

An Open Letter *The Hizballah Program*

Our Identity

We are often asked: Who are we, the Hizballah, and what is our identity? We are the sons of the *umma* (Muslim community) - the party of God (Hizb Allah) the vanguard of which was made victorious by God in Iran. There the vanguard succeeded to lay down the bases of a Muslim state which plays a central role in the world. We obey the orders of one leader, wise and just, that of our tutor and *faqih* (jurist) who fulfills all the necessary conditions: Ruhollah Musawi Khomeini. God save him!

By virtue of the above, we do not constitute an organized and closed party in Lebanon. nor are we a tight political cadre. We are an *umma* linked to the Muslims of the whole world by the solid doctrinal and religious connection of Islam, whose message God wanted to be fulfilled by the Seal of the Prophets, i.e., Muhammad. This is why whatever touches or strikes the Muslims in Afghanistan, Iraq, the Philippines and elsewhere reverberates throughout the whole Muslim *umma* of which we are an integral part. Our behavior is dictated to us by legal principles laid down by the light of an overall political conception defined by the leading jurist (*wilayat al-faqih*).

As for our culture, it is based on the Holy Koran, the Sunna and the legal rulings of the *faqih* who is our source of imitation (*marja' al-taqlid*). Our culture is crystal clear. It is not complicated and is accessible to all.

No one can imagine the importance of our military potential as our military apparatus is not separate from our overall social fabric. Each of us is a fighting soldier. And when it becomes necessary to carry out the Holy War, each of us takes up his assignment in the fight in accordance with the injunctions of the Law, and that in the framework of the mission carried out under the tutelage of the Commanding Jurist.

Our Fight

The US has tried, through its local agents, to persuade the people that those who crushed their arrogance in Lebanon and frustrated their conspiracy against the oppressed (*mustad'afin*) were nothing but a bunch of fanatic terrorists whose sole aim is to dynamite bars and destroy slot machines. Such suggestions cannot and will not mislead our *umma*, for the whole world knows that whoever wishes to oppose the US, that arrogant superpower, cannot indulge in marginal acts which may make it deviate from its major objective. We combat abomination and we shall tear out its very roots, its primary roots, which are the US. All attempts made to drive us into marginal actions will fail, especially as our determination to fight the US is solid.

We declare openly and loudly that we are an *umma* which fears God only and is by no means ready to tolerate injustice, aggression and humiliation. America, its Atlantic Pact allies, and the Zionist entity in the holy land of Palestine, attacked us and continue to do

so without respite. Their aim is to make us eat dust continually. This is why we are, more and more, in a state of permanent alert in order to repel aggression and defend our religion, our existence, our dignity. They invaded our country, destroyed our villages, slit the throats of our children, violated our sanctuaries and appointed masters over our people who committed the worst massacres against our *umma*. They do not cease to give support to these allies of Israel, and do not enable us to decide our future according to our own wishes.

In a single night the Israelis and the Phalangists executed thousands of our sons, women and children in Sabra and Shatilla. No international organization protested or denounced this ferocious massacre in an effective manner, a massacre perpetrated with the tacit accord of America's European allies, which had retreated a few days, maybe even a few hours earlier, from the Palestinian camps. The Lebanese defeatists accepted putting the camps under the protection of that crafty fox, the US envoy Philip Habib.

We have no alternative but to confront aggression by sacrifice. The coordination between the Phalangists and Israel continues and develops. A hundred thousand victims - this is the approximate balance sheet of crimes committed by them and by the US against us. Almost half a million Muslims were forced to leave their homes. Their quarters were virtually totally destroyed in Nab'a, my own Beirut suburb, as well as in Burj Hammud, Dekonaneh, Tel Zaatar, Sinbay, Ghawarina and Jubeil - all in areas controlled today by the 'Lebanese Forces'. The Zionist occupation then launched its usurpatory invasion of Lebanon in full and open collusion with the Phalanges. The latter condemned all attempts to resist the invading forces. They participated in the implementation of certain Israeli plans in order to accomplish its Lebanese dream and acceded to all Israeli requests in order to gain power.

And this is, in fact, what happened. Bashir Jumayyil, that butcher, seized power with the help also of OPEC countries and the Jumayyil family. Bashir tried to improve his ugly image by joining the six-member Committee of Public Safety presided over by former President Elias Sarkis, which was nothing but an American-Israeli bridge borrowed by the Phalangists in order to control the oppressed. Our people could not tolerate humiliation any more. It destroyed the oppressors, the invaders and their lackeys. But the US persisted in its folly and installed Amin Jumayyil to replace his brother. Some of his first so called achievements were to destroy the homes of refugees and other displaced persons, attack mosques, and order the army to bombard the southern suburbs of Beirut, where the oppressed people resided. He invited European troops to help him against us and signed the May 17th, [1984] accord with Israel making Lebanon an American protectorate.

Our people could not bear any more treachery. It decided to oppose infidelity - be it French, American or Israeli - by striking at their headquarters and launching a veritable war of resistance against the Occupation forces. Finally, the enemy had to decide to retreat by stages.

Our Objectives

Let us put it truthfully: the sons of Hizhallah know who are their major enemies in the Middle East - the Phalanges, Israel, France and the US. The sons of our *umma* are now in a state of growing confrontation with them, and will remain so until the realization of the following three objectives:

- (a) to expel the Americans, the French and their allies definitely from Lebanon, putting an end to any colonialist entity on our land;
- (b) to submit the Phalanges to a just power and bring them all to justice for the crimes they have perpetrated against Muslims and Christians;
- (c) to permit all the sons of our people to determine their future and to choose in all the liberty the form of government they desire. We call upon all of them to pick the option of Islamic government which, alone, is capable of guaranteeing justice and liberty for all. Only an Islamic regime can stop any further tentative attempts of imperialistic infiltration into our country.

These are Lebanon's objectives; those are its enemies. As for our friends, they are all the world's oppressed peoples. Our friends are also those who combat our enemies and who defend us from their evil. Towards these friends, individuals as well as organizations, we turn and say:

Friends, wherever you are in Lebanon... we are in agreement with you on the great and necessary objectives: destroying American hegemony in our land; putting an end to the burdensome Israeli Occupation; beating back all the Phalangists' attempts to monopolize power and administration. Even though we have, friends, quite different viewpoints as to the means of the struggle, on the levels upon which it must be carried out, we should surmount these tiny divergencies and consolidate cooperation between us in view of the grand design.

We are an *umma* which adheres to the message of Islam. We want all the oppressed to be able to study the divine message in order to bring justice, peace and tranquillity to the world. This is why we don't want to impose Islam upon anybody, as much as we that others impose upon us their convictions and their political systems. We don't want Islam to reign in Lebanon by force as is the case with the Maronites today. This is the minimum that we can accept in order to be able to accede by legal means to realize our ambitions, to save Lebanon from its dependence upon East and West, to put an end to foreign occupation and to adopt a regime freely wanted by the people of Lebanon.

This is our perception of the present state of affairs. This is the Lebanon we envision. In the light of our conceptions, our opposition to the present system is the function of two factors; (1) the present regime is the product of an arrogance so unjust that no reform or modification can remedy it. It should be changed radically, and (2) World Imperialism which is hostile to Islam.

We consider that all opposition in Lebanon voiced in the name of reform can only profit, ultimately, the present system. All such opposition which operates within the framework of the conservation and safeguarding of the present constitution without demanding changes at the level of the very foundation of the regime is, hence, an opposition of pure formality which cannot satisfy the interests of the oppressed masses. Likewise, any

opposition which confronts the present regime but within the limits fixed by it, is an illusory opposition which renders a great service to the Jumayyil system. Moreover, we cannot be concerned by any proposition of political reform which accepts the rotten system actually in effect. We could not care less about the creation of this or that governmental coalition or about the participation of this or that political personality in some ministerial post, which is but a part of this unjust regime.

The politics followed by the chiefs of political Maronism through the 'Lebanese Front' and the 'Lebanese Forces' cannot guarantee peace and tranquillity for the Christians of Lebanon, whereas it is predicated upon '*asabiyya* (narrow-minded particularism), on confessional privileges and on the alliance with colonialism. The Lebanese crisis has proven that confessional privileges are one of the principal causes of the great explosion which ravaged the country. It also proved that outside help was of no use to the Christians of Lebanon, just when they need it most. The bell tolled for the fanatic Christians to rid themselves of denominational allegiance and of illusion deriving from the monopolization of privileges to the detriment of other communities. The Christians should answer the appeal from heaven and have recourse to reason instead of arms, to persuasion instead of confessionalism.

To the Christians

If you, Christians, cannot tolerate that Muslims share with you certain domains of government, Allah has also made it intolerable for Muslims to participate in an unjust regime, unjust for you and for us, in a regime which is not predicated upon the prescriptions (*ahkam*) of religion and upon the basis of the Law (the *Shari'a*) as laid down by Muhammad, the Seal of the Prophets. If you search for justice, who is more just than Allah? It is He who sent down from the sky the message of Islam through his successive prophets in order that they judge the people and give everyone his rights. If you were deceived and misled into believing that we anticipate vengeance against you - your fears are unjustified. For those of you who are peaceful, continue to live in our midst without anybody even thinking to trouble you.

We don't wish you evil. We call upon you to embrace Islam so that you can be happy in this world and the next. If you refuse to adhere to Islam, maintain your ties with the Muslims and don't take part in any activity against them. Free yourselves from the consequences of hateful confessionalism. Banish from your hearts all fanaticism and parochialism. Open your hearts to our Call (*da'wa*) which we address to you. Open yourselves up to Islam where you'll find salvation and happiness upon earth and in the hereafter. We extend this invitation also to all the oppressed among the non-Muslims. As for those who belong to Islam only formally, we exhort them to adhere to Islam in religious practice and to renounce all fanaticisms which are rejected by our religion.

World Scene

We reject both the USSR and the US, both Capitalism and Communism, for both are incapable of laying the foundations for a just society.

With special vehemence we reject UNIFIL as they were sent by world arrogance to occupy areas evacuated by Israel and serve for the latter as a buffer zone. They should be

treated much like the Zionists. All should know that the goals of the Phalangists regime do not carry any weight with the Combatants of the Holy War, i.e., the Islamic resistance. This is the quagmire which awaits all foreign intervention.

There, then, are our conceptions and our objectives which serve as our basis and inspire our march. Those who accept them should know that all rights belong to Allah and He bestows them. Those who reject them, we'll be patient with them, till Allah decides between us and the people of injustice.

The Necessity for the Destruction of Israel*

We see in Israel the vanguard of the United States in our Islamic world. It is the hated enemy that must be fought until the hated ones get what they deserve. This enemy is the greatest danger to our future generations and to the destiny of our lands, particularly as it glorifies the ideas of settlement and expansion, initiated in Palestine, and yearning outward to the extension of the Great Israel, from the Euphrates to the Nile.

Our primary assumption in our fight against Israel states that the Zionist entity is aggressive from its inception, and built on lands wrested from their owners, at the expense of the rights of the Muslim people. Therefore our struggle will end only when this entity is obliterated. We recognize no treaty with it, no cease fire, and no peace agreements, whether separate or consolidated.

We vigorously condemn all plans for negotiation with Israel, and regard all negotiators as enemies, for the reason that such negotiation is nothing but the recognition of the legitimacy of the Zionist occupation of Palestine. Therefore we oppose and reject the Camp David Agreements, the proposals of King Fahd, the Fez and Reagan plan, Brezhnev's and the French-Egyptian proposals, and all other programs that include the recognition (even the implied recognition) of the Zionist entity.

The Jerusalem Quarterly, number Forty-Eight, Fall 1988

This is a slightly abridged translation of "Nass al-Risala al-Maftuha allati wajahaha Hizballah ila-l-Mustad'afin fi Lubnan wa-l-Alam", published February 16, 1985 in *al-Safir* (Beirut), and also in a separate brochure. It carries the unmistakable imprint of Sheikh Muhammad Hussein Fadlallah, the Hizballah mentor, and is inspired by his book *Ma'maal-Quwma fi-l-Islam* (Beirut 1979). See also his article in *al-Muntalak* (Beirut), October 1986.

*This paragraph did not appear in the original translation published by the Jerusalem Quarterly. It is possible that this omission is due to the fact that the source (*al-Safir*) for the translation did not include this text, which appears in the original Hizballah Program. The original Program was published on 16 February 1985. The organization's spokesman, Sheikh Ibrahim al-Amin read the Program at the al-Ouzai Mosque in west Beirut and afterwards it was published as an open letter "to all the Oppressed in Lebanon and the World". It should be emphasized that none of Hizballah's web sites have published the full text of the organization's program, and they prefer to publish the 1996 electoral program which was intended for the specific propaganda campaign before the Lebanese Parliamentary elections in 1996.