Summarized Administrative Review Board Detainee Statement

The Presiding Officer read the Hearing Instructions to the Detainee and confirmed that he understood and had no questions.

The Assisting Military Officer presented Exhibit Echo Charlie - Alpha, the Enemy Combatant Notification Form to the Administrative Review Board.

The Assisting Military Officer presented Exhibit Echo Charlie - Bravo, the Enemy Combatant Election Form to the Administrative Review Board.

The Designated Military Officer presented Exhibit Designated Military Officer - 1, the Unclassified Summary of Information to the Administrative Review Board.

The Designated Military Officer presented Exhibit Designated Military Officer - 2, the FBI Redaction Certification to the Administrative Review Board.

The Designated Military Officer gave a brief description of the contents of Exhibit Designated Military Officer - 1; the Unclassified Summary of Information to the Administrative Review Board.

The Administrative Review Board paused briefly to permit the Members to read the Unclassified Summary of Information.

Presiding Officer: I have one question about the Unclassified Summary. Is the pronunciation for [Basij]? Is it [Bah-seeg (ph)] or [Bah-gee (ph)]?

Detainee: [Bah-seeg (ph)].

Presiding Officer: [Bah-seeg (ph)].

Detainee: I have already given some information about that party to my Assisting Military Officer but later he is going to tell you.

Presiding Officer: Okay, I needed to have it pronounced correctly.

The Designated Military Officer confirmed that he had no additional unclassified information to present and requested a closed session to present classified information relevant to the disposition of the Detainee.

The Presiding Officer opened the Administrative Review Board for the Detainee to present information with the assistance of the Assisting Military Officer.
Presiding Officer: At this point in the hearing the Detainee will be able to present information to the Administrative Review Board. Assisting Military Officer, does the Detainee want to present any information to this Administrative Review Board including written statements, oral statements, or witness statements prepared on his behalf?

Assisting Military Officer: Sir, the Detainee has not provided me any written statements. He has indicated he may make an oral statement but first he would like me to read the comments he made relevant to the Unclassified Summary of Evidence. He may then comment on each of those items.

Presiding Officer: Okay. Aminullah Baryalai Tukhi, do you want to make a statement under oath?

Detainee: Yes.

Presiding Officer: An oath is a promise to tell the truth and we have prepared a Muslim oath if you wish to use it.

Detainee: There is no problem. I am ready to take the oath because I am telling the truth.

The Detainee takes the Muslim oath

Presiding Officer: Aminullah Baryalai Tukhi you may begin. If that involves the Assisting Military Officer and Mr. Tukhi, then let us proceed.

Detainee: I would like for my Assisting Military Officer to read my answers to answer those allegations and if anything is missing I am going to add.

Assisting Military Officer: In response to the allegation he forged documents to facilitate the escape of al Qaeda members, the detainee stated he had done no such thing. He said he stated in his tribunal that he had not forged documents, and if someone reviewed the tribunal notes they would have an understanding of why that is true. He also said he had an Iranian translator during his tribunal that he had problems with, and he felt that may have affected the tribunal's understanding of his case.

There was a brief pause to correct the malfunction of the recording equipment.

Detainee: I have nothing to add. That's fine, please read the second one [factor favoring detention].

Assisting Military Officer: In response to the allegation he facilitated the travel of individuals, in 2001, from Meshad, Iran to Tayyebat, Iran, a town near the Afghan border, the detainee said if he were going to help people to travel, and forge documents, the most important person who would have asked for that help would have been Abdul Aziz. Since Aziz knew he was not forging documents, or capable of helping people to travel, he did not come to him for help. The detainee said Aziz is here at Guantanamo, and was captured in

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Pakistan not Afghanistan. He said this is just one example of why this allegation is not true. He also said he is not familiar with the alleged type of work because, as a Muslim, he is against any illegal thing.

Detainee: Did you say that I did travel with Aziz once or are you going to tell that later?

Assisting Military Officer: That comes later.

The Assisting Military Officer continued with the Detainee's responses.

Assisting Military Officer: In response to the allegation that he associated with Abdul Aziz, the leader of al Wafa, and received payments for arranging the travel of individuals to and from Afghanistan, the detainee was a taxi driver in Meshad, Iran. Because he is Sunni and Aziz is Sunni, when friends of Aziz would travel to Meshad, Aziz would give them the detainee's phone number so that he could deliver food from Sunni restaurants. Aziz and his friends did not like to eat Shi’ite food. The detainee said he did this to make money and, as far as he knew, all the individuals were legal. One time he did accompany Aziz on a taxi trip from Meshad to Tayyebat. As an Afghan, he was not allowed to take his own cab to Tayyebat, so he traveled with Aziz in order to earn a commission. Aziz had all required legal documents and went through customs at Tayyebat by himself. The detainee said there was no way he could tell that Aziz belonged to al Qaida or al Wafa, and that the United States should separate in their mind people who intentionally help al Qaida from those who do not know al Qaida and are just trying to make a living.

Detainee: That's perfect because the only thing that I want you to know is that the money I was getting from Aziz, it wasn't because I was smuggling people or I was helping them to cross the border. I was just making an earning by providing Sunni food and stuff like that, which you already see. When the first person introduced me to Aziz, he [Aziz] was a fine gentleman and he was a very descent person. I didn't know at that time that Aziz belonged to al Qaida or al Wafa, there was no way that I would know that. I was just making a living when I was traveling with Aziz. I have kids, I have a wife and I have house rent to pay. I was just making a living and I didn't know. I had no idea. I never had the intention to help al Qaida or al Wafa or any terrorist organization like that.

Assisting Military Officer: In response to the statement that al Wafa is a known terrorist organization, the detainee said he had nothing to do with them.

Detainee: I am not a member of al Wafa. [The] United States probably knows a lot about al Wafa [more] than I do. I've never been their member and I have nothing to do with them. Let them be terrorist, it has nothing to do with me. The first time [that] I heard the name of al Wafa [was] here during the interrogation. When the interrogators, they showed me the pictures and I showed them the picture of Aziz, that yes, I know this man. The interrogators told me that this man belonged to al Wafa, before that I didn't know such [an] organization exist. The interrogators in Afghanistan, [the] American interrogators in Afghanistan told me that. Because I told them the truth, when I told them the truth and everything that I was doing in Iran and how I was helping people travel, they showed me
لا يمكنني قراءة النص العربي الموضح في الصورة.
some pictures and I took Aziz picture and told them I know this man. Then they gave me this information that that man belongs to al Wafa.

Assisting Military Officer: In response to the allegation he smuggled al Wafa members into Afghanistan, the detainee said he had not done this and had already explained everything he did.

Detainee: I haven’t done such a thing. It [the allegation] doesn’t belong to me.

Assisting Military Officer: In response to the statement that he was in a student political organization that was not popular in Afghanistan, and was against the Taliban, the detainee said it was not a political organization. He said that during the Taliban regime, when the Taliban were moving towards the city of Herat, Esmail Khan, who was then the governor of Herat, asked the people to gather and defend their city against the Taliban. The University of Herat also asked the students to defend the city and the detainee was one of the students that responded. He helped prepare items such as posters and newspaper articles that were against the Taliban.

Detainee: When Esmail Khan, the governor of Herat made a speech, actually in his speech he used the word Basij. That word [Basij] means “movement”. He used that word to encourage people to fight against Taliban. I was a student and I was against [the] Taliban. I was against their [the Taliban] ideology and concepts and that’s why I did my share and I participated in that movement against [the] Taliban.

Assisting Military Officer: Finally, the detainee agreed that he has previously stated that he is not al Qaeda or Taliban. He said when the Taliban took over Herat he continued to live in the city for one and one-half years, and then left for Iran. Although he only needed three months to finish his education when the Taliban took over Herat, he protested against them and then left the city.

Detainee: I just want to add that I am not al Wafa either. I am not Taliban, not al Qaeda and not al Wafa. Esmail Khan actually he is working in the current cabinet of President Karzai, the government. Esmail Khan, the governor of Herat, would encourage people to fight against Taliban. He is working in [the] current government of Afghanistan.

Presiding Officer: Aminullah Baryalai Tukhi, does that conclude your statement?

Detainee: So far yes. The answer to all these allegations, yes, I am done with that part.

Presiding Officer: Did the Administrative [Assisting] Military Officers’ statement provide the information [that] you wanted us to hear?

Detainee: I want to repeat one point that my Assisting Military Officer already stated. I think that during the Tribunal there was a misunderstanding. I want to make sure that you understand why I am not capable of making or forging documents or smuggling people.
want to repeat that part. If you have time, I would like to repeat that, if not, then that's okay and we can continue.

Presiding Officer: You can repeat it.

Detainee: The first thing that I would like to tell you, is that nobody actually knew about what I was doing. This information, during interrogation, I volunteered. I told [the] interrogators who I was and what I was doing. Unfortunately, I believe that the interrogators, they kind of added things or twisted things around and they made a story and allegation against me. I want to tell you, repeat one point, that actually the people that I was helping or providing food for, Abdul Aziz was the one who was introducing them to me. Actually he was giving my phone number to them. Now when Americans came to Afghanistan, they defeated the Taliban and they captured Arabs. When Arabs were running away and al Qaida and [the] Taliban they were on the run, now if I were capable of transferring or smuggling people from Afghanistan to Iran, then Abdul Aziz, he should have come to me first instead of introducing anybody to me. Of course everybody would think about their ride first. He should have come to me and asked me to take him and help him and take him to Iran. But instead he ran away to Pakistan and the reason for that is because he knew I [am] not capable of doing such a thing. I was a simple person. I didn't know how to forge documents. I didn't know how to smuggle people. He knew I can't help him, that's why he ran away to Pakistan instead of Iran. As soon as the first time I heard about al Qaida and these things, after all those things happened in Afghanistan, as soon as I heard about the situation and events that were happening in Afghanistan, I turned off my cell phone and I stopped using it. Abdul Aziz didn't know me, he didn't know who I am, about my family or my address. The only thing that he had from me was my phone number that he was giving to his friends when they were coming and traveling to Iran. So, I just stopped and threw away my cell phone and after that I didn't see Abdul Aziz and I didn't have any connections with him. If you review these points and if you think twice about my story, you'll know that what I am telling you is truth. You'll probably find that those allegations are basically false. I am telling you the truth from the bottom of my heart and not making up stories. It's all true. Thank you.

Presiding Officer: Assigned Military Officer, do you have any questions for the Detainee?

Assigned Military Officer: No, sir.

Presiding Officer: Designated Military Officer, do you have any questions for the Detainee?

Designated Military Officer: Yes sir. Did Aziz pay you a lot to work for him?

Detainee: No, he was paying me very little. I am not sure how to say how much it would be in American dollars. I am assuming that it's like ten dollars or twenty dollars. He wasn't paying me something like three thousand or five thousand American dollars. Just enough so I could survive. I am not sure if I can [explain]. He was not paying me with American dollars; he was paying me with Iranian toman. It was mostly like giving...
somebody a tip. [For example] like you [translator] if you would come there, I would give you food, I would serve you and you would just give me a ten dollar or twenty dollar, whatever was in you pocket. Mostly like they were tipping me.

Designated Military Officer: Did they pay you more than you earned as a taxi driver?

Detainee: [he laughs] That was a little bit extra than what I was making as a cab driver. But you need to know that if you count all my trips with them or all the help that I gave to them it wouldn't be more than twenty days. What was happening [was] that somebody would come to me every two months or every three months. Aziz would send somebody and then I was [helping them] on top of being a cab driver. I was just serving them or helping them as a Sunni and making some extra money. If you [would] count the total help that I was doing to Aziz's friends, it wouldn't be more than twenty days, I would say. It wasn't like every day and all the time I was with them and serving them while I was in Iran. It was [just] once in a while thing. At that time, I was thinking about making some money and earnings and I thought that it's was a normal thing to do. I though of the work, but now I realize that no, it wasn't a good thing to do. I am an educated man and I never noticed any unusual behavior from them to make me suspicious of them. I thought they were ordinary people. I wasn't aware of their business.

Designated Military Officer: Why did you turn off your cell phone after the United States invaded Afghanistan?

Detainee: When [the] United States actually advertised through the radio and I was hearing news that the United States came to Afghanistan and they were talking about al Qaeda and they were talking about these Arabs and everything they did to Afghanistan, I didn't know, just to be...I just thought for my own safety....I thought that the situation was not good with me. [I thought that I should] just stop doing this job for a while because [I] just [wanted] to be on the safe side.

Designated Military Officer: So were you a little bit suspicious of Aziz?

Detainee: When I heard about Arabs creating problems in Afghanistan through the news, since Abdul Aziz is an Arab, I just didn't want to deal with him any more. I didn't want him to call me or find me.

Designated Military Officer: Regarding the Basij ruler or leader, I would like to ask if he could speak on his [detainee's] behalf today? For his previous position on the Taliban?

The linguist repeated the word Basij, as if asking for clarification of the question.

Designated Military Officer: Let me back up, he said that the man who lead the movement before was now in current government, so my question is, if he were sent here today, could he speak on his behalf?
Detainee: Yes of course, actually a few days ago there was an interrogator who just came from Afghanistan. He went to my house. I had a drug store and he’s been there. I asked the interrogator to help me with this coming Administrative Review Board. But Bastij, it wasn’t something [like a] secret organization. It is very well known in that time and in that city. So not only in Herat but people who read [the] newspaper, I am sure that at least they [have] heard about it. It was popular in Iran not in the whole country.

Designated Military Officer: I guess I am not sure if he answered my question. I am really trying to see if that man would be an alibi for him in terms of how he felt about the Taliban. Do you understand what I am saying?

_The linguist verified the Designated Military Officer’s question by asking if he was talking about the government._

Detainee: I was just a kid, [a] college kid. I was a very little person and Esmail Khan was the governor and he is a minister in the current government. He was inviting the whole city to fight against Taliban, not personally me. I was a little man and of course he didn’t know me. If you ask him, he wouldn’t know my name and who I am. You can ask my college teachers or persons of the college. Yeah, they probably know me. They’ll have my name if you ask them that.

Presiding Officer: Do any of the Administrative Review Board Members have any questions for the Detainee?

Board Members: Yes, sir.

Questions for the Detainee:

Board Member: If you had a chance to drive a cab in New York would drive a cab in New York?

Detainee: I never thought about going to New York, but all I know [is] that if I... whenever, if I get released from here, I wouldn’t leave my country Afghanistan, my city Herat, not even for one single night. I’ll never leave my country and my city.

Board Member: Did you actually transport Abdul Aziz in your taxicab?

Detainee: No, I never did that. I never transported him in my own taxi.

Board Member: When you met him for the first time how much time did you spend with him?

Detainee: Okay, let me tell you this thing first and then I’ll answer your questions. First of all Abdul Aziz was speaking Arabic language and I was speaking Farsi, so we had problems with communication. The first time, we were actually using kind of mostly sign language when we were talking. It was for five or ten minutes, first time when I met him,
the manager of the hotel had to help us communicate with each other. It was like five or ten minutes. Actually in that five or ten minutes I was asking him if he had [a] passport, if he goes to Afghanistan and if he is legal and the manager of the hotel was translating. The distance from Meshad to Tayyebat is approximately three hours and I was sitting on the passenger side and there was a driver and Abdul Aziz with another person was sitting in the back. Once in awhile I would look at them and ask them if they were okay and they would say yes and whenever they were hungry they would just tell me food and we would just stop and I would find a Sunni restaurant to provide food and stuff. So basically, we didn’t have any conversations. I could speak a few English words but Abdul Aziz couldn’t speak English. Thank you.

Presiding Officer: Mr. Tukhi, when they showed you photos of Mr. Aziz, were there other photos that you recognized?

Detainee: Well, I was arrested in Iran and then they transferred me to Afghanistan. The Afghan authorities turned me over to [the] Americans. My first night, I told my story to [the] American interrogators. After two or three days the interrogator came back to me with some pictures and Abdul Aziz’s photo was among those photos, so I just pointed at him and said I know him.

Presiding Officer: And no others? He [the detainee] recognized no other photos?

Detainee: No, sir. They brought in [a] few pictures for me but the only person that I could recognize was Abdul Aziz. I told the interrogators that it is because of this Abdul Aziz, I’m sitting in prison right now.

Presiding Officer: Was Aziz or any others armed when you talked to them?

Detainee: I already mentioned that I haven’t seen anything illegal or abnormal. Of course I didn’t see any weapons, I didn’t or I wasn’t suspicious of them doing any illegal things. So, no I didn’t see it.

Presiding Officer: You mentioned that you help publish articles against the Taliban. Did you write those articles or publish them or both?

Detainee: No, we wouldn’t publish [the articles], the government would publish [the articles]. What we would do, is the students would write articles, they would be given to the President of the University and they would choose the best one and give it to the publisher, I mean to the minister of information and they would just publish it through the local newspaper. I want to give you an example, one day there was a big demonstration against Taliban and all the people of Iraq, they were demonstrating and they were gathering together and they went to protest against [the] Pakistan Embassy. One of the other stuff that I was doing while I was a member of that Basij, during that demonstration, we as students, members of the Basij movement, we were trying to organize those [demonstrations]. To make sure that they are organized and they go the right way and follow them and those things, not anything serious. At that time the Basij was very strong.
and popular in Herat against the Taliban and that gave us a lot of opportunity and different ways we could fight against [the] Taliban. Some people would go and take the weapon and actually fight against the Taliban and defend the city but we as students, we were college students, and we were trying to participate and be a part of those moments. It wasn’t [a] very organized political party. It’s something that was created just to fight against [the] Taliban, to defend the city. It wasn’t organized; we were regrouping the students and making Basij with the other side of the city. Some people would get together and fight against Taliban.

Presiding Officer: Can you describe what life was like around the Taliban?

Detainee: As I mentioned before that when Taliban took over the city, I had three months to finish my college education. I protested and stopped going to the college because when Taliban came, they were trying to implement the laws that our people, we were not use to that. They were beating women. They were forcing men to grow beards. Their laws were so strict that we [were] not even sure if it was Islam’s law or just [a] creation of the Taliban. So that’s why the life was miserable and horrible and that’s why I protested and stopped going to college and then left the country.

Presiding Officer: Mr. Tukhi are you hostile towards the United States now?

Detainee: [Could you] clarify the question?

Presiding Officer: Would you take up arms against the United States?

Detainee: I never fought against the United States then and I [have] never been against the United States. I want to tell you something, please don’t take it wrong. I know you might think that I am saying [this] because I want to be released but that’s not the case. I am telling you the truth, when I was in Mashad, Iran and we heard that Americans came and they defeated Taliban, me and my friends, we made a party. We celebrated the defeat of Taliban. We were so happy that finally somebody came [Americans] and they got rid of [the] Taliban and now our country is free and we could go back. So I’ve never been against the United States and I never fight against the United States. So far everything that the United States have done and I have heard through the newspaper, through the media or through my friends, everything I like it. The United States trying to bring democracy, United States want to go to elect their own President, United States helping in many areas [of] our country and why should I be against that. I was a college student and I was studying Economics. Of course, I would love to go back to my country and actually help my people and help Americans in rebuilding my country. I never fought against [the] United States, I never fought against anybody and I don’t want to fight against the United States, never ever.

Presiding Officer: Does any of the Administrative Review Board Members have any more questions?

Board Members: No, sir.
The Designated Military Officer motioned to get the attention of the Presiding Officer.

Presiding Officer: Designated Military Officer, do you have an additional question?

Designated Military Officer: Yes, sir. If you were transferred or released where would you want to go?

Detainee: I would like to go to my own city, Herat. I have some plans. I have some work. I would like to go [to] my city, to my own city. One of my dreams is to finish my education and when I get my Bachelors [Degree], I am sure it will be needed. They need lots of people to help them. Like I can find a job in [the] banking areas or customs. I am trying to participate in rebuilding my country, that way I can make some money and make a living. Of course when the government would pay me for working in the bank or any of those areas, usually they work half days. After that [job] I would like to work in the drug store or somewhere, just [an] extra job to make some extra money and have a living. If I ever, maybe God [will] help me and if I ever will be released, I don’t want to leave my wife and my kids, not even for one single day. When they take me for interrogation, they always leave my hands open. They never handcuff me and I’m a very friendly person. I always talk with them, we chat and I tell them the truth and they are very friendly with me. Approximately like two months ago there was an interrogator that came from my city, from Herat. He is an American interrogator. That interrogator, he went to my drug store where I use to work and he asked and make some interrogations about me. He brought some pictures from my drug store, some pictures of my city. [The detainee interrupted the linguist] I am sorry not of the drug store, [but] from the city of Herat. I was so happy to see those pictures of my city. I was requesting, I asked the interrogator, that please write something for me to either prove or that I am not a threat to the United States because I knew that my Administrative Review Board would be coming soon. He told me that as far as the law, our law, American law would allow me, I would do everything to help you and I will write something [off] my opinion about you. I actually wrote a letter through the Red Cross, I wrote a letter back to my family so they could arrange, they could make some inquiries about me and they could arrange some kind of a written statement from lots of witnesses that people would tell he [the detainee] is a harmless man and he [has] never been armed and he is not a threat to [the] United States, but I haven’t gotten responses yet. I have sent three letters through [the] Red Cross and I have sent one letter through the MP’s, through the guards and I haven’t got a response yet. As soon as I found out that the Tribunal decision found me [to be an] enemy combatant, I immediately wrote those letters and sent them. I haven’t received any response, I have nothing in writing to give it to you to prove it. To make it short for you, I have a wife, I have kids and they need somebody to take care of them. I am a harmless person but my family needs me. If you keep me here, I mean...I am not a threat anyway if you release me. So by keeping me here it’s not going to do any good for you but if you release me, my wife and my kids will need my help. I would like you to review this point carefully again, I understand that I have been dealing with Arabs but please review my case and I am telling the truth that when I was doing things for them [it was] not because I was with them or my ideology or thoughts were with them. All I was trying to do is make some money. I swear to God at that time I didn’t
even know that they were al Qaida. All these things happened, that they were [a] terrorist organization, that they were al Qaida or al Wafa.

Presiding Officer: Okay.

_The Designated Military Officer and the Assigned Military Officer have no other information to present to this Administrative Review Board._

_The Presiding Officer began reading the post Administrative Board instructions to the Detainee and the Detainee interrupts by stating the following:_

Detainee: What do you mean by being the third country?

Presiding Officer: Should your country not accept you, the United States' Department of State would find another country that will host your presence.

Detainee: Oh with Gods help my country wouldn't do that to me. Afghanistan would want me.

_The Presiding Officer continued to read the post Administrative Board instructions to the Detainee._

_The Detainee made the following comment._

Detainee: [in response to another Administrative Review Board in one year] Hopefully that is not going to happen, hopefully I will be released after this one.

_The open session of the Administrative Review Board was adjourned._

AUTHENTICATION

I certify the material contained in this transcript is a true and accurate summary of the testimony given during the proceedings.

Colonel, USA
Administrative Review Board Presiding Officer