

A draft of the first chapter of the book

Jihad Al-Kuffar

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DEREF The Beginning (notes taken on December 23, 1999)

Praise be to Allah, who revealed the Book, controls the clouds, defeats factionalism, and says in His Book, “But when the forbidden months are past, then fight and slay the pagans wherever ye find them, seize them, beleaguer them, and lie in wait for them in every stratagem (of war)”; and peace be upon our Prophet Muhammad, who said, “I have been sent with the sword between my hands to ensure that no one but Allah is worshipped; Allah, who put my livelihood under the shadow of my spear and who inflicts humiliation and scorn on those who disobey my orders¹⁻¹.”

At last, I have written the first paragraph. After thinking about the beginning of this diary, all day long, I felt inspired by the blessed words of a memorable *fatwa*, which should always be a constant companion in the life of a committed fighter like me. Allah willing¹⁻², I am a mujahid, a true believer, who is striving to remove evil from the Earth and lay the foundations of a new age—as I did in the past, as I will continue to do in the future. I implore Allah to protect me and give me the strength to punish the secular world that is threatening our society. And I am not alone; by now, the train of death is on its way¹⁻³. Its riders are steadfast¹⁻³. Nothing will stop them or turn them back¹⁻³.

© Our struggle is a mission—a mystical entity. The power of mujahideen is what allows our communities to live with dignity; those who believe fight in the cause of Allah, and those who reject faith fight in the cause of evil—but they will not survive. They will run into defeat, the miserable end of the blind who are unable to see the true light and will perish in the pits of hell.

There is no chance for the infidels. Victory comes only from Allah; feeble indeed is the cunning of Satan¹⁻⁴.

We must combat the allies of the Devil at any time and in any place, for this is the teaching of the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings upon Him): “Whoever fought to raise the word of Allah, then he is fighting for the sake of Allah.” And Allah Almighty said, “All you who believe, if you meet the enemy, hold fast and mention the name of Allah often so that you may win¹⁻⁵.”

I am well aware of my duties. Heaven will be mine only if I live to fight, free from the illusions of the world. Inspired by deep religious conviction, I have always been standing up for our fundamental principles, and my devotion has been rewarded; since the first days of my holy war, side by side with the Taliban, I have shared the fate of the undisputed protagonists of modern history. A glorious past has changed the lives of many people, and today, we continue to secure the advancement of morals, thanks to the conquests of bold militants who endeavor to spread our values.

We are called to a decisive war between infidelity and Islam. The path is difficult and full of obstacles. We must spare no effort, and we need to be familiar with the insidious grounds where we are going to fight. It is necessary to examine this issue in depth, starting from our true Law and the reality in which we are living¹⁻⁶.

We cannot feel safe even when the infidels are a marginal minority. “We are threatened all the time,” complained an old friend from Baghdad who was praying with me this morning. “Take the case of Iraq. As I turn my eyes to this land, all I see is a frightening mosaic: an ethnic mixture and an odd cluster of beliefs, where some criminals open their homes to the Jews and become a Trojan horse for their plans. We cannot lower our guard, for the Zionists infiltrate through the lands of these idiots, draping themselves in their banners and taking them as a bridge to gain financial control and economic hegemony. Next, we must face the Shiites: the insurmountable obstacle, the lurking snake, the crafty and malicious scorpion, the spying enemy, and the penetrating venom. The unhurried observer and inquiring onlooker easily understands that their creed is the looming danger and the true challenge. It is like a knife at our throats. We’ve got to beware of these hypocrites because they lie, and their religion has nothing in common with Islam, except in the way that Jews have something in common with Christians when they present themselves as People of the Book. From patent polytheism, worshipping at graves, and circumambulating shrines, to insulting the mothers of the believers and the elite of Islamic nations, they arrive at distorting the Holy Koran as a product of logic in order to defame those who know it well. Their greatest act of worship is to curse the Muslim friends of Allah from first to last. They were among the closest allies of the Tartars as they seized the countries of Islam, killing Muslims and capturing their women. And Ibn Taymiyya said, ‘It becomes clear that they are more evil than the sectarians and more deserving of being fought than the *Kharijites*. This is the reason

for the general opinion that circulates, that the Shiites are people of heresy. The populace spreads around that Shiites are the opposite of Sunnis because they show resistance to the *Sunna* of the Prophet of God (may God bless Him and grant Him salvation) and to the Laws of Islam.’ The people of Islam have clearly seen that we are not the first to have brandished the sword. The Shiites continue to kill mujahideen, stabbing them in the back under cover of the silence and complicity of the whole world—even with the support of the Sunnis who did not seek enlightenment from the teachings of science and did not take refuge in a safe corner. Nothing has ever changed, and the final result is before our eyes. We’re surrounded by a wretched multitude of traitors—a silent majority lost in a desert of ignorance and negligence. Victims of base propaganda, rabid crowds plague our country; crowds deceived by the treacherous sirens of secular societies; crowds lured by the dream of a sunny tomorrow, a prosperous future, and a carefree life, with comfort and favor; crowds motivated by the hope of improving their living conditions; crowds destined to become easy prey for cunning media and political enticement. And what about the Sufis, a depraved sect that is doomed to perdition? In truth, these are narcotic opiates and deceitful guides for Islamic nations; not one of them ever speaks about jihad, or calls for sacrifice or self-sacrifice. Believe me—I’m scared of this world that is built on unjustifiable deviations and gross moral turpitude. I’m really scared, but I know that sincere believers can overcome the horrors and absurdities of life; if we trust in the miraculous light of faith, none of us will disperse despite the plots of the Devil. There’s no fear of the future when we find peace and purpose in the instructive example of mujahideen: the quintessence of the Sunnis, the good sap of this world, the virtuous fighters who belong to the Sunni doctrine, and naturally, to the Salafi creed—the virtuous fighters who are eager to obey the symbolic figures of jihad. They’re the spearhead, the enabling vanguard, and the bridge on which the Islamic nation crosses over to the victory that is promised and the tomorrow after which we aspire¹⁻⁶.”

That wise militant had made a good point, for mujahideen are the greatest resource of mankind, and all of us are deeply honored to be part of this privileged elite. We are the only upright believers, the indestructible champions of justice, and the humble servants who have chosen to combat for a supreme goal. We are the honest guardians of eternal values, the upholders of the uncorrupted version of the true revelation, and the holy warriors determined to impose the only legitimate truth—that truth which I like to call “our creed” or “our faith” or “our doctrine” or “our spiritual movement”, in order to emphasize the unrivaled standards and the extraordinary features of our practices, traditions, objectives, and ideals. No misunderstanding is acceptable; we have nothing to do with the hypocrites or the apostates who prefer to deal with the infidels by calling for moderation or peace or mercy. With the unbelievers, there will be no moderation, no peace, and no mercy—this is our basic rule, and those who disagree are strangers to our world.

The policy of our leaders has borne fruit, and the power of mujahideen has grown out of any expectation, since honesty and virtue have always been our reason to exist. By now, we can inflict suffering to every country, like never before. There's no limit to our potential. No matter how ambitious the target, we only need to stay on the right track, for victory will not be denied to devout militants who understand that the holy war is an element of faith. We cannot escape blame if we do not struggle for the true liberation of our nations, for the growth of ethical knowledge across the globe. We must live with the sword; no other way exists to maintain purity. Surely, I would be a miserable man if I had not embraced our doctrine, so unique and so beautiful. Life is devoid of meaning for those who refuse to fight against the unbelievers in the name of Allah and in the way of Allah¹⁻⁷.

Day after day, I took part in world-shattering battles, proud of my choice. However, I did not feel completely at ease. I was oppressed by an unpleasant sense of grief and bitterness, as I realized that memories were often lost in the shadows of the past. Everything seemed to be fading away.

The elapse of time looked like an enemy, and a strange idea eventually crept into my mind. I thought about holding a diary, at least a rough diary—a precious instrument to keep a record of so many acts of courage, countless and untold, which will change the course of history.

Last summer, in the silence of the evening, I started hearing a persistent voice from the depth of my heart: *“Why are we condemned to forget gorgeous days of glory and struggle? What about the martyrs who continue to render a great service to our cause? I'm sure their sacrifice can't be consigned to oblivion...”*

Bewitched by epoch-making events that continued to stimulate popular interest, I was convinced it would be great to retain memories of our battles, but I was unable to overcome doubt, laziness, and fear; something had always prevented me from beginning that diary.

I was certainly embarrassed because I knew I was not a good writer, but my poor skill never was the main handicap. “After all,” I repeated to myself, “I want to celebrate the heroic militants who fight for a just cause and represent the cream of our nations. I'm not aiming for a masterpiece of literature...”

The obvious conclusion was that a poor manuscript would be better than nothing, but this self-encouragement was not enough. I was still blocked by a strong fear. The fear was so strong that I always abandoned the idea of taking notes on my fantastic experiences as a mujahid.

Most of all, two burning questions used to thwart any initiative: “If my diary falls in the hands of the wrong people, what price are we going to pay? What will ever happen if I become a martyr and lose control of my documents?”

I was caught in a whirl of opposite feelings, but suddenly, everything changed. At last, I have been given the chance of a lifetime, the opportunity to hold a diary without running risks. From now on, I can use a coded language, because yesterday I was sent on an important mission, fully equipped with electronic devices, including a portable computer—a perfect

instrument to put down whatever I wish with the help of cryptograms. If something went wrong, there would be no worries about painful consequences.

So, my dream has come true. Seated at a desk, I have been typing on the keyboard of my notebook for about an hour, without a break. I can barely contain my excitement, and I am not upset by a little inconvenience: this computer does not allow me to use my native language. There is no way out—I must write in English rather than Arabic.

It is a pity, but I do not mind; after all, it would be silly to complain about this detail. If necessary, someone in the future will make a translation to introduce our youths to the outstanding achievements of wonderful fighters and broad-minded leaders. Now, I just need to continue with passion. In the same spirit in which I have decided to fight until the last breath, I have got to do this job with complete dedication. After starting a diary, it would be a shame if I stopped talking of battles and victories. There is no excuse: I must persevere in my efforts and pay tribute to the mujahideen who devote their lives to the triumph of justice, offer their wealth for the success of our beliefs, and get ready for martyrdom. By no means shall I drop my idea because the sacrifice of any militant is a clear message for all believers. And in the years to come, a large number of brethren, fascinated by so many stories of faith and virtue, will surely be encouraged to swell our ranks.

At this very moment, I am in Nepal. It probably looks funny that I have set about writing a diary in this awkward place, a small hostel in the outskirts of Kathmandu, so far from the lands where I usually live. Instead, everything is in full agreement with the timeless magic of our holy war, because right here, in Kathmandu, some fighters are getting ready for a sensational battle that will give new emotions to sincere believers. By the grace of Allah, I am in a city that will be part of our history till the end of the world. My morale is high, and it was a real blessing that just yesterday, just in time for an awesome season of conquests, I was given a portable computer. Now, I am so glad to type these notes—and I do not care if the shadows of the evening invite me to turn off the lights; before leaving my desk, I absolutely want to talk about the latest events and explain why I happen to be in this country.

It all began a couple of weeks ago, after the killing of an Indian agent. I was on the scene, in Sarawak, where I worked as an instructor at a training facility, a strategic gateway to armed struggle in the Philippines and Indonesia. The camp was filled with recruits who used to come as poor, desperate youngsters without a future. A few months were enough to transform each of them into a suicide bomber. At the end of our courses, they were new men, outstanding examples of virtue. Whoever had joined us with sincere devotion and passionate fervor was always sure to become a prime candidate for the great prize reserved to martyrs.

Our outpost was on a river, hidden in the depths of the jungle, in a secluded place. But on a dreadful day, we realized we were in danger; a man, apparently an Indian, was about to discover our sanctuary. Two

recruits were approaching the camp by boat, and he was in their wake, alone, on a small cruiser. It was very late, pitch dark, exactly what you would expect in a tropical rain forest after sunset. The black of the night seemed to be impenetrable.

As soon as our militants were on the jetty of the compound, two lances with photoelectric lamps emerged, speeding up in the darkness and racing wildly toward the cruiser. As I feared, the man on board grabbed a rifle. A trainee was shot dead, and a burst of machine-gun fire smashed a lamp to smithereens. We fired back, aiming at the boat and hoping to capture the intruder alive, but we could not manage; some bullets reached his legs, while the cruiser hit a wave and made a sharp turn. Our enemy was standing up and lost his balance. He desperately tried to hold onto a rail, howling with rage and pain. No way, that stupid gunman fell overboard and splashed into the water. The stream was rushing. Roaring rapids and surface rocks gave him no chance. At dawn, we found his body, dragged by the tide; it had been washed up on a narrow neck of land near a meander, three hundred meters downstream.

We could only search his boat, which had landed on a small beach, slipping in the sand without catching fire. Pretty soon, our mujahideen discovered something that seemed to pose a serious threat: a photograph hidden between the pages of a phone book. There was also a name, jotted down overleaf, the name of a man who was fighting to defend our interests in the Indo-Pakistani Region.

The news came as a shock because we had not found the picture of an ordinary militant. He had a special role in our struggle and was being trained for an imminent attack on India, a tremendous enterprise that will be regarded as a milestone on the road of revenge against the disbelievers. And after a long wait, we are on the eve of the action: the job is planned for tomorrow. Together with four mujahideen, that daring fighter will hijack the Indian Airlines flight IC814 from Kathmandu to Delhi. The final goal is the freedom of Muhammad Masood, a Muslim preacher who is serving a sentence in an Indian jail.

Until that dramatic gunfight in Sarawak, our Pakistani brothers had been working on their project without getting into trouble, but stormy clouds had suddenly arisen; an identikit portrait in the hands of an Indian spy could not be dismissed as a minor problem. It looked as if the secret service of a hostile country was engaged in a manhunt. And my travel to Kathmandu is related to that very picture. I am here to take care of a brave fighter in a discreet way. It is a delicate task, and several mujahideen are involved in the operation; we have been ordered to protect him and watch out for possible enemies who might be around. Crucial days are ahead, and we must be sure that our plans are not foiled by unexpected events.

So far, everything has gone off smoothly: we have not seen any suspects, and there are only a few hours to go before the attack. The worst seems to be over. Once again, it is time to have a positive outlook on the future; the infidels are about to suffer a humiliating defeat, and the entire world will be rocked by the force of faith. Soon, five militants will board an

Indian airliner to punish a cruel enemy; if they fight with honor, the plane will not escape its destiny.

May Allah guide us all to what is right¹⁻⁸. May Allah include us among His servants, who are favored by Him and His servants who uphold the dignity of His religion. Only Allah can help us; there is no power and no struggle without the help of Allah. And while I long for the next battle, I increase my prayers for forgiveness and my prayers of repentance to Allah to obtain Allah's favor. In the end, Allah will make us victorious because of that. Only Allah knows this matter. Until we meet in the battlefield. Allah is Great. May His peace, mercy, and blessings be upon all the believers¹⁻⁹.

[1-1] Paragraph copied from a fatwa published in 1998. The English text can be found, e.g. in
<<http://www.library.cornell.edu/colldev/mideast/wif.htm>>.

[1-2] The words "Allah willing" were copied, e.g., from the transcript of a videotape of Osama bin Laden (2001), as reported in
<<http://edition.cnn.com/2001/US/12/13/tape.transcript/index.html>>.

[1-3] Sentence copied from a "religious exhortation," as reported in
<http://www.worldnetdaily.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE_ID=31255>.

[1-4] Paragraph based on a message by Osama bin Laden (February 2003), as reported in
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/2751019.stm>.

[1-5] Paragraph based on a message by Osama bin Laden (February 2003), as reported in
<<http://www.sftt.org/dwa/2003/2/12/3.html>>, available in January 2008.

[1-6] Paragraph based on a letter by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, as reported in
<<http://www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/library/news/iraq/2004/02/040212-al-zarqawi.htm>>.

Even though there is speculation that the letter may not be authentic, several parts of the paragraph are literally copied from this document, since its contents reflect sentiments which are proved by well-documented facts and are undeniably shared by several terrorist organizations (namely, deep hatred for the Jews and widespread hostility toward Iraqi Shiites, often combined with continuous propaganda in favor of armed struggle).

[1-7] The words "fight in the name of Allah and in the way of Allah" were copied, e.g., from
<http://www.e-prism.org/images/The_Ruling_on_Jihad_and_its_Divisions_-_Yousef_Uyery.pdf>.

[1-8] The words "May Allah guide [...]" are commonly found in written texts and appear to be appropriate in this paragraph.

[1-9] Paragraph mostly copied from a "Declaration of War" (2002), as reported in
<<http://www.websitesrcg.com/ambon/documents/laskar-jihad-010502.htm>>.