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Written in al-Faruq camp/Khowst

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Book by Mustafa Hamid

Following the defeat of the Soviets in Afghanistan, Arab Mujahidin who played a major role in defeating communism, were perceived by International circles as criminal terrorists.

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U.S hegemony became evident in the Arab and Muslim World. This book will discuss Islam in general terms and Jihad in specific one.

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1978 the author Mustafa Hamid volunteered to fight the Jews along with the PLO in Southern Lebanon.

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1984 he met 'Abdallah 'Azzam in Peshawar. He did not see eye to eye with Azzam and their relation was somewhat cool and reserved with regards to Afghan Parties Leadership.

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Arab Mujahidin fighting the Soviets had stronger convictions than those Arabs fighting the Israelis. Mustafa Hamid came to Afghanistan knowing that he will participate in the richest Islamic Jihad experience.

The popular religious movement started by Shaykh Hasan al-Banna, the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood movement (Ikhwan al-Muslimin), which is still one of the largest and most organized Islamic movements.

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1979 Pakistani ISI was established by Diya'-al-Haqq to intervene in Afghanistan. Afghani resistance comprised of 7 Jihadist organizations managed by American and Pakistani Intelligence. Author draw a comparison between Muslim brotherhood members who fought side by side with Arab armies and later faced prosecution and torture by apostate Arab Governments with Arab Mujahidin fighting and defeating the Soviets in Afghanistan and later meet the same fate of prosecution by infidel Arab Governments.

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American has used Islam to pursue anti Communist Cold war policy. The fact that Mujahidin are willing to give their life for evicting the Soviets from a Muslim land was a bonus to U.S policy. America did not mind to kill all those who are in opposition to their plans including 'Abdallah 'Azzam, Diya' al-Haqq and Tamim al-'Adnani.

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'Abdallah 'Azzam was killed in Peshawar in November 1989, and Diya' al-Haqq was killed in August of the same year. A Plan to eliminate Arab mujahidin in Afghanistan was put in action by the Pakistani authorities and American involvement. The Afghan Arabs are being pursued all around the world and have no place but Yemen and Sudan to hide.

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Arab Mujahidin who fought in the 1948 against the newly created Israel were better organized than those who fought the Soviets in Afghanistan.

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Arab Mujahidin in Afghanistan started serious military training in 1987. 1993 "Caliphate" (al-Khilafah) organization was formed by a group of Arab Afghans in Peshawar. They headed to the mountains in the tribal areas around Peshawar, and they assigned rulers for many Islamic countries.

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Muslim Brothers with the support of King Faruk Played a major role in fighting the English military presence in Egypt.

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When the author was 6 years old, his brother registered him in the Muslim brotherhood youth scouts near his township, and half a century later, his belief is the same in regards to Islam being: God, Prophet, Koran, Jihad, and Martyrdom. There were training camps in the desert around the town where militia men trained.

In 1975 the author was awakened to Islam. He was working in Abu-Dhabi and its mosques were active with "educational" activities, lectures and guests coming from many countries to lecture on Islamic issues.

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Muslim brothers were not involved in the 1973 war or the Lebanese civil war. Due to the defeat of the Muslim brotherhood spirit in Egypt, author religious beliefs were shaken and he found himself leaning towards Marxism, he stopped praying and fasting.

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There was a friction between Muslim Brothers old generation and the new Islamic youths. I became more religious in Abu Dhabi. I started asking about Jihad, Muslim brothers, Palestine and couldn't find convincing answers.

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His high school friend 'Abd-al-Rahim was a pilot engineer in UAE and was very well versed in Islam and religious knowledge, who believes that jihad should begin when the

Muslim is reformed and the family and then the society is reformed, only then jihad of the Jews and infidels can begin.

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After the 1978 Israeli raid of Lebanon, shaykh Ahmad Ibn-‘Abd-al-‘Aziz Mubarak, the head of religious courts in Abu-Dhabi wrote a fatwa, which was published in Ittihad newspaper, justifying that jihad besides the Palestinians against the Jews is a duty on each Muslim. The other sheikhs in Abu-Dhabi agreed with his fatwa.

This urged the author to leave to Lebanon for jihad.

Shaykh ‘Abd-al-Badi’ Safar, the ex-secretary of shaykh Hasan al-Banna of Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt was in Dubai in 1973 and urged the author to go to jihad.

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With his friend Isma’il they left Abu-Dhabi to Southern Lebanon with the help of PLO. They were held, along with other volunteers, by Syrian security in al-Ma’mal area by the Syrian and Lebanese border. His name was listed in the “black list” by the Syrians.

There were all sorts of people within the volunteers, even U.S. citizens.

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I did not feel very religious when I was fighting the Israelis in south Lebanon in comparison to my strong religious tendencies while I was in Afghanistan years later.

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They were at training camp in al-Damur village. They prayed in a house converted into a mosque. The area belonged to the Maronites before the war.

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After disappointment with Lebanon and PLO, the author started thinking about forming a jihadist movement in Abu-Dhabi, where the Ministries of Education and Religious Endowment are in the hands of the local Muslim Brotherhood. In Yemen too the Ministry of Education is under their influence. They were also successful in business enterprises after fleeing from Egypt in 1954.

In the small mosque in the old Abu-Dhabi market we met the imam of the mosque who was from Afghanistan, who was a judge in Heart, Afghanistan. His name was Sayyid Muhammad Tahir. His son was the caller to prayer Sayyid Ahmad with a 12 year old brother.

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A delegation of Afghan sheikhs from Paktiya province visited Sheikh Tahir in Abu-Dhabi; one of them was Sheikh Mawlawi Adam, who spoke a good Arabic. They informed the author that weapons were available to purchase from the tribal areas of Pakistan next to Afghan borders.

He had two Egyptian friends while in Abu-Dhabi named Badawi and Jamal, both have family ties in Egypt and spend their summer vacation there.

He also met an Egyptian from Upper Egypt named Ahmad al-Minyawi in another friends' house, his name is "Amin Nar". These Egyptians were the sons of Hajj Husni al-Minyawi and Ahmad Nar respectively; both men were prominent figures in the Muslim Brotherhood movement and fought in the 1948 war against Israel.

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1979-the author and his friend Ishmael decided to travel to Afghanistan for Jihad. The author met a young man from Southern Egypt Ahmad al-Minyawi, who was a jihadist, visited his friend Amin Nar. Their friendship was based on their Brotherhood roots from their families in Egypt. Ahmad was related to Husni al-Minyawi, the old jihadist in Palestine and special member of the Brotherhood. Amin was a nephew of Ahmad Nar, Brotherhood military officer and the author of "Fighting in Islam". After the visit, Ahmad agreed to go to jihad in Afghanistan but needed two months to obtain a new passport. Sheikh Tahir agreed to accompany us to Afghanistan via Pakistan.

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They boarded the plane to Peshawar to look for a shop in Barrah Market. The shopkeeper took them to a small village between farms behind Barrah Street and entered us in a small mud house. There they met Hajji Din Muhammad who was a representative of Maulawi Muhammad Yunus Khalis leader of Afghanistan Islamic Party and his brother Hajji 'Abd-al-Qadir who was governor of Allahabad after the fall of the communist regime in Kabul.

They brought them Afghani outfits and left to Miranshah six hours from the border. They were three Arabs. They were to meet Qari Mahmud in Miranshah; who spoke Arabica and studied at Najim al-Madaris religious school in Jalalabad at the hands of Azhar scholars like sheikh Mahlawi; he would be their guide in Afghanistan.

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When they arrived in Miranshah, they were led to a house of Afghan Immigrants, which was prepared for them. After a while, they left to jihad. Ahmad was a practical jihadist who helped the Mujahidin, but Ishmael and the author were more lie dreamers who dreamt of jihad spreading from Afghanistan to the rest of Islamic and Arab countries.

Ahmad's brother in London sent them three military uniforms and some money to buy weapons for jihad.

Ahmad surprised the author by informing that a neighbor of his in Abu-Dhabi is a journalist with al-Ittihad newspaper and would like to accompany them in Afghanistan. The neighbor's father is a famous and respected scholar.

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Although the author was an engineer, he preferred to work as a journalist. He once worked for six years at a small periodical called Al-Fajr paper. He saw a great opportunity here to spread the word of jihad in Afghanistan around the Islamic countries and especially in the rich Gulf region which seems to welcome the new Islamic wave.

He was writing from Afghanistan to al-Ittihad paper without putting his name on the article, due to the fact that he was an employee (on leave) for al-Fajr paper, until his relations ended with the al-Ittihad in 1990. In 1986 he was the director of the al-Ittihad's Islamabad bureau.

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For the first time the author had an opportunity to take a photo of a Mujahid behind an anti-aircraft gun. The photo was so good that it was published in the Ittihad paper several times.

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For the first time he was exposed to the problem of land mine in Afghanistan.

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More than five thousand soviet expert assisted Tariq then, their presence was felt in every command of the Afghan military. We left Muti'allah camp and precipitated towards Mullah Jalal-al-Din Haqqani camp in Sirana, he was second in command in Yunus Khalis Islamic party group. We waited two days to meet Haqqani, who was accompanied by twenty of his men. Jalal-al-Din Haqqani lead us to a house on top of the hill, and explained to us in detail the situation in Afghanistan and in his region of Paktiya. Soviet troops were demoralized. They left Muti'allah center at the Ziruk region in Argun heading to Mulawi center "Jalal al-Din Haqqani" in Cirana.

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Vivid description of dead Russians soldiers, burned in their armored vehicles following their defeat.

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Mujahidin weren't familiar and did not even know about RPG weapon, they were amazed of its effectiveness against tanks. Even a delegation from Ghosni came, just to ask Mullah Jalal-al-Din to give them one RPG, to protect themselves against tanks.

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Mujahidin from Tajikistan and Uzbekistan came to Afghanistan to train, to prepare themselves for their countries upcoming battle against their own socialist government. I wasn't affiliated with any particular Islamic sect but because of al-Shafi'i sect popularity in Egypt, I claimed it as my belief whenever asked.

I remembered when I interviewed Jalal-al-din Haqqani and my friend Isma'il asked him about his take on the Iranian's Khomeini revolution, Haqqani's positive and welcoming views eased any worries I had about publishing the interview in Abu-Dubai.

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The 1989 Afghan Muslim scholar fatwa that calls for the death of any Wahabi explained clearly the jihad atmosphere in Afghanistan that followed its liberation from the Soviets. I remember in 1994 at a checkpoint encounter, when Burhan al-Din Rabbani's Mujahidin assuming we were Tajik said to us: "I took you for Arab Wahabist, god knows how much I want to kill one of them and that is the most valuable deed in the eyes of Allah than killing thirteen Russians". It was surprising that the early difficulties we encountered originated from the Islamic Brotherhood, and followed us still when we decided to pursue our work in Tajikistan.

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The author's relations with Isma'il deteriorated due to points of view, which led to his complete departure from the Afghan scene, while he continued to the end. Meanwhile, Ahmad stayed flexible and active without complete immersion in the issues, but he stayed useful to the end.

On Thursday, Haqqani sent us away and sent one of his men with us to accompany us to the first line where the Mawlawi 'Abd-al-Rahman Center is in Dara village.

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We were introduced to Mawlawi Muhammad Surur Jan the uncle of Mawlawi 'Abd-al-Rahman, who spoke Arabic which helped us in interpreting from our joining of the camp to the time of our return to Miranshah. These two men are among the few first generation jihadists who are still alive. By our joining, our number became 12, with three being soldiers who joined the Mujahidin. There were Pashtun (from the area) Arabs (my friend Ahmad and I), Persians, and Uzbeks.

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In Mawlawi 'Abd-al-Rahman Center, my friend Ahmad and I owned half of the mechanical rifles in the training camp. Ahmad, who was mortar operator, had no personal weapon. In Jaji operation, which was the first fight in which Arabs sacrificed in Afghanistan, the digging that UBL did was the real cause of that fighting. And in Khowst, the digging there was the reason for the success of the Arabs against Khowst airport in 1990-1991. The soldiers who deserted the army were used for digging tunnels and caverns. This led to the formation of digging teams which were mostly from Wardak state.

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The first heavy weapons we saw was anti-aircraft weapons at Muti'allah center in Zerok. The other was a Russian captured 14.5ml mortar.

At Sarana center, we saw 12.67 ml anti-aircraft machine gun made in Belgium, which were made especially for Afghan Kingdom.

In December 1979 the communist regime in Kabul fell and the only anti-aircraft weapons in Paktia province were the two mentioned machine guns.

The third weapon that we saw in fighting was "Sayyid Ahmad's 82ml Mortar". Who was in Mawlawi 'Abd-al-Rahman's group, and the lessons they taught me lasted for the entire war period. One of these lessons is to wait for fighting until close to dusk to prevent

aircraft from participation. The second lesson was to choose the target. Sayyid Ahmad, who was a mortar specialist in the Afghan army and fled to join the Mujahidin, always discussed his targets with his leader 'Abd-al-Rahman before aiming and firing his mortar. The third lesson was to ration the supplies, and only use the rounds as needed and accurately.

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Another wiz at using the mortar was "Khan Wali" who lost his foot and became a legend in folk tales. He was from Jalal-al-Din Haqqani group. Among the Arabs I saw Yahya al-Misri (Yahya the Egyptian) and Abu-Hammam al-Sa'idi. They both played a great role in the outcome of fighting and both are alive.

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Extremely important for the Mujahidin to use their supplies with utmost planning and obtain the largest amount of spoils from the enemy.

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Ahmad and I escaped death numerous times, long before we fired our first shot. During my first mission we fired fifteen rounds, while in the second mission we each fired five bullets. A just and balanced retaliation didn't exist, the enemy's [soviets and government forces] capabilities were overwhelmingly superior that the Mujahidin.

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Our new location was positioned and deployed as a defensive buffer of the north perimeter that is adjacent to the road coming from Ghardiz the region capital. Upon hearing about the military supply convoy and the monies it transported, Mullah 'Abd-al-'Aziz (Afghan Mujahidin group commander) formulated plans to intercept it. After we spent all day and night in our ambush positions in vain, and without a sight of the expected convoy, our Afghan translator Mullah Muhammad Surur reallocated our positions and instructed us not to fire any shot until we hear Mullah 'Abd-al-'Aziz shots first.

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Ramadan has always been the period when the enemy makes advances and claims new territories, because of the Mujahidin passiveness and absence. Mullah 'Abd-al-'Aziz devised a ruse to prevent the expected enemy's aggression during the holy month, so he instructed each and every Mujahid to fire five single shots at the enemy. I participated in this operation along with my friend al-Manyawi.

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We traveled with groups affiliated to Mullah Yunus Khalis's party [The Islamic Party]; we heard complaints about the other parties namely Hikmatyar Islamic party and Ahmad Gaylani party.

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The news about Samir ‘Abd-al-Muttalib visit to Afghanistan, who is a reporter from al-Ittihad newspaper, was brought to us by a delegation affiliated with Muti’allah. The Mujahidin finally got a voice, al-Ittihad newspaper became the spokesperson for the Mujahidin cause, and it allowed their message to be heard all over the Arab world.

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The magazine also became a mediator, it promoted contact with Islamic organization, symbols, and other countries Official Islamic Ministries. We established contact with Islamic scholars and leaders such as Shaykh Ahmad bin-‘Abd-al-‘Aziz in Abu-Dhabi and in Dubai and Shaykh Muhammad al-Mahmud in UAE.

In our effort to promote our cause, we wrote a report and send it to the Egyptian Islamic Brotherhood [EIS] in Cairo, with Isma’il who is part of the Afghan envoy delegation. This step backfired; in 1985 Sayyaf [EIS leader] personally sought to kill me when al-Ittihad news paper published my article that comprised opposing views. We experienced another upset when Shaykh al-Tilmisani respectfully and clearly shown no interest in our cause, when Isam’il met him. Our friend al-Minyawi wasn’t surprised by such a response though; he recalled his father’s remarks:” Today’s Islamic brotherhood is composed of cons and businessman of Islam”.

While the Islamic brotherhood in Abu-Dhabi and Dubai clearly indicated that their role would be limited to financial support only; they categorically refused to take part in any military armed role.

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The most turbulent issues pertaining to Afghan Jihad lasted from the beginning of Jihad in April 1978, until the dark period of April 1992. All the reports I wrote, which ended up on Egyptian Islamic leader’s desks in Peshawar, were traced back to me, thus they did cost me and continue to cost me a lot. Al-Ittihad newspaper gladly published all Jihad-related articles in Afghanistan that I sent them, especially when they knew the direct contact I enjoyed with leaders all over Afghanistan. In 1985, I joined al-Ittihad staff, and became al-Ittihad’s Islamabad bureau correspondent and director.

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The reference of my information is based on my visits and meetings at the Jihad sites in Afghanistan, but also is based on the Mujahidin correspondence to their command headquarters in Jalalabad to Mullah Muhammad Yunus Khalis.