

Establishing The Khilafah - The experience of Hizb ut-Tahrir (The Liberation Party)

The name of Hizb ut-Tahrir has been closely associated with the subject of Khilafah since the Party's inception in 1953. This is not surprising as the Party was established with the objective of establishing the Khilafah and the work towards achieving this objective has dominated its activities ever since. The following is an account of the Party's experience and method in the struggle to establish the Khilafah.

In recent years Hizb ut-Tahrir (The Liberation Party) along with other Islamic movements, has suffered from mass arrests and a general increase in the level of state aggression directed towards the Party. Hizb ut-Tahrir is known to be present in Lebanon, Jordan, Syria, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Egypt, Tunisia, Libya, Morocco, Kuwait, Turkey and Pakistan. In all these countries the Party has adopted the same method of working under a centralised leadership, i.e., under the leadership of Abdul Qadeem Zalloom. The goal of the Party in all the countries is the same, to call to the khair, i.e., Islam and to establish the Khilafah. After establishing the Khilafah in one country the Party believes this will be the starting point for conveying the call of Islam everywhere. The first step towards this would be to annex the existing muslim countries under the banner of the Khilafah state.

Because the Party is outlawed by the existing regimes it is difficult to find out about the activities of the Party in the muslim world from established sources. The party's name is seldom mentioned even when court proceedings are in motion against its members. A recent example of this occurred in Tunisia in 1988, whilst the trials of the Islamic Tendency Movement was given full coverage by the press, over forty members of Hizb ut-Tahrir were tried in secret by a military court. Part of the reason for this is that the name Hizb ut-Tahrir has become synonymous with the Khilafah.

Hizb ut-Tahrir maintain that the life of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) in Makkah constitutes the principal source for the method of establishing the Islamic State today or at any other time, because the actions of the Prophet (saw) in Makkah culminated in the establishment of the first Islamic state in Medina. { Hizb ut-Tahrir has divided the Prophet's (SAW) method of building the Islamic state into two stages generally referred to as the private and public phase. The latter phase is often further divided into the phase of interaction and the seeking of support. It is within the framework of these three stages that we shall look at the experience of Hizb ut-Tahrir.}?????

The First Stage: Building the Body of the Party

Hizb ut-Tahrir (The Liberation Party) was founded in 1953 by Taqiuddin Nebhani (may Allah have mercy upon him). Tuqiuddin Nebhani had been a judge in the Shar'iyah Appeal Court of Al-Quds (Jerusalem) and was a great scholar, thinker and politician. The Party commenced working in Al Quds under his leadership. The early years saw the Party totally devoted to the task of building the body of the Party. The aim being to create a group that could carry out the responsibility of establishing a state, at a time when the established order was opposed to this task. During this stage the Party's main task was to ideologically prepare certain individuals who were attracted to the idea of carrying the call to Islam (da'awa) and establishing the Khilafah.

The preparation of the individuals at this stage was educational, with the education being carried out in a concentrated way. The outcome of which meant every individual in effect could represent the Party.

The emphasis at this stage was twofold:

1. The first requirement was to consolidate the basics of Islam, making the commitment to them both resolute and productive. Of course this comes from the belief, thus building the creed (Aqeeda) dominated this first period of education. Iman, however, must be accompanied by action, thus this preparation must produce evidence, in the shape of action, that the belief is established correctly. For this reason the Party prevented anyone continuing to study with the Party - after this

early stage - who practised any form of Haram or who neglected to perform the wajib (compulsory) duties.

This stage of building the Aqeeda is a process that produces individual Muslims who dare not initiate any action without knowing the rule of Allah on the issue. It is true to say that it became a well known characteristic of the members of Hizb ut Tahrir to keep asking about the daleel, i.e., the evidence. Of course, this is now common place, but there was a time in the fifties, sixties and seventies when asking about the daleel was enough to recognise whether someone was from Hizb ut -Tahrir.

In this stage of preparation Hizb ut-Tahrir emphasised the concepts of rizq (the provisions being from Allah) and the ajal (the duration of life determined by Allah) to ensure that those who carry the da'awa will not be distracted through fear of death or the fear of losing their work or wealth.

This preparation has shown great results, governments of the muslim world banning the party and pursuing and prosecuting its members.

2. The second aspect of this educational preparation is concentrated on providing the individuals a unique method of learning and thinking. This was essential for the individuals who would face the issues of the people on their own. As Hizb ut-Tahrir considered itself to be an Islamic political party with the responsibility of taking care of the peoples affairs, it would be unacceptable for the members to have to keep referring to the Amir every time a question was asked. The method of learning was designed to provide the individual with the political and creative mentality. The Party emphasised that the society, whilst being the place where we apply our thoughts, was not the source of our thoughts, in other words, that we must strive to change the existing conditions and not to live by or abide by them. For this reason we must understand every detail about the current conditions and understand why the Islamic nation has reached this low level, how kufr came to dominate the muslim world, why the existing states do not apply the Islamic law and what must replace the existing non-Islamic systems that dominate our society.

Given this, the Party naturally taught its members the concepts of nationalism, patriotism, capitalism socialism, democracy, and various other corrupt ideas, and showed how these ideas penetrated countries, how to refute them and, most importantly of all explained the supreme ideas of Islam.

The Prophet (SAW) went through this stage of preparation (turbiah) with his noble companions (RA). He taught them their Aqeeda and everything that subsequently was built upon it. Examples of this teaching can be found in the sirah (life of the Prophet), such as at dar al Arqam and the house of Sa'eed bin al Ass. The fruit of this education was the shaping of a unique generation of sincere and resolute belief, people like Bilal and Yasser (RA) The way in which the Companions conducted themselves in the public stage of the dawa demonstrates the method of thinking and character building learned from the Prophet (SAW).

The Second Stage: Interaction with the Society

Hizb ut-Tahrir completed the first stage of building the party body by the late 1950's and then the Party entered the second stage of its struggle to establish the Khilafah. By 1960 the group of people who had gone through the concentrated education procedure had become a political party.

The transfer from the first stage to the stage of interaction had not been easy, because during the first stage, the Party was in the process of establishing the organisation and ensuring that its structure was firmly built.

At this stage the Party had to use all that it had learned to convey its beliefs, standards and way of life so that the people of the society would adopt these as their own. The goal of this stage being to create a popular base which supports the idea of establishing an Islamic state and carrying the

da'awa to all mankind. While this may sound simple, in truth this is the most difficult part of any movement which seeks to reshape society.

The task was difficult because in this period Hizb ut Tahrir did not stick to just informing people that Islam was the best alternative. The Party attacked all the ideas and thoughts which had been adopted by society which contradicted Islam. Actually this is the very meaning of struggle. The Party endeavoured to destroy the prevailing public opinion favouring nationalism, secularism and establishing relationships with the West. With the Arab world then in the of Arab nationalism led by Nasser, whom people almost worshipped, the struggle was intense. Nevertheless the Party stuck to its call they, declared Nasser to be ruling with kufr and an agent of the USA which brought great pressure upon the Party. However, at the same time, the Party strived to make the supreme ideas of Islam accepted publicly and considered worth fighting for, ideas such as, all Muslims must live according to the Islamic rules under leadership, and that Islam must be conveyed to the world by every means including Jihad. Performing this task is termed by Hizb ut-Tahrir the ideological struggle.

The second aspect of this task the Party engaged in is termed the political struggle. In this political struggle the Party targetted the political establishments who opposed the Party and its goal. This was natural because the dominant institutions saw the party a threat to their own survival and interests.

In the political and ideological struggle the party addressed the public and people as a society and not as individuals; and as such it was not acceptable to just invite individuals to one's house and to talk in private about the need to change the *taghoot*. It became necessary for the Party to go forth into the public domain whence it addressed all the issues loudly, explicitly and forcefully as possible. Party also began to approach specific types of people who possessed influence on large groups of people. The means of talking and communicating with people at this stage were the mosques, open lectures, public gatherings like weddings and funerals. Other means were pamphlets distributed according to on-going issues. The issues which Hizb ut-Tahrir addressed varied from simple rules of daily life to political analysis of world affairs. Examples of these issues can be found in the thousands of leaflets Party has published over the years.

Political Confrontation

The political and ideological struggle naturally provoked the anger of the authorities. The Party was banned in all the countries where it worked and its members pursued, imprisoned, tortured and killed. The first member to be martyred was Abdul Ghani al Mallah, who was tortured to death in 1963 by the Baathists in Baghdad. Then followed a long line of members who became victims of Qaddafi, Saddam and the other tyrant rulers of the Middle East. Qaddafi, in particular, has carried out a personal crusade against the Party ever since the Party sent a delegation to discuss with him his denial of the validity of the ahadith of the Prophet (SAW). After four hours of discussion wherein they proved that the ahadith were a source of sharia like the Quran, the Party distributed reports of the discussion. So incensed was Qaddafi that he murdered thirteen members; they were hanged in universities and schools in front of their teachers, pupils and families. One of them was brought down still alive, he was hung a second time, then they tied his body to the back of a car which was driven in full view of his family and sons.

When the pressure intensified and the people started asking and waiting for the victory, Hizb ut Tahrir moved into the next phase of the *dawa*, the phase of seeking support (*nussrah*). Before examining this phase let us recap on the work done so far:

1. Hizb ut Tahrir addressed the society, spoke in public and targetted public opinion. The Prophet (SAW) did this after he was ordered by Allah (SWT) "DECLARE WHAT YOU HAVE BEEN DERED." [15: 94] Thereafter the Companions commenced reading Quran publicly.

2. Hizb ut-Tahrir launched its political struggle against the existing political establishments. Ibn Ishaq reports that Muhammad (SAW) started his offensive against Quraish, their systems of kufr, their gods, and only after this did Quraish begin its offensive against Muhammad (SAW) and his followers.

3. The struggle launched by Hizb ut-Tahrir targetted the existing kufr systems and the non-Islamic relationships both political and non-political. In the public stage Muhammad (SAW) received revelations attacking the transactions and relationships that existed in Makkah. For example:

"Wailun Lil Muttaffifeen - Hellfire to the cheaters in trade." [18: 1]

"Kalla bal la tukrimmonal yateem - No, you don't feed the orphans." [89: 17]

"Wa tuhib bo-nal mala hubban jamma - You love the money very much." [89:20]

"Wa ithal mau'oodato su'ilat - When the child buried alive is asked." [81: 8]

And many other verses which focused on the existing practices in Makkah such as *zina*, *riba*, slavery etc. Politically, many verses targetted the elite and leadership of Makkah like Abu Lahab al waleed and Abu Jahal. The Prophet (SAW) read aloud the verse that said the idols around the Ka'ba would be the fuel of Hell-fire.

4. Hizb ut-Tahrir engaged in a struggle of ideas, i.e. political and ideological. The Party does not use physical or armed struggle. The Prophet (SAW) did not use armed struggle in the public stage of the da'awa to establish the Islamic state. Moreover, he did not attempt to break any idol or prevent the people from running nude around the Ka'ba as the people of Jahiliyya were inclined to do. He asked his people not to respond to the physical abuses of Quraish. In fact the Quran reminded the Companions of their condition in Makkah when they were to be patient and not to resort to physic struggle: "DO YOU SEE THOSE WHOM WE HAVE TOLD THEM BEFORE TO PRAY "[4:77]

5. When the persecution of Hizb ut-Tahrir increased to the point that some of its members could no longer endure it any more, the Party allowed some members to leave the area where the Party was working and to live in non-Islamic countries where they would be safe. The Prophet (SAW) allowed some of the Companions to migrate to Abyssinnia.

6. Hizb ut-Tahrir defined a region or sphere of work (*majal*), in other words, an area which it targetted, for establishing the Islamic state. It limited its activities of interaction within this area known in Arabic as the *majal*. The limits of this area has varied with the members establishing themselves in different muslim countries. The Prophet (SAW) defined a sphere for himself and did not limit himself to Makkah, but also he did not go all over the world.

7. When in the mid-sixties the persecution intensified against the Party, and the societies Where the Party worked were not prepared to move with any Islamic movement, Hizb ut-Tahrir decided to move he next phase of the dawa, namely, the seeking of support. Ibn Ishaq reports that when the level of torture and persecution by Quraish against the muslims reached its zenith, that is after the death of Abu Talib and Khadeeja (RA), the Prophet (SAW) commenced looking and searching for nussrah (support).

The Third Stage: Seeking Support to Establish the Khilafah

Hizb ut-Tahrir considers this process of seeking support to be the last phase of the pubic da'awa rather than a stage in itself. But for the sake of helping assess the activities we have looked at it as a stage in itself.

Nussrah is defused as the back up necessary for the Party to achieve political authority, through which the Islamic state government can be established and maintained. Hizb ut-Tahrir looks for this support from those sources in the society capable of providing it.

Two conditions must be met as a prerequisite for support

Two conditions must be met as a prerequisite for nussrah, they are:

1. Complete belief and faith in the ideology of Islam, its basic creed and the commitment to the political structure of Islam, i.e., the Khilafah state. This condition must be fully met and verified. The Party, of course, must have its means to verify that this condition is met and that the right people have been recruited. This is necessary because Hizb ut Tahrir does not want to be used by people to build their own power. The Prophet (SAW) according to Ibn Ishaq and Ibn Katheer rejected two offers of support because he saw the tribes offering the support were looking to share or inherit the power.
2. The second condition that has to be met by those giving the source of support is that they hold the real power and influence over a group of people who hold power in the society. For example, officers in the army who maintain an important position and yield influence in the military, and tribal leaders in tribal societies like Jordan and Saudi Arabia.

The State cannot be established unless the society has been prepared

Hizb ut-Tahrir maintains that it does not request those capable of giving support to obtain the political authority unless the Party has done the necessary ground-work in that society. This means preparing the public opinion and public awareness to support the state once it is established. Of course, such ground work should be established during the second stage, i.e., the interaction. The sirah of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) informs us that after support was provided by the six men from Khazraj, the Prophet (SAW) sent Mus'ab bin Umayr to prepare the society of Medina to accept Islam and to be ready to fight for it. Hizb ut-Tahrir points out that such preparation has been going on by the Party for the past 33 years. Naturally, this work of building and changing the ideas and feelings of people will never stop. There will always be a need to reshape the thoughts and feeling of the people towards Islam; otherwise the Islamic state might collapse again after it is established.

In 1958, when Hizb ut Tahrir was still in the very early stage of its work, it was offered to run the government in one country of the majal, i.e., its field of work.. This was turned down because the jump from preparation to taking authority was too great, the Party could not make it. In the sixties, however, with the ground work prepared the Party asked its people who held the nussrah to remove the government of Iraq and to hand the power to the Party. However, the attempted coup de tate failed. Further attempts were made to take power in Syria and Jordan, all of which failed.

Naturally the failure to achieve victory has disheartened some of the Party members, but the sirah of Muhammad (SAW) reports that the Prophet (SAW) did not succeed at first. He made several attempts before he was blessed with the nussrah of the people of Medina, who were later to be known as the Ansar. Hizb ut-Tahrir, whilst being criticised from some quarters for relying on people of nussrah, maintain that nussrah is definitely part of the method of Muhammad (SAW) to achieve the goal of establishing the Khilafah. In a leaflet published by Hizb ut-Tahrir in Ramadan 1986, the Party said:

"It is clear that the Islamic state can only be established if the current governments are removed and the authority is transferred from the disbelieving rulers to a khilafah. This task evidently requires material power to compensate the material power of the governments. This problem was overcome by the Prophet (SAW) by seeking nussrah (support) from those who could provide it; during his time this was given by the chiefs of powerful tribes [see the Life of the Prophet by Ibn Hisham, under the heading 'The Prophet offers himself to the tribes']. The same problem has to be solved with the same method today, because there is no indication that the Prophet (SAW) tried any other method in spite of his numerous failures to obtain nussrah before it was furnished by the Ansar of Medina. Those who provide Nussrah can use their arms or weapons when needed, because the

Ansar at the time of the second pledge (baya of Aqaba) were requested to provide nussrah (support) and protection for the dawa even with their weapons.'

The founder and leader of Hizb ut-Tahrir, Shiekh Tuqiuddin Nebhani, died in 1977 and was succeeded by Abdul Qadeem Zaloom, who remains the leader today. Although under the present leadership the Party has not attempted to take power, nevertheless the Party is still very active and laying the foundations for the establishment of the Khilafah outside of the framework of the existing political process. The Party considers it haram to participate with the current governments, they say: Would you participate with the kuffar to execute the rules of kufr? Or is it not that whilst implementing some aspects of Islam, you agree to implement kufr? Allah says:

"WHOSOEVER JUDGES BY OTHER THAN THAT WHICH ALLAH HAS REVEALED SUCH ARE DISBELIEVERS (KAFIROON)." [2:85]

Delegation to Tehran

In early days of the Iranian revolution the Party sent a delegation to Khomeini in Paris and then twice to Iran to discuss the question of Iran becoming the Islamic state. The Party met with Khomeini and the Council of Experts formed to draft the constitution. In spite of discussing and convincing the Council of Experts to establish an Islamic constitution, the constitution that was finally published, on instruction of Ayatollah Khomeini contradicted Islam and the ideas put forward by the Party on a number of counts. In particular, the Party considered Iran to be a nationalistic and sectarian, i.e., shi'a state built on the concept of Wilayat ul Faqih, with a republican style presidency, split powers of authority, a capitalist economy and a non-Islamic foreign policy.

Hizb ut-Tahrir's concept of the Islamic State

According to Hizb ut-Tahrir a state maybe defined as the power or authority represented by a body of people organised under one government within one or more territories. In other words, a state is an entity for the implementation of a collection of measures, understandings and convictions held by a group of people. From this definition it follows that the Islamic state is that entity empowered to carry out the Islamic laws, ideals and measures.

Islam is both a belief and way of life. The Islamic creed (Aqeeda) is the foundation for the Islamic system, its civilisation, its norms and criteria. Therefore, this creed should also serve as the only basis for the Islamic state, its constitution and laws. Nothing related to either the constitution or the laws of the state should be permitted if it is not based on the Islamic Aqeeda.

A state may call itself Islamic, or it may state in its constitution that the official religion of the state is Islam. Its constitution may contain an article stating that Islam is the main source for the formation of the constitution. None of these measures, nor all of them combined, would be sufficient to make the state or its constitution Islamic. Islam must be the only source, foundation and pivot around which the state builds its dealings inside the state, as well as with other nations. Islam must be the basis for the state's accountability and nothing else should be employed in judging the state's performance.

Criteria or views held by followers of other ideologies, such as: socialists, communists, capitalists, ideas such as nationalists, provincialist or those who hold to a certain school of thought (mazhab), cannot be the basis for the state's accountability.

Additionally, the Islamic state should belong to all muslims. The Islamic state should not belong only to a certain nation, people or school of thought. The State is not Arabic, Persian, Indian or Afghani. It is not Hanafie, Shafii, or Jafarii. It is an Islamic state and nothing else.

Another condition is that the authority of the state should be dependent on muslims only and not on the support of non-Muslim countries. The security of muslims inside and outside the state should be

the result of the global security of Islam and not the security granted by, or stemming from, the systems of the non-muslims.

When all these conditions are realised, i.e. when the safety of the state is Islamic, when the source of its authority is Islamic, when the system of government, its foreign policy, the economic, social, system of punishments and dealings, the system of worship, education and justice, when all these are Islamic in their foundation and implementation, and when the state is for all Muslims, then, and only then, the state is an Islamic state. Therefore, what is important is not the name but the content behind the name of the Islamic state.

Is the Name Khilafah personal to Hizb ut-Tahrir

The term of Khilafah has become so closely associated with Hizb ut-Tahrir that some people have come to view the term Khilafah as a personal expression of Hizb ut-Tahrir. The truth of the matter is that Islam has defined the system of government to be the Khilafah or Imamah. It is not a kingdom or monarchy, it is not an imperial, democratic, dictatorial nor theocratic system.. This is deduced from the ahadith of the Prophet (SAW) and the consensus of the companions (RA).

The Prophet (SAW) said: "If the pledge (bay'a) was given to two khalifahs, then kill the second one." [Muslims]

Other ahadith that mention the Khalifah include: "There will be khalifaas [Bukhari & Muslim] and "Any one who gives his allegiance to an imam" [Muslim], and so on.

On this the Sahabah were unanimous.

From the texts, we can infer the system of government in Islam. Allah (SWT) says that "AND RULE AMONG THEM WITH WHAT ALLAH REVEALED." [5 : 48]

He also says ".....AND FOR EACH WE HAVE MADE A LAW AND A COURSE..... [5:48] Therefore, the method followed by the Prophet (SAW) in governing is to be considered an implementation of this verse and becomes the same as a duty (*fard*).

By going back to the evidences of the Sunnah of the Prophet (SAW) and his chosen system of government and the consensus of the companions Hizb ut-Tahrir concludes that the Islamic system of government is:

- a) A Khalifah or imam for all Muslims to establish the laws of Islam.
- b) A representative assistant selected by the Khalifah to be responsible for ruling and carrying out the affairs of the state.
- c) An executive assistant to carry out the decisions made by the Khalifah for the internal and external affairs of the state. He also reports back to the Khalifah and feed back from these areas.
- d) Amir al Jihad to be responsible for the external affairs, the military, the national security, and the industry.
- e) The military forces i.e. the army.
- f) The justice department (al quadaa) to supervise the litigations on commercial (al muhtaseb), civil and personal matters, as well as the constitutionality of the laws and their adherence to Islam. This includes the complaints of the public against the government or the Khalifah himself.
- g) The *wulats* or appointees to various parts of the Islamic state.
- h) The administrative body to carry out the affairs of the ummah and the needs of the people..
- i) The consultative assembly Majlis al-Ummah to give opinions on various matters, to account for the performance of the state, to nominate the individuals for the position of the Khalifah and to discuss various laws.

This Islamic system of government must be considered without influence from other existing systems in the world to day. So the representative assistant is different from the concept of minister in other systems. Also, the shura council differs from the parliament in a democracy. In the Shura council the decisions voted on depend on the evidence from sharia in matters of forming laws. In other matters such as technical or political issues, the Khalifah decides after consulting with members of the council regardless of majority stand. In other matters such as removing a ruler or building hospitals and other major works, the majority opinion prevails.

Hizb ut-Tahrir considers this to be the form of the Khilafah state which must be established and this is the system of government according to Islam. This is not a personal concept of Hizb ut-Tahrir, all the scholars of the past, including the great Islamic political theorist AI-Mawardi agree that the system of government in Islam is Khilafah.

Based on these criteria, any country that declares itself to be an Islamic State maybe judged. This way, muslims may avoid the possibility of falling victims to deception and misguidance which results from names and slogans. This way, we may also be able to safeguard the accomplishments of Muslims for which a great price has been paid and endless sacrifices were made. Past events indicate that muslims were exploited by secular people to achieve certain goals and be left out when the time comes to harvest the fruits of their efforts.

The International Order

Hizb ut-Tahrir sees the international order as a factor which cannot be ignored. The international order is shaped by the strength of the two super powers: the USA and the USSR. The international laws are set such that they can exercise authority over all nations. Hizb ut-Tahrir in its political writings maintain that co-operation between the super powers does not favour the establishment of the Islamic state. Hizb ut-Tahrir considers the ideal time to establish the Khilafah is when the super-powers are in a state of tension with each other. In 1968, when Russia invaded Czechoslovakia and tension with the USA reached a maximum, Hizb ut-Tahrir together with the people of nussrah - moved simultaneously in Jordan and Syria to overthrow both governments. The attempt failed but the international situation was perfect. Before the Prophet (SAW) migrated to Medina, he was monitoring the international situation, which was then determined by the relationship between Persia and the Romans. This was clear from the debate that took place between Abu Bakr and the kuffar, and from surat al Room (The Romans) which addressed this issue and which was one of the last surahs to be revealed in Makkah.

Conclusion

The experience of Hizb ut-Tahrir in this work of establishing the Khilafah demonstrates that this dawa requires from the muslim the greatest possible level of commitment to Allah. This task, which Hizb ut-Tahrir has taken up since 1953, is not easy. The ideological and political struggle is intense. It requires the movement to say the truth even when all the world is against it. The fruit of this struggle is now beginning to be harvested. Khilafah is no longer a strange word; people everywhere are calling for the establishment of the Khilafah. Other sincere movements have joined in this work to establish the Islamic state and throughout the world the threat of Islam is perceived to loom large on the horizon.

Al-Fajr Magazine, April 1990