

Sheikh Abu Yahya al-Libi, An Interview with as-Sahab

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Interviewer: All praise is due to Allah, and may prayers and peace be upon the Messenger of Allah Muhammad and upon his family, companions and allies. Honorable Shaykh: if you may, tell us first about the stages of your arrest and how and where it occurred?

al-Libi: All praise is due to Allah, and may prayers and peace be upon the Messenger of Allah and upon his family, companions and allies. After the blessed blows taken by America in the events of September, America announced that the world had been divided into two: either with us or against us. Following this division, the government of Pakistan headed by Pervez Musharraf took a traitorous position as it declared its total support and complete backing of America.

Subsequently, the sweeping campaign of arrests began, targeting all Mujahideen residing on Pakistani soil, and not only the Mujahideen but also all foreigners residing in Pakistan, including those legally studying in the religious schools and so on, and others. So during this oppressive, sweeping campaign, many of the Mujahid brothers were arrested, and we received our share of these arrests and I was arrested on May 28th, 2002, in the city of Karachi, at the hands of Pakistani intelligence and police but with the guidance and direction of American intelligence. And as you know, America had declared its all-out war on all Mujahideen, and not merely alQaida or Taliban. Its campaign was against all Jihadi movements in general and I was affiliated with a Jihadi group, the well-known Fighting Islamic Group [of Libya] and as part of this campaign, I was arrested and taken to one of the police stations in Pakistan, and after only six hours, I was handed over to the Americans, who were running a prison in Karachi. And that's how I was arrested.

Interviewer: You passed through a number of prisons. Could you tell us about some of those American detention centers?

al-Libi: The story of the prisons is a tragic one. If truth be told, our arrest revealed to us many things which were previously hidden and which one can only discover by experience and by direct contact with the Americans. We found a great difference and huge discrepancy between what we see and hear in the media and the reality which is hidden from many Muslims and even many Mujahideen, due to the blackout America imposes on all media. First of all, I say that the whole world is now part of the United States of America. Its center is Washington and there isn't a country on earth - however much it claims to be hostile or opposed to America - which doesn't have a prison which the US uses against the Mujahideen. In Pakistan—Pakistan is one of the biggest detention centers for the Mujahideen. In Karachi, this metropolis in which there are more than 20,000,000 Muslims, there are American-run prisons. And the country which really contains large prisons and massive detention centers for the Mujahideen and their supporters is Afghanistan. All of Afghanistan has become a prison for the Mujahideen, and the biggest of the prisons used by the US are (1) the central prison, or - as the Mujahideen refer to it - the Prison of Darkness, or the Prison of Torture, which is located in Kabul, and (2) Bagram prison, which is well-known to the media, and from which Allah saved us by His Grace. There's also Guantanamo, similarly well-known. And as for the prisons which are located in the Arab countries, they are countless. When I was arrested in late May, immediately in the very first session, the Lebanese interrogator of course wanted to frighten and terrify me, and so among the threats he made, he asked me, "Which prison do you want us to take you to? To Syria? To Jordan? To Egypt? To Israel?" And then he said, "Even to Libya!" And of course at that time, the relations between Libya and America were ostensibly bad. He told me, "Don't be fooled by what

you see in the media about there being some hostility between Libya and America." I would say that in fact all the Arab countries are part of the US and complete the number of US states.

Interviewer: The media have carried pictures showing American troops torturing detainees, especially in Abu Ghayb prison. If you may, tell us what you saw or heard of violations inside American prisons, especially those that you passed through.

al-Libi: I say that what the media have carried and especially what occurred at Abu Ghayb in Iraq is insignificant compared to what happens to the Mujahid brothers in the American prisons. First of all, methods of torture are unlimited. That is, the primary goal of the interrogators is extracting information, and their hands are free when it comes to the way they extract this information - i.e., they stop at nothing. And everything you could possibly imagine has been suffered by the Mujahideen. The worst thing we could possibly mention in this regard is violation of honor. Many brothers have been subjected to this thing, and this is not a mere allegation we make, but something we have heard directly from those who suffered this problem. Also, the severe beatings which these prison guards inflict — and especially those brothers who were transferred to the Arab prisons like those in Jordan, Egypt and elsewhere: in these prisons, what the Mujahideen suffer is many times greater than what they suffer in the other prisons run by the Americans directly, like Bagram. In spite of the harshness which they suffer in the latter, if we compare the prisons which the Arab puppet governments control with what our brothers the prisoners and Mujahideen suffer in the prisons controlled by the Americans, we see a big difference, although conditions in all the prisons are severe. There is a special prison for torture in Kabul which is the primary central prison used by the Americans against the brothers. This prison was visited by all the imprisoned brothers - especially the Arabs, non-Afghans, and some leaders of the Taliban and Hekmetyar's Hizb-i-Islami. These all passed through this prison, which consists of solitary (one- man) cells, in front of each one which is a large loudspeaker. Music is played in that prison 24 hours a day, and there are some of the brothers who had to listen to this music - Western, Eastern, and otherwise - continuously for one full year, until they developed psychological complexes, and so you find that some of the brothers, if they hear the least sound of music, they start crying because they are reminded of the tragedy they experienced. Additionally, some brothers had cold water used against them in the biting winter: a barrel full of ice-cold water is brought and the brother - naked and stripped of his clothes - screams "O Allah, O Allah" desiring some mercy, and the arrogant infidel fighter against Allah and His Messenger replies and says to him, "Where's Allah so He can come and remove you from this barrel?" Then the brother is taken and thrown into the cold cell — the brothers remain suspended on the wall at a height of approximately 60 centimeters for six or four or three months — his hands are not freed neither for sleep nor eating nor relieving himself, but only when he is taken for interrogation — the use of dogs to frighten is common, especially in Bagram prison. As for the prison which was established in the headquarters of the Islamic Emirate in the house of Amir-ul-Mumineen Mullah Muhammad Umar, may Allah preserve him: not many know anything about this prison, but it's one of the harshest prisons used by the Americans against the Taliban. The room inside the prison is only one meter by one meter. Inside it is a large spotlight which is directed upon the naked brother prisoner, and when the spotlight is turned on, the room heats up because the spotlight is very hot, and in this heat, cold water is all of a sudden poured on the brother. And it continues like this all the time: spotlight/water/spotlight/water, until the brother nearly loses his mind. These are some of the tragedies suffered by our brothers in the prisons, and if we were to continue, I think it would require volumes. This country [America] which claims that it respects the human being and human rights and strives for equality and the lifting of oppression from the Arab peoples and the spread of democracy: this is its real face, about which many Muslims know nothing. And by the grace of Allah, what we saw in their prisons revealed to us their evil and introduced us to their

true nature, and we recognized that they are the enemies of Allah and His Messenger. The slogans they raise - some of which we just mentioned - are all phony, and if they ever want to apply them, then on non-Muslims; as for the Muslims, they have no right to them.

Interviewer: Were there any sisters under arrest?

al-Libi: Yes. In the house in which I was arrested there was a Pakistani family living with me on the upper floor, and the woman was arrested by the lowly, despicable Pakistani intelligence, and remained one entire month in prison in another city - not her city. Also, in Bagram prison, from which Allah made easy our deliverance, there was a Pakistani woman who spent two full years in this prison in which there are over 500 prisoners, all of them men of course, except for this one woman in solitary confinement. This woman was, I think, over 40 years old, and was treated in prison like a man in all respects: in her going out for relieving herself, in her being restrained with chains, in her orange clothing with which they clothe the prisoners, in their interrogation of her - i.e., all the techniques they use against the male prisoners were used against this woman. This woman remained 2 full years in prison, until she lost her mind. I still wish that I knew where this woman is, I wish I knew her name, because when we were in prison, we really felt her tragedy and we felt the oppression and suppression she was suffering. We stayed in solitary confinement for 6 months and one month and 2 months - i.e., intermittently, and we know what solitary confinement means, and what those single cells mean. It means being cut off from the world, it means being put in the grave while you're still alive. That's solitary confinement. So because of what we saw of her suffering and oppression, Allah made the way easy for us and we took a stance to help and aid this woman with what we possessed and were capable of. We were captive prisoners and the prisoner is like a slave: he is powerless to help himself. So I and some of my brothers - including some of those who were delivered with me from Bagram prison - staged a hunger strike for 6 straight days. The soldiers came to us and asked us, "Why are you refusing food?" We told them that it was because of this poor woman. Then they said to us that this woman is a criminal and deserves this. But we persisted and were punished and put in solitary confinement for one full month. And all praise is due to Allah: we persevered and Allah bestowed His favor upon this woman and delivered her, This first of all was by the Grace of Allah Alone and then by virtue of the Muslim coming to the aid of a Muslim, and in this is a simple lesson for all Muslims: that you shouldn't belittle anything which you are able to provide to your captive brethren and Mujahid brothers. If Allah the Exalted sees in you honesty, sincerity, and real concern for Allah's religion and the suffering of your brothers, then Allah will put His blessings in this simple reason. You only have this thing which you possess and you can't have more than it. So Allah spited those arrogant ones and responded to this request. And it is from His generosity and favor that He freed us in a way so fantastic that even we, who experienced and lived it, almost can't believe how we exited that fortified fortress of which they are so proud - Bagram prison.

Interviewer: You went through numerous stages in interrogation. Could you give us a picture of the methods of interrogation followed in the American detention centers?

al-Libi: The truth is, our meetings with the interrogators introduced us to a number of things. First, we used to read in the books that the unbelief of the apostate is stronger and harsher than that of the original unbeliever, and that is a fact which we experienced, and I think the brothers imprisoned in the prisons of the Arab idol-king puppet rulers know this truth. The vilest and most hateful of the interrogators and the most abusive of them to the prisoners are those of Arab origin, especially the Egyptians, Jordanians, and Lebanese. They comprise the most vicious and wicked group among the interrogators whom we saw, whether it be in the dirtiness of the language they use against the prisoners during the investigation, or in the torture and their car-

rying it out and supervising it by themselves during interrogation and imprisonment. This is a fact which we discovered through experience and not from mere stories or words we've read in books. On the other hand, we discovered that the interrogators, whether they belong to the CIA, FBI, or military intelligence, we discovered the shallowness of their information, whether it be intelligence-related or just their general level of education. I'll give you an example, and it's really an amusing one - let me tell it to you. In the first interrogation session, a Lebanese interrogator and with him an American man sat in front of me. This Lebanese interrogator - who was a Christian - wanted to show me that he understood something of the religion, since I was an observant [Muslim] and belonged to an Islamic group. He wanted to jump on this bandwagon, so he said to me, "You must use your reasoning and be open-minded if you want to save yourself from your present situation." Then he said to me - in a Lebanese accent which I try to imitate - "What does Allah say in the Holy Quran?" I said, "What does he say?" He replied, "Allah says, 'T'qilha [tie it! and go ahead.] !Prophetic Hadeth] After that, I wanted to find out the meaning of this "verse" which he mentioned according to this "Quran" of his which he knows so well and its connection to his advice to me to use my reason. And the answer came in agreement with the "verse" which he mentioned and he said, "T'qilha means use your reasoning." So I said to myself, "Abu Hanifah can relax!" This is the level of the interrogators with whom we dealt. I don't deny that among them are experts and devious ones who are skilled in interrogation and have the ability to extract information through cunning and deception, but the majority of those whom we saw and dealt with and with whom our brothers dealt were as we have noted.

Interviewer: By virtue of your arrest, what did you discover about the character of the Americans?

al-Libi: The truth is, we found the American character, or the American soldier with whom we had long-term contact, to be a mix of doctrinal, behavioral, moral, and ideological deviation. I have not found a description more precise and fitting than His statement, Exalted be He: "And those who reject Allah enjoy [this world] and eat as cattle eat; and the Fire will be their abode." (Muhammad 12) And His statement: "But whosoever turns away from My Message, verily for him is a miserable life, and We shall resurrect him blind on the Day of Judgment." (Ta Ha 124) We saw them in comfort and ease, with everything they want in front of them. At Bagram base, the guard sits in front of you guarding the cage with a computer in front of him on which he surfs the Internet. This is the degree of opulence and luxury which they have reached, yet they live lost and alienated. We - Arabs and Muslims - each one of us is proud that he belongs to a specific family and that he knows his father and mother and tribe. This is from the fundamentals of our Arab and Islamic affiliation. But when you come to the American soldier, you find him lost, and estranged. Ask him where his father is, and he will tell you, "I don't know." Ask him what his father's name is, and he will tell you, "I don't know." Just like that, and with utter frankness. And not just one soldier or two or three, but a large slice of the American army. The American soldier will come to you and express to you his social grievance and ruin and he will curse and abuse his mother, saying, "My mother left me when I was little — I'm ruined — I'm destroyed." He says this, but he can't talk about his complaint with his brother soldier because he has the same problem. So he comes to you because he knows that you will listen to him and he trusts you, so he relates his problem to you. The American character is cowardly: one shout from the prisoners shakes the prison and a general alert is declared in the prison. The American character is lost, in search of the way, in search of the path: "Where are we going? We don't know." The American character engages in purely material dealings: not merely between them and the prisoners, but among themselves also. I mean that the animosity and feuding which occurs between the soldiers is a characteristic inseparable from them. I'll give you an example: in the prison, they are divided into two squads, a squad which works at night and a squad which works in the day. Each squad has a 12-hour shift. The night squad curses the day squad & the

day squad curses the night squad. I thought of the statement of Allah: "Every time a new people enters [the fire], it curses its sister." (Al-'Araaf 38) So this is in this world, and it's what awaits them in the hereafter as well. Whenever a problem occurs, they say, "It's all because of the night squad." And the night squad says, "It's all because of the day squad." Also, the American soldier doesn't know the destiny or outcome of this battle which he's gotten into, which afflicts him with distress and complaints, as he awaits the moment in which his tour of duty in Afghanistan ends so he can return to his country. And when the date of his return to America nears, you'll find him in a state of happiness and cheerfulness and exultation, and he'll come and inform the prisoners, saying, "I'll be leaving soon." And some of the prisoners speak with them about conditions in the prison and the hardship they face, and they respond by saying, "We're prisoners like you, we've lost our minds." I swear by Allah, this is what they say! One of them will tell you, "I'm insane, I've lost my mind. I leave the house to go to the prison, and I leave the prison to go to the house, and I leave the house to go to the prison, and I'm here on this base which I am unable to leave." For one full year, and he has one month in which he satisfies his lusts in the countries of his choice.

Interviewer: That's how life was for the prison guards and interrogators. How was it in regard to the Mujahid brothers?

al-Libi: We spoke just now about the condition of the American soldier, and usually, someone who lives free and has all the goods and delights of life provided to him lives in contentment, happiness, and tranquility, while someone who lives in a locked room, forbidden from speaking, with a daily routine and set program for 2 or 3 years will suffer from distress, loneliness and other complaints. However, the reality is that the light of faith contrasts with the darkness of unbelief. I'm talking about the high spirits and relaxation which we experienced and saw in our brothers. And I don't mean just our high-ranking Mujahid brothers, but rather the general population of prisoners, including the illiterate ones who can neither read nor write. You see all of them in a state of cheerfulness, happiness, and rest. The American soldier will come in amazement and ask, "How can you live like this?" I'll tell you a story: we, the Arabs, were in one room, and when they would take all of us out - and this was related to us by one of the American soldiers - when we would all go out for exercise or showers, he said, "I come and sit where the prisoner sits and sleep where he sleeps, and I feel as if I will explode - I feel like I am suffocating. And I say to myself, how can this prisoner spend all his time in this condition?" The truth is, the state of mind experienced by the prisoners isn't just in Bagram. We passed through many prisons: I alone passed through four prisons and was held in solitary cells, and the brothers we lived with passed through numerous prisons, not only in Afghanistan but also in Egypt and Jordan, until they were brought here. And yet you find them in a state of happiness, laughter, and joy. And perhaps - I swear by Allah that this isn't an exaggeration - perhaps in more of a state of faith, devotion and happiness than they would have been had they been outside the prison. The condition of the prisoners in general is one of high morale, and I state this from experience. Many of the brothers suffered unimaginably awful, difficult conditions, and despite that I have yet to hear that one of the Mujahid brothers went back on his principles or beliefs. On the contrary, there some who may have had some deviation - maybe ideological deviation or a [mistaken] conception of the ground realities - but after living in the prison and coming into contact with these infidels and coming into contact with the Mujahideen, they amended their ideas. And some of them said, "If I had know the Americans and the American soldier had this disposition and were in this state, I swear by Allah, they wouldn't have captured me." And the fact is, the person says this, but his capture was decree of Allah, the Exalted. As for the relationship between the Arabs and the Afghans: it is one of brotherhood, loyalty, and the bonds forged by common faith and creed. The fact is, the Afghans - and the Taliban in particular - don't feel in the least that what happened might be - as is broached - because of the Arabs. They feel

that their problem is the same as ours, and also that their destiny is the same as ours. So the relationship was strong, to the extent that when we would be moved from room to room, they would - I swear by Allah - bid us farewell with sobs and weeping, and when we would enter a room, they would greet us by crying. This shows that the bonds of faith are superior to all bonds, as Allah, Exalted is He, said: "Verily, the believers are brothers."

Interviewer: Did you meet any of the leaders of the Taliban, and how were they while in prison?

al-Libi: Yes, we met some of the leaders of the Taliban, and I might not be able to mention some of the names here lest it lead to some problems for them. But I swear by Allah and testify for His sake that the brother Taliban whom we met in prison were among the best we have seen of Allah's worshippers - whether in terms of piety and fear of and devotion to Him or in terms of their disassociation from and rejection of the unbelievers and their methodologies or in terms of their loyalty to the believers, to the extent that they feel that they have been neglectful of your rights. He feels that what happened to you - and you're now together with him in prison - is his fault and that he didn't protect you sufficiently. So those Talib leaders whom we saw were of the Highest standard and truly deserves to be leaders of the Ummah, and I don't say this out of exaggeration, [empty I praise, and excessive flattery which oversteps the bounds, but I say it as testimony for Allah's sake about which I will be questioned in His presence.

Interviewer: What information and news about the outside world used to reach you?

al-Libi: Prison, in reality, means the grave. The prisons which we passed through were tantamount to graves, and the news which leaks through to the prisoners comes from limited sources, and most of it comes from the new detainees who are brought to Bagram prison. They have some information, but because they perhaps spent some time in other prisons, their news is old by the time it reaches us. There was a magazine called "Sulh" [Peace] which was published in English, Pushto, and Persian. However, it didn't contain news, but instead, flattery, praise and ideological corruption meant to glorify and convert to the puppet Karzai regime. Sometimes some of the soldiers would come and relate to us some of the news from Iraq, because they felt bitterness - and these are their words - they feel bitter because of their going into Iraq. They say - and this is from their mouths - "we understand our entering Afghanistan, because al-Qaida and Taliban are there, but what is the motive for our going to Iraq? Where are the nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction which Bush claimed were present in Iraq? Saddam has been captured, so why are we still in Iraq? Every day, American troops are killed in Iraq, and we - the troops - are the only ones paying the price." So in a demonstration of the bitterness which they feel in their hearts and in a condemnation of their government's blind policies, they come and get it off their chest with stories and news of what is happening in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Interviewer: During your escape from prison, you passed through a number of regions inside Afghanistan. How were you treated by the general public?

al-Libi: We spent a good amount of time, traveled long distances, and visited many houses during our journey which began with our exit from Bagram prison and ended with our reaching the Mujahid brothers. By Allah, every single man whom we met and every single house which we entered was sympathetic to us and supportive of us. By Allah's grace, they sheltered and clothed us and gave us the money that we needed and showed us the way and warned us about the checkpoints which are on the main roads. They gave us a hero's welcome. Our news was well-known to the Afghans whom we met, so as soon as we would show up, they would ask, "You're the four who escaped from Bagram?" And we would reply, "Yes, we're the four who escaped

from Bagram." And despite their fear and poverty, they - by Allah - helped us with everything they could possibly help us with, to the extent that some of them - I swear - took off the clothes they were wearing and dressed us in them. So we found them to be completely sympathetic, and we found in them nothing but total hatred for the American forces and their puppet government, the Karzai regime, and disassociation from it and that they are awaiting the day of relief which will come at the hands of the Mujahideen. So what the media have reported - that the Afghan people are supportive of the Karzai regime and that they have acquired stability and economic growth, and that they were happy to put the period of Taliban rule behind them - all of this has no basis whatsoever on the ground, and this is what we experienced and saw, and were it not so, then how could we reach this place if Allah hadn't placed these good-hearted, supportive, helpful at our service? How could we have traveled this long distance? How could we eat and drink? We left Bagram prison without clothes, wearing only pants. How could we have passed through the cities and villages, and traversed the crops and fields? From where did we get our clothing? From where did we get the money with which we bought things? All of this was through the support of these people. When we would enter [a house], even the women would welcome us - event he old women would welcome us and would want to shake our hands and kiss our hands out of love and support for the Mujahideen. And when these Afghans would bid us farewell from their homes, they bade us farewell with tears, sobs, embraces, and fear that we might fall into the hands of [the enemy], and with continuous prayer for us.

Interviewer: While in prison, perhaps you saw some of the leaders of the Mujahideen. Can you tell us about some of them?

al-Libi: Without a doubt - and this is something we must recognize -the Mujahideen have paid a price in the campaign which the US has waged against them. But this is not a shame or defect - we don't say that it is a shame or defect. We call ourselves Mujahideen, and they are those who raise the slogan of Jihad, and what is Jihad? Jihad is made up of exertion, difficulty, exhaustion, and hardship, and in this, they take pride and find prestige. So this campaign involved some of the heads and leaders of the Mujahideen and some of their role-models and some who sacrificed themselves, and their time for the sake of championing Allah's religion. We mention as an example the Mujahid hero Khalid Shaykh Muhammad. The Ummah (Islamic nation) doesn't appreciate the importance of this man, nor the services which he rendered to Allah's religion. And how sorry we were that this brother fell into the hands of the Americans, but Allah - Exalted is He - wanted something, and there's no doubt that what Allah chose for him and the Mujahideen will be better for them. Among them aso is the brave leader Ibn Shaykh al-Libi. I saw Ibn Shaykh al-Libi and we were together for four months in Panjsher prison. I would meet and speak with him and I would ask him, "Shaykh, how's morale?" and he would reply, "10 over 10!" meaning high, even though he suffered severely in the American Prison, and he was a thin, weak man and he's become, as we say, "skin and bones" i.e. very weak, yet he's patient and looks forward to Allah's reward and anticipates the relief of Allah, the Exalted, and he used to say, "If Allah the Exalted wants something, he prepares its causes, and the only reason Allah steered the Americans to Afghanistan - the graveyard of their predecessors the British and the Russians - and to Iraq - whose people are renowned for their fighting, perseverance, and fierceness - is that Allah wants to bring them to an end." That's what he would say. So we ask Allah to release them and the other leaders. And among the leaders of the Taliban, there was Malawi Noor Jalal, the deputy chief of intelligence, a good man who was brutally tortured in the Prison of Darkness in Kabul before being transferred to Bagram, where he was when we left the prison.

Interviewer: Did you have anything to say to the Muslim scholars in particular and the Islamic nation in general?

al-Libi: I say to the Muslim Ulema: Muslim Ulema, what is it you're waiting for? What is it that makes you refrain? I say this to some of the Muslim Ulema who have disowned the Mujahideen, repudiated their actions, and dedicated their pens, pulpits and mouths to slandering Mujahideen. I say to them: don't you know that one day you shall stand in front of Allah? Don't you know that you shall be questioned about every word you say? Don't you know that you will be held accountable for each testimony you give - whether for the unbelievers or against the Mujahideen? Don't you know that this world is short-lived and will pass and end, after which you will harvest the fruits of what you do today? Muslim Ulema: who will awaken the Ummah from its coma? Who will arouse concern in this Ummah? Why do we always hear from the Mujahid scholars, "Go and perform Jihad; Jihad is obligatory in Iraq"? Why don't we ever hear a Mujahid scholar say, "Come to Jihad"? Why don't we hear them say, "Come on, come to us"? Why aren't there scholars in the arenas of Jihad? If Jihad is an individual obligation, is it obligatory on the youth only? What has exempted you? Your knowledge? What has excused you from this duty? Muslim Ulema: it is essential that you free yourselves from this painful reality. You must repudiate these puppet governments which terrorize and frighten you. I swear by Allah, You shall never taste the sweetness of faith, nor the dignity of the believer, nor the glory and power of true belief and certainty in Allah, until and unless you enter the arenas of Jihad and experience the Jihad firsthand instead of from a distance. So we request the Muslim Ulema to stand beside their brothers and not confront them nor be a burden upon them, nor force the Mujahideen to sacrifice some of their energy and effort to respond to their misconceptions. We expect the Muslim Ulema to themselves be providers of fatwas, guidance, education and motivation. Regarding the duty of motivation, this great duty which Allah assigned to His Prophet, saying: "So fight in Allah's Cause - you are held responsible only for yourself - and rouse the believers." (An-Nisa 84): if the righteous, sincere Ulema don't carry out this forgotten act of worship, who will? Who do we expect to say to the Mujahideen, "Go ahead"? Who do we expect to say to them, "Make sacrifices"? Who do we expect to say to them, "Slay the enemies of God"? Why do we always - or almost always - find many of the Ulema standing as an obstacle in the path of Jihad? Is there a clearer and purer banner than the one that the Mujahideen have raised in this era, whether in Afghanistan or Iraq or Palestine or elsewhere? If the Mujahideen have made some mistakes, then that's because of your negligence and absence from their midst. They're making every effort for their actions to be in conformity with the tradition of the Prophet, peace be upon him, and mistakes befall them because they're human or because of their lack of knowledge due to your absence from the field. So if you refrain, it's not the duty of the Mujahideen to join you in refraining and abandon the fields of Jihad and let the enemies of God kill, slaughter, violate honor, and demolish mosques, for us to say, "Leave the Jihad, the Jihad has brought nothing but corruption, destruction, and calamities upon the Ummah." The Jihad which has exposed these puppet governments which have raised the banner of total loyalty to the enemies of Allah, the Jews and Christians: were it not for this Jihad, they wouldn't have been exposed. And today, we see major conferences which are being held why? To combat terrorism. And we see proposals like the proposal made by the Saudi idol-King Abdullah for the creation of an entire organization modeled after the United Nations dedicated to countering terrorism. Why have these proposals emerged at this time? Because of the agony and distress they have suffered at the hands of the Mujahideen. Yes, the Mujahideen have suffered, but this is Jihad. Among them are those who have been killed, captured, displaced, and wounded — some of them are poor, some of them cannot find a place to live or settle, but this is Jihad. Your task, Ulema of Islam, your assignment, is today greater than it was before. Today the Ummah needs you, it needs you to stand by it. The Mujahideen are calling out to you and asking you to stand at their side, to enter with them the arenas of Jihad. The Mujahid is waiting to find a sincere scholar who will stand with him in battle. As for the Muslims in general, what we ask of them is what we are doing now. What we ask of all Muslims is that they know that the battle which the Mujahideen are waging isn't, as the media likes to portray it, a battle exclusive to a

particular group - a group of bandits or terrorists. No, it's a decisive, crucial battle in which the Ummah plays a part, because the Ummah is being targeted in this battle: targeted in its beliefs, targeted in its morals, targeted in its behavior, targeted in its ideas. So today, the Ummah in its entirety, including men, women and girls, must stand beside its sons. So we tell the Islamic Ummah: a little patience, a little encouragement, and a little sacrifice and support for your brothers the Mujahideen, that we might pick this fruit which for so long blood has been spilled and limbs severed in order to reach it.

[Interviewer asks al-Libi a question in Arabic that is not presented in English subtitles]

al-Libi: One of the greatest of the favors which Allah has bestowed upon us is that he has delivered us from the grip of the wrongdoers. This is a favor. whenever we think about it, we feel so humbled toward Allah. Exalted is He. No one ever thought - no, to this very day, we don't consider ourselves deserving of Allah favoring us in this way. And as we said before, Allah, the Exalted, made things easy for us from start to finish, and brought us to the lands of honor and sacrifice: the lands of Jihad for which our hearts longed when we were in those dark and secluded rooms, and here we are, standing with our brothers the Mujahideen. And we were aid and reinforcement for them, by the grace of Allah, and glad tidings for our brothers: It's an important lesson which Allah has taught us, the Mujahideen, and the Islamic Ummah, as well as the unbelievers whose hearts are full of darkness: that everything is in Allah's Hands, and that if He wants something, He says to it, "Be," and it is. It wasn't by our power that we left prison. We left without shirts on our backs. However, Allah wanted to show us the extent of our need for Him and that we are stripped of everything, so He - to humiliate and spite those infidels and demonstrate their weakness - brought us out from their midst. And the fact is, when I saw pictures of Bagram base , I couldn't believe that it was the base from which we exited, because we weren't let outside without our eyes being blindfolded; it was like a big city - so how did we escape? Only by the grace of Allah, the Exalted. Allah, the Exalted, is the One who favored us with our exit from prison, and it's He who made the way easy, & it's He who has sheltered us like this, so with His permission, we shall continue on this path, the path of Jihad in Allah's way. We've tasted the pleasure of Jihad and we can't leave it. And by the grace of Allah, He has shown us the weakness of our enemies and shown us our strength by way of our weakness. When we were weak, Allah showed us that we are strong, so we shall, with Allah's permission, support our brothers, and we are a part of them, and we shall, Allah willing, combat these Christians and their apostate helpers, and we shall never abandon the path of Jihad. Allah willing, we won't leave the path of combat until Allah grants us martyrdom or rules between us and them, and He is the best of rulers.

[Interviewer asks al-Libi a question in Arabic that is not presented in English subtitles]

al-Libi: Yes. I continue to tell the Mujahideen what Allah told them: "O you who believe! Persevere in patience and constancy; vie [with one another] in such perseverance; strengthen each other; and fear Allah; that he may prosper." (Aal Imraan 200) So you must be patient and avoid all sins, for they are the gateway to defeat. We aren't defeated by our lack of manpower and weaponry, but are defeated by the sins we commit and our disobedience to Allah. So we - and this is directed to all Muslims but especially the Mujahideen among them - we must fear Allah and be very humble and break down in front of Him, and avoid conceitedness and self-importance, and always be aware that every victory we win is a Divine gift and present for which we must be thankful . And part of being thankful for it is that we preserve it. And I say to my captive brothers whom we left behind, whether those whom we saw or those whom we did not: we're continuing on the path, with Allah's permission. And I say to the leaders of the Mujahideen, and foremost among them the chivalrous imam who lives outside his time and who

renewed for the Ummah the meaning of loyalty and disassociation, the Commander of the Faithful, Mullah Muhammad Umar: to him I say, we are still committed to our pledge and are still on the path, and I give you the good news that Allah's victory is coming your way, and I give you the good news that Allah shall give you power on earth better, stronger, and wider than you had before. And know that what you lost is nothing and that what Allah has given you of the Muslims' love of you and their prayers for you night and day is greater than what you lost. And we say to the renewer of the banner of Jihad in this era, the Mujahid Shaykh Usama bin Ladin: continue with Allah's blessings, for Allah shall make you happy with the demise of this arrogant, immoral nation. Your helpers are behind you, and shall neither stop nor be stopped, with Allah's permission. Also, we say to the unsheathed sword which Allah has drawn against the enemies of Allah and His Messenger, the virtuous Mujahid Shaykh Abu Musab al-Zarqawi: slay the enemies of Allah, and slay them some more. And know that Allah the Exalted is the one who bestowed on you this status. And be conscious of the trust which has been put on your shoulders, and know that the Ummah looks forward to more from you, and that the oppressed and displaced are looking for and awaiting a refuge in which to take refuge. So don't neglect his trust but preserve and protect it. And we say to the virtuous Mujahid commander Shaykh Abu al-Layth al-Qasimi: Allah has prepared this matter for you and raised your status because you took the path of Jihad in Allah's way so be firm on this path and don't glance right or left nor become upset or concern yourself with the collapsed and fallen ones who litter the length of the path. And I also address the Mujahid leader and ascetic worshiper whom we consider to be so but we do not purify before Allah, Dr. Ayman al-Zawahiri: know that Allah has made it easy for you to take the path of Jihad and made you firm on it, so keep up your motivation of the Ummah and convey to it your words which move the hearts of the Muslims and enrage the unbelievers, and be firm on this path and increase your guidance, advice and direction to the Mujahideen in the East and West. Also, we can't forget our brothers the captives in the prisons of the apostates, whether in Egypt like the Mujahid Shaykh Abu Yasir Rifai Ahmad Taha, or our brothers in the prisons of Libya like the virtuous Shaykh Abu Mu- nadir al-Saa'idi and the leader Abu Abdullah al-Sadiq. Also, the patient Shaykh in Jordan, Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi, and the Shaykh of the patient ones in this era, the man who taught the Ummah how the scholar should be, how his patience should be, how his sacrifice should be, how his declaration of the truth should be, and that the Mujahid should declare this word and not fear the blame of a blamer, Shaykh Umar Abd al-Rahman, may Allah free him and those brothers who are with him. I have no doubt that one of the reasons for the continuing destruction and misfortune which has struck America is its animosity to this man. As the Prophet, peace be upon him, said [in a Hadeeth Qudsi], "I have declared war on he who is hostile to a friend of Mine." And so this is our message to the captives and all the Mujahideen in the East and West, and we send our sincere greetings to the martyrdom seekers in Palestine and Iraq, those who have brought back to the Ummah the meaning of sacrifice and giving, those upon whose firmness, strength and determination the boulder of international unbelief led by America was dashed to pieces. And it's my pleasure to dedicate them some words which perhaps don't do justice to their sacrifices, but they are all I'm able to offer here. I shan't lament he who sold all that is worldly And bought the other and looked to eternity And advanced fearlessly and with all his heart His faith gleaming and shining like a spark An igniter of the war uniquely and courageously If it is said "who is its lion?" he says "I am he" Firm of heart and bold of chest His friend is combat and hard work his guest In his soul are concerns if they were to be poured Onto a lofty peak, from their weight it would be felled He did not acquire wealth but spent his years In the shade of the sword or redness of the spears He remembers Allah and cries while The fool laughs in this world of smiles This, and I send peace and prayers upon the best of Allah's creation, Muhammad, and upon his family and companions.