



# Ayman al-Zawahiri: "A Review of Events"

**Transcript of Ayman al-Zawahiri's Fourth Video Interview Produced by  
the As-Sahab Media Foundation: "A Review of Events."  
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*[This document is a transcript of an Arabic-language video recording obtained by the NEFA Foundation and transcribed on behalf of the NEFA TerrorWatch subscription service. This transcript is provided for educational and informational purposes only. The As-Sahab Media Foundation is the official propaganda arm of Al-Qaida and is the exclusive source of audio and video recordings of Bin Laden, Dr. Ayman al-Zawahiri, and other high-ranking Al-Qaida leaders in South Asia.]*

"...As-Sahab Foundation is pleased to today host Shaykh Ayman al-Zawahiri in its fourth conversation with him. We ask Allah to benefit us and the Muslims with this work, and to make it sincerely for His Noble Face."

Q: "To begin, Shaykh Ayman: peace be upon you and the mercy of Allah and His blessings, and we welcome you as a guest of as-Sahab Foundation."

Zawahiri: "And upon you be peace and the mercy of Allah and His blessings."

Q: "Noble Shaykh: we meet today for the fourth time, as events in the Islamic world accelerate at a critical pace and as the Islamic world witnesses transformations critical to its destiny and future. If we were to ask you to mention the most important of these transformations, what would you say?"

Zawahiri: "The most important and critical of these transformations –and Allah knows best– is the emergence of the Mujahid vanguard of the Muslim Ummah as a power imposing itself on the world stage, as a result of the intensifying Jihadi awakening surging through the Islamic world, refusing humiliation defending the honor of the Muslim Ummah and rejecting the methodologies of defeat and culture of backtracking. And the groups of this Mujahid vanguard are now uniformly deployed and –by the grace of Allah– are coming together and uniting."



Q: "Perhaps the recent joining up of a number of the most important leaders of the Fighting Islamic Group in Libya with Qaida al-Jihad Group is one of the most important of these transformations."

Zawahiri: "Without a doubt, especially if you add to that the important role played by the Fighting Islamic Group in Libya in inviting to the pure creed, the creed of finding honor in Allah alone and rejecting submission to anyone other than Him, and their role in defending the Muslim Ummah

with self and wealth, and not just in Libya: in fact, you almost can't find a field of Jihad in which their praiseworthy and –Allah permitting- divinely – accepted traces are not present.

Q: "And what is the most important field in which this Mujahid vanguard is wrestling with the enemies of Islam?"

Zawahiri: "Iraq is the most important of these fields."

Q: "Then this leads us to the topic of Iraq."

Zawahiri: "Go ahead."

Q: "To begin, what is your opinion about the condition of the Jihad in Iraq today?"

Zawahiri: "The condition of the Iraqi Jihad is –overall- excellent, by the grace of Allah, and whatever pains are suffered are a must on the march of Jihad, and the most recent reports which have come from Iraq tell of an increase of the strength of the Mujahideen and a deterioration in the Americans' conditions, despite their desperate attempts to deceive and mislead. And the decision of the British to flee is sufficient."

Q: "But the Americans have talked a lot about their operation in Diyala and the statements of Petraeus and Crocker in which they repeatedly talked about the "spectacular progress in al-Anbar," to the extent that the name of al-Anbar was repeated in the report more than 24 times, in addition to their claims of "depriving the Mujahideen of ground" and the participation of the tribes and a number of armed factions with them in their assault on the Islamic State of Iraq."

Zawahiri: "All of this is empty propaganda meant to cover up the American failure in Iraq, and the biggest evidence for that is that Petraeus, in a report to Congress, stated that he might be able to lower the number of his troops in Iraq to 100,000 soldiers during the coming summer, while at the same time, the report emphasizes the unpreparedness of Iraqi forces and that the withdrawal of American forces now will lead to the collapse of Iraqi forces. All of these statements are nothing but blatant plays on words. The apostate traitor forces which couldn't be readied in four years won't be readied during the next six months, and even if we were to assume the impossible, which is that the Americans are able to ready those treasonous forces, will those forces be resolute where the Americans failed with all their men and might? So these forces are doomed to defeat, whether they have been readied or not."

*[Video fragment showing American troops in Iraq]. Voiceover: "They are serving in an army which has lost its balance, and the chief of its staff is the one stating this. As for regaining the lost balance, it requires, in the opinion of General Casey, 3 to 4 years and major resources. Casey commanded American forces in Iraq before being replaced in the position by David Petraeus, so he knows what he's talking about. But what does it mean for the American army to lose its balance? The head of the American ground forces doesn't hide the fact that the military intervention in Afghanistan and Iraq is connected to this matter, and it appears that the Iraqi experiment in particular is the worst for an army for which –most likely- the plan to decrease forces starting in July of next year won't do much to safe it."*

"So we can summarize the position in the following: first, defeated American forces groaning from the daily hemorrhage of losses and looking for a way out, with their government under massive public pressure to pull them out. Second, unprepared treasonous traitor forces whom the Americans have decided to abandon to meet their fate. And third, treasonous tribal militias whose biggest thief has been eliminated: Abd al-Sattar Abu Risha, whose extraordinary powers the Americans used to extol, and who they claimed was the one protecting them and that they would transfer his experiment to other areas by releasing rivers of bribe-money to flood the pockets of the traitors, in order to buy an imaginary victory in Iraq and delude the tax-payers at

home into thinking that they actually achieved something. So if we were to borrow the mathematical expression, we are looking at a cubic failure for America in Iraq. And however much of the massive American propaganda machine tries to deceive its people, the facts are more powerful than all of its media, uglier than all of its tricks, and worse than all of its deceptions...”

O: “But Petraeus and Crocker repeated more than once in their addresses that the American have been able to “deprive the Mujahideen of ground.” Isn’t this an achievement on their part?”

Zawahiri: “Isn’t this the same failure which occurred previously in al-Qaim, Samarra, al-Falujah, Tal’Afar and other cities, after which the Mujahideen always return? ...The repeating of these deceptive phrases means one of two things: either the American administration is lying outrageously through Petraeus and Crocker, or the Americans haven’t learned anything from four years of losses in the attack-and-retreat war in Iraq, and moreover didn’t learn anything from their defeat in Vietnam.”

O: “Or perhaps it means both things at once?”

Zawahiri: “Perhaps. If you don’t know, that is unfortunate. And if you even know that’s even worse.”

O: “So the remaining hope for the Americans is in readying the apostate forces to cover the withdrawal of their forces?”

Zawahiri: “This is like Satan’s hopes for Paradise.”

*[Video Fragment of an al-Furqaan TV interview with an Iraqi officer]: “Destroyed vehicles...how many vehicles? 850 vehicles have been destroyed in this district. No one has given us any weapons. Everyone who leaves work takes his weapon and equipment, and the new recruits: I don’t have factories to make weapons for those I send on military missions. Where can I find weapons? Answer me! There are no support weapons, there are no vehicles, there is no equipment, nothing.”*

*[Voiceover]: “In addition, the elements of the police and army, who have long tasted the flavor of death at the hands of the Mujahideen have today begun to flee from their accursed jobs, which usually ends with a Mujahid’s bullet in the head.”*

*[Video Fragment of an al-Furqaan TV interview with an Iraqi officer]: “And no one wants to join. Before they would join up for work before and administrative order was issued. Now the administrative order is given and no one wants to sign up for work. But why should he volunteer when he is frightened? This has meaning; this is part of the terrorism.”*

Zawahiri: “And this proves the correctness of the Mujahideen’s methodology in targeting those apostate forces from the outset, and proves the misguidance of the religion-and-life-destroying Fatwas which encouraged Muslims to join these forces and thereby contradict the doctrine of loyalty and disloyalty by seeking to make successful the Crusaders’ plot – which the Mujahideen have destroyed, by the grace of Allah. I announced – by the grace of Allah – about two years ago that Islam is victorious in Iraq, and I announced a year before that – by the grace of Allah – that the exit of the Americans from Iraq was only a matter of time. And today, I give the good news to the Muslim Ummah in Iraq and in all homelands of Islam – relying on Allah, hoping for His grace and desiring His aid – that the conspiracies of the Americans and their temptations are on their way to disappearance and defeat.”

O: “What do conspiracies and temptations do you mean exactly?”

Zawahiri: “I mean by that the money that has been paid out to traitors like the deceased Abu Risha and other armed organizations in exchange for them stirring up strife between the Muslims

and calling to tribal bias towards the Mujahideen's retaliation against the spies. I mean by that what the Americans have acknowledged in the terms of participation of armed factions with them in their war against the Mujahideen and against the Islamic State of Iraq (may Allah protect it). And I mean by that the money that is being paid out by neighboring states under American supervision for the purpose of sending the Jihad off course and turning it into a mere expulsion of the Americans or agreement with the Americans on arrangements for their departure, in exchange for the non-establishment of the Islamic State of Iraq."

Q: "But some claim that the Islamic State of Iraq is the one who stirred up the fighting between it and some of the factions, and accuse it of having killed innocent people and spilled blood?"

Zawahiri: "This is an allegation and an allegation requires proof. Also, the State declared its readiness to redress every grievance."

Q: "Does this mean that you exonerate the State of the charges leveled against it?"

Zawahiri: "I am unable to exonerate or condemn any party in a case whose two sides I have not heard. However, I do declare the State innocent of having a methodology which deems the blood of innocents to be lawful and attacks sanctities, and that's due to what I know about the most important of its leaders and what I know about its methodology. And then, have we forgotten what the State was accused of in al-'Amiriyyah, after which it became clear that the "Revolutionaries of al-'Amiriyyah" were agents of the Americans, and a picture appeared of their leader receiving payments from General Petraeus, and his organization disowned him? And also, if we were to hypothesize that what the State has been accused of is true, then is the State the only one who has made mistakes? And has the State refused to be judged according to Shari'ah? And moreover, and more critical and important than all of that, are these incidents which the State and other Jihadi groups are accused of on the same level as what the State announced regarding the falling of some parties into blatant treason, allegiance to the Americans and fighting with them against the Muslim Mujahideen?"

Q: "Do you mean by that the 'Revolutionaries of al-Anbar'?"

Zawahiri: "No. The 'Revolutionaries of al-Anbar' is a well-known, notorious case, more obvious than the midday sun. Rather, what I mean is what many have acknowledged regarding the participation of groups and factions in fighting alongside the Americans against the Islamic State of Iraq, among them Shaykh Muhammad Bashar al-Faydi, who has made a number of statements in this regard, most recent of which was in his conversation on al-Baghdadiyyah channel. Sunday, November 4th, and also Dr. Muthanna Harith al-Dari... in addition to the serious acquisitions made by the Islamic State of Iraq against specific parties, accusations which require reflection, research and exposure of the traitors and treason. Looking into this issue is much more important than looking into the problems which occur between the Mujahideen – despite our emphasizing that they shouldn't be neglected or taken lightly – because this issues means the presence of treasonous hypocrites in the ranks of the Mujahideen working and fighting for the Americans. Thus, I advise the good people among the Mujahideen and others who seek to unify the ranks of the Mujahideen to look into this serious matter before anything else, and if it becomes apparent to them that some group is involved in these crimes, then let them expose it and explain its crimes to the Muslim Ummah, in order to ruin the plans and plotting of the Americans. This is one of the things which must be confronted swiftly and decisively. The Truth (Blessed and Exalted is He) says, "O Prophet! Strive hard against disbelievers and the Hypocrites, and be harsh against them. Their abode is Hell, and an evil destination it is." (9:73) And I advise my brothers the Mujahideen to put an end to this scourge and sedition and eradicate this treasonous group from Iraq of the Caliphate and Jihad. The Truth (Blessed and Exalted is He) says, "If the Hypocrites and those in whose hearts is a decease and those who cause agitation in the City by spreading false rumors do not desist, We shall, surely, urge you on against them; then they will only dwell therein as your neighbors for a little while. They are accursed. Wherever they are found they will be seized and killed." (33:60-61) And I also call on all Muslims to stop supporting the armed groups which have

cooperated with the Americans against the Muslims and the Mujahideen. And I warn those individuals from among the armed factions who have been involved in cooperating with the occupation against the Mujahideen that history is recording everything, and that they will lose both their religion and life, and that the Americans will soon be departing – Allah permitting – and won't keep defending them forever. And let them look at the fate of America's agents in Vietnam and the fate of the Shah of Iran, and intelligent is he who learns from other's mistakes.

Q: "Or indeed, let them look at the fate of Abd al-Sattar Abu Risha."

Zawahiri: "Yes – whom Bush took pride in and eulogized."

Q: "But the Americans claim that the clans of al-Anbar have supported them, and that they are seeking to transfer this experiment to other areas."

Zawahiri: "Those who have supported the Americans are the scum and the lowly ones, and their history is known to all. As for the noble and honorable clans and tribes of Iraq in general and al-Anbar in particular, they supply and support the Jihad and Mujahideen, and many of their free, noble and honorable sons are in the ranks of the Mujahideen fighting for the victory of Islam against the Crusader invasion of Iraq of the Caliphate and Islam..."

Q: "After agreeing to cooperate with the Americans, what are the techniques they are using to hit at the Mujahideen?"

Zawahiri: "There isn't a technique they haven't used in their attempts to hit and eliminate the Mujahideen, but by the grace of Allah, all of them have ended in failure, because falsehood can't beat truth. They're people of falsehood who wanted dollars, wanted life, wanted the world, and Allah doesn't give victory to those who prefer this life to the hereafter. That's why I call on the tribes of Iraq and its honorable and defiant clans. Defending Islam and Muslims to confront these scum, because history is being written and generation after generation will transmit it, and the tribe or clan which doesn't cleanse itself of the traitors, apostates and lowly ones and doesn't disown them will be remembered by history generation after generation as having been in the ranks of the agents and traitors. As for the tribe or clan which helps Islam and Jihad and suppresses any traitor seeking to exploit its name for unlawful earnings and dirty profit, it will be remembered in the history of the Arabs and Muslims with pride and honor and the Arabs in their period of ignorance used to pass by the grave of Abu Righal and stone it, because he showed Abrahah the way to Makkah the Venerable. The Americans didn't take over al-Ramadi by fighting, but by economic blockade and making life difficult for the general public, which the weak-spirited exploited in order to instigate the people against the Mujahideen. Otherwise, the people are our brothers, our clans and our families who sheltered us and joined us for the entire four years, and it was in defense of them and the religion that we fought, by the grace of Allah, and they know us well and we know them well, because there is no difference between us and them, by the grace of Allah. This small group of apostates represents no one other than themselves and doesn't represent the fine clans who have sheltered us and hosted us in their homes and have supported and aided us and provided us with ammunition and held nothing back. These apostates represent no one but themselves."

Q: "If you were to give one piece of advice to the Mujahideen in Iraq what would it be?"

Zawahiri: "Unity around the World of Tawheed [Islamic monotheism]."

Q: "Speaking of unity between the Mujahideen in Iraq, Shaykh Usama bin Ladin [may Allah protect him] released a recent message about this topic, and some – including the first channel to broadcast it – interpreted it as the Shaykh [may Allah protect him] admitting to the mistakes of al-Qaida and apologizing for them and warning its members, and so on to the last of their interpretations and deductions. What's your comment on that?"

Zawahiri: “ First, I would like to clarify that there isn’t anything today in Iraq named ‘al-Qaida’: instead, Qaida al-Jihad Organization is Mesopotamia has merged- by the grace of Allah – with other Jihadi groups in the Islamic State of Iraq [may Allah protect it], which is a legitimate emirate based on a proper legal methodology and which was founded through Shura and received the pledge of allegiance of most of the Mujahideen and tribes in Iraq. This is one thing. Second: this television channel manipulated the Shaykh’s message.”

Q: “How did it manipulate it?”

Zawahiri: “It manipulated it using three tricks, all of which the world only discovered after 24 hours. The first trick was the deletion of crucial portions of the Shaykh’s speech.”

Q: “Like what?”

Zawahiri: “Like his mentioning that the map of the region will be redrawn at the hands of the Mujahideen Allah permitting, and the artificial borders will be erased and the greater state of Islam will be established from the ocean to the ocean... Like their deletion of his incitement of the Muslims in Sudan and its environs to Jihad against the Crusader invaders and armed rebellion against the one who gave them permission to come in order to remove him... Like their deletion of his admonition to the commanders of the factions to refrain from entering the polytheistic political process.”

Q: “But they might say that they chose the important parts of his speech to show.”

Zawahiri: “That’s incorrect. The deleted parts are of extreme importance, and the importance of everything that comes from Shaykh Usama is no secret, nor is the attention paid by the entire world to what he says and its eagerness to analyze his words. So everything he says is very important, both for his supporters and his enemies. And they could have at least noted those parts in a summarized fashion. And we see this channel providing long air time and serialized programs to those who are much less important than the Shaykh, and indeed, to those who promote the school of the Faqahaa [jurists] of the Marines. So couldn’t it have spared a few minutes for someone whom America considers to be the most dangerous man in the world? Also, in the program which commented on the Shaykh’s speech, it was within their means to examine all the ideas contained in the message, even if only in brief or in passing, but the deleted parts weren’t even mentioned, and long air time was given to commentators who disagreed a lot and were given even more time than was given to the Shaykh, the giver of the speech which they were commenting on. The second trick was their giving to the Shaykh’s message other than the intended meanings, and the host’s asking his guests questions which implied the meaning he wanted, like their claim that the Shaykh directed his reproach and advice to the Mujahideen of the Islamic State of Iraq, although the Shaykh directed his words to all the Mujahideen in Iraq and reproached them for the delay shown by some them in unifying. And his advice about being slow to unify in particular doesn’t cover the men of the Islamic State of Iraq, for they have given the greatest of examples in hastening to unify the ranks of the Mujahideen and Muslims in Iraq, from Abu Mus’ab al-Zarqawi’s pledge of allegiance to Qaida al-Jihad to the establishment of the Islamic State of Iraq. Also, their claim that the Shaykh’s advice to the Mujahideen regarding the mistakes that occur between them was meant for the Islamic State of Iraq, although the Shaykh’s address was directed to everyone. So by what logic did they arrive at this exclusion and limiting? Additionally, their claim that the Shaykh’s call to avoid fanatical bias towards leaders was also exclusively meant for the Mujahideen of the Islamic State of Iraq, although the Shaykh addressed all the Mudahideen with that and emphasized that the brotherhood of faith is the bond between Muslims, not affiliation with a tribe, homeland or organization. So does the Islamic State of Iraq call for Jihad to establish a nationalistic state in Iraq? Or to establish the Islamic Caliphate which includes all the Muslims and their countries? And is the Islamic State of Iraq proud – as others are – that it only includes Iraqis? Or does it consider it to be the right of any Muslim to belong to it? In addition to that, the Shaykh also strongly rebuked - in his call to avoid bias - the followers of the groups which enter the polytheistic parliamentary elections and yet they show bias to their

groups in that. So has the Islamic State of Iraq entered the fray of the polytheistic parliamentary elections for its personnel to show bias to it in that?! Glory be to Allah! And the third trick is that they called on commentators who were either hostile or unsympathetic to the Shaykh's message, and professional impartiality required that both those who opposed as well as agreed with the Shaykh's speech be called on. And this is their policy with most of al-Qaida's releases: al-Qaida is usually the absent indictee whose defense is not heard – rather, the listeners only hear condemnation of him and attacks on him. And this isn't the first first this channel has had with al-Qaida: no, it has had many firsts, among the most famous of which was the interview conducted by Professor Jamal Ismael with Shaykh Usama bin Ladin, which the channel refrained from airing under the pretext of its "lack of professional craftsmanship" and other such incomprehensible expressions. Then it broadcast most of it about six months later in a program with a ridiculous title, "The Destruction of al-Qaida", as if they were congratulating America on its attack on the camps in Khost and rejoicing over the Mujahideen misfortune. Indeed, with almost every release from al-Qaida which reaches them, they use the same tricks mentioned just now. That's why I caution everyone who is interested in acquainting himself with the truth about what the Mujahideen publish and say, whether he be from the Mujahideen's supporters or from their enemies, to depend solely on the full transcripts of the Mujahideen's releases which they publish on the internet. This pulls us towards discussion of the role of Jihadi information media. Yes, Jihadi information media are today waging an extremely critical battle against the Crusader-Zionist enemy. The media used to be the exclusive domain of two parties: the first comprising the official government media, and the second comprising media which claim to be free and non-governmental, some of which are mere government channels which stubbornly claim to be free like the BBC. However, Jihadi information media have demolished this monopoly, and placed the facts in front of the world, and the world has been surprised by critical truths and shocking realities which it wouldn't have been able to see or hear about had Jihadi information media themselves not shown them. The other media only rarely bother in the first place to try to reach the Mujahideen to hear their voice, and if something of their productions reaches them, its fate is usually to be held and prevented from broadcast. Allah has favored the Mujahideen with victory in this ideological-propagational battle, and it suffices us the huge number of reports about the danger of Jihadi media, among the most recent of which was what Petraeus acknowledged in his report to Congress concerning the danger of the Internet and the facilities it offers to the Mujahideen, and before that, Rumsfeld's admission that al-Qaida has won the battle for hearts and minds in the Islamic world."

Q: "Then do you have something to say to the men of Jihadi media?"

Zawahiri: "I ask Allah to reward those working in Jihadi media in the best way, and reward them with the best for the risks they take and the harm to which they expose themselves in order to reveal the facts about the Crusader-Jewish crimes against our Muslim Ummah. And I call on them to increase their efforts and sacrifices, and I praise Allah that the enemies who have at their disposal enormous resources and massive media establishments – have testified to their defeat in front of the meager resources of the Mujahideen..."

*[The video moves to a clip from a media interview with NEFA Senior Investigator Evan Kohlmann]: "Who is it aimed at?" I think there is a wide and diverse audience but I think this is where we have one of the biggest misconceptions in the whole field of terrorism. This is not aimed at people that are in far off places in the world, small isolated communities, from poor families. Where talking about a science that is aimed at middle class Muslim youths in western cities. Places where technology is as easy to come by as is water or food. You can walk into any cyber cafe in the world in any major city and find this stuff but its really its aimed at a young generation, a youthful generation for whom the internet its as simple as 1, 2, 3, its natural."*

Zawahiri: "...Because the Mujahideen publish the honest truth for which perishable falsehood – with all its lying and showiness – is no match: "And say: truth has arrived and falsehood has perished, for falsehood is bound to perish." [17:81] And I remind these unknown soldiers that they

are on a great frontier of Islam, and that they are demolishing the myths and fantasies which Western and Eastern propaganda kept transmitting to the ears of our listeners, minds of our thinkers and curricula of our students for decades on end. So fear Allah in the trust which you are shouldering, and let truthfulness be your guiding principle and invitation to pristine Tawheed your methodology. You must strive to bring the Ummah, long exiled from its Shari'ah, back to the pristine Muhammadan fountain and the way of life of his rightly-guided Successors, good Companions and purified House – with all of whom Allah was pleased – and away from the deviations of the deviants, lies of the religion-trading charlatans, methodologies of defeatism and supplication, philosophies and backtracking and bowing, Fiqh [jurisprudence] of the beggars, Fatwas of the 'Ulama [scholars] of the Marines and bargaining of the leaders of the movements who are dragging the Ummah towards secularism and away from the rule of Shari'ah, and towards nationality-based partisanship and away from the brotherhood of Islam, and towards submission to Sykes-Picot instead of the Caliphate state from the ocean to the ocean, Allah permitting, and who are abandoning their territories under the pretext of political expertise, world-wise pragmatism, national unity, saving lives and other such myths. So I ask Allah to make the men of Jihadi media a cause of the dissemination of the message of Islam and Tawheed to the entire world and the spreading of truthful awareness throughout the Ummah, and a cause of the enlivening of the spirit of honor, dignity, sacrifice, redemption, Jihad and martyrdom in the ranks of the Muslims, and that He guide them to combine their efforts and close ranks for them to be an example for others, and make them persistent in recording the Ummah's Jihadi heritage which, were it is not for Allah's guidance of them, would have been squandered by the enemies and traitors. And I ask Allah and beseech Him to accept their good deeds sincerely before His Noble Face, and to protect and care for them and avert from them the plotting of the plotters and the schemes of the schemers, and to bless their efforts and resources, and not to deprive them of His empowerment and aid in this world and His reward in the hereafter."

Q: "OK, let's return to what we started but didn't finish in terms of advice to the Mujahideen in Iraq. You mentioned that you advise them to unite around the world of Tawheed. Could you elaborate a bit?"

Zawahiri: "Yes. The noble brothers of the Iraqi Mujahideen – the pride of the Ummah in this area – must clear up the differences between them, and take their disputes to the people of knowledge and virtue from the active scholars for them to rule between them according to the Shari'ah of Islam. And they must avoid the scholars of the sultans, who recognize the treasonous rulers who helped in the embargo against Iraq and permitted their countries to be used by the Crusader invasion forces as bases from where they set out to kill thousands of Muslims in Iraq and Afghanistan. They must also expel from their ranks the corrupt traitors who sold their religion for a paltry worldly gain and fought under the standard of the Cross, and expose them so the Muslims can beware of them, in the same way that the Mujahideen exposed their brothers in Afghanistan who entered Kabul on top of American tanks: Sayyaf, Rabbani and those like them. And they must reject the dividing of the resistance into honorable and dishonorable, or funny and not funny, or nice and not nice. Allah hasn't sent down authorization for any of these divisions, and they are meant to be used to arrive at invalid concepts. No, the Jihad in Iraq and the rest of the Islamic lands is obligatory against the invaders and Crusaders and their agents. So everyone who is hostile to Islam and Muslims and allies himself with the Crusader invaders against the Muslims, whether Iraqi or non-Iraqi, must be confronted and Jihad waged against him. The Prophet (Peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) fought his polytheistic people, was hostile to them and invoked Allah against them, as did the Companions (with whom Allah was pleased). And when the Prophet (Peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) chose to ransom the prisoners of Badr, Allah sent down on him a verse of the Quran in which He reproached him (peace and prayers of Allah be upon him): "It is not for a Prophet to have captives until he inflicts great slaughter [or empowered] in the land. You [O Muslims] desire the goods of this world, while Allah desires for you the hereafter. And Allah is Mighty, Wise." (8:67) Hostility to family and clan for the sake of Allah's religion is an enduring divine methodology. The Truth (Blessed and Exalted is He) says, "O you who believe! Take not for allies your fathers and your brothers if they prefer infidelity to faith." (9:23) And the Truth (Blessed and Exalted is He) says, "There is for you an



excellent example in Abraham and those with him, when they said to their people, 'We are innocent of you and of what you worship beside Allah; we have rejected you, and there has begun between us and you enmity and hatred forever, unless you believe in Allah Alone.' (60:4) Also, the Mujahideen must come closer together and advise and consult one another concerning the unification of the Mujahideen's ranks. And it was al-Qaida Organization in Mesopotamia, then the Mujahideen's Shura, then the Pact of the Perfumed Ones, then the Islamic State in Iraq (may Allah protect and help it) who came through with flying colors in striving to unite and unify the Mujahideen and this is an undeniable virtue. "That is Allah's grace; He bestows it on whom He pleases; and Allah is the Lord of immense grace." (62:3) So all the Mujahid brothers in Iraq, who are the hope and pride of the Ummah, must develop what their brothers arrived at and complete and finish it, and not allow it to be detracted from, criticized or mocked. They know that the Islamic State of Iraq is the primary force involved in confronting the Crusader – Zionist aggression against Iraq, and this demands that they cooperate with it, guide it and be honest with it like a concerned and sympathetic brother. In the same way, our beloved brothers in the Islamic State of Iraq (may Allah help and protect it and grant it victory) must open their hearts to their brothers and rush to them and be concerned for them, and everyone must humble themselves before their believing brothers. "O you who believe! If any from among you turn back from his faith, Allah will soon produce a people whom He will love as they love him; humble with the believers, mighty against the rejecters, fighting in the way of Allah, and never fearing the blame of a blamer. That is the grace of Allah, which He bestows on whom He pleases. Allah is All Embracing, All Knowing." (5:54) And as I and my brothers call out here to all the noble, honorable Mujahideen in Mesopotamia I call out with special emphasis to the beloved and honorable ones in the groups with pure and pristine methodologies, foremost among them our noble brothers and racers to goodness in the Ansar al-Sunnah Group and their patient, garrisoned, Mujahid brother amir, His Eminence the Shaykh Abu Abdullah al-Shaafee'i (may Allah preserve him for ammunition for Islam) and the rest of his brothers, the lions of Islam in Iraq, to tell them: the Mujahideen everywhere await with baited breath the unification between you and the Islamic State of Iraq, for you to give victory to the genuine, pristine, Jihadi methodology which seeks to liberate all lands of Islam and set up the Caliphate following the methodology of Prophethood. And I tell them: the Islamic State of Iraq is your state, your emirate and your government, and with whom will you unite if you don't unite with them? So strive for goodness with them, and gladden the believers' hearts with the good news for which they have waited so long. May we hear this good news soon, just as our brothers in the Fighting Islamic Group of Libya recently gladdened the believers' hearts with it. Amen, amen, Allah willing."

Q: "This leads us to talk about the political orientation which the Mujahideen in Iraq must adopt, particularly since the American Crusader forces are about to leave and would like to arrange the political arena in Iraq in line with their own wishes. So should the resistance movement's orientation be a nationalistic one which treats all Iraqis as equal, whether they be loyal to Islam or hostile to it? And recognize the legitimacy of the states which rule by other than Shari'ah and are allied to America and Israel? And limits the ultimate goal of the Jihad to the liberation of Iraq and the setting up of a nationalistic state there? And pretends to forget the obligations of Islamic brotherhood and the individual duty of liberating the Muslims' homelands and the obligation of fighting until all infidel armies depart from the land of Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) especially from around the two Sanctuaries and the environs of Jerusalem? And pretends to forget the Jihad against the apostates who rule our countries and repress our Ummah and pretend to forget the effort to establish the Muslim Caliphate? Or should their orientation be based on unchanging fundamentals from legal policy founded on the Quran and Sunnah?"

Zawahiri: "First of all, I would like to reassure my Muslim Ummah that the era of the theft of Jihad has passed, by the grace of Allah and His help, and that today, the Ummah in general and its Mujahid vanguard in particular won't offer its blood cheaply in Allah's path for its fruit to be reaped by the likes of Abdul Nasser, Al Saud, Bouteflika and Musharraf. That is an era which has passed and shall not return, with Allah's grace and generosity."

Q: "Then in whom will the Ummah place its trust?"

Zawahiri: "It will place it – Allah willing – in the honest Mujahideen who didn't backtrack or compromise: 'Those who, if We establish them in the land, establish Salat and give Zakat, and enjoin right and forbid wrong, and with Allah rests the end of (all) affairs.' (22:41)"

Q: "Yes please continue."

Zawahiri: "The other thing which I would like to inform the Muslim Ummah of is that the trend of compromise and methodology of retreat is in defeat and retreat due to the large number of retreats it has made, and that the Mujahideen has rejected this methodology."

Q: "Perhaps we will just refer to this point here, to take it up in detail later, Allah willing."

Zawahiri: "Fine. So my brothers in the Mujahid movements in Iraq must realize that the signs of the Caliphate state have begun to loom on the horizon, and for this reason, the forces of infidelity and treason have come together in an effort to suppress them. And this what Shaykh Usama bin Laden was referring to in his latest message – and al-Jazeera didn't report this part despite its importance – when he talked about the redrawing of the region's map and erasing of the Crusaders' artificial borders and the establishment of the greater Islamic state from the ocean to the ocean, Allah permitting."

Q: "It's worth mentioning that the Islamic State of Iraq has emphasized this concept before, and more than once."

Zawahiri: "Yes. And here I must point out that the Islamic State of Iraq is one of those movements with a pristine methodology and clear vision which at an early stage declared its observance of legal constants in fighting and politics, and stated the bitter truth which others fear to speak. Thus, our brothers the Mujahideen mustn't adopt programs and methodologies which conflict with the fundamentals with the Shari'ah or help the enemies of the Caliphate to delay or prevent its establishment. So for example, the methodologies of the Jihadi movements must be founded on the rule of the Shari'ah, not the rule of the majority. They must be founded on an emphasis on the brotherhood of Islam as the bond between Muslims: thus, everyone who aids the Jihad and Mujahideen, Iraqi or otherwise, is from the Mujahideen in Iraq: for him is what is for them and upon him is what is upon them; and everyone who is hostile to Islam and the Jihad and aids the global crusade against the Muslims isn't from the Mujahideen, even if he be Iraqi. They must emphasize the serious effort to set up the Caliphate state, which is by consensus an unchanging demand of the Shari'ah. They must emphasize the liberation of the Muslims' homelands from the occupiers: particularly Palestine, the Arabian Peninsula, and every Muslim land occupied by the infidels. This is the individual obligation of every Muslim since the fall of Spain, and the martyr of Islam, Shaykh Abdullah Azzam (may Allah have mercy on him) used to implore and reiterate and his heart would ooze pain as he defended this genuine fundamental of the Shari'ah."

*[Cut away to the voice and still picture of Shaykh Abdullah Azzam]: "An individual duty ever since the Caliphate fell, and individual duty ever since Palestine fell, and ever since Bukhara fell, and ever since Azerbaijan went. So it's not an individual duty in Afghanistan only: why then are you surprised at hearing this from us? And the wonder of wonders and the strangest of strange are those scholars who are still debating: is Jihad an individual duty or a collective duty? I don't know from where these people acquire their knowledge. I don't know from where they procure their Fatwas. All the Muslims' countries have gone and the tyrants are at the necks of the women and Muslims everywhere, but they're having discussions, eh? They're discussing whether Jihad is an individual duty or collective duty. Yes. Constantinople was the headquarters of the Synod of the Eastern Church. As Muhammad al-Fatih was pounding the walls of Constantinople with the catapult, the men of the Church Synod were meeting and discussing how many devils are able to stand on the head of a pin. We're like that: the Jews, the enemies, the*

*Russians and the Americans are coming at us from every side, right? And some of us are still asking, 'Is it an individual duty or a collective duty?' May Allah pluck out your eye if you haven't yet seen that Jihad is an individual duty! How? Does this even need to be debated in the first place? If they had studied one book of Fiqh, it is well-known that the attacker is to be repelled, the attacker who seizes the people and wants to take their wealth or attack their honor or religion or country: it is well-known that it is an individual obligation to repel him."*

Zawahiri: "And they must emphasize refusal to recognize the legitimacy of all the governments which the international system recognizes in our Islamic world, for they are regimes outside the fold of Islam which rule by other than what Allah sent down, and many of them are allied to the enemies of Islam."

Q: "But some might cast doubt on that."

Zawahiri: "The matter is extremely clear. All governments which are recognized by the international community rule by other than what Allah sent down and comply with the resolutions and charters of the United Nations, and many of them are allied with the Crusader and Jewish enemies of Islam against the Muslims. And I challenge those who cast doubt on that to bring me one government recognized by the international community which fits the requirements of Dar-ul-Islam (the state of Islam): is it the Saudi state, or Jordan, or Egypt, or Pakistan, or who? They're apostate governments outside the fold of the Sahri'ah for one or more reasons, but their populations are Muslim and are being oppressed by these regimes."

Q: "I think that in the interest of fairness we should mention that the methodologies of a number of Jihadi groupings in Iraq emphasize these concepts, foremost among them, the Islamic State of Iraq (may Allah grant it victory), even if some of the other groupings' methodologies are not so clear, or have some mistakes, deviations or defects."

Zawahiri: "Allah favored the Islamic State of Iraq to be the first in a number of spheres, and its banner is one of the cleanest banners in Iraq and has not been polluted by what others have been polluted by. And it is the primary power facing the Americans today – as recognized by everyone including the Americans – and this is why supporting it is a trust on the shoulders of the Muslim Ummah and the Muslims. Therefore, I call on my Muslim brothers everywhere to read carefully the communiqués and methodologies of the Mujahid groups, and to advise these groups should they notice any defect in their methodologies, or any difference between their basic methodologies and the statement of their officials. There must be awareness in the Muslim Ummah, in order for it to protect the march of its Mujahideen and contribute to the unification of the Mujahideen by bringing them together in the methodology of the Tawheed."

Q: "OK. Talk of spreading awareness leads us to the role of the 'Ulama in this critical stage."

Zawahiri: "The role of the 'Ulama in this critical stage is to emphasize the rule of Shari'ah and rejection of territorial affiliation and nationalistic spirit as a basis for discrimination between Muslims. Their role is to emphasize the duty of the Muslims to continue Jihad until the expulsion of the infidel invasion forces from Palestine, Afghanistan, Chechnya and all the lands of Islam, and to emphasize their duty to continue Jihad until the establishment of the Caliphate State. And the 'Ulama must disown the secularist states which rule the countries of the Muslims and expose their conspiracies. The role of the 'Ulama isn't to conform to the status quo and condition themselves to it and speak only half the truth. No, the role of the 'Ulama is to declare the whole truth: "And [remember] when Allah took a covenant from those who were given the Book [saying], 'You shall expound it to the people and not hide it.'" (3:187)."

Q: "Do you want the 'Ulama of Iraq specifically to play a particular role?"

Zawahiri: "Oh course. They are on the battlefield, and they are acquainted with the conspiracies being hatched against Islam and the Muslims, and they are standing opposite the religion-selling charlatans who agreed not to use any Fatwa for the fighting of the infidel invaders, and on the contrary, ruled that peace should be made with them and they should be joined in their fight against the Muslims."

Q: "Your mentioning of the religion-selling charlatans in Iraq takes us to the Fatwa of the Mufti of Al Saud deeming it impermissible to go forth to the jihad in Iraq and elsewhere. What is your view of this Fatwa?"

Zawahiri: "This Mufti is another star on the roster of the club of the Fuqahaa of the Marines, and this Fatwa's chain of transmission is an American Crusader one: from the Mufti from the interior minister from the king from the American embassy and so on until Bush. So what a terrible chain and what terrible transmitters. And it is a Fatwa of enigmas and secrets. The Mufti of Al Saud talks about the outside in general, the unstable conditions, the unclear banners, the strife and those with suspicious intentions, and it is upon the listener to deduce and try to understand from the ambiguous words and veiled expressions what exactly the Mufti means and what his proofs are. This evidence is moral cowardice, for if he were a brave man, he would have listed the happenings, the events and parties, to make it possible to examine and study what he said. And it is a Fatwa which talks about a legal pledge of allegiance and the people of authority and a ruler to whom allegiance has been pledged by consensus. So it is possible for the Mufti to tell us who these people of authority are, and who chose them, and how they were chosen, and who did they represent, and when did they sit and consult one another, and which candidates for the Imamate did they run through, and then, why – after study and deliberation – did their decision come to rest on Abdullah bin Abd al-Aziz as being the one – among all the candidates – who met the qualifications for rightful rule? Also the Mufti talked about the youth lacking legal knowledge. So why doesn't the Mufti clarify to us just what the academic qualifications of his ruler, Abdullah bin Abd al-Aziz, are? Is it possible for his to enter elementary school? Or does he need lessons from His Eminence to teach him the fundamentals of reading and writing before he can qualify for that?! And the Mufti also talks about a ruler who leads the jihad and defends the country and the worshippers. Would that the Mufti had kept silent and not expose himself and his regime! Could it have missed by his copious knowledge that when the Kingdom was threatened by Saddam, it sought help from the Americans, and procured a suspicious Fatwa permitting the Americans to be called on and saying that they would stay for a few months and then leave, but they've now been there for about 17 years? Why doesn't the Mufti inform us of the ruling concerning the ruler who places his country and its resources at the service of the forces of the infidels and their fleets and aircraft, for them to take off from it to bomb, destroy and burn the Muslims' countries and villages and exterminate thousands of them in Afghanistan and Iraq? Also, oh Mufti who has pledged allegiance to a ruler who defends the lands of Islam, here is Palestine under occupation for more than 80 years, and the Muslims' countries have been occupied one after another, both close to your ruler as well as those far from him. So tell us about the armies mobilized by your ruler which filled the horizons, the aircraft which covered the sun, and the seas which choked the seas to liberate the lands of the Muslims. Actually, tell us about his famous initiative for the recognition of Israel, and about the pressure he put on HAMAS in his palace at Makkah to compromise on four-fifths of Palestine. And tell us, oh Mufti of great knowledge, what is the number of rockets which have been fired from the Land of the Two Sanctuaries to kill the Muslims in Iraq and Afghanistan? What is the number of air sorties flown from the bases of the Land of the Two Sanctuaries against Iraq and Afghanistan? What is the number of ships supplied from the ports of the Land of the Two Sanctuaries to attack Iraq and Afghanistan? And what is the number of barrels of fuel which your ruler has supplied the Crusader forces so they can invade, destroy and bomb Iraq and Afghanistan? And tell us, oh Mufti, why was Jihad against the Russians in Afghanistan an individual obligation, whereas today in Iraq, it is one of the greatest of cardinal sins? And finally, wouldn't have it been more appropriate for this Mufti who rules according to the school of Bush to reproach his so called guardian who rules for his visit with the Pope, who has insulted Islam and Muslims? Is this how

the moderate creed and confrontation of polytheism is supposed to be? Bewildered questions for Al Saud's Mufti, and our appointment is with Allah, and to him we will complain."

Q: "Perhaps this reminds us of one of the notables of the Fiqh of the Marines, among whose latest deviations was his request to the lions of Islam in Algeria to hand over their weapons to the sons of France and agents of America."

Zawahiri: "The problem with these Faqahaa of the Marines is that they have intertwined their destinies with the destinies of the rulers and kings, and have been unable to appreciate the tragic disaster in Algeria, which is that after the Muslim Algerian people presented a million martyrs in defense of Islam against the Crusade, they ended up falling under the repression of butchers serving the interests of America and France. This tragic disaster, which repeats itself in many of the Muslims' countries, is perpetuated, accepted and agreed to by the Fuqahaa of the Marines, but they are the first to shout out whenever the Muslim Ummah confronts its enemies and aims its blows at America and its agents. So they lead the Ummah to defeat, and anesthetize it with their Fatwas which serve the interest of America. One time they rule that Jihad is only to be ordered by America's agents, and another time they permit the fighting of the Muslims under the banner of America, whereas the Mujahideen in Algeria and other lands of Islam are the ones confronting America's Crusade. And here I call on every Muslim in the Maghreb of Islam by the right of "There is no god but Allah" and by his love of the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) to stand by his brothers and sons the Mujahideen, with his self, wealth, opinion, expertise and information."

*[The video cuts away to footage of GSPC/AQIM fighters in Algeria. One of their own speaks to the group]: "Shaykh Abu Mus'ab Abd al-Wadud (may Allah protect him) took part in this blessed operation, which coincided with a visit he made to inspect his troops in the Central region. The number of participants in this operation was no less than 100 Mujahideen all of whom who were burning with desire to crush the fortresses of those who sold their religion, land and honor among the sons of France and slave-agents of America. The Taghut (idol-king) didn't permit this Ummah to be upright, and provided it with the causes of corruption and the causes of obstinacy, and his oppression increased, and the Mujahideen were put to great trial. Some of them have lost their legs, others their hands, and still others their sights, and without a doubt, Allah will not abandon us. All the Mujahideen have suffered, and Allah, the Glorious and Great, is the one who will take care of us. And recently, this Taghut has sought help with America and brought in the Americans, and has sought help with the Jews and Nazarenes: the hate-filled, usurping Jews and the tyrannical Nazarenes. He has brought them to Algeria to fight the Mujahideen and has sought help with them. As for us, we seek help with the Lord of America."*

Q: "OK. We return to Iraq. What is your comment about the Congress's resolution to divide Iraq?"

Zawahiri: "This is the deal which the Crusader invaders struck with the religion-selling charlatans and the secularist traitors, and it was a losing bet from square one. And may Allah reward the Mujahadeen who demolished the American Crusader project and spoiled the opportunity for the religion-selling traders to make forbidden profit and revealed their treason. I had pointed out this division in my first message after the events of September 11th, about five years ago: i.e. more than six months before the invasion of Iraq. And I pointed out that the division won't be limited to Iraq, but will extend to a number of the region's states, and that it is expected that the American campaign will expand to Iran and Pakistan, to destroy and state with a nuclear program in the Middle East, in order to ensure the security of Israel."

Q: "But is Iraq really divided?"

Zawahiri: “All of Iraq – and indeed, all of the Muslims’ lands – must be under the authority of Shari’ah, and Allah permitting, the Muslim Ummah and its Mujahid vanguard will not allow entities loyal to the Crusaders and Jews to be set up there.”

Q: “But the Shiites are the majority in the south and the Kurds are the majority in the north.”

Zawahiri: “Perhaps the Iraqis in the south have discovered the greed of the militias and their disregard for the rituals for which they use to collect money. The fighting in the Karbala and the destruction of the domes of the tombs of al-Husayn and al-Abbas (with both of whom Allah was pleased) has revealed the truth about the warring authorities and shown that they are prepared to fight for control of those tombs, due to the seas of money which it brings them, and shows that although they call on the people to glorify those tombs, they are the first to destroy them should they conflict with their greed. And when the tombs of the two Askari Imams (may Allah have mercy on them) were blown up in Samarra, the Shiite militias falsely accused the Mujahideen, and they spilled the blood of the Muslims under this pretext. But when the domes of al-Husayn and al-Abbas (with both of whom Allah was pleased) were bombarded, they said that this is a dispute between brothers which has been contained. “What, then, is the matter with you? How do you judge?!” (10:35) This bombardment stirred up a number of questions in my mind. Why should a dome of gold be built over the tomb of al-Husayn (with whom Allah was pleased)? Is it possible that al-Husayn (with whom Allah was pleased) could have ordered such a thing? And did al-Husayn (with whom Allah was pleased) have in his lifetime a dome of gold? If he had had a dome of gold during his life, the Muslims wouldn’t have followed him and wouldn’t have loved him, and he would have been just another king. Allah purified the People of the House, and made them a symbol of Zuhd [ascetic-ism] and disdain for this worldly life, so how is it that money is collected in their names?! Why not melt down this dome and spend it on the poor, even the poor among the Shiites themselves, not to mention the poor Sunnis? Why don’t they spend it on the Shiite poor? Moreover, why do they collect it from the Shiite poor and hoard it? This is behavior alien to the spirit and guidelines of Islam, which calls for the spending the Zakaat [alms-tax] in the path of Allah and on the poor and needy and makes war on worship of men and invites to Tawheed. Everyone who still possesses a remnant of intelligence or conscience must rethink many of the things which the religion-dealing traitors preach and promote, and must reread the history of the People of the House in a sober and impartial fashion, because the People of the House (with whom Allah was pleased) were leaders in enjoining of good and forbidding of evil and defense of the constants of Islam and its honor, and their history cannot be understood outside this Quranic context.”

Q: “They claim that they are defending the People of the House against the oppression which they (with whom Allah was pleased) suffered.”

Zawahiri: “They are defending them against whom and with whom? Against the Mujahideen under the banner of the Americans. Some time ago I saw a video of Shiite soldiers training under American supervision and shouting, ‘O’ Ali, O’ Ali.’ Were they honest, they would have said, ‘O’ Bush, O’ Bush’ or ‘O’ Dollar, O’ Dollar!’ I believe that what the Shiite militias in Iraq have perpetrated under Iranian guidance will go down as a mark of shame in the history of Islam, and in fact, in the history of humankind. It is in the nature of nations and peoples to fight the invading occupier, not to bring him and fight under his banner. And the religion-dealing traitors deceive their followers and tell them that they will establish the state of the People of the House in Iraq, but they pretend to forget that they sought the creation of that state on the spears of the American Crusaders and by submitting to them, and that it can’t possibly exist without that. If the Americans have decided to depart under the blows of the Mujahideen, will the puppet militias show resolve? And if the strongest power in the history of mankind—or so they say—was incapable of occupying Iraq, will Iran be able to? I believe that those who think in such a warped fashion deceive themselves before they deceive others and wrong themselves before they wrong others. Actually, I believe that the People of the House (with whom Allah was pleased) have been wrong twice: once at the hands of the unjust rulers who made war on them, and another time—in an even worse fashion—on the hands of the religion-traders, who used them as a way to

the collecting and hoarding of the people's money, and a way to the worship of humans in order to collect money from invented rituals, then destroyed these rituals with mortar rockets when they fought over the spoils, and cooperated with the infidels invading the lands of the Muslims and forbade their followers to wage Jihad against them, and fled from the battle, and approved and agreed to the American-made secular constitution, and demanded—and continue to demand—that the Crusader invasion forces remain on Muslim soil. If this is what they call genuine Muhammadan Islam, what then is treasonous American Islam?"

Q: "But they talk about Muqtada al-Sadr as representing the Shiite resistance to the Americans in Iraq."

Zawahiri: "Muqtada al-Sadr is one of Iran's lieutenants in Iraq, and in 2004, he announced the handover of the weapons of the 'Army of the Mahdi' to the Americans, and that the 'Army of the Mahdi' is a civil institution participating in the political process. And following the recent events of Shiite-Shiite fighting between the 'Army of the Mahdi' and the 'Supreme Council,' Muqtada al-Sadr announced the freezing of the 'Army of the Mahdi' for six months. So this is the Shiite resisting the Americans in Iraq. And the skirmishes which take place between him and the Americans are American-Iranian disputes over expansion of influence. Otherwise, Muqtada al-Sadr [would] announce the handover of his weapons to the Americans."

Q: "Some talk about a clandestine resistance to the Americans in the south of Iraq."

Zawahiri: "And why should it be clandestine? Has resistance become shameful? I can understand why the plans and makeup of the resistance might be clandestine, but why doesn't it reveal its name and its operations? Don't you agree that the matter is contradictory?"

Q: "But what is the way to stop Shiite-Sunni fighting in Iraq?"

Zawahiri: "Don't ask the one under attack not to defend himself; instead, ask the attacker to refrain from his aggression, in order to create an opportunity for trying to stop the fighting."

Q: "Could you elaborate a little on this phrase?"

Zawahiri: "That is, he who cooperates with the Crusader occupier must stop all such cooperation and declare Jihad against the Crusader invaders, and not flee from the fight when the two sides meet. And he must stop fighting the Mujahideen under the banner of the Cross and its puppet government in Baghdad, and he must end massacres against the Muslims in Iraq, and he must release their captives and seek to compensate those harmed by his crimes, and then there might be an opportunity for mutual understanding."

Q: "But what about the Kurds?"

Zawahiri: "The Kurds are a genuine part of the Muslim Ummah, and every Muslim is proud of their sacrifice and history. And all Muslims sympathize with the injustices they suffered at the hands of the fanatical Baathist regime, and I think that their brothers the Mujahideen in Iraq—whether Arab, Kurdish, or Turkmen—are understanding of many of their demands, as stated by Shaykh Abu Umar al-Baghdadi (may Allah protect him). But what no Muslim—Kurdish or otherwise—can possibly accept is that Iraqi Kurdistan be ruled by a secular government loyal to the Crusaders and cooperating with the Jews."

Q: "OK. You mentioned that the American campaign might expand to Iran, and here we would like to get your opinion on a question which is echoed now and then, to wit: why don't the Mujahideen put aside their differences with Iran as they face a common enemy seeking to eradicate them all. What is your comment on that?"

Zawahiri: “My comment on that is that we used to—even before the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq—concentrate on confronting the American-led Zionist-Crusader alliance in its contemporary Crusade against the Muslim Ummah, but all of a sudden, we discovered Iran collaborating with America in its invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq... The leaders of Iran, like Rafsanjani and others, have declared more than once that were it not for the role played by Iran, American blood would have flowed profusely in Afghanistan. And the leaders of Iran never tire—in their statements, press and media—of repeating the ridiculous joke that says that al-Qaida and the Taliban are agents of America... And as the Islamic Emirate in Afghanistan was protecting its Muslim brothers and refusing to hand them over to America, and challenging—with its faith, patience, and resolve—America and the rest of the Crusader West and their aides, Iran was backing and financing the armed groups in the Northern Alliance which had close ties to American intelligence. And this is something which is no longer a secret. In fact, this was officially documented by the American Congress’s report on September 11th... Yet despite that, Iran continued to back them openly and secretly and host Burhanuddin Rabbani as the legitimate president of Afghanistan. And when the American invasion of Afghanistan began, Iran signed an agreement with the United States, claiming that it was merely for the rescue of American wounded and soldiers. And Iran facilitated the entrance of the forces of Ismael Khan through its borders to Herat, which they took control of, then handed over to the Crusader forces. And Iran recognized the puppet government in Kabul as soon as it was established, and indeed, the Iranian foreign ministry attended the installation ceremony, in hopes of getting his share of the loot, but the Americans were more cunning than he was. And when Shaykh Hekmatyar (may Allah protect him) stated that the Karzai government is a puppet government which doesn’t represent the Afghan people, the Iranian government expelled him from its territory.”