



# Jihad Al-Kuffar

...a fictional story which is told in a diary found and edited by Michael A. Rome

# THE TITLE: WHY Jihad Al-Kuffar?



Because Jihad al-kuffar (or “Jihad against the disbelievers”), in someone’s view, consists of “physically fighting” and refers to a duty that must be fulfilled “either by direct participation in combat or by donations of wealth or other methods of supporting the struggle”. This possible interpretation of the words Jihad al-kuffar is the main reason behind the choice of the title: it gives emphasis to the fact that the alleged author of the diary (a *مجاهد* engaged in a “holy war” against people who do not share his beliefs) acts in full accordance with accepted standards and guidelines, which call for violence, find favor with radical groups, justify armed struggle and are reflected in WORLDWIDE terrorist attacks (e.g., in Islamabad, Istanbul, Jakarta, Riyadh).

*The dots on the map show the places visited by the militant during the period covered by his diary.*

## PROLOGUE

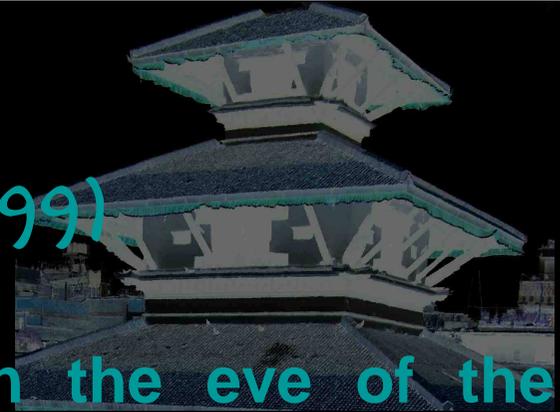


A European citizen comes across a compact disk, which contains the diary written by a radical militant “during a twenty-eight month period, from December 1999 through March 2002”. The action begins in the Island of Bintan, Indonesia, to the south-east of Singapore, where a tour guide starts talking about a CD received from a cousin who lives in Peshawar, Pakistan, next to the Afghan border...

*The picture above was taken by the author in December 1999. It shows a welcome gate in a small island (Penyengat) near Tanjung Pinang, the main town on the Island of Bintan. Behind the gate there is the entrance to a mosque which is mentioned in the first page of the prologue.*

# 1. THE BEGINNING

(NOTES TAKEN ON DECEMBER 23, 1999)



The scene is in Kathmandu, Nepal, on the eve of the hijacking of the Indian Airlines Flight IC-814 to Delhi. There is some evidence that the fighters who should take control of the aircraft have probably been identified by the secret service of a country engaged in anti-terrorist operations. In view of this threat the mujahid is in Nepal to “watch out for possible enemies who might be around”. The night before the attack everything seems to go according to plan.

In the first pages of his diary the militant presents himself and talks about his practices, traditions, objectives and ideals. His words are straightforward: he wants nothing to do with “the hypocrites or the apostates who prefer to deal with the infidels by calling for moderation or peace or mercy”. In his opinion, with the unbelievers there can be “no moderation, no peace, and no mercy”.

## 2. BAHAWALPUR

(NOTES TAKEN ON JANUARY 11, 2000)



The hijackers of Flight IC-814 free the hostages in exchange for prisoners held by the Delhi Government. One of them is a preacher who immediately resumes his teaching: at the beginning of January (after a speech held in Karachi to praise jihad) he addresses a large crowd in Bahawalpur, Pakistan, and vows to raise half a million mujahideen, half a million fighters, for an all-out war on India.

The *mujahid* is right there and goes into ecstasies, sure that “the challenge against those who do not believe is the noblest action of those who believe”. More than ever he hopes to spread his “ideals of eternal peace and subdue the lands of the kuffar”: in his opinion “there is no other practical solution to guide the whole of mankind to the truth, no other practical solution to allow every man to obtain salvation at the end of his earthly life”.

### 3. A NEW MISSION

(NOTES TAKEN ON APRIL 26, 2000)



After returning to Afghanistan, his adopted motherland, the *mūjahid* is sent to Egypt with a fellow militant: Ahmed. They are to investigate a man (Ismail) who lives in Cairo and who is linked with an Indian agent, an alleged civilian whose cover was blown after the hijacking of Flight IC-814. Since this agent was recently killed, no one can force him to talk...

Ready for the new mission, dreaming of an “imminent walk down a wonderful path of virtue”, the *mūjahid* is grateful to his leaders for entrusting him with an important task—an investigation into a spy ring that is threatening the Afghan jihad and its freedom fighters. He prepares to write another chapter of the fascinating book of his holy war. There is no doubt in his mind: “a future of victories is ahead”. He only needs to be patient and behave properly, because Good will be rewarded with Paradise, Evil will be punished with Hell.

## 4. CAIRO

(NOTES TAKEN ON MAY 22, 2000)



As he lands in Egypt, the *mujaheed* thinks back to his early youth, when he spent some months of his life in Cairo. It was in Spring 1967 and the whole country was in ferment, eager to wage war on Israel. But “Egypt did not enjoy divine favor”: its people did not deserve it. They were too different from the Afghan fighters, sustained by unshakable faith in their struggle against the Red Army.

After leaving the airport, the militant now tries to focus on his mission and overcome the shock caused by Egypt being so different from Afghanistan. But the mission comes to an abrupt end: Ismail is killed. Even worse, it turns out that Ismail only had a minor role in the spy ring. The men who hold the reins of the organization are still a mystery. The only clue is a long-distance call from Cairo to London: a phone call to an Iranian man whose name is Mehdi...

## 5. LONDON

(NOTES TAKEN ON AUGUST 16, 2000)



The **مُجَاهِد** and his friend, Ahmed, spend some months in London and tail Mehdi. They hope to track down the people involved in the spy network that has already created so much trouble in the past. All efforts, however, seem to be in vain...

During their stay in England, the two fighters experience a reality that is full of promises for the future of their holy war: in the United Kingdom (and perhaps even more in other European countries) the power of the mujahideen is surging “beyond any expectation” and often comes together with strong anti-Semitic feelings. The **مُجَاهِد** believes that so many positive developments are due to: uncontrolled immigration, cultural organizations being transformed into recruitment centers, total freedom of action given to radical preachers and progressive legislation which tolerates (or, at the very least, pretends to ignore) terrorist activities.

## 6. NABLUS

(NOTES TAKEN ON OCTOBER 9, 2000)



Ahmed and his men go through Mehdi's flat with a fine-tooth comb, but do not find any clues. Before leaving, they stage a fake burglary in the hope that Mehdi will blame everything on common housebreakers. The militants steal money and silver ornaments, including a picture frame with a photo of Mehdi (and a mountain in the background). In the end, however, Mehdi does make a mistake: they find out that he will soon travel to Nablus, the West Bank, where he will probably come into contact with a counter-terrorist unit.

The *mūjahid* is after him, in the heart of Palestine, but suddenly Mehdi vanishes without leaving a trace. The militant can only find comfort in an intense moment of intifada: he joins a furious mob engaged in the destruction of Joseph's Tomb and a nearby Jewish Seminar, a few hours after the pull out of the last Israeli troops (October 7).

## 7. THE DISTRICT OF YAKAOLANG

(NOTES TAKEN ON JANUARY 20, 2001)

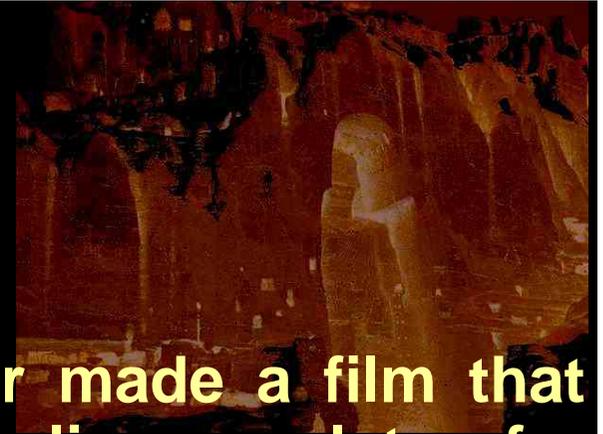


The mujahid remarks despondently about the imminent future (“a new president has taken office” in the US and “the time of easy fighting is over”) and thinks back to his last day in the West Bank, in Ramallah, when he joined a cheerful crowd during the lynching of Israeli reservists (October 12).

Meanwhile he discovers that the snap stolen in Mehdi’s flat was taken near Mazar-i-Sharif, Afghanistan. He is ordered to go there to investigate. Someone remembers meeting Mehdi in 1999 heading to the District of Yakaolang. The militant moves to this area, where a rebellion is in progress. When the insurgents are defeated, a house-to-house search takes place to kill the survivors. During the crackdown, it comes out that a brother of Mehdi’s lived there, but he has recently died. In the past he also traveled to Prague in the Czech Republic: there, he spied on a fighter named Muhammad...

## 8. BAMMIYAN

(NOTES TAKEN ON MARCH 13, 2001)



While tailing Muhammad, Mehdi's brother made a film that reveals the face of an accomplice and the license plate of a Czech car, except for one digit: this promises to deliver a fatal blow to a dangerous spy network...

After a short stay in Kandahar, the militant is sent to Bamiyan for the demolition of the Buddha Statues. The first sculpture has just been blown up, when he is suddenly ordered to go to Pakistan: Ahmed is waiting for him in a helicopter. The *mujahid* is incredulous when he is told the reason for this unexpected journey: he has been chosen for a suicide mission in Italy. His reaction is immediate and enthusiastic: "It's always been my lifetime dream, all I can hope. No gift can exist which is more rewarding than martyrdom for a believer who fights for the sake of justice... a magical blessing has been bestowed on me..."

## 9. NAPLES

(NOTES TAKEN ON APRIL 4, 2001)



The militant arrives in Italy and meets some fellow fighters and local anarchists, who will assist him in his suicide mission. The attack will be launched in Genoa, Italy, at the end of July during a G8 summit: according to the plan he will approach the venue for the meeting during the riots staged by antiglobalizers. Later, at night, he will reach a firing range, crossing from one roof to another with the help of steel wire ropes. Finally, he will fire an antitank missile to strike the heads of state from the richest countries in the world...

The *mujahid* goes to Naples to watch the fights that are expected to take place during an international meeting (March 17). The trip to Naples is part of the training program, since the militant must get familiar with the strategies of the antiglobalizers: in Genoa he will mingle with anarchists and disguise himself as a demonstrator to approach the target...

## 10. DAMASCUS

(NOTES TAKEN ON MAY 11, 2001)



The man who helped Mehdi's brother in Prague is tracked down. He dies in a gunfight, but leaves a trace: the address of a grocery store in Malaga, Spain. Ahmed is ordered to spy on the people who work in the shop (Francisco, his wife and a man from Iran, Hasain). After intercepting a phone-call, Ahmed finds out that Hasain's sister (Fatma) tried to hook up with Muhammad (the militant tailed in Prague): the girl lives in Jenin, the West Bank. Suddenly Hasain is sent to Syria...

The *متجسس* and Ahmed are after Hasain, but he hides in the crowd and vanishes without a trace during the last day of Pope John Paul II's visit to Damascus (May 5-7). Meanwhile, some militants find Fatma in Jenin: immediately the two men set out to Palestine. En route, they discuss the Pontiff's trip: excited at its political implications, they fully agree that Damascus has been "awash with positive energy".

## 11. JENIN

(NOTES TAKEN ON MAY 15, 2001)

After a short stay in Bethlehem, Ahmed and the **مُجاهِد** go to Jenin. They rejoice in the success of the intifada, the forthcoming slaughters in Israel, the prospects of the Afghan jihad, the love that so many militants share for martyrdom and the worldwide support given to the Palestinian struggle (especially by Western political and religious movements).

In Jenin, Ahmed and his friend hope to get information out of Fatma. Suddenly her cousin shows up and opens fire. Fatma and her kinsman are killed in the gunfight: there is no way to track down the leaders of their organization. Meanwhile, in Spain, Francisco and his wife disappear. Despite some lingering doubts, the militant is confident and optimistic about the future: “nothing will go wrong if we devote our lives to jihad, the most important obligation of those who believe—the gateway to martyrdom and to the eternal reward.”



## 12. GOTHENBURG

(NOTES TAKEN ON JUNE 18, 2001)



While Ahmed returns to Spain to “resume his manhunt”, the *mūjahid* continues to prepare for his suicide mission and travels to Gothenburg, Sweden, where a large number of protesters are sharpening their knives to fight against the police during a European Union Summit (June 14-16). It is his “last chance to study the pacifists’ tactics and become fully acquainted with the guerrilla techniques that will be adopted in Genoa”. During the rallies he appreciates the efforts of the antiglobalizers who keep fighting to “destroy the errors of the past in order to create the culture of the future” and “form a third-worldist conscience against the weapons of the West, against its toxic substances, against global warming”.

After the clashes, the militant savors the taste of success and imagines himself in Genoa, “in a battlefield engulfed in complete chaos, the main ally for an effective attack”.

## 13. THE AMBUSH

(NOTES TAKEN ON JULY 18, 2001)



Almost ready for his mission, the *mujaahid* meets Ahmed, now back in Italy. Ahmed talks about a daring attempt to break into the grocery store in Malaga, the clue left behind by Mehdi's brother. The shop had been booby trapped. So Ahmed was wounded in the blast. But he did find evidence of an intel operation against Muhammad (the man who had been tailed in Prague). Now he lives in Miami, Florida, and his home phone was bugged. This gives a chance to lay a trap: Muhammad speaks on the telephone about an imminent journey to Salou, Spain. If the enemies have wiretapped the call, they might take the bait and shadow Muhammad in Spain. Then, it should be easy to identify and kill them...

The *mujaahid* takes part in the job and travels to Madrid. When the mission is over he immediately turns to the future, dreaming of his next victory—dreaming of his next life.

## 14. GENOA

(NOTES TAKEN ON AUGUST 12, 2001)



“Life is not in the hands of man. Nothing depends on our will. The course of history can be overturned at any time, and human projects are often doomed to failure.” The *mujahid* writes these words when he talks of his mission in Genoa: all dreams were shattered by the harsh reality. Something went wrong and he was forced to cancel the attack. However, he is also “heartened by the strength of faith”: he just needs to be patient, because “the final victory is for those who believe”.

It is time to return to Afghanistan, but the journey back will also take him to Grozny, Chechnya, and Ramallah, the West Bank: a new phase of the holy war is in progress and the militant must seek recruits for the Afghan jihad. The first part of the trip is a great success: despite the urgent need of mujahideen for the Chechen resistance, the response of many fighters turns out to be particularly generous.

# 15. GROZNY

(NOTES TAKEN ON SEPTEMBER 2, 2001)



The mujahid stays in Grozny for some weeks and meets several insurgents. The morale is high and the prospects of Chechnya are excellent: “the Russians are far from an easy victory”. But there is also a vortex of anguish and despair: the support of the international community is poor, almost negligible. Instead, “were the Americans or the Israelis involved in the killing of a man, anyone would talk about their cruelty all over the world.” With the Russians, it is terribly different. “Human rights and supreme principles are downgraded to a mere option. Everything falls within the context of a standard police operation against criminals. Nobody calls for peace...”

In September the militant is ready for his next destination, Palestine: another land full of potential, where the best fighters will not be insensible to the call of the Afghan jihad.

# 16. RAMALLAH

(NOTES TAKEN ON SEPTEMBER 11, 2001)



The mujahid is in Ramallah, the West Bank, where he has already found “scores of militants attracted by the unequalled charm of the Afghan jihad—the climax of the fight of the believers against the unbelievers”. But today he does not care about new recruits. He is celebrating an incredible victory: “I am surrounded by the cheers that thousands of militants raise to the sky on this historical, unforgettable day... Still enchanted by the overwhelming success of our mujahideen, I cannot find the exact words to describe my feelings. This is a moment of empowerment, of catharsis, of apotheosis... The Great Satan has been humiliated... America and its Zionist accomplices lie in the dust, unable to rise from the grave... New opportunities are emerging. The most arrogant infidels are sunk in gloom and misery, while we clearly see the superb resources we possess.”

## 17. KANDAHAR

(NOTES TAKEN ON OCTOBER 7, 2001)



The *mujahid* talks about the Taliban law, which aims to serve justice and virtue. “Prostitutes, adulteresses, and homosexuals are promptly lashed or executed. Thieves have their hands chopped off. Each citizen is compelled to visit the mosque and say his daily prayers. Women stay at home and obey their fathers, their uncles, their brothers, their husbands, their sons. Every aspect of life is totally aimed at a harmonious blend of religious rules and religious customs.” The militant also appreciates the worldwide protests of the pacifists who oppose any military attack on the Taliban, but he firmly believes that war is the best solution. He is full of confidence and hopes that America will be deaf to the cries of the peace activists. With some luck, the US will make the greatest mistake in its history. If the White House really gives the green light, the fate of the Great Satan is sealed: “rivers of blood will fill the valleys of this blessed Emirate.”

## 18. MAZAR-I-SHARIF

(NOTES TAKEN ON NOVEMBER 8, 2001)



Since the war broke out (October 7), the **مجاهدين** has been in Kandahar, Kabul, Mazar-i-Sharif: everywhere the morale is high and the whole country is in good spirits. One month of air raids has proved that “the unbelievers have failed. After weeks of bombings, Afghanistan is firmly in the hands of mujahideen, while the pagans who are fighting for the sake of Satan have been cornered in the northern territories and have not conquered a single town” of the Islamic Emirate. If they try to advance, every fighter is ready to meet the challenge.

In the meantime millions of protesters “condemn the Great Satan and the infamous governments that dare to support his criminal policy”. The fury of peace activists is growing in Muslim lands and beyond. Everyone is willing to take a stand. Everyone continues to “praise the stubborn determination of the Afghan leadership and drum up support” for its holy war.

# 19. THE END

(NOTES TAKEN ON MARCH 6, 2002)



Fully satisfied with the progress of military operations, the *mujahid* makes notes on the latest events: “The forces of evil are going to be defeated, destroyed, annihilated... Any attempt to overthrow the legitimate Afghan government has failed, and the time of reckoning is approaching.” He also talks in positive terms about a strategic retreat, which began when the Taliban left Mazar-i-Sharif, on November 9. Then it was the turn of Kabul... then it was the turn of Kandahar...

Now most mujahideen have gathered in East Afghanistan and are eager to counterattack: their spiritual masters prepare to “emerge from the Tora Bora caves and kick the invaders out of the emirate”. The militant is not far away, in the Province of Paktia. Suddenly a helicopter shows up. He feels safe and keeps writing, but the last sentence remains unfinished: “victory is for those who fight for the sake of just”...