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THE LETTER FROM EL HAGE'S COMPUTER

During the August 1997 raid on El Hage's house in Nairobi, the FBI recovered this letter from his personal computer. They believe it was written by Haroun Fazul, one of the suspects in the Nairobi bombing who had stayed in El Hage's house. In the letter, Haroun expresses concern that the rhe cell members in East Africa are in great danger from American intelligence forces, and asks, Are we ready for that big clandestine battle?

Brother Sharif,

Do not worry when I'm late in communicating with you since as you know the equipment is limited and now one is afraid to talk with you given the circumstances. Perhaps the worker could serve as the line of communications between me and you and whom you could send after he arrives at your location in the middle in circa one week; he can take the latest news which I will receive from 'Abd al-((Sabbur)). Tell him (the worker) not to call me on any of the telephones here at our end and advise all of the same. He (the worker) can call at the al-Bunda (nfi) and leave a message that he has arrived at the middle so that I can proceed towards him God willing

Note: This letter is published here exactly as in the original translated document given to FRONTLINE. No changes have been made to grammar or punctuation.

Brother Sharif, 'abd al-((Sabbur)) called before he came and while I was writing that report on 13 August 1997 and informed us he is coming in one week. He (Sabbur) told Salim to prepare himself for travel to the manager (comment: could also mean director) and to also submit the request to vacate the house immediately. I understood that 'Abd al-Sabbur will travel quickly and I met Ahmad and told him about the matter. I also asked Ahmad about the feasibilit[y] of him assuming responsibility of the agency (comment: could also mean organization) and he told me he will not touch anything. He (Ahmad) further told me that it is better to sell all the items and to rent a regular house and put one of us there along with the communications equipment. What I see (recom[m]end) is that you come down to Nairobi immediately in order to see the situation for yourself and see how to arrange things in the future.

Brother, my family has been in touch with me and told me that my mother is very sick and that they would like me to go there. What do you think? Keep in mind we only have \$500. Should I come down or wait for Wadi' until he comes back whereby he may return wit[h] some money. As you know he took the rest of the money which had arrived from Safwan and he traveled with that money. I sat down wit[h] 'Abdallah ((Hasan)) and he thanked you for all your words and advised me the time had come to move forward and take care of the ...

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Third: The Security Position

We can now state that the security position on the cell is at 100 percent danger. In this report, I will try to explain the reasons that make us feel that danger (way). I will also try to offer my recommendation to honored and wise high command which I know understands everything and we hope it is seeking the best. There are many [r]easons that lead me to believe that the cell members in

East Africa are in great danger, which leaves us no choice but to think and work hard to foil the enemy's plans who is working day and night to catch one of us or gather more information about any of us. (This report stems from the basic principle that) anyone who studies security matters seriously, will never handle anything carelessly, regardless of how small or great it is, but will take all matters seriously. As we have heard, seen and read that the "Hajj" (comments: reference to Usama bin Ladin) has declared the war on America and that was confirmed when we saw the interview that took place in Jalalabad in which the Shaykh stated the following points:

-- declaring war upon America because it had appointed itself the policeman of the world.

-- he had nothing to do with the two explosions in Saudi Arabia but he was glad they took place.

-- my future plans will be heard in the radio stations.

(Above was made) in addition to other points which pleased us all, thank God. In fact America's goal in that interview was to slander the Shaykh in the American people's mind and open a new door (of attack). This is being done in order to pave the way to catch him without any domestic opposition from within the states. The interview showed the Shaykh's picture when he was in Afghanistan and on the war fronts and they were showing his picture when they were showing the dead bodies of the Jews in Palestine and the Americans in Somalia and Yemen. They have also shown the two explosions in Riyadh and connected them with his opposition to the Saudi regime. After they described him as a rich businessman who owns millions of dollars, they accused him of being the major financier of the mujahedin "terrorists" in the world and that he has a huge multi-national army and had become America's primary target. They have also shown another film for the Shaykh on 10 August 1997 on the same network CNN. From all this talk, we understood that America is willing to move against the Shaykh or those who are associated with him. After that a lot of news were broadcasted about the Hajj and his followers in the radio and magazines. We then heard the news of his move with his family from Jalalabad to Qandahar; they even named the village where he lives with his family. We were surprised to read in one of the English newspapers which noted that America had sent a force of one thousand multi-national mercenaries to Pakistan to try and kidnap the Shaykh or Mr. 'Atif.

From all these developments we understood that there is a war on and the situation is dangerous and that anybody who is associated with the Hajj regardless of their position and their nationality are at risk. Also, the American forces carry kidnaping operations against anyone who threatens its national security and its citizens, and we have seen that when they kidnaped the Pakistani national from one of the border villages whereby while he was sleeping in one location he found himself the next morning in Washington.

My recommendation to my brothers in East Africa was to not be complacent regarding security matters and that they should know that now they have become America's primary target and that they should know that there is an American-Kenyan-Egyptian intelligence activity in [Na]irobi aiming to identify the names and residences of the members who are associated with the Shaykh since America knows well that the youth who lived in Somalia and were members of the Shaykh's cell are the ones who killed the Americans in Somalia. They know that since Kenya was the main gateway for those members, there must be a center in Kenya. Ahmed ((Tawii)) told me that he will talk to Taysir about t[h]e changes since we are really in danger. Our biggest problem is that our security situation here is very weak. I told him that the network will appreciate the changes (in security) since we are convinced

one hundred percent that the Kenyan intelligence are aware about us and that indeed our security situation is extremely bad.

We read in the Kenyan newspaper the "standard" news of the arrest of five terrorists in Kenya. When DC Gharissa declared that news, I warned Ahmad ((Madubi)) that there is an intelligence operation in Kenya to identify the leaders a[n]d the foreigners who deal with them. We think there is American pressure on Kenya to search for the Arabs living in the area (country). Therefore, brother Sharif, please watch out and also let the brother engineers be careful and be advised that anyone of us could fall in the trap. If the engineers come down, it would be better if they did not contact me and God willing, I will try and visit them at their homes.

The last bit of news which almost made me explode (go crazy) and which I consider the primary cause of danger for the East Africa network (concerned) the following. (This was in conjunction with what) we read in one of the British newspapers "The Daily Telegraph" and which I have asked brother Tawfiq to buy from Nairobi after hearing on BBC on 2 August 1997. The gist of the news is this: "There is an individual from the bin Ladin finance department currently in the hands of the American Central Intelligence Agency "CIA" and also in the hands on the British intelligence service "MI6" and is in Saudi Arabia. He was delivered to them through the Saudi intelligence service during the middle of May. Along with him is another individual called "Jallud" who is an assistant to Usama and who may have cooperated with the Saudi government after he was arrested since May. The newspaper also mentioned that Sidi Tayib had advised the American intelligence service about the scope of distribution of money to various Arab communities who cooperate with al Shaykh in the United States especially in Brooklyn, New Jersey and Jersey City. This individual was also said to have given details about Usama's financial information in Afghanistan and Pakistan and how much was sent to London and to Detroit in America. The newspaper also linked this news with the Jerusalem bombing and the arrest of Lafi Khalil in New York and [h]is colleague Abu Mayzi. The the newspaper further discussed the current residence of Usama in Qandahar and the number of his wives and his description and age and mentioned that he is wanted in Britain because of the bombings in [France] during 1995 which it noted he had financed and which was conducted by the Algerians who were based there at the time. It also noted that he has a hand within the Saudi opposition movement in London known as the "Committee for the Defense of Legitimate Rights". Additionally, it also noted that he is wanted by the Egyptian government for his involvement in the attempted assassination against the Egyptian president in 1995 in Ethiopia as well as for his support of the blind Shaykh "Imar 'Abd al-Rahman" who was targeting tourists in Egypt.

We have tried to take some measures here in Nairobi but first we wanted to verify that the man called Sidi Tayib is identifiable with Abu al-Fadhl the amputee who is married to the Shaykh's relatives. In this connection and to the best of my knowledge, there is only one Abu al-Fadhl from Saudi Arabia who is known as Abu al-Fadhl al-Makki (the Meccan). We have matter seriously, despite the limited resources we have here in the office. (As such) I have sent a fax to Hamad to (try to) verify this information to no avail since I do not know if he had received my message or not. Until now, I have not received his answer. Also, I have contacted the engineer al-'Utaybi in Qatar but his telephone is always busy. Finally, I have sent a fax to Abu Ibrahim in the Sudan and till the writing of this message on [?]4 August 1997, I have not received his answer through the fax.

I have also contacted Abu Khadijah the Iraqi in Germany on 13 August 1997 and informed him about the news which shocked him. I told him to be careful. In [h]e final analysis we do not care much to verify the man's name. What

matters is the fact that an important man with close links to the Shaykh seems to have fallen into the enemy's hands and we have to take all the appropriate security precautions against that. (Hence) I, along with Tawfiq, have collected all the files which we do not need here a[n]d which might pose a threat against us and have placed them in another location. We did not burn them si[nc]e they belong to engineer 'Abd 'al-Sabbur who may have a different opinion about what we are seeing here, but anyway we are awaiting for his return next week. He had called from there to inf[or]m Tawfiq to prepare himself as they will join the director there after his approval. We tried to leave the house but we have a problem with cash flow. We also thought that if we were under surveillance, that (by moving) this may look very suspicious. On the same day we heard the (above) news the partisans from Mombasa called. I told them I will get in touch wit[h] them and asked them never to call me at that number again. They told me that Khalid wanted to talk to me about an important subject but I told them I will get in touch with them but never to call me at that number again. After two days they called me at the same number so I forced them to burn that number immediately informed Khalid that I had prohibited them from calling me here as I am one hundred percent sure that the telephone is tapped. This was (my conclusion) after Wadi's wife told me after three days of reading the newspaper, that she had heard strange voices in the t[e]levision when she was trying to adjust the speaker. (She relayed the following). She told me she heard "This is it. This is the line". She then said, there was a pause and then the following "Yes, yes, is he Arab or Englis[h]?" Then (she) said the line went dead. May be that seems normal when you surf the television channels a[n]d you hear overlapping voices from movies or channels. But I took this matter seriously since we are in a state of emergency after what we heard about Abu al-Fadhil. She (Wadi's wife) also told me that there was an American lady living in the same complex who had visited them. This was (after) Abdallah whom she had seen when he had gone to buy bread. She (the lady) had asked him "Are you American?" and he answered her affirmatively. She (the lady) then came to the house to which Abdullah had provided the number for. When she (the lady) came to the house, she asked to use the phone. (Wadi's wife) then said "I was suspicious of that call since she perhaps did something to the phone and hence we took care in using the telephone at the house." I advised Umm Abdallah to put the television set in the box so that we can take it to another location.

The fact of these matters and others leave us no choice but to ask ourselves are we ready for that big clandestine battle? Did we take the necessary measures to avoid having one of us fall in the trap? Knowing we were counting on God's blessing with our limited resources.

The second matter is that I would recommend to the good and wise supreme command which I implore to God to keep safe to work hard to return the caliphate to earth and fight the forces of atheism and dictators who wreaked havoc on earth. We, the East Africa cell members, do not want to know about the operations plans since we are just implementers. We trust our command and appreciate their work and know that they have a lot of problems. But my advise here is for the practical part only since we started the project for "ree-establishing the Moslem state" is a collective effort and not an individual one; we are all part of it. So we are asking you, for the sake of organizing the work, to tell us that there is a possible danger that may take place in a while due to a certain decision so we can prepare ourselves accordingly or (so that) we may go underground for a while since our presence might foil or complicate your plans that we know no[t]hing of.

As you know, the decision to declare war on America was taken and we only know about it from t[h]e news media and we should have known about that decision (and the decision only) and not the plans so that we could take the necessary precautions and to prevent ca[us]ing any complications or failure in

your plans due to our ignorance of them.

As you (know) if one of us fall in the trap due to one of your decisions, God forbids, that will be a loss to the whole cell. We ask you to keep in touch wit[h] us through the internet from Pakistan, as we get a lot of information now about the Shaykh from that network. Or you can follow 'Abd al-Sabbur's example such as when he faxed his family fro[m] the border village next to you. We need to hear your good words and we are afraid to be in the dark and from taking any unapproved plans domestically since we do not have the necessary expertise regarding such difficult decisions; decisions which (only you) can undertake.

I did not write this report until I was officially asked by brother Khalid to be responsible for the media information office for the cell in Nairobi. He (Klhalid) had asked me also to write periodically about the security situation on the cell and the whole group in here in general in East Africa. This is to be included in al-Baraka fi[le]s which usually include seven items, the third of

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affairs of the people there where you are needed urgently in order to arrange things for them. Also, the coordination will take place there.

Brother, I finished the first and the second Baraka (files) but I know we had agreed to correspond with each other by discs, so I printed for you the most important and last item: the third one. Finally, my greetings to all the engineers and I have not yet visited anyone and perh[ap]s I may not visit them until the situation improves. Umm Fatma delivered (a baby), however, we have not gone there because I am in Nairobi and perh[ap]s I will not go. I do want to complicate matters further by including them in the network. It is enough what had happen[e]d. Will rearrange our affairs anew.

Say a lot of prayers for us so God may grant us success, may God give you his reward.

Your brother,

Salih Suhayb al-((Ansari)).

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