

Chatting on top of the World: 10
The Biggest Stupidity
Troubled Environment

No doubt the enthusiastic reception of Abu ‘Abdullah in Jalalabad and gathering all the al-Qaeda fighters there, led to igniting the enthusiasm of the Peshawar Arabs to gather there in hoards.

People like me, who were discouraged and dispirited felt like a minority; however I found other disheartened people whom I befriended.

The number of Arab casualties was escalating like never before, not since the day they took part in the Afghani Jihad. Some of the martyrs were married while some of them had families consisting of a wife and eight or nine children.

I used to accompany my wife whenever we had to pay our condolences to the widows. On one such sad occasion, and while I was waiting in my car watching women paying their condolences to one of the widows, I met “Muhammad Shawqi al-Islambuli”. We had already met a year earlier.

I told him with sadness that it is not appropriate for the Arabs to participate in the Jalalabad battle because there are too many mistakes and bad intentions which will render us victims.

With a warm smile on his face he said, “The news reporters and the politicians talk about distrust, but they have no valid proof.”

I immediately changed the subject until a bearded young, tall and well built man approached us and stood next to the car we were in. Muhammad Shawqi introduced us by saying this is brother Abu al-Aysar – ‘Ali ‘Abd-al- Fattah. I remembered I had heard that name before when I was told he was the Emir of the Islamic Group in the Governorate of al-Minia in Egypt. He was planning on joining the Jihad forces in Jalalabad, so I avoided talking politics. Our conversation was limited to niceties.

Few days later, I found myself accompanying other Arabs to visit Muhammad Shawqi to offer him our condolences on the loss of Abu al-Aysar, who was hit by a mortar in Jalalabad and died on Tuesday, 6th of Ramadan 1409—April 11,1989.

Dr. ‘Abdullah ‘Azzam had written numerous moving articles about the Arab martyrs in the al-Jihad Magazine. His moving literary style where he used Koranic verses, poetry, and the final wills of the martyrs ignited the senses of the Muslim youth in the Arabian peninsula and the Gulf. This led to an influx of volunteers for Jihad, and monetary donations. The Jihad Magazine and others in Peshawar had already started campaigns calling for money contributions using stories about the Arab martyrs which were very popular stories among the Muslim young men in particular and the Arab masses in general. This caused a deluge of volunteers in Jalalabad which also caused a rise in the number of martyrs.

In its issue of April/May 89, The Jihad Magazine reported a record breaking number of martyrs were killed, especially among Arabs. The latest count was 34 killed while the

battles around Jalalabad and Khost were still on, and the sirens of ambulances in that area were deafening.

I do not know why Khost was mentioned here, because things there were normal; so much so that Haqqani sent his men to Jalalabad to support the Mujahideen there –we will discuss this in another section—It seems that the writer, Dr. Abu Muhammad did not want to portray Jalalabad as the only place where so many martyrs had fallen. Even in Peshawar, “Almarjafini” demanded that an investigation be held to determine what went on in that battle. He demanded that the Arabs should pull out of there. The writer Abu

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Muhammad was the pen name of ‘Abdullah ‘Azzam who eulogized three of the leading jihadists, namely, Abu Musallam, `Abid and Abu al-Yusr (‘Ali ‘Abd Al-Fattah)

Dr. Azzam talked about the martyr Sakhri...our friend who carried ‘Abd-al-Rahman on his shoulder in order to get out of a mine field on the mountains of Turghar... Except ‘Abd-al-Rahman was martyred... Also Sakhri was killed in a land mine in Jalalabad.

At the same time, his two friends `Abid and Saraqa were killed with him. It was not one land mine that caused their death. There were a series of land mines connected together which when al-Sakhri triggered one all the others blew up.

Actually, I hated Dr. ‘Abdullah’s writing style. He was smart and aware of what was going on around him. He knew that the Jalalabad battle was not a battle of faith.

I considered him, may God rest his soul, a partner in the crime. After the death of Sakhri, I could no longer hold my tongue back. I became angrier when meeting Arab Mujahideen, and I could not but tell them that what is happening in Jalalabad is a crime because Arab blood is being needlessly spilled there. Any one who encourages the Arab youths to participate in that battle becomes responsible for the wasted blood and souls. Had I been in charge, I would court martial Abu ‘Abdullah, Abu `Ubaydah and Abu Hafas and sentence them to death.

My words spread all over the four corners of the world, like a raging fire, and they reached the three men I accused. Abu ‘Abdullah, whom I have never met was the most agitated, because he and the other two understood what I meant.

I became very disgruntled, so on 13 Ramadan, 4/18/89, I left for Abu Dhabi in order to renew my residence permit there and at the same time to get away from the environments in Peshawar and Jalalabad.

Once in Abu Dhabi, I found that the news of Jalalabad were both inflated and distorted. During an interview with al-Ittihad Newspaper they asked me: What was happening there? They requested me to write something that would clarify the situation there, because they too were lost as to what was happening there, and could not understand how the Arab Mujahideen could fail.

They were expected to enter Kabul as conquerors, once the Soviets pulled out. What happened? Did that mean the total failure and the end of the Mujahideen?

I had heard the same comments and questions from those concerned as well as from those who are either neutral or gloating over our misfortunes.

I wrote an article titled “The battle of Jalalabad...Is it Final”. I was trying to prove that the failure to conquer Jalalabad did not mean it was the final blow for the Mujahideen...This is the text of the article:

The Battle of Jalalabad...Is it Over?

The regime in Kabul does not hope to be victorious, it only seeks a long enough period of steadfastness until the Geneva agreement goes into effect.

To form a strong government with the Mujahideen as its foundation in order to reflect the military victory. Any victory will be meaningless in the absence of a strong government. Why Jalalabad, and how can victory be accomplished there?

What is happening in Jalalabad? This question resonates the world over and places some doubt on the capability of the Mujahideen to end the war in Afghanistan to their favor, especially after the elapse of nine years of heroic fighting against the Soviets and ten years against the communist regime in Kabul.

No doubt, the Jalalabad campaign is the most controversial battle in the history of the Afghan war. The problem lies in conflicting approaches of one, adopting a quick and decisive war that will ensure victory to the Mujahideen and open the road to Jalalabad from the

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Pakistani borders at “Torkham” which connect the highway between Kabul, Jalalabad and Pakistan, or holding the Mujahideen back to fight for every inch of Jalalabad under the defensive belt surrounding them.

What further confused the observers abroad were the statements issued by the leaders of the Afghan organizations announcing the imminent fall of Jalalabad and declaring it a sister capital of Kabul and the seat for the provisional Mujahideen government.

Where these statements based on actual military achievements, or where they just media ploys which the leaders of the seven organizations, who became members of the Provisional Mujahideen Government, failed to assess the consequences?

What were the expectations after that? Will the Mujahideen be able to conquer Jalalabad? Or will they focus on another city? Or will they shift from a policy of swift conquests of cities to a strategy of a slower pace and less risky because it suits their military capabilities better? Or there is another scenario which some claim is true and that is the failure of the Mujahideen to conquer the city means their failure to conquer Kabul, and therefore any military victory becomes far fetched? If true, this would lead to negotiations and the imposition of a political solution consisting of a government with representatives from all the major warring factions, namely, the Mujahideen, the communists, the royalists and others. This is what Najib in Kabul and the International powers are calling for.

In other words, will the Jalalabad battle become a military production of a political solution? This means that the battle is being conducted by the international powers as the American New York Times indicated. This means that the future of Afghanistan as a country needs to be well assessed by the clashing powers on the Afghan arena.

The Communist Forces

The Soviet army completed its withdrawal from Afghanistan on the twenty-fifth of last February. There was no doubt on any one's mind, including the Soviets, that the Kabul regime will be capable of running the country. The Kabul regime could not succeed where the Soviets, with all their might, had failed; namely subduing and controlling the Afghan people.

So why did the Soviets agree to withdraw?

Of course, there are many reasons. Topping the list is the bold resistance of the Afghan people who left no doubt in any one's mind that they will not accept the Soviet occupation, no matter what it cost. This determination was the key to the Afghani success, irrespective of how hard the international media tried to claim that America's role was the key factor.

As if a whole population can become an agent for a foreign government—or the world liberation movements, such as the Algerians or the Vietnamese, failed to capitalize on the political conflicts among such nations to rally support for their causes. No one people can win a war against an occupier if they themselves are not willing to bear the sufferings of war in order to achieve their freedom.

This digression is important for explaining the depth of the hatred of the Afghani people (not necessarily their leaders) towards foreign allegiances. If we also consider their deep reverence to Islam, then we would understand why the Kabul regime is secluded and unable to continue ruling.

To resolve this crucial point, which is the core of the Afghani war since it first started, the communist regime adopted some changes in its political manifesto. Its atrocity reached a point where it adopted Islam and dropped Marxism, a step which became apparent in the enacted laws and public propaganda. This was the regime's last attempt to safeguard its control and gain popular approval for its right to be a part of the authority and the political process.

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As a part of the Marxist's weapons, and for the past nine years, Moscow had trained an army of pretentious Islamists in Tashkent in order to support the existing communist regime in Kabul and give it an Islamic aura, exploiting the ignorance and illiteracy of the Afghan people and thinking they could control it with lies and deceptions.

On the military front, the Soviets supported the Kabul regime with additional military elements such as the newly trained forces consisting of young men who, for the past ten years, had received their military training and political ideology in the Soviet Union. There are no accurate figures about the size of these forces, but the estimate was put at a hundred thousand levels, that is the size of the withdrawing Soviet forces. These new elements have been assigned to defend cities, and the Mujahideen who fought them admitted that they were well trained, and adopted fighting tactics that were different from those used by the traditional Afghani army, but they lacked experience. The existing forces despise the new elements who replaced the Soviets because they are better equipped, better paid and better fed. People call the Russian Afghans, and that is why the

Mujahideen do not hesitate to kill them, while they spare the older army elements because they are forced to fight.

Another force the Russians trained before their evacuation is the “al-Juzjan” forces, named after the Afghani province of Juzjan. This name was coined by the Mujahideen from Kandahar when they first fought them last summer. Basically, these forces consist of Farsi speaking people from the North, and were trained on guerilla warfare tactics so that they can match up to the Mujahideen tactics. They had ambushed many Mujahideen convoys in Kandahar and carried out swift raids on their bases.

There are no available statistics on these forces, but they are basically in charge of defending the cities that are still under the regime’s control. It is probable that these forces are trained to engage in guerilla warfare inside the cities which make the Mujahideen’s conquest of any city more difficult. The news received from Kabul indicated that there are guerilla warfare experts there to train the government troops to fight the Mujahideen should they succeed in breaking the city defenses and enter the capital. The same had happened in Jalalabad.

The air force that was placed under Kabul’s command was reinforced with the new MIG-29 jet fighters. Moreover, in case of emergencies the regime will be supported by air power beyond the Soviet borders. This had happened during the recent Jalalabad battles. It also used to happen a lot during the Soviet occupation.

The Mujahideen had accused India of sending sixty pilots to the Afghani regime in order to fight the Afghani Mujahideen in Jalalabad. They also accused them of supplying poison gas to be used against them. The Mujahideen had no substantial evidence of these claims, but they based their accusations on India’s opposition of accepting a Mujahideen-controlled regime in Kabul. In general, the relationship between India and the Mujahideen had always been murky.

The Scud-B missiles which the Soviets supplied Kabul with proved ineffective against the Mujahideen—especially in the mountains. These missiles are effective when used on flat surfaces, and that is why the air strikes are more effective in mountainous regions. The importance of these Scud missiles is making Kabul capable of threatening Pakistan without exposing its pilots to the dangers of confronting the Pakistani air force.

Historically, the confrontation records indicate that the Afghani pilots were no match for the Pakistani ones.

The threat to use Scud missiles against Pakistan, especially after the Jalalabad battles, is a psychological tool to pressure Pakistan to leash the Mujahideen; according to Najib’s minister of defense.

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Technologically advanced equipments were used in the Jalalabad battles, the most important of which were equipment that would identify the source of artillery and bombarding these sources. Also, the use of long range rockets launched from airplanes, thus denying the Mujahideen the ability to use their “Stingers” because they could not hear the planes’ oncoming sounds.

On the regional political scene, Moscow felt somewhat less worried about the future of Afghanistan when the democratic Bhutto regime replaced the Zia al-Haq regime. The

democratic process gave the opportunity to Moscow's friends to express their desire to end the Afghani problem. These people who are publishers and members of people started calling for closing the Pakistani borders against the movement of the Afghani resistance.

The political support which New Delhi gave to the Najib's regime in Kabul, irrespective of whether there was a military support or not, was based on its refusal to allow the establishment of an Islamic regime there. India's political support carried a lot of weight because it was backed by a growing military power; to such an extent that it became a major player in the political process of Southeast Asia and the Indian Ocean.

All the above factors, though they strengthen the position of the Kabul regime, will not enable Najib to remain in control for a long time. What the Soviets are hoping for is to keep the Najib regime in power long enough until the international community proceed with the implementation of the Geneva agreement. This agreement stipulates the formation of an expanded government that would include all the warring parties. Until this objective is achieved, Moscow would hope that the elements of the present regime could hold on to power and at the same time try to threaten Pakistan and pressure it to leash the Mujahideen and have it accepts the international solution.

On the other hand, there are the Mujahideen. Their long and heroic struggle achieved a historical victory. For the first time, the red army was ever driven from a battle field back to its borders. This is the first time the red army had been defeated and was forced to retreat. This victory did not come to the Afghani people on a silver platter. As people, they sacrificed a lot to achieve this victory, which included:

- More than one million martyrs
- More than five million refugees
- Between two and three and a half million injured or disabled.
- Life in the rural areas is 80% destroyed. The Afghani people fought courageously and with strong conviction.

The political gains should have been at par with the volume of sacrifices, but this was not achieved mainly because of the nature of the Afghani society itself and the rest because of regional and international involvements in one way or another. What made it worst is that those who got involved gave themselves more right to deal with the Afghani issue than the people with legitimate rights did.

The blame of this shortcoming lies basically on the leaders of the Afghani Organizations, which they permitted the existence of such a flaw. For ten years, they were unable to work as united front, or come up with a leadership that would have the popular backing. This situation gave the golden opportunity to the foreign powers to penetrate the organizations and control them.

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This situation remained in place until the Russians withdrew on February 15th, this past month. A ten year failing could not be corrected in few days. The consultations in Rawalpindi over the formation of a provisional government lasted two weeks, until finally the distribution of the ministerial portfolios among the seven organizations was agreed upon.

A Pakistani expert specialized in the Afghani issue said that the agreement the seven organizations reached in Rawalpindi was the least they could have agreed upon. This means that ten years of fighting and sacrificing produced a minimum level of political achievement. The provisional government is not at par with the people's sacrifices and their future aspirations. Moreover, the outcome of the future military operations and the solution of the Afghani crisis remain obscure.

There are many reasons for making the Mujahideen believe that the provisional government did not measure up to their expectations:

Though the top portfolios were distributed among the seven leaders, yet their organizations remain stronger than the government, and they maintain their own budgets, private forces and structure. They have not come under the government's authority.

As was the case in their previous attempts to form a united front, the leaders failed to present to the people one single strong leader whom they can support. A leader who can have the freedom to form a government of sincere and capable dignitaries, without being obligated to the leaders of the organizations or their aides.

This contradictory situation drove some people to wonder: how can the government ask the international community to recognize it when its own Afghani people do not. They also wondered how does the government expect the Kabul regime to hand over its powers and armed forces at a time when the resistance organizations themselves failed to do so? The formation of such a fragile government pose another question regarding the future of the country: How can the masses place their destiny in the hands of seven governments (the organizations) instead of one strong government? These issues were raised by the pro-Moscow media, for Russia and the Kabul regime were trying hard to neutralize the political gains achieved by the Afghani people through their long struggle. The problem was compounded when the Mujahideen failed to conquer the city of Jalalabad which impacted the provisional government's reputation.

Another contraction that faced the provisional government since its formation: It was a government in exile. Though the bulk of the country was liberated, and the mountainous caves could offer refuge to the government's officials, yet the location and the operation of the provisional government remained outside Afghanistan. Its efforts to remain in contact with its people remained superficial. The government declared that their first meeting will take place in Jalalabad, and even a meeting date was set; but when Jalalabad was not liberated, the government convened on the outskirts of Khost next to the frontiers. They were accompanied by foreign reporters, and the meeting was limited to taking photographs of some of the government members as proof that they met on Afghani territory. This looked very naïve to the foreign reporters, so how about the Mujahideen then?

This in part is the result of having the seven leaders run their organizations from Peshawar by remote control.

The provisional government had to become an effective force in running Afghanistan, and not only looks strong in front of the cameras. The communist forces could no longer attack the liberated territories, and the government could choose any safe location in the mountains which offer natural protection. They could run their affairs through wireless communications, which they already possess and remain in constant contacts with the governments of the various provinces.

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A Political Problem

The real problem now is not liberating Jalalabad, but a bigger political one expressed by the question: Who governs Afghanistan...and how?

The natural answer would be that Afghanistan is governed by its people who fought and paid dearly for its freedom and independence through a government that represents it and its hopes and ambitions. We are afraid that the organizations have stooped low when their objective revolved around the way they were going to distribute the ministerial portfolios among themselves, the seven leaders and their loyal supporters. This was definitely disastrous to the Afghani people.

There remains one opportunity to resolve this political problem. This lies in the formation of a permanent government which can take months to form. What they will need to do then is the following:

- Abandon the format of seven organizations, and adopt a plan to have one leader who would work through the government institutions.
- Broadening the government base to include all the factions that fought in the war. This would include organizations which broke away from the original seven, as well as those groups located in Iran and other independent factions.
- Drive the Afghani people to solidarity in order to prevent the foreign powers from infiltrating the country and start a civil war that could destroy the countries social, religious and cultural fabric. This can be dangerous, because such a war could disintegrate the country and transform it into smaller fractured entities that would become a part of the foreign powers' sphere.
- Forming an effective government on the Afghan territory, and in exile. Such government will start decentralizing its administration so the country can rebuild what the war had destroyed, especially in the field of agriculture. This will relieve Afghanistan from depending on foreign assistance and loans, which the West is willing to offer in order to keep Afghanistan in its sphere.

“Jalalabad – Militarily”

Realistically, on the military front the Mujahideen over power the government forces, especially from the morale aspect. Bonding between the Mujahideen and the people is strong because it is based on the principles of Islam which oppose the regime's communist policies. The morale was further strengthened when the Russians withdrew in shame.

The government's armed forces are better equipped, in quantity and quality. However, the better equipped Russian forces failed when they confronted an enthusiastic force possessing a high morale such as the Mujahideen. Some of the military analysts believe that the Mujahideen's attack on Jalalabad was premature from the military aspect. The well fortified cities, such as Kabul and Jalalabad, require the Mujahideen

to regroup and adopt the basic principles of conventional warfare in order to be victorious. The Mujahideen should acquire heavy weapons and air defense equipment That would handle enemy planes at any altitude. The present weapons the Mujahideen possess are not suitable for conquering well fortified cities, but they can be used to siege a city and make it surrender in the long term.

The statements made by the leaders of the seven organizations predicting the fall of Jalalabad in few days were not realistic, as militarily the Mujahideen lacked the proper equipment and the coordination among the various organizations during the battles.

These false statements gave Kabul the weapon to show how deceitful and weak the Mujahideen are. The leaders gave Kabul an easy political and psychological victory.

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The political analysts realized that the heavy weapons that were available for the Mujahideen during the Jalalabad battles were few, especially when compared to the required arms that were needed for such battles. Whatever was available was thinly spread amongst the various groups who had no coordination amongst the.

They also noticed that they had few Stingers, and SAM 7, while the communists had heavy air power and superiority in tactical and technical equipment. This led to heavy casualties among the Mujahideen especially they were forced to retreat to flat and open plains around the city. It was suggested that the Mujahideen adopt a war of attrition against the city instead of opening a battle front that would not lead to a swift victory and could cause a high number in casualties.

They also suggested that the major supply roads be cut off, especially the Salang path in order to interrupt the Soviet supply line to the regime.

Due to the lack of adequate air defense equipment, the Mujahideen should compensate this shortcoming by attacking the airstrips and air bases in order to weaken the communists' air supremacy.

The observers were surprised by the hysterical way the media had handled the battle of Jalalabad, as if it were the decisive battle of the Afghan war. It was clear that the campaign could not have achieved its objective. Did the media intentionally exaggerate the Mujahideen's failure in order to open the door for an international solution whereby the communists and the Mujahideen, and as per the Geneva agreement, form a coalition government? We doubt the leaders of the organizations played a role in this, and believe that it was a product of the media's over-enthusiasm.

What we have noticed is that the western media had exaggerated the Jalalabad news but failed to mention that the government forces used poison gases against the Mujahideen in Jalalabad. In reality, the government forces regularly used poison gases against the Mujahideen locations in Jalalabad. It used to drop these gases from helicopters at night or use jet fighters and scud missiles the rest of the time. These drops have been photographed by numerous reporters but they were never published. Is it possible that the western media became a part of the international collusion?

On the military front, why did the Mujahideen choose Jalalabad as their primary offensive target? Logic has it that easy targets should be dealt with first and then move to the more difficult ones.

The battleground around Jalalabad is flat and exposed which rendered the Mujahideen an easy target for the enemy planes and artillery. It is a killing field for the Mujahideen and a stumbling block for their offensive against the well fortified Jalalabad.

How come the battle was not initiated in Kandahar, the second most important city after Kabul? There were no fortifications there, and the Mujahideen were already inside the city for months on end.

Had the Mujahideen exerted part of the effort they had exerted in Jalalabad, they would have easily controlled it and achieved huge military and political victories.

There are three other cities similar to Kandahar. Why didn't the Mujahideen focus their military efforts on one of them?

This poses a question on the adopted political decision to wage this battle...

Who took the decision...how...and why?

The observers believe that it is better for the Mujahideen not to have a military victory which cannot be sustained with their military capabilities. This might lead to a military

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setback. They have to adopt a new strategy that would be at par with their capabilities and the Afghan people's interests. Moreover, Strengthening and consolidating their political front will help them in achieving the desired military victories.

Was written on May 2nd, 1988

Was published in the Emirates newspaper al-Ittihad on May 11, 1989

Conflicting Views Regarding the Afghan Arabs

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The Jalalabad battle placed the Arab volunteers under the International media's attacks. The Pakistani press started publishing reports about them. They printed photographs showing them strolling down the streets of Peshawar in Afghani attire. The editorial comments were not friendly, but indicated that thousands of them were fighting in Afghanistan.

Almost simultaneously, on 4/10/89, similar editorials appeared in the Emirates' newspaper "al-Khalij". This was approximately a month after the war in Jalalabad was waged on 3/6/89. Under the title "Why Don't We Fight in Burma As Well", a reader by the name of Mansur 'Abd-al-Rahman wrote:

Recently, the Afghan issue has taken a new and important turn for the people of the Emirates who are few but wealthy. Since the civil war in Afghanistan started we have been supporting the Mujahideen in every possible way and means. We have not carried

arms nor scarified our lives in the war there. Recently, it became apparent that a group of our young citizens, who are supposed to be religious and aware of their national duties, took on the responsibility of liberating Afghanistan and defending the Mujahideen with their money and their soul, especially those under the leadership of Hikmatiar. During the past few days, some of the volunteers proceeded to the battle fronts after they were deceived by the western media and joined the Mujahideen in the Tukhar region and the areas of Rustak, Hirat, Badkashan, Salang, Jalalabad and other fronts where bloody battles are raging between the Kabul forces and the Mujahideen who are supported by Pakistan. They all knew that they will be killed by the missiles and tanks on the front lines.

Some of the young men were recruited locally by the Mujahideen representatives who frequently visit the country and as well as through the local Mujahideen's representation offices. Others were recruited in the United States when they were studying there. One of the students went to the United States to finish his graduate work. He was recruited there and sent to Afghanistan via Peshawar without the consent of his parents. His mother sent him numerous letters begging him to return, but he refused and insisted on dying as a martyr for the sake of the Afghani cause and next to his Muslim brothers.

We, in the Emirates need every citizen and every one who loves his country irrespective of his ideologies and beliefs. We are all requested to stay alive because the death of any one of us will change the demographic fabric of our country. It is not commended that the war in the mountains of Afghanistan becomes the reason for our extinction. The biggest favor any one can give to his society is to stay alive, especially if he loves it. This will prevent the dwindling of our population. Till now, we have seen a small number of people participating in this jihad, which owes its existence and continuity to the assistance provided by the CIA in terms of highly developed weapons, which even some countries don't have.

The Afghan cause has sources of finance amounting to 70 million dollars, which are paid in cash to the various factions. What baffles me is how an Imam of a mosque can liberate Afghanistan, or how can a university student, whose mother is looking for him and can barely use a gun, face 150 thousand government troops.

Therefore we are fighting the Afghan government in the name of Islam. Didn't we, for one second, stop to think that the aids we are receiving from the CIA are not free!

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What is required now is to stop volunteering for the Afghan cause, even if it take an edict to do that. The human losses and the security of the Emirate society should supersede all considerations.

As for the Afghan cause, let us leave it to the Afghani people. Just for the sake of asking: Why are giving Afghanistan more attention than it warrants? Why don't we volunteer our souls and funds to the Muslim brethrens of the Moro Front in Southern Philippines? Or to the Moslems who are exposed to oppression and death in Burma? Or even the Blacks in America?

This whole subject requires a whole book to cover it. It does not escape the reader's attention that the war in Afghanistan had been a civil one since the very beginning, and the Red Army was made out of the citizens, the Afghans themselves. The young men of the Emirates were recruited in America...for the Afghani cause. It is an American ploy endorsed by its intelligence apparatus.

How can the ultimate objective for an Emirate citizen be to stay alive? How can he build a country if this is his mentality? No wonder, with this mentality, we should not be surprised if few years from now the American and European armies under the command of the Jewish General Schwarzkopf would come to this country to protect the people of such mentalities.

Did America, who is not helping Afghanistan for free, liberate Kuwait just for the love of God? How would America withdraw after it established long term presence here and controlled the oil resources? Who would force it to withdraw? The citizens who are zealous about their country despite their varied ideologies and beliefs?

Do these people, who want the citizens to save their lives as a service to their country, would rather see their country crushed under the heels of the Americans, the French, the British or even the Israelis?

This whole paranoia about the death of one Emirate citizen is so misconceived because till now none of the Emirate volunteers, who were few, have died in action.

If they passed an edict to prevent the Emirate young men from performing Jihad for fear of upsetting the demographic fabric, then why don't they pass a law banning the use of fast cars which kill dozens of them each year? And another law banning the use of drugs, alcohol, sniffing glue, drinking benzene and cologne which kill dozens a year too. Why don't they pass a third law banning travel to the Far East where their youth have cheap sex and come back with aids and gonorrhoea which they spread all over the country.

Why... Hundreds of laws should be passed in order to save the lives of these young men; why then the only one should be banning them from performing Jihad in Afghanistan?

It is shameful that a week after this humiliating article was published an Emirate citizen was martyred in Afghanistan. On Monday 12 Ramadan, 1409, corresponding to April 17th, 1989, 'Abd-al-Rahman Al-Imarati (Muhammad 'Abdullah Rashid Zayid) from the village of Tadfu` in Fujaira was killed. He was a member of the Emirate's armed forces. Sheikh 'Abdullah 'Azzam eulogized him in an article in the Mujahid Magazine of Ramadan/ Shawwal, 1409 H, by writing, "When a colonel ordered him to return to the Emirates he told him when I come back you can do whatever you want with me, because he was a military man who took off his uniform and joined Jihad to apply what he had learned during his military service. He realized that the armies in the Islamic world perform nothing but routine tasks consisting of welcoming and bidding farewell to visiting dignitaries.

The article Sheikh 'Azzam wrote about the martyrdom of 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Imarati totally contradicts that which Mansur 'Abd-al-Rahman had written in the 'al-Khalij' newspaper. It shows the difference between heroism and lowliness which the latter had acquired through wealth and the despicable style of life in the Gulf.

In ‘Azzam’s article, there was a photograph of the martyr before his burial. If someone wanted to imagine the perfect picture of a Muslim knight of early Islam, he would not have painted a better picture than the one of ‘Abd-al-Rahman al-Imarati.

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In any case, years later, the Arab media started calling the Arab volunteers heading for Afghanistan the Afghan Arabs. This paved the road for the rulers to torture, chase or even kill these volunteers in a manner which even the Nazi war criminals did not witness after the Second World War.

During the battle of Jalalabad, opinions about the Afghan cause started to crystallize. There were different internal conflicting currents and ideas about the cause. Some expressed their opinions vehemently because of their Islamic roots, such as Abu Usama ‘Abd-al-‘Aziz ‘Ali. Some people clashed with these currents as was the case with Abu Mus`ab, the Syrian, and myself.

I had the notion of summarizing the various opinions to make them easier to understand and to have future generations realize the facts, but I was banned from doing so.

Journey...Marriage...and War

Ramadan of 1409 H—1989 A.D. was a harsh month. It wasn’t the heat or the cold, quite the contrary, it was spring and the weather was moderate.

It was the abnormal and awful events that were taking place in Jalalabad. The number of Afghani corpses that were transported from the front to Peshawar were beyond imagination. As for the Arabs, they were led by Abu ‘Abdullah who, despite all the warnings and the clear indications, went on to fight with all his might. Supporting him was Dr. ‘Abdullah ‘Azzam who, through his writings in the al-Jihad Magazine, had ignited the Muslims senses by relating the heroic performances of the martyrs of Jalalabad, and describing the promised Islamic nation. He described the treasures of war which the martyrs Mujahideen had amassed, including arms, weapons and equipment. However, the truth indicated that the battle was a pre-planned quagmire which the Afghan Mujahideen fell into and stupidly were followed by the Arab Mujahideen. Except, the Afghans managed to pull out of it slowly while the Arabs sank deeper into it. After the martyrdom of Sakhri, then ‘Ali ‘Abd-al-Fattah and many other colleagues of mine, and after I was convinced that those responsible for the massacres of Jalalabad should be executed, the situation became unbearable. I hastened to leave for the Emirates. I did not even stay behind to spend the Eid with my family, which hurt them a lot. However, they appreciated the depression I was going through as a result of the sad events, and agreed that I should leave, though they were not happy about it. To my good luck, my mother-in-law, who is also my aunt, had come from Egypt to visit us. Though she was on a wheel chair, she filled the house with joy especially her interaction with the children.

Tuesday, 13th Ramadan – 18th April

I think that was the first time any one had ever met me at the Abu Dhabi airport.

The airport was quiet and the movement was slow. Maybe it was due to fasting. My niece was standing there alone. I had not told any body of my arrival.

Being the smart man I am, I realized that it was another one of those female conspiracies. It seemed that my wife, who is also my niece's aunt, had told her of my arrival. My niece started smiling when she saw the stupid look on my face. I asked her in a faked serious manner: What brought you here? She answered me in her youthful manner:

My aunt told me that you are coming via Karachi. As for my grandmother, she is fine and sends you her greetings.

Months had passed since I heard any news of my family who were scattered around the world. The biggest surprise hit me when she told me that my friend Sheikh Jalal-al-Din

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got married to a Yemeni girl. I was elated with the news and a bit jealous of his successful romantic achievement. But then, I was not as handsome as he was. I listened to some of her news, but in fact I was thinking of the political ramifications of Jalal's marriage. This made me forget, though temporarily, all the worries of Peshawar.

It had been five years since I last had such a quiet and uninterrupted meeting with Haqqani.. After all that time, I went back to being his driver and body guard, as well as his tour guide in the Emirates. He sat next to me in the car, and his personal emissary, Ghazi Mirjan, sat in the back. We left Abu Dhabi in a luxurious car that belonged to our friend 'al-Miniawi' heading to Sharjah where we planned to break our fast at the office of the Afghan Mujahideen who were Haqqani supporters.

After the evening prayers, Sheikh Haqqani was scheduled to deliver a speech at the Ajman mosque, and at eleven he will proceed to meet the Emir of Ajman in his palace which was not far from the mosque.

Our views on the Jalalabad battle were congruent, but he ruled out the conspiracy theory. However, he agreed with me that there can be no victory there for the time being because of the reasons that were known to both of us. We both realized the need to move swiftly and strongly on Khost in order to prevent the demoralization of the Muslims and Afghans there. Moreover we did not want to have a political solution emanating from the catastrophe of Jalalabad. We did not want to lose all the previous sacrifices and hopes we had. Haqqani then told me that he had dispatched 300 of his fighters to support the Mujahideen there.

Regarding the stance of Benazir's government towards him, he said that it was bad because they had stopped all military supplies that were earmarked for operations in Khost and Gardez. He added that they have started giving us orders.

I congratulated him on his marriage and expressed my fullest support on his work for Jihad and the Afghan and Arab Mujahideen, especially at these times when the western media had distorted the image of the Arab Mujahideen, attempted to destroy the relations between them and the Afghan people, and claim that the war between the Wahabi Saudis and the Hanafi Afghans will soon erupt. His marriage will solidify the Arab stance because of his respected status as a scholar, Mujahid, and religious authority.

His marriage to a Yemeni will solidify the relationships between the Yemeni people and the Afghan people. They both have similar commonalities, such as passion to fight, toughness and adherence to Islam. They are scattered all over the Arabian peninsula and the Gulf and can play a supportive role to the Mujahideen, both in manpower and money. I suggested to him that when he goes back to Peshawar, a big wedding celebration should take place as a sign of support to his marriage.

Haqqani became a bit apprehensive because he believed that such a celebration should be initiated by the Arabs. So I decided to steer this even upon my return.

Haqqani told me that, upon his return, he will energize the Khost operations by executing a big plan there. I told him I am willing to be a member of such a plan and will try to rally Arab support behind it....in any case I am personally committed to this program.

Tuesday, 4 Shawwal...9 May/1990

I went back to Peshawar hoping that the Arabs push on Jalalabad had stopped, and that they had started heading towards Khost so that they may achieve something meaningful and adjust their plan.

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I intended to meet Dr. 'Abdullah 'Azzam to tell him about Haqqani's marriage to a Yemeni girl so he may capitalize on this event by strengthening the Arab position in Afghanistan, and confront the western media campaigns.

The approach of the Khost battle hastened my return, to the extent that it caused a family embarrassment. I forgot to buy the sweets which the children had asked me to buy for them in the Emirates. They had repeatedly asked me for them and I promised them I will. When I first walked into the house, they dashed towards my huge suitcase which I bought there, and which I had filled with new books and forgot about the sweets. It was a big disappointing and embarrassing situation which lasted for days. When they first opened the suit case and searched it, they shouted there is nothing here...where are the sweets? I tried in vain to convince them that books are more important than sweets because books feed the soul and sweets feed the body. They became madder. I tried to resolve the issue by getting them sweets from the corner grocery shop, but they vehemently refused. What compounded the problem was their grandmother's supportive role.

I had to pay the children money rewards and bought them local sweets; but until this day they have not forgotten their disappointment. However, my disappointment in the Arabs was by far greater than my children's disappointment. After embarking on few contacts, I realized that the situation was worse than when I left. The Arab paranoia over Jalalabad got worse as they pushed their men in hoards towards it. It was similar to a rare group suicidal mission. It was similar to the famous story of the pied piper who enchanted the children with his piper so they followed him until he threw them in the sea, thus taking revenge against their fathers who refused to pay him for his efforts of cleaning the city from rats.

Deployment and recruitment were on the increase among the Arabs...it went on till the battle of the Western Sector in the month of Dhul Hijjah—this rendered my words useless, just like screaming in a valley.

I could not possibly discuss anything in Peshawar except the Jalalabad deployment. Things were going around in a vicious circle:

1. Fall of martyrs
2. Media constriction
3. Arrival of Mujahideen
4. Fall of Martyr....and so on.

I came across my old friends Abu Hafs and Abu 'Ubaydah. During my absence, Abu Hafs was injured badly in Jalalabad and was treated since. He now works in administration at al-Qaeda. As for Abu 'Ubaydah, he became the military aide to Abu 'Abdullah who personally commands and issues all orders.

I met them again later to learn where we stand and to keep them abreast of my news, especially the topic of Haqqani's marriage, and the forthcoming operations in Khost. I was surprised to learn that they had abandoned their doubts about Jalalabad and had replaced it with their conviction and enthusiasm. They told me that the situation there had turned to the better and suggested that I go there to see for myself, and meet Abu 'Abdullah to present him with my viewpoint. I said I had put my viewpoint in writing before leaving for the Emirates which became common knowledge. Moreover, Abu 'Ubaydah relayed my viewpoint to Abu 'Abdullah in Jalalabad and came back and told me that Abu 'Abdullah wanted to tear it and throw it in the wind because his men were gaining victories there.

Abu 'Ubaydah calmly repeated his familiar viewpoints, which were:

1. The brethren, in cooperation with the Afghans, occupied huge areas of land.
2. The brethren showed courage and valor during the battles.
3. The percentage of losses is proportional to the size of such a big operation.

He asked me to comment on his viewpoints, but instead, I had to repeat my own views. I told him:

1. Occupying huge areas is meaningless as long as the enemy forces remained in tact.

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2. The real and difficult battle is going to start inside the city. If the Arab and Afghani losses are that high along the fortified periphery of the city, can you imagine what the situation will be like once we are inside the city?
3. The idea of waging a battle was a mistake to start with. We should have first attacked the weaker cities, such as Khost and Kandahar.
4. The Arab forces are small in number and cannot sustain such heavy losses. Also such losses cannot justify a long war of attrition. The decision to get the Arabs involved in the battle was wrong and reflects the impotence of the leadership. This is the problem of Islamic leadership everywhere. There are ample courageous and sacrificial young men under such leaderships. How can such leaders waste such exemplary elements in such a useless and fruitless battle?

Again, we could not reach an agreement on the subject of Jalalabad. As for the Khost operation, Abu Hafs told me that he would assign me 12 people from the Khost camp to help me out in my forthcoming operations. I told him I would like them to participate in my offensive operation on Turghar so I may finish what 'Abd-al-Rahman started.

I considered the participation of 12 men would be sufficient to attack and control the mountains of Turghar.

The next day they were quick in withdrawing this meager offer when they told me that they had to pull away all the fighters, including those who were still not trained, from Khost to Jalalabad!!! based on Abu 'Abdullah's request.

On a different visit to their residence (they both lived in the same house consisting of two floors) the following took place, and here I am relaying what I have jotted down in writing on May 14th, 1989:

At night, I visited Abu Hafs and Abu 'Ubaydah and told them of my intention of traveling to Miranshah in the morning. They were elated because they believed that Abu 'Abdullah would receive the much needed supply of men and weapons in Jalalabad. I felt sorry for them because they were riding the wave despite their conviction of my viewpoint; but the influence of Abu 'Abdullah on them was greater.

I thought that sometimes their minds were with me, but their hearts were always with Abu 'Abdullah. Sometimes, even their minds were totally with Abu 'Abdullah.

I felt sorry for them, but I felt comfortable because I was traveling alone and working away from the Arabs whom, for years, I have seen nothing positive from them. In my assessment, they had never contributed anything of value to the Afghans or themselves. Their half-hearted deeds have led to catastrophes. Their limited mentality will always be disastrous to their operations.

I miss 'Abd-al-Rhman a lot. I feel sad he is no longer around. I remember my journey of 1981 when I was in a similar situation. It was a great year. I have great hopes for God granting us victory and I am content with distancing myself from the Arabs, and vice-versa.

Now, eight years after my writing about these pessimistic "predictions" regarding the self-destruction of the Arab Jihad, I clearly see in front of me that these predictions had turned into realities as their work in places like Egypt, Algeria and Libya has been totally destroyed. As for Saudi Arabia which sponsored their ideology and operations, especially in its infancy stage, it has surrendered to the American occupation with the approval of the man in charge.

Monday May 15, 1989

Early in the morning, Walid and his mother dropped me at the bus station heading for Miranshah. I sat next to the bus driver who spoke Arabic and behind us there sat a man from Khost accompanied by two women. He also spoke Arabic. He realized that I spoke Arabic which posed no problem at the time. I carried short conversations with them, but most of the time I was silent and watching the road. I had two bags which I carried

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through the narrow and dirty alleys leading to my house in Miranshah. I opened the door and got shocked with what I saw. It was filthy and messy. I think someone had jumped over the common wall shared with the hospital, entered the house and destroyed certain effects. Some items might have even been stolen. I spent the night cleaning and tidying the place so I can find a proper place to sleep. Luckily, I had left my weapons at the Arab

house during my last visit; or else who ever broke into the house might have stolen the weapons too. I went to the Arab House to get my weapons and found five men there. The man responsible for the House was a young Algerian person called 'Abd-al-'Azim. He asked me when the next political seminar will be held, because he had missed attending the last one.

Offensive...Still Born

At the Arab House, they told me that they are withdrawing what is left of the fighters and sending them to Jalalabad, and that most of them had left the day before. They added that their morale was high and were enthusiastic about participating in the battle there. They were exchanging positive news regarding the Arab fighters' confiscation of 15 tanks and the use of heavy and offensive weapons.

I went back to my cold and dark 'home' which was like a deserted cave hanging on the edge of the world. Here I came to participate in the Khost battle, but where are the capabilities? I should become another 'Rambo' in order to do that!! I smiled. I have no idea how I could have slept that night.

Tuesday 16 May

An assistant to Haqqani by the name of Mawlawi Nizam-al-Din played an important role in supplying the front and its leadership. This same role used to be performed by his martyred brother Mawlawi Fathullah, then the martyr Mawlawi Ahmad Jul.

Mawlawi Nizam-al-Din is a medium height, dark skinned and slender man. He is well known for his honesty and disciplined character. People tried to avoid him because he was strict as he was a judge in profession. In battle, he was known to be courageous and steadfast.

I got to know that Mawlawi Nizam-al-Din was in Lijah preparing for operations in Lijah and Bari. I took a car from Haqqani's office heading to Lijah. There was an Arab young man along with seven of his brothers sitting in the trunk of the car who worked with the Mujahideen. They were an independent group who had no connections with the Arab groups in Peshawar.

Every part of the road to Lijah brought back memories of the time when I first took that road in 1982, and again in 1985 with the company of Abu Hafs and 'Abd-al-Rahman. We attacked the city airport at the time. It was the first purely Arab attack launched, and it was unexpectedly successful.

We reached to the end of our journey through the narrow valley which I treaded in 1982. Mawlawi Nizam-al-Din was holding a meeting with the area commanders in an old room that used to be the mosque of our camp. I sneaked into the room and sat in the corner. No one noticed as they were all busy participating in a group discussion. I then slipped out and toured the area for memories' sakes.

I headed back to the meeting room as they had started leaving it. Mawlawi Nizam-al-Din saw me and walked towards me to greet me and give me a welcome hug. He said that he was proceeding immediately to Bari and asked me whether I wanted to stay in Lijah or accompany him to Bari. I said I'll go with you. He then asked me, "How many are you?", as if he was pouring salt over my wounds. I spontaneously said that I was the only one.

My spontaneous answer seemed to have hit him. He approached me, hugged me again and said with a smile, God is the only one, and you are the only one...may He protect you.

His words boosted my morale. We all rode in a crew cab pick up truck. He sat next to the driver, and I sat right behind him. During the trip, I discovered that I had missed many important incidents since I last was in Bari in April of 1988.

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One of the most important events was the mass withdrawal of the communist forces from key locations. The most crucial was their withdrawal from the eastern and southeastern areas of the valley. The story of this withdrawal was amusing and we will relate it later. This withdrawal almost led to the total collapse of the communist front when their forces were unexpectedly chased by the Mujahideen which caused havoc and confusion among their army and militia. They abandoned certain positions that they were not supposed to leave and ran towards the city. However, the chase stopped when the commander of the Mujahideen, "Manan" al-Kutchi was killed. The Mujahideen abandoned their offense and turned back to bury their leader.

What happened in Khost at the time, that is the fall of Khost, had a very dangerous impact on the overall situation in Afghanistan, politically and militarily. However, the international media ignored the news of Khost totally and concentrated on the Jalalabad news, thus proving once more that it was closely tied to the world powers and operates according to their commands.

They concentrated their coverage on our defeat in Jalalabad – or the largest cemetery in the world – and intentionally overlooked the only place where a major military victory was in the making.

I noticed that there were limited withdrawals on the mountain ranges. They had maintained a post at the path leading to inner section of the mountain. The government forces had withdrawn all along the ranges guarding a small strip between the mountain ranges and the new security belt. We crossed in our car the valley from Lijah to Bari through the natural pass of the valley which got narrower as we proceeded. The trip was an exciting development for me, as in the past, we used to dream of liberating this pass, and today it is a reality.

Previously, traveling from Lijah to Bari could not be done by car. We used to walk or use mules. The cars used to turn around and go back to Pakistan through the "Sidqi" pass and then proceed in a northeasterly direction to the 'Ghulam Khan' pass. From there we used to walk for ten kilometers before reaching Bari.

In 1988, when we were planning on attacking Turghar, we tried to open a road between Lijah and Bari. We asked 'Abu Anis and his Afghani colleague "Roshan Jul", who was under Haqqani's command and who had a bulldozer in Oor, to build a road for us. But the villagers in that area ordered them to stop and threatened to destroy their bulldozer with RPG's. Work had stopped because the villagers were afraid that the Russians would bomb their villages if they saw the road being built.

Later, the Mujahideen came to terms with the villagers and started building the road in 1989.

My first trip with Sheikh Nizam-al-Din from Lijah to Barri though the narrow desert passes was full of danger; for two reasons: First the pass was full of old land mines. The Mujahideen had removed some of them, but enough only to let their cars move through certain familiar mine fields. I saw such fields as we crossed one of the passes, and any government agent can lay any type of anti-personnel and anti armored cars mines in these dirt-laden fields.

The second danger consisted of the enemy's defensive lines. The enemy can easily track our car by the big cloud of dust it generates while crossing the pass. There were two well fortified lined: one was called the "Malanj" fort, and the other one, which was more fortified and dangerous was called "Nadad" fort.

It was only natural that I got scared as we sped over a dirt road and knew that ahead of us were well fortified forts with tanks and artillery. Two hundred meters down the road, the driver stopped abruptly and jumped out of the car. Without asking any question, we jumped from the car as well. The driver pointed at the direction of the trees and the bushes and said that he had seen armed men behind us and it might had been a hostile ambush. We spread over the area to take cover when two Mujahideen walked in our direction asking who we might be. Other armed men appeared on the scene, but the two

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men were to introduce themselves as a group of Mujahideen who were on their way to carry out an operation against the enemy in the valley.

They were relieved but I was not because as soon as we left the minefield, and as they were telling us the number and names of the Mujahideen who had been killed there, we fell into an ambush. The area was natural for ambushes. We had to cross a long road with the Russian tanks stationed to our left. I was sitting next to the driver and expecting a shell to enter the left window and exit the right window.

I asked Sheikh Nizam-al-Din about the probability of being shelled. He said that this actually took place a couple of days earlier when a Mujahideen car was shelled and all its occupants were killed. He tried to calm me down by saying that he had asked to protect us. I wanted to answer back but my vocal chords failed me. I tried to concentrate on the road ahead and dream of reaching my beloved Bari dead or alive; in one piece or shredded. I stopped looking to my left, but every once in a while I would sneak a look. We then firmly closed the car windows to avoid the heavy dust.

The car was supposed to be hot on the inside but I felt chilly all over. I then noticed that Mawlawi Nizam-al-Din was addressing me by saying: Thank God we passed the Malanj fort without any problem...I wanted to smile but he was quick to tell me that we were passing the Nadanah fort. Do you see it? It is the one with high towers. I took a swift look at it and remembered the sight. Two years earlier, we used to shell the Nadanah fort with rockets from the opposite mountains. I was at the time with 'Abd-al-Rahman and his the "Wali Jan" group. I remember the fort at the time had three tanks; I wonder how many tanks they keep now? I closed my eyes a bit trying to avoid seeing the promised rocket being fired at us.

Few minutes later, the car veered right and entered the Bari valley, at which time Sheikh Nizam-al-Din said: Can you imagine that we passed in front of them in bright day light and they did take one shot at us? Of course, I was not imagining, but I was determined that I will never take this trip again under any circumstances.

At the narrow pass to Bari there were a group of hills with short trees. A group of Mujahideen had dug trenches amongst them. They were from the “Albin ab” and the ‘Jihad al-Alami’ groups under the leadership of Shabab scholars. The first group operated in areas under Jalal Haqqani’s control and the other operated in the Baktika area under the leadership of Mawlawi Nasrallah Mansur and his field commanders such as Arslan Rahmani. Both groups are members of the Hanafi movement who belong to the “Diubandi” School which is committed to Jihad and religious conformity.

Both group were heavily committed to the Jihad campaign in Afghanistan and had sacrificed thousands of martyrs. Their serious participation started in 1984 and impacted the Jihad success in the provinces of Baktia and Baktika. However, the two groups did not support any political movement that had no interest in military operations.

They played an important part in supporting the Taliban movement in 1995 in their ideology and organization, as well as in supporting the major Pakistani scholars such as Mawlawi Fadl al-Rahman and Mawlawi ‘Abd-al-Rashid Ahmad. Both groups lacked operational tactics; however, they participated in the Jihad campaigns of Kashmir where many of their martyrs had fallen.

Few months before my arrival to Bari with Sheikh Nizam-al-Din, numerous operations were carried out against the two forts. The Mujahideen occupied the Nadanah fort twice but the government forces would take it back. They lost lot of martyrs there. Few days before my arrival, one man attacked the fort single handedly. He approached a number of soldiers sitting in the fort’s yard, who thought he was a militiaman, and opened fire at them, killing them all. However, other soldiers came rushing and gunned him down.

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On a treed rocky hill I saw a number of Mujahideen sitting behind the rocks and the trees using binoculars. I have never before seen Mujahideen who were as alert and as cautious as this group. I left the Mawlawi Nizam-al-Din entourage and headed towards them. Two thirds up the hill some one yelled ordering me to be cautious because the hill was mined. It is the mine game all over.

Once I got up there, they started explaining to me the scenery I was looking at. They were observing “Jandanah” and the surrounding areas. Behind Jandanah, there was what looked like a forest. I thought then that if the Mujahideen entered that area they will then be safe from the enemy’s air raids, and can easily repel any ground offensive as well. I conveyed my thoughts to Mawlawi Nizam-al-Din who told me that he was thinking along the same lines. Months later, this tree covered area proved to be a major stronghold of the militia forces where they took cover and later launched many successful attacks on the Mujahideen.

Behind this mined area, there was a big expanse where natural caves were used are administrative centers and storing facilities. Three hundred meters away laid the straight

of “Yuri Khail” and the famous old government fort. On the eastern tip, the Mujahideen had dug up large caves and placed on Saqr rocket launcher there.

I was glad to see the new excavations there because it reminded me of the decrepit sites the Mujahideen had in Jalalabad.

I met doctor Nasrat there who commands the “Ghund Salman al-Fursi” group, which is newest military formation under Haqqani. Doctor Nasrat is the brother of Naqibullah who commanded the Ur Base and who was killed in the 1986 campaign. Nasrat had lost a part of his foot as a result of a land mine explosion during an operation he was commanding. This has not slowed him down when it came to leading his men on a dangerous mission. He was in his thirties, handsome and wore spectacles. He was well organized and serious. Doctor Nasrat had achieved successful operations by leading “Ghund Salman al-Fursi” including the conquest of Khost.

Mawlawi Nizam-al-Din had concluded his discussions at the center. I congratulated some old friends on the success including Nasrat with whom I drank green tea. We then proceeded by car to “Samir Jul” center, then “Bir Sayyid” center which later was named “Khalil” center after Mawlawi Haqqani’s brother, Khalil—it was from there that the conquest operations of Khost and others were launched.

In front of the center, we came across two tanks in a trench which were part of the next operation. We performed the sunset prayers at the “Bir Ahmad” center which could only be reached through narrow alleys. The bulldozers there had started digging caves on both sides of the road and the place looked like the most important base for guerilla fighters in Baktia. It is no wonder that later it was intensely hit by scud missiles. The place became full of ditches filled with water because there was a stream passing through there.

After prayers, we proceeded to the frontiers through the Ghulam Khan post. We found the gate was open, which consisted of a rope that was tied to two barrels, and no guards. We continued to “Hus Dar” post which was closed. The militia leader, who was in a next-door room, refused to let us go through because the allotted time for crossing had expired. A team of our people proceeded to negotiate with him, and a few moments later he lowered the rope and we passed through. They might have bribed him to let us through. We barely made it in time for the evening prayers. We prayed at the ‘Muhajireen’ mosque and then dined and slept at Mawlawi Nizam-al-Din’s quarters.

During the next three or four days the planned big attack stopped before it even started. This entailed three backward steps:

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The First Step:

Confirmed news from reliable sources in Khost was received to the effect that a huge number of the members of the “Jarbiz” tribe had visited Khost and received money and weapons from the government in return for their loyalty. The news were disturbing for the Mujahideen as they were afraid that these weapons will be used against them in future operations, especially that the area which is controlled by the “Jarbiz” tribe is crucial to the Mujahideen’s operations.

On Wednesday 5/17, and close by the borders, I saw numerous vehicles loaded with men armed with machine guns, and RPGs. They were chanting fiery songs through loud

speakers. This was a part of muscle flexing of the “Jarbiz” group to show people that they were performing their duty of confiscating the arms and moneys that were provided by the Khost government. They claimed that they had confiscated 300 pieces of weapons. My conclusion of this incident was that the “Jarbiz” tribe wanted to use any excuse to break away from the planned attack on Khost. As for confiscating weapons, to me it looked more like distributing more weapons among the tribe members, because none of these weapons were handed over to the Mujahideen.

This made everyone happy. The Khost government was happy because they believed the “Jarbiz” tribe, which is a heavy weight, will not participate in attacks against Khost. The Mujahideen were happy because the tribe confiscated weapons from the non-committed, and the Tribe elders were happy because they had split the spoils they obtained from the Khost government.

The Second Step

This step was undertaken by the Khost government in a clever manner that was not alien to the Afghan communists.

The Khost government asked the moderate Jihad groups to mediate between them and the extremist Jihadists, and if any one group refuses this mediation then it will be attacked by the other Jihad groups and the government. That was a diabolic scheme because the idea of mediation itself will poison the relations among the various groups, some of which are already poisoned. If the moderates agree to this, then they will be attacked by the others and will have no backing except from the communist government, which they will publicly associate themselves with. This will not only be a great victory to the Khost government, but a great victory the country as whole as well. The Jihad groups will then split and experience internal fighting across the board.

There was no reaction on the part of the Mujahideen. The Khost and Kabul radio stations kept on hammering the idea of a national reconciliation. They attacked the Arab and the Pakistani youth as well as the Wahabis. They used to air a song by a female vocalist who chanted repeatedly the phrase: Peace be upon you, and be upon you too. This is an old Egyptian song which might have been pirated by the government. It could also have been a part of a cultural cooperation between the Egyptian government and the government of Kabul, especially at a time when Egyptian newsmen and Azhar scholars were frequently visiting Kabul.

The Third Step

The attack was postponed few times. That was natural. But the strange thing about it was that every time the meeting among the leaders ended, the Khost and Kabul radios would transmit the decisions taken by the attendees and the date, day and hour that were set for the next attack. The radio would mention the name of every leader who attended the meeting and what he said therein.

At first, I did not believe it, but later it was confirmed to me that the reporting was factual. I met Mawlawi ‘Abd-al-Rahman (who later became Emir of al-Ansar Mujahideen Group) and told me that most of the commanders have withdrawn from the attack plan on Khost and that he suspected that these commanders were bribed by the government of Khost.

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‘Abd-al-Rahman was very enthused about attacking Khost because the situation in Jalalabad was extremely bad. We agreed that the least we can do is to have Jalal-al-Din Haqqani and his staunch supporters attack Khost using whatever resources they possessed.

This idea failed to materialize, and I have no idea what Haqqani will do next.

Hamid Jul...What is his Role?

Jihadist and Islamic groups view Hamid Jul as the Muslim man who sincerely stood by the “Afghani Jihad” until he was released from his position as the Chief of the Intelligence Service (ISI) at the beginning of the Benazir Bhutto regime.

Hamid Jul took over this dreadful position from Akhtar Abd al-Rahman who established this organization and led the American intervention operation in Afghanistan. This organization was the apparatus that actually administered Pakistan during the regime of Zia-ul-Haq.

The role of the ISI in Afghanistan was to execute the American strategy there, in return for political and monetary gains, which the Americans were reluctant to pay had they not been forced to. That is why when the American and the Soviets came to terms, America pounced upon Pakistan and tried to take back what it could. It prevented Pakistan from sharing in the regional spoils of war, and dealt it the hardest blow by returning Bhutto’s daughter to the political arena and handing her the reins of the government.

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After relieving Akhtar ‘Abd-al-Rahman from his post – based upon America’s request – Hamid Jul assumed that position, and America blessed it because he was more suitable for the job than his predecessor. He did not prove to be the perfect solution and that is why America, during the Jalalabad fiasco, disposed of him and had Bhutto appoint one of her loyal men -- i.e. America’s men -- to the position in the person of General Callo. During his tenure, Hamid Jul executed three disastrous decisions which harmed the Mujahideen; First: He allowed the Soviets to go into Khost and out of it in peace. Second: He allowed the Soviets to pull out of the Afghani cities without being exposed to the Mujahideen attacks. Few individual attacks took place which annoyed the Soviets and caused them to threaten to halt their withdrawal in November, 1988. The third was the Khost war which caused the highest level of casualties among the Afghans and the Arabs.

If, for argument’s sakes, we believe that the battle was not preplanned by the Americans and the Soviets in order to pressure the Afghan leaders to negotiate a settlement and share power with the communists, and if we agree that it was not set up as an ambush, then why did the Pakistani ISI intervene to prevent the fall of the city? Or prevent the Mujahideen from working on pivotal plans that cause the city to fall? This Pakistani

intervention was experienced by commanders on the front, but at that time, they did not comprehend what was happening. When the Mujahideen reached the village of Samar Khail, they had one of three options to embrace, should they have elected to advance:

The first Option:

Approach the city from the main road. They will advance approximately ten kilometers before they face the airport' strong defenses.

The airport lies on the left side of the street (west). There are densely treed farms and villages facing it. The battle for the control of the airport is going to be a fierce one unless the Mujahideen were able to occupy this densely treed farm area and then attack the airport on a front line of 3 kilometers. Of course, they have to occupy the road coming from the city so they can cut off all the supplies delivered from there.

The Second Option:

This is the better but more dangerous option. The Mujahideen would veer right from the main road towards the fields and villages that surround the city, thus by-passing the airport and the main road. They then can proceed to the city center without any meaningful resistance.

A penetration or an attack through that agricultural belt into the city is extremely possible and provides them with more flexibility to maneuver. Moreover, it makes aerial detection and scud missile attacks less likely.

Taking that route between the Kabul river and the main road is the natural course for guerilla fighters. This is what exactly happened. The first thrust of the Mujahideen was along that axis. They advanced quite a distance inside the villages and the farms, thus by-passing the airport. They were in a position that, if they could not even advance any further, would enable them to reach the city center or close to it and then cut off the road between the city and the airport. They also will then be able to threaten the airport runway which is 3 kilometers long.

According to one of the Arabs accompanying the Mujahideen, what happened next is that the Mujahideen stopped advancing to spend the night in the villages and seek support from their brethren in Samar Khail. They had covered a long distance without facing any hostile forces, and the villages ahead of them were free of hostile troops. However, what happened is that instead of receiving the supplies and support in the morning they received a Pakistani intelligence officer. He insisted that they withdraw and take position on the southern end of the airport between 'Saratcha' bridge and 'Kriz Kabir' village, and occupy the airport first and then advance towards the city. What the Pakistani spy was saying could not even convince an Afghani child.

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They are now amidst the trees and the mud houses. It is their natural fighting arena which they have used for years. How will they agree to leave such a site and move to arid and open fields based on a suggestion by the ISI Pakistani spy?

The Mujahideen stayed in their locations waiting for the arrival of reinforcements.

The Pakistani spy left and they remained in place. They kept on waiting until the enemy forces took positions in the village facing them. The heavy fighting began. Had the Mujahideen got their reinforcements in time, they would have been able to surround these forces and defeat them. Unfortunately, the reinforcements never arrived. They were forced to withdraw, but they found out that a heavy battle was raging on the southern periphery of the airport. This was the turning point of the battle of Jalalabad.

The Pakistani ISI, led by Hamid Jul, succeeded in preventing the Mujahideen from staying on the right course. They forced them to withdraw and ensured their failure. The Jalalabad battle turned into a long battle of attrition with a high cost in men and funds. It was the holocaust of the Afghan Mujahideen.

What was Hamid Jul's role in that disaster? Was he really in command of his intelligence apparatus? Or did America have a secret team within his apparatus to implement whatever plans it had for Afghanistan, and even Pakistan?

The latter is far fetched because of Jul's strong personality, but at the same time it is not improbable for the Americans to form and execute such a plan. In 1993, America used this apparatus to hit the Arabs in Peshawar under the command of the American Consul General there and without the knowledge of Nawaz Sharif's government. They had executed similar schemes within the army and secret service.

The Third Option

This was the most stupid option adopted by the Arabs. To advance from the western desert region and to attack the edges of the defense lines in the area.

Under the leadership of Khalid and Saz Nur, the Arabs advanced for a distance of fifteen kilometers inside the desert. They encountered numerous government buses which made them believe they were on the right track. The two leaders, Khalid and Saz Nur, were not aware that the deeper they penetrated the more exposed and dispersed they became. This encouraged the enemy to kill some of them and arrest the others. When this plan failed, they reverted to a simpler plan. They left the Arabs stationed in the sites they had occupied, unable to advance any further because the terrain was exposed and the enemy overpowered them with their tanks, artillery, air cover and troops. They could not withdraw from these sights because of their steadfastness mentality. The Arabs consider withdrawal an act of cowardice and a religious taboo.

They never thought of withdrawing or shift their positions. This led to bloodshed where hundreds of casualties faced their death in Jalalabad.

Despite this, the Afghans and the Arabs considered Hamid Jul a friend of Jihad. They felt that his men's interference tantamount to guidance and direction of the Mujahideen.

However, they should have predicted the danger that was forthcoming by replacing Jul with one of Benazir's staunchest enemy of Islam and Muslims, namely, General Callo. The whole intelligence apparatus in Jalalabad had fallen in enemy hands. One would think that this would require a revision of the issue. Instead, the opposite took place.

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The Arab enthusiasm kept building up and the military and propaganda efforts reached their peak, and so did the number of martyrs. What is even stranger is the fact that this

whirlwind lasted till the end of the war in 1992. The big question was: Why did the Arabs take this stance in Jalalabad?

Until now, I have not find the convincing answer.

Two months earlier I wrote an article titled “The War of Dhul Hijja” covering the war the Arabs waged in Jalalabad. It assessed the general situation in Afghanistan and the particularly in Jalalabad.

The Government of the Mujahideen had renounced its involvement in Jalalabad after it failed at a high cost of human lives. The American involvement was almost uncovered, but the evidence was all there. What is strange is that the Arab leaderships, despite all the failures, continued to dig the biggest graveyard for the Arabs fighting in Jalalabad, which went on till the fall of Kabul on April 29th. Moreover, they mentally terrorized those who opposed the Jalalabad battle and labeled them as the enemies of Jihad. They even called one of the Mujahideen ‘Brutus’.

For information, Brutus was the closest friend of Caesar, but he participated in his assassination when he stabbed him, which led Caesar to say, “Et tu Brutus.”

Benazir fired the Director of the Intelligence Service, Hamid Jul, who was a friend of the Afghans and the Arabs, and the last strong man of the Zia Ul-Haq regime.

Jul fell from grace and the intelligence apparatus became controlled by one of the staunchest enemies of Muslims and Islam in the Indian sub-continent. His first gift to the Mujahideen was the vast graveyard in Jalalabad which was the most horrifying in the history of the Afghan war. I take the opportunity here to present the article I wrote on this subject titled ‘Chatting on top of the World’ which was published in “Al-Arab” newspaper on 7/6/89. This is the article:

What is Behind the Recent Changes in the Pakistani Military Intelligence?

Removal of Hamid Jul and appointing Callo.

Strengthening Benazir’s grip on internal politics.

Major changes in Bhutto’s Afghan policy will be forthcoming.

American Media in South Asia: Observers or events makers?

Statements of the Afghan leadership hurt their friends Hamid Jul.

The fabricated failure in Jalalabad which the victims paid for.

Peshawar, Friday 6/2/89, corresponding to 28 Shawwal, 1409

Removing General Hamid Jul, Director of the Pakistani Military intelligence, and replacing him with the retired general Shams-al-Din Callo was an important event in internal politics. The noted Pakistani newspaper editor, Mushahid Husayn, described the event as the most important decision Mrs. Bhutto took since she assumed the premiership in last December.

Husayn went on to say that the removal of Hamid Jul came in the middle of a campaign that criticized the role of the Pakistani Military Intelligence in the Afghanistan war. This has triggered a fiery reaction from the American media, who has been playing a key role in covering the events in Southern Asia and played a role in directing events there.

The most important extraordinary media coverage was that of the recent Pakistani elections which they called “The Democratic Phase” under the leadership of Mrs. Bhutto,

followed by the coverage of the Afghan war starting with the Soviet withdrawal up to the formation of the Afghani provisional government.

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Then the famous Jalalabad battle raged, and the American and international media launched a huge coverage of this battle as if it were the final military victory that would defeat the communist regime in Kabul and replace it with the Mujahideen provisional government.

Retired air force marshal, 'Ayyad Ahmad Khan, said in his military analyses of the Jalalabad battle that the western media coverage was not only exaggerated but hysteric as well. He added that it was apparent from day one that the battles, by any military standard, could not have led to the fall of Jalalabad or Kabul, and that the Mujahideen needed a longer time to realize such victories.

He later reversed his stance and attacked the Mujahideen in Jalalabad and blaming the Pakistani military intelligence for their interference in the Afghan war by justifying for the battle of Jalalabad during a meeting they held with the American ambassador to Pakistan, Mr. Oakley, as was reported in the Washington Post.

Internal Considerations

Internally, there were many leading politicians waiting for opportunities to settle old scores. Topping the list was Sayyid 'Abd-al-Wali Khan, Leader of the National Party. He was known for his historic support of the Indian-Soviet axis which called for the cessation of the Afghan war and supporting the existing regime. He accused the United States and the regime of the late Zia Ul-Haq of inciting the war there.

It was only natural that Khan's accusation got relayed to the Pakistani Military Intelligence which was still a remnant of Zia Ul-Haq's regime. In general, all those who opposed Zia Ul-Haq's regime are still carrying the memories of his Director of Intelligence and still accuse him of interfering in the internal politics of the country, which violates the basic objective of the organization's mission. The interference of the military establishment in politics presented a nightmare to all the politicians, and that is why Mrs. Bhutto called more than once for putting the army under the civilian authority of the government.

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The political parties are aware of the covert involvement of the army in internal affairs. However, in the event that something happens that would threaten the unity and the security of the country, then the army would publicly play a major role in internal politics. No doubt, the leading political powers are trying to control this complicated situation. The parties that have assumed the reins of governing are trying to play down the role of the army in internal politics by keeping it in its barracks until it is called upon by the political leadership.

Trimming Operation

Removing Hamid Jul from the directorship of the Military intelligence was the first step in trimming all the unwanted people and putting this institution under the control of the governing political leadership.

Mrs. Bhutto appointed General Callo to replace Hamid Jul and to fill this sensitive position. He reported directly to Mrs. Bhutto instead of the Chief of Staff and Army Commander, which was a first in the history of the intelligence service. Early in her tenure, Mrs. Bhutto ordered the formation of a committee that would investigate the activities of the intelligence apparatus, especially the role the military intelligence played in the Afghani issue.

The Pakistani reported some of the results reached by the investigation committee by saying that the Military Intelligence under the leadership of Hamid Jul had discovered and confronted India's meddling in the affairs of the Sind province of Pakistan. It also referred to Jul's assistance of the Afghan Mujahideen. However, the committee criticized the interference of the intelligence apparatus in internal politics for backing "The Islamic Republican Union", which opposes Bhutto, during the recent election campaign.

This led the news reporter "Mushahid Hussein" to confirm that the recent change of leadership in the intelligence service had severed the relationships between the opposition party, namely "The Islamic Republican Union" and the army. The opportunity is ripe now for Mrs. Bhutto to confront more forcefully the leader of the opposition bloc Mr. Nawaz Sharif, prime minister of Punjab who had always been at odds with her and who drives Punjab against any cooperation with the government.

-- New Policy --

It was noticed that the removal of Hamid Jul on May 24th was executed during Bhutto's visit to Turkey and few days before her planned visit to the United States.

In an interview with the Washington Post, Mrs. Bhutto said that she intended to take a more primary role in the Afghani crisis, and that she planned to change the former policy which she had inherited from the regime of Zia Ul-Haq, and which was based on a military solution. In her opinion, that was a carnal mistake because it compounded the unrest and threats to the Northwestern part of the country which Reagan and Bush had supported by shipping arms to the Mujahideen through the Pakistani intelligence apparatus. She added that she was going to discuss her new Afghanistan policy with the administration in Washington.

Amidst the extensive American media coverage of Bhutto's policies, The New York Times came out with an explosive news item on April 23rd stating that the attack on Jalalabad was launched by orders of the Bhutto government and against the advice of the Military Intelligence and its Director Hamid Jul.

It was not clear whether this news item was factual or intended for agitating existing conflicts.

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--Numerous Pressures --

No doubt, the recent changes in the intelligence apparatus and keeping the army from handling the Afghani issue has impacted the internal Pakistani policy, the fate of the Afghani issue and the status of the seven Mujahideen organizations in Peshawar and their provisional government.

With the removal of Hamid Jul, these organizations had lost their last strong supporter in the Pakistani government. The American media started accusing Hamid Jul and Zia Ul Haq of being responsible for assisting the extremist wing of the Afghani resistance and had planned to get them to take power in Kabul. In fact, the military solution started to fade away. In private interviews, some field commanders complained that pressures were applied on them not to occupy large cities, but to conquer small and weak villages only so that any pressure on large cities could be alleviated. This happened to be the case when, during the siege of Khost and Jalalabad, the commanders did not only face such pressures but they faced a drop in the supply of ammunitions and spare parts for their artillery and mortar guns.

On the other hand, the Moscow-Kabul-Indian axis increased their political, psychological and military pressures on the Mujahideen so they would abandon the idea of a political solution. Also, such pressures were applied on Pakistan as well.

Naturally, the removal of Hamid Jul, the last of the hawks in the government, was step in that direction.

What confirms the application of pressure on the Pakistani government was the incident where a rocket had fell on southern Punjab in Pakistan on Monday, May 22nd last, next to an area that was allotted to house nuclear projects. The Pakistani Army Commander did not rule out the possibility that this long range missile was either a Russian made rocket fired from Kabul or a medium range Indian rocket type "Ajni", which India was testing at the time, and which was directed towards Pakistan's Punjab area instead of the Bay of Bengal.

India was quick in denying these accusations. If that was true, then Kabul would have been the other culprit which was sending a warning message on the danger the enemy might face and the extraordinary assistance it is receiving from Moscow.

--Secret Negotiations--

Even before the removal of Hamid Jul, some of the major Afghani leaders started to accept the idea of sharing governing authorities with the Kabul regime and shelf the military solution.

Sources close to the Afghani resistance revealed that secret discussions between one of their leaders and Soviet officials were held in an Arab capital as a result of a high level Palestinian mediation. In her interview with the Washington Post, which we mentioned earlier, Mrs. Bhutto mentioned the discussions and said, "The Mujahideen and the Soviets will resume their discussions soon, and will discuss the Soviet prisoners of war the Mujahideen hold, and expressed her hope that these discussions would include other political issues."

The discussion which Bhutto referred to had ended without any tangible results.

Agreement on distributing the ministerial portfolios among the two parties was far from being achieved. Moscow insisted on giving the major ministries to the ruling party, The People's Democratic Party, while the Mujahideen insisted on giving ruling party member

non-ministerial portfolios and removing all Afghani politicians with communist allegiance.

Other similar negotiations took place in Europe, including Switzerland, but nothing was finalized.

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As for the moderate wing in the Afghani resistance, they were trying hard to find a proper position in the future government for the former King, Zahir Shah.

--A Friend's Reward --

Despite Hamid Jul's important contributions to the Afghani organizations, they were not able to lend him a helping hand during his debacle. On the contrary, the fiery statements made during the Jalalabad battles by the top leaders of these organizations ignited the hysteric American media campaign against Jul by blaming him and his intelligence apparatus for the failure in Jalalabad. Furthermore, the statement made by the minister of defense of the provisional government on 5/11/89 in which he accused the field commanders of the Mujahideen of not consulting his government on the Jalalabad battles confirmed America's claim that 'some party' is behind the planning for these battles. The accusations against Jul and his apparatus seemed to be valid, and the prediction of Pakistani Dr. Shah Khan, who wrote in the al-Muslim newspaper that the Jalalabad battles are searching for a scapegoat, came true.

-- Media Fence --

The international media must be envious of the more advanced American media because it has the power to predict and even participate in the making of events. It earned the right to be called a super media of a super country.

It is believed that the American media, rightly or wrongly, made Jul and his apparatus the scapegoats for what they called "the military failure" of the Mujahideen in Jalalabad. Any one who is admired by the American media will become a star, and any one who receives their wrath will no doubt perish.

We should expect to have more scapegoats from the fall out of the Jalalabad fiasco. In addition to their hysterical attacks on Jul and his intelligence apparatus, the American media started attacking the Islamic volunteers, especially the Arabs.

Their accusations were so severe that they suggested that each volunteer be executed more than once. They harshly criticized them and accused them of being fanatic religious warriors.

It seems that the American media forgot that they had blessed this war because it was religious...so what happened now that the war is ending and discussions to assume power have started?

The word 'Islam' became a dangerous word for the Afghan state and a crime to use it. On April 17th, Time magazine, after accusing the Arab volunteers of being Salafists and Wahabis, reported an Afghani moderate scholar as saying that the volunteers would rather call Afghanistan Islamistan, and that they are considered a dangerous crowd because they are destroying the Afghani people's expectations.

So the message is clear; Time magazine reports that Islam in Afghanistan is destroying its people's expectations. So why did they, for nine years, praise the men of the 'Islamic resistance' in Afghanistan? Moreover, the American media and the American administration had recognized and accepted the term 'Mujahideen', which is a term that is closely tied to Islamic ideology.

The British Broadcasting Corporation took the same path. It exploited its widespread coverage among the Afghani people and launched a massive campaign, in Farsi and Pashto, against the 'Wahabi Arabs', and claimed that the next conflict will take place between the local population and those who came from abroad carrying the Wahabi threat.

Therefore, the threat of communism has dissipated now, and the present real danger emanates from Wahabi Islam. The western media reported that numerous incidents of clashes between the Afghani citizens and the Wahabi Afghans and Arabs had taken place.

-- International Media Accord --

It became amazing that Radio Kabul and the other Afghani broadcasting stations in Khost and Jalalabad, as well as Radio Moscow started focusing their attacks on the Arabs and the danger they pose on the future of Afghanistan.

It was a unique situation to watch the international media agreeing on attacking this common enemy of humanity, communism and capitalism. What a colossal enemy! They were nothing but a small group of Arabs who were barely in their twenties.

The American media went one step further. They painted these people as a threat to world peace.

They claimed that the Arab youth get trained in Afghanistan on terrorism and hijacking. This is weird, because there are no people in the world who were bombarded and killed by air raids like the Afghanis, and yet we never heard of one incident where an Afghani hijacked a plane, be it civilian or military. Ninety percent of the Afghani Mujahideen have never been on a plane, and 80% of them have never seen a plane on the ground. But they have seen Russian planes bombarding their villages.

How can the Arab youth or others be trained on terrorism and hijacking in Afghanistan? May be the new American assessment of the Afghani battle against the local communists has transformed from one of 'Jihad' for liberty to one of terrorism. In order not to be unjust to the American super media who can predict events we must mention that the Arabs had lost their logic and balance by becoming irrational.

A reporter from the BBC went on a long journey to Northern Afghanistan so he could interview Ahmad Shah Mas`ud and ask him a weird question, "Since you only speak Farsi, what is your position on the other Pashto leaders?"

To this strange question, Mas`ud gave the reporter a reply which the latter wished he did not have to hear it. He said that Islam had eliminated all these differences and that all Afghanis are Muslims, and therefore, there is no difference among them; except the western media tries to continue playing this tune.

The American media comes to us with the tune, the BBC redistributes the music, and the Russians reverberate the song.

So, how many heads are going to fall as a price for the fabricated fiasco of Jalalabad?

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November 89 – Peshawar Jolted
Kidnapping....and Assassination

It was a civilized operation, the one which the Sudanese government undertook to deport “Abu ‘Abdullah” and a limited number of his personal guards. They and I were put on board of a small government plane which took us to Jalalabad. I was deported without being forewarned while staying in Khartoum for the past four months.

The plane landed in Jalalabad airport and then proceeded to the house of “Fadl al-Haq”, one of the commanders of Hikmatiar in the region. Per Abu ‘Abdullah’s request, we then moved to an old royal palace surrounded by groves. During the time we were waiting for our families to arrive from Sudan, Abu ‘Abdullah and I started writing down some of his memories of Afghanistan. We were actually in Jalalabad in the middle of where the major events were taking place, specifically Samar Khail Mountain, which we could see from the palace’s balcony, the southern tip of the city and the Jalalabad valley.

After Abu ‘Abdullah finished relating his memories about the Jalalabad battles, which he called the “Dhul Hijja” battles, he mentioned the most important event of all: the uprooting of the Arab presence in Afghanistan, and liquidating its leaders starting with Dr. ‘Abdullah ‘Azzam.

Abu ‘Abdullah said:

During my presence in Saudi Arabia, two important incidents took place on the arena of the Arab Mujahideen in Pakistan.

The first took place on Thursday evening of 11/23/89 when the Pakistani authorities claimed that they discovered explosives stashed in a suitcase of a Saudi passenger who intended to explode plane full of civilians, including Sheikh Zandan. A young Egyptian man “Muhtassib” was arrested and made responsible.

At noontime of the next day, Friday, Dr. ‘Abdullah ‘Azzam was assassinated.

Unidentified people detonated explosives under his car as he was heading to perform the Friday noon prayers at the “Sab’ al-Lail” mosque. He and his two sons, Ibrahim and Muhammad were killed.

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For months the international media had waged campaigns against the Arab presence in Afghanistan. They accused them of being terrorists and fundamentalists and used the Wahabi theme in order to spread hostility between the Arabs and the Afghans.

Regarding the plane incident, the passenger manifest had 23 names of leaders in al-Qaeda. They tried to place the responsibility on their shoulders and arrest them in an attempt to destroy al-Qaeda.

Confirmed information inside Saudi Arabia revealed that the whole story was fabricated by ‘Abdullah al-Mani’, the director of the Saudi Red Crescent in Peshawar.

Muhtassib was a member of al-Qaeda. He was a chemist and had successfully completed an advanced training program on explosives. He had left al-Qaeda a month or so before the hijacking incident.

He was a Salafi and a Mujahid. He later became the guest of Jamil al-Rahman in Peshawar, where the man responsible for housing the Mujahideen was Abu `Umran, a Saudi national working for `Abdullah al-Mani`.

Abu `Umran offered Muhtassib to train the Arabs in Jamil al- Rhman's Kunar camp. The camp's function was to receive and track all the Saudis coming to perform Jihad in Afghanistan.

Muhtassib took the offer without knowing that these people and the camp were connected to the Saudi Intelligence. Muhtassib used to harshly criticize in public the Saudi government and King Fahid and engaged himself in heated arguments with other guests and Abu `Umran about his topic.

Some people advised him to stay away from these people because of their close connection to Saudi Arabia.

After the hijacking incident, Abu `Abdullah called me in Peshawar and asked me to remove Muhtassib from Peshawar and send him to Afghanistan. He said that he will send me the details the next day. The details arrived the next day with a person, which revealed that someone with a suit case full of explosives went to Abu `Abdullah and told him that a man with Muhtassib's descriptions had given him the case.

We started looking for Muhtassib all over Peshawar, but could not find him. The next day we found him while visiting a sick man called `Adil Siam (Abu al-Nadr), who later was killed by the Egyptian intelligence. I went to see Muhtassib and spent an hour with him. He did not seem confused, nor did he impress me as someone who knew anything about the suit case.

I asked him about his future plans. He told me that he plans on going to Egypt but he will conduct some training sessions before his departure. I thought that was a perfect opportunity for me to remove him from the arena without having him doubt anything. I agreed with him that he will proceed to Khost early the next morning.

The next morning I waited for him for a long time, but later found out that he was arrested by the Saudi Intelligence in Peshawar.

Few days after his disappearance, the picture of Muhtassib appeared in the Pakistani press accusing him of attempting to explode the Saudi plane, and that the Pakistani authorities had arrested him at a bus station in Rawalpindi as he was arriving from Peshawar. Of course, that was all lies and fabricated news.

During his trial in Rawalpindi, Muhtassib met one of his brethren and told him:

A day after the incident, I was invited to dinner at Abi `Umran's house to discuss the training program at Kunar camp. After dinner, Abu `Umran asked him to step into a side room where I saw his boss, al-Mani` and a group of Afghani men. They shackled me and beat me badly.

Later Muhtassib was transported in an ambulance to another house belonging to the Saudi intelligence. Al-Mani`, Abu `Umran and the Afghani goons were all with him. They started investigating him by using all sorts of physical and mental torture techniques trying to force him to confess that he was behind the airplane operation and that the al-Qaeda group was a part of the plot.

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They showed him a list of names of 23 al-Qaeda members and told him that they were a part of the plot as well.

They even had prepared letters claiming that he had exchanged with two al-Qaeda officials, namely, Abu Hafs and Abu `Ubaydah, which proved that they too were involved in the plot.

Simultaneously, the Pakistani intelligence started looking for Abu Hafs and Abu `Ubaydah in an attempt to arrest them. Abu Hafs got to know about the search so he disappeared, but later was arrested on the outskirts of Peshawar. Abu `Ubaydah was not in Pakistan at the time.

Muhtassib went on to tell his visitor that:

He did not tell on the al-Qaeda group and only admitted his involvement.

He was later transferred to the Pakistani intelligence who started investigating him and using some torture methods but not as harsh as those of the Saudi intelligence. Muhtassib felt that the Pakistani torture saved him from the Saudi torture.

Muhtassib went on to tell his visitor that he wanted to send a suitcase to one of his brethren in Jeddah called Abu Hammam (he was later killed in Egypt by the Egyptian intelligence) which contained some rubber stamps. Muhtassib had asked Abu `Umran if he could send this suitcase to Jeddah. Abu `Umran said yes, there is one of our trusted brethren leaving for Jeddah. So Abu `Umran took the suitcase from Muhtassib which had no explosives in it at the time.

Placing explosives in the suitcase was done by the Saudi intelligence in Peshawar. They placed a dynamite stick with some wires without connecting it to a detonating circuit.

The suitcase was then handed to one of their men who was traveling to Jeddah.

One of the passengers (Sayif) who was standing in the security checking line behind the man carrying the suitcase said that the security check that day was very lax.

The plane took off from Islamabad airport...as the plane was taking off, Muhtassib arrived at the Islamabad airport. He was in a hurry. Abu `Umran had sent him there with a typewritten sealed envelope to deliver it to the person carrying the suitcase. Abu `Umran had told him to deliver the letter to the airport police so that they can deliver it to the man carrying the suitcase either in the transit lounge or on the plane.

Muhtassib quickly grabbed a cab, and delivered the letter to a policeman guarding the departure gate, and turned around and came back not knowing what was in the typewritten letter.

The letter contained a threat to explode the plane if the planner of the operation is not paid ten million dollars. Upon reading the letter, the Pakistani authorities ordered the plane to land in Karachi. They announced the plot and requested all passengers to disembark. They then offloaded the entire luggage and asked each passenger to identify his suitcase and carry it to the airport terminal.

The suitcase carrier whispered in Sayif's ear: I doubt that the suitcase Muhtassib gave me contained explosives.

At the terminal, each passenger was asked about his name, where he was coming from and where he was going to. It was a routine check.

The Pakistani authorities arrested six Iranian passengers, and the Pakistani press claimed that Iran was behind the plot, and so did the Saudi press.

Few days later the Pakistani press reported that the Pakistani authorities had captured an Arab terrorist at the bus station in Rawalpindi as he was coming from Peshawar and considered him to be responsible for the attempt of exploding the plane.

Muhtassib was brought to trial. The evidence against him included the following:

a- The confession he had signed under torture by the Saudi intelligence in Peshawar.

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b. The letter threatening to blow up the plane and the typewriter that was allegedly used, which was provided to the court by the Pakistanis. – The defense proved the contrary during the trial.

The Egyptian Embassy in Islamabad showed great interest in the trial and its representative attended all the court sessions. They promised Muhtassib that they will help him, but nothing materialized. On the contrary, there is evidence now that they had colluded with the court to control Muhtassib until the court sentence is passed.

As for the defense lawyer, and one day before the court was to pass the sentence, he assured Muhtassib that all the Pakistani allegations were refuted, and that all the evidence was forged, and there was no doubt in his mind that he will be rendered innocent.

The sentence was passed, and the shocking news was that the court had sentenced Muhtassib to 25 years imprisonment.

Abu ‘Abdullah continues his conversation by talking about the assassination of Dr. ‘Abdullah ‘Azzam. He said:

There was a feeling among the brethren who accompanied Dr. ‘Abdullah that he was targeted, and therefore they advised him not to go to Peshawar but to stay at the Sada camp under custody so he may perform his duties without worrying about security issues. But he used to go to Peshawar once a month. On one of his trips, and before his assassination, explosives were discovered under the dais where he was supposed to give a speech. This led to make the brethren more careful and caution Dr. ‘Abdullah repeatedly. At that time the Sheikh was heavy hearted because of the poor situation on the ground. There were massive conflicts on the Afghani arena, and differences among the Arabs in Peshawar.

He also suffered from those who were considered to be supporters of the Islamic movement in Jordan, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia.

Recently, he was very depressed. Sheikh ‘Abdullah did not get any support from the scholars to help him in one of the most important issues of the century to both the Moslems and the Arabs. At a time when the East and the West were fiercely interlocked, the Islamic movement was stingy in helping him to spread his message.

The Islamic movement fell short of giving him the proper support on this issue.

The Sheikh was a good hearted man. He was farsighted especially when it came to the importance of the cause and its impact on the Muslims and the world. He believed in Jihad as the way to awaken the nation and rid it from humility and oppression.

He was courageous and sacrificial... He was truly a unique symbol of Islam. When the Sheikh was assassinated, it came to mind that I would be next and others who loved Jihad will follow. Lots of brethren warned me of this, and the night I heard of the Sheikh's death I did not sleep at home and took extra security precautions. At the time I was banned from traveling.

I received news that 5 communist men from southern Yemen had entered the Kingdom planning to assassinate me. This security turmoil lasted until I left the Kingdom. I always carried arms while moving around.

The sadness in the Kingdom, the Islamic world and among the supporters of Jihad over the Sheikh's death was profound. At that time we believed that the foremost beneficiaries from the Sheikh's assassination were the Jews, the Americans and their collaborators.

Dr. 'Abdullah's writings were dangerous for the Jews and America because he preached adopting Jihad for the liberation of Palestine and Jerusalem. His writings impacted the formation and operation of the Hamas movement.

He knew well that the security of Israel and America was one and same, and had called for boycotting American goods and treating America as an enemy.

In analyzing the situation, Abu 'Abdullah used to relate evidence about Saudi Arabia's involvement in Dr. 'Azzam's assassination as an executor of America's wishes. He said: First: Saudi Arabia was adamant on preventing the Saudi youth to join Jihad. This became a clear policy to me when, during an investigation, they ordered me not to call upon the Saudi Youth to perform Jihad. It is well known that Sheikh 'Abdullah was the biggest supporter of Jihad in Afghanistan.

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Second: Inciting the youth to liberate Palestine and urging people to boycott American products rendered him a target for both countries. It is a well known fact that, after Israel, Saudi Arabia is the second staunchest ally of the Americans.

Third: 'Abdullah al-Mani', the principal suspect in the Islamabad Airplane drama, was a staunch enemy of the Islamic movement and its Jihad. He sent numerous reports to the Kingdom claiming that Sheikh Abdallah was conspiring with Osama Bin Laden and Sheikh 'Umar Abd-al-Rahman to topple the regime in Saudi Arabia.

Al-Mnai` was in charge of distributing the funds he received from Salman, and which were allotted for helping the Afghan people, among the Saudi volunteers in order to spy on their Mujahideen brethren.

According to evidence on hand, we believe that the Jews had asked America to liquidate Sheikh 'Abdullah, and in turn America asked Saudi Arabia and Pakistan to execute the crime.

One of these days the truth will surface when all these criminals are brought to justice. This concludes Abu 'Abdullah's conversation on this issue.

International Preparation...for the Complex Crime

Since the assassination of Zia Ul-Haq, it became clear that the events in Afghanistan and the region took a new turn. No doubt, assassinating Zia Ul-Haq was executed by a joint operation between the Soviets and the Americans. They both benefited from killing him.

It was easy to deduct that hard times were awaiting the Arab presence in Afghanistan, and the Arab Jihad there in general.

When the Jalalabad battles raged in March of 1989, the international media started targeting the Arabs directly. It was a bad sign because it was a well known fact that the 'International Media' was nothing but a tool used by Israel and the United States to liquidate their enemies, politically and morally, before inflicting the final blow.

America had substituted the word American with the word International in order to avoid arousing the feelings of the distraught nations, or drawing their attention to American unilateral domination. They put other countries under the illusion that what is taking place is internationally instigated while the contrary is true. An example would be the International Bank, Interpol, (IL), International resolutions, International legitimacy, etc. America speaks on behalf of the whole world as if it is its earned right for being the world's most powerful country.

Based on this, the Interpol had something to do with the assassination of Dr. 'Abdullah 'Azzam and the fabrication of the hijacking incident which took place the night before the assassination was executed. The Americans and their faithful shadow, Great Britain convinced the Pakistani government through the Interpol that a certain group has become active in not only hitting their interests but those of Pakistan as well. They asked Pakistan to take the necessary security measures to protect their countries' citizens and interests. (The Muslim newspaper of 5/15/89).

Two weeks prior to that, Reuter reported the following news item from Islamabad: The Pakistani authority has doubled its security procedures and declared a state of emergency at Pakistani airports after a clandestine group had threatened to hijack a Saudi airplane. According to Pakistani security officials, the Pakistani Ministry of Interior had received the threat earlier in the month from a group called "Jund al-'Adala". This was reported by the al-Ittihad newspaper of 5/1/89.

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This news item revealed that the threat was timed as the battles in Jalalabad were at their peak...simultaneously; the Kabul and Moscow radios were accusing the Arabs in Afghanistan of training on hijacking airplanes.

The news item was initiated by the western international media and terminated by the communist media, Moscow and Kabul. The icing on the cake was the work of 'Abdullah al-Mani', one of Saudi Arabia's top agents in Pakistan and the Director of the Saudi Red Crescent, who furnished the Pakistani authorities with a long list of the Arab youth "terrorists" and whom he accused of being the planners of the hijacking and other terrorist operations.

A closer look on these developments gives us an idea about the extent and depth of the new international coordination, led by America and Israel, against the Islamic movement and the dangerous impact it would have on the Moslems.

Meanwhile, Sheikh 'Abdullah 'Azzam was passing through the worst period of his life; his morale was at its lowest, and the accumulating problems depressed him. Recurring disappointments and the threats on his life compounded his problems, the last of which

was the unsuccessful assassination attempt on his life when he escaped injury from a bomb that was placed under the dais.

A senior Palestinian Mujahid told me that Sheikh ‘Abdullah had received a warning from one of the Palestinian Embassy employees in Islamabad to the effect that orders by the American Embassy were given to execute the assassination plan which would be headed by Nasir Allah Baer, one of Benazir Bhutto’s confidants, and the Minister of Interior in her second government.

Few weeks ago, the top aide to Dr. ‘Azzam; Tamim al-`Ani, died in a mysterious way in the United States where he was undergoing a weight related surgery. Rumors in Islamabad had it that he was killed intentionally. He was a dignified Palestinian personality who at one time was the representative of the PLO in Ur. He later became the chief security man for Dr. ‘Azzam, as well as his personal aide, and driver.

The day of the assassination attempt, Tamim did not accompany Dr. ‘Azzam. The reason for that sounded logical. What happened is that for the first time ever Sheikh ‘Abdullah got into his son’s car which was driven by his elder son Muhammad. His other son Ibrahim was next to Mohammad. They then proceeded to “Saba` al-Lail” mosque. Maybe the Sheikh wanted to revise his Friday sermon on his way to the mosque because he had two difficult issues he was tackling. The first was the reconciliation between Hikmatiar and Rabbani, which he accomplished the night before; and the second was the news about the hijacking of the Saudi airplane. He believed it targeted the Arab and Yemeni guests that came to see him. The news was still murky but one could deduce that something out of the ordinary was taking place.

The Sheikh did not have ample time to review his thoughts...minutes later, his car reached the intersection next to the mosque and the driver had to slow down in order to cross a narrow bridge over a small stream which was being repaired by the municipality for weeks. Explosives had been planted under the bridge and a 50 meter cable ran from its location all the way to a nearby petrol station. There were two municipality workers at the station chatting and eating bananas. The station owner suspected the presence of these two workers because they usually do not work on Fridays. He also was suspicious of the cable running by the edge of the stream and suddenly ends by their side.

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He called the police to report his suspicions but no one showed up for over an hour later. Meanwhile the Sheikh’s car crossed the bridge, and then...everything was over.

Let us now go over what one of the Arabic magazines in Peshawar (Al-Thabat, which belongs to Abu Sayyaf) wrote in its issue of 12/16/89 about the incident and the statement of an Arab who was on the scene. The Magazine wrote:

The Impact of a Horrifying Explosion in Peshawar
Martyrdom of Dr. ‘Abdullah ‘Azzam
And His Two Sons, Muhammad and Ibrahim

Peshawar – Al-Thabat: Sheikh ‘Abdullah ‘Azzam was martyred with his two sons, Muhammad and Ibrahim while they were on their way to perform the Friday prayers at

the “Saba` al-Lail” mosque on Friday, 16/4/1410 H corresponding to 11/24/1989 G. Before entering the side street leading to the mosque, the car exploded by a bomb that was planted on the intersection’s edge. The explosion caused the car to break in two, and the Sheikh catapulted from the car and hit another parked car. He lied on the ground with blood flowing from his ears, nose and mouth. His two sons’ bodies were torn into small pieces and landed ten meters away from the explosion site. An eye witness (ʿAwwad Mukhtar) said that Sheikh ‘Abdullah ‘Azzam died instantly and before they could take him to hospital.

It is worth noting that the Pakistani police estimated the explosives to weigh 20 kilograms. It generated a ground hole of two meters wide and one meter deep in a paved road.

The facts point at the involvement of a professional organization in this explosion. They followed the Sheikh from the minute he left his house until he reached the explosion site. Many cars in the interim had crossed the site but nothing had happened, which points to the presence of a person or persons near the explosion site who made sure it was the Sheikh’s car before exploding it.

It is worth mentioning that the Sheikh was exposed to a previous assassination attempt when a bomb was planted under the mosque’s dais where he was supposed to lecture. But the guards discovered the bomb before prayer time.

The Story of Sheikh ‘Abdullah ‘Azzam’s Martyrdom An Eye Witness Relates for Certitude

I left my house to go to the mosque to hear the voice of rightness. The voice of a man who sacrificed himself and his sons for the sake of God. That is why people always were enthusiastic to attend his Friday sermon. His words penetrate deep into the hearts because you feel they are genuine.

I parked my car at the tip of the side street that leads to the mosque at 12 noon. The car windows were down, and as I was rolling them up I heard this scary loud explosion...and immediately I saw a car cut in half and I felt a body had struck my car amidst dark clouds. I disembarked and found that the body was that of our martyred Sheikh, ‘Abdullah ‘Azzam.

My God, this wrecked car in front of me belonged to the Sheikh’s son and very few people knew that; and usually the Sheikh does not ride with his son. For a while, I was in a daze not knowing what to do. I was supposed to be one of the victims but was not even scratched. Then I heard brethren Abu al-Harith screaming: My God those criminals killed him. Help me lift the Sheikh, We lifted him and placed him on the side walk. His face was clear but speechless, as if he was in deep sleep. There were no wounds or scratches on his face, and even the cap he was wearing was still on his head. His robe was intact except blood was running down from his nose and mouth!! It was then that I realized that God had chosen the Sheikh to be next to him as martyr...a few instances later, people

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Realized there were body parts scattered over 100 meters away...those belonged to his two sons (Muhammad and Ibrahim) who were with him in the car.

What coward hand had killed the Sheikh and his sons? The criminals thought that by doing so the Jihad will come to a halt. Oh my God, the Sheikh had reared a whole generation and left work and curriculum to be followed. The caravan will not come to a halt, and we are proceeding on the path paved by our martyred Sheikh and our martyred brethren. May the cowards never get any rest.

Eye Witness/ `Awwad Mukhtar

The newspapers of Saturday, 11/25/89, reported the assassination of Sheikh `Abdullah `Azzam and preliminary details about the Saudi airplane incident. They did not tie the two together.

This is what the al-Ittihad newspaper reported about the airplane incident:

Islamabad- News Agencies: Yesterday, a Saudi passenger airplane escaped destruction. Navigation sources in Islamabad said that a Boeing 747 carrying 248 passengers had escaped destruction after confusion in handling luggage occurred where a suit case with a bomb in it was discovered before loading it on the plane. Informed Pakistani sources said that they had found two dynamite sticks, and the police announced the arrest of a number of passengers for investigation.

The Pakistani authorities are looking for a person who had sent a letter to the security forces of Islamabad airport warning them of the presence of a bomb on board flight 367 heading for Riyadh.

The sources added that airplane received orders to land in Karachi where it was inspected. A bomb was found in a school bag in the luggage compartment, and none of the passengers claimed its ownership.

Shortly after takeoff, an unknown organization confirmed the presence of a bomb on board of the plane, and demanded a ransom of \$15 millions. The Pakistani press also mentioned that the said organization delivered a written letter to the airport confirming the presence of one of its members on board and will detonate the bomb if its demands are not met. The letter was carried by a taxi driver who claimed it was given to him by a foreign person. The airport authorities contacted the airplane's captain and ordered him to land in Karachi where the passengers and the luggage were offloaded.

In other words, such an incident, exploding an airplane, had to be arranged prior to assassinating Dr. `Abdullah `Azzam, for the following reasons:

1. Use the incident to stir up the public opinion of Pakistan (where the Arab Mujahideen and their families live), and the public opinion of Saudi Arabia (which is the human and financial reservoirs of the Mujahideen) against the Arab Mujahideen since the incident took place on Pakistani land and against a Saudi plane.
2. Using the incident in order to justify their punishment scheme against the criminals which the Saudi government listed and presented to the Pakistani government; i.e. the list prepared by `Abdullah al-Mani`. This will lead to the fall of al-Qaeda and the arrest of its principal cadre. Naturally, this would lead to larger arrest campaigns elsewhere which would deter al-Qaeda from planning to avenge the assassination of Dr. `Azzam. Such revenge scared the Pakistani authorities and the West because of the presence of a large number of Arabs in Pakistan who are well armed and trained and who would seek to avenge the death of Sheikh `Abdullah.

The obsession of liquidating the Arab Mujahideen laid heavily on the Pakistani minds until they finally resolved it by launching tracking and deportation campaigns in April, 1992.

3- Paving the road for the Arab Mujahideen to be tracked and liquidated once they return to their countries because they have transformed into becoming terrorists who would pose danger to the innocent civilian population.

4- Destroying the moral reputation the Arab Mujahideen had acquired and the courage and sacrifice which the masses had credited them with, and transferring them from victorious heroes to hated criminals.

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5- Using all of the above to distort the “duty of Jihad” ideology and preventing the Moslems from performing it. They succumb to the wishes of the international forces and abandon the rights of the people and God.

The Arab youth was not the obvious target. What the Moslem Mujahid, who was feared by the Jews and the Americans and other crusader countries, stood for was the real target. On Saturday, December 19th, the Pakistani press published on their front pages a picture of “Muhtassib’s” looking downwards with a caption in bold letters: An Arab Terrorist Captured.

It was an American style reporting where the accusation where the accused was labeled as an Arab or a Moslem and not as a generic terrorist. They did not condemn the action itself but the ethnicity and the religion instead.

The papers reported that the Director of the FBI in Pakistan, Malik Muhammad Nabi Khan, had lead the group which arrested the suspect and whom he described as a dangerous Arab terrorist responsible for the Saudi airplane incident because he had planted the bomb himself.

It was awkward that a month later, on January 19th, 1990 to be exact, the same Pakistani newspapers reported that a passengers bus belonging to the Jamil al-Rahman group, which the Saudi authorities operate, had exploded in front of the Islamabad airport five minutes before the landing an airplane coming from Saudi Arabia. Another bus belonging to “Beit al-Ansar” in Peshawar, which is a hostile for the Saudi agents, was parked in front of the airport waiting for the Saudi plane to land.

The Pakistani authorities confirmed that it was investigating both competing parties. It was a new plan to hit the Arabs who were fighting amongst themselves the way the Afghanis were fighting each other. But the issue died; may be because it was a worse story than that of the attempt to explode the plane. It did not give the Saudis the cover they desired to cover up the assassination of Dr. ‘Abdullah ‘Azzam and accuse Arab factions who were opposed to him.

The theatrical story of the Saudi airplane succeeded in leashing the Arabs and diverted their attention. On Thursday night, when they heard the news they thought they were being targeted and a number of arrests were going to take place. But the next day something worse happened: Sheikh ‘Abdullah ‘Azzam was assassinated who was the symbol of the Arab Mujahideen in Afghanistan.

The reactions to the incident were varied and murky, and some accused others. The Arabs rushed to the assassination site as soon as the car explosion took place to gather the body parts of the victims. They noticed the presence of a person across the street holding a video camera and taping what was going on. They got to know from the people in the area that this man started video taping prior to the arrival of the car. The Arab youth and the security of Sheikh 'Azzam got hold of him, took his camera, and beat him badly. Other young Arab men intervened and convinced the crowd to release the photographer and his camera, which they did. He left with valuable footage of the crime including photographs of the two persons who detonated the bomb from the gas station. Even the photographer himself might have been an important part of the team that executed the assassination and probably a member of the Intelligence Service which planned the whole operation to start with.

Suspicion did not center only around those three people but also on the young Arabs who managed to free the photographer and his valuable tape. Suspicion also covered the security guards of the Sheikh as well and some relatives of his who reside in the occupied land and visit him frequently.

What is strange in the matter is that these relatives come to Peshawar holding special permits from the Israeli occupation authorities who know they are relatives of the Sheikh who had declared war on Israel, not only through his speeches but by recruiting elements that executed commando operations in Palestine. The last such operation was in Tiberius which we will discuss later.

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In this turmoil the demonstrators were chanting against America and Israel demanding revenge. It was pure words because nothing came out of it. To the contrary, many of them packed their gear and left Peshawar for fear of the fall out from the Saudi airplane story and the assassination of Sheikh 'Abdullah.

Sheikh 'Abdullah's supporters realized that their shameful reaction was useless; so they came up with a 'brilliant' idea to write the name of Sheikh 'Abdullah 'Azzam and Tamim al-Adnani' on the Egyptian Falcon missiles and hit Kabul. They published pictures of these missiles in the 'al-Jihad' magazine and claimed they were avenging the two great martyrs. They brought more problems and accusations upon themselves because the real culprits were not in Kabul or in Moscow; they were in America and Israel. That was the truth.

Between Palestine...and Afghanistan

No doubt, I like many other people who had lived this incident believe that Dr. 'Abdullah 'Azzam was assassinated because of the Palestinian issue.

All along, he had declared that the Palestinian issue would not be resolved except by adopting Jihad, similar to what happened in Afghanistan, by using all available resources at the soonest possible time.

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The Sheikh gained profound respect and popularity among the people who lived in the occupied land of Palestine. One of their Palestinian compatriots became the foremost symbol of Jihad in Afghanistan; one of the most crucial issues since the end of the Second World War.

The operations in Afghanistan had a twofold impact on the Palestinian youth: One, they have rediscovered Jihad as a tool to confront the Jewish occupation of Palestinian territories and repulse any attack on their Moslem Nation. The second impact led to the creation of the Hamas group (The Islamic Resistance Movement) in Palestine in 1987, which was led by Sheikh Ahmad Yassin, who, until now, was still detained in an Israeli prison. Shortly after that, in 1988, the 'Intifada' movement was launched which consisted of a popular uprising against the Israeli occupiers using stones and religious zeal.

Dr. 'Azzam's role in Afghanistan not only impacted the morals and the psyche of the Palestinian youth, but went on to draw them to proceed to the Afghanistan arena to perform Jihad. This set a precedent within the Palestinian secular organizations.

He capitalized on their presence by supporting and developing the Jihad movement in Afghanistan, and urged them to adopt Jihad as their future path.

Dr. 'Azzam made sure that he is always surrounded by Palestinian young men. This led to accusing him of forming a regional bloc, which caused him a number of problems. One of which was the split of the Arabs in Peshawar along regional ethnicities. This split became apparent at the front lines.

The emergence of the Islamic factor as a dynamic propeller of Palestinian resistance became the most single important event on the Palestinian arena since the country was first partitioned. This drove the Israelis to ally themselves with the secular Palestinian organizations, represented by the Palestine Liberation Organization, in order to confront this Islamic movement.

This alliance between the Jews and the PLO resulted in the assassination of Dr. 'Abdullah 'Azzam and other organization leaders such as Abu Nidal who was assassinated by the Israeli commandos in Tunisia with the collusion of Arafat and his liberation organization.

At the end of 1988, a year after the launching of the Intifada, the United States shifted its policy towards the PLO. They declared the establishment of the Palestinian State (of course on paper only) which was welcomed by the United Nations.

This fictional State established embassies all over the world with a clear objective of inciting the local Palestinians and other international groups to assault the Muslim forces inside Palestine, and the neighboring countries such as Egypt, Saudi Arabia who had Mujahideen in Afghanistan.

In reality, most of the secular and leftist movements in the Arab world had allied themselves with America and Israel against the emerging new Islamic movement.

The Dr. 'Azzam phenomenon became not only a thorn in Israel's side, but in the Palestinian Liberation Organization's side as well. The PLO considered the Islamic movement as their fierce competitor and was not willing to lose the billions they amass every year in the name of the Palestinian cause.

The Moslem Brotherhood was also irritated by the success of Dr. 'Azzam who once was a member for becoming a respected jihad symbol. What became strange is that the

secular PLO and the religious Moslem Brotherhood became united in handing Dr. 'Azzam one serious threat: Do not approach Palestine and do not use your arms there. The threats handed by the Brotherhood of Palestine and Jordan drove Dr. 'Azzam to threaten them to publicly withdraw his support for Hamas in Palestine, which he for years was committed through his editorial writings and Friday speeches.

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They had to forcibly withdraw their threats because Dr. 'Azzam's stature in the Islamic world carried more weight than that of the Moslem Brotherhood. As for the PLO, they were clearly threatened to cut his hand if he dared to extend it to the Palestinian occupied territories. Very few people were aware that after the PLO was evicted from Beirut, they started collaborating with the American and the Israeli security apparatuses to liquidate the armed groups that fought Israel. This was led by the PLO's chairman Arafat after he had won the confidence of the Americans and the Israelis who made him the legitimate President of the proposed Palestinian State.

Dr. 'Azzam could not have stopped from veering towards Palestine even if he wanted to. The Palestinian young men had already moved towards Jihad and towards Afghanistan, and took the Doctor as their guiding leader.

The Jihad machine was set in motion and they could not stop it. They decided to destroy it by killing Dr. 'Abdullah 'Azzam and dispersing the Arab Mujahideen in Afghanistan. Their plan, which was not a perfect one, succeeded to a large extent, except a large number of influential elements escaped this 'holocaust'.

People close to Dr. 'Azzam said that he was in a bad state of demoralization before he was assassinated. He wished he would be dead because of the terrible incidents and events the Jihad movement went through that year; so much so that he became a suspect and the youth in Peshawar and elsewhere started attacking him. We will discuss this later on.

Despite the morbid situation in Afghanistan a new bright light erupted in Palestine and Dr. 'Azzam played a role in that. The 'Intifada' had erupted along with commando-type attacks by Mujahideen who had fought in Afghanistan. This led Israel to request Pakistan in 1988 to close all the Arab training camps there. Moreover, shortly before his assassination, a major commando operation took place in Palestine which shook Israel. This was led by a former Jordanian officer of Chechen origin who had fought in Afghanistan.

In its issue of 9/23/89, Abu Sayyaf's Arabic magazine, al-Thabat, which is published in Peshawar, ran the details of this commando operation in the bottom corner of the magazine's last page. They published the photograph of a well built man carrying a gun and wrote under it in bold red: The Hero of the Tiberius Operation. The article read: Al-Thabat in a matchless fete is publishing the photograph of the hero of the Tiberius Operation where ten Israeli soldiers were killed. The martyr's name is Darrar who had served with Abu Sayyaf for two years and established the 'Academy of Preparing

Mujahideen'. He also wrote the marching song 'Wa-Islamah' and provided the commentary for the documentary film, "We Will have no Glory without Jihad". He had returned to Jordan for health reasons and then executed the Tiberius operation which caused a crisis between Jordan and Israel and where he was martyred.

One of Darrar's friends, who is of Caucasian origin revealed the following information: Darrar's real name is Muhammad Mansur. He was a former officer of the Jordanian Army with a rank of Major of the Corps of Engineers. He is of Chechen origin, and had left Peshawar for Jordan to get his family out of there. He intended to reside permanently in Peshawar to be next to the Afghan Mujahideen, except the Jordanian authorities banned him from leaving the country again. This is when he asked himself: "Is there no Jihad except in Afghanistan?" He decided to fight the Jews in Palestine, especially that his experience with the Corps of Engineers made him aware of the defenses at the borders and the mine fields surrounding them.

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At the time of the attack, Darrar was armed with a Kalashnikov, six magazines, a pistol and hand grenades. He crossed the borders through Lake Tiberius next to a village called Samakh. There he engaged in a battle against two Israeli units and managed to kill thirteen soldiers before they were able to kill him. The Jews were shocked when they discovered the identity of the martyr and kept his body for three days before delivering it to the Jordanian government. They were stunned, and posed a stupid question: "What has this Chechen got to do with the Palestinian cause?"

His Caucasian friend told me that the martyr Muhammad Mansur had targeted his operation against that particular area because of the presence of the Israeli village of Kfar Kama where Caucasians loyal to Israel live. The martyr might have wanted to awaken their Islamic sentiments through his operation.

Darrar's operation shined intensely over the land of Palestine, but no doubt it drove Israel to speed up its plans of liquidating the Jihad operation in Afghanistan starting with the assassination of Dr. 'Abdullah 'Azzam to be followed by eradicating the Arab presence there.

What is strange is that the assassination and liquidation plans which the infidels used against the Arab Mujahideen are to a large extent similar to the plans they used against the Moslem Brotherhood Mujahideen in Egypt.

No doubt, a lot of mistakes were committed by the Islamic movement in both Jihads. The comparison of such mistakes committed by both Jihad movements should be the subject of a detailed study and analyses, however, we shall briefly list the comparison between the two major Jihad operations, namely, Afghanistan and Palestine, because they were the two major operations which crossed the definition of national or regional conflicts in the twentieth century.

First--The Political Battle:

Both battles, Palestine and Afghanistan, were waged on an international level, and not on local or regional levels.

The Palestinian Battle:

This was waged within the framework of the internal conflicts in the western camp, where the western leadership had transferred from Britain, which used to be great, to the young and economically and militarily powerful United States. This battle started after the First World War and took both parties a lot of restraint to keep it under control. The Jewish project was transferred from the hands of the British, who wanted to establish a national home for the Jews on the land of Palestine, to the United States which was more influenced by the Jewish lobby. It took the Jewish project one notch higher by establishing a Jewish State in Palestine within the maximum borders its army can occupy. The Jews in Palestine started hitting the British forces stationed in Palestine then they waged a war of annihilation against the Palestinian villages until in 1947, the United Nations came up with a resolution to partition Palestine between the Jews and The Palestinians. Afterwards, in 1948, the Jews waged a war in order to expand their borders beyond the lines that were drawn by the UN.

The Afghanistan Battle:

The war in Afghanistan started right after the communist coup d'etat took place in Kabul in April of 87. At first it was a limited internal war until the Soviets were forced to militarily intervene in December of 79 to save the weak regime of Kabul and prevent the Islamic Mujahideen from assuming power.

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America and the west expected the Soviets to crush the Mujahideen in a period no longer than one month. But during the winter and spring seasons the Mujahideen operations witnessed a marked build up instead of experiencing defeat, and the west began considering exploiting this situation in order economically attrition the Soviets and ruin their world-wide image.

With the battle raging in Afghanistan and the probability of a Soviet defeat in place, the world order witnessed a change which existed since the end of the Second World War, where the East had one Marxist superpower based in Moscow, and the West had one capitalist superpower based in Washington. Suddenly, the new world order had one superpower, and America assumed that role without having any competition. Here we see America's involvement in both battles, except that in Palestine they replaced the British control, the same way they did in other Arab and world countries.

The Palestine battle reflected America's role which led to the surfacing of the Jewish influence which secretly rules the world through the power of money and international intrigues. After the Second World War, the Jews realized that they have their own state that was established on Arab land and which could extend from the Euphrates to the Nile. The secret Jewish rule of the world is about to become public because they will be able to rule the world from their newly established Greater Israel. This is what the Talmud revealed.

It is with this in mind that we consider that the battle of Palestine had caused major long term developments on the international political arena, some of which have become permanents.

Second: The Military Strategy of the Battle Palestine

This strategy was not put in place by Arab Governments or regular volunteers. The seven Arab Armies that participated in the war was under the command of a British General called 'Glubb' who was also the commander of the forces of the 'Trans Jordan Emirate'; an Emirate which Britain established and financed. However, Glubb's command was ceremonial and each of the Arab Armies operated independently without having a clear strategy or a common goal. This served Britain well because they were incapable of facing the new Judo-American infiltration of the region. The Arab Government Armies remained without any strategy, leadership or weapons to reckon with, and were badly defeated. They could not even defend the partition lines set by the United Nations and had to retreat. This gave the Jews the opportunity to control areas that had access to the Mediterranean and the Red Seas. The Jewish, and in turn the American, strategy started to be accomplished.

As for the Arab volunteers, they were nothing but subordinates of the Arab Armies; on the other hand the Moslem Brotherhood of Egypt was in a better position because it was a part of the army's commandos unit. However, despite its involvement in dangerous missions, it lacked its total operational independence to form its own strategy.

Afghanistan:

The military strategy for the Mujahideen was American drawn because America considered the Afghans were fighting by proxy in this era of the cold war. America's objective was to inflict damages on the Soviet forces while serving its interests in that region and the world. However, the Pakistani President, Zia Ul-Haq took it upon himself to draw military and political strategies for a regional war which he labeled as proxy.

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The Pakistani President benefited from the strategic location of his country by giving the Mujahideen the logistic support they needed and supporting them within the Moslem world. However, the President paid a high price for his ambitions and his meddling with decisions earmarked only for the super powers. He was killed when his plane was exploded.

The Mujahideen did not have a unified leadership that could draw up political or military strategies. They remained under the control of the Pakistani intelligence service, ISI, and some improvising field commanders. In rare instances, some of the talented field commanders were able to draw some local strategies that were limited to their areas of operations. Yet, these limited operations inflicted some serious damages to the Soviets which in turn led to the fall of the regime. However, these strategic operations did not impact the political situation in the country, for after the military victory was achieved

the country was ruled by American and Soviet agents who formed an unpublicized coalition.

The Arab Mujahideen had no strategic role to play any more, and started thinking of other objectives awaiting them in the countries they came from. They have benefited from being in Afghanistan by getting trained, organized and financed.

Third: Fighting Tactics

Palestine:

The fighting tactics in the field was under the supervision of the Arab officers, especially on the Egyptian side, where the Moslem Brotherhood served. Since the members of the Moslem Brotherhood were picked by the leadership of Hasan al-Banna and rigorously trained by the Egyptian army officers, they became an elite disciplined and effective fighting unit. The other Arab Mujahideen in Afghanistan could not compete with their skills, especially that discipline among the Arab Afghans was totally non-existent. It is fair to say that the Afghan war was in dire need for...Hasan al-Banna. The operation there lacked the presence of such a historical personality that possessed the capability of rallying and organizing the Mujahideen.

In Palestine, the Arab volunteers who were not under the command of the Egyptian army had more freedom to operate and take initiative; but the political and military situations in the Arab world limited their actual impact. The lack of proper training and capable leadership contributed to their ineffectiveness as well.

Afghanistan:

The Mujahideen there lacked proper training and were ignorant of the tactics used when utilizing modern arms. The Pakistani training program did not benefit them a lot, so they had to learn by using trial and error tactics under inexperienced commanders. That is why they paid a high price in number of casualties.

Few groups were exposed to modern fighting techniques under capable leaders, such as the Ahmad Shah Mas'ud in Panjshir. They well trained on using guerilla warfare tactics. The Arab volunteers went through a similar process where at first they were ill-trained; but as the war progressed more emphasis was placed on training and they reached a high level of adopting modern warfare tactics.

When the war was over, the Arabs had hundreds of well trained fighters as well as capable field commanders. This led to the dangerous situation where a number of

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organizations began absorbing these well trained fighters – organizations such as 'Al-Qaeda', 'The Islamic Jihad Group' in Egypt, plus a number of other organizations in North Africa, Pakistan, India and Bangladesh.

The long years during which the Afghan war was waged created a huge number of well trained and experienced Arab volunteers. This can not be compared with the Arab volunteers in Palestine because the war there hardly lasted for two months. Moreover, the number of volunteers in each war differed substantially. The Americans estimated the

number of Arab volunteers in Palestine totaled anywhere between 3000 and 3500 fighters, while Arab volunteers in Afghanistan reached 50,000 fighters. There were twice as many volunteers in Pakistan and Bangladesh who came to be trained and join the Jihad, but their exact number is not known. Of course, the military training and experiences were acquired by the groups that were engaged in battles on the various fronts. That is why we can safely conclude that the Jihad experience in Afghanistan had more of an impact on the various Islamic movements than that in Palestine.

Fourth: Circumstances Surrounding the Mobilization of Volunteers

Palestine:

The Arab regimes, at the time, knew well that the Jews will accomplish their objective in Palestine. They had committed treason by not fighting in order to satisfy the great powers. However, in an effort to avoid the wrath of their masses, they allowed the volunteers to mobilize. In the event they lost the war, they would not then be blamed for preventing the volunteers to participate in the war.

The western powers, because they knew the Jews will win, did not mind the participation of the volunteers. They believed that the Islamic movements would go back to moderation after being dealt a defeat, and would cease to cause any internal turmoil which could impact the Jewish and the Western interests.

Afghanistan:

The political, social and economic situations in the Arab world helped in the formation of Jihad groups, especially among college students and educated Muslims.

The Jihad in Syria started spreading and was difficult to contain. The situation in Egypt was about to explode, and the continued Judo-American attacks on the Muslim's holy places almost caused an armed Islamic revolt in the nations that surrounded Israel.

At first, the Mujahideen trickled to Afghanistan, then their numbers began to build up when Dr. 'Abdullah 'Azzam published his famous book about the Jihad in Afghanistan, and the United States encouraged them to go. The Arab countries facilitated their travel, and Saudi Arabia provided funds and assistance to those proceeding for Jihad. The western media, as well as the Arab and Islamic media supported the calls for Jihad in Afghanistan. Later, the number of volunteers jumped dramatically because of the famous (IL) battle.

Therefore, we see that in both cases, Palestine and Afghanistan, the common factors that triggered the flow of volunteers to those countries were:

1. The existence of religious enthusiasm to support the causes.
2. America and Israel agreed that such a flow would not harm their interests; on the contrary, they might benefit from it.
3. The great powers gave the green light to recruit volunteers, and therefore the countries involved lifted the restrictions imposed against them

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Fifth: The Plan to Liquidate the Volunteering Mujahideen

This was the final obvious step to be undertaken in order to end the Jihad phenomenon at the time. Since its inception, the movement was under the close scrutiny of the atheists and the infidels, so much so that they were tracking the path that was set by the great powers. It was natural that once their interests were served, and shortly before any Islamic interests are served, the great powers would revert to destroy these Mujahideen. The liquidation plan included smearing the names of the Mujahideen, arresting them after the war, assassinating their leaders, and tracking those who fled away. Let me compare the factual incidents that took place in both places:

Palestine:

1. After the cease fire, all weapons were withdrawn from the Mujahideen units that were part of the Egyptian army
2. The Mujahideen were placed in detention centers so that they would not spread the Islamic Jihad virus among the masses.
3. The government launched a smearing campaign against the Moslem Brotherhood accusing it of terrorism, attempts to assassinate leading political figures, inciting chaos in the country and using religion for their political agenda.
4. Arresting members of the Moslem Brotherhood and throwing them in jail.
5. Assassinating the founding leader of the Moslem Brotherhood, Sheikh Hasan al-Banna on the streets of Cairo.
6. The 'Revolutionary' government chased all the Mujahideen who managed to escape, and later killed a large number of them. Some managed to take refuge in Jordan and the Gulf States.

Afghanistan:

- 1- Right after the pull-out of the Soviet forces, a media campaign was launched to serve the following objectives:
 - a. Since the Soviets have pulled out, the present war has turned into a civil one which should be stopped in order to form a government where all parties would be represented.
 - b. Accusing the Arab Mujahideen of extremism and terrorism and their intention to kill the Afghans and take advantage of their women.
2. Fabricating the incident of hijacking the Saudi airplane in order to justify the arrest of Arab Mujahideen and their Afghan allies, and pave the way to the assassination of Dr. 'Abdullah 'Azzam. However the fabricated story did not have any impact may be because the Pakistani Intelligence had no experience in exploiting such an incident.
3. The assassination of Dr. 'Abdullah 'Azzam. His personal guards and supporters, instead of avenging the death of their leader, fled the country from Peshawar for fear of being arrested.
4. Due to the huge number of Arab volunteers and their influence on the Afghan Mujahideen, the eviction and detention campaigns against the Mujahideen did not take place until April of 1993.

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5. America launched a ferocious world-wide campaign to detain, smear and kill the Arab Mujahideen in Afghanistan
They poured all sorts of accusation and insult against what they called the 'Arab Afghan.'

We will reveal how America's direct interference played a part in liquidating the existence of the Arab Jihad in Peshawar, Pakistan and Afghanistan. Members of the American Embassy in Islamabad, and members of the American Consulate in Peshawar took active part in this campaign. Moreover, a whole team of FBI men and women agents and US marine forces were deployed near Peshawar to intervene should the situation dictates it.

The Saudi and Egyptian intelligence also participated in this campaign by cooperating with the Pakistani Intelligence. Also, the Israeli intelligence were present there, but was kept away from the limelight. After all, they were the first to demand the destruction of the Arab Mujahideen presence in Afghanistan.

There are more comparisons to be drawn from the Jihad in Palestine and Afghanistan. I hope some Moslem researchers would perform this task in the future.

Afflictions on the Eve of Assassination

The pressures of events laid heavily on Dr. 'Abdullah 'Azzam. According to his close associates, he was morally depressed, so much so that he stopped paying attention to the security threats that engulfed him. He may have preferred to die than go through this low moral condition. In other words, he was morally assassinated before he was physically killed.

The events of that year were enough to destroy the man morally. Let us cover these events:

1. The formation of the Rawalpindi government where Sabghat Allah Mujaddidi was appointed Chief of State. This caused a big shock among the Arab Mujahideen because, politically, Mujaddidi was considered a western agent.

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On another front, the Salafists termed him as a polytheist because he published a book where he claimed that Allah had entrusted running the world to the four righteous imams. Dr. 'Azzam kept on defending the situation in Afghanistan, including the disastrous cabinet. In one of his Friday sermons in Peshawar he said, "We do not mind having such a government as long as Abu Sayyaf, who will be our safety valve, will act as the Prime Minister."

The Sheikh was sincere about his statement, but very few were convinced that it reflected his true view point. He received numerous criticisms from the Jihad groups and their leaders operating in the Arab world.

2. The military defeat in Jalalabad came as a blow to the Sheikh who had, through his published articles, urged thousands of volunteers to join the raging battle there, and caused them to die in this bloody and chaotic conflict. He tried to justify what happened

in Jalalabad through his numerous articles by using Islamic historical facts as parallel examples.

In one of his sermon speeches he reminded the faithful of the 2 years siege imposed by the Moslems on the Persian city of Tastaz which did not fall until Bara' Bin Malik was crushed. In our case, the problem lied in the unwillingness of the Afghan leaders to conquer Jalalabad and therefore the logical question which the young Arab Mujahideen asked themselves was: Why did they let us pay such a high price with the lives of our brethren? Once again, the Sheikh did not sound convincing.

3. The American supply of arms to the Mujahideen was exposed after Peter Towson was appointed as the US liaison officer to the Mujahideen. In a unique diplomatic move which embarrassed Dr. 'Azzam supplying the Mujahideen with US arms ceased. This hurt 'Azzam's movement and caused the leaders of the fundamentalist groups, such as Hikmatiar, to accuse America of abandoning the Mujahideen.

Therefore, the Americans assisted and armed the Mujahideen! The bulk of the Arabs in Peshawar were surprised by this news which drove Dr. Azzam to respond, in one of his sermons, by saying that receiving aid from the atheists was approved by the four leaders with the understanding that there will be no strings attached.

Even if Dr. 'Azzam forgot what he said once, there were still a lot of supporters and backers who remembered him staunchly defending the fact that the Mujahideen did not accept aid from America; even the Stinger missiles they used had been paid for in full to America.

In that same sermon, he went on to say that there are a number of issues which the Afghans will not compromise on, especially the fundamentalists who strictly adhere to the Qur'an and the Sunna. They have a clear vision that the forthcoming state should follow the word of Allah and that the government should be Islamic and not a coalition of factions, and that no communist will take part in it. They flatly declared that they will accept aid from Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and other Muslim countries, but not from America.

He then went on to address the young men who criticized him by saying: Seek knowledge from the scholars. A lot of these young men are ignorant because those who are half educated would pose questions and those who are well versed are not scholars who would comprehend what is taking place.

Here we see the Sheikh contradicting himself. He refutes what he uttered yesterday and supports those he criticized earlier. He always defended the fundamentalists, who are nothing but tools of the greater international scheme in Afghanistan.

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It was a great blessing for Sheikh 'Azzam that he did not live long so he would witness the ugliness the situation had turned into. He did not live to see what happened in Kabul after it fell or the atrocities committed by the fundamentalist governments after they assumed power. He did not see the fundamentalist Hikmatiar firing his missiles on the presidential palace from which the fundamentalist Burhan-al-Din Rabbani and his political advisor 'Abd-al-Rasul Sayyaf ran the country.

Despite the ugliness of his assassination operation, it was a blessing in disguise for him, which at the time no one predicted.

4. The Fierce Salafist Campaign against Sheikh ‘Abdullah ‘Azzam

The Salafist movement was of two tiers: The first was run by the Saudi Intelligence Service and had marked influence on the Afghani Salafist movement headed by Jamil al-Rahman; a strong leader who was based in the boarder province of Kunar. They also controlled the Saudi Red Crescent and other Saudi and Afghani organizations.

The second tier was the Jihadist and popular Salafi movement which denounced Saudi Arabia and every one who supported it. It was headquartered at the Kuwaiti Red Crescent center and was finance by the Kuwaiti Salafist movement.

There were other Salafist movements spread in the Arab world, such as the Egyptian Jihad Organization, Osama Bin Laden’s “al-Qaeda” and other groups in northern Africa. These movements fiercely criticized Sheikh ‘Abdullah, the Afghan Mujahideen and the leaders of other fundamentalist and moderate parties. They also criticized Mujaddidi for including the Shiite Parties in the Rawalpindi conference, despite the fact that these parties had boycotted the conference before the final vote of confidence on the new government was cast.

Later, a 13 page leaflet was distributed in Peshawar containing the movement’s viewpoints of Dr. ‘Azzam. The top issue was declaring hostility against Dr. ‘Azzam for criticizing the Afghani leadership and against the Shiite of Afghanistan and Iran without mentioning any political justifications.

In one of his speeches, Dr. ‘Azzam reacted to the leaflet by saying that this movement failed to understand the basic applications of our faith. He mentioned how the Prophet sent his companions to a Christian King in Ethiopia, who was fair and just to his people, to support him in his fight against his enemies. He added that very few Salafist young men know that numerous companions were supportive of the atheists in the earlier days of the message.

This movement became a force to reckon with in 1989. They established their own publication where they attracted Saudi youth to join them with the blessings of the scholars there. They established special guest houses in Peshawar, and dispatched these young men to the Konar front which was controlled by the Afghan Salafist, Jamil al-Rahman.

This group had strong religious convictions which they used as ammunition to attack others. This created a lot of confusion among the Arabs in Peshawar, and even in some of the Arab countries. Examples of such ammunitions were:

- Planting the seeds of doubts around Jihad in Afghanistan because the masses there were polytheists.
- Rectifying the faith should precede Jihad. It is wrong to fight along side the Afghans before they rectify their faith, on the contrary we should fight them until they adopt the true religious faith.
- We should fight against the Shiites and Hanafis of Afghanistan. This led to the slow flow of funds from Saudi Arabia, which caused Dr. ‘Azzam to double his efforts to collect contributions; to the extent that it reached the begging level.

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5- The timing of the massacres of Khar was also a big blow for Dr. 'Azzam because it created a huge uproar. At that time, Dr. 'Azzam was accompanying the leader Hikmatiar on a tour of the northern part of Kabul. From there, he used to send his articles declaring that the fall of Kabul would be accomplished shortly. At the same time, he was admitting in a subtle way that the Jalalabad operation was a big mistake.

By doing that he was trying to raise the morale of the Arab Mujahideen. Then the lightning struck when Hikmatiar forces attacked a caravan of Mas`ud's men and killed a number of his leaders and arrested the rest. As usual, Hikmatiar kept silent over this incident, but the international media spread the news about this ugly massacre. The Sheikh aborted his journey with Hikmatiar and returned to Peshawar trying to justify what took place Farkhar Asanid by using parallel historical incidents that took place in Islam. Except his relationship with the Mujahideen, who volunteered to perform Jihad in Afghanistan, and those who had supported him from abroad by sending him funds had deteriorated, which gave him the feeling of retreat.

The number of people who lost their trust in him started to increase, and some criticized him openly, while others accused him of deceiving them by exaggerating the truth about the reality of the Afghans.

The Sheikh's efforts to cover up the Afghani blunders failed. He was too late in exposing the truth about the Afghans. His Moslem supporters were shocked when new facts started surfacing, but these facts were old news because the Sheikh, all along, tried to hide them from his followers in order to keep them committed to Jihad. This led his followers to abandon Jihad at a time when he needed them most. They later abandoned him when America decided to stop assisting the Mujahideen.

6- The Fatwas issued by the Saudi Scholars considered what was going on in Afghanistan a civil war. These Fatwas were distributed all over Peshawar and the religious students which caused a tremor among the Arabs there. This added more problems to Sheikh 'Azzam because this move might cause the Arabs to renounce Jihad, and because America was behind those moves in order to create the regime that would serve its interests best. He confronted this move by publishing his fiery articles in the al-Jihad Magazine and his Friday sermons at the mosque. He kept at it until he was assassinated on his way to the mosque to attend the Friday prayers.

7- The Moslem Brotherhood, especially those in Jordan, threatened to kill him if he interfered in the Palestinian issue or with the Hamas organization. Hamas even warned him that it is against having Palestinians bear arms in the occupied land the way the Afghans are doing in their country. He in turn threatened Hamas to withdraw his recognition of the legitimacy of Hamas movement.

As for the international Brotherhood, who is headquartered in Egypt, they had recently established an information center in Islamabad in cooperation with the Pakistan Islamic Group. They started launching media coverage of the events of Afghani Jihad which implied accusations of Dr. Azzam, who was considered to be the prime motivator of getting the Moslems to contribute funds to the Mujahideen.

8- The threats Dr. 'Azzam received from the Palestinian Liberation Organization against the use of arms inside the occupied land. Their message was harsh and full of threats.

9- The loss of his aide and right arm, Tamim al-'Adanani added to his long list of troubles and woes. His dreams started to shatter and his hopes started to wane.

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So, this is the way he was on the eve of his martyrdom...It is my belief that, even if he had seen the assassination plot in his own eyes, Dr. 'Azzam would still have gone to the mosque that day.

As we mentioned earlier, Dr. 'Azzam's assassination was executed upon the request of Israel and the participation of the Intelligence Service of the Palestinian Liberation Organization who provided personal protection to 'Azzam. They dug the street, planted the bomb and detonated the explosives at the moment his car was passing by. They video-taped the operation through "Nasirullah Babir" and his men from the Zu al-Fiqar organization, which is the military wing of the People Party that was headed by the then Prime Minister of Pakistan, Benazir Bhutto.

As we mentioned, no immediate arrests were made, and Dr. 'Azzam's supporters fled from Peshawar to various Pakistani towns instead of reacting to the incident. When the dust settled, they went back, but they did not do what America was expecting them to do, and that is avenge the killing of their Sheikh. It is extremely odd that until the writing of these lines, 9/22/97, such a move was not taken by them.

Less than a month later, and close to the Christian Christmas season, America passed a law allowing its armed forces to act as an international police force to track down terrorists and drug traffickers who were enemies of the United States. Simultaneously, the European countries declared a state of emergency to confront any potential attacks that might be carried out by the terrorists during the Christmas season. This was triggered by America who warned Europe that Middle Eastern terrorist elements were planning to hit them during the Christmas season. This news item was published by 'Al-Khalij' newspaper on 12/17/89, which added that the United States decided to authorize its armed forces to arrest terrorists, drug traffickers and other wanted criminals without obtaining prior approval from the European countries concerned.

That was the second time that the United States would take such a decision. On June 21st of this year, the Department of Justice authorized the FBI and other federal agencies to arrest wanted criminals without obtaining prior approval from the countries concerned. The said news paper published this news item under the heading 'Sting'.

America started to behave like the sole power that rules the world, especially after the Soviets retreated from Afghanistan. They realized that the Soviet Union was deteriorating and they were no longer a force that could compete with them. Though that was true, the

Americans turned around and started preparing themselves to wage a war against the Arab Mujahideen in Afghanistan. They were expecting a violent reaction from these Mujahideen on the assassination of their leader 'Abdullah 'Azzam, but were stunned when they experienced little reaction from them. This encouraged America to push forward...and so they did.

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The Farkhar Massacre

What happened in Farkhar is still a mystery, and calling it a massacre is more of a mystery especially that the media made a big affair out of it.

The political parties in Peshawar, namely the Moslem Party led by Hikmatiar and the Islamic Group led by Rabbani over reacted by arranging demonstrations and holding meetings to the extent that people thought that the two parties were going to battle out inside Pakistan.

The incident was less than drastic. It was an ambush set by one of Hikmatiar's leaders (Sayyd Jamal) in the governorate of Takhar where he killed 5 people and captured 25 others from Rabbani's 'Group'. The incident, which occurred on Monday, July 17th, 1989, was considered to be a routine skirmish because the fighting between the two parties in Northern Afghanistan had become more intense than their own struggle against the Kabul government.

It is believed that the international media had exaggerated the reporting of this incident in order to destroy the local and international image of the Mujahideen and undermine any role that they might play in the political future of the country.

Was the incident planned, the same way the Jalalabad battle was?

In other words, did the major powers, the Americans and the Soviets plan for another incident in order to destroy the Mujahideen's reputation? The Jalalabad battle and the western sector campaign were barely over, but it seemed that the great powers wanted to totally destroy the Mujahideen by disallowing them a chance to catch their breath.

Unlike other massacres, the over reaction of Mas`ud and Rabbani indicated the possibility of a collusion on their part to create such a crisis in order to facilitate the plans set by the external powers. Two weeks prior to the incident, Hikmatiar, the then Minister of Foreign Affairs in the Mujahideen government, toured Afghanistan with the company of Dr. 'Abdullah 'Azzam. He visited Kabul, and Barwa and Kabisa provinces to the north of the capital.

He also visited Takhar, Kandaz and Badkhashan and summoned leaders from Peshawar to meet with them. The meetings lasted for five days. After the meeting, Mas`ud had recommended the path the leaders should take when going back to Talqan, the capital of Takhar which was controlled by Sayyd Jamal. He assured them that the passage was safe despite the fact that Sayyd Jamal was from the Islamic Party and had personal and family scores to settle. It was strange what some experts of the Afghani situation claimed

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at the time. They said that Sayyid Jamal was Mas`ud's friend and that he was his mole in the Islamic Party of Hikmatiar. One source, an Afghani citizen, said that Sayyid Jamal took Mas`ud's approval to commit the massacre because the victims were at odds with him. They had objected to his confiscation of all the aid that was destined to the province, and distributing it to his supporters. Mas`ud rewarded Sayyid Jamal by launching a smear campaign against him which drove the people in the area to arrest him and try him by a panel of 45 religious judges. He was sentenced to death, and was hanged, along with five of his assistants. The source went on to say that Mas`ud had no further use for Sayyid Jamal's services and that is why he got rid of him.

Let us now go over what Dr. `Abdullah `Azzam, who was accompanying Hikmatiar, wrote when he heard the news. In his editorial of 8/5/89 in the Lahib al-Ma`raka Magazine, he wrote:

The Anticipated Hope

As we entered Barwan, our hopes were raised regarding the fall of the government. We were in trenches that were two hundred meters away from the center of the government seat which was controlled by the Mujahideen. We were anticipating that the two giants, Hikmatiar and Ahmad Mas`ud Shah, would come to terms and bury their hatchets. We worked hard on the suggestions presented by Hikmatiar to end the hostility between the two leaders which the government played a big role in planting through its agents. We thought that the best time to get the two leaders together was on the day the Jaram airport was set to reopen. It would have been an opportunity to finally reap the fruits of our efforts to get the two leaders together.

At the time we were thinking of the best way to notify Mas`ud to proceed to meet with Hikmatiar, which included my going to him to accompany him, the news of that day struck us like a lightning.

While sitting with under the apricot trees having lunch with Hikmatiar and talking about the forthcoming meeting with Mas`ud, he looked at me and said that the BBC had just broadcast a news item to the fact that Agha Walid had ambushed Mas`ud's leaders as they were on their way back from Nazar where they attended the Shura Council. He killed thirty Mas`ud followers among them four of his top leaders.

For years, I had not received such heavy and devastating news. It could be the beginning of a conflict that would destroy all. I excused myself and left Hikmatiar to take a walk hoping to digest the news and to think of the best course we can take to stop the evil consequences and how to douse the flames should they erupt again. I started packing my gear to proceed north to meet Mas`ud and the leaders of the 'Moslem Party' and the 'Islamic Group'.

Prior to proceeding north, a lot of questions crossed my mind as to who was responsible for this incident:

Was it the Government, which was crumbling under the Mujahideen's feet?

Was it the makings of an idiot who did not weigh the impact on all Moslems?

Was it the result of a long history of hatred and vindictiveness?

Were we facing the winds that would destroy every one's anticipated hopes?

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Or was it the start up of meetings between the brethren to resolve their differences? This is an unforeseen matter, and the Almighty is the only one who could foresee matters. Dr. 'Azzam added that Hikmatiar was shocked when he heard the news, and his face became ashy in color. When he finally arrived at Farkhar to meet Mas'ud in order to circumvent the massacre's consequences, he found him agonizing over the incident. It took Hikmatiar a whole week of climbing snow covered mountains to reach Farkhar.

As usual, and in Al-Jihad Magazine of September 89, Dr. 'Azzam tried to justify the incident by finding parallel incidents that took place during the Islamic history. He believed that the comparison generated psychological relief. Despite all the turmoil I experienced there, I came out with the conviction that the situation in Afghanistan was better than I thought, definitely better than that in Peshawar, and that our preparations to confront Najib were strong.

Dr. 'Azzam's trip in Afghanistan in the company of Hikmatiar indicated a bias and a drift away from other leaders. He believed that Hikmatiar was an inspired leader and a savior of Islam in Afghanistan.

When the Jalalabad operation failed, the Doctor started dreaming about Kabul and placed his trust in Hikmatiar to fulfill that dream. In an editorial he published in al-Jihad Magazine in August of 89, Dr. 'Azzam wrote:

I always knew that Hikmatiar was an optimist, and the times proved it. When we used to discuss the evacuation of the Russians he always used to say that the Russians had no alternative but to retreat, or else the Indian army would invade Pakistan. In order to avoid that, the Russians have no alternative but to retreat.

Hikmatiar launched his battle, along side his brethren, in 1975 against the regime of Dawud. At the time, it was believed that he was waging a losing battle. Time proved that Hikmatiar was right, and had he not fought Dawud, Afghanistan would have become an integral part of Russia, the same way Burkhart and Tashkent were. However, Hikmatiar was too fast in waging his battles against Jalalabad and Kandahar, however, when it came to planning the battle for Kabul, he stepped back from being a dreamer or operating in a vacuum. He based his plan on solid figures, names and facts which made him confident that the demise of Communism in Afghanistan was coming soon. I personally warned him against hasty decisions and avoid putting dates against the conquest of certain cities or the fall of the tyrant in Kabul. We were hasty in declaring the fall of Jalalabad which we thought would take us few weeks to occupy; but later found out that we had to face numerous difficulties and obstacles along the way.

The Doctor avoided setting dates for the fall of cities, but he did not learn to be cautious from people like Hikmatiar, who was the golden boy of the Pakistani Intelligence Service. Had Dr. 'Azzam lived long enough; he would have experienced another deceit planted by the Pakistani Intelligence and their master, the Americans. They over-exaggerated Najib's military power in Kabul in order to draw down what was left from the Mujahideen's human and financial resources.

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It was rumored at the time that the available donated funds for the battle of Kabul had reached \$65 millions. This amount was collected from supporters in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States. They had heard that the failure in Jalalabad was caused by the Mujahideen lacked the availability of regular troops, and therefore it was crucial to afford them with regular troops so they could wage their next battle in Kabul. The idea was great and the execution was ingenious. In order to form such an army, they decided to buy complete and top of the line military uniforms from Southeast Asia and distribute them among the Mujahideen around Kabul...which became the crux of the problem!!! For when the Mujahid put on the uniform he became a regular army trooper expected to wage a traditional war. What became even stranger is that the Party Leaders in Peshawar approved the idea and registered the number of men he had around Kabul. The most humble fundamentalist leader claimed he had 30,000 men around Kabul.

The plan to conquer Kabul was another wonder of the Afghan war. There appeared to be a lot of theoreticians who discussed the plan on the pages of magazines and newspapers using various writing styles. One would think that these people were as competent as General Montgomery. The media printed resounding headlines such as The Importance of Occupying Kabul lies in the Importance of Tumbling the Kabul Regime and Kabul is the Decisive Arena...etc. Included in these magazines were coupons urging people to contribute to 'the project of conquering Kabul and other cities'. One of the contributions, according to Dr. 'Azzam's article in al-Jihad issue 58, was coordinating among the various Mujahideen leader to ensure the supply of food supplies during the battle. It was estimated that the summer battle required six thousand tons of food stuffs together with putting a transportation and distribution network in place. May be Allah had looked down at us passionately because the sincere and generous donors had supplied us with enough funds to buy the needed food stuff.

At night, I accompanied Abi al-Hasan in his inspection tour of the tent warehouses where the food stuffs were stored (rice, flour, lentil, beans and ghee). The huge trucks were parked in front of these tents. The first supply convoy consisted of 26 trucks which were scheduled to leave to the front. Our Arab brethren started shouting Allah Akbar and raised their hands to pray to Allah to get these supplies safely to their destination.

The convoy arrived safely, first to the front line and then to the food merchants in Kabul who were in dire need of these supplies because the Salang path, which is the main supply route between Moscow and Kabul, had been disrupted.

The food stuff transactions were very profitable for the fundamentalist parties because they had conducted the trading with the devil living in the palace in Kabul.

Similarly, the military uniform transaction ended up with the merchants of used clothes in Pakistan where they were sold at one tenth the original cost. They were resold for whoever pays the price in places like Peshawar and the frontier markets, and even in the outskirts of the capital, Islamabad.

These atrocities were carried out by the fundamentalist groups who were nothing but Wahabi atheists. They should thank Allah that we did not kill them. Some people managed to steel from the Arab fighters on the front, but these were rare individual incidents.

The Farkhar catastrophe was a slap in the face of Arab Jihad in Afghanistan due to its timing, its psychological effect and the fierce media coverage. This catastrophe left a heavy burden on Dr. 'Abdullah 'Azzam. His martyrdom relieved him from bearing the calamities and the burdens which were too heavy for any one person to bear.