

Al-Zarqawi's Life Detailed in First Part of Serialized Book**Part 1 of Serialized Book: "Al-Zarqawi. . .The Second Generation of Al-Qa'ida" by Fu'ad Husayn, Jordanian writer and journalist***AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI**Wednesday, June 8, 2005 T12:06:27Z***Journal Code:** 1430 **Language:** ENGLISH **Record Type:** FULLTEXT**Document Type:** FBIS Translated Text**Word Count:** 4,534

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

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

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

The second testimony was from Al-Zarqawi's godfather, Isam al-Barqawi, also known as Abu-Muhammad al-Maqdisi, who met Al-Zarqawi in Pakistan in 1989. There, the two men agreed to establish a religious organization in Jordan. When Al-Maqdisi was jailed with Al-Zarqawi, he became his companion, shaykh, and mentor who drew up the platform of the organization. Al-Maqdisi was Al-Zarqawi's supporter when the latter became the group's amir in jail. From behind the bars in Jordan, Al-Maqdisi continued to provide critique and counsel to Al-Zarqawi in Iraq.

The third and most important testimony came from Muhammad Makkawi, better known as Sayf al-Adl, man number three in Al-Qa'ida. Sayf al-Adl shed light on Al-Zarqawi's second advent to Afghanistan in 1999. He discussed the reasons behind the dispute between Al-Zarqawi and Bin Ladin and the training camp that was established exclusively for Al-Zarqawi in Herat. He clarified the nature

of the relationship that existed between Al-Zarqawi and the leadership of Al-Qa'ida at that juncture of time prior to the 11 September strike. Sayf al-Adl spoke of Al-Qa'ida's motives behind the strike, the occupation of Afghanistan, and the exodus to Pakistan and Iran. He disclosed the nature of the role that Tehran played then. Sayf al-Adl referred to the decision to send Al-Zarqawi to Iraq and preparations made in advance. In an attempt to examine the future of Al-Qa'ida in Iraq after the establishment of Qa'ida al-Jihad in the Land of the Two Rivers (Qa'ida al-Jihad fi Bilad al-Rafidayn), the book followed the development of Al-Zarqawi's character and modus operandi over the past three years. It obtained accurate information by means of painstaking research of everyone who was in touch with Al-Zarqawi during these years.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Similar to most Arab countries in that era, jihad against the communist occupiers of Afghanistan was an accessible route from Jordan for the lovers of jihad and martyrdom, although Palestine was closer to Jordanians in general and Al-Zarqawi in particular, in view of the demographic makeup of Jordan's population.

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

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

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

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

Abdallah Azzam was one of the vanguards of Arabs who headed to Afghanistan to take part with Afghan mujahidin in fighting the troops of the Soviet Union that backed the communist regime of Afghanistan. Bin Ladin urged Azzam to join Afghanistan's mujahidin rather than study at a Saudi university. Afghan mujahidin viewed Azzam as a commander who inspired Arab and Muslim volunteers. Together with Bin Ladin, Azzam became the founder of the movement of Afghan Arabs that spread in Arab states following the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan. The movement

was blamed for an escalation of armed confrontations with ruling Arab regimes. Abdallah Azzam was one of the key historic leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood group in Jordan. Since its establishment, the group has coexisted with the regime despite the ebb and flow of their relations every now and then.

At that point in time, ruling Arab regimes--most of whom cooperated with US policy one way or another--encouraged young men to join the mujahidin in Afghanistan when the Cold War was at its peak between the United States and the Soviet Union. Volunteers were leaving Jordan for Afghanistan openly and donations were collected at mosques and public places to finance the travel costs of large numbers of young men to Afghanistan. Meantime, funds from the Gulf, particularly Saudi Arabia, were flooding Afghan mujahidin in response to requests from Washington that was adamant to defeat its archenemy, Moscow. Just then, pro-Muslim Brotherhood imams in the mosques of the West Bank and Gaza Strip excommunicated everyone who carried out suicide operations in the occupied Palestinian territories. As a result, Al-Zarqawi, who was looking for an opportunity for jihad, went to Afghanistan to join Abdallah Azzam in the late '80s of the 20th century.

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

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

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

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

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

The establishment of the Al-Tawhid group with Al-Maqdisi led Al-Zarqawi to a five-year term in prison, which was the first important step of his journey. The prison, and not his first trip to

Afghanistan, was the most significant phase in the development of his personality. In Afghanistan, he was no more than one of thousands of Arabs who converged on the country when fighting between mujahidin and Soviet armies was drawing to an end. The thrill of the battlefields faded and everyone, including Al-Zarqawi, lost an opportunity to demonstrate their skills and distinction.

The prison left a clear mark on Al-Zarqawi's personality, which grew more intense. In his opinion, policemen, judges, and government members of all ranks were supporters of the regimes, which he believed were taghuts (illegitimate political powers) who should be fought.

Following the interrogation phase, Al-Zarqawi was sent from one prison to another until he ended up in the desert prison of Suwaqah, located 85 kilometers to the south of the capital of Amman. Soon afterward, his fellow group members, who were detained for the same case, were brought to the same prison.

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

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

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

Al-Maqdisi's second widely circulated book was "Al-Kawafir al-Jaliyyah fi Kufr al-Dawlah al-Sa'udiyyah" (The Evident Sacrileges of the Saudi State) that excommunicated Al-Sa'ud, the ruling Saudi family. The book played a key role in sowing the seeds of violence that Saudi Arabia was then witnessing. Perpetrators of the bombings that took place in Al-Khubar and Riyadh in the mid-1990's admitted that they were influenced by Al-Maqdisi's publications. Before his execution, one of the defendants, Abd-al-Aziz al-Mu'thim, confessed that he met with Al-Maqdisi in Jordan and obtained

copies of his books, particularly the one on Al-Sa'ud. He said that he disseminated the book in the Arabian Peninsula and the Gulf. Al-Mu'thim revealed that he was so convinced by the book's arguments that he carried out the explosions. Al-Maqdisi strongly denied any involvement in the bombings despite several attempts to hold him responsible. In a written reply to our questions, he denied that he did anything more than research and writing based on independent judgment.

If this was the case of those who read Al-Maqdisi's publications, what then would have been the situation of Abu-Mus'ab who set up a group with Al-Maqdisi and spent several years with him in jail? Al-Zarqawi spent the early period of his term in prison in Al-Maqdisi's company. In addition to what he previously learned from Abdallah Azzam, he gained knowledge of Al-Maqdisi's beliefs. He listened to the discussions between Al-Maqdisi and other leaders of various Islamic tenets in Jordan who were behind bars in the same prison. Meanwhile, Al-Zarqawi worked on developing his Islamic shari'ah education. He learned the Holy Koran by heart.

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

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

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

Deputy Layth Shubaylat, with whom I had close personal relations, was the first person who greeted me when I arrived in the Suwaqah Prison. Right away, Shubaylat advised me to stay away from the room of Al-Zarqawi and his group. He said: "They do not welcome me although I am an Islamist deputy. How then will they welcome you when you are not an Islamist?" However, when Shubaylat sensed my curiosity to know them, he told me: "You do not want to listen to my advice. However, be cautious when you go there. You should feel safe if they serve you a cup of tea. Otherwise, try to get out of there as quickly as possible."

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

Al-Zarqawi would leave Jordan for good immediately if he was released from jail.

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

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

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

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

The other personality of Al-Zarqawi was the one with which he treated the official authorities in jail. He was boldly rude with them. He dealt with them within official limits. He did not allow the official authorities to address any member of his group except via his channel. Al-Zarqawi, however, favored isolation to the extent that he was nicknamed Al-Gharib (the stranger). Al-Gharib was his nom de

guerre when he volunteered to fight alongside mujahidin in Afghanistan. He preferred that others call him Al-Gharib. He used this name to sign his letters and cards to his family members.

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

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City/Source: London

DIALOG Update Date: 20050608; 09:34:55 EST

Descriptors: Terrorism

Geographic Codes: AFG; IRQ; JOR

Geographic Names: Afghanistan; Iraq; Jordan; Asia; Middle East; South Asia

NewsEdge Document Number: 200506081477.1_45d50cf3f078314f

Original Source Language: Arabic

Region: Asia; Middle East

World News Connection®

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Dialog® File Number 985 Accession Number 208800583

POWERED BY **Dialog****Second Part of Serialized Book on Al-Zarqawi and Al-Qa'ida Published****Part 2 of Serialized Book: "Al-Zarqawi. . . The Second Generation of Al-Qa'ida by Fu'ad Husayn, Jordanian writer and journalist"***AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI**Thursday, June 16, 2005 11:40:19Z***Journal Code:** 1430 **Language:** ENGLISH **Record Type:** FULLTEXT**Document Type:** FBIS Translated Text**Word Count:** 4,319

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The third dimension of Al-Zarqawi's personality has a historical background. Unless you study the character of Nur-al-Din Zanki, Al-Zarqawi's prime model, you will not be able to understand Al-Zarqawi, the future of his organization, or the steps he undertakes.

Wherever he went, Al-Zarqawi used to look for books on Nur-al-Din. The best gifts he received were history books that dealt with the jihad and conquests of Nur-al-Din Zanki against the Crusaders. Hence, we can answer the following important question: Why was Al-Zarqawi the only Al-Qa'ida leader who opted to settle in Iraq after US forces occupied Afghanistan? Did he want to begin from Mosul to liberate Iraq, unify Bilad al-Sham, northern Iraq, and Egypt, and pave the way for the liberation of Jerusalem? When we read the history of Nur-al-Din Zanki, we were able to understand why Al-Zarqawi opted to go to northern Iraq and take Al-Jazirah area on the banks of the Euphrates as his first base to wage war on the US occupation forces in Iraq.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Al-Zarqawi left Jordan for Pakistan to go to Chechnya, which he believed was in need of Arab

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

its 11 September strikes. Both the salafist jihadist organization and the US administration adopted the same strategy.

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

In Kandahar and Tora Bora, Al-Zarqawi and his group took part in ferocious battles alongside Taliban and Al-Qa'ida. Al-Zarqawi was wounded in one of the battles in Kandahar. He suffered from a broken bone in his left rib cage when parts of a building collapsed under air strikes. Contrary to rumors, Al-Zarqawi did not lose his leg in the battle.

Despite the intensity of the battles in Tora Bora, Al-Zarqawi was able to withdraw with his group safely and escape the US bombardment and siege of the area. His supporters believed this was testimony to his military shrewdness. Following the fall of Kandahar and the shelling of Tora Bora, Al-Zarqawi had no alternative but to leave Afghanistan. It became obvious that the Taliban era had come to an end. Before leaving Afghanistan for good, Al-Zarqawi secured safe passage for the wives and children of his comrades to Pakistan.

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

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

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

Iraqi leader of the Ansar al-Islam group, with providing his network with training and military support until it could fend for itself.

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

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

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

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

When Khalid al-Aruri was taken captive in Iran and Abd-al-Hadi Daghlās was killed in northern Iraq, Al-Zarqawi took the Al-Jazirah region west of Al-Anbar as his headquarters. He entrusted Sulayman Khalid Darwish, better known as Abu-al-Ghadiyah, a Syrian dentist, with teaching members of his group to make explosive devices. Abu-al-Ghadiyah, whose second wife, a Palestinian, and their son Khalid were residing in Jordan, became one of the most important members of Al-Zarqawi's group who decided to take revenge on the United States.

While building his network, Al-Zarqawi adopted foundations that were different from those of Bin

Ladin and Al-Zawahiri who both depended on volunteers from the Arabian Peninsula and Egypt and huge funds from the Arabian Peninsula. Al-Zarqawi, on the other hand, relied on men from Bilad al-Sham -- Jordan, Palestine, and Syria -- and later Iraq and some other Arab countries. Members of his group were called Jund al-Sham. Al-Zarqawi took advantage of Syrians who were granted political asylum in various parts of the world following a crackdown on the Muslim Brotherhood group and other Islamic movements in Syrian cities, including Aleppo and Hamah in the 1980s. In reaction to the violence that was exercised against them, these groups, once religious movements, began to adopt more extremist and more violent ideas. Some of them joined the mujahidin in Afghanistan bringing with them huge funds which they made in Europe, North America, South America, and other countries around the world. After Al-Zarqawi drew up a special strategy to guide the battle, he welcomed these men via his Syrian aide Abu-al-Ghadiyah.

People who are aware of the hierarchy of Al-Zarqawi's network doubted that the reward allocated for information leading to the arrest of its amir, Abu-Mus'ab, would work. When he was in Herat, Al-Zarqawi built a mini Islamic society that protected his network from penetration. Al-Zarqawi married the daughter of Shaykh Yasin, who drove a booby-trapped ambulance car and assassinated Shiite leader Baqir al-Hakim. Al-Zarqawi encouraged his sister to marry Khalid al-Aruri. Abu-al-Ghadiyah married the daughter of Abu-Muhammad, one of the fighters of the network. Thus, the main leaders of Al-Zarqawi's group were sons-in-law or brothers-in-law to each other.

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

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

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

The CIA was interested in the investigations into the assassination of Foley. Although US participation in the investigations contravened Jordanian laws, the FBI collected evidence that proved Al-Zarqawi was involved in the assassination. The defense attorney wrote down his objections to the investigations and its outcome, which he said was based on such participation. The US administration's concern about the issue and its attempts to link it to Al-Zarqawi coincided with the US attempt to rally international public opinion and pave the way to invade Iraq under the pretext that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction and supported global terrorism.

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

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

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

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

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

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City/Source: London

DIALOG Update Date: 20050616; 08:37:00 EST

Descriptors: Terrorism

Geographic Codes: IRQ; JOR; SYR

Geographic Names: Iraq; Jordan; Syria; Middle East

NewsEdge Document Number: 200506161477.1_2cc10b2b1eebbe7e

Original Source Language: Arabic

Region: Middle East

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Third Part of Serialized book on Al-Zarqawi and Al-Qa'ida Published**Part 3 of Serialized Book: "Al-Zarqawi. . . The Second Generation of Al-Qa'ida" by Fu'ad Husayn, Jordanian Writer and Journalist***AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI**Saturday, June 18, 2005 T16:18:18Z***Journal Code:** 1430 **Language:** ENGLISH **Record Type:** FULLTEXT**Document Type:** FBIS Translated Text**Word Count:** 4,585

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

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

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

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

During the war, I witnessed the influx of Arab volunteers to Iraq to fight the Americans. I visited them at their gathering places and I listened to their testimonies both in hospitals after they were wounded by the US shelling or after they ran away from Iraqi areas that denied them entry. However, this was during the war. The situation changed afterward, but none of those volunteers mentioned anything about Al-Zarqawi then.

On 8 August 2003, a bomb explosion targeted the Jordanian Embassy in Baghdad. The UN Baghdad

headquarters came under a similar attack on 19 August. Once more, Al-Zarqawi was held responsible for both operations. Al-Zarqawi, however, claimed responsibility for the second bombing but not the first one. In an audio recording broadcast eight months after he blew up the UN offices, Al-Zarqawi claimed responsibility for other operations.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

salafist jihadist groups.

The way the United States handled the Iraq issue poured Bin Ladin's oil on Al-Zarqawi's fire and aggravated the situation in Iraq. The enormous US media coverage and intentional exaggeration of Al-Zarqawi's activities in Iraq aimed to blame Al-Zarqawi for all the escalating military operations and give the impression that the Iraqis approved of the presence of foreign forces on their territory. Such coverage also aimed to emphasize that a few Arab fighters were behind these operations and that terrorists existed in Iraq prior to the US invasion. However, without being aware of it, this approach was very much in favor of Al-Zarqawi. Such exaggeration created a champion in the eye of Arabs who were looking for a leader with whom they could initiate their long-awaited jihad. Every Arab and Muslim who wished to go to Iraq for jihad wanted to join Al-Zarqawi and fight under his leadership. The mentality in the Levant was used to creating a hero if there was not one. This hero would become a symbol who would shape history. The American Hollywood way of thinking met with such a mentality. They both created Al-Zarqawi as a hero and symbol although he did not do much to deserve the praise. There were a maximum of 30 people under his leadership at that point of time. Thanks to the US media ingenuity, Al-Zarqawi's followers are presently estimated in the thousands.

The US authorities provided Al-Qa'ida leadership and cadres with an opportunity to unify ranks with Al-Zarqawi when they announced that they seized a letter, which they said Al-Zarqawi wrote to Al-Qa'ida leaders. The US authorities published the full text of the letter, which underlined that Al-Zarqawi was willing to merge with Al-Qa'ida and accommodate its ideology. Immediately afterward, pro-Al-Qa'ida Arab and Muslim fighters joined Al-Zarqawi's network even before the actual merging took place. Following the publication of the letter, wealthy Arabs and Muslims provided Al-Zarqawi with funds that reinforced his position in Iraq in terms of human resources and finance. As for Usama Bin Ladin, he was happy too. He contacted Al-Zarqawi to finalize the process of merging his group under Al-Qa'ida leadership. Al-Zarqawi became the amir of Al-Qa'ida in Iraq, where Al-Qa'ida is currently the key player.

Al-Zarqawi's merged tactics with Al-Qa'ida served both him and Bin Ladin. For Bin Ladin, it was a historical opportunity to stick a thumb in Washington's eye and tell the United States that the invasion of Afghanistan did not annihilate Al-Qa'ida. In other words, if a bullet does not kill me, it makes me stronger, as the saying goes. Iraq became a more important arena for Al-Qa'ida. The nature of the territory and the people was more appropriate for Al-Qa'ida than Afghanistan was. As for Al-Zarqawi, he had a supply of human resources, most of whom were recruits who came to Iraq to join Al-Zarqawi for the love of jihad. Previously, such a supply of human resources was undermined by an iron fist policy on the border. Al-Zarqawi's union with Al-Qa'ida provided him with a permanent and systematic influx of human resources. This was also true for financial and logistic support.

Al-Zarqawi's political strategy in Iraq became more obvious following his statement in which he threatened to kill Iyad Allawi, head of the interim government in Iraq. Such a strategy, which focused on targeting Iraqi police, reflected his firm position vis-a-vis the police force when he was a prisoner in Jordan. Al-Zarqawi's military strategy became evident when he killed the Korean hostage. He wanted the Americans to be left alone in Iraq. He repeated what he did to the United Nations and hampered US plans to install a local Iraqi Government to run the country. He wanted to keep an open war between the US occupation forces and the mujahidin who fight to expel the crusader forces from the Muslim territory. This way, the experience of jihad in Afghanistan would stay alive. This time, however, developed techniques would be used to allow the jihad snowball to grow into an avalanche that would reach Iraq's neighboring countries and ultimately, the more sacred and more sensitive issue for Muslims, the issue of Palestine.

First: His Methodology

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

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

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

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

The weird behavior of some proponents of Wahhabism and those in charge of the holy sites drew various reactions from pilgrims, particularly when Wahhabists prevented them from coming near the tomb of the prophet, prayers and peace be upon him, under the pretext that it was polytheism. Wahhabists maintained that a pilgrim would commit polytheism if he touched the tomb or the window surrounding it. They would loudly say to this person: "O polytheist." Such behavior prompted pilgrims and educated people to ask many questions and carry out research. As a result, many of them were introduced to Wahhabism.

The spread of Wahhabism in Islamic countries was attributed to a group of scholars who visited Mecca and Medina to perform the pilgrimage. They were introduced to the beliefs of Wahhabism and they agreed with them concerning the issue of fighting innovations and common sectarian

superstitions. These scholars formed the nucleus of Wahhabism in their own countries when they returned from their pilgrimage. Furthermore, a large number of students studied at Wahhabist religious universities that taught Hanbalite beliefs (strict school of Islamic jurisprudence). These students actually became the ambassadors of this denomination in their countries. The tenets of Shaykhs Bin-Abd-al-Wahhab and Ibn-Taymiyah began to find their way toward becoming a global movement.

Moreover, the ruling regime in Saudi Arabia was associated with the religious political legitimacy of Wahhabism. It exerted tremendous efforts to support and disseminate this sect on the Arabian Peninsula and elsewhere. A huge budget was allocated for publishing books on the Hanbalite sect in its Wahhabist version. Since the era of King Abd-al-Aziz, the books of every Muslim scholar have been printed, published, and distributed for free. These books included a collection of Al-Rasa'il wa al-Masa'il al-Najdiyyah (Najd Messages and Issues), Al-Durar al-Sunniyah (Sunni Gems), a collection of Ibn-Taymiyah's fatwas (legal opinions), Ibn-al-Qayyim books, and books on fiqh (jurisprudence), interpretation of the Koran, and hadith (sayings and doings of Prophet Muhammad). Publishing houses in Egypt, Beirut, Damascus, Baghdad, and India helped to circulate these books. Hence, the area of distribution expanded to include Arab and Islamic markets.

Since the salafist Wahhabist books did not pose a censorship problem in the Islamic world, markets were flooded with huge quantities of them. It was impossible not to find some of these books at the libraries of the children of Islamic awakening. Cultural centers affiliated with the Saudi Government spread in all the Islamic countries. These centers played an effective role in supplying students with the fatwas of Shaykh al-Islam Ibn-Taymiyah. Furthermore, Saudi Arabia inaugurated Islamic centers in capitals around the world and supplied them with salafist books and Wahhabist preachers and scholars.

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

Such a call for political and social reform had a strong echo in the Arab Maghreb, where Al-Salafiyyah integrated into the national movement and adopted its contemporary objectives. Ultimately, Al-Salafiyyah and nationalism merged particularly when colonialists recruited some religious groups and various forces to work with them. To tell the truth, the national liberal movement came from Al-Salafiyyah, reminiscent of the spread of Al-Salafiyyah in the entire Maghreb. Al-Salafiyyah defeated other denominations, particularly Sufism, when it integrated into the national movement and raised the banner of jihad against the colonialists and their collaborators. Thus, Al-Salafiyyah developed to include fighting colonialism, innovations, and predominant social traditions. Simultaneously, it called for the modernization of political and social conditions.

In today's world, salafist movements are the most significant Islamic reformist movements. Their influential calls for liberating religion from the impurities of tradition and innovations of backwardness are heard everywhere. In the 20th century, the modern salafist movement took various forms including liberalism, rationalism, and jihad. Eventually, however, it crystallized under the name

Al-Salafiyyah, which is the Najd school of Hanbalite roots. We will focus on this form of Al-Salafiyyah since it extended beyond its habitat to affect all aspects of life and become a global Islamic phenomenon.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

This new strategy gave salafist movements momentum and organizational power. They began to enjoy unprecedented flexibility. The most evident example of such flexibility was Al-Qa'ida's support for Abu-Mus'ab al-Zarqawi in 1999 although he was not in full agreement with Bin Ladin's methodology. Both men had different understandings of some aspects of the faith concerning allegiance and

subsequent issues of excommunication and deference. These were viewed as basic religious issues, particularly concerning the position vis-a-vis Al-Sa'ud -- the rulers of Saudi Arabia -- whether or not they were atheists, and what position should be adopted if they were. All such controversy did not prevent Al-Qa'ida from making concessions although it was the most powerful party in Afghanistan. Al-Qa'ida did without full allegiance from Al-Zarqawi. It supported him when he established a special camp on the foundation of coordination and integration. Muhammad Makkawi, better known as Sayf al-Adl, number three in Al-Qa'ida, will provide us with details in the testimony he sent to us.

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

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

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City/Source: London

DIALOG Update Date: 20050618; 13:37:06 EST

Descriptors: Terrorism

Geographic Codes: IRQ; JOR

Geographic Names: Iraq; Jordan; Middle East

NewsEdge Document Number: 200506181477.1_977c0e056fec7a39

Original Source Language: Arabic

Region: Middle East

World News Connection®

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Dialog® File Number 985 Accession Number 209300463