of which was the Al-Jafr desert prison, where they tried to isolate us from the entire world. However, they did not succeed. Every time they did that, they brought us closer to the people and facilitated our contact with a large number of young men. When they transferred us to the Al-Salt Prison, they made it easier for the young men of Al-Salt city to visit us, instead of traveling the long distance to the Suwaqah Prison. The relocation facilitated our communication with them. When they moved us to the Al-Jafr Prison, they brought us closer to the city of Ma'an and facilitated our contact with our brothers who introduced us to new people in Ma'an. Whenever they closed a door, God opened new doors everywhere. We were able to publish books and obtain useful references. "And (the unbelievers) plotted and planned, and God, too, planned, and the best of planners is God." [Koranic verse] This was our situation with them the whole time. Without knowing it, they were tightening the noose, but God was freeing us.

Thanks to God, this was always the case. They sent me to prison every year or two, without guilt other than declaring my faith, tawhid, and call, in which I mainly announced the excommunication of tyrants, incited young men against their masters, and supported mujahidin against Americans everywhere. This was my crime, for which I was taken to prison every now and then. They thought that the jail would undermine our ideology. They were too stupid to know that jail and suffering would intensify our call. God Almighty made the prison one of the stages during which we learned and at the same time educated others. If they had known that we would achieve victory, they would not have held us in custody for one minute. Praise be to God for His generosity and blessings. "Fain would they extinguish God's light with their mouths, but God will not allow but that His light should be perfected, even though the Unbelievers may detest (it)." [Koranic verse] We were set free, thank God. I opted to stay in the country to take care of the call we initiated. I hope I will convey it west of the Jordan River, where I have hopes and ambitions.

Abu-Mus'ab in Afghanistan

Abu-Mus'ab opted to leave all this and travel to Afghanistan. I was not happy, because I had reservations regarding the situation there.

However, he was enthusiastic, and he urged everyone he knew to go to Afghanistan. It was not only sorrowful to see Abu-Mus'ab emptying the arena from pro-tawhid men, but it was also painful to see Abu-Abd-

al-Rahman -- Ra'id Khuraysat -- leaving with another group of young men from Al-Salt to Afghanistan and then to Kurdistan, where he was killed with a group of brothers while fighting the Kurdish Northern Alliance. Abu-Abd-al-Rahman had taken strides in propagating our call and establishing training camps.

Abu-Abd-al-Rahman's endeavors were amazing. The man was a pioneer in the field of propagating our ideology, a beacon for young men, and a thorn in the side of heretics. As for Abu-Mus'ab, he used to tell everyone who blamed him for emigrating from his country that he was a man who loved jihad and had no patience to learn, teach, or propagate the faith. He accompanied a number of young men to Afghanistan, where they took advantage of the circumstances of the country and its camps. All this, however, was obvious to our country's intelligence as a result of fatal organizational defects. It hurt me to see that, but I tried hard to advise them whenever I could.

Abstention From Helping Taliban

I learned that Abu-Mus'ab and his group of young men abstained from fighting alongside the Taliban when they experienced events, some of which I had reservations against. These events discouraged me from traveling to Afghanistan. I knew these things before, without going all the distance to witness them. These events were circulated by the media. We learned of some of them via the radio before we were released. Nevertheless, enthusiasm to escape the pressure of the enemy prompted them to close their eyes to these things. Later, however, I did not know what prompted them to refrain from fighting alongside the Taliban, although they should have.

I followed the news of the brothers, including their detention, relocation, or return to Jordan. I felt sorry for the dispersion of their efforts and capabilities in various countries, including Afghanistan, Kurdistan, Pakistan, Iran, and Iraq. A group of them were detained in Pakistan, another group in Iran, and a third in Kurdistan and Iraq. I felt sorry for them for working without a clear program and hopping from one region to another, depending on different circumstances and not on a defined or pre-planned strategy.

I used to follow the news of how the intelligence in Jordan received a flood of information from the returnees, which saved the intelligence tremendous efforts to send spies to every country. The intelligence learned about the exact details about the young men, including their activities, camps, places of residence, addresses, and new aliases in both Afghanistan and Kurdistan. I was shocked whenever the intelligence told me such detailed information. I tried to hide the news of the young men as much as I could. During interrogation, I heard detailed information about the young men for the first time. When I was released, I found out that the information was correct. It was not cleverness on the part of the intelligence or knowledge of the supernatural. Instead, it was organizational weakness and fatal security negligence on the part of the young men.

I advised some men and sent messages to them. This caused me so much harm from the enemy and others that God alone knew about. I endured all that to protect my brothers, their efforts, and their capabilities. I was afraid that the enemy would abort these efforts. It was painful to see that the young men were dealing with organizational and military issues superficially. The lack of experience foiled several attempts by Abu-Mus'ab and frustrated the organizational action that he

attempted to establish in Jordan. Subsequently, these unsuccessful attempts resulted in the imprisonment of many young men. Some of them were sentenced to life in prison on charges of involvement in three attempts. In the last two experiences, the enemy won huge funds that Muslims, their call, and jihad needed badly. I used to follow their news and give them advice, but they never listened until it was too late. It was sad to know that these organizational mistakes and security weaknesses took place again in Afghanistan. Abu-Mus'ab did not learn from our experiences at home. He was not successful in choosing the right individuals with organizational expertise, despite the availability of financial resources. I felt sorry to see the enemy confiscating all these resources when each action was aborted. Those concerned did not invest these resources in an action that would help the nation or jihad. They did not take into consideration the necessary security precautions that would accommodate their ambitions. This was not guesswork. I experienced these events whenever the attempts were aborted. I examined the situation of the advocates of these acts and their uncertainty. When I was in jail with them, I advised them to be cautious of certain things that I anticipated, but they did not listen. Very often, I was taken to jail as a result of such advice or as a result of the possession of those young men of my writings. Some of them confessed that they knew me although I had no organizational affiliation with them. The young men did not inform me of any of these events, but I anticipated the outcome in view of my experience in the field of propagation. They did not heed my advice. They took shelter under my name, writings, and "shaykhdom." I would have not worried if their action had been accurate. However, there is no need to mention details here.

Downfall of Afghanistan's Regime

In the aftermath of the downfall of Afghanistan's regime, the fraternal young men were scattered across Pakistan and Iran. Some of them were detained in Pakistan and Iran. Some others were killed in Afghanistan at the hands of the proxy Northern Alliance. Abu-Mus'ab went to Kurdistan, which was not on his itinerary one day. He did not agree with Shaykh Ra'id Khuraysat, may his soul rest in heaven. Abu-Abd-al-Rahman [Khuraysat] had settled in Kurdistan already, where he established camps and trained many men. He had a significant influence there, but he was killed with a group of young men during confrontations with the proxy Kurdish Northern Alliance. May their souls rest in heaven.

The remnants of the men rallied around Abu-Mus'ab. Some of them had good military experience, especially in the field of making explosive devices. These young men helped Abu-Mus'ab in Iraq after many of his men in Afghanistan were killed, detained, or hunted in Pakistan, Iran, and Jordan. Other men from Jordan and elsewhere joined Abu-Mus'ab, including Abu-Anas al-Shami. I rejoiced at the news, since I knew that Abu-Mus'ab was in dire need of someone who would remind him to be cautious amid such complicated circumstances in Iraq and the all-out war against him and every mujahid. This prompted me to write these words.

Thanks to God, the experiences shaped me, and the days taught me to refrain from over-enthusiasm or slackness and to maintain my balance whenever I could. I forward these words to my brother Abu-Mus'ab, and I announce it loud and clear that I support him against his enemies,

their masters, evil scholars, and lackeys. I forward these words to him to advise and remind him and other mujahidin. I will be happy if he heeds my advice and invigorates my hopes, and I will be sad if he does not. However, I would have done my duty toward him and other fraternal mujahidin.

I begin by reiterating what I have already said. I believe that Abu-Mus'ab al-Zarqawi is a proponent of the ahl al-sunnah wa al-jama'ah [Sunnis]. He supports our tenets concerning tawhid, Abraham's Children, and the excommunication of tyrants and their supporters. Like us, he discriminates between supporters of those whom we excommunicate who share their atheism and hostility against pro-tawhid men, on one side, and others who might help them carry out a forbidden act or flatter them for committing a wrongdoing that is not viewed as atheism, on the other. We do not excommunicate the latter, and he does not do that, either. His faith and ours is the faith of Sunnis. We do not excommunicate a Muslim for some guilt unless this Muslim declares that he allows things that are forbidden by God. God willing, Abu-Mus'ab and the young men with him will adhere to this.

Like us, Abu-Mus'ab believes that the blood, honor, and property of Muslims in various Islamic countries are protected by the laws of vendetta. I do not imagine in any event that he will inflict harm on a Muslim soul, property, or honor. I know he is willing to sacrifice his soul, blood, and assets for the cause of his fellow Muslims to bring them out from the darkness of tyrants to the light and justice of Islam. It was a lie when the enemy tried to hold him responsible for an attempt to target thousands of civilians in his country with chemical weapons. This was absolute deception that no one believed. The deep-rooted hatred of the enemy prompted them to tell such a lie against every mujahid concerned about his religion and nation. The enemy told such a lie since they were driven by their loyalty to their American masters, who were jealous of every proud mujahid. Unlike US lackeys, mujahidin refuse to be crushed under the heels of Americans. From an Islamic jurisprudence perspective, I know that although the man was not an excellent student, he learned God's book [the Koran] by heart in jail. He used to ask many questions about justice. He was ready to sacrifice everything for the sake of integrity. When we were in jail, he believed in my ideology and writings. He did not make any decision without consulting with me in support of tawhid and Abraham's Children. Therefore, I was not surprised when I learned that he named his fighting group in Iraq Jama'ah al-Tawhid wa al-Jihad, albeit without minimum consultation with me. He named his group after my Internet website, which has been known for years as the Minbar [Podium] of al-Tawhid wa al-Jihad. I ask God Almighty that the group will honor its name.

Although Abu-Mus'ab did not adopt our tenets precisely, I was happy when I learned that he became close to Abu-Anas. In the past, Abu-Mus'ab lacked such flexibility, which denied him integration into Al-Qa'ida under Shaykh Usama [Bin Ladin], may God protect him. However, I hope that such flexibility is not the outcome of pressure. Sunnis are supposed to fight and cooperate alongside despotic amirs against infidels. I hope that his rapprochement or elimination decisions are not determined by utter allegiance to him. This is an unbalanced standard that attracts ignorant people who are not qualified for many missions and whose flaws shocked us many times. I hope he does not

eliminate virtuous people, each of whom is worth a whole tribe. It is a pity that he does not employ their expertise. The naivete and limited experience of leading a small group in prison should not affect armed organizational action. We have paid a dear price for this when brothers were either killed or sentenced to life in prison, not to mention the enormous financial losses that were wasted on these hasty experiences. Honesty, love of the faith, sincerity, and enthusiasm are not enough to enrich an experience and to proceed with an organizational action. They do not replace knowledgeable people. Be aware of arrogance or satisfaction with insignificant or short-lived leadership. Do not undermine the expertise of knowledgeable people merely because they do not agree with you on everything. I know that Abu-Mus'ab does not compromise his faith or the tenets of tawhid. I pray to God that he will not be harmed by his jihadist decisions as a result of the pressure and brutality of the enemy. He should adhere to the straight path in his actions and abstain from exaggeration or negligence.

When it comes to military decisions, Abu-Mus'ab should not excommunicate people in general. He should know that the masses in the country where we live call themselves Muslims. Thus, he should refrain from shedding the blood of Muslims, even if they are sinners or defiant. He should discriminate between fighting in the original home of atheism where the masses are infidels and fighting in the new country of atheism where the masses call themselves Muslims. He should take this into consideration. He should avoid shedding the blood, property, or honor of Muslims, even if they are sinners or defiant. Shedding the blood of people who are protected by the laws of vendetta is a critical dilemma on Judgment Day. It is better to leave a thousand atheists than to shed the blood of one Muslim. We hope he is aware of this.

Remainder of Al-Maqdisi's Testimony

When I look at the current widespread chaos in Iraq, I underline what I have already mentioned. The mayhem aims to tarnish the bright image of jihad by means of car bombs, roadside bombs, and mortar bombs in streets and markets packed with Muslims. The pure hands of mujahidin should not be stained by shedding inviolable blood. A fighting group should abstain from such acts. It should respect its jihad and the efforts of its supporters to reap the benefits of jihad. It should not allow itself to commit any of these acts. Its jihad should always be accompanied by responsible words that defend mujahidin and acquit them of disreputable acts.

I have something worthwhile to say. Mujahidin should make the right decisions and stay away from illegitimate acts. They should refrain from overreaction in response to the brutality of tyrants. A warrior should not exceed the legitimate limits. He should abstain from kidnapping or killing people who are Muslims by name under pretexts that they work for infidels in jobs that do not support atheism or antagonism against Muslims. They should abstain from killing or abducting women or children of the enemy since these groups of people are inviolable in Islam. Likewise, mujahidin should not be involved in suicide operations, as some people call them, or martyrdom-seeking operations, as others like to call them. According to our erudite scholars, these actions are called jihadist. We should not ignore the conditions of jihad that our seasoned scholars identified. These known conditions should

never be overstepped under pretexts that men are available to carry out such acts, bombs from the deposed regime are readily available, or the country's circumstances provide a suitable environment for chaos. A mujahid can adopt the aforementioned means only when necessary. Beware of exceeding the limits or making such acts a traditional fighting method or an end in itself.

Our ideology of tawhid and Abraham's children is not a reformist call to patch up the situation. Rather, it is a radical call to uproot tyrants and their polytheism. It is a war on their allies. This war is established on redefining adherence or disobedience, love or hate, and cooperation or antagonism. Accordingly, our ideology does not nurture small birds or dervishes. It raises hawks and lions that adhere to the shari'ah and protect the honor and blood of Muslims. Mujahidin should abide by Islamic jurisprudence in favor of the greater Muslim interests and renunciation of corruption. They should choose the most convenient acts and take into consideration the nation's circumstances, the resources of Muslim citizens, and the nature of the phase. Mujahidin should take all this into consideration or else they will rush at fighting without discrimination between good and evil or between the nation's interests and destruction. The acts of ultra extremist groups are fresh in memory. Beware of repeating these acts. Let every mujahid remember that we are adherents of a great religion. Its jihad, objectives, and means are different from those of mafia gangs. The mafia maintains that the end justifies the means since it is not deterred by faith or shari'ah. Since financial and responsible human resources are scarce, individuals should take into consideration the situation of the Muslim nation, scholars, and mujahidin in the four corners of the world including free or imprisoned mujahidin. Individuals are not allowed to gamble or waste these resources. They will be accountable before God for wasting their youth and assets. The situation will be graver for those in charge of Muslim lives and resources when God asks them about the age and funds of mujahidin and Muslims. A mujahid, therefore, should opt for actions that are the best for Muslims and their power but most detrimental for the enemy and their atheism. There is no room to experiment or gamble when it comes to the blood of mujahidin and resources of Muslims.

Moreover, beware of expanding the circle of conflict or fighting individuals other than the occupiers and their allied lackeys. Beware of expanding this circle if there is no point behind it or if it dissipates the efforts of mujahidin. Foremost of all, avoid actions that include involvement in unsuccessful plans in countries beyond the locations of mujahidin and their resources. There is no point of revengeful acts that terrify people, provoke the entire world against mujahidin, and prompt the world to fight them or take advantage of the situation to reshuffle the cards or tarnish mujahidin. Mujahidin should refrain from acts that target civilians, churches, or other places of worship including Shiite sites. The battle is against the occupiers and their lackeys, and not against the mosques of Shiites regardless of their history and animosity. Mujahidin should discriminate between Shiite citizens and fighters. In light of the iniquitous crusade and occupation that does not discriminate between Sunnis or Shiites, a declaration of war against sects that call themselves Muslims is not in favor of the shari'ah policy. Mujahidin should abstain from making meaningless threats against countries around the world. Such threats not only aggravate the war but

also rally the world against mujahidin. Repetitive threats cost mujahidin their credibility.

Jihad should be accompanied by a mature media that addresses people straightforwardly and informs them of what they do not know -- a media that does not adopt unsuccessful actions that people do not understand. It should avoid tarnishing jihad or discouraging people from following it. The media should take into consideration that people lack knowledge regarding the elite of mujahidin who adhere to Islamic jurisprudence. An individual who does not feel proud about his religion will not do jihad or mujahidin any favor. Rather, he will harm them.

God alone knows. The life history of our Prophet Muhammad, prayers and peace be upon him, and his guidance are evident enough. Beware of curtailing jihad or confining it to revengeful reactions. Beware of separating jihad from its concept that builds the nation and enhances its power. Do not focus on the means and forget about the end and do not separate from knowledgeable people or proponents of da'wah.

As a result of the atrocities of Saddam and his party, the Islamic awakening came to Iraq late and was uprooted at various stages. The best thing that mujahidin can offer to this beleaguered country -- if it is not possible to meet great expectations at present -- the best is a pure jihad, right choices, and mature media. This should raise a generation of the country's citizens and tribes that carry one banner and initiate jihad. The people of Mecca know its alleys better, as the saying goes. The country's citizens have the priority to defend their own affairs, discuss their concerns, and shoulder their responsibilities. Mujahidin should pay attention to this issue. It is detrimental if mujahidin do not care about the balance of power in the country or its nature and the nature of its citizens. Strangers should not come first. Mujahidin should not overlook the experiences of our fraternal mujahidin in various countries. I have frequently said that Iraqis should be at the forefront of resistance. A wise Islamic Iraqi leadership that is aware of the concerns of the Iraqi people and knows how to address the people responsibly will become a beacon for the people. It will avoid making dubious decisions or committing disreputable acts. Mujahidin should take this into consideration if they want to reap the benefits of their jihad in the long run. I ask God Almighty to grant victory to His soldiers and give power to His worshipers.

Finally, during my current term in prison I wrote a book -- observations regarding the dividends of jihad concerning ignorance of shari'ah and ignorance of reality. In it, I included my advice to mujahidin and the proponents of da'wah. I ask God to make every mujahid benefit from my advice and refrain from asking whom I mean by every statement. The issue is greater than this. I have never backstabbed Muslims or sincere and honest mujahidin. My statements address many issues and experiences in various countries and fields. They do not focus on one individual in particular. The book includes experiences of mujahidin and events that came to the surface and drew the attention of people. I advise my fraternal mujahidin to protect their efforts and keep jihad in its brightest image. This is the best victory for them -- better than sacrificing their lives. A well-judged opinion in war is far better than fighting, as the proverb goes.

I hope that readers will find these remarks useful. I published them in support of and as counsel to my fraternal brother Abu-Mus'ab, may God Almighty protect him and grant him success on the path of good

guidance. May God grant him and his companions success in favor of tawhid and the pure faith. I hope they listen to the advice. "Allah will certainly aid those who aid his (cause), for verily Allah is full of strength, exalted in might, (able to enforce His will)." [Koranic verse] Prayers and peace be upon our Prophet Muhammad and his entire family and companions.

[Signed] Abu-Muhammad al-Maqdisi

Qafqafa Prison, Jumada al-Thani 1425, corresponding to July 2004

[Description of Source: London Al-Quds al-Arabi in Arabic -- London-based independent Arab nationalist daily with an anti-US and anti-Saudi editorial line; generally pro-Palestinian, tends to be sympathetic to Bin Ladin]

Terrorism: Detained Al-Qa'ida Leader Sayf al-Adl Chronicles Al-Zarqawi's Rise in Organization

On 25 May, "Naqil al-Haq" posted to the Islamic Renewal Organization forum a chapter of a book entitled, "Al-Zarqawi: The Second al-Qa'ida Generation." The book was completed in Spring 2005 by Fu'ad Husayn, a Jordanian journalist and writer, who did extensive research on Al-Zarqawi and received information from three people close to Al-Zarqawi, including Sayf al-Adl, to whom this chapter is attributed. The Arabic-language London-based daily Al-Quds al-Arabi started serializing the book on 13 May 2005, and this section is the eighth in the series, published by the newspaper on 21-22 May. The Islamic Renewal Organization at 22lajnah22.co.uk/forums is the website of the Saudi dissident group formerly known as CDLR, based in the United Kingdom and headed by Muhammad al-Mas'ari.

In this section on Al-Zarqawi's life, Sayf al-Adl explained the circumstances in which Al-Zarqawi entered the ranks of the al-Qa'ida Organization and portrayed Al-Zarqawi as a hardliner even by al-Qa'ida standards. According to Sayf al-Adl, shortly after the 2001 invasion of Afghanistan, Al-Zarqawi and his staff fled, planning to return to Afghanistan in seven years as part of a "well-designed" and "well-planned strategy." Then Al-Zarqawi and his team, allegedly, moved to Iran establishing a basic al-Qa'ida infrastructure including safe houses in Tehran and Mashhad. Sayf al-Adl said that Al-Zarqawi and supporters moved to northern Iraq after a crackdown by Iranian security on al-Qa'ida members.

Al-Zarqawi, according to Sayf al-Adl, became an effective and charismatic leader since he left Afghanistan and his ability to carefully orchestrate operations leaves Sayf al-Adl envious.

A translation of the chapter follows:

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate. Praise be to God, the Lord of the Universe. Prayers and peace be upon the master of messengers, imam of the pious, commander of mujahidin, leader of the righteous, his family, companions, and everyone who follows his lead to the Day of Judgment.

I have never liked reading, writing, or rhetoric on any day. Under the current circumstances, however, I have so much free time that I spend it in praying, memorizing the holy Koran, and doing some physical exercise. Through this daily program, I received your request to write about my experience with fraternal brother Abu-Mus'ab [al-Zarqawi] -- Ahmad Fadil. I was reluctant at the beginning. Later, however, I

entertained the idea and felt that I would be glad to do so. Memories and ideas began to come to my mind. I ask God Almighty that my effort will help the free mujahidin everywhere. I follow the news of jihad and the victories of mujahidin with pride since they are the lions, heroes, and hope of this nation. They are its vanguards on the path of pride, dignity, victory, and imminent power, God willing. I believe that Abu-Mus'ab is one of these best lions and heroes.

After God granted Muslim mujahidin in Afghanistan victory against the infidels, polytheists, and Russians and when disagreements began to emerge among factions of Afghan mujahidin, many of our Arab brothers were thinking of returning to their native countries, including the Saudis, Yemenis, and Jordanians who had no problems with the security services in their homeland. On the other hand, we, the Egyptians, and our Syrian, Algerian, and Libyan brothers had no alternative other than to stay in Afghanistan, fight on the frontlines of jihad, or go to safe places where there were no powerful central governments and where we would have powerful alliances.

Therefore, we chose Sudan, Somalia, and some underprivileged African countries. Some fraternal brothers had already left to the countries that won independence from the disintegrating Soviet Union while others spread to the four corners of the world. Some truthful and seasoned brothers viewed the exodus as a major loss. They said that expeditious steps had to be taken to stop it. They maintained that the human resources and expertise should be integrated to make the desired change. Thus, the idea of the blessed Qa'ida al-Jihad emerged as a preliminary step on this path.

Preparation

We began to gather needed information to reorganize our effort. First, we wanted to obtain old and recent information concerning all the pioneers of jihad who participated in jihad in the Afghan arena.

Foremost of them were our Jordanian and Palestinian brothers. We wanted to update our information about them.

Therefore, we followed the military tribunals that the Jordanian State Security Court held against Jordanian's who returned from Afghanistan and various small Islamic groups that attempted to carry out some jihadist acts from Jordanian territories against the state of the Zionist enemy in beloved Palestine. Most prominent in the media were fraternal brothers Abu-Muhammad al-Maqdisi and Abu-Mus'ab. We used to follow their statements in court in the case of Al-Tawhid [monotheism in Islam] or Bay'at al-Imam [Allegiance to the Imam]. Our fraternal brother Umar Abu-Umar, also known as Abu-Qatadah, highlighted the achievements of these fraternal brothers in his London-based magazine "Al-Minhaj" [Methodology]. We read the messages of Abu-Muhammad al-Maqdisi and Abu-Mus'ab and their historic statements in court. Abu-Qatadah, a Palestinian, was upbeat regarding our promising fraternal activists in Jordan on the path of the blessed da'wah.

We were very happy when we learned of their release in 1999. We were not surprised when we received information that Abu-Mus'ab and some of his fraternal brothers arrived in Pakistan. We were not surprised since the idea of alliance with and support for the mujahidin Muslim group was a duty for everyone who understood the faith properly. The information we had indicated that Abu-Mus'ab wanted to go to Chechnya--the hottest and most traveled Islamic battlefield at that

time. Such information meant that Abu-Mus'ab enjoyed a high degree of awareness and sincerity. His willingness to go to Chechnya meant that he was ready to sacrifice for his beliefs. The desired change in the nation's situation would not be achieved by wishes, the theory of inevitable victory, or hypothetical power alone. Rather, it required full realization and sincere practice. The nation's masses would not be fooled anymore. They would not run behind everyone who crowed. They became aware that a tangible change in their lives was the only thing that could influence them. Accordingly, the philosophy of Al-Qa'ida emerged to address the nation's masses on this foundation. I will elaborate on this point later, God willing.

Meanwhile, Abu-Mus'ab and his two companions faced problems with the Pakistani security services regarding their residence permits. The fraternal brothers were taken into custody, but there was an agreement to release them on the condition that they leave Pakistan. Abu-Mus'ab and his two companions had no other choice but to go to Afghanistan. Similarities between Abu-Mus'ab and Myself

I received reports that a group of Jordanians arrived in Kandahar. I was busy with my work outside the region. I returned to Kandahar two weeks after Abu-Mus'ab's arrival and I went to meet him at the guesthouse that provided accommodation for newcomers.

Both Abu-Mus'ab and Abu-Muhammad al-Maqdisi were not in need of recommendation. Their news, the proceedings of the military tribunals held for both of them in Jordan, and the ideas that they declared in public during these trials were satisfactory enough. Earlier, Abu-Qatadah and a Jordanian jihadist shaykh spoke well of both of them.

I should mention here that I met with the fraternal brother who was responsible for following the news of Abu-Mus'ab and his two companions. I wanted to be in the picture regarding what happened between the fraternal brothers and Abu-Mus'ab. In a nutshell, Abu-Mus'ab was a hardliner when it came to his disagreements with other fraternal brothers.

Therefore, I had reservations. I recalled many personal memories from my life and relations after God guided me to comprehend pure Islam in the early 1980s. I kept these memories in mind when I met Abu-Mus'ab. I arrived at Abu-Mus'ab's place of residence after sunset prayers. I was accompanied by an Egyptian who used to have affiliations with the Islamic Group in Egypt. Shaykh Abd-al-Akhar was his mentor in the past. As a result of some acts and ideas, the Egyptian man was not in full agreement with other fraternal shaykhs.

As we entered the guesthouse, Abu-Mus'ab and both his companions were at the door to welcome us since I notified them of my arrival two hours in advance. We hugged the fraternal brothers and congratulated them on their safe arrival. When we entered the guesthouse we found that the men were down to earth. We introduced ourselves briefly and began to talk.

I found that I was talking to a man with whom I shared many traits. Abu-Mus'ab was a sturdy man who was not really very good at words. He expressed himself spontaneously and briefly. He would not compromise any of his beliefs. He was uncompromising but he had a clear objective, which he strived to achieve--the reestablishment of Islam in society. He did not have details regarding how to achieve this objective except for initiating tawhid, comprehending the faith

thoroughly, and initiating jihad against the nation's enemy. Abu-Mus'ab's life experience was not very rich. He had, however, great ambitions and defined goals. I asked him about the situation in Jordan and Palestine. He had adequate information about Jordan, but his information about Palestine was poor. We discussed points of disagreement between him and his fraternal brothers. We listened to him, but we did not argue since we wanted to win him over to our side. Our meeting lasted for five straight hours during which we listened to all he had to say. We left them and promised to meet again in two days. The next morning, I was scheduled to meet with both Shaykh Usama Bin Ladin and Shaykh Ayman al-Zawahiri, May God protect them. We had a planned agenda to discuss after which I suggested that we talk about Abu-Mus'ab since the fraternal brothers already had good knowledge about the issue. The controversial issues with Abu-Mus'ab were neither new nor uncommon. We used to have some disagreements with hundreds of other fraternal brothers who came from various regions in the world regarding certain issues. The reason was the diverse understanding of some aspects of the faith that pertain to wala [commitment to everything that God says], bara'ah [abandonment of everything that God hates], and the subsequent issues of takfir [excommunication] or irja [an early Islamic school of thought that was characterized by insistence on keeping an apolitical attitude and refusal to judge the faith of others]. Other controversial issues included a modus operandi and how to cope with the current circumstances, each in his surroundings and home country. The most important issue with Abu-Mus'ab was the stance regarding the Saudi regime and how to deal with it in light of the Islamic laws that pertain to excommunication and belief.

I suggested to the fraternal brothers that they could entrust me to handle these cases including Abu-Mus'ab's and similar cases. It was both unfair--in terms of jurisprudence--and incorrect--in terms of the movement--to abandon every brother or group with whom we might have minor disagreements.

Designation from Bin Ladin and Al-Zawahiri

The information we had said that Al-Qa'ida and its tenets did not have many supporters in Palestine or Jordan. The plan that the fraternal brothers agreed on underlined the importance of the presence of Al-Qa'ida in Jordan and Palestine since the Palestinian question is the bleeding heart of the nation. Thus, everyone who wanted to be close to the nation's sentiments should be well-informed on this question. The liberation of the nation is contingent on dealing a strike to the Israelis and annihilating their state. There will be no change or liberation unless Israel is undermined and eliminated.

The survival of the regional order was linked to the survival of the state of Israel. The regional order existed in favor of Israel's ambitions to pave the way for its expansion. Meanwhile, the relationship between the current Arab regime and the state of Israel was controversial. We were in agreement that there would be no liberation without change and no change unless Israel was weakened. Israel would not be weakened unless Arab regimes were undermined and unless Western support for Israel and these regimes came to a halt. It was logical, therefore, that we should exist everywhere on this globe. How could we abandon such an opportunity to be in Palestine and Jordan? How could we waste a chance to work with Abu-Mus'ab and similar men in other countries?

Following two hours of nonstop discussion, the fraternal brothers agreed to designate me to handle this issue while providing me with the means to do so.

I praised God Almighty for this success since the issue concerned me for more than 10 years. I was not in full agreement with everyone, particularly regarding tactical and strategic steps. This problem surfaced since the first day I was detained in Egypt on 6 May 1987 regarding the case of the reestablishment of the Al-Jihad movement and a coup d'etat attempt. The case was known as Al-Jihad 401 in which nearly 6,000 fraternal brothers were arrested. Up to 417 of them remained in custody. The case pertained to the assassination attempt against ex-Egyptian Interior Minister Hasan Abu-Basha and a journalist, Makram Muhammad Ahmad. I was then a colonel in the Egyptian Special Forces. Major Muhammad al-Baram of the Special Forces and Special Guard, May God protect him and grant him success, was with me.

I found that the brothers at the Al-Jihad movement and the Islamic Group lacked practical experience that could enable them to achieve the desired change. In my opinion and the opinion of some brothers, this was due to over-enthusiasm that resulted in hasty action or recklessness at times. Moreover, they lacked the necessary expertise, a short-term and long-term plan in advance, and a vision to employ the nation's human resources at the highest level. Change required an ideology, human resources, funds, and sincere and knowledgeable leadership that possessed a vision and a plan, which would define its goals and means. The banner of such leadership should be clear.

The reasons that prompted me to leave Egypt in the aftermath of the above mentioned case were very similar to the reasons that prompted Abu-Mus'ab to leave Jordan. These identical reasons included the following: First, the Egyptian and Jordanian security services began to realize that the major threat to the regime was ideological Islamic groups who did not believe in middle solutions and who called for a radical and comprehensive change in the political, economic, social, and ideological fronts. Accordingly, the security services were monitoring Islamic movements day and night. They were trying to deal preemptive strikes to them to deny them an opportunity to go ahead with the process of calm and constructive change.

Second, the security services in both Egypt and Jordan began to recruit spies from these groups. They succeeded in this field to a large extent for many reasons that we would not mention in this article.

Consequently, we felt it was important that the leadership of an Islamic action should be remote from these strikes to enable it to plan effectively and achieve its plans.

Third, there was a lack of necessary local financial resources in both countries to achieve the desired Islamic change. It was necessary, therefore, to knock on foreign doors in search of funds.

Fourth, communication and integration with trustworthy Islamic individuals and groups would never take place as long as merciless security services existed in these countries. Departure, therefore, was a must.

Fifth, support for hot Islamic issues. A free and honest person would not let his family or nation suffer.

The aforementioned reasons prompted me and Abu-Mus'ab to leave our countries and head to the arenas of jihad in the Islamic world.

After the two shaykhs, May God protect them, approved to designate me to handle the case of Abu-Mus'ab and similar cases, I contacted some fraternal brothers whom I trusted their intellectual ability and vast practical experience. We held an emergency meeting during which we discussed all aspects of the issue. We made important decisions after our nine-hour meeting during which we performed prayers and had a meal.

I had a complete perspective of a new and enormous project. The preliminary success of the project was linked to the approval of Abu-Mus'ab. I prayed for God to help me to convince Abu-Mus'ab of this important plan and greater Islamic project that we were striving to accomplish.

We scheduled a meeting with Abu-Mus'ab for 09:00 the next morning. I left with the Egyptian fraternal brother whom I mentioned before. We both went with one of the fraternal brothers from the peninsula of Arabs [Saudi Arabia]. He was from Hijaz and he had a long experience in issues of jihad and the Islamic action in various fields. He was in full agreement with me regarding most issues.

This time, we did not enter the guesthouse. We asked Abu-Mus'ab to accompany us alone. He got in the car and we headed to the home of the fraternal brother from Hijaz. We introduced Abu-Mus'ab to the man and I felt that Abu-Mus'ab was happy to meet him.

I began the conversation since I was the proponent of the project. I had a thorough idea of its aspects and goals. The main idea of the project was based on the importance of finding an area in Afghanistan where a simple camp would be established for daily training. Abu-Mus'ab would oversee the camp and bring in fraternal brothers from Jordan, Palestine, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, and Turkey to forge a presence for us in these important areas.

The second point that we discussed with some fraternal experts was the importance that such an area would be remote from our headquarters and would be located on the western border of Afghanistan adjacent to Iran. Iran became a safe passage for the fraternal brothers after the Pakistani authorities began to tighten the noose around our movement. It was very difficult for Arab and other brothers to arrive in Afghanistan through Pakistan. It was easy, on the other hand, for the brothers to take the Turkey to Iran to Afghanistan route.

Herat was a suitable and nearest Afghan city to the Iranian border and it was somewhat remote from us. Arrival to and departure from the city was much easier. Concerning financial resources, the fraternal brother from Hijaz and some of his companions promised to make the resources available to accommodate the human resources in Herat and the requirements of the action.

One of the topics we discussed was that we were not seeking full allegiance from Abu-Mus'ab or his companions. Rather, we wanted coordination and cooperation to achieve our joint objectives. We explained to him that we were ready to provide him with special training for every distinguished individual or group from his side. We pledged to coordinate with the fraternal brothers of the Taliban movement to avoid any obstacles in the future. We proposed the establishment of two stations in Tehran and Mashhad in Iran for the arrival in and departure from Afghanistan. The objective was integration into an important region in the Arab and Islamic world. It would provide an opportunity for every sincere brother--particularly those who

did not fully agree with the tenets of Al-Qa'ida--to achieve integration at the current stage and full agreement in the near future, God willing. We tried to obtain an immediate response from Abu-Mus'ab, but he said: "I have to carry out some consultations. My fraternal brothers Khalid al-Aruri and Abd-al-Hadi Daghlas have accompanied me from the beginning and I should consult with them." We agreed to meet in two days. It would be a Friday. The fraternal brother from Hijaz invited us for lunch on that day. Everyone agreed and Abu-Mus'ab was told to bring both his companions for lunch. We agreed to send a car for them before Friday prayers.

Two days later, we performed the Friday prayers and went to the home of the man from Hijaz. We had kabsah for lunch. Abd-al-Hadi inquired about certain issues. His questions indicated he was quite intelligent. God Almighty granted us the ability to answer all the questions. The result was total approval from Abu-Mus'ab and his two companions. We agreed to begin preparations as of the next day.

The plan stipulated that Abu-Mus'ab and his two companions would spend 45 days in special training while we would make the necessary arrangements in Herat and Mashhad consecutively. Abu-Mus'ab began to contact his comrades to urge them to come. During the training, I noticed that Abu-Mus'ab and both his companions were very enthusiastic about the training. They worked very hard to achieve the highest levels.

The training period went by and we began to prepare to move to Herat in harmony with the plan. Meanwhile, two fraternal Syrian brothers arrived. We discussed the Herat plan with them and they agreed without hesitation. The fraternal brothers chose an area on the outskirts of Herat where there was an old and small camp, which they provided with the necessary supplies. We praised God Almighty for this success. We stayed in Herat with them for four days after which I felt that Abu-Mus'ab and his Jordanian and Syrian comrades shared the same thoughts. We agreed to meet every month. They would come to us one month and we would visit them the next. We left with them three vans that escorted us in our trip. We promised to send other cars if necessary. We said goodbye and returned to our location.

We left Abu-Mus'ab with his two companions--Khalid and Abd-al-Hadi--and the Syrian brothers. We were confident they would succeed and excel in their project since every one of them had a strong will. They were determined to achieve victory for Islam and Muslims. When we arrived at our headquarters, we submitted a detailed report to the fraternal brothers. I felt that they were satisfied with the achievement that was made. Praise be to God, the Lord of the Universe.

A full month passed since we returned from Herat during which we prepared three vans and loaded them with supplies that we believed the fraternal brothers there would need. I left with five Arab companions including the aforementioned brother from Hijaz. We accompanied two Afghan brothers. We arrived in Herat late in the afternoon. We informed Abu-Mus'ab in advance about the time of our arrival. The fraternal brothers were waiting for us. They prepared lunch of various dishes, mostly Syrian. The meal was delicious. It was different from the food we used to have during the four days that we spent in Herat last month. When I inquired, I was told that two Syrian families--originally from Aleppo who used to live in Turkey and who arrived in Herat five days ago--prepared the lunch. I was glad to hear the news since it meant

that the idea was finding its way to success. I was grateful to God. We began to inquire about the conditions and difficulties that faced them over the past month and the achievements they made. The outcome was: First, Abu-Mus'ab and his comrades were able to bolster relations with Taliban officials in the area. Taliban men were ready to provide all the resources at their disposal in favor of the project.

Second, there were five people when we left Herat the first time-- Abu-Mus'ab, his two companions, and the two fraternal Syrian brothers. We found that the two Syrian families who came to Herat comprised 13 members including the head of the family, three young men over 16, two women, and six girls. In all, the number of Arabs in Herat amounted to 18.

Third, we found that in cooperation with the Syrian brothers, Abu-Mus'ab prepared a military and cultural program that I thought was remarkable. The cultural program focused on religious education, learning the Koran by heart, and studying history and geography.

Fourth, we found that Abu-Mus'ab and his companions agreed to form the structure of an integrated society in light of their expectations that hundreds of fraternal brothers and their families would join them in Herat soon.

Fifth, we learned that Abu-Mus'ab sent a note to his fraternal brothers in Jordan telling them of the beginning of his success in Afghanistan and asking them to immigrate there if they could. He asked if his family and Abd-al-Hadi's could join them. The Syrian fraternal brothers did the same and this indicated they were confident that the project would succeed.

We praised God for this significant progress. We discussed developments regarding an increase in the resources and the stations of Mashhad and Istanbul.

We spent three days during which we took part in their daily program. We noticed the enthusiasm and sincerity that prevailed. We said goodbye and agreed that they would come to visit us after one month. We returned to our headquarters happy and optimistic. The brother from Hijaz was seriously thinking of joining Abu-Mus'ab and his companions in Herat. We updated our information of the Herat file that we opened three months ago. We briefed the fraternal brothers concerned about the developments.

A Mini Islamic Society

The days passed quickly and the date of our monthly meeting arrived. Abu-Mus'ab and the Syrian fraternal brother, Abu-al-Ghadiyah, came carrying good news. The number in the camp amounted to 42 men, women, and children including the families of Abu-Mus'ab and his two companions. Three new Syrian families arrived including one that came from Europe.

Abu-Mus'ab was optimistic that they were establishing a mini Islamic society. He said that fraternal Jordanian and Palestinian brothers would arrive in Herat soon. He said the Iran-Afghanistan route was safe to travel. This passage was new and important to us in Al-Qa'ida. We took advantage of it later on. We used it instead of the old route through Pakistan, particularly for the passage of fraternal Arab brothers. This issue prompted us to think of building good relations with some virtuous people in Iran to pave the way and coordinate regarding issues of mutual interest. Coordination with the Iranians was later achieved. Coordination was made with sincere individuals who were hostile to the

Americans and the Israelis. It was not made with the Iranian government. During this time, I noticed that Abu-Mus'ab became more polished. When we first met four months ago, he was not the one who would begin a conversation. His ideas and interests in political news were limited. Now, however, he was the one who would start a conversation. He was interested in every issue. He would utilize public relations that might lead his project to success.

I noticed that he became more influential when he spoke to someone. He spoke more in standard Arabic, whereas before he used to speak in his normal dialect. All these issues indicated that he would become a distinguished leader. His Syrian companion was wonderful. He possessed vast experiences and mastered several languages including English, Turkish, and some Kurdish. The Syrian fraternal brothers whom I got to know in Afghanistan were the most sincere people I have ever met. The suffering they faced and still face played a great role in shaping their personality. They were respectful and obedient to their leaders. They were motivated to learn and gain academic and practical experience. I was satisfied with Abu-Mus'ab's project whenever I learned that new numbers of fraternal brothers were joining him. Abu-Mus'ab's project was making progress. The fraternal brothers of various nationalities who converged on Herat to join him received training. These included Syrians, Jordanians, Palestinians, and some Lebanese and Iraqis. Thanks to God, Abu-Mus'ab was able to build relations with the Kurdish Ansar al-Islam and began to establish bases in northern Iraq.

We continued to pay periodic visits to Herat. Every time, we could notice the progress at the organizational and administrative levels and the military capabilities of the young men.

At the dawn of 2001, Abu-Mus'ab became a different person in terms of resources and the potential he possessed. His perspective and thoughts became more profound concerning every issue he faced. He began to plan for the future in a strategic manner. He focused on building relations with all nationalities and races including young Arab and non-Arab men in the Afghan arena. He traveled in Afghanistan to meet with them and listen to the news of their countries of origin. Most of the time, he left Abd-al-Hadi Daghlas as his deputy in Herat. He used to travel with Khalid al-Aruri and Sulayman Darwish Abu-al-Ghadiyah. I could say that Abu-Mus'ab's leadership qualities became obvious. First, he was concerned about the situation of the entire Islamic nation. Second, he became dedicated and accurate in his attempt to achieve swift results.

Third, he became fond of reading and was always interested in everything that took place in the world.

Fourth, he was a fan of Nur-al-Din Zinki, a distinguished Islamic leader who led the process of liberation and change that was completed by the hero Salah-al-Din al-Ayyubi. Abu-Mus'ab always asked if there were books available about Nur-al-Din and Salah-al-Din. I think that the books Abu-Mus'ab read about Nur-al-Din, who launched his campaign from Mosul in Iraq, influenced him to move to Iraq in the aftermath of the downfall of the Islamic emirate in Afghanistan.

Fifth, Abu-Mus'ab became more concerned about the situation of the individuals around him. He often discussed with me the means that would strengthen their social and psychological relations. The story of the marriage of the messenger, God's prayers and peace be upon him, to

A'ishah and Hafsa--the daughters of his friends, Abu-Bakr and Umar--were a model to him. Abu-Mus'ab married one of the daughters of his Palestinian companions who joined him from Jordan. Abu-Mus'ab's friends got married and so were their daughters although some of the girls were young compared to the age of their peers who get married in our Arab world. Abu-Mus'ab and his fraternal brothers became one family in terms of religion and social and economic relations. They lived in an atmosphere of friendship reminiscent of the atmosphere that prevailed between the apostle, God's prayers and peace be upon him, and his companions. This modern example should be a lesson for everyone who works in the field of da'wah and the contemporary Islamic movement.

Sixth, after spending two years in Herat, Abu-Mus'ab began to think of dispatching his trustworthy companions to areas outside Afghanistan to recruit young men and collect funds. I think the beginning was in Turkey and Germany since the Syrian brothers who joined him had good relations in both countries.

Seventh, among the fraternal brothers I have met, Abu-Mus'ab was one of the most determined to protect the honor, blood, and reputation of Muslims.

These were some of the characteristics of Abu-Mus'ab prior to the events of 11 September 2001.

The Goals of the New York Strike

In the meantime, we at Al-Qa'ida made preparations to carry out the greater strike. Our goals focused on the following three points: First, since its establishment and independence from the British crown and for more than two centuries of human history, the United States has gone on the rampage everywhere in the world. It was intimidating and assaulting people. It was seizing the resources of nations. Some people might be surprised if we tell them that the United States was preparing its armada to occupy Algeria in 1817. Mujahidin and Arab sailors in the Mediterranean--whom the West labeled as pirates--confronted and defeated the US fleet. The battles between the US and Islamic parties lasted for more than three months. The US aggression was the prelude to implementing the colonialist plan, which was endorsed at the second conference of European nations held in Vienna in 1815.

Since then, the United States has been trying to attack our nation to intimidate it and seize its resources. It has been humiliating all the beleaguered people in the world. Over the past century, the United States was trying to intimidate China, Korea, and Vietnam. It conspired against nations in Africa and South America. The objective was clear: a flagrant and atrocious aggression established on pretexts that have always been shrouded with deception. The United States overthrew several governments. The events that took place in Yugoslavia were fresh in memory. The United States assassinated many of the world's leaders who were opposed to it. It spared no means to achieve its goals. Nevertheless, no state or country in the world dared to retaliate for the US aggression. The prejudice and arrogance of the United States dominated its psychological makeup, which fuelled its injustice to the extent that it looked down on other nations and people.

Our main objective, therefore, was to deal a strike to the head of the snake at home to smash its arrogance. This objective was partially achieved, thank God. Had the other strikes succeeded the way the strike against the two towers did, the world would have felt the sudden

change.

Second, the second objective of this strike was the emergence of a new virtuous leadership for this world, which was crushed under the feet of the Zionist-Anglo-Saxon-Protestant coalition. Our vision said that genuine Muslims possessed the qualifications needed to lead humankind and save it from the darkness of injustice and aggression of the wicked coalition. Our nation and the beleaguered people of the world will realize that there are people who do not fear this satanic coalition and that the newcomers possess a well-examined plan to change the miserable life of the underprivileged in the world.

These newcomers will become the virtuous leadership of this globe that will face the forces of evil and injustice. The divine rule governing the conflict says: "And say: 'Truth has arrived, and Falsehood perished: for Falsehood is [by its nature] bound to perish.'" [Koranic verse]. Truth will prevail. It will fight falsehood and defeat it sooner or later. The slogan we have adopted regarding this issue is the statement of Rab'i Bin-Amir when he met Rustum, the Persian leader, before the Battle of Al-Qadisiyah. Rustum asked him why he came. Rab'i replied: "God sent us to save humankind from worshiping humankind and worship the lord of the human race. He sent us to save people from the injustice of religions to the justice of Islam and from the hardship of the world to relief of the world and the hereafter."

A free person does not accept agony for himself, his family, or the entire human race. How do we keep silent against this flagrant injustice and blatant negligence of human values and the legacy that was desecrated by these abnormal people? Our objective is the emergence of a sincere and virtuous Islamic leadership that rallies the nation's capabilities and motivates the weak and deceived in this world against this octopus that is represented by this wicked coalition. Such leadership says what it believes in and does what it says. It fears God alone. Nothing but God's destiny will turn it away from achieving its goals. Thank God, this has been accomplished.

Third, our ultimate objective of these painful strikes against the head of the serpent was to prompt it to come out of its hole. This would make it easier for us to deal consecutive blows to undermine it and tear it apart. It would foster our credibility in front of our nation and the beleaguered people of the world. A person will react randomly when he receives painful strikes on his head from an undisclosed enemy. Such strikes will force the person to carry out random acts and provoke him to make serious and sometimes fatal mistakes. This was what actually happened. The first reaction was the invasion of Afghanistan and the second was the invasion of Iraq. The mistakes might happen over and over and there might be other random reactions.

Such reactions prompted the Americans and their allies to deal powerful strikes to the head and other important parts of the body of our nation, which has been in hibernation for almost two centuries. God willing, these strikes will help the nation to wake from its slumber. Woe unto the Americans, British, and everyone who supports them when our nation wakes up.

Our objective, therefore, was to prompt the Americans to come out of their hole and deal powerful strikes to the body of the nation that did not exist. Without these strikes there would be no hope for this nation to wake up. The entire masses of the nation with their financial capabilities and high morale would defeat the enemy. We have a

knowledgeable and sincere leadership that has a well-examined plan, but we cannot discuss its details at the moment. The sleeping nation will soon wake up. The Americans, their allies, and their lackeys have been fooled.

Abu-Mus'ab did not have a previous knowledge of the strike or its goals. After it was accomplished, we explained the objectives to him and briefed him on some important details of the forthcoming goals and expected US reaction. We think that the strike achieved 20 percent of what we had planned for. Such an accomplishment was enough to prompt the Americans to carry out the anticipated response.

In the two months that followed the strike, the United States threatened to annihilate Al-Qa'ida and its supporters everywhere. It threatened to uproot and pursue Islamic jihad everywhere. The Americans were confused in their statements and acts. Their allies and lackeys were repeating whatever the Americans would say. What we had wished for actually happened. It was crowned by the announcement of Bush Jr of his crusade against Islam and Muslims everywhere.

The Crusade has been ongoing for a long time. It did not end with the end of the first crusade during the era of Salah-al-Din and Ricardo, the heart of the lion. The crusade took new dimensions. The ignorance of Bush and his clique in this line of thinking and its importance to us was a great victory that we extracted from them when they were taken by surprise.

Let us go back to Abu-Mus'ab, who visited us in Kandahar more than we visited him in Herat. Abu-Mus'ab learned many lessons that played a role in shaping the perspective of the overall conflict in the world between good and evil--the good that is represented by the messengers and proponents of sound monotheistic messages and evil that is represented by the followers of Satan and the fabricated and misinterpreted monotheistic messages that are based on the wishes of some people in favor of their ambitions and personal interests even though such interest were to the detriment of the poor and deprived among mankind.

The US assault began at the end of 2001. Abu-Mus'ab returned to Herat to be close to his fraternal brothers and group. We did not have a clear or defined plan for confrontation. There was a significant percentage of Shiites among the population in the Herat area. The camps and forces of Taliban and their caches of weapons were fiercely bombarded. The opponents and Shiites in the region moved swiftly and took control of the area. The young men of Al-Qa'ida, Taliban, and Abu-Mus'ab's group had no other alternative but to withdraw quickly and join us in eastern Afghanistan.

Before Abu-Mus'ab and his fraternal brothers left Herat, a group of their companions were taken captive by Shiite forces and opponents. Their release was almost impossible. Abu-Mus'ab, however, reportedly insisted on saving them from captivity. He rallied 25 fighters of his group, knelt twice to perform the al-hajah [destitution] prayer, and launched an attack on the area where his companions were taken into custody. The sudden attack took the wardens by surprise. The attack was fierce since it was carried out by a desperate person who did not believe in any solution other than saving his fraternal brothers or else die.

The result was the escape of the wardens and the release of all the fraternal brothers without casualties. This incident demonstrated the

success achieved by Abu-Mus'ab over two years. Caring and dedicated men graduated from this camp to defend their principles and companions even if they risked their life. After Abu-Mus'ab and his fraternal brothers freed their companions, they prepared to leave Herat. They left in a 135 vehicle convoy that carried them, their fraternal Arab brothers of Al-Qa'ida in the region, and the remnants of the fraternal Taliban brothers.

It was a long way to Kandahar. Planes were flying overhead everywhere in Afghanistan. Praise be to God, the convoy arrived safely in Kandahar. At the beginning, we decided to defend Kandahar regardless of the consequences. We began to secure the wives and children of the fraternal Arab brothers by sending them to Pakistan. We began to make preparations for confrontation.

One day, there was a meeting with some of the important fraternal brothers including Abu-Mus'ab. One fraternal brother used his Al-Thurayya [certain brand] satellite phone. A few minutes after the man used his telephone I left the site of the meeting with three other fraternal brothers. Ten minutes after our departure, a US plane shelled the house where we held the meeting. Abu-Mus'ab and some fraternal brothers were still there. The bombardment resulted in the collapse of the ceiling of the home. No one was killed but some of the fraternal brothers sustained injuries including Abu-Mus'ab, who suffered from broken ribs. He had bruises as a result of the collapse of the ceiling. The assault began on Kandahar. The leadership made a new decision to withdraw to the mountains and evacuate the wounded to safe places. Abu-Mus'ab was requested to leave Pakistan since he was wounded. He refused, however, and insisted on joining us to take part in the battle. The Americans feared direct confrontation. Therefore, they relied on air bombardment. They employed the hypocrite forces of the Northern Alliance and other opponents in ground battles. Therefore, we can say that Abu-Mus'ab did not stay away from the confrontation even though he had a legitimate excuse to do so.

The confrontation was not proportionate or direct. The objectives of the American assault included the following: First, overthrow the Islamic emirate in Afghanistan and eliminate the likelihood of its return or reestablishment any time in the future. The Islamic emirate provided the circumstances, territory, and safe haven for Al-Qa'ida. There is no way to allow this to happen again since the reestablishment of this emirate will be the emergence of the state of an Islamic caliphate that every Muslim in the world hopes for.

Second, annihilate Al-Qa'ida and its leadership and make it a lesson for everyone. Everyone who dares to harm this giant elephant--the United States--will be punished. Punishment is total extermination. This was one of the major challenges that faced us at the outset of our action. A mature response that would amount to the level of such a challenge was necessary. Thus, the leadership made an audacious decision to dismantle the emirate and integrate into the Afghan society once again. This move will enable it to return in seven years, in harmony with a well-examined plan that will defeat the Americans and their supporters of traitors and hypocrites.

We began to implement the plan immediately. Accordingly, there was no room for us in Al-Qa'ida to appear in public as we did before. It was important to carry out and organize this vision in accessible areas in this region.

We Did Not Run Away from the Battle

Some people might ask: Is this manhood? Are these the principles and values of the faith that you adhere to especially that Islam views the escape from battle as treason? The answer concentrates on the following points: First, we did not run from the battle or leave the fraternal brothers of Taliban to face their destiny alone against the Americans. Our plan was to spread in the territory and open new and several battlefronts with the Americans to disperse their forces and deny them the chance to focus on one region.

Second, the leadership ultimately decided that the form of confrontation was the guerrilla warfare or the hit-and-run tactic. This meant that people who would carry out such warfare should be from the region. Our race and language as Arabs were not suitable for such missions. Those who mastered the languages and dialects of the country had the choice to remain or leave and join other fraternal brothers in other areas of conflict.

Third, the departure of the fraternal brothers and their spread in the countries provided us with further financial and human resources that we could employ in the battle, particularly that the war was not confined to a specific geographic spot. It was a war everywhere in the world.

Fourth, we realized that these steps were very important for the project to survive. Moreover, they were important to deny the Americans a chance to achieve some of their objectives, including annihilation of the fraternal brothers and the leadership.

We sustained a few casualties but the leadership was intact and was exercising its work efficiently from Afghanistan. The young men who spread all over the world would open new battlefields with the Americans, polytheists, and hypocrites. The evidence is the outcome that Abu-Mus'ab and his fraternal brothers achieved in Iraq. I was the man in charge of securing the arrival of some fraternal Arab brothers to Iran and relocating them. Abu-Mus'ab and his group were among them.

In Iran

We began to converge on Iran one after the other. The fraternal brothers in the Peninsula of the Arabs, Kuwait, and the United Arab Emirates who were outside Afghanistan, had already arrived. They possessed abundant funds. We set up a central leadership and working groups. We began to rent apartments for the fraternal brothers and some of their families.

The fraternal brothers of the group of Gulbuddin Hekmetyar offered us satisfactory help in this field. They provided us with apartments and some farms that they owned. They put them at our disposal.

We began work and we reestablished contact with the leadership. We began to support it again. This issue was one of the reasons behind our departure from Afghanistan. We began to form some groups of fighters to return to Afghanistan to carry out well-prepared missions there. Meanwhile, we began to examine the situation of the group and the fraternal brothers to pick new places for them.

Abu-Mus'ab and his Jordanian and Palestinian comrades opted to go to Iraq. Following a long debate, their skin color and tongue would enable them to integrate into the Iraqi society easily. Our expectations and profound examination of the situation indicated that the Americans would inevitably make a mistake and invade Iraq sooner or later. Such an invasion would aim at overthrowing the regime. Therefore, we

should play an important role in the confrontation and resistance. It would be our historic chance to establish the state of Islam that would play a major role in alleviating injustice and establishing justice in this world, God willing.

I was in agreement with Abu-Mus'ab concerning this analysis. Contrary to what the Americans frequently reiterated, Al-Qa'ida did not have any relationship with Saddam Hussein or his regime. The Americans would always try to link Saddam Hussein and his regime to Al-Qa'ida. They wanted to give themselves justifications and legitimate reasons to enter [Iraq] in harmony with their laws that they dictate by force on this world that is enslaved by the West, the Israelis, and the Anglo-Saxons. We had to draw up a plan to enter Iraq through the north that was not under the control of the regime. We would then spread south to the areas of our fraternal Sunni brothers. The fraternal brothers of the Ansar al-Islam group expressed their willingness to offer assistance to help us achieve this goal.

The Americans felt that Iranians were closing their eyes to our activity in Iran. Thus, they began to launch a concentrated media campaign against Iran. They accused Iran of helping Al-Qa'ida and global terrorism. The Iranians responded by pursuing the young men and arresting them. They began to deport them to their former home countries or wherever they wished as long as they left Iran.

The steps that the Iranians took against us confused us and aborted 75 percent of our plan. A large number of young men were arrested including up to 80 percent of Abu-Mus'ab's group. Consequently, there was a need for the departure of Abu-Mus'ab and the brothers who remained free. The destination was Iraq. The route was the northern border between Iraq and Iran. The goal was to go to Sunni areas in central Iraq and begin to prepare for confrontations to face the US invasion and defeat the Americans, God willing. The plan was well examined.

Abu-Mus'ab gained new experiences. When he came to say goodbye before he left to Iraq, he underlined the importance of taking revenge from the Americans for the crimes they committed during the bombardment of Afghanistan that he witnessed with his own eyes. His hatred and enmity against the Americans shaped his new character.

I cannot write in detail about this new personality. I have not met Abu-Mus'ab since he left Iran. The tales I hear about him, however, would allow me to say that he has become a seasoned commander who could run the conflict against the forces of global atheism--the Americans, the Israelis, and their supporters. I hope that Abu-Mus'ab and his companions will listen to some of the advice that we believe is important at this stage. Such advice will have great results in determining the outcome of the ongoing conflict between good and evil in the world. Our advice includes the following: First, every action or effort should have a goal. If the goal is clear from the beginning the path to achieve it will be clear and smooth. A clear path enables us to identify the means, resources, and time that we need to lead this path and achieve the goal. Therefore, you should know that every goal requires four elements that should be available for everyone who leads the path of change to accomplish a positive result. These elements are as follows: A. Thought: Every successful project should have a thought or idea that outlines its means and objectives. There is not much room for independent judgment. You should declare straightforwardly that your

objective is to reintroduce the Islamic way of life by means of establishing the state of Islam that will solve the entire problems of the nation. A powerful Islamic nation will be able to play its virtuous role in the life of the entire humankind. God Almighty said: "Ye are the best of people, evolved for mankind, enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong, and believing in Allah." The Almighty said: "Let there arise out of you a band of people inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong."

Such a privilege will never be achieved unless the nation possesses the necessary means. These means will not be achieved unless an Islamic state is established. At present, there is no way to repel the assailant or alleviate the injustice that prevails in this world. Resources are seized, countries are occupied, people are intimidated, and the honor and sovereignty of countries violated. The only way to alleviate the injustice is the emergence of a powerful state that can deter the assailant and put a limit to its aggression.

My fraternal brothers, the circumstances to declare this state are appropriate. The beleaguered people of our nation have become aware of the circumstances surrounding them. The atheism of the regimes and governments ruling our Arab and Islamic world is obvious. Everyone knows that these regimes first: Govern in violation of God's Shari'ah. Second: Support the Israelis and polytheists who have been the nation's enemy throughout history. Third: The animosity of these regimes to Islam and Muslims is very obvious.

Therefore, the masses of the nation are looking forward to the day of salvation from these regimes and rulers. Our thought should be clear. Its sources should be specified. The main sources are the holy Koran and the Sunnah of the prophet. Faith is the principal foundation of this thought. We derive such faith from the virtuous ancestors and deal with it the way they did. Faith helps understand the situation clearly without vagueness. Such comprehension produces a refined ideology that is able to renew itself and deal with the dilemmas facing the nation. It should be a clear and powerful thought capable of refuting and overcoming hostile ideas. Throughout more than 1,400 years, Islam has taken strides in coexisting with various communities and circumstances. It produced the thought that enabled it to overcome every dilemma. Accordingly, we should have a circle of judicious men and scholars who are capable of addressing this situation.

B. Man is the second element that should be available for the success of every project--a man who believes in the idea firmly and strives to achieve the goal defined by the idea. Therefore, we should have a special da'wah authority that is qualified to address the nation's people and win them over to the side of truth.

Similar to our jihadist military action, we should carry out a da'wah action. We cannot achieve the desired change unless we make an obvious change in the situation of mankind. Man shapes the time and place the way he wants. We cannot achieve the great ultimate victory if we are not capable of employing the nation's potentials, including human and financial resources. Needless to say, the nation's youth are ready to endorse the call for the truth and defend it.

C. We have a sound thought and a free man who believes in this thought. Such a person can never achieve his goal unless he has the

necessary financial resources that help him to possess the necessary means to achieve victory and power.

D. A veteran and powerful and experienced leadership is the fourth element that should be available. A leadership deals judiciously with the three aforementioned elements. Without resources or leadership, a thought and man cannot achieve the goal. The Arab and Islamic world has a wealth of experience that can form a new and qualified leadership for this nation.

Second, a clear banner: The banner of Islam and a genuine leadership of the nation have been absent for more than 100 years. The absence of the banner scattered the nation's strength and capabilities and undermined it in front of its enemy. Leaders who isolated themselves for confrontation were created by the enemy. They were traitors whom the enemy manipulated in their favor to achieve their objectives. These collaborators raised global pan-Arab banners at times to deceive and undermine the nation. Sometimes they raised secular or international banners. When we raise the clear banner of Islam--the banner of there is no deity but God and Muhammad is the messenger of God--the falseness of all other banners will become obvious. This will help the emergence of a genuine leadership of the nation, a sincere leadership that is capable of addressing these grave challenges with knowledge taking into consideration the current circumstances. It will be able to motivate capabilities and rally resources in the best possible manner. This requires the capabilities of young men each in their own capacity. We have learned that organization means employment of resources. Third, a plan: Every action should be established on a clear plan right from the beginning. A clear plan determines the necessary means, requirements, and the needed time for implementation. An action that is not established on a plan is viewed as random and unproductive. An observer of contemporary Islamic movements concludes that their actions were mostly random. Allegiance alone is not enough to achieve success or victory. Divine laws should be taken into consideration. Drawing up a well-defined plan is one of the divine laws. Accordingly, mujahidin should have short-term plans aimed at achieving interim goals and long-term plans aimed at accomplishing the greater objective, which is the establishment of a state.

Fourth, employment of the available opportunities with the future in mind and taking advantage of new circumstances: We can give Iraq as an example at present. The security mess that resulted from the collapse of Saddam Husayn's regime provided a good opportunity for the jihadist Islamic action to have roots and spread in the Iraqi arena. Such an action would not have succeeded if the former regime stayed in power.

These opportunities might occur again in other regions. We expect that Syria and Lebanon will face similar circumstances. If this takes place, it will give the Islamic action a vast area of action and maneuvering. It will help the Islamic action win tremendous human and financial resources. The jihadist Islamic trend will have a chance to exist near the border of occupied Palestine. The Syrian human resources are a very important element. Direct and constant clashes with the Israelis are a more important element that will disseminate the jihadist tenet and give it credibility that allows it to achieve two major objectives. It will justify a genuine leadership for the Islamic world and contribute to undermining

Israel and go ahead on the path to annihilate it, God willing. This might take place in Syria and Lebanon soon. Egypt will follow sooner or later since the Israeli theory is established on the importance of taking advantage of the giant US force to destroy current and potential enemies that might pose a threat to Israel's security. The Americans will commit strategic mistakes by adhering to the foolish Israeli policy. Therefore, the current available circumstances and developments that might take place in the region will provide an opportunity to establish an integrated Islamic army that is capable of achieving consecutive victories that will win it high credibility. A new leadership for the Islamic nation will emerge that is capable of rallying efforts and taking advantage of the capabilities of the nation on the path of the blessed jihad. Jihad will enable this leadership to reestablish the Islamic caliphate in society once again. A caliphate means a state of Islam that is capable of overcoming the injustice that befell on the world. Consequently, God's promise will be achieved. "And we wished to be Gracious to those who were being depressed in the land, to make them leaders (in Faith) and make them heirs." [Koranic verse]. "When comes the Help of Allah, and Victory, and thou dost see the people enter Allah's Religion in crowds, Celebrate the praises of thy Lord, and pray for His Forgiveness: For He is Oft-Returning (in Grace and Mercy)." [Koranic verse].

These were some of the practical and urgent recommendations that we offered to Abu-Mus'ab and the fraternal mujahidin in Iraq. If they take it, the sorcery will turn against the sorcerer. Thus, they will help to implement the greater plan that has been drawn up for the successful return of Islam to human society. The circumstances are available, thank God. The coming days will prove that God's worshipers are coming. The injustice, deprivation, and the aggression resulting from the policies of these satanic and unwise forces have made life intolerable. Change has become an urgent need that all the free people of the world are longing for.

In brief, our advice is a clear objective, a sound banner, clear legitimate means, the ability to take advantage of the circumstances and resources, victory, power, and the satisfaction of the Lord of the Universe. May God grant us success. Praise be to God, the Lord of the universe. [Signed] Sayf al-Adl, Official in Charge of Security for the Global al-Qa'ida of Islam Army.

Al-Zarqawi... From Where to Where

Mankind shapes time and space. This saying is important to explain the events of the past and equally important to explore future events around the world. Therefore, we should examine the personality of Abu-Mus'ab Al-Zarqawi in view of his role in Iraq. Abu-Mus'ab's impact is expected to extend to other countries near Iraq within the next three years.

In Al-Zarqawi's perspective, the Islamic faith is not only rituals but also a methodology and way of life. It defines relationships with oneself, with the Creator, with others, and with society. It identifies relations between a Muslim society and other societies. In his opinion, this depends on an understanding of Islam that focuses entirely on the pure Islamic faith, similar to the understanding of virtuous ancestors of the nation's scholars and great mujahidin who proved their devotion to this

nation and this faith.

Accordingly, Al-Zarqawi concludes that the whole world is unsound. He believes that it contravenes shar'iah since mankind violates the most important characteristics of divinity -- governorship, which should be totally for God. According to this perspective, Abu-Mus'ab concludes that the situation in the world is illogical and contradicts his beliefs. The human race, he thinks, breaches the governorship of God Almighty Who created this world and mankind. God chooses for humankind the faith that they should follow if they want to succeed on earth and in heaven. Every deviation from the path of this faith will result in failure to achieve a dignified life for mankind in this world. It will be a great loss for people in the hereafter.

Abu-Mus'ab believes that God Almighty gives mankind life for a period as a test. Life is short and, therefore, Abu-Mus'ab believes that it is unfair that people do not live under this faith. Thus, if the current situation continues, he believes that it will be against humanity. A rational man does not allow this to happen. Logic says that concerned people who are not satisfied with their situation should seek change. This is in harmony with a shari'ah judgment that Abu-Mus'ab believes in. It is established on the following hadith of the prophet, prayers and peace be upon him: "Whoever amongst you sees anything objectionable, let him change it with his hand, if he is not able, then with his tongue, and if he is not even able to do so, then with his heart, and the latter is the weakest form of faith."

In general, Abu-Mus'ab believes in changing the objectionable with the hand. We have mentioned that Abu-Mus'ab is originally a Bedouin who is free in nature. A free man does not accept injustice or humiliation for himself, his family, or the underprivileged. Abu-Mus'ab grew up in Al-Zarqa -- a city where people shared social and cultural backgrounds. It was a mini model of the situation of the Arab and Islamic nation. The majority of the city's population was originally Palestinians who were expelled unjustly from their homeland. Therefore, the residents of this city were generally oppressed and their rights denied. They lived a miserable and not a free or promising life. They could see no horizon and no change. Their spirits, however, were high and they were looking forward to freedom.

Path of "Bullies"

In his early endeavors for freedom, Abu-Mus'ab was a tough person -- or as the common people called it, "a bully." The beginning was understandable and justified. Toughness for Arabs meant manhood, generosity, courage, protection of the defenseless, and support for justice regardless of the consequences. From the beginning, Abu-Mus'ab was looking for freedom since he was earnestly looking for the truth. This stage of gallantry lasted less than two years during which Abu-Mus'ab gained qualities that shaped his character. In Arab countries, the traits of gallantry involved firmness, adventure, self-sacrifice for friends, kindness, and transparency.

This stage, which won Abu-Mus'ab the most important qualities that he currently enjoys, did not last long. Since he was constantly looking for justice, God guided him to Islam via proponents of da'wah in the city. His search for the right path was not supported by traditional da'wah activists but rather by proponents of jihad aimed at changing the situation of the nation. These men understood jihad as the sacrifice of one's soul, efforts, and property to remove all obstacles, barriers, and

earthly or material taghuts [evil idols] that refused to accept the propagation of Islam or the freedom of people from slavery to man in favor of the worship of the Lord of all human beings. For them, jihad was defense of the nation's territory, dignity, honor, resources, and freedom.

This was how Abu-Mus'ab understood Islam, given that it accommodated his personality. Proponents of this ideology used to encourage Muslim young men to go to the battlefields of jihad in Afghanistan -- the only available arena for jihad then. Pro-da'wah activists believed that the fields of jihad were an all-embracing school that prepared young Muslim men who were capable of making a change in the situation of the nation and mankind. The fields of jihad provided a suitable environment, which was not available under regimes that ignored the agony of the human race. In the fields of jihad, there were only true believers. The evidence of their sincerity was the fact that they left their property, wives, children, homelands, and personal security to go to rugged, cold, and dangerous battlefields.

An individual gains the qualities of the people around him. These men in these arenas were free to express everything they believed in without barriers or financial or moral obstacles. Moreover, these men represented various communities and social fabrics in the entire world. The presence of young men in the fields of jihad provided them with invigorating ideas and enabled them to apply everything they learned in theory. These individuals were the most sincere, the most aware, and the most willing to sacrifice. Honesty with oneself prompts a person to seek the truth. Searching for the truth leads a person to awareness, and the apex of awareness is sacrifice to achieve one's beliefs. Such an environment was available for Abu-Mus'ab from the beginning. He learned much more there than he would have learned if he had stayed in Jordan or Al-Zarqa.

Tawhid and Taghut

Young Muslim men went to the arenas of jihad to learn pure Islam that was unblemished by the fatwas or opinions of kings or sultans. These men returned to their original homelands to propagate the sound faith. The Afghanistan stopover gave Abu-Mus'ab two years of experience that was enough to make him realize the truth.

The truth that Abu-Mus'ab realized maintained that the human race had distanced itself from the faith of tawhid -- the unique lordship and governorship of God Almighty. This remoteness from God was the root cause of all the problems from which mankind suffered everywhere. The system that prevailed in the world was established on the slavery of mankind to mankind in contravention of the faith of monotheism that Al-Zarqawi believed in. The prevailing order caused injustice, slavery, hegemony, appropriation of resources, and usurpation of homelands. There would be no salvation or change except by means of returning to tawhid that was established on the sound understanding of "there is no deity but God." Believers in this faith had a full picture of how the human race should live.

Such a perspective is based on the principles, ideas, and values that are the outcome of such understanding. An individual is a slave to God alone. He obeys God in everything and stays away from everything that God forbids. He does not do injustice, does not attack, does not appropriate, and does not enslave other people. This is Abu-Mus'ab's understanding of the faith of tawhid. Logic says that everyone who

believes in this faith should do his utmost to create the change that accommodates this perception of the faith.

Furthermore, God Almighty said: "Whoever rejects taghut and believes in Allah hath grasped the most trustworthy hand-hold that never breaks. And Allah heareth and knoweth all things." [Koranic verse]. An interpretation of this verse says that a believer should excommunicate taghut first of all. Believers should fight taghuts in every form or content. Accordingly, Abu-Mus'ab views the regimes that do not rule in harmony with the shari'ah as atheist. He maintains that the systems, rulers, and peoples of these regimes are viewed as taghut that should be exterminated and changed. He believes that the entire world order, which is established on principles and foundations that contravene shari'ah, are taghut which should also be fought and eliminated. The current world order, he thinks, produces flagrant injustice, blatant sin, and atrocious hegemony of the powerful against the underprivileged on earth who have no power to repulse the enormous aggression.

Abu-Mus'ab, therefore, believes that the propagation of tawhid is the path that Muslims and the underprivileged on the globe should take. Tawhid, he believes, will salvage them from this ignorance and weakness and will make them a fierce power capable of achieving justice, preventing sin, alleviating misery, and resisting the atrocities exercised by the major powers in breach of all norms. This theory of Abu-Mus'ab is established on a divine promise by God Almighty Who said: "And We wished to be Gracious to those who were being depressed in the land, to make them leaders (in Faith) and make them heirs."

Such an understanding prompted Abu-Mus'ab and a group of young men who went for jihad in Afghanistan return to Jordan in the wake of the defeat inflicted on the Soviets. Abu-Mus'ab and these men were confident that this ideology and faith that defeated the Soviets would be capable of making a long awaited change. However, the experience of Abu-Mus'ab and his companions was not sophisticated enough in the field of da'wah or organizational action. Therefore, they made plain mistakes that prompted security services in Jordan to hunt them down. Their detention, however, disciplined their character, refined their skills, and increased their knowledge. They learned the holy Koran by heart and understood the foundations of the faith of tawhid. These were some of the advantages that Abu-Mus'ab and his comrades won over almost five years in prison. They came out of jail stronger and more determined to pursue change. Jail strengthened the faith and determination of the proponents of such ideologies.

Following this experience, Abu-Mus'ab began to think as a responsible commander who shouldered an enormous responsibility. His experience was the cornerstone of the next stage of his life -- the last three years from 2002-2005 -- with its specific and general dimensions. Hence, we currently deal with an outstanding commander who initiated resistance against the US occupation of Iraq. He embarked on confrontations with US forces who arrived in the area where Abu-Mus'ab was present -- on the northwestern outskirts of Baghdad -- with a group of less than five young men.

In Kurdistan

Abu-Mus'ab arrived in the Kurdish areas of northern Iraq at the outset of 2002. The Ansar al-Islam group -- an Islamic organization of jihadist tenets -- was launching a war against leftist and secular Kurdish groups

affiliated with the east and West. The group took Iraq's Kurdistan mountains as its base. There, Abu-Mus'ab met with some Jordanian young men who were fighting alongside Ansar al-Islam including Ra'id Khuraysat and Nidal Arabiyat, both of whom asked him to stay with them. Abu-Mus'ab, however, told them that "the Americans are coming and we have to get ready to confront them. We should count on Sunni Arabs for the confrontation since they have better resources and capabilities." Abu-Mus'ab, therefore, opted to move to Baghdad and central Iraq to prepare for the inevitable confrontation.

Abu-Mus'ab was certain that the US-British assault aimed at overthrowing the regime. He believed that the attack would be similar to that on Afghanistan. Thus, he began to draw up his own plan in cooperation with the men who were with him. His plan focused on the following points:

1. Gathering quick information regarding Iraqis who took part in the Afghan jihad, including Umar Hadid who was killed during recent battles in Al-Fallujah, evaluating their situation, contacting them, and exerting efforts to convince them to handle developments wisely.
2. Taking the Euphrates peninsula as a base for the group's leadership in view of the fact that the area was a geographic triangle with a population of similar demographic characteristics. Sunni Arabs made up the bulk of the population of the area, which was home to some renowned Arab tribes and Sunni Turkmen. Abu-Mus'ab used to speak with a Bedouin accent similar to the accent spoken in this region, which was an easy passage between Iraq and Syria. A few Syrians were with Abu-Mus'ab, including his companion Abu-al-Ghadiyah, whose real name was Sulayman Khalid Darwish. Abu-al-Ghadiyah was entrusted with making trips to Syria to recruit young men in his area of origin in Aleppo, Hims, and Hamah. He was also entrusted with re-establishing communication with his fraternal Syrian brothers across Europe to obtain funds to finance the group.
3. Getting in touch with some men in the Gulf including Saudis and Kuwaitis to secure an ample supply of recruits and funds and open channels of communication with Al-Qa'ida leaders in other regions.
4. Re-establishing relations with Abu-Mus'ab's friends in Jordan.
5. Collecting and storing weapons.

Abu-Mus'ab and his companions succeeded in carrying out the five aforementioned points. The effort that was exerted prior to the US attack enabled Abu-Mus'ab and his group to initiate resistance without delay. The Iraqis who took part in the Afghan jihad were convinced of Abu-Mus'ab's idea. Abu-al-Ghadiyah, meanwhile, succeeded in recruiting up to 400 Syrian men who later formed a martyrdom-seeking army. He contacted Syrians in Europe who began to supply him with funds and men. Moreover, Gulf-based men were in favor of the idea. Kuwaiti-born Khalid al-Dawsari began to play a pivotal role in supplying Abu-Mus'ab with men, funds, and information and opening channels of communication with Al-Qa'ida groups across the world to take part in Abu-Mus'ab's project. Abu-Mus'ab succeeded in reestablishing contact with his friends in Jordan. He entered Jordan secretly and met with a number of his friends to brief them on the highlights of the next stage.

Objectives of US Invasion
Abu-Mus'ab had a plan and succeeded in carrying it out prior to the war. This enabled him to embark on the battle at an earlier time. It encouraged others to join him promptly. The success of Abu-Mus'ab's

plan confused the Americans and their Iraqi allies since the Americans did not anticipate such resistance. Abu-Mus'ab, therefore, had a plan from the beginning. In his address to the Islamic nation in April 2004, he said that the US invasion had three objectives:

1. Keeping the Islamic nation in an endless state of weakness and denying it every successful endeavor to possess the financial power that would help it come out of the circle of hegemony. Islamic weakness was the result of division and expropriation of resources and homelands. Furthermore, Western powers were not satisfied with the outcome of the division that emerged as a result of the Sykes-Picot agreement 90 years ago. Let us explain this theory and cite Iraq as an example. In the aftermath of World War I and the downfall of the Islamic caliphate state, the West divided the Arab and Islamic world geographically, economically, and demographically by means of establishing satellite entities in favor of its interests. Iraq, for instance, had an estimated land area of 280,000 square kilometers. When Iraq won superficial independence in the early 1940's, its population did not exceed 4 million. Its gross national income was nearly 35 million pounds sterling. At present, the population of Iraq stands at 26 million. Had the situation of the country returned to normal the way it used to be before the first Gulf War, Iraq's gross national income would have amounted to \$40 billion. In the past, there were a few hundred people who held bachelor's degrees in Iraq. Today, there are nearly 5 million people with a bachelor's degree and hundreds of thousands who hold master's and PhDs.

In brief, Iraq, which was meant to remain weak in harmony with the Sykes-Picot division agreement, became strong in terms of the economy and qualified human resources. Moreover, the political leadership in Iraq tried to get rid of hegemony when it announced that Arab oil was for the Arabs. Iraq, therefore, became an economic power with well-qualified human resources. Moreover, the political leadership in Iraq changed its outlook vis-a-vis the political situation governing the world. Iraq, therefore, could have become a major power that would influence the situation in the region and the world if it were left alone. This, however, could have tipped the balance governing the current circumstances in the world. Interference, therefore, was necessary to deny everyone a chance to come out of this circle of hegemony.

2. In Abu-Mus'ab's opinion, the second objective for invading Iraq was maintaining security. A powerful Iraq with a leadership that made an effort to get rid of hegemony would pose a threat to Israel's security in the short and long run. Israel's security was vital and should never be jeopardized for one second.

3. The third objective was expropriating Arab oil. The economic power behind the US dollar came from the revenues of almost 25 million barrels per day of Arab oil. Up to 75 percent of oil revenues were pumped into the US economy every day. US experts realized the consequences if the US economy lost such revenue. The US administration, therefore, did not hesitate to take expeditious steps to seize Arab oil. That was the most important goal that forced the US administration to attack and occupy Iraq.

In the opinion of Abu-Mus'ab and Muslim jihadists across the world, the aforementioned three points were the US motives to invade Iraq. As a result, the reaction of Abu-Mus'ab and jihadists worldwide to repel the US attack and prevent the United States from achieving its goals

centered on the following points:

1. The Americans and their allies came to thwart Saddam's attempt to possess the power that would enable him to come out of the circle of hegemony. Abu-Mus'ab and the jihadists decided to take Iraq as a pivotal center for Islamic jihadist action. The security mayhem that resulted from the downfall of Saddam Husayn's regime and US inability to control the situation as a result of the lack of a preplanned comprehensive strategy to address the ramifications of the collapse of Saddam's regime created fertile soil for pro-Islamic jihadist activists. The jihadists were able to carry out a far-reaching program to prepare men and obtain financial resources to establish an Islamic army that would carry out the process of change and liberation in the region. Such a process should pave the way for declaring a state of Islam, a state of wise caliphate, as promised by Prophet Muhammad, prayers and peace be upon him. Observers of the Iraq situation believed that Islamists were making progress to build this army and possess the necessary power to liberate and change the situation of Arabs and Muslims.

2. The second objective that the Americans wanted to achieve by overthrowing Saddam's regime was to defend Israel's security and eliminate every possible threat against it. The United States claimed that the former regime posed a threat to Israel's security. Nevertheless, this regime was replaced by men who would focus on exterminating Israel to fulfill a divine commandment. These men believed that Israel represented a major obstacle to the primary goal of establishing a state of Islam. Therefore, persistent effort would be exerted to remove this obstacle. Al-Qa'ida decided that its ultimate priority was to keep up its efforts to embark on a direct confrontation with Jews in Palestine in the near future. When they succeed, they believed, they will win the support of all Arabs and Muslims. Since everyone agrees that whoever fights Israel has the priority to lead the nation, the jihadist movement will enjoy further support and will thwart the second goal behind invading Iraq.

3. The Americans came to save their deteriorating economic situation from collapse by means of seizing Iraq's oil. For this reason, jihadists decided to burn Arab and Nigerian oil. They were convinced that undermining the United States economically and militarily would not happen unless the United States was deprived of the revenues of the entire Arab oil. The three-year plan of the jihadists was established to burn Arab oil to undermine the United States and its allies of Arab regimes in the region. As a result, the United States would not be able to face the substantive challenge. If Abu-Mus'ab and Al-Qa'ida achieved these objectives, their greater project would be a stone's throw away and they would succeed in carrying out their strategy to expel US forces from Iraq in the long run. Abu-Mus'ab and Al-Qa'ida would not prefer a quick US withdrawal from Iraq since such a withdrawal would deny them a suitable environment to motivate the nation to rally its potential resources toward freedom under an Islamic leadership.

Al-Qa'ida's Strategy

Al-Qa'ida's strategy is founded on convincing Arab and Islamic nations that a genuine Islamic leadership has emerged. The strategic vision and tactical steps enabled this leadership to achieve victory in ongoing battles. Al-Qa'ida seeks to maintain these victories by planning to draw the Americans into new battlefronts, bring this serpent out of its hole, and deal strikes to it to exhaust US strength. This should provoke the

United States to carry out acts that would expose its goals to seize Arab resources -- particularly oil -- and protect its relations with Israel. Al-Qa'ida's leadership could convince Muslims of its strategy of dealing successive strikes to the British and Americans everywhere to force them to stop supporting the state of Israel. Consequently, Israel would remain alone against the nation that was looking forward to revenge after Israel committed its atrocities against beleaguered Palestinians, Lebanese, and all Arabs. Thus, the far-reaching vision of Abu-Mus'ab and the global jihadist movement vis-a-vis Israel in Palestine is based on the following foundations:

1. The establishment of the state of Israel coincided with the European-Jewish conspiracy to overthrow the Islamic caliphate state as represented by the Ottoman Empire. Palestine was an important part of this state. In terms of international law and logic, Jews and Europeans would not have succeeded in establishing the state of Israel had the Ottoman state remained intact. The West allied with Jews and drew up a well-defined plan that the Jews achieved when it destroyed the Ottoman state from within by means of infiltration and conspiracy. The West, meanwhile, took care of undermining the Ottoman state at the international level. The West and the Jews would have been unable to establish the state of Israel had the state of Islam remained intact. Thus, the major powers in alliance with the Jews succeeded in establishing the state of Israel. By the same token, Arabs and Muslims will not be able to defeat the state of Israel unless they establish their own state. Islamist jihadists are seriously seeking to establish a state of Islam that will be capable of building an integrated power proportionate to the power of the pro-Israel West. They are determined to build a power that is capable of deterring the West and forcing it to stop providing Israel with everything it needs. This was obvious in most of the messages of Usama Bin Ladin and Ayman al-Zawahiri.

2. The establishment of the state of Israel coincided with Arab and Islamic division. Islamist jihadists believed that Israel could not have survived without these several Arab states surrounding it or other countries in the region. These countries paved the way for the establishment of the state of Israel and protected its foreign security afterward. This was what actually happened. As soon as the British mandate decided to withdraw from Palestine, Arab armies entered Palestine with the alleged intention of liberating Palestine. The reason, however, was to protect Israel's security since Jews were not capable of taking control of all of Palestine at that point in time. They did not possess the human or financial resources that would enable them to do so. Arab armies, therefore, entered Palestine to provide Israel with security and prevent Palestinians and other peoples in the region from keeping up their resistance, which was capable of undermining the newborn state at that time. These armies were designated to keep the Palestinians in a state of weakness and deny them a chance to defend the rest of their territory. This was what happened in the war of June 1967 when the rest of Palestine fell to Israeli forces within hours with minimum resistance by the armies that remained there. Orders were given for these armies to withdraw and the Palestinian people were not able to initiate resistance since they were not allowed to possess any kind of weapons that could help them defend their territory.

Abu-Mus'ab, Al-Qa'ida, and Islamist jihadists around the world linked Israel's power to Western support for the Jews. In the holy Koran, God

Almighty described the Jews by saying: "Shame is pitched over them (Like a tent) wherever they are found, except when under a covenant (of protection) from Allah and from men." Al-Imran Surah, Verse 111. Men are the Western powers and some Arab countries. The state of Israel will not be eliminated unless Western support comes to an end. Western support will not stop unless a state of Islam is established. The establishment of a state of Islam is necessary to deal a strike to the West to halt or undermine its support for Arab regimes and Israel. Only then will an Islamic state be able to deal with these regimes unilaterally and undermine the state of Israel. Al-Qa'ida believes there is a substantial link between these regimes and the state of Israel. It believes that these regimes will become weak if Al-Qa'ida deals a strike to the state of Israel. Similarly, eliminating the state of Israel in Palestine will become easy if Al-Qa'ida gets rid of these regimes. Resistance against Israel will win Al-Qa'ida credibility among the masses of the nation and will prove that it is eligible to lead the nation. This will provide Al-Qa'ida with enough recruits and financial and moral support to fulfill the desired goals.

3- Islamist jihadists believed that the state of Israel is the head of the spear that the West planted in the heart of the Islamic world. They believed that the situation of Muslims will keep bleeding if the spear remains in the heart. They maintained that the Palestinian cause is one of the nation's central causes and for that reason the utmost efforts should be exerted. Islamist jihadists called the front that they agreed to form in 1998 the "Global Islamic Front against Jews and Americans." The name had substantial significance that linked Jews to Americans. In their opinion, this was important strategically and tactically to run the current conflict in the world in their favor.

Significance of Abu-Mus'ab's Pledge of Allegiance to Al-Qa'ida

From the beginning, Abu-Mus'ab realized the enormous dangers surrounding the nation. He realized that no matter how organized and prepared an individual, a group, or a party is, it will not possess the power to make the desired change unilaterally. He believed that the network could employ the entire resources of the nation to achieve its goal if it possessed a sound vision. The challenge was not easy and accordingly, every reaction should rise to the level of such challenge. The camp of the foes of the Islamic nation had human resources, funds, knowledge, and practical experience that were not available to any alliance or camp throughout the history of mankind. Consequently, the step that Abu-Mus'ab took to open channels of communication with Al-Qa'ida after he arrived in Iraq prompted him to pledge full allegiance to Al-Qa'ida's leadership. Such fealty gave Al-Qa'ida a new sense of credibility and added new dimensions to the network. Abu-Mus'ab had an army of at least 5,000 full-time fighters who were supported by vigorous proponents whose number exceeded 20,000 men. This huge number of men gave Al-Qa'ida momentum that made it look invincible. It gave the network further credibility among the population of the Islamic nation. Abu-Mus'ab had his group in Iraq and the achievements they made enhanced the popularity of Al-Qa'ida and its accomplishments and enabled it to become the nation's genuine leadership that made good its promises.

The merger of Abu-Mus'ab and his group with Al-Qa'ida won the network high credibility and added elements of new power to both sides. In the wake of the downfall of the Islamic emirate in Afghanistan,

Al-Qa'ida was in need of new significant positions. Abu-Mus'ab's allegiance provided it with a new regional and global position of the following importance:

Al-Qa'ida's operations and military activities were intermittent.

However, following the pledge of allegiance of Abu-Mus'ab and his group, Al-Qa'ida is there every day and every hour. The nation's masses follow these acts with extreme admiration. They enhance the position of the network to extract the legitimacy it needs from the hands of regimes. The victories achieved by Abu-Mus'ab in Iraq against the Americans are crucial winning cards in Al-Qa'ida's hand.

Al-Qa'ida enjoys widespread support in the Arabian Peninsula, which is adjacent to Iraq. Therefore, Abu-Mus'ab's fealty to Al-Qa'ida provides unlimited human and financial resources that enable Al-Zarqawi to keep up the resistance against the Americans and gives him a chance for constant escalation. It increases available human and financial support, not to mention the new experiences that are gained all the time.

Whenever the confrontation escalates, the resources of mujahidin will increase and this falls in harmony with the strategic plan drawn up by Al-Qa'ida.

Abu-Mus'ab's pledge of allegiance to Al-Qa'ida has won him many financial and moral victories that will play a substantive role in determining the outcome of the battle against the Americans and their allies in Iraq and the region. Iraq is not an insignificant country in the region. It has been the cradle of human civilization throughout history. The first Islamic state was established in Medina in the Arabian Peninsula. In its second phase, the state moved to Bilad al-Sham from where it relocated to Iraq during the era of the Abbasids. The Islamic civilization emerged there and began to take shape in view of the resources that Iraq possessed. If Abu-Mus'ab defeats the Americans and succeeds in expelling them from Iraq, it will be the dawn of the reestablishment of an Islamic state that is capable of addressing the responsibilities it will shoulder.

Future Strategy

The future strategy of Abu-Mus'ab al-Zarqawi is based on expanding the conflict with the United States and Israel and involving new parties in it. Simultaneously, a broad-based Islamic jihadist movement will assume responsibility for changing the circumstances that have prevailed in the region for a long time and establishing an Islamic caliphate state that will take Iraq as its base. The prospects of this strategy are as follows: Turkey, which is located north of Iraq, is currently viewed as the most important Islamic state. Turkey's importance emanates from its available financial resources, since the country has made significant achievements in the industrial, agricultural, and education sectors. Turkey's gross national income has increased rapidly. In addition to its growing financial and human resources, Turkey enjoys a significant strategic location. Abu-Mus'ab, who is currently in Iraq, keeps these facts in mind. Earlier, Abu-Mus'ab and Al-Qa'ida used to make spontaneous plans and give priority to swift strikes to achieve tactical objectives. At present, however, Abu-Mus'ab and Al-Qa'ida have involved Turkey in their strategic plan. They believe that the country lacked self-determination and freedom in view of the fact that the Jews of Dunma were the real powerbrokers in the country. The Jews were in control of the army and the economy. Therefore, Turkey's salvation and

return to the ranks of the nation with its tremendous resources will not happen unless a powerful strike is dealt to the Jewish presence in that country. The plan of Abu-Mus'ab and Al-Qa'ida stipulated that the situation in Turkey should remain calm at present. Small strikes will open the eyes of the security services and prompt them to go on alert. A slow, but well-examined infiltration is Al-Qa'ida's current approach in Turkey. When tangible victory is achieved in Iraq, a fatal strike will take place against the Zionist influence in Turkey. Al-Qa'ida hopes that such a strike will cost the Jews control of the army and vital economic spheres.

Iran is the second country that Al-Qa'ida seeks to involve in this conflict. Abu-Mus'ab and Al-Qa'ida have already started to implement this plan, according to information available to us. Steps have already been taken to prompt Iran to retaliate for a US or Israeli attack on the country. Iran has substantive information about the Zionist influence in Turkey. Its secret wings in Turkey are capable of making significant achievements. The key to change in Turkey is in the hands of Abu-Mus'ab and Al-Qa'ida, and Iran might be the means to achieve this goal.

The strategy of Abu-Mus'ab and Al-Qa'ida to rely on Iran to achieve future change in Turkey is based on intelligence information that confirmed that Iran has succeeded in possessing the components of an atomic bomb. Iran expects that the United States and Israel will deal a powerful and sudden strike to a number of nuclear, industrial, and strategic Iranian facilities. Accordingly, Iran is preparing to retaliate for or abort this strike by means of using powerful cards in its hand. These cards might deter the United States and Israel from launching the strike or might prompt them to think twice before launching it. The United States might have already embarked on withdrawing the following cards from Iran's hand:

1. Iran prepared to attack the entire Gulf oil sector and shut down the Strait of Hormuz, Bab al-Mandeb, and the Bosphorus to cut off 60 percent of the world's oil supplies and deprive the United States of oil revenues. The strike will inflict harm on various countries in the world to prompt them to hold the United States and Israel responsible for the difficult situation. Washington has not embarked on a public initiative to guarantee that Iran will not use this card.
2. For 15 years -- or since the end of the first Gulf War -- Iran has been busy building a secret global army of highly trained personnel and the necessary financial and technological capabilities to carry out any kind of mission. Iran has identified American and Jewish targets around the world. This secret army is led by two professional Lebanese men who have pledged full allegiance to Iran and who hold enough of a grudge against the Americans to qualify them to inflict damage on Jewish and American interests around the world.
3. The Palestinian resistance in the occupied territories: Iran succeeded in establishing good relations with the wings of the Palestinian resistance, including the Islamic Jihad movement, some groups of the Fatah-affiliated Al-Aqsa Martyrs' brigades, the popular resistance committees and their military wing, the Al-Nasir Salah al-Din Brigades in Gaza, and some groups of the Islamic Resistance Movement, HAMAS. Iran views these parties as its entrenched wings in occupied Palestine. The US-Israeli plan regarding this issue is clear. The Sharm al-Shaykh meeting, which was held at the end of January 2005,

represented the beginning of this plan, which stipulated a truce between the Palestinians and Israel and made many promises to appease the Palestinians. The objective was to cool this front and withdraw the Iranian card. Al-Qa'ida interpreted this as the first step toward launching an attack on Iran.

4. The Lebanese Hizballah party is an executive wing of Iran. The party, which is stationed near the northern border of Israel, has well-trained men and enough military equipment to inflict severe damage on the state of Israel if it receives orders to do so. The party harbors deep-rooted hatred against Israel. The United States and Israel are aware of these wings in Lebanon and are determined to eliminate them prior to the battle with Iran. The plan that the United States, Israel, France, and some Lebanese parties agreed on resulted in Security Council Resolution 1559 and concrete steps that began with the assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri. The assassination was the first step to help implement the articles of the resolution that stipulated the withdrawal of Syrian troops from Lebanon and the disarmament of the resistance party. The resolution aimed to undermine Syria -- Iran's ally -- and exterminate Hizballah -- Iran's military wing in Lebanon, which stands on the frontlines of confrontation with Israel. The military campaign against Iran will begin when the United States and Israel succeed in disarming Hizballah.

5. The Iraqi situation and resistance: Iran believes that it is the main winner of the campaign by the United States and its allies against Iraq. Iran's most hated enemy -- Saddam Husayn and his regime -- was overthrown, and pro-Iran Shiites won the lion's share in recent elections. Iranian intelligence has nearly 30,000 agents in Iraq. Since the Americans have not succeeded in eliminating the Sunni resistance, how can they deal with the situation if the Shiites join the resistance? Iran plans to incite its proponents in Iraq to join the anti-US resistance in the event that the United States or Israel launches an attack on Iran. Iran plans to open its border to the resistance and provide it with what it needs to achieve a swift and major victory against the Americans.

These are some of the deterrence cards that Iran possesses. They are not a secret to the services of Al-Qa'ida in Iraq. Abu-Mus'ab is drawing up the appropriate plan that will take full advantage of the circumstances in case the Americans and Jews deal a strike to Iran. Consequently, we are on the threshold of a critical stage, the outcome of which seems obvious in light of our knowledge of the US-Israeli way of thinking, which says a confrontation with Iran is inevitable. In light of our knowledge of the way of thinking of Abu-Mus'ab and Al-Qa'ida, we expect that they will carry out the following plan over the next stage:

1. One of Al-Qa'ida's theories stipulates the expansion of the geographic area of confrontation with the enemy to disperse its forces, increase the chances of inflicting damage on it, and carry on the war of attrition against it. The area of the war will expand, and its horizon will open if the United States and Israel attack Iran. Pro-US Shiites in Iraq and Afghanistan will feel very embarrassed and might reconsider their alliances. The United States and Israel might succeed in destroying Iran's infrastructure. As a result, the Iranian regime will be taken aback and will lose its ability to control the situation. This will provide Al-Qa'ida with better circumstances and a larger, vital area to carry out its activities. Al-Qa'ida will relocate thousands of its proponents and

Taliban supporters to Iraq to take quick steps against the Americans. Under the current circumstances, these supporters cannot pass via Iran. However, if the Iranian Government's control is undermined, the passage of these proponents will become easy, if not protected by Iran. Al-Qa'ida's anticipation is based on the hadith of the prophet, prayers and peace be upon him, in which he said the black banners will be launched from Afghanistan and will settle in Jerusalem.

2. Syria is one of Iran's main allies in the region. The Iranian-Syrian alliance and coordination began following the success of the Islamic revolution of Khomeyni. Iran-Syria relations have remained solid since then. Undermining Syria will coincide, or might precede, an attack on Iran. Undermining the Syrian regime will be in favor of Al-Qa'ida and Abu-Mus'ab in Iraq. The 800-kilometer Syria-Iraq border will enable several thousand supporters of Abu-Mus'ab in Syria to move freely. The weakness of the Syrian regime will provide Al-Qa'ida with freedom and a larger area to move across the border. It will provide them with the opportunity to infiltrate into Lebanon. In this event, the state of Israel will be a stone's throw away for Al-Qa'ida men. Al-Qa'ida will take this opportunity to win the nation's credibility, which no other organization or revolutionary party has won before. As a result, Al-Qa'ida will be crowned as a genuine legitimate leadership of the Islamic nation.

Al-Qa'ida, therefore, has the potential and resources to infiltrate into Syria and Lebanon in the event of an attack on Iran. The situation in Lebanon will not remain stable. Sunnis in Lebanon and Syria are supportive of the tenets of Al-Qa'ida more than of any other ideology.

3. When Iran starts to retaliate for the attack, it will target the Jews of Dunma and their influence in Turkey. This, too, will help Al-Qa'ida because it will shuffle cards and salvage Turkey from the control of the Dunma Jews, which has been intact for almost 100 years. In Al-Qa'ida's opinion, the nation will get rid of this dangerous evil that infiltrated its body and will win back Turkey, which is looking forward to freedom and liberation. Al-Qa'ida is getting ready for these developments and available opportunities.

4. Iran plans to attack Gulf oil. Al-Qa'ida announced and planned to do so earlier than Iran. Chances are high that Iran will attack Gulf oil, in view of its capabilities, which are not available to Al-Qa'ida. Such an attack will be in favor of Al-Qa'ida's plan to demoralize the United States everywhere in the world.

5. Al-Qa'ida is looking forward to Iran's confrontation with the United States and the Jews, since the global secret Iranian action against the Americans and Jews will shuffle the cards and create better circumstances for Al-Qa'ida to act. It will increase this circle of confrontation, undermine the Americans, and provide a larger area of action. In fact, Al-Qa'ida is planning eagerly for the next stage.

Al-Qa'ida... From Where to Where

Al-Qa'ida is the name the Arabs give to a place where fighters are prepared and trained. It is the place from where fighters set out toward their target.

The communists were destined to succeed in Afghanistan when they toppled the regime via a military movement in the early 1980s. The communists, however, did not succeed in controlling the country due to the opposition they faced from the Afghan Islamic movements that developed into armed resistance. The communist masters in Moscow

interfered directly and found an opportunity to advance to the south, toward the warm waters and the oilfields of the Arab Gulf region. The Soviet incursion into Afghanistan aggravated Islamic resistance. The Islamists began to express their rage by taking practical steps that centered on three dimensions in support of Afghan jihadist movements. The first dimension was moral support, represented by inflammatory speeches and media outrage that influenced many Muslims, particularly in the rich Arab Gulf.

The second dimension was the transfer of funds in support of mujahidin in Afghanistan. Some wealthy Gulf shaykhs went to Pakistan to deliver the funds in person. Saudi national Usama Bin Ladin was one of the wealthy young men who arrived there. He met mujahidin leaders in Peshawar, on the Pakistan-Afghanistan border. Bin Ladin saw the suffering of Afghan refugees. He realized that financial assistance alone was not enough from Muslims who needed to perform their duty in compliance with their religion. Bin Ladin believed in the following shari'ah ruling -- which Muslim scholars confirmed unanimously throughout Islamic history -- "If an inch of Muslim territory is usurped, jihad becomes an individual duty for every Muslim man and woman. A woman goes out to jihad without the permission of her husband, a boy without his father's permission, and a slave without the permission of his master." Bin Ladin returned to Saudi Arabia and began to underline the importance of the participation of Muslim young men alongside their fraternal Muslim Afghans in the jihad against the Soviet assailants.

Subsequently, the third dimension crystallized, and young men began to converge on Pakistan individually or in groups. The goal was to support their Muslim brothers, repulse the aggression, and defend the faith and homelands.

Number and Fate of Arab Afghans

Western sources put the number of jihadists who arrived in Pakistan to participate in Afghan jihad from the four corners of the world at approximately 80,000. In his book *Propagation of the Global Islamic Resistance*, Abu-Mus'ab al-Suri [the Syrian], whose real name is Mustafa Bin-Abd-al-Qadir Nassar, better known as Umar Abd-al-Hakim, said: "It was yet more regrettable that the home of Islam was established in Afghanistan during that era of Taliban. For six years, the door was open to establish camps and front lines. An opportunity for jihad was provided under the banners of shari'ah, although the number of those who entered the country for immigration and jihad did not exceed 1,500 mujahidin, including 300 with their families. The number meant that one in a million of the nation's population took part in jihad. God blessed a limited number of mujahidin to gain from the preparation and training in the arena of jihad. Worse yet was that none of the Muslim scholars, particularly renowned clerics, and none of the symbols of da'wah who deafened the world with empty slogans about jihad immigrated there.

"We will find that the ratio remains 1:1 million if we count up the number of those who mobilized for jihad to help their brothers in Afghanistan -- who fell under the oppression of the former blatant occupation of Russians -- Bosnia, Chechnya, Palestine, or other Islamic countries that came under recent occupation. This was actually the percentage, despite the pounding drums of the media, which did not stop overplaying armed jihad or the so-called "terrorism" to justify

aggressive objectives. Do not believe the skyrocketing numbers that US intelligence published in the media under the name of Al-Qa'ida to achieve US goals. I reconfirm the numbers I mentioned, since I witnessed this stage in the field, thank God."

Those who arrived to take part in the Afghan jihad included doctors, engineers, military men, and journalists of various ages, diverse cultures, and considerable experience in numerous fields. Mujahidin had sufficient time to learn shari'ah from honest scholars. They entered into a war that made them realize that the nation would be capable of repulsing every aggression if it returned to Islam and adhered to its foundation in the face of challenges.

Those young men gained experience in fighting and technical skills that enriched their knowledge and enhanced their self-confidence. The great victory that they were able to achieve against the Soviets raised their spirits and gave them hope that they could realize their ambitions. Simply, you enjoy high self-esteem when you defeat a country like the former Soviet Union.

The winds, however, blew in the opposite direction. Disputes emerged among factions of Afghan mujahidin and sedition arose. Arab Afghans opted not to interfere. Many of them returned to their motherland. Some of them opted to go to other arenas of jihad. Some others went to places where governments did not have total control. Yemenis and Jordanians who did not have problems with their countries' governments returned to their homelands. On the other hand, Egyptians, Saudis, and Libyans spread all over the world. The battlefields of jihad made the jihadists aware of their ambitions and high spirits.

The men who joined the battlefields of jihad achieved success and outstanding victories. We saw how they achieved victories in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The greater victory was the defeat of Americans in Somalia. Jihadists tried to support Al-Turabi's government in Sudan, but Al-Turabi and his group were not ready to shoulder the responsibilities associated with the presence of these men. The Americans and some governments in the region began to exercise pressure on the Sudanese Government to prompt it to expel jihadists from Sudan. The Americans attacked the Al-Shifa pharmaceutical factory under the pretext that it was manufacturing chemical weapons. Al-Qa'ida ideologues were in favor of supporting Sudan, since the country possessed substantial economic and human resources. Sudan could have become a foundation for Arab and Islamic renaissance and progress in the region. However, the reaction of the Sudanese Government was not up to the ambition of Al-Qa'ida. The government could not resist the pressure. It asked these men to leave Sudanese territory, including Bin Ladin and his close aides. It did not take these men long to find a new safe haven when the Taliban movement began to make progress in Afghanistan. The movement comprised shari'ah students who were studying at religious schools on the Pakistani border where Afghan refugees were living. The Taliban movement's faith and perspectives were clear from the beginning. The movement had a future plan to establish an Islamic state. These circumstances encouraged young Arab men who left Afghanistan to return to the country. Their return gave the Taliban movement momentum and helped it to achieve the major victories that enabled it to establish an Islamic emirate on Afghan territory.

[Description of Source: London Al-Quds al-Arabi in Arabic -- London-based independent Arab nationalist daily with an anti-US and anti-Saudi editorial line; generally pro-Palestinian, tends to be sympathetic to Bin Ladin]

Arab Afghan and Taliban

The alliance of Arab mujahidin with the Taliban and their contribution to the significant victories that the Taliban achieved provided them with a safe haven. The mujahidin were able to regroup and build up their human and financial resources once again. Thousands of them returned with one big question in mind: What should be done to save the nation from its dilemma?

They were aware that the problem needed a quick diagnosis. Their preliminary diagnosis said that Western interference in the affairs of Arabs and Muslims resulted in the current control over the nation and its assets. In their opinion, such control was the root cause of the problem since it led to the usurpation of the nation's authority, expropriation of its wealth, and equivocation of the truth from its population. Western colonialism resulted in the occupation of Arab and Islamic countries and the humiliation of their population. It prearranged the situation and handed power over to lackeys in accordance with well-defined plans. Consequently, regimes that had nothing to do with the Islamic nation from far or near came to power although they did not adhere to Islam. They were hostile to Islam and Muslims. They supported the enemy against Arab and Islamic causes. These regimes helped the nation's enemy to seize its wealth and undermine its dignity. They exercised flagrant oppression against the population and denied them the chance or means to achieve progress. The diagnosis of the mujahidin clarified the following:

The Islamic nation's situation is unacceptable. It contravenes shari'ah and human values.

The Islamic nation's leadership is illegitimate. It came to power by means of conspiracies with the foreign enemy.

The nation's resources are expropriated in favor of the enemy and corrupt rulers.

There is no one to solve the nation's major problems or dress its wounds.

There is a conspiracy aimed to keep the nation in an environment of scientific, technologic, and economic backwardness. The nation will be too weak to face the challenges imposed on it.

The existing parties, organizations, and groups that introduced themselves as frameworks for change and liberation failed in their endeavors to make tangible progress.

The enemy's unity intensified and their ambitions escalated.

This was the diagnosis of the Al-Qa'ida founders after which they began to look for a remedy. They asked the following logical question: Who caused all this to the nation and who was responsible for its tragedies? Their answer was easy. It was the Zionist, Protestant, and Anglo-Saxon alliance that emerged at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. Such alliance became clear for everyone when the then British foreign secretary announced the so-called Balfour Declaration in 1917 that expressed the sympathy of the British Government for establishing a national homeland for Jews in Palestine.

The declaration was followed by the 1922 downfall of the Islamic caliphate -- as represented by the Ottoman state -- and the occupation of its territories including Palestine. In 1920, the League of Nations Mandate was issued to calm the situation in Palestine and pave the way for the establishment of a Jewish state. This coincided with the resolutions issued by the 1919 peace conference and the Sykes-Picot Agreement that stipulated the division of the estate of the caliphate among the victorious allies.

Therefore, Al-Qa'ida founders identified precisely the enemy that caused the tragedies of the Islamic nation. This enemy could not be influenced ideologically, according to Al-Qa'ida's religious beliefs that were anchored in the holy Koran, in which God Almighty said: "Strongest among men in enmity to the believers wilt thou find the Jews and Pagans." Al-Qa'ida founders believed that the enemy would not change their stance by means of depriving them of the privileges and influence they enjoyed in Muslim countries. The reason was the fact that decision making was not in the hands of the nation's population but rather in the hands of our own kinsmen of rulers who do as they are told.

Consequently, authority should be obtained, war should be declared on the enemy, and successive strikes should be launched to force the enemy to change or renounce its position. Authority should have a framework and, for that reason, a new organization was born under the name of the "Global Islamic Front Against Jews and Americans." The name came as a logical result of the aforementioned diagnosis of the status quo and knowledge of who caused the damage.

The first step that this organization took was to gather information about individuals and groups who held similar beliefs. At that point of time, mujahidin began to return to Afghanistan and Arab camps reopened there. This time, however, the young men did not return for good. They came to receive the necessary training and then relocate all over the world. Apparently, the United States and Jews were not present in Afghanistan. This was why Al-Qa'ida came to be known as "Qa'ida al-Jihad al-Mubarak" [Foundation of Blessed Jihad]. As we mentioned before, Arabs used the word Al-Qa'ida to name a place where fighters were trained and mujahidin were provided with everything they needed. They used the word to describe a place from where warriors set out toward their target. The first stage of jihad in Afghanistan lasted from the early 1980's until the early 1990's. It was the cradle where Al-Qa'ida's ideology and men were nurtured.

Development of Jihadist Ideology

Al-Qa'ida's beliefs came as a natural product of the development of the Islamic jihadist ideology that emerged in the mid-20th century. The ideology was basically established on a specific understanding of the Islamic faith on the foundation of "there is no deity but God alone." In other words, God is the only one to be worshipped in the whole universe. God is the Creator, God is the Maker, God is the Sustainer, God gives life and death, God determines everything and makes one's path easier. He has the power over all things. "There is no deity but God" is a methodology of life that puts forward a comprehensive perception of the life of man on earth. "There is no deity but God" denies men lordship since it is for God alone. Lordship and governorship is the most important characteristics of divinity. God's governorship does not do injustice. It does not ignore, deceive, or favor

someone to the detriment of another. Divine governorship organizes the life of mankind. It produces equality, justice, and genuine freedom. In harmony with this understanding, faith -- if we want to translate it into political language -- means that the regimes and governments in power these days have usurped the most important characteristic of divinity -- governorship -- and have accorded it to mankind. In Al-Qa'ida's opinion, the governorship of mankind has produced all the injustice that has prevailed in the world since Islamic rule ceased to exist. Therefore, Al-Qa'ida's men have opted for a tough mission and a tougher objective. Their objective is to take mankind back to the right path. In their opinion, the right path is the supremacy of God's shari'ah that can only prevail under the umbrella of an Islamic state. Al-Qa'ida's strategic goal is to resume Islamic life by means of reestablishing the state of Islam. This issue poses the following question: What is the strategy of Al-Qa'ida and what is its plan to accomplish this principal goal?

Al-Qa'ida and Other Islamic Movements

The key ideologues of Al-Qa'ida had the opportunity to know a large number of Islamic movements over a period of two centuries.

Correction movements began with the Wahhabism in Najd and Hijaz, the Sanusi movement in Libya, the Mahdi movement in Sudan, modern Islamic jihad movements that faced imperialist forces in the Arab Maghreb and the East, and contemporary Islamic movements including the Muslim Brotherhood, Hizb al-Tahrir al-Islami [the Islamic Liberation Party], and the Islamic Group in India and Pakistan.

Al-Qa'ida ideologues had a firsthand look at the experience of Jamal al-Din al-Afghani and his proponent, Muhammad Abduh, as represented by the Islamic Jama'ah [Group]. Furthermore, they came to know Islamic jihadist and reformist movements in Egypt, Palestine, Afghanistan and other regions.

This knowledge was not merely academic but also direct. Al-Qa'ida's men, leaders, and ideologues came from different ethnic groups. They include Arabs, Turks, Afghans, Pakistanis, Indians, and Caucasians. They had various intellectual and organizational backgrounds. Some were affiliated with Al-Salafiyyah, some with the Muslim Brotherhood group, some with the Al-Tahrir Party, and some with the Al-Da'wah wa al-Tabligh group. Some of them lived in the east and some were born in the West and lived there. The diverse nationalities, backgrounds, and experiences gave -- and will give -- Al-Qa'ida a renewed and constructive ability of coexistence under all circumstances.

Al-Qa'ida's ideologues concluded that the failure of various Islamic movements was attributed to the following reasons:

Islamic movements had different diagnoses of the nation's situation. Wrong diagnoses produced unsound judgment of the situation. As a result, tremendous efforts that were exerted did not achieve crucial results.

These movements did not draw up plans to identify goals and means. Islamic movements did not dare to introduce themselves as a genuine leadership of the nation and an alternative to the weak and fake leaders who were not working in favor of the nation.

Islamic movements were unable to employ the nation's human and financial resources. Al-Qa'ida, therefore, submitted a specific perspective that outlined its future path:

- o The nation's mujahidin who defended its territories, holy sites, and

freedom are the legitimate leaders of the Islamic nation. The rulers and regimes of Islamic countries are usurpers of authority and they conspire with the foreign enemy.

o The situation of the world is not any different from the status quo of the Islamic world since it contravenes the shari'ah and faith. It is a pre-Islamic situation in view of the fact that it gives the human race the power of legislation to draw up and implement laws in breach of the commandments of the Lord of the universe. The pre-Islamic situation produces injustice, blatant aggression, sins, and corruption that affect human life and result in tragedies that make mankind deviate from the right path.

o There should be a well-defined plan of clear objectives and means within well-examined timeframes that take care of organization and the nation's exclusive and objective circumstances.

o The desired change in the situation of mankind should be established on the foundation of changing the ideological, theoretical, and theological conditions of humanity. However, the regimes and pre-Islamic forces that control the world do not allow and will not allow -- as Al-Qa'ida believes -- any constructive ideological activity. They are an obstacle that should be removed. Their removal will only take place by means of jihad, which Al-Qa'ida interprets as sacrificing one's soul, effort, and property to eliminate all obstacles, financial barriers, and worldly taghuts. Al-Qa'ida believes that jihad will get rid of these obstacles. With well-designed action, the force that such a jihadist project needs is on the rise.

Al-Qa'ida's Plan

Al-Qa'ida drew up a feasible plan within a well-defined timeframe. The plan was based on improving the Islamic jihadist action in quality and quantity and expanding it to include the entire world. Al-Qa'ida believed that jihad would enhance the nation's power that would frighten its enemy and eventually force them to relinquish their control of its resources. The enemy would ultimately leave the nation to deal with its rulers. Authority would return to the nation, God's shari'ah would prevail, and all domestic and foreign problems would be solved naturally.

Al-Qa'ida's feasible plan was divided into stages linked to a timeframe. The seven stages should take place over a 20-year period. The plan that began in 2000 with the New York strikes will end in the year 2020.

Following are the stages in sequence:

1. The awakening stage: Al-Qa'ida ideologues believed that the Islamic nation was in a state of hibernation unprecedented throughout its long history. The hibernation began in the early 19th century and extended to the 20th century. The consequences of this hibernation were the catastrophes inflicted on the nation as a result of the challenge that the enemy imposed on it. The nation did not respond properly to this challenge. The plans that Al-Ba'th drew up to respond to such a challenge did not succeed. Therefore, Al-Qa'ida leaders drew up a plan to deal a strike to the head of the serpent and cause it to lose consciousness and act chaotically against those who attacked it. This entitled the party that hit the serpent to lead the Islamic nation.

When the United States dealt powerful strikes to the Islamic nation and declared an outright war on it, Al-Qa'ida launched the 11 September attacks to force the Americans to reveal the truth behind their actions and intentions. As a matter of fact, Bush senior [as published]

announced that his war was a crusade. He called for an international coalition to combat and eliminate terrorism. He began by invading Afghanistan and then Iraq. Al-Qa'ida leaders believed this was a successful first stage of their plan to trigger Washington to attack the Islamic nation and awaken it from its hibernation. Al-Qa'ida leaders believed that the response of the United States was a strategic mistake committed by the Zionist-Anglo-Saxon coalition under US leadership. Thus, Al-Qa'ida's main objective was achieved by means of the 11 September attack. The recipe succeeded and the Americans were fooled. This stage -- the awakening stage -- began with the preparation for the 11 September attacks at the outset of 2000. It ended with the US occupation of Baghdad on 9 April 2003. Al-Qa'ida strategists commended the outcome of the first stage saying it forced the Americans to leave their conventional bases. Thus, the battlefield expanded and the Americans and their allies became easy and close targets. The battle will continue around the clock and so will the escalating war of attrition against the superpower. Al-Qa'ida believed that the second important achievement it made at this stage was that its tenets became known everywhere. Al-Qa'ida grew from an organization of limited resources and capabilities to a widespread network of tremendous and ever-increasing human and financial resources. A month before the Taba attack, Ayman al-Zawahiri addressed his supporters and called on them to embark on forming leadership frameworks and centers of power everywhere they exist, each in harmony with his circumstances and capabilities. His address was clear evidence that the Islamic nation and its peoples began to wake up from their hibernation step by step and began to realize the bitter reality they face.

2. Eye-Opening Stage

Al-Qa'ida intellectuals believe that the eye-opening stage began with the occupation of Baghdad on 9 April 2003, after which the Islamic nation woke up to a harsh reality. Homelands were occupied; the enemy was at large; resources were expropriated, and rulers never cared about the nation. These rulers were involved in conspiracies against their nation and were no longer concerned about keeping the fig leaf that used to cover them. The nation was denied its freedom. Its honor was desecrated for the whole world to see. The nation's blood was spilled by spiteful and savage criminals with no one to stop them. Meanwhile, the bribed and sinful preachers of sultans sang the praises of their masters day and night and exerted relentless efforts to cover their deception. Corrupt governments gave free rein to the myrmidons of interrogation and torture in their security departments to exceed their limits in suppressing and intimidating the nation's honorable men and virtuous vanguards. Poverty spread as a result of corruption, mismanagement, and conspiracies with the foreigners.

In accordance with the plan and vision of Al-Qa'ida's intellectuals, the eye-opening stage will last for three years, until the end of 2006. This stage will enable the nation to realize the truth and uncover hidden plots. During this stage, Al-Qa'ida aims to prolong the confrontation with the enemy, since it views such a confrontation as a victory, regardless of the consequences. The intellectuals believed that previous battles with the nation's enemy were fabricated. They thought that the

scenarios of those battles were drawn up and implemented precisely. The outcome was successive defeats that cost the nation its self-confidence. In light of these defeats, conquered rulers proposed sick ideas. Peace with the Jews became their only strategic and irrevocable option. Acquiescence to the West and the Americans became a must. All these issues combined prompted the nation's sincere young men to join the newcomer who wanted to change the situation. The awaited newcomer was Al-Qa'ida, its leadership, and methodology. Consequently, the eye-opening stage will bolster Al-Qa'ida and turn it from a network into a mushrooming invincible and popular trend. During this stage, Al-Qa'ida plans to achieve the following:

- Engage in direct confrontation with the State of Israel in Palestine.
- Burn Arab oil and deprive the West and proxy regimes of benefiting from oil revenues.
- Prepare for the stage of electronic jihad via the Internet and give it high importance. The impact of electronic jihad will materialize with the beginning of the third stage.
- Proceed with the calm and productive establishment of power in vital areas of the Arab and Islamic world. This process is led by the second generation of leaders within Al-Qa'ida's framework.
- Take Iraq as a base to build an army of jihad of new blood. This army will redeploy in neighboring countries by the beginning of the third stage to assume action within specific and carefully planned agendas.
- Prepare shari'ah studies and disseminate them soon. These studies will steer Muslims toward paying zakat [almsgiving] and making donations to the mujahidin to help them obtain the necessary equipment and weapons for the success of their project, in retaliation for the US policy of freezing the assets of "terrorists."

The aforementioned points are a prelude for the third stage. Direct confrontation with Israel in Palestine will begin when eyes are opened and the movement's power is multiplied.

3. Stage of Reawakening and Standing Upright

Al-Qa'ida ideologues give themselves a time frame of approximately three years to carry out this stage, from the beginning of 2007 to the beginning of 2010. For them, standing upright means the ability to take effective and productive action. The characteristics and objectives of this provisional stage will create a major transition in the process of change in the region surrounding Iraq. The focus will be on Al-Sham at the beginning. Al-Sham was not a random choice, since the ideologues referred to authenticated hadiths in which the prophet, God's prayers and peace be upon him, mentioned the siege of Al-Sham following Iraq. The belief of the ideologues was based on the fact that Israel and the United States planned to divide Al-Sham -- currently Syria, Lebanon, and northern Jordan -- into sectarian mini-states. Moreover, US-European outrage at the current Syrian regime aims to disintegrate every power around the State of Israel, regardless of its structure, to reorganize the region in favor of the ambitions of the State of Israel. Al-Qa'ida believes that the anti-Syria reaction would undermine the Syrian regime and would deny it the ability to control the domestic situation effectively.

The theory of the Islamic jihadist action of Al-Qa'ida is based on exploiting every instance where security control is lost. The Jund

[soldiers of] al-Sham idea was proposed in Afghanistan a long time ago, but it did not materialize as a result of the US invasion. The young men who worked on the idea returned to Syria and Lebanon. Some of them are currently in Iraq. They have prepared themselves to make the most of possible events in Lebanon at present and Syria next. If it is true that Islamists assassinated Al-Hariri due to his relationship with the US- and Saudi-backed Iyad Allawi, this means these young men will try to speed up time to achieve this stage sooner.

By the end of this stage, Al-Qa'ida will have completed its preparations to engage in direct clashes with the State of Israel, both in Palestine and on Israel's border. In this event, Al-Qa'ida will unquestionably become a legitimate leadership of the Islamic nation. As a result, Al-Qa'ida will have a huge supply of human and financial resources. According to the plan, attacks on Israel will not be confined to Palestine alone, but will extend to some Islamic countries where Jews have a powerful influence. We mean Turkey, as we previously mentioned in this book. An end to the control by the Dunma Jews over the Turkish Army and the Turkish economy will enable the Islamic nation to regain substantial military and financial power.

At this stage, Al-Qa'ida will win large numbers of trained and educated young men who are no longer affected by the complex of defeats and catastrophes. These young men will give Al-Qa'ida tremendous force and capability to move on to the fourth stage of its plan.

4. Stage of Recuperation and Possession of Power To Create Change

This stage is set to begin in 2010 and end by 2013. It will focus on overthrowing regimes by means of direct and fierce clashes with them. Al-Qa'ida strategists believed that the current US approach in dealing with the Arab region would expose the cards and flaws of the ruling regimes for everyone near or far. Step by step, the *raison d'être* of these regimes will cease to exist. When the regimes gradually disintegrate, Al-Qa'ida and the Islamic jihad trend will grow persistently.

Furthermore, the constant deterioration of US power will take place by means of expanding the circle of confrontation and maneuvering. The United States will not be able to continue to support the regimes. At this point in time, the jihadist movement will be able to attack and burn Arab oil and deprive the Americans of the most important economic source. Without oil, the regimes will further disintegrate, since they will not be able to build their economic capabilities.

By then, Al-Qa'ida will have completed its electronic capabilities, and it will be time to use them to launch electronic attacks to undermine the US economy. Al-Qa'ida ideologists began to implement an idea proposed by the Islamic Al-Tahrir Party that underlined the importance of using gold as the standard exchange value in international markets. The ideologists will powerfully disseminate this idea around the world and will prepare the necessary research to support it. Consequently, the value of the US dollar will drop and will eventually collapse.

Al-Qa'ida has recruited economists and earnest researchers to refute the economic theory that Jewish economists promoted in the United States. This theory stipulated that there was no need to back currencies with precious metals, including gold and silver. It maintained that a country's gross national product was enough to evaluate its currency. This theory prompted the Americans to print their currency without reflection. When this theory is nullified and when the Americans are denied the

exploitation of Arab oil -- combined with the exhaustion of the economy by means of the escalating battle -- skepticism regarding US economic capabilities will find its way to Japanese, Chinese, and foreign investors. It will prompt them to withdraw their investments that are threatened by the giant US market. This giant will begin to act chaotically and will destroy everything around it. Influential Israeli and American economists in the United States will then deal a fatal blow to the US economy.

Al-Qa'ida's information points out that these economists embarked on buying gold and other precious metals as a precaution against any depression that would affect the US economy and the dollar. Al-Qa'ida theorists believe that the dollar will be gone with the wind when these activities are exposed. Consequently, the American people will vent their anger on the economists, and a major transition will take place. American support for the State of Israel will stop gradually, until it comes to a halt under public pressure as a result of the tragedies that the Israelis inflicted on the Americans. A halt to US support will undermine the State of Israel in the region. Al-Qa'ida believes that such a development will affect the correlation between the power of regimes and the importance of their existence, on one side, and the State of Israel and its influence in the world, on the other. Eventually, the outcome will be in favor of Al-Qa'ida.

The Americans are weak, exhausted, and unable to shoulder the responsibilities of the current world order. Weakness will affect Israel step-by-step as a result of both its confrontation with jihadists in the region and US weakness. The ruling regimes will lose their eligibility and capability to defend themselves when US and Western support stops. All these events combined will enable Al-Qa'ida and the Islamic jihadist trend to move to the fifth stage.

5. Stage of the Declaration of the State

According to Al-Qa'ida's strategy, the beginning of this stage will last from 2013 to the beginning of 2016. At this stage, the Western fist in the Arab region will loosen, and Israel will not be able to carry out preemptive or precautionary strikes. The international balance will change. China will become a superpower if it continues to witness constant growth and so will India. The rising unity of Europe will not continue. Al-Qa'ida's analysis says the British will not allow this unity to rise because they believe it will go against almost three centuries of Anglo-Saxon supremacy in the world. Therefore, the British will not stand by and watch the rug be pulled out from under their feet. Some people who disagree with Al-Qa'ida's theory ask the following question: How then did the British endorse US supremacy? Al-Qa'ida ideologists respond by saying that US rulers were and still are Anglo-Saxons. British relinquishment of supremacy in the mid-20th century was merely a trick to fool European nations and the world.

Al-Qa'ida ideologues believe that the outcome of future events will be in favor of change and the global Islamic jihadist trend that will be able to declare an Islamic state -- a caliphate -- that will be resurrected.

Al-Qa'ida ideologues and leaders anticipate a state of global weakness in the ranks of the enemy and the emergence of a new global power that is not strongly opposed to Muslims. This will coincide with a persistent increase in self-power that will provide Al-Qa'ida and the Islamic jihadist trend with a golden opportunity to declare the establishment of

an Islamic state. The declaration of the state is the strategic goal of Al-Qa'ida. For them, it means the following:

- Ability to control and lead.
- A chance for genuine reconstruction.
- Ability to motivate the nation's human and financial resources and employ them ideally in favor of the nation's causes to meet its needs.
- Creation of a new international balance of power whereby the nation's enemy will slink away into their black holes.
- Dissemination of right, justice, freedom, and equality on earth.

God's promise of "And We wished to be Gracious to those who were being depressed in the land, to make them leaders (in Faith) and make them heirs." [Koranic verse]. Eventually, all corrupt regimes in Muslim countries will collapse and this is what Al-Qa'ida leaders and intellectuals are looking forward to.

6. Stage of All-Out Confrontation

Al-Qa'ida ideologues estimate that the beginning of 2016 will be the outset of the all-out confrontation between the forces of faith and the forces of global atheism. The all-out confrontation will begin immediately after the establishment of an Islamic state. The world will be divided into two camps: the camp of faith and the camp of atheism. Bin Ladin referred to this in many of his messages. As a matter of fact, Al-Qa'ida is established on an idea founded on a divine Koranic verse that the network views as the foundation of change. The verse says: "And say: Truth has (now) arrived, and Falsehood perished. For Falsehood is (by its nature) bound to perish."

In other words, falsehood will come to an end and will cease to exist when the truth is established. For Al-Qa'ida, the Islamic state represents the truth. When the conflict begins, falsehood will not be able to hold out and will perish. The Islamic state will lead the human race once again to the shore of safety and the oasis of happiness.

7. Stage of Final Victory

Al-Qa'ida ideologists believe that the all-out confrontation with the forces of falsehood will take a few years at most. The enormous potential of the Islamic state -- particularly because the Muslim population will amount to more than 1.5 billion -- will terrify the enemy and prompt them to retreat rapidly. Israel will not be able to withstand the substantial Islamic power that will frighten the heart of the enemy. The world will realize the meaning of real terrorism in accordance with the Islamic perception. Such terrorism will terrify the enemy and make them think a thousand times before attacking Muslims and the beleaguered or attempting to violate their rights.

This is the final stage of the well-defined Al-Qa'ida plan that gives Al-Qa'ida credibility, which no other contemporary Islamic movement has ever enjoyed. This comprehensive plan and these clear objectives will help Al-Qa'ida achieve further progress.

Status Quo of the Islamic Nation

The Islamic nation is undergoing a difficult situation. In general, the regimes governing the nation are ignorant and iniquitous. They lack determination and awareness. They work in favor of the nation's enemy and actually follow a program aimed to keep the nation weak and unable to overcome the circle of ignorance and backwardness. Arab

rulers seized the nation's authority and cooperated with the foreigners to expropriate the nation's resources. They exercised all means and exerted every effort to hide the truth from the masses. All these issues combined have become obvious. The nation's young generation and masses have become aware and capable of realizing all dimensions and details of the truth. Everyone is looking forward to the day when they will get rid of these regimes and the unacceptable situation. In light of these circumstances, Al-Qa'ida will win approval and support when it proposes itself as the nation's leader. Large sectors of the population will support the new leadership, particularly if it adopts a reasonable address capable of handling all issues wisely.

Situation of Political and Arab Parties

Parties operating on the Arab and Islamic front failed to realize the hopes of the nation's masses, especially regarding the process of change and liberation. The bulk of these parties did not have plans, programs, or a sound vision to deal with the status quo. Rather, they accommodated their situation in harmony with the interests of their leaders. Some of them made peace with the regimes and did not care about change anymore. Some of them altered the axiomatic principles of Islam to accommodate the democracy and secularism of regimes. Some organizations offered compromises and made peace with the nation's enemy in exchange for unattainable pledges.

In Al-Qa'ida's opinion, such failure coincides with the enthusiasm of the nation's young generation and masses to the newcomer that enjoys the desired qualities. Al-Qa'ida believes that its tenets are the newcomer that enjoys these characteristics. The trend of Al-Qa'ida will flourish and will spread in harmony with this vision.

Nonstop and Renewed Aggression

Al-Qa'ida theorists believe that the non-stop aggression against the Islamic nation for almost two centuries, the occupation of its territories and wealth, the disdain of its dignity, and the confiscation of its freedom have left bleeding wounds in the nation's body. Al-Qa'ida believes that the situation in Palestine, Iraq, Afghanistan, Chechnya, Kashmir, Sudan, Eritrea, and the Philippines was enough to awake the conscience of Muslims and incite them to look for a haven or a solution to repulse the aggression. Al-Qa'ida's methodology against the enemy is the nation's promising hope to bring double retaliation on the enemy.

Achieving Victories

Al-Qa'ida establishes its theory to achieve victory on the following divine verse: "When comes the Help of God, and Victory, And thou dost see the people enter God's Religion in crowds, Celebrate the praises of thy Lord, and pray for His Forgiveness: For He is Oft-Returning (in Grace and Mercy)." Al-Fath Surah [Victory Chapter of the Koran]. The aforementioned verse of the holy Koran followed a significant victory that the prophet, prayers and peace be upon him, and his virtuous companions achieved in Mecca. Following this conquest, large numbers of the Arabs of the peninsula converted to Islam voluntarily. Every victory, large or small, achieved by Al-Qa'ida will open the door to large numbers of the nation's young men to join its ranks and various fields all over the world. Someone who cannot join directly will embark on forming his own group that feeds on the same ideology in an endeavor to achieve the goal by using the same means and approaches.

Al-Qa'ida believes that the situation will be aggravated in light of the escalating US and Jewish aggression. Al-Qa'ida plans to provoke this

aggression every day. The US deployment in the Islamic homeland will enable mujahidin to clash with them easily everywhere. Al-Qa'ida views every clash with them as victory, since the nation has not engaged in real battles for a long time. The strategy of Al-Qa'ida is based on well-defined stages. Its objectives are specific and its means clear. Its plan is based on sound understanding of the stages of history and founded on a series of logical expectations. Al-Qa'ida is prepared to deal with events and invest them fruitfully. Its growing power is derived from its ability to energize the nation's capabilities. Its sole option is to persist in the conflict. This continuation will exhaust the capabilities of the enemy.

Al-Qa'ida's vision is established on action, initiative, and ability to manipulate events. Al-Qa'ida has a global message aimed at alleviating injustice against the beleaguered in the world. Al-Qa'ida does not compromise. It proposes radical solutions based on shari'ah rulings and a significant understanding of the current situation. Al-Qa'ida's warriors and mujahidin do not consider death a loss. They do not view defeat in a certain battle as the end. They have faith in the divine promise of victory and power for the virtuous worshipers of God. They assure believers of the inevitability of victory.

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