

FROM SOMALIA TO AFGHANISTAN

March 1997

This text is bin Laden's most comprehensive interview with a Western journalist, the CNN reporter Peter Arnett, whom he met near Jalalabad in March 1997. The occasion was set up by Arnett's colleague Peter Bergen, through the London-based Advice and Reform Committee (ARC).¹ The questions were submitted in advance, and all queries about bin Laden's personal life and finances were excised. The interview lasted an hour.

Though describing the Saudi regime as a branch of the United States, doing its will even in keeping oil prices down, bin Laden explains that the target of the jihad is the American occupiers, not its local agents, and declines to outline any alternative to the House of Saud: "the young are concentrating their efforts on the sponsor and not on the sponsored". Today, after the fall of the Soviet Union, the United States displays greater arrogance than ever before, as now it is the sole superpower. It must be forced to withdraw not just from the Arabian peninsula but the whole Muslim world. American troops are the primary target of the jihad, but American civilians are at risk too, since the US itself spares no civilians in its aggressions against Palestine, Lebanon, and Iraq—just as it exterminated without a qualm the inhabitants of Hiroshima. American citizens, states bin Laden, are responsible for the actions of governments for which they voted, and cannot escape their consequences. Continually practising a double standard, the US sows terror and then calls whoever resists its injustices a terrorist. But it is weaker than it thinks: Arab mujahidin, fresh from victory in Afghanistan, routed US troops in Somalia and will do so again elsewhere; the Russians were tougher soldiers than the Americans, and Muslim fighters defeated them.

1 The English transcript of this interview is reproduced by kind permission of CNN. For a full account of this encounter, see Bergen, *Holy War Inc*, pp. 1-23.

PA: *Could you give us your main criticisms of the Saudi royal family that is ruling Saudi Arabia today?*

OBL: Regarding the criticisms of the ruling regime in Saudi Arabia and the Arabian peninsula, the first one is their subordination to the US. So, our main problem is the US government, while the Saudi regime is but a branch or an agent of the US. By being loyal to the US regime, the Saudi regime has committed an act against Islam. And this, based on the ruling of *sharia*, casts the regime outside the religious community. Subsequently, the regime has stopped ruling people according to what God revealed, not to mention many other contradictory acts. When this main foundation was violated, other corrupt acts followed in every aspect of the country, the economic, the social, public services, and so on.

PA: *If the Islamic movement takes over Arabia, what kind of society will be created and will Saudi Arabia, for example, return to the laws of the Qur'an at the time of the Prophet?*

OBL: We are confident, with the permission of God, praise and glory be to Him, that Muslims will be victorious in the Arabian peninsula and that God's religion, praise and glory be to Him, will prevail in this peninsula. It is a great pride and a big hope that the revelation unto Muhammad will be resorted to for ruling. When we used to follow Muhammad's revelation, peace be upon him, we were in great happiness and in great dignity. To God belong credit and praise.

PA: *If the Islamic movement takes over Saudi Arabia, what would your attitude to the West be and will the price of oil be higher?*

OBL: We are an *umma* and have a long history, with the grace of God. We are now in the 15th century of this great religion,² whose complete and comprehensive methodology has clarified the dealing between one individual and another, the duties of the believer towards God, and the relationship between the Muslim country and other countries in times of peace and war. If we look

2 The Islamic calendar dates from Muhammad's emigration from Mecca to Medina. Year 1, AH (Anno Hegirae) therefore corresponds to 622 AD.

back at our history, we will find there were many types of dealings between the Muslim nation and the other nations in peacetime and wartime, including treaties and matters to do with commerce. So it is not a new thing that we need to create. Rather, it already exists. As for oil, it is a commodity that will be subject to the price of the market according to supply and demand. We believe that the current prices are not realistic due to the Saudi regime playing the role of a US agent and the pressures exercised by the US on the Saudi regime to increase production and flooding the market that caused a sharp decrease in oil prices.

PA: *You've declared a jihad against the United States. Can you tell us why? And is the jihad directed against the US government or the United States' troops in Arabia? What about US civilians in Arabia or the people of the United States?*

OBL: We declared *jihad* against the US government, because the US government is unjust, criminal, and tyrannical.³ It has committed acts that are extremely unjust, hideous, and criminal, whether directly or through its support of the Israeli occupation of the Land of the Prophet's Night Journey.⁴ And we believe the US is directly responsible for those who were killed in Palestine, Lebanon, and Iraq. The mention of the US reminds us before everything else of those innocent children who were dismembered, their heads and

3 The doctrine of *jihad* is traditionally split into two categories: "offensive" and "defensive". An offensive *jihad*, to conquer new lands for Islam and convert new peoples to the faith, is a collective responsibility of all Muslims; however, it must be called by a Caliph, the recognized leader of the world Islamic community. Bin Laden always describes his *jihad* as "defensive", something for which no formal declaration of war is required. In Michael Scheuer words, a defensive *jihad* is "an Islamic military reaction triggered by an attack by non-Muslims on the Islamic faith, on Muslims, on Muslim territory, or on all three. In this scenario, it is doctrinally incumbent on each Muslim to contribute to the fight against the attacker to the best of his ability. In such a *jihad*, there is no Qur'anic requirement for a central Muslim leader or leadership to authorize warlike actions. Once Islam is attacked, each Muslim knows his personal duty is to fight. He needs no one else's authority. Doctrine and historical practice therefore "void any claim that bin Laden cannot lead a *jihad* because he was not educated as an Islamic scholar and has no religious credentials ... Bin Laden's genius lies not in his call for a defensive *jihad*, but in constructing and articulating ... a consistent, convincing case that an attack on Islam is under way and is being led and directed by America." (Scheuer, *Imperial Hubris*, pp. 7-8; also *ibid.*, pp. 17-18, 131-8.)

4 According to Islamic tradition, Muhammad was brought by night from Mecca to the Dome of the Rock (or *miraj*), Jerusalem, from where he ascended to heaven. Accompanied by the angel Gabriel, he was consulted by numerous other prophets and given the obligatory Islamic prayers before returning to earth. The "Land of the Prophet's Night Journey" is Palestine.

arms cut off in the recent explosion that took place in Qana [in Lebanon]. This US government abandoned even humanitarian feelings by these hideous crimes. It transgressed all bounds and behaved in a way not witnessed before by any power or any imperialist power in the world. They should have been sensitive to the fact that the *qibla*⁵ of the Muslims raises the emotion of the entire Muslim world. Due to its subordination to the Jews, the arrogance and haughtiness of the US regime has reached such an extent that it occupied the *qibla* of the Muslims, who are more than a billion in the world today. For this and other acts of aggression and injustice, we have declared *jihad* against the US, because in our religion it is our duty to make *jihad* so that God's word is the one exalted to the heights and so that we drive the Americans away from all Muslim countries. As for what you asked, whether *jihad* is directed against US soldiers, the civilians in Saudi Arabia, or against the civilians in America, we have focused our declaration on striking at the soldiers in Saudi Arabia. This country has in our religion a significance of its own over the other Muslim countries. In our religion, it is not permissible for any non-Muslim to stay in our country. Therefore, even though American civilians are not targeted in our plan, they must leave. We do not guarantee their safety, because we are in a society of more than a billion Muslims. A reaction might take place as a result of the US government's targeting of Muslim civilians and executing more than 600,000 Muslim children in Iraq by preventing food and medicine from reaching them. So, the US is responsible for any reaction, because it extended its war against troops to civilians. This is what we say. As for what you asked regarding the American people, they are not exonerated from responsibility, because they chose this government and voted for it despite their knowledge of its crimes in Palestine, Lebanon, Iraq, and in other places, and its support of its client regimes who filled their prisons with our best children and scholars. We ask that God may release them.

PA: *Will the end of the United States' presence in Saudi Arabia, their withdrawal, militate against your call for jihad against the United States and against the US?*

OBL: The cause of the reaction must be sought and the act that triggered this reaction must be eliminated. The reaction came as a result of the aggressive US

5 See above, p. 16, n. 1.

policy towards the entire Muslim world and not just towards the Arabian peninsula. So if the cause that has called for this act comes to an end, this act, in turn, will come to an end. So, the defensive *jihad* against the US does not stop with its withdrawal from the Arabian peninsula; rather, it must desist from aggressive intervention against Muslims throughout the whole world.

PA: *Tell us about your experience during the Afghan war and what you did during that jihad?*

OBL: Praise be to God, Lord of the Worlds, that He made it possible for us to aid the *mujahidin* in Afghanistan without any declaration of *jihad*, [but instead through] the news that was broadcast by radio stations that the Soviet Union invaded a Muslim country. This was a sufficient motivation for me to start to aid our brothers in Afghanistan. I have benefited so greatly from the *jihad* in Afghanistan that it would have been impossible for me to gain such a benefit from any other opportunity, and this cannot be measured by tens of years but rather more than that. In spite of the Soviet power, we used to move with confidence and God conferred favors on us so that we transported heavy equipment from Saudi Arabia estimated at hundreds of tons altogether that included bulldozers, loaders, dump trucks, and equipment for digging trenches. When we saw the brutality of the Russians bombing *mujahidin* positions, we dug a good number of huge tunnels and built in them some storage places and in some others we built a hospital. We also dug some roads, one of which you came by to us tonight. So our experience in this *jihad* was great, by the grace of God, praise and glory be to Him, and what we benefited from most was that the myth of the superpower was destroyed not only in my mind but also in the minds of all Muslims. Slumber and fatigue vanished and so did the terror which the US would use in its media by attributing to itself superpower status or which the Soviet Union used by labelling itself as a superpower. Today, the entire Muslim world has imbibed the faithful spirit of strength and started to interact in a good manner in order to bring an end to occupation and the Western and American influence on our countries.

PA: *What was the significance of the Afghan war for the Islamic movement? Veterans of that war are fighting for Islamic movements and conflicts from the former Soviet republics such as Chechnya to Bosnia to Algeria. Can you explain that phenomenon to us?*

OBL: As I mentioned in my answer to the previous question, the effect of *jihad* has been great not only at the level of the Islamic movement but also at the level of the Muslim nation in the whole world. The spirit of power, dignity, and confidence has grown in our sons and brothers for this religion and the power of God. And it has become apparent even to the Islamic movement that there is no choice but to return to the original source, to this religion, to God's Book, and to the *sunna* of His Prophet, as understood by our predecessors, may God be pleased with them. Of this, the peak of this religion is *jihad*. The nation has had a strong conviction that there is no way to obtain faithful strength but by returning to this *jihad*. The influence of the Afghan *jihad* on the Islamic world was so great; it necessitated that people should rise above many of their differences and unite their efforts against their enemy. Today, the nation is interacting well by uniting its efforts through *jihad* against the US, which has, in collaboration with the Israeli government, led the ferocious campaign against the Islamic world in occupying the holy sites of the Muslims. As for the young men who participated in *jihad* here, their number was quite big, praise and gratitude be to Him, and they spread in every place in which non-believers' injustice is perpetuated against Muslims. Their going to Bosnia, Chechnya, Tajikistan and other countries is but a fulfilment of a duty, because we believe that these states are part of the Islamic world. Therefore, any act of aggression against even a hand's span of this land makes it a duty for Muslims to send a sufficient number of their sons to fight off that aggression.

PA: *Can you tell us now about your expulsion from Saudi Arabia and your time you spent in Sudan and your arrival here in Afghanistan?*

OBL: I was, by the grace of God, in the great spot that is dear to Him, al-Hijaz, especially Venerable Mecca, where is God's Ancient House/' However, the Saudi regime imposed on the people a life that does not appeal to the free believer. They wanted the people to eat and drink and sing the praise of God, but if the people wanted to encourage what is right and forbid what is wrong, they could not. Rather, the regime dismisses them from their jobs and in the event the people continue to do so [encourage what is right], they are detained in prisons. I have refused to live this submissive life, which is not befitting of

6 The Ka'ba.

man let alone a believer. So, I waited for the chance when God made it possible for me to leave Saudi Arabia. I hope He would confer upon me His favor to return one day, when God's law rules in that country. I went to the Sudan and stayed there for about five years, during which I visited Afghanistan and Pakistan to work against the Communist government in Kabul. When the Saudi government transgressed in oppressing all voices of the scholars and the voices of those who call for Islam, I found myself forced—especially after the government prevented Sheikh Salman al-Auda and Sheikh Safar al-Hawali and some other scholars from doing so—to carry out a small part of my duty of enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong. So, I collaborated with some brothers and established a committee for offering advice (the Advice and Reformation Committee), and we started to publish some declarations. However, the Saudi regime did not like this and started to exercise pressure on the Sudanese regime. The US government, the Egyptian government, and the Yemeni government also helped in doing so. They asked the Sudanese regime to extradite me, and the pressure continued. Saudi Arabia dropped all conditions agreed with the Sudanese regime in return that I be driven out of the Sudan. The US government had already taken the same stance and pulled out from its diplomatic mission from Khartoum, saying that it would only return after I had left. Unfortunately, the Sudanese government was in some difficult circumstances and there was a tendency inside the government that inclined to reconciliation or surrender. Then, when they insisted initially that I should keep my mouth shut, I decided to look for a land in which I could breathe a pure, free air to perform my duty in enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong. I ask God to increase the prosperity of this great land of Khurasan in order to carry on this duty. So, we implore God to accept [our deeds and most of all] Muslims.

PA: *Now, the United States government says that you are still funding military training camps here in Afghanistan for militant, Islamic fighters and that you are a sponsor of international terrorism; but others describe you as the new hero of the Arab-Islamic world. Are these accusations true? How do you describe yourself?*

OBL: After the collapse of the Soviet Union—in which the US has no mentionable role, but rather the credit goes to God and the *mujahidin* in Afghanistan—this collapse made the US more haughty and arrogant, and it has

started to see itself as a Master of this world and established what it calls the new world order. It wanted to delude people [into thinking] that it can do whatever it wants, but it can't do this. It levelled against me and others as many accusations as it desired and wished. It is these [accusations] that you mentioned. The US today, as a result of this arrogance, has set a double standard, calling whoever goes against its injustice a terrorist. It wants to occupy our countries, steal our resources, install collaborators to rule us with man-made laws, and wants us to agree on all these issues. If we refuse to do so, it will say we are terrorists. With a fleeting glance at US behavior, we find that it judges the behavior of the poor Palestinian children whose country was occupied: if they throw stones against the Israeli occupation it says they are terrorists, whereas when the Israeli pilots bombed the United Nations building in Qana, Lebanon, while it was full of children and women, the US stopped any plan to condemn Israel. At the same time that they condemn any Muslim who calls for his rights, they receive the highest official of the Irish Republican Army [Gerry Adams] at the White House as a political leader, while woe, all woe if the Muslims cry out for their rights. Wherever we look, we see the US as the leader of terrorism and crime in the world. The US does not consider it a terrorist act to launch atomic bombs at nations thousands of miles away, when it would not be possible for those bombs to hit only military troops. Rather, those bombs were dropped on entire nations, including women, children, and elderly people and up to this day the traces of those bombs remain in Japan. The US does not consider it terrorism when hundreds of thousands of our sons and brothers in Iraq died for lack of food or medicine. So, there is no basis for what the US says, and these words do not affect us, because we, by the grace of God, are dependent on Him, getting help from Him against the US. As for the last part of your question, we are fulfilling a duty which God decreed for us. We look upon those heroes, those men who undertook to kill the American occupiers in Riyadh and Khobar. We describe them as heroes and as men. They have wiped disgrace and submissiveness off the forehead of their nation. We ask God, praise and glory be to Him, to accept them as martyrs.

PA: *Let's go to the bombings of United States troops in Riyadh and Dhahran. Why did they happen and were you and your supporters involved in these attacks?*

OBL: We ask about the main reason behind this explosion. This explosion was a reaction to US provocation of the Muslim peoples, in which the US transgressed in its aggression until it reached the *qibla* of the Muslims in the whole world. So, the purpose of the two explosions is to end the American occupation [of Saudi Arabia]. So if the US does not want to kill its own sons who are in the army, it has to get out.

PA: *On the same issue of the American troops in Saudi Arabia, do you think there will be more bombing attacks on them? Or attacks on US civilians in Arabia? Or assassination attempts, for example on the Saudi royal family?*

OBL: As for the previous question, the explosion of Riyadh and the one in Khobar, it is no secret that during the two explosions, I was not in Saudi Arabia, but I have great respect for the people who did this action. I say, as I said before, they are heroes. We look upon them as men who wanted to raise the flag of "There is no god but God", and to put an end to the non-believers and the state of injustice that the US brought. I also say that they did a great job; theirs was a big honor that I missed participating in.

PA: *Do you think there will be more bombing attacks on American troops in Saudi Arabia? Or attacks on American civilians in Saudi Arabia? Or will there be assassination attempts on the Saudi Arabian ruling family?*

OBL: It is known that every action has its reaction. If the American presence continues, and that is an action, then it is natural for reactions to continue against this presence. In other words, explosions, and killings of American soldiers, will continue. These are the troops who left their country and their families and came here with all arrogance to steal our oil and disgrace us, and attack our religion. As for what was mentioned about the ruling [Saudi] family, those in charge bear the full responsibility for everything that may happen. They are the shadow of the American presence. The people and the young men are concentrating their efforts on the sponsor and not on the sponsored. The concentration at this point of *jihad* is against the American occupiers.

PA: *What are your views about Sheik Omar Abdul Rahman and have you ever met him? Do you know him?*

OBL: Sheikh Omar Abdul Rahman is a Muslim scholar well known all over the Muslim world. He represents the kind of injustice that is adopted by the US. A baseless case was fabricated against him, even though he is a blind old man. We ask God, the Almighty, to relieve him. The US sentenced him to hundreds of years just to please its caprice and the whims of the Egyptian regime. He is now very badly treated and in a way unfit for an old man like him or any Muslim scholar.

PA: *The US State Department quoting a Pakistani official says that Ramzi Yousef, a convicted bomber in the World Trade Center in New York City stayed in the house you funded in Peshawar, Pakistan for those receiving training during the Afghan conflict after the Trade Center bombing: is that true? Did Ramzi Yousef stay in your house in Peshawar?*

OBL: I do not know Ramzi Yousef.⁷ What the American government and Pakistani intelligence has been reporting is not true at all. But I say if the American government is serious about avoiding the explosions inside the US, then let it stop provoking the feelings of 1.25 billion Muslims. Those hundreds of thousands who have been killed or displaced in Iraq, Palestine, and Lebanon, do have brothers and relatives, [who] will make of Ramzi Yousef a symbol and a teacher. The US will drive them to transfer the battle into the United States. Everything is made possible to protect the blood of the American citizen while the bloodshed of Muslims is permitted everywhere. With this kind of behavior, the US government is hurting itself, hurting Muslims and hurting the American people.

PA: *Were you involved in financing the bombing of the World Trade Center in New York City?*

OBL: I have no connection or relation with this explosion.

7 On February 26 1993, a bomb was detonated under the World Trade Center in New York, killing six people and injuring more than 1,000; it also caused over \$300 million damage. The attacks were supervised by the Pakistani/Kuwaiti Ramzi Yousef (1968-), who was arrested two years later in Islamabad, found guilty of masterminding the 1993 bombing and sentenced to life imprisonment; he is currently held in a high-security prison in Florence, Colorado. His uncle, Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, who reportedly helped fund the bombing, is described by the *9/11 Commission Report* as "the principal architect of the 9/11 attacks".

PA: *In a recent interview with an Arabic newspaper, you said that Arabs who fought in the Afghan war killed US troops in Mogadishu, Somalia. Can you tell us about that?*

OBL: The US government went [to Somalia] with great pride and stayed there for some time with a strong media presence, wanting to frighten people [and show] that it is the greatest power on earth. It went there with pride and with over 28,000 soldiers, to fight a poor unarmed people.⁸ The goal of this was to scare the Muslim world and the whole world, saying that it is able to do whatever it desires. As soon as the troops reached the Mogadishu beaches, they found no one but children. The CNN and other media cameras started photographing them [the soldiers] with their camouflage and heavy arms, entering with a parade crawling [on the ground] and showing themselves to the world as the "greatest power on earth". Resistance started against the American invasion, because Muslims do not believe the US allegations that they came to save the Somalis. A man with human feelings in his heart does not distinguish between a child killed in Palestine or in Lebanon, in Iraq or in Bosnia. So how can we believe your claims that you came to save our children in Somalia while you kill our children in all of those places?

With God's grace, Muslims over there cooperated with some Arab *mujahidin* who were in Afghanistan. They participated with their brothers in Somalia against the American occupation troops and killed large numbers of them. The American administration was aware of that. After a little resistance, the American troops left after achieving nothing. They left after claiming that they were the largest power on earth. They left after some resistance from powerless, poor, unarmed people whose only weapon is the belief in God Almighty, and who do not fear the fabricated American media lies. We learned from those who fought there, that they were surprised to see the low spiritual morale of the American fighters in comparison with the experience they had with the Russian fighters. The Americans ran away from those fighters who fought and killed them, while the latter stayed. If the US still thinks and brags that it still has this kind of power, even after all these successive defeats in

⁸ Operation Restore Hope was an American military operation, conducted under the auspices of the UN, which in March 1993 officially took over administration of the country. In the battle of Mogadishu, in August 1993, between 500-1000 Somilian militia and civilians were killed; eighteen US troops and one Malaysian soldier died.

Vietnam, Beirut, Aden, and Somalia, then let its troops go back to those who are awaiting its return.

PA: *Your family is a rich powerful family in Saudi Arabia. Have they, or the Saudi Arabian government, asked you to stop your activities?*

OBL: They have done that a lot. They have pressured us greatly, especially since a lot of our money is still in the hands of the Saudi ruling family due to the activities of our family and company.¹ They sent my mother, my uncle, and my brothers on almost nine visits to me in Khartoum, asking me to stop and return to Arabia to apologize to King Fahd. I apologized to my family kindly because I know that they were driven by force to come to talk to me. This regime wants to create a problem between me and my family in order to take some measures against them. But, with God's grace, this regime did not get its wish fulfilled. I refused to go back. They [my family] conveyed the Saudi government's message that if I did not go back, they'll freeze all my assets, deprive me of my citizenship, my passport, and my Saudi ID, and distort my picture in the Saudi and foreign media. They think that a Muslim may bargain on his religion. I said to them: do whatever you may wish. It is with God's bounty that we refused to go back. We are living in dignity and honor for which we thank God. It is much better for us to live under a tree here on these mountains than to live in palaces in the land most sacred to God, subjected to the disgrace of not worshipping God even in the most sacred land on earth, where injustice is so widespread. There is no strength except with God.

PA: *Have Saudi agents attempted to assassinate you? Are you targeted by the US government? Are you in fact in fear of your life?*

9 The Saudi BinLaden group (SBG) is run by one of bin Laden's brothers, Bakr, who is the chairman; other top jobs in the company are also held by brothers. By the mid-1990s, the estimated worth of the bin Laden group of companies was \$5 billion; SBG employed 37,000 people in 1999. Construction projects undertaken by SBG include: the construction of a new suburb of Cairo; a Hyatt hotel in Amman, Jordan; a mosque in Kuala Lumpur, and a \$150 million base for more than 4,000 US servicemen in Saudi Arabia. Its other ventures include distribution of products including Snapple drinks; it is licensed by Disney to produce Arabic books based on its animated features; and it continues to maintain and renovate the holy mosques of Mecca and Medina, expanding their capacity to a million worshippers each: Bergen, *Holy War Inc*, pp. 48—50.

OBL: The US pressures are no secret to you. The Saudi pressures are also in response to American pressures. There were several attempts to arrest me or to assassinate me. This has been going on for more than seven years. With God's grace, none of these attempts succeeded. This is in itself proof to Muslims and to the world that the US is incapable and weaker than the picture it wants to paint in people's minds. A believer must rest assured that life is only in the hands of God, and sustenance is also in the hands of God, the Almighty. As for fearing for one's life, it is difficult to explain to you how we think of ourselves, unless you have full belief. We believe that no one could take out one breath of our written life as ordained by God. We see that getting killed in the cause of God is a great honor wished for by our Prophet. He said in his *hadith*: "I swear to God, I wish to fight for God's cause and be killed, I'll do it again and be killed, and I'll do it again and be killed."¹⁰ Being killed for God's cause is a great honor achieved by only those who are the elite of the nation. We love this kind of death for God's cause as much as you like to live. We have nothing to fear for. It is something we wish for.

PA: *What are your future plans?*

OBL: You'll see them and hear about them in the media, God willing.

PA: *If you had an opportunity to give a message to President Clinton, what would that message be?*

OBL: Mentioning the name of Clinton or that of the American government provokes disgust and revulsion. This is because the name of the American government and the name of Clinton and [George HW] Bush directly reflect in our minds the picture of children with their heads cut off before even reaching one year of age. It reflects the picture of children with their hands cut off, the picture of the children who died in Iraq, the picture of the hands of the Israelis with weapons destroying our children. The hearts of Muslims are filled with hatred towards the United States of America and the American president. The President has a heart that knows no words. A heart that kills hundreds of children definitely knows no words. Our people in the Arabian peninsula will send him messages with no words because he does not know any words. If

¹⁰ From the *hadith* collection of Muslim, book 20, no. 4,626.

there is a message that I may send through you, then it is a message I address to the mothers of the American troops who came here with their military uniform walking proudly up and down our land while the scholars of our country are thrown in prisons. I say that this represents a blatant provocation to 1.25 billion Muslims. To these mothers I say that if they are concerned for their sons, then let them object to the American government's policy and to the American president. Do not let themselves be cheated by his standing before the bodies of the killed soldiers describing the freedom fighters in Saudi Arabia as terrorists. It is he who is a terrorist who pushed their sons into this for the sake of the Israeli interest. We believe that the American army in Saudi Arabia came to separate the Muslims and the people for not ruling in accordance with God's wish. They came to support of the Israeli forces in occupied Palestine, the land of the night journey of our Prophet.