

Priorities of The Islamic Movement in The Coming Phase

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Preface

Praise be to Allah the Almighty, with Whose Grace all good deeds come to fruition, and peace be upon His Chosen Prophet, his family and companions. It was a fortunate occasion that brought me together with my honourable brother, Mohammad Al-Hashemi Al-Hamedi, the conscientious Muslim writer, when we attended the Annual Congress of the Arab Muslim Youth Association in North America last winter (December, 1989). It was there that he told me about the "Centre for Studies on Islamic Future", which was established by a group of Muslim thinkers, and urged me to cooperate with and support it.

He also talked to me about the Centre's intention to organize a symposium on the issues of Islamic future, telling me about its topics and participants and seeking my opinion. I welcomed both centre and symposium, sparing no advice that I could give in that direction. However, he would settle for nothing less than my promise of active participation. To make his offer the more attractive he said, "We will be holding the symposium in the country that you love and that loves you - Algeria". He asked me to devote my paper for the symposium to the topic "Priorities of the Islamic Movement in the next Three Decades", as he saw my interest in what I termed as "the fiqh [understanding] of priorities". I have focused on this branch of fiqh, talking much about it, as it is a part of my interest in righting the course of the Islamic Movement and rationalizing the Islamic Awakening, for this is my first and foremost concern. It is such a significant concern that I pray Allah to help me give it its due attention and serve it properly. It was for this reason that I could do

nothing but accept my honorable brother's invitation. The topic, the person who extended the invitation, the participants and the venue were all factors that made acceptance attractive, even compulsory. I asked Allah's help and set myself on writing the required paper, despite the frequent trips that I had to make at that time, which often interrupted my thinking and my research work. The fruit borne by my work is the following pages. I hope they contain a ray of light that, dim as it may be, will show us the right path. If it does not, it will be enough that we have raised this topic for research and discussion, for it will then serve as a reminder and enlightenment. What I have written here is a continuation of what I wrote before on the Islamic Movement in particular and the Islamic Awakening in general, including books, papers and articles.

The difference between a movement and an awakening is that a movement represents an organized group or groups with specific objectives and clear-cut courses, while an awakening is a general, churning current that encompasses individuals and groups, both organized and otherwise. Between the two of them there exists, to quote logicians, an absolute generality and an absolute particularity; every movement is an awakening while not every awakening is a movement. Therefore, an awakening is of a wider, more extensive scope than a movement, and rightly so.

An awakening is a tributary that supplies and reinforces a movement, while a movement is a guide that steers an awakening to the right direction: the relation between the two of them is one of interaction.

I would like to underscore an important point here: wherever I mention the Islamic Movement, the movement I mean is the Islamic

Movement in its all-embracing sense, not any particular movement. However, in most examples I will be citing the Muslim Brotherhood, because that is the movement where I grew up; I experienced all its hardships and good times, and shared in many of the events it witnessed over almost a half-century.

I have chosen the title of my paper as "Priorities of the Islamic Movement in the Coming Phase", but I did not confine my work to the "three decades" as requested, since I do not approve of such strict limitation in this rapidly-changing age. And the close of our prayer is "Praise be to Allah, the Cherisher and Sustainer of the worlds".

Doha, in Ramadan, 1410 A.H. (April, 1990 A.D)

Yusuf Al-Qaradawi

Introduction On the Islamic Movement

What Do We Mean By Islamic Movement?

By "Islamic Movement", I mean that organized, collective work, undertaken by the people, to restore Islam to the leadership of society, and to the helm of life all walks of life.

Before being anything else, the Islamic Movement is work: persistent, industrious work, not just words to be said, speeches and lectures to be delivered, or books and articles are indeed required, they are merely parts of a movement, not the movement itself

"Allah the Almighty says, Work, and Allah, His Messenger and the believers will see your work"
(Al-Tawba: 105)

The Islamic Movement is a popular work performed for Allah's sake

The Islamic movement is a popular work based mainly on self-motivation and personal conviction. It is a work performed out of faith and for nothing other than the sake of Allah, in the hope of being rewarded by Him, not by humans.

The core of this self-motivation is that unrest which a Muslim feels when the Awakening visits him and he feels a turmoil deep inside him, as a result of the contradiction between his faith on the one hand and the actual state of affairs of his nation on the other. It is then that he launches himself into action, driven by his love for his religion, his devotion to Allah, His Messenger, the Quran and the Muslim Nation, and his feeling of his and his people, neglect of their duty. In so doing, he is also stimulated by his keenness to discharge

his duty, eliminate deficiencies, contribute to the revival of the neglected faridas [enjoined duties] of enforcing the Sharia [Islamic Law] sent down by Allah; unifying the Muslim nation around the Holy Quran; supporting Allah's friends and fighting Allah's foes; liberating Muslim territories from all aggression or non-Muslim control; reinstating the Islamic caliphate system to the leadership anew as required by Sharia, and renewing the obligation to spread the call of Islam, enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong and strive in Allah's cause by deed, by word or by heart - the latter being the weakest of beliefs - so that the word of Allah may be exalted to the heights.

Inadequacy of Official Work

It is by this popular work performed solely for Allah's sake that the Islamic Movement is established. The official, or semi-official work, such as establishing boards, higher councils, associations or unions for Islamic affairs supervised by the ministries of awqaf [*lit. endowments, used in a wider meaning to refer to Islamic affairs*] or any other government bodies, could more or less benefit Islam and Muslims, in proportion to the intent and enthusiasm of those in charge of it, as well as to how much they place their loyalty to their religion before their loyalty to this earthly life that embraces them and embraces those who appoint them to their positions.

However, this official or semi-official work is always inadequate and deficient in many ways, as follows:

1. It revolves in the orbit of the domestic policy of the state that starts and finances it. Its very movement is dictated by that

policy, and hence it does not express pure Islam or the greater Muslim nation as much as it expresses that particular state.

2. It is not based, in most cases, on men proven by work, seasoned by struggle and tested in the field, but on "appointed" men who are in the favor of the financing state and therefore seek to please it out of their ambition or out of their fear. Such men cannot, therefore, disobey the state's orders, or ask "Why", or say "No". I am speaking of the overwhelming majority here, as among the "official" workers there may exist some who do better than some "popular" workers in their loyalty to Allah, their jealousy for their religion and their endeavoring to realize this religion in a proper way.
3. It often lacks the true intent to defend Islam, and may even be aimed at a purely political gain. In most cases, this sort of work is similar to "the Mosque of Mischief" mentioned in the Quran: its superficial objective may be to serve worship and piety, but its hidden aim is to divide the believers and hinder the efforts of faithful workers.
4. It is, for all these reasons, under accusation from the masses and peoples, and deprived of their sympathy and support. Even those official "ulama" (scholars) who put themselves at the service of the state's policy - that is, speaking up of keeping silent as required - lack the confidence of the masses, who call them "the scholars of the authorities" or "the agents of the police".

For all these reasons, the official or semi-official Islamic work, so long as Muslim rule is absent, is unable to establish a true Islamic

Movement. However, given its capabilities, it can render some academic and practical services and provide financial and moral support to the popular Islamic work and its institutions, especially if such official or semi-official work is headed by faithful, brave leaders.

The Movement is an Organized, Collective Work

Besides being a popular work done solely for Allah's sake, the Islamic Movement is an organized collective work. It is not enough for Islam's well - being that volunteering individuals should work:

“Separately and in scattered areas, though their effort will be added to their balance on the Day of Judgment, for Allah shall not waste the effort of man or woman, and everyone shall be rewarded for his deeds according to his intention and perfection of his work. And anyone who has done an atom's weight of good shall see it”

(Al-Zalzalah: 7)

Individual work, under the contemporary circumstances of the Muslim Nation, will not be enough for bridging over the gap and realizing the aspired hope. Collective work is a must, and it is ordained by religion and necessitated by reality. Religion advocates "the sense of congregating" and opposes "straying". Allah's hand is with collective effort, and he who strays shall stray into Hell. It is only the stray sheep that the wolf devours, and a prayer is not invalid if the worshipper performs it separately from the congregation or stands ahead of the rank. A believer to another believer is like one firm brickwork each part supporting the other. Cooperation in righteousness and piety is one of the faridas of religion; and the mutual teaching of truth and patience is one of the

preconditions of saving oneself from loss in earthly life and the Hereafter.

The sheer state of affairs makes it inevitable for a hopefully fruitful work to be collectively done. It takes two hands to clap, and one is weak by himself, strong by his fellows. Great achievements are only made through concerted efforts, and decisive battles are won only through the unity of hands, as the Quran says:

“Allah loves those who fight in His cause in battle array, as if they were a solid cemented structure” (Al-Saff: 4)

Collective work should be organized and based on a responsible leadership, a solid base and clear-cut perceptions that define the relationships between the leadership and the grassroots according to fundamentals of obligatory shura [consultation] and compulsory seeing obedience.

Islam recognizes no collective work that is not organized. Even collective prayer is based on organization, for Allah shall not look at the row which is not straightened; and rows are to be closed. No gap should be left in a row of worshippers for it will be filled by Satan standing shoulder to shoulder and foot to foot. It is a unit of movement and appearance as much as it is a unity of doctrine and direction "do not differ so that your hearts may not differ".

An Imam is required to oversee the alignment of the row behind him until it is straightened and closed before starting prayer, and he advises the worshippers to "be responsive to the [guiding] hands of your brothers", as the prayer in congregation requires a measure of flexible and responsiveness for harmony of the rank as a whole.

Then comes the obedience to the imam, (The imam is appointed to be followed: say "Allah Akbar" after he utters it bow when he bows; prostrate when he prostrates and listen when he recites. Nobody is allowed to break the rank, or precede the imam in bowing or prostrating so that he may not introduce a wrong note into this harmony and create an irregularity in such an organized, coordinated structure. He who does that should fear that Allah will metamorphose him into a man with a donkey's head. However, should the imam make a mistake, it is the right, even duty, of those behind him to rectify this mistake, whether it is the result of impropriety or forgetfulness, involves word or deed, or happens in recital (of the Quran) or in other fundamental parts of prayer.

Even women in the back ranks in prayer are allowed to clap their hands if the imam makes a mistake, so as to attract his attention to the mistake. Congregational prayer is a miniaturization of the overall Islamic congregational system and of what the interrelation between the commander and the troops should be like: there is neither infallible leadership nor absolute, blind obedience.

The Movement's mission is to revive Islam

What is the mission of the Islamic Movement?

The Islamic Movement has come into existence to revive Islam and reinstate it at the helm of life once again, after removing the obstacles from its path. The revival of Islam "is not an expression of mine: it was used by the Prophet (peace be upon him) in the sound hadith narrated by Abu-Hurayra:

"Allah shall send down a man who will revive the religion of this Nation at the start of every hundred years"

(Abu-Dawud & Al-Hakim)

Most of those who interpreted this hadith tended to take the word "who" to mean a specific individual who will revive the religion. They have actually tried to name such individual from among the prominent theologians and imams whose death fell near the end of a century of the hijrah calendar, such as Omar ibn-Abdel-Aziz (died 101 A.H.) and Al Shafe'i (died 204 A.H.) and so on. However, they differed much on the issue of who the reviver of the third hundred years might be.

Meanwhile, some of the hadith commentators regarded the word "who" in this hadith as suitable to imply the plural just like it would be proper to imply the singular, indicating that the "reviver" could well be a group and not an individual. This is what Iban Al-Athir thought most likely in his book "Al-Jam'i Lil Usul - collection of fundamentals". Al-Hafez, Al-Dhahabi and others supported this concept, too.

I have more to add to this: the reviver of Islam should not necessarily be a group in the sense of a number of people including so and so and so, but may be a group in the sense of a school, a movement of thought and action that works in union to revive the religion.

This is what I take to be the most likely interpretation in understanding and applying this hadith to the century [A.H.] that has just ended and the century that has just started. We pray to Allah to make our present days in this new century better than our past days, and to grant us still better days in our future.

How should the required revival be achieved?

The revival to be achieved by the Islamic Movement should I take three directions:

1. The first direction would be the formation of an Islamic vanguard, capable, through integration and cooperation, of leading the contemporary society with Islam without isolation or leniency, and remedying the ailments of Muslims with medicines that have been prescribed by Islam alone. This vanguard must comprise individuals whose ranks are glued by deep-rooted faith, sound learning and close ties.
2. The second direction would be the formation of a Muslim public opinion representing the broad popular base which stands behind Islam's protagonists, loving and supporting them after having become aware of their general objectives and confident of their faithfulness and capability, and also after having rid itself of the effects of the mud-throwing

campaigns against Islam and Islam's protagonists and movements.

3. The third direction would be the preparation of a world, public climate that will accept the existence of the Muslim Nation when it understands the true aspects of the Islamic Message and civilization, and becomes free of the evil effects left by the fanaticism of the Medieval Ages and the lies and distortions concocted by anti-Islam campaigns. Such public opinion would tolerate the emergence of Muslim power beside other global powers, realizing that Muslims have a right to rule themselves according to their own creed since they are the majority in their own countries - as called for by the democratic principles that are so often praised and advocated - and to promote their universal humanitarian message as one of the great ideologies of the world: an ideology that has a past, a present and a future and lays claim to over one thousand million adherents in this world in which we now live.

The multitude of the Movement's fields of action, and which is more deserving

Diversification of Fields of Work

The fields of work awaiting the Islamic Movement in the coming phase are wide and expansive. The activist leaders and intellectual theorists of the Movement should make a careful scientific study of these fields. Such a study must be based on documented and confirmed statistics and data.

There is Educational Work

This field of work is important for forming human "cadres" and Islamic vanguards bringing up the aspired generation of victory, whose members will understand and believe in Islam in full, including knowledge, work, call and struggle. Members of this generation will carry the call of Islam to their Nation first and then to the rest of the world. They will be able to do that only after they commit themselves to Islam as a clear - cut perception in their minds, a deep - rooted doctrine in their hearts, a line of behaviour governing all aspects of their life, worship of Allah and dealing with other people, and a path of culture that will improve the state of affairs of the Nation and bring it together on the Word of Allah and lead the confused humanity to what is best and most proper.

There is Political Work

This kind of work would be aimed at extricating the rule from the hands of weaklings all traitors to place it in the hands of the powerful and honest who seek neither to be high and mighty on the land nor to corrupt it, who, if Allah establishes them in the land, establish prayer and give alms, enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong.

There is Social Work

This work would be aimed at remedying poverty, ignorance, disease and vice, and facing up to those suspect institutions that make social and philanthropic work a tool for altering the Nation's identity and weakening its ties with its creed.

There is Economic Work

This sort of work would contribute to the development of the community to free it from subordination and lift off its burden of usury - based loans, as a prelude to building Islamic economic institutions.

There is the Work of Struggle (Jihad)

It would be aimed at liberating Muslim land, fighting the forces that oppose the Islamic Call and the Muslim Nation, and preserving the freedom of the Muslim will and the independence of the Muslim decision.

There is Media and Propaganda Work

It would be aimed at spreading Islamic ideas and explaining the teachings of Islam in such a way that would restore their middle - course nature and comprehensiveness and eliminate all the ambiguities and lies that may mar their clarity. It should use all the types of media available, from publications to audio and visual aids.

There is Intellectual and Scientific Work

It would be aimed at correcting the perception of Islam in the minds of Muslims and non-Muslims alike and setting right those wrong concepts and deficient fatwas (legal Islamic opinion) which have proliferated among some groups of the Islamists themselves, so as to lay down a mature, inspired understanding of the Islamic Movement. Such understanding will be based on a legal foundation derived from the texts and goals of Sharia, and it must be especially established among the elite of educated and cultured Muslims who didn't actually have a chance to know Islam in a right & proper way.

Distribution of Forces Among the Fields of Work

I believe that all these fields are necessary and that none of them should be neglected or put off. What must be done is to distribute forces and capabilities among them according to what each of them needs on the one hand and what forces and capabilities we have on the other hand.

The Holy Quran forbade that all of the Muslims at the Prophet's time should go to the field of jihad - and what a holy field it was! - and neglect another field that was no less sacred than the field of jihad, and might even have been more sacred at some times because it paved the way for it and reminded Muslims of it and warned them against neglecting it: it is the field of learning their religion well.

In Surat Al-Tauba [Repentance], which denounced those who held back from jihad and promised severest punishment for those who dragged their feet on the way to the battlefield, Allah the Almighty says

"Nor should the believers all go forth together. If a contingent from every expedition remained behind, they could devote themselves to studies in religion and admonish their people when they return to them, so that they (may learn) to guard themselves"

(At-Tauba: 122)

This is a strong call for specialization and for distribution of forces among the fields that need them.

What should be Emphasized and Given Priority?

The Islamic Movement should address several matters that have a particular significance in the next phase in the light of the fiqh of priorities already mentioned.

These matters are:

1. Focusing on certain concepts that have to be clarified, generalized and deepened in the intellectual field. This is what we call the “new fiqh”.
2. Focusing on certain social brackets to which the Movement should spread and which the Awakening should include in the field of Muslim call.
3. Focusing on a certain qualitative standard in the preparation and qualification of the readerships of the future in the educational field, particularly where the nurturing of faith and thought are concerned.
4. Focusing on the development of ideas and practices with regard to local and world political relations, so as to break the Movement's domestic isolation and external blockade and ensure its universality and flexibility in the political field.

We will deal separately with each of those four fields of work.

The Islamic Movement In The Field Of Intellect And Knowledge

The Government In The Field Of Intellect And Knowledge

The first and foremost field, in my opinion, is the intellectual field, for it is the basis for the enhancement of the call and Islamic Education.

It appears to me that our dilemma is an intellectual one in the first place. There is a clear deficiency in the understanding of Islam among many people, and an obvious lack of knowledge of Islam's teachings and their relevant hierarchy of importance, which is higher and most important, which is just important, which is not important at all. There is a lack of knowledge of the present time in which we live; of the reality that surrounds us.

There is an ignorance of others, in which we fall prey to either overestimation or underestimation, while others know everything about us and have laid us bare up to the very marrow!

There is even an ignorance of ourselves. Up to this day, we have not put our finger on our points of strength or weakness, often making a mountain out of a molehill, or seeing a blizzard as a sheer storm in a teacup. It is the same whether we are looking at our capabilities or at our shortcomings.

This ignorance is not restricted to Muslim masses, but it does also include the vanguard on which the hope for helping the cause of

Islam now rests, and which represents the groundwork on which the aspired Islamic work will be built.

Our Need For a New Fiqh

In fact, we need a new fiqh, so that we may deserve to belong to those described by Allah as "people who understand". By 'fiqh' here I do not mean fiqh as it is used in Islamic terminology, i.e. the science of jurisprudence that determines the particular terms and judgments of Shari'ah from their detailed evidence, such as the terms and conditions of ablution, impurity worship, transaction, marriage, divorce, baby - nursing etc. Important as it may be, this is not what we mean here. Neither do we mean the sense in which the word "fiqh" is used in the Quran and hadith, since it was among those words and concepts that have changed overtime, as Imam Al-Ghazali said in the Chapter on "knowledge" in his well-known encyclopedia called. *Ihya Ulum al-Din* "Revival of the Sciences of Religion".

The Quran had mentioned the root "F. Q. H. " (to understand) in its Meccan surats before the detailed rules of what is allowed and what is forbidden under the Shari'ah were sent down, and also before the faridas, hudud (punishment) and judgment were ordained. Read What Allah the Almighty says in Surat al An'am (65), which was sent down in Mecca, "say":

"has power to send calamities on you, from above and below, or to cover you with confusion in factional strife, giving you taste of mutual vengeance- each from the other. See how we explain the Signs by various (symbols); that they may understand" (65) (65) See how we explain the Signs by various (symbols); that they may understand" (65)

Also read in the same Surat:

"It is He Who has produced you from a single person: Here is a place of sojourn and a place of departure. We detail Our signs for people who understand"(98)

The word "fiqh" in the two verses means: *an in-depth understanding of the unchanging practices of Allah in souls, minds and horizons, and His creation and of the punishments He has in store for those who stray from the right path preordained by Him.*

Read in Surat Al-Araf (7), which is also Meccan, what Allah the Almighty says about the people He has ordained for Hell. He describes them saying, "They have hearts wherewith they do not understand" and then says that they are

"Like cattle-nay, more misguided: for they are heedless [of warning"(179)

Also read in many surats the description of the attitude of polytheists towards the Quran, which Allah the Almighty described by saying

"We have thrown veils on their hearts, so that they may not understand it, and deafness in their ears"

(Al An'am: 25, Al-Isra: 46, Al-Kahf: 57)

In Medinan Quran, the word "fiqh" was used in several surats to deny the presence of the quality of "fiqh" in polytheists and hypocrites. In Surat Al-Anfal (8), Allah the Almighty addresses His Messenger and the believers, saying

"If there are twenty amongst you, patient and persevering, they will vanquish two hundred: if a hundred, they will vanquish a thousand of the unbelievers: for these are a people without understanding"(65)

The denial of possession of fiqh by warning unbelievers here means that they lack the understanding of the unchanging practices of Allah and how He gives days [of varying fortune] to all people by turn.

In Surat Al-Tauba (9), Allah dispraises the hypocrites by saying:

“They prefer to be with the women who remain behind [at home]: their hearts are sealed, and so they do not understand” (87)

The understanding meant here is the understanding of the necessity of jihad and contribution to protection of the religion, life, honor and property and the community as a whole - an objective that precedes any individual interest, however urgent. In the same surat, Allah the Almighty describes this sort of people [who lack this understanding] by saying:

“Whenever a surat is sent down, they look at each other [saying] (Does anyone see you?" Then they turn aside: Allah has turned their hearts [from the light] for they are a people who do not understand”(127)

These muddle - headed people forget that Allah sees them before humans do, but they really have lost their fiqh: their understanding. In Surat Al-Hashr (59), Allah speaks to the believers about hypocrites, saying:

“Truly, you are stronger [than they are] because of the terror [thrown] in their hearts by Allah. This is because they are a people who do not understand” (13)

In Surat Al-Munafiqun (63), Allah says:

"That is because they believed, then they rejected faith: so a seal was set on their hearts: therefore they do not understand" (3)

Also in the same surat, Allah says:

"They are the ones who say, 'Do not spend anything on those who are with Allah's Messenger so that they may disperse.' But to Allah belong the treasures of the heavens and the earth, but the hypocrites do not understand"(7)

This shows that the hypocrites have the lion's share of the Quranic description of "people who do not understand". It is because the hypocrites imagine that they are intelligent, that - they managed to sit on the fence, live with double faces and try to deceive Allah and those who believe, and when they meet those who believe they say, "we believe", but when they are alone with their evil ones, they say, "We are with you".

But Allah the Almighty uncovered their secret, unveiled their hesitation and disclosed their deception in many verses. See for instance:

"They try to deceive Allah and those who believe, but they only deceive themselves and do not realize [i]" (Al-Baqara: 9)

In short, they have been scandalized before Allah and people, lost earthly life and the Hereafter, and they will certain!, be thrown into the Low depths of Hell. What stupidity could be more abysmal? No doubt that anyone meeting this description enjoys no even a grain of understanding!

Conclusion:

In Quranic parlance, the word "fiqh": does not have the terminological, meaning it has in today's language, i.e. jurisprudence, but refers to understanding [and learning] of Allah's words and His practices in the universe, life and society.

Even the fiqh of religion referred to by the phrase "devote themselves to studies in religion mentioned in Surat al-Tawba (9): ..

"If a contingent from every expedition remained behind, they could devote themselves to studies in religion and admonish their people when they return to them, so that they [may learn] to guard themselves" (122)

.. does not refer to the traditional meaning of the word, as such reference to jurisprudence] would not result in a warning that could make the recipient wary or be on his guard, and is far as can be from performing this function - a function of the Call primarily.

There is a similarity between the usage of the word "fiqh" in this sense [understanding in these verses of the Holy Quran, and its use in the following hadith: *"If Allah wants to do good to a person, He makes him well-versed in the religion"*.

It means that Allah will enlighten his vision so that he may delve deep into the truths, secrets and aims of religion to understand them better instead of contenting himself with mere words and superficial meanings.

The Types of Fiqh [Understanding] We Need

I have dealt with the types of fiqh we need, or at least with some of them, on various occasions. A part of my argument is included in my book "The Islamic Awakening Between Ingratitude And Extremism", dealing with the fiqh of practices and the fiqh of ranks of deeds.

Another part of the argument is included in my book entitled "The Islamic Awakening Between Permitted Difference And Undesirable Disunity", dealing with one of the main types of fiqh we need: the fiqh of difference. In that book, I argue that there are five types of fiqh that we need. However, I will focus here on only two of these five. These are:

The Fiqh of Balances	The Fiqh of Priorities
The need for 2 levels of fiqh	The Fiqh of Priorities in the Prophet's surat (biography)
Integration of the 2 types of Fiqh in examining interests & evils	The interrelationship between the Fiqh of Priorities & the Fiqh of Balances
The difficulty of practice in real life	The necessity of observing proportions among Shari'ah Taklifs (Legal Commands of Mandates)
Proof of the Fiqh of glances from the Holy Quran	The neglect of the Fiqh of Priorities among many muslims
The opinion of Ibn Taymiyyah	Imam Al-Ghazal & The Fiqh of Priority
When the Fiqh of Balances is absent	Imam Ibn Qayyim judgment on preferred worships

I believe that a stop at each of them is in order

The Fiqh of Balances

By the fiqh of balances we mean several matters, as follows:

1. Balancing interests against each other, in terms of size and capacity; value and effect; as well as, endurance, so as to determine which should be given precedence and which should be discarded.
2. Balancing evils against each other in the same way of balancing interests, so as to determine which could be accepted and which has to be avoided.
3. Balancing interests against evils if they contradict, so as to determine when to give the avoidance of evil a precedence over the gaining of interests, and when to forgive evil for the sake of interests.

The Need for Two Levels of Fiqh

In this respect, we need two levels of Fiqh as follows:

1. The Need for the Fiqh of Shari'ah:

The first of these levels is a Shari'ah Fiqh based on a profound understanding of the letter and spirit of Shari'ah, so as to establish the soundness of the said "principle of balances" and determine its evidence, which should be clear to those who endeavor to understand the judgments and texts of Shari'ah and delve deep in its secrets.

Shari'ah was sent down only for achieving benefits for humans in earthly life and in the Hereafter, in the known ranks of these interests: Al-Daruriyyah (the indispensable) Al-Hajjiyyah (the needful) and Al-Tahsiniyyah (the dignifying).

2. The Need for the Fiqh of Factual Experience:

The second level is a rather positivistic fiqh based on the study of contemporary reality - a study that is careful comprehensive and dependent on the most accurate information and statistics. However, we have to warn here against misleading and unrealistic figures based on propaganda leaflets, inadequate information and questionnaires aimed at serving a specific objective, not at serving Truth as a whole.

Integration of the Two Types of Fiqh in Examining Interests and Evils

Both the Fiqh of Shari'ah and Fiqh of factual experience should be integrated so that we may reach the proper academic balancing process that is free from both extremism and neglect.

The Shari'ah aspect here is clear in principle It was discussed in the books of Usul Al-Fiqh (principles of Jurisprudence), starting with "Al-Mustasfa" and up to "Al Muwafaqat", as well as the books on rules, similarities and differences. When interests conflict, lower interest is sacrificed for the sake of higher interest, and private interest is sacrificed for the sake of common interest, and the owner of private interest is to be compensated for his loss. Also in cases of conflicting interests, temporary interest is forsaken in favor of long-term or permanent interest; superficial interest is neglected for the sake of real interest, and sure interest is given precedence over uncertain interest.

In the Treaty of Hudaibia, we saw the Prophet (peace be upon him) give prominence to real, basic and future interests over some considerations that others would never have relinquished. He agreed to such conditions that at first glance seemed unfair or humiliating to Muslims; he agreed to the removal of the phrase, "*In the name of Allah, Most Merciful, Most Compassionate*", in whose place was written "*In The name Of God*". He also agreed not to be mentioned as the Messenger of Allah in the pact, and to write his name only as Muhammad Ibn Abdullah. The examples are many. If evils conflict, and some of them are indispensable, then one should choose the lesser of two evils and the lower of two degrees of harm prescribed. Muslim Scholars have prescribed that harm should be eliminated as much as possible and that a lesser harm should not be eliminated with a greater harm. A minor harm should be tolerated if such tolerance would make it possible to avoid a major harm, and private harm should be accepted for the sake of avoiding common harm.

Many examples of this are mentioned in books on the "rules of Fiqh" or "similarities and analogies". If interests and evils conflict, they should be examined carefully in terms of their size, effect and duration.

A slight evil should be forgiven for the sake of realizing a major interest. A temporary evil should be forgiven for the sake of realizing a long - term or permanent interest.

Even a great evil should be accepted if its elimination would lead to a greater evil. In normal conditions, the avoidance of evil should come before the realization of interest.

It is not enough that we should accept this concept in theory, but rather we have to apply it in practice, for many of the differences among the active Islamist groups are related to these balances.

Is alliance with now - Muslim forces acceptable?

Is reconciliation or pacification with governments that do not adhere to Islam acceptable?

Is it allowed to participate in a ruling regime that is not purely Islamic and operates under a constitution that has loopholes or does not have our full approval?

Should we join an opposition front that comprises political parties for toppling an infidel backshading regime?

Should we establish Islamic economic institutions in an environment dominated by a usury-based, man-made economic system?

Should we allow Muslim elements to work for usury based banks and establishments, or should we keep all the religious elements that adhere to the teachings of Islam away from such establishments?

The Difficulty of Practice in Real Life

It is easy to lay down a principle, but difficult to put it to practice. The Fiqh of balances is not easy to grasp by the layman and by others who can raise a hue and cry for the slightest cause. The erudite scholar, Mawdudi, and his followers met much resistance and embarrassment when he, in the light of the fiqh of balances, was of the opinion that electing "Fatima Jinnoh" was less harmful than electing "Ayyub Khan". They became a target of a ferocious campaign invoking the hadith: "*A people who appoint a woman to lead them will never thrive*". So how about a people who appoint as their leader a tyrant, would they do any better? Never!

The fiqh (of balance) here examines the two evils to choose the lesser one and avoid the greater of them.

Dr. Hassan Al-Turabi and his brothers in Sudan were attacked by some Islamists because they had decided to join the Socialist Union and had accepted some government appointments under Ja'far Nimeiri's regime, even before he announced the application of Islamic Shari'ah in Sudan.

Our brothers in Syria fared the same (opposition) when they decided to ally themselves with some non-Islamic forces to resist the regime that was seeking to annihilate them, although Prophet Mohammad allied himself with the tribe of Khuza'a who were polytheists, and he sought the support of one polytheist group against the other at times, too. However, I am not taking sides here. I am only advocating a principle: the fiqh of balances, on which the structure of Shari'ah politics" should be built.

In positions taken by the Prophet and his Companions, and in the provisions of our comprehensive Shari'ah is much evidence supporting this argument: that it is permissible to participate in a non-Islamic rule or ally with non-Muslim forces.

Proof of the Fiqh of Glances from The Holy Quran

If we carefully examine the Holy Quran, with its Meccan and Medinan revelations we will find much proof of the fiqh of balances and how to weigh things against one another.

A balancing of interests is present in Aaron's reply to Moses (may Allah have peace on both of them) "O son of my mother, do not seize me by my beard nor by (the hair of) my head. Truly I feared that you should say,

"You have caused a division among the Children of Israel and did not respect my word" (Taha: 94)

A balancing of evils is found in the explanation given by Al-Khidr when he scuttled the boat:

"As for the boat, it belonged to poor people who plied on the water, and I wanted to render it unserviceable, for there was after them a king who took every boat by force" (Al-Kahf: 79)

If the boat would be kept by its owners because it was scuttled, then the situation would be less damaging than it would be when the boat was to be lost completely. Saving some is certainly better than losing all.

Quite in point on the fiqh of balances is Allah's saying:

"They ask you about fighting in the Prohibited Month Say', 'Fighting therein is a grave. [offence], but graver it is, in the sight of Allah, to deny Him, to prevent access to the Sacred Mosque, and drive out its members'. Tumult and oppression are worse than slaughter"
(Al-Baqarah: 217)

Allah the Almighty is telling us that fighting in the Prohibited Month does constitute a grave offence, but may be undertaken for resisting something graver.

For a comparison between abstract and concrete interests, let us read the Almighty's admonishment of Muslims after the Ghazwah of Badr.

"It is not fitting for an apostle to have prisoners of war until he has thoroughly conquered the land. You look for the temporal goods of this world, but Allah looks to the Hereafter, and Allah is Exalted in might, Wise"
(Al-Anfal: 67)

For a balancing of interest and evil, let us read the Almighty's saying:

"They ask you about wine and gambling. Say, "In them, there is great sin, and some profit, for men, but the sin is greater than the profit"
(Al-Baqarah: 219)

In comparing non-Muslim groups and forces one to another, let us read the opening verses of Surat Al-Rum (the Romans) which predict the Romans' victory over the Persians. On that ..

“though both parties are non-Muslims [the surat says, day the believers shall rejoice] though both parties are non-Muslims [the surat says, day the believers shall rejoice] though both parties are non-Muslims [the surat says, day the believers shall rejoice]” (4)

.. because the Romans were people of the Book, which made them closer to Muslims than the Persians who worshipped fire.

The Opinion of Sheikh Al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah

Sheikh Al-Islam Ibn Taymia gave a very strong opinion on the permissibility of assuming some public offices in an unjust state, if the occupant of such office would seek to alleviate some of the injustice or curb evil and corruption (*see Annex. 1*).

He also wrote a comprehensive chapter on the conflict of good things or bad things, or their combination if they came together and could not be separated but were to be taken as a whole or left as a whole (*see Annex. 2*).

A Muslim symposium devoted to Islamic economics and comprising some jurisprudents and some economists opined that it was legal [from the Shari'ah point of view] to subscribe to the shares put up for public sale by companies and enterprises which are established in Muslim countries to operate in authorized fields but could have a tinge of suspicion of riba [usury] in their transactions. The symposium, examining that issue in the light of the fiqh of balances, saw that such vital and effective concerns should not be left to non-

Muslims or unreligious Muslims, as such action would entail a grave danger, particularly in certain countries.

Shareholders can donate a proportionate part of their profits as a sadaqat [charity] for that part of the profit he may deem as resultant from riba - related transactions. According to this fiqh, conscientious Muslim youth were given the religious opinion that they should not leave their jobs in banks and insurance companies and their likes, albeit their stay would entail some sin, because their stay would make them gain experience that they might use to serve Islamic economy. They would be rejecting the evil, even if only in their hearts, while they joined efforts with those who seek to change the whole order into an Islamic one.

When the Fiqh of Balances is Absent

If we do not apply the fiqh of balances, we will be closing many doors of good and blessing in our own faces, making the philosophy of rejection a way of dealing with everything, and taking self - isolation as a pretext for avoiding problems and shirking a confrontation with the adversary on his home ground.

It would be so easy for us then to say "No"! or "This is haram [prohibited by Shari'ah]!" to every proposal that requires thought or ijtihad [passing a legal opinion on some issue that is not specifically dealt with by Shari'ah].

But if we apply the fiqh of balances, we will find a way to compare one situation to another and weigh profits against losses in the short and long runs and at individual and collective levels, and then

choose what we judge as leading to the realization of interest and the avoidance of evil in the best way possible.

Over ten years ago, I was invited to write for the "Doha" magazine that was published in Qatar. It was a general publication of literary and cultural pursuits, and most of its editorial staff were secularists, while its predominant line, though not against Islam, was not pro-Islamic or defending Islam either.

I hesitated for a long time, but, thinking of the proposal in a balancing manner, I judged that to write for the magazine would be better and more useful than boycotting it, because its readers represented a broad base of the cultured masses, most of whom do not usually read Islamic magazines. The readers of that magazine are unlike those who read the "Al-Umma" magazine and the like, so we have to make our word reach them whenever we have a chance. It is our divine duty to the Call to do so.

This is what makes us agree to be interviewed by reporters of newspapers and magazines whose line may not gain our approval. Some of our brothers still blame those who write in the daily newspapers which do not follow an explicit Islamic line.

Some even blamed me for serializing my book, "The Islamic Awakening Between Allowed Difference And Rejected Dispersal" in the Saudi Asharq Al-Awsat newspaper because that newspaper had adopted certain attitudes they did not approve of, but I had realized the benefit of publishing the book in such a widely-read newspaper. There are even those who believe in boycotting mass media in all their forms - the printed, the audio and the visual, c account of their deviated thoughts and practices.

They forget that; leaving the mass media will only make them worse and will give a chance to the secularists and dirty - minded to infiltrate deeper into them and sabotage them, while it will deny us chances which we do not find equivalents. If we examine this issue in the light of the fiqh of balances, we will find that entering these important and vital fields is not only legal but desirable, even imperative, as well because it represents a means for discharging the duty of the Call and fighting evil as best we can. If something is required by duty, then it is a duty in itself, as it is already known and established.

The Fiqh of Priorities

By fiqh of priorities", we mean putting everything in true perspective; no prominent issue should be postponed, and no minor issue should be given prominence; no big matter should be underestimated, and no small matter should be exaggerated.

This is what the laws of nature and the rules of Shari'ah dictate. I mean that Allah's creation and commands ..

"Verily His is the Creation, His the Command" (Al-A'raf: 54)

.. make it imperative to observe true perspective.

The Fiqh of Priorities in the Prophet's Surat (Biography)

During the Meccan phase of the Message, the Prophet's mission was confined to calling the people to the Cause of Allah and bringing up the faithful generation that would carry the Call later to the Arabs and then take it to the four corners of the world. At that time, the Prophet focused on establishing the creed, cultivating monotheism, eliminating polytheism and idol-worship and nurturing values and virtues.

The Holy Quran supported this trend during that phase, so it did not distract Muslims with particulars or secondary provisions, but urged them to concentrate their efforts on building the Muslim image mentioned in Surat Al-Asr:

“Those who have faith and do righteous deeds and [join together] in the mutual teaching of Truth and of Patience and Constancy”(3).

During the Meccan phase of the Message, the Prophet did not allow Muslims to take their axes and destroy the idols they saw around the Ka'ba every day, or brandish their swords to defend themselves or fight their and Allah's enemies who were meting out torture to them. He only told them what the Quran said:

“Hold back your hands and establish regular prayers” (Al-Nisa: 77)

.. at the time when they came to him beaten and wounded. There is a proper time for everything. If something is sought before the time is ripe for it, it will most likely be harmful, not useful.

The Interrelationship Between the Fiqh of Priorities and the Fiqh of Balances

The fiqh of priorities is related to the fiqh of balances, and in the certain domains the two of them overlap or run parallel to each other, as a balancing process may lead to a certain priority, and thus fall under the fiqh of priorities.

The Necessity of Observing Proportions Among Shari'ah Taklifs [Legal Commands or Mandates]

The fiqh of priorities embraces the observance of proportions among actions and Shari'ah taklifs.

Upsetting the proportions set by Islam among Shari'ah taklifs would badly damage both religion and worldly life. In Islam, belief comes before work, as belief is the foundation and work is the building. No building can stand without a foundation. Belief precedes actions, which are very diversified. The Prophet said in a sound hadith:

“Belief is divided into seventy-seven levels: the highest is "There is no God but Allah" the lowest is removing harm from the road [of people]”.

The Holy Quran tells us that deeds are divided into higher lower orders before Allah, not one order only. Allah the Almighty says:

“Do you make the giving of drink to pilgrims or the maintenance of the Sacred Mosque equal to [the pious service of] those who believe in Allah and the Last Day, and strive in the Cause of Allah? They are not comparable in the sight of Allah, And Allah does not guide those who do wrong. Those who believe and suffer exile and strive in the Cause of Allah with their property and their persons have the

highest rank in the sight of Allah. They are the people who will achieve [salvation]"
(Al-Tawba: 19-20)

This is why Sheikh Al-Islam Ibn Taymia said that the acts of jihad were better than the acts of hajj [pilgrimage]. The Hanbale jurists and other faqihs even classify jihad as the best physical activity to be volunteered.

Many traditions praise jihad. Those include Abu-Hurayra narrated. He said:

"One of the Prophet's Companions passed a ravine where a sweet-water spring are liked the ravine and said, "How I would like to isolate from other people [to worship Allah]! I will not do it I asking the permission of the Messenger of Allah (may have peace on him)". The man told the Prophet of his wish. The Prophet said, "Do not do it. Your striving for the Cause Allah is better than praying in your house for seventy years"
(Tirmidhi & Al-Hakim)

The hadith narrated by Salman (and traceable to the Prophet) tells us of the merits of ribat (guarding Muslims infidels):

"A ribat for one day and one night is better fasting and night-praying for a month. And if one dies while state of ribat, he will have his good deeds kept counted h favor (as if he were alive), and (if alive) he will be safe the Tempter (the Devil)."
(Muslim)

This is what made an imam like Abdullah Ibn Al-Mubarak who was in an encampment during jihad, write to his friend Al-Fudayl Ibn-lyad, a hermit worshipper who was always traveling between the two holy shrines in Mecca and Medina, saying, in verse:

"O worshipper of the Two Shrines, if you could see us, You will learn that your worship is mere play. Some may wet their cheeks with their tears, we wet our chests with our own blood to... the end of the poem."

According to the fiqh [in the sense of jurisprudence], a nafila [optional practice of worship in contrast to farida, which means a compulsory worship] should not be given precedence over a farida; an individual obligation has the precedence over a collective obligation; the collective obligation undertaken by an inadequate number of people or by nobody at all has the precedence (as a duty) over that which found people enough to fulfill its undertaking; an individual obligation related to the group or the Nation comes before that related to rights of individuals; and a duty whose time is limited and has already come has precedence over a duty whose time is ample. Fiqh also prescribes that the interests stated by Shari'ah vary in importance, from the indispensable through the needful to the dignifying in this same order of priority. Also, when the interests of the Nation conflict with those of individuals, the former should be given precedence. So, that's a point on which the fiqh of balances and the fiqh of priorities converge.

The Neglect of the Fiqh of Priorities Among Many Muslims

The problem with many groups of the Islamic Awakening advocates is that the fiqh of priorities is nonexistent to them, as they often seek the secondary before paying attention to the principal, try to examine the particulars before grasping the generalities, and hold to the controversial before familiarizing themselves with the established. It is a pity that we ask for instance about the blood of a gnat, and do not care about the shedding of Al-Hussein's blood, or

fight for nafila, while the people have wasted the faridas, or quarrel over a form, regardless of the content.

This is the situation today for Muslims in general. I see millions making the umra [minor pilgrimage] every year in Ramadan and other months and others making hajj for the tenth or even the twentieth time: if they saved the money they spent on these nafilas, they would accumulate thousands of millions of dollars. We have been running around for years trying to collect one thousand million dollars for the Islamic Philanthropic Institution, but have not collected a tenth, or even one-twentieth or one-thirtieth, of that amount. If you ask those performers of supererogatory umra and hajj to give you what they would spend on their voluntary journeys so that you may direct it to resisting Christianization or communism in Asia and Africa, or to combating famine here or there, they will not give you anything. This is a long-time ailment that no heart doctor has ever been able to cure.

The fiqh of priorities requires that we know which issue is more worthy of attention, so that we may give it more effort and time than we give others. The fiqh of priorities also requires us to know which enemy is more deserving of directing our forces and concentrating our attack against him, and which battle is more worthy of waging, for people are divided into several kinds in Islam's eye, as follows:

There are the Muslims, the unbelievers and the hypocrites.

Unbelievers have in their ranks the pacifists and the militant. They also include those who only did not believe, and those who did not believe and also blocked the path to Allah [before those who believed].

Hypocrites include those of the lesser hypocrisy and those of the greater hypocrisy. With whom do we start, then? Which area is more worthy of work? Which issue is more deserving of attention?

The fiqh of priorities requires that we know the time-limited duty so that we may treat it properly and not delay it and thus waste a chance that may not present itself again until after a long time, if it ever does.

A poet admonishes us about the value of time by saying: *"Avail the chance, for a chance, If unavailable, becomes a grief"*. Our Arabic adage also says: *"Do not put off today's work till tomorrow"*.

When Omar Ibn Abdel-Aziz was once advised to postpone some chore to the next day, he replied, *"I am already tasked by a day's work, how will I feel if I have two days work to do tomorrow?"*

A wise saying by Ibn-Ata is *"There are certain duties with plenty of time given for their fulfillment, so they could be cautioned within the time-limit, but there are, besides, time-limited duties that, if out of time, are irredeemable, for with every new time there is a new duty and a new task demanded by Allah"!*

Imam Al-Ghazali and the Fiqh of Priorities

In his book "Al-Ihya", Imam Al-Ghazali criticized those who were content with worship and did not pay attention to the ranks of deeds. He said: "Another group is keen on nafilas but not as keen on faridas. We see some of them very pleased with the duha [forenoon optional prayer and tahajjud night time optional prayer] and other nafilas, but they find no pleasure in the faridas, nor are they as keen on performing the farida prayers early in their time. They forget

what the Prophet narrated from the Qudsi hadith [inspired by Allah the Almighty to His Messenger]:

"Nothing that my slaves shall do to bring themselves closer to me shall be better than doing what I have ordered them to perform [as faridas]" (Al-Bukhari)

Neglecting the order of prominence in good deeds falls under evil conduct. An individual may even find himself obliged to do only one of two compulsory things, or forced to do two things with a very limited time for one and ample time for the other: if he does not preserve their order, then he is deceived. "The similar instances are countless, for obedience and disobedience [of the commands of Allah] are both obvious. What is really ambiguous is giving precedence to some forms of obedience over others, such as giving prominence to faridas over nafilas; to individual duties over collective duties to a collective duty with no one to fulfill it over that fulfilled by other people; to the more important individual duties over those which have a lesser importance, to what cannot be postponed over what can be postponed; and to the needs of one's mother over those of one's father. The Prophet was asked:

"Who is more entitled to be treated with the best companionship by me?" He replied, "Your mother". And the man said, "Who is next?", and the Prophet said, "Your mother". And the man asked again, "And who is next"? and the Prophet said, "Your mother". And the man asked for the fourth time, "And who is next?" and the Prophet said, "Your father". And the man further asked, "And who is next?" and the Prophet replied, "The closest and then the closer of your relatives.""

A person should devote his companionship by the closeness of relationship. If two of his kins are of the same degree of relation, then he should help the one who needs help more, and if they need help equally then he should help the more pious of them.

"Similarly, if someone cannot meet the Costs of spending on his parents and making a pilgrimage at the same time, he should not make the pilgrimage because if he does, he would be acting in ignorance, for he should give the rights of his parents precedence over pilgrimage. In this case, he will be giving prominence to a religious duty over another religious duty that is of a lower rank.

Moreover, if someone has an appointment and the time for jumua [Friday congregational prayer] comes upon him, then he has to go to the prayer. If he goes to his appointment, he will be committing an act of disobedience [to Allah], even though the fulfillment of the appointment is, as such, an act of obedience.

Someone may also find some najasa [impurities] on his garment and speak roughly to his parents on that account. While najasa is unacceptable, hurting the parents is also unacceptable, and caring to avoid hurting the parents is more important than caring to avoid najasa.

"The examples of the combination of tabooed deeds and of compulsory duties are countless. He who neglects the order of Priorities in any of them is certainly deceived" (1)

Imam Ibn Al-Qayyim's Judgment on Preferred Worships

Ibn Al-Qayyim examined various opinions on: which worships are better, are they the hardest to perform, or the more beneficial? "

He judged that there is no such thing as an absolutely preferred worship but there is a time at which a worship was preferred most.(2) In times of famine, providing food is the best deed that brings a Muslim closer to Allah.

When infidels invade a Muslim country, jihad is the best deed, followed by providing mujahids (performers of jihad) with arms and money. When scholars die and there is nobody to succeed them, learning religion is the greatest act for which a Muslim may seek reward from Allah and have his fellow believers' praise his is how deeds should be balanced against one another, according to their competent merits.

The Islamic Movement In The Field Of Propaganda And Public Knowledge

The Islamic Movement In The Field Of Propaganda Horizontal Expansion

The Islamic Movement should work hard for extending its activity to all the groups and classes of the community, and for spreading horizontally by nurturing the public Islamic Awakening. This way, no place in social life will be empty of the Movement's presence and activity. The Movement's message will be everywhere, and its soldiers and children will be there, with many times their number in followers, supporters and advocates.

This can only be achieved through working in the field of information and mass media in such an organized and well planned manner that makes use of the latest innovations and technologies of information and mass media that science has reached so far. Such work should draw on the Western and Eastern capabilities and tools as much as it can and whenever they are found, so long as they would lead to the achievement of aspired aims, for *(A good believer should always seek the word of wisdom. Whenever he finds it, it is he who should get it).*

The Movement should use the help of specialized experts who know how to address the public as a whole and each group separately, and are well versed in the sciences of psychology, sociology, politics and mass communication and in how to put them to service in the best interests of the Movement and Islam.

The Movement should even start planning as of today for qualifying advocates of the Call who can speak the language of our age and deal with contemporary environment on equal footing, as well as medinen who believe in the nobleness, comprehensiveness, universality and balance of the Islamic Call and have the capability to convey the Message to the people in the language of today and by using the logic of knowledge.

In the following pages, we will discuss the most important social brackets to which the Awakening, followed by the Movement, should spread: from the educated, through workers, to merchants and others.

The Movement And The Cultured Elite

The cultured elite is the first group that the Islamic Movement should spread into and affect significantly, so as to set right its conception of Islam and Islam's creed, laws, culture and history, and enlighten its members about the Islamic Movement and its objectives and achievements.

The Misunderstanding of Islam by Many of The Cultured

Despite the spread of the Islamic Awakening among many of the cultured youth, many of them are still ignorant about Islam, or the Islamic knowledge they have is incomplete, distorted or vague as a result of the aftereffects of the ages of backwardness or the impact of the new distorting influences of ideological invasion.

Some of them, though university educated, still believe in superstitions, follow charlatans, allow polytheism to interfere with

their faith, let heresy mingle with their worship and permit haphazardness to impose itself on their conduct, while they think at heart that they are truly religious.

Some of the cultured still make turns around the shrines of saints as if these shrines were other Ka'bas. They seek the help of the defunct, wear amulets, believe in evocation of spirits, swear by names other than Allah, promise offerings to dead, not to Allah, and slaughter corbans for (dead) people, not to Allah.

Although these are relatively few as a result of the sweeping materialistic wave and the Western ideological invasion, they still have presence because of the influence of the deviated sufism, which can still wield some power in most Muslim countries, and are supported, both overtly and covertly, by official authorities for reasons that an intelligent person cannot miss!

Those cultured individuals should know the fundamentals of proper belief and creed and learn the ways of worship approved and accepted by Allah. Many of the educated are still ignorant of the elements of immortality and the aspects of power and greatness in Islam. They hardly know anything about the characteristics or principles of Islam. They take their knowledge of Islam from orientalist and missionaries, or from the current state of affairs of Muslims, thinking that the situation of people around them is what Islam is about, and therefore attribute people's backwardness, corruption and ignorance to Islam, while Islam is innocent of all of that.

The cultured ought to know where to learn their Islam and what sources will provide them with the proper Islamic teaching. They

should know that Islam is an evidence against (untrue) Muslims, but Muslims are not an evidence against Islam. Some of the cultured people still believe that they can be truly religious Muslims while they agree to be ruled by a law. It is the duty of those to realize that Islam is a creed and a system of laws and that Allah has not sent down His Book so that it may be recited for the dead but that it may rule the living..

"We have sent down to you the Book in truth, so that you might judge between people as guided by Allah" (Al-Nisa': 105)

.. They should also realize that he who does not judge by what Allah has sent down falls under the bad descriptions of unbelief, injustice or wickedness, or all of them put together.

Some of the cultured still imagine that Islam is a form of Christianity, and Christianity agrees to the division of man and the splitting of life between God and Caesar: *"Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's)" (Matthew: 22:21)*

This way, they confine Islam to the relationship between man and Allah as a special relation whose only place is man's conscience. If that relationship goes beyond the conscience, then the only place it will go to is the mosque, but nowhere else.

As for life and its order, culture and its trends, education and its curricula, economics and its applications and law and its punishments, what has Islam got to do with such things? [they wonder].

What is worse is that some of them claim to be Muslims, may even boast of being Muslims, and pray and make umra or pilgrimage, and at the same time advocate secularism, absolutely prefer nationalist ties to Islamist ties and adopt a purely Western line of thinking without carefully selecting or even testing what they follow: they adopt Darwin's theory of evolution, Freud's theory of sychoanalysis, Marx' theory of materialistic interpretation of history and Durkheim's theory of how religions evolved; but they do not see any part in all that for Islam.

One of them even said once, "I am a Muslim Marxist"! I do not know how the two could be present in one person! And from where does he get his inspiration then: from the Quran, or from "capital" and "the Communist Manifesto"? And whenever a dispute arises, who is his example and judge: Mohammad or Marx?

Would it be acceptable from any person to say, "I am a Muslim Buddhist" or "I am a Muslim Christian"? If not, then how could he say, "I am a Muslim Marxist"? Is it because Marxism is not a religion, but fights all religions and regards religion as the opium of peoples? If so, then this should make it more imperative to reject Marxism, for if Islam does not agree to combine with another religion, even though a scriptural one, then how would it agree to combine with a doctrine that rejects all religions?

However, Marxism, although denying all religions, has the nature of a religion that demands absolute devotion from its followers and would not have itself combined with any other religion or belief by any follower.

Marxism is a dominating totalitarianist philosophy that, by its very nature, does not leave room for Islam or any other religion, except, under conditions of leniency and necessity, when such religion is allowed to take the place of the tail, not the head, and act as a follower, not a leader.

Some of the cultured still believe that the political weakness, military defeats, cultural backwardness and modest scientific and technological capabilities of Muslims are caused by Islam, and that the victories and progress of the West are due to its freedom from the stranglehold of religion and to its adoption of secularism which separates the State from religion.

They would be taught the real facts of religion as these should be learned from their original sources: the Holy Quran and the Prophet's Sunna (tradition), just as the best generation of our Nation (the Prophet's companions and followers) learned them. Then they will find that the facts of Islam, if learned properly and followed conscientiously, would bear only the best fruit.

There is nothing in the facts of Islam but what frees the mind; purifies the soul; solidifies the will; strengthens the body; builds families on the most formidable of foundations; leads societies to progress on the basis of science, faith, mutual dependence and ethics; establishes governments on pillars of justice, shura [consultation] and ruling by what Allah has sent down; and guides all mankind to what is most proper.

They should also be told that he who studies the history of Islam and examines Islam's ups and downs, victories and defeats, flourishes and setbacks, strengths and weaknesses, will certainly find that the ups, victories, flourishes and strengths come about only when Muslims become close to Islam and its values and teachings, under the leadership of a Caliph, a commander, a scholar or a movement, as happened in the era of the rightly guided Caliphs before the dissent was unleashed on them, or during the reigns of Omar Ibn Abd Al-Aziz, Abu Jafar Al-Mansoor, Haroon Al-Rashed, Noor Eddin Mahmood Al-Shaheed, Saladdin Al-Ayubi and others.

But defeats, setbacks and periods of weakness and decline come only when Muslims stray away from the truth of Islam, and the farther they stray, the graver their calamity.

Some of the cultured are still ignorant of things that are taken for granted in Islam: we have seen writers dealing with the crucifixion of Christ as an established fact, while Islam categorically refuses all allegations that Jesus was crucified. Some others speak of how Eve had lured Adam into eating from the Forbidden Tree and had thus brought about his expulsion from the Garden, and consequently the misery and suffering of mankind on this earth.

This idea is derived from the Torah and the Books of the Old Testament, but they have no grounds in Islam. For it was Adam who ate, and it was Adam who disobeyed Allah:

"We had already, beforehand, taken the covenant of Adam, but he forgot, and We found on his part no firm resolve" (Taha: 115)

"Thus Adam disobeyed his Lord, and fell into error. But his Lord chose him [for His Grace]: He turned to him, and gave him guidance"

Adam was the one who bore the prime responsibility, and his wife only followed suit in eating. Many of the cultured still look at culture from a Western perspective. To them, dancing comes at the forefront of the elements of culture, and a people that does not dance is a people that is not cultured! Tell them that we have dancing with swords and clubs, and without them; tell them that we have club - fen and dabka [a Lebanese folk dance], and other forms of folk dancing like those of any country which people perform on joyous occasions such as weddings and feasts - tell them that and you will be a target for their mockery because you do not grasp the one and only meaning of dancing: that a woman dances with a strange man, and a man dances with a strange woman, their bodies touching and their hearts moving to the music. But do not ever allow your mind to think of evil, because they are not humans, like me and you, that have instincts and lusts: they are above suspicion and lust, they are even angels walking on earth!

As for the concept of halal and harem [what is lawful and what is forbidden], which prescribes that a Muslim is not free to do what he likes, but has to act within the inviolable limits set for him by Allah:

"He who transgresses the limits set by Allah verily wrongs himself"

(At-Talaq: 1)

.. it is a strange concept that is not accepted by those cultured people.

How Should the Islamic Awakening Deal with the Cultured?

The approach of the Islamic Awakening to the cultured elite should take two directions: the curative and the preventive.

The curative approach is a remedial of the wrong concepts harbored by the cultured, by bringing them around through quiet, objective, academic argument, not through insults, beating about the bush or enthusiastic eloquence. It guides them to the documented sources from which they can know what they should know about Islam, its Book, its Prophet, its Creed, its Shari'ah, its history and its culture.

This approach is most suited to dealing with the youth who have not yet fallen under the influence of fanaticism for a principle they have adopted or have been brought up on, and also for dealing with those who have set themselves on a quest for Truth for Truth's sake.

As for fanatics and those who have made themselves a profession bidding on progressionism, liberalism, rightism, leftism etc., an argument with them is seldom useful, except when it is held by way of making a point or refuting a point.

The second approach, the preventive, aims at establishing a sound, documented Islamic culture that combines academic accuracy with clear expression. The purpose of such a culture is to give adequate doses of understanding of Islam and rectify those wrong concepts that have proliferated among the cultured, in addition to countering the false and invented beliefs without explaining them in any elaborate manner. The objective of this approach is to protect the youth against poisoning by invading ideologies. The knowledge they

will acquire would serve as a "vaccine" against the ideological plagues that sweep overtly over our land or infiltrate covertly into it.

We have to keep from this arena - the arena of the cultured elite - those common preachers, the preachers of the masses, who do not speak the language of this age, nor can they use the logic understood and accepted by the cultured, as they can address only the faithful hearts which they can warm with their enthusiasm, but not the liberalized minds which seldom say yes but always ask why and how.

Popular preachers are like popular writers: the former excite the emotion with their eloquent speech, and the latter with their eloquent writing. A pen is one of the two tongues, as the old Arab adage says, though the tongue may be more capable of provoking and exciting the audience through the voice and its effects on them, and it is more so when coupled with vision. Such preachers and writers have their role and their use inasmuch, as the knowledge possessed by each of them is good. However, in the circles of the cultured elite, the damage they do is often more than the good they can achieve.

The Islamic Movement And The Masses

Paying attention to the cultured elite does not mean neglecting the masses, as the two actions are not conflicting. Popularity is a main characteristic of the Islamic Movement. The Movement is popular in the sense that it is not a governmental or official movement, nor is it an aristocratic one. It is a movement that has emerged from the heart of society to express its feelings and interact with its masses, speaking in their behalf and supporting their demand for rights. The

enemies of the Movement abroad, and their agents inside, have tried to isolate the masses from the Movement, sometimes by misinformation and distortion, others by coercion and intimidation, and still others by different means.

However, it is more dangerous that the Movement should alienate itself from the people through arrogance, accusation, disregard, desperation or preoccupation. There is a real danger when the Movement forgets its interrelationship with the people, neglects their problems and woes and crawls into its shell, talking only to itself and hearing only its own voice, thus putting itself in solitary confinement away from the people.

The Islamic Movement will be successful only when it manages to make the people move with it, supporting its cause, getting angry at what angers it, feeling pleased with what pleases it, appreciating its stances and efforts and cursing its enemies. It will be successful when it focuses its efforts on merging into the people, running through them like blood through veins, and mingling with them, like body with soul and vision with eyes, so that each cannot be separated from the other.

This will be possible only when the Islamic Movement adopts the causes of the people and reacts to their feelings, feeling joy at their happiness and becoming sad at their grief, sharing in their bitter and worse times, and becoming one with them.

Telling of the Truth, Not Anesthetizing With Dreams

Our belief in the people and faith in the power of the masses should not make us mislead them away from bitter reality, or anesthetize them with hollow dreams. The advocates and intellectuals of the Islamic Movement should tell the Nation about its diseases as these diseases actually are, not hide them as people do with those who are afflicted with incurable diseases. They should give the people the facts, even though such facts may be bitter, not feed them rosy dreams without trying to bring these dreams to reality.

Muslim Sufi educationists have distinguished between hope and wish, saying, "*Hope is what is coupled with work, otherwise it is a wish!*" Hope is the motive of believers, but wish is the craft of those who have nothing to do.

The Quran says to those who claim that the Garden is theirs alone, although they neither believe nor strive:

"Those are their [vain] desires. Say, 'Produce you proof if you are truthful'"
(Al-Baqara: 111)

Imam Ali Ibn Abi Talib said to his son Al-Hassan, "*Beware of depending [totally] on wish. Wish is the stock of fools!*" An Arab poet says: "*Do not be a slave to wish. For wish is the capital of the penniless.*"

Hope, aspiration and looking forward to a better day are the moving power and the fuel of any movement seeking to change dark reality into a bright tomorrow. But hoping and aspiring are different from wishing, as wishes can combine with despair of realizing what is wished while hope and aspiration are the opposites of despair and hopelessness.

We must explain the harsh reality to people: we have to tell them of the dangers lurking in the future, so that they may brace themselves against the future's suffering and not live under the illusion that the future will be a bed of roses without thorns or a paradise where they will get all the goodies without toil.

There is a mistake that has to be corrected in the advocacy of Islamic slogans and solutions to the Muslim masses: when Muslims raise the slogans, "Islam is the solution"; "There is no hope for us without Islam"; or "Islam is the only way out of our economic, social and political problems", the common people imagine that just chanting these slogans and supporting their advocates in the elections to carry them to Parliament on a majority vote etc. would solve all problems with a magic wand or a miracle from heaven! .

The Islamists and their intellectuals must explain, plainly and directly, to the people that Islam solves the problems of people through people themselves, and that Allah will not send down His angels to the earth to do people's work for them: tilling land, nurturing animal and piscine wealth, boosting industry, reviving trade, building infrastructure, mobilizing Muslim potentialities for productive work, or keeping the Nation from idleness and squander of energies.

It is people who perform all these tasks and other tasks that are needed for good life and are lacked by a good contemporary society and sought after by a wise and thoughtful humanity.

Omar Ibn Al-Khattab told some people who had taken residence in the mosque, waiting for what Allah would send down to them, "*None of you should sit idle and not go after his lot that Allah has destined for*

him, saying " O Allah, send down my lot to me" while he knows that heaven does not rain gold and silver. Allah says:

"And when the prayer is finished, then you may disperse through the land and seek of the bounty of Allah" (Al-Jumu'a: 10)

The Holy Quran plainly states this inviolable law when it says:

"Verily never will Allah change the condition of a people until they change what is in themselves" (Al-Ra'd: 11)

This is the first starting point, i.e. changing our wrong concepts, dead and corrupt ideas, hateful traits and rejectable morals into correct concepts, vivid and good ideas, praiseworthy traits and noble morals. People must prepare themselves for a life different from that which they are accustomed to: a life of work and production, not idleness and loafing; a life of seriousness, not joking; a life of austerity, not luxury a life of justice, not; a life of toil, not laziness.

Correction of Wrong Concepts

It is the duty of the Islamic Movement and its advocates to correct the wrong Islamic concepts that spread among the Muslim masses, so that Islamic concepts may be a tool of construction and progress, not destruction and backwardness.

Many of the religious understand some major Islamic values wrongly, including belief, piety, righteousness and straight forwardness. Look at these verses of the Holy Quran:

"If the people of the towns had but believed and feared Allah, We should indeed have opened out to them [all kinds of] blessings from heaven and earth" (Al-A'raf: 96)

"And for him who fears Allah, He [ever] prepares a way out, and He provides for him from [sources] he never could expect"

(Al-Talaq: 23)

"If they [the Pagans] had only remained on the [right] way, We should have bestowed on them rain in abundance"

(Al-Jinn: 16)

"Before this We Wrote in the Psalms, after the Message [given to Moses]: "My righteous servants shall inherit the earth". When the common people read these verses in the Holy Quran, they think that what is meant by the verses is observing the rites and the faridas prayer, fasting, tasbih (uttering the formula "SubhanAllah", i.e. "Glory be to Allah"), tahlil (uttering the formula of faith "La ilaha illa Allah", i.e. "No god but Allah"), takbir (uttering the formula "Allahu Akbar", i.e. "Allah is the Greatest"), etc and keeping away from all the forbidden things, i.e. wine, gambling, etc. This certainly is part and parcel of religion, but not all religion, nor even all faith and piety.

While Allah the Almighty has created man so that he may worship Him:

"I have only created Jinn's and men, that they may serve Me"

(Al-Dhariyat: 56)

He has also meant for man to be His vice gerent on earth, settling and building it with knowledge and labor

"I will create a vicegerent on earth"

(Al-Baqara: 30)

"It is He Who has produced you from the earth and settled you therein"

(Hud: 61)

The word "settled" here means "wanted you to and build it". This settlement is a kind of worship. Faith, piety, righteousness and

straightforwardness make imperative that we balance our religion with our earthly life; worship Allah by following His universal practices; prepare all our might for meeting our enemies; till the land and work the factories; and take up every science or craft that the Nation may need for its religion or earthly life, as this has been regarded by Muslim faqihs (jurisprudents) as that the whole Nation would be a collective duty sinful if all people failed to accomplish it. The aspired piety is not beads jiggled by a dervish or a turban wrapped around the head of a self-style sheikh, nor is it a hermitage or a secluded corner chosen for prayer by a worshipper: it is knowledge and work; religion and life; soul and material; planning and organization; development and production; perfection and excellence;

"It pleases Allah that a man carrying out a task should do it well"

(Al-Bayhaqi)

"Verily Allah has prescribed proficiency in everything" *(Muslim)*

The Prophet urged Muslims to seek perfection in everything they do, even if it was killing a small reptile. A Prophetic tradition says:

"He who kills a lizard at the first stroke will have so many good deeds to his credit. He who kills it at the second stroke will have so many (less than the first) and he who kills it at the third stroke will have so many (less than the second)"

(Ahmad, Muslim, Abu Dawud, Al-Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah)

Endeavoring to do everything well is required, however the thing in question may look trivial.

The Prophet's companions did not look at Islam as a religion for monks or hermits, nor did they regard faith and piety as an isolation from life or an absolute preoccupation with faridas at the expense of life-enhancement.

Abdel Rahman Ibn Auf, upon receiving a generous offer from Sa'd Ibn Al-Rabu, declined the offer politely and said, "*I am a merchant, so show me where the marketplace is*". He traded and made millions in profit. This did not take him out of the sphere of faith and piety, for he was so faithful and pious that he became one of "the Ten Who Received Glad Tidings", whose certain entrance into Paradise has been foretold by the Prophet, and with whom the Prophet was pleased at the time of his death - and one of the six members of the Shura (consultative) Group (the six companions of Omar ibn al-Khattab, who formed a council, at Omar's behest, to elect one from among themselves as Caliph after Omar).

Pious believers are those who strive in this worldly life while being careful to always do well, armed in so doing by their trust in Allah and their faith and righteousness. Therefore, Allah blesses their endeavor in this world, and will not deny them their reward in the Hereafter.

The Islamic Movement And The Working Classes

By working classes, I mean industrial workers and craftsmen of all specializations who form large groupings at present, especially in major towns and cities, and are united by organized trade unions that can bring daily life to a halt if they decide to call a strike in defense of a right or in protestation against an injustice.

What meets the eye in this regard is that the Islamic Movement has had little effect on the worker community to date. The leftists are still more influential and have a louder voice in this sector of our society, and they can manipulate the will and voice of workers in their interest to a large extent.

This is unfortunate, because the parent Islamic movement the Muslim Brotherhood led by Imam Hassan Al-Banna had begun with a group of Egyptian workers who had taken the oath of allegiance to the Imam in Ismailia and pledged to support the goal he had been seeking.

Despite the fact that the Islamic Movement has driven its roots deep in the ranks of pupils and students in most Muslim countries, its presence in all worker circles is limited. The Sudanese National Islamic Front Leader, Dr Hassan Al-Turabi, has pointed that out in his book about the Islamic Movement there, despite the fact that the Movement is very influential in the Sudanese society, as it has monopolized certain fields and can wield much weight in others. I do not know the reason for the Islamic Movement's failure to spread among the workers.

Is it the poor religious sense among workers? But what has weakened this sense at the time when these same workers are members of a people of which religion is part and parcel? Is it the poor knowledge of real Islam and its mission in life, coupled with the effect of imported ideas? This also requires an explanation. Is it the Movement's failure to recognize and sponsor the causes of workers and support their legitimate demands vis-à-vis the greedy capitalists and unjust rulers who exploit them?

Or is it the success of Leftists, who had planned well for influencing and patronizing the workers as a prelude to using them for promoting their destructive principles and materialistic philosophy. Leftists are well-qualified for such a task, and they also possess means of temptation and use tools that the Islamic Movement could never bring itself to use. Whatever the reason, the Islamic Movement should review its strategy in this regard, for workers are a vital group in our Muslim community. Islam is still a strong driving power and stimulant of the masses, particularly when they realize that Islam is the religion that best recognizes work and does workers justice.

Islam's economic, social and legal rules protect workers and workers rights and support workers against those who do them wrong or try to exploit or manipulate them. It also calls for providing work for every unemployed worker and social care for every disabled member of society who cannot work.

Perhaps a new factor is now at work in the Islamic Movement's favor among workers: that is the collapse of the Communist philosophy and system which has consequently led to the foundering of dictatorial regimes in Eastern Europe. The workers have rebelled

against the dictatorships that had spoken in their names. Even Mother Russia, the cradle of Socialism, has set itself on a new course leading to reconsideration and reconstruction of its community according to the philosophy of "perestroika".

The Marxist, socialist regimes, which had been built by workers for workers, have failed to bring about the happiness that workers were aspiring to - that happiness which workers have revolted on feudal and capitalist regimes to attain, even been established than they do under communist rule.

A very good example to illustrate this point is the two parts of Germany and how they feel in each of them? The people of East Germany felt as if they had been living in a large prison: as soon as they had half a chance to defect to West Germany, they fled en masse.

What better evidence could we ask for?

The Islamic Movement and Businessmen and Financiers

Among the fields that the Islamic Movement should invade and influence is the field of traders, businessmen and financiers. Except for those whom Allah protects against wrongdoing, the members of this class live in the world of figures and balance sheets, money and capital, loss and profit, monopoly and competition.

Such mentality often makes its owner forget the barrier between halal and haram and neglect the dhikr [remembrance] of Allah and the performance of salat [prayer] zakat [alms].

That is why the Prophet was careful to guide and admonish traders against the evils and perils lurking on the path of commercial

activity. He warned them against cheating, saying: *“He who cheats us is not one of us”*. He warned against monopoly, saying *“He who monopolizes [a commodity] is a sinner”*. He warned against much swearing by Allah in trading, criticizing those merchants who make Allah the Almighty a commodity (so that they would not buy or sell without swearing by Allah).

He warned against false oath, as it (may forward a transaction but will deprive the seller of Allah's blessing). He warned against riba [usury], saying: (Allah curses those who receive riba, those who pay it, those who write its contracts and those who witness it). He warned against the Gharar [sale of goods that are not present] because of the involved ignorance of the buyer and the consequent dispute over the sale once the commodity is present.

The Holy Quran also admonishes against fraud in measuring or weighing, saying:

“Woe to those that deal in fraud. Those who, when they have to receive by measure from men, exact full measure. But when they have to give by measure or weight to men, give less than due. Do they not think that they will be raised up? On a Mighty Day. A day when [all] mankind will stand before the Lord of the Worlds?”

(Al-Mutaffifin: 16)

On the other hand, the Quran praises those, merchants who are not distracted from their duty to Allah and His faridas. It describes those who visit mosques regularly for prayer:

“In them [the mosques] He is glorified in the mornings and in the evenings [again and again], by men whom neither trade nor sale can divert from the remembrance of Allah, nor from regular prayer, nor

from paying zakat: their [only] fear is for the Day when hearts and eyes will be turned about" (Al-Nur: 36-37)

Merchants and businessmen hold a large portion of the Nation's wealth. They control people's supply and set the prices of needed commodities. They influence the Nation's economy and financial policy.

Therefore, merchants and businessmen should be [made] aware of what they must and must not do, and of what they have to give out of their wealth in zakat and in dues other than zakat.

Merchants and businessmen should not be regarded as hopeless cases who do not fall within the scope of the Awakening and who are preoccupied with worldly life alone.

Merchants and businessmen are human like other people: they are affected by promises and warnings, and they can be influenced by the word of wisdom and the patient and suitable approach.

In the early days of the Prophet's Message, many merchants took up the Belief in Allah and His Messenger and supported the Message of Monotheism, even if their action exposed their commerce and capital to destruction and waste.

There was Abu Bakr, Osman and Abdul Rahman Ibn Auf, who were among the very first to take up Islam, and they are among "the Ten Who Received Glad Tidings". Their hijra [migration] to Medina forced them to abandon their homes and wealth in their quest for Allah's pleasure and grace and their endeavor for supporting Allah and His Messenger. They welcomed their lot and were content to take it for the sake of Allah. In our contemporary age, we see many

faithful merchants and businessmen who prefer the Hereafter to this life, spending, of their free will, for the support of their religion and not holding to the good wealth sent down to them by Allah out of His Grace, for they regard themselves and their wealth as a property of the Islamic Call and the Islamic Movement.

Financiers in the Christian West provide missionary foundations all over the world with the funding necessary for their work, donating billions of dollars for that purpose. The same applies to Jewish capitalists who, despite the known Jewish miserliness and money worship, have given generously to the Jewish cause before and after the establishment of Israel. Muslim financiers must not do less, as they know that the wealth is Allah's wealth and they are only appointed by Allah as its guardians, and that they are required to strive in Allah's cause with their money, and that they will be rewarded by Allah for everything they spend for the sake of Allah's cause.

There is an important point in regard to material contribution and donation that we have to cast light upon: I know that there are many among rich Muslims who are pious and straightforward and wish to give of their wealth in quest for Allah's pleasure. They donate much and give freely and generously. However, they need to know how and where to spend their money. It is required in the field of Islamic work and donation that those who have money to spend on charity should know that it is not so important to spend the money as it is important to spend it in the right ways.

It is vitally important in this connection to arrange priorities, giving precedence to what is more important, followed by what is important, and so on.

It is really regrettable that the majority of rich Muslims, particularly those rich Muslims who spend their money on philanthropic purposes, pay most of their attention to the construction of mosques and similar institutions of a purely religious nature. This has been a cause for many complaints from workers in the fields of Call and Islamic work.

Our brothers in the Islamic Call Organization in Africa complained of it. Our big brother Dr Mohammad Nasser and his colleagues in the Supreme Council for Islamic Call in Indonesia complained of it, too. It has also been a cause for complaint among our brothers working in the fields of Islamic preaching and education and other brothers who work in confronting secularism, Marxism and other ideologies and trends.

Experts and faithful supporters of the Call agree that there is something that is more important than building mosques: it is the building of people, men who build civilizations, win victory for messages, achieve hopes, establish prayer in mosques and realize progress in institutions. Building a center for spreading the call and enhancing the awareness of Muslims is one of the first deeds that bring a Muslim closer to Allah and serve Islam in a proper way. Spending money in such a way is a priority, a great deed that wins a Muslim the pleasure of Allah. Such a center will help in promulgating the right Islamic ideology among the young Muslims, correcting their doctrine and reforming their conduct. It will cultivate in their hearts the love of Islam and the jealousy for it, through various means and approaches, including trips, camps, workshops, lectures etc.

Qualifying preachers who are well trained, capable, knowledgeable in both religious and worldly matters and wholly devoted to their task through possession of the means of sustenance that enable them to see to their mission properly is a duty whose neglect constitutes a sin, and whose discharge represents a good deed worthy of Allah's reward and people's praise. It is, in fact, a deed that deserves devotion of money, time and effort for its implementation.

The Islamic Movement And Women Activity

The Islamic Movement has given attention to woman since the dawn of the call. Imam Hassan Al-Banna established the "Muslim Sisterhood" section and assigned it the task of spreading the idea among Muslim women and rising up a generation of women who could shoulder part of the burden carried by the men of the "Muslim Brotherhood" in their endeavor to establish Allah's religion in the land.

This section played a significant role, and the Sisterhood had its share of hardship, especially where caring for the families of imprisoned members of the Brotherhood and delivering food supplies and money to them were concerned, despite the risk they ran against the agents of Criminal Investigations Department. Some of them suffered extreme hardship for Allah's cause, such as our sister Zainab Al-Ghazali.

The Deficiency of Islamic Work in Women's Circles

However, we have to admit that women's Islamic work has not yet reached the desired level, though the call has spread among women, especially university students and secondary school pupils.

Although over sixty years have passed since the Movement emerged into existence, no women leaders have appeared that can confront secular and Marxist trends single-handedly and efficiently.

This has come about as a result of men's unrelenting attempts to control women's movement, as men have never allowed women a real chance to express themselves and show special leadership talents and abilities that demonstrate their capability of taking command of their work without men's dominance.

When Will Women's Islamic Work Succeed?

I believe that women's Islamic work will succeed and prove itself in the arena of the Islamic Movement only when it gives birth to female Islamic leaders in the fields of Call, thought, science, literature and education. I do not think that this is impossible or even difficult. There are genius women just as there are genius men. Ingenuity is not a monopoly for men. It is not in vain that the Holy Quran tells us the story of a woman who led men wisely and bravely and made her people fare the best end: it is the Queen of Sheba, whose story with Solomon is told in Surat Al-Naml.

I have observed in the University of Qatar that girls make better students than boys. Other colleagues in the university made the same observation. This is particularly true because girls have more

time for study than boys, who are occupied by many things and have cars in which they roam the streets all the time.

The Spread of Hardline Ideas in This Field

I must say frankly here that Islamic work has been the scene of spreading hardline ideas that now govern the relationship between man and woman, adopting the strictest opinions to be ever found on this issue.

This is what I saw for myself in many conferences and symposiums even in Europe and the United States. For several years in a row, I attended the annual conferences of the Muslim Student Union in the United States and Canada in the mid 1970's.

Both men and women attended the lectures and debates, listening to comments, questions, answers and discussions in every major Islamic issue, including the academic, social, educational and political. The only sessions restricted to women were those allocated to dealing with the questions that concerned women alone.

However, I attended some conferences in the United States and Europe in the 1980's, and found that women were kept away from a good part of the important lectures and debates. Some of the women also complained that they had become bored with the lectures that focus on woman's role, rights, responsibilities and position in Islam and had come to regard the repetition of those lectures as a sort of punishment imposed on them. I denounced that in more than one conference I attended, telling the participants that the rule in worship and religious learning was participation and that there

never existed in Islam a mosque that had been reserved to women alone and not visited by men.

Women attended the sessions in which the Prophet taught Muslims the Religion. They also participated in (or at least attended) the Jumua' (Friday), the two Ids (bairams) and congregational prayers together with men. They asked questions about minute female matters without being prevented from learning the Religion by their shyness, as Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) herself said.

The books of Sunna abound in questions that were directed to the Prophet (peace be upon him) by women, including those asked by women who wanted answers to questions that concerned only themselves and those asked by women on behalf of all women, as the woman who said "*O Messenger of Allah, I have been sent to you by women*". Women also asked the Prophet to allocate a separate day for them that they would have to themselves without the men, so that they might have the time and privacy to ask whatever they liked without being inhibited by the presence of men.

This was another privilege given to women besides the public lessons they attended together with men.

The Problem of Islamic Work in Women's Activity

The problem of women's Islamic work is that it is men who direct it, not women, and men are careful to maintain their grip on it, so they would not allow female readerships to emerge. Men impose themselves on women's Islamic work, including even women's meetings, as they exploit the shyness of reticent Muslim women and never allow them to take command of their own affairs. This way, no female talents are given a chance to prove themselves in the pursuits of the Islamic Movement or to be seasoned by experience and struggle and taught in the school of life by trial and error.

However, our Muslim sisters are not wholly free of blame, for they have surrendered to this sorry state of affairs' contenting themselves with a life of ease and tranquility in which men thought and chose for them. It is high time they took the initiative, opened wide the doors of effort and work for the Call and shut up those self-appointed female voices that have imposed themselves on the doctrine, laws and values of this Nation. These strange voices, loud as they are, represent only a defeated, downtrodden minority that has no weight both in religion and in worldly affairs. I was invited to give a lecture to female students of an Algiers university last year. As is customary after a lecture, I started taking questions from the girls in written or oral forms. Some young men were present, and one of them took it upon himself to collect the questions, sort them out and pass along to me what he thought should be answered and abandon what should not. I objected to his conduct, saying, "*Why does not one of the girls do that on behalf of her colleagues?*" "*Why do you men have to 'poke your nose' in women's affairs? Take your hands off them! Let them do whatever they like, sorting out their own questions and choosing what they deem fit and then making one of their kind read them*

aloud", I said. It was as if I had lifted a heavy burden off the chests of the girls, and one of them hurriedly came forward to assume the role that one of the men who had escorted me to the gathering was playing.

A similar incident took place this winter in Manchester City in Britain, where a Muslim student convention was held. A lecture to Muslim women had been scheduled for me, to be followed by questions and answers. Again, one of the good young men assumed responsibility for receiving and sorting out questions, but I said to him bluntly, *"There is no reason for you to be here. It would be better if one of the girls did that for her colleagues, for they have a right to run their own affairs here"*.

However, the good brother told me that he had been assigned that task according to the practice followed there and could not abandon it. He did have his own explanation, which I had to accept in fact.

Another complaint from our sisters in Egypt and Algeria is that when an active, motivated and religion serving girl marries a conscientious, abiding man whom she came to know through Call related work, he forces her to stay at home and denies her participation in the Movement, putting out a torch that was lighting the path of other Muslim girls. It has apparently become so common that an Algerian girl working in the Islamic field once wrote to me asking whether it was harem for her to refuse marriage for the sake of avoiding the end of others of her sisters in Islam who had ended up in a life of laziness and idleness away from the field of the Movement and the Call, at the time when work was allowed to communist and secular women.

A Potential Objection and Its Rebuttal

Hardliners may ask how we want Muslim women to play an active role in the Islamic Movement and act as leaders to prove their presence in the field of Islamic work while they are ordered in the Holy Quran to stay in their homes:

“And stay quietly in your houses, and make not a dazzling display, like that of the former Times of Ignorance” (Al-Ahzab: 33)

My answer to such zealous questions is that this verse was addressed to the Prophet's women, who had a special position that no other women would have, and were subject to restrictions that do not apply to other women. Allah the Almighty says to them in the Holy Quran:

“O consorts of the Prophet! You are not like any of the [other] women” (Al-Ahzab: 32)

However, this verse did not prevent Aisha from going to war in the Battle of the Camel, to demand what she thought right in politics, supported by two of the senior Companions of the Prophet who had been nominated for the caliphate and are among "the Ten Who Received Glad Tidings" (of sure entrance into Paradise).

Her regret of that situation, as told by historians, was not because her going out of her house was illegal, but because her political view was not successful, may Allah grant her forgiveness and bless her soul.

However, if we examine the opinion of those who claim that this verse was meant for all women, we will find that it does not mean confining them to the houses and never letting them out, as such

confinement was stipulated by the Quran as a punishment for sinning women who proved to have committed adultery with evidence given by four witnesses before the Shari'ah set their punishment at the hadd [pi. Hudud, major punishments in Islam] mentioned in the Quran and hadith. Allah the Almighty says:

“If any of your women are guilty of lewdness, take the evidence of four [reliable] witnesses from amongst you against them; and if they testify, confine them to houses until death claims them, or Allah ordains for them some [other] way” (Al-Nisa: 15)

Moreover, Allah's saying:

“And make not a dazzling display, like that of the former Times of Ignorance” (Al-Ahzab: 33)

.. indicates that it is legal for women to go out if they are dressed modestly and do not make a dazzling display, for a woman is not to be prohibited from displaying herself within her home, as she is allowed to dress and make herself beautiful as she likes at home. What a woman is ordered to refrain from is to make herself beautiful and display herself when she goes out on the street or goes to the market or anywhere else, so as to avoid any suspicion of dazzling display.

The Islamic Movement In The Field Of Education And Religious Training

Belief based

Education is the basic and necessary approach for any Islamic movement that seeks to change the state of affairs by changing people themselves. The point of focus in the field of education should be the preparation of the Muslim vanguard who will aid the cause of Islam. They would be to our age what the Prophet's Companions were to the Prophet's age.

The foremost quality that members of this vanguard must have is belief, by which I mean the belief of Quran and Sunna; the belief that has over seventy branches of values and morals; the belief on which whole volumes were compiled, for belief does not come about by the wish or by pretense: it is what settles in the heart and is proved by acts.

So, what is meant here is not just the mental knowledge whose effect does not extend to the heart to light it or to the will to move it. Neither is it just filling the memory with words and terms such as God and the Lord; religion and worship; the various branches of monotheism; idols and (the Times of) Ignorance, and then feeling proud that one possesses what makes a true believer and what constitutes yaqin [perfect and absolute belief] and dragging others to arguments and verbal battles over these words and terms.

Neither argument nor verbal battles would yield a belief like that of Pharaoh's magicians when they believed in the Lord of Moses and

Aaron, or like that of the Prophet's Companions when they believed in the Message of Allah's Messenger. The needed belief is the one of the first generation, as prescribed in the Quran and Sunna.

Only one verse from a surat in the Quran needs to be quoted here: it is the verse with which Allah answers the desert Arabs who said, "We believe" while belief had not entered their hearts:

"Only those are believers who have believed in Allah and His Messenger, and have never since doubted, but have striven with their belongings and their persons in the Cause of Allah. Such are the sincere ones"

(Al-Hujurat: 15)

It is also narrated in the hadith that the Prophet said:

"Whoever possesses the following three qualities will have the sweetness [delight] of faith: to love Allah and His Messenger more than anything else; to love a person only for Allah's sake, and to hate to revert to atheism [disbelief] after Allah saved him from it like hating thrown into Hell"

(Bukhari & Muslim)

It may be enough for the common people who follow the leaders to have a half, or even a quarter, belief, but the leading vanguard must have a true belief. They should never include a half or a quarter believer.

Imam Hassan Al-Banna used to say to his disciples, "Give me twelve thousand believers, and I will conquer with them the mountains, cross the seas and invade the land".(1) But is this number enough to bring about the great hopes and realize the ambitious aspirations of the Islamic Nation? I say yes, we will do with twelve thousands of the true

believers. But I also say that we will not do with twenty-four thousand half believers or forty-eight quarter believers, or any of the "fractions" of believers whom one stumbles upon as a result of their stupendous numbers but who can do nothing of use in times of need.

We want believers like the Ansar of Medina, who were described of becoming large in number at the time of war and few at the time of distribution of the war booty. As for those who are many in numbers but of little use in reality and are no better than 'the scum of the torrent, they will never be fit to be in the leading vanguard, even if they are millions in number.

Belief based or God inspired education is the first precondition for bringing up a generation that will defend the cause of Islam. It is this generation that has been described by the Almighty:

"You who believe, if any from among you turn back from his faith, soon will Allah produce a people whom He will love as they will love Him lowly with the believers, mighty against the rejecters, fighting in the way of Allah and never afraid of the reproaches of such as find fault. That is the Grace of Allah, which He will bestow on whom He pleases. And Allah encompasses all, and He knows all things"

(Al-Ma'ida: 54)

The Necessity of a Measure of Proper Sufi Education

A measure of proper Sufi education based on the Quran and Sunna is in order here, as it would help in shaping a religious character whose owner would put Allah before Allah's creation, the Hereafter before earthly life and the motives of religion before the motives of desire.

Not all Sufism is evil as some would imagine. Neither are all Sufists misled as claimed by those who lack in knowledge or fairness. Sufists are like other groups, as Sheikh Al-Islam Ibn Taymia said in his treatise entitled "Al-Fuqara" [the Poor]. He said about them, *"Among them you find the straightforward and the deviant; the one who wrongs his own soul, the one who follows a middle course, and the one who is, by Allah's leave, foremost in good deeds"*. Of course, we reject all the fallacies of philosophical Sufism (including such tenets as: hulul" divine incarnation" and ijtiḥad "mystic communion with God"), ecstatic utterances of heretic Sufists and the deviations of money oriented Sufism. What we really seek is the pure, quintessential Sufism of the pioneer Sufists, such as Al-Hassan Al-Basri, Al-Fudayl Ibn Iyad, Ibrahim Ibn Adham, Abu Sulayman Al-Darani, Abul Qasim Al-Junayd and others like them.

We seek the sunnite Sufism that follows a balanced line of Quran and Sunna the Sufism that cares about the "piety of hearts" before it concerns itself with the "acts of the organs of the body". It is said in the sound ḥadith that..

"Allah shall not look at your bodies or your faces, but rather into your hearts"

(Muslim)

We seek the Sufism that addresses the ailments of the heart, plugs the holes through which Satan can steal into hearts, and resists the desires of the human soul, so that it may have proper morals and virtues and abandon sins.

Someone described Sufism in a nutshell, saying, "*Sufism is being true to Allah and good to mankind*". This is what Allah the Almighty means by saying:

"For Allah is with those who restrain themselves and those who do good"

(Al-Nahl: 128)

The Sufists are with Allah by being pious, and with people by doing good. Allama Ibn Al-Qayyim quoted the early Sufists as saying, "*Sufism is good manners, and anyone who surpasses you in manners should be better than you in Sufism*". Ibn Al-Qayyim comments on that by saying, "*No, religion is good manners, and anyone who surpasses you in good manners should be better than you in religion*". True ! And we need only to quote the Prophet's hadith:

"I have been sent [with the Message] to make manners perfect)"

(Bukhari)

Four Points of Focus

There are four points of focus in this education, as follows:

1. Pure Intention

The first focal point is making one's intention pure, so that his work may be done solely for the sake of Allah, not for the sake of any other gain such as money, power, people's favor or any other of the ambitions that the soul may covet in secret.

Islamic work is a worship and a jihad. Worship is good only when it is practiced in pure intention for the sake of Allah:

“And they have been commanded no more than this: to worship Allah, offering Him sincere devotion, being true [in faith]”

(Al-Bayyinah: 5)

Jihad in Allah's cause is proper only when it is performed with an intention that is pure and is directed at making the Word of Allah exalted to the heights.

Allah the Almighty does not accept a deed with shared objective, nor a heart with shared beliefs. This why Imam Hassan Al-Banna was keen to raise his first slogan as, "*Allah is Our Goal*", so as to assert that the pleasure and reward of Allah are our most aspired goal. We might say that we seek to establish an Islamic community, an Islamic state or an Islamic ruling system, or that we work for restoring the integrated Islamic way of life, or any other near or long term objective, but our goal in all this will be to gain the pleasure of Allah so that He may count us among His righteous servants.

Every Islamic worker should bear in mind these two verses:

"Say: "Truly, my prayer and my service of sacrifice, my life and my death, are [all] for Allah, the Cherisher of the Worlds. He has no partner: thus I am commanded, and I am the first of those who submit to His will" (Al-An'am: 162-163)

Causes are not made victorious through the efforts of fame seekers, but through the efforts of those who were described in hadith to be

"Charitable, pious and quiet people, who are not felt when present nor missed when absent, and whose hearts are the lamps of [Allah's] guidance" (Al-Hakim)

2. Fearing Allah

The second focal point is to fear Allah in any deed, so that such deed may take its share of perfection. This is why the Prophet, when Gabriel asked him about perfection, said:

"Perfection is to worship Allah as if you were seeing Him, for although you do not see Him, He does see you"

This is a prerequisite in any deed, be it earthly or religious, for perfection in work is a farida that every Muslim should seek to observe. Allah has prescribed perfection in everything, and nothing should make a man seek perfection more than his feeling that Allah sees and hears him and knows all that he does.

Perfection is more a prerequisite when the deed in question is related to religion, such as work in the fields of the Islamic Call and the Islamic Movement, where Islamic workers discharge

their duty on behalf of other Muslims who sit idle and watch, and even sometimes attacks them and try to bring them to abandon their efforts. Islamic workers never lack in supervision, nor do they ever require administrative inspections, for they are under supervision from within themselves, and they are the first inspectors of their efforts, as they always have in mind Allah's saying:

“And He is with you whosoever you may be, and Allah sees well all that you do”
(Al-Hadid: 4)

3. Calling Oneself to Account

The third focal point is self-accounting. *First*, we have to have a true intention before setting to work. *Second*, we have to seek perfection in our work. *Third*, we have to call ourselves to account. It is the hadith *“A wise man is that who calls his soul to account and works for that which comes after death, and a helpless (fool) is that who gives his soul a free right and hopes for Allah's forgiveness [without cause for such forgiveness]”*

It is also related that Omar said, *“Call yourselves to account before you are called to account, and weigh your deeds before they are weighed against you”*. Another saying by Maymun ibn Mahran, *“A pious man is that who calls his soul to an account that is fiercer than that of a tyrant ruler and a tightfisted partner”*.

The origin of our point here is Allah the Almighty's saying in the Quran: *“And I do swear by the self-reproaching soul”*

(Al-Qiyamah: 2)

Self-accounting always breeds more effort towards rectification of errors and elimination of shortcoming, making one always

seek perfection and avoid self-admiration, conceit and contempt of others. Calling oneself to account is also one of the moral and educational fundamentals in Islam. This is why it is considered as a must by all Sufists and experts of education.

People nowadays repeat the term "self-criticism". There is no harm in using this term, but there does exist real harm in regarding its meaning as being new to us and regarding it as a practice that we have copied from others, for it is nothing but the self-accounting that is called for by our Quran, our Sunna and our very culture.

4. Putting One's Trust in Allah

The fourth focal point is putting one's trust in Allah. It is the spiritual weapon that turns weakness into strength and few numbers into large numbers. It was also the weapon with which the Apostles of Allah faced up to the tyrants among their people, never being intimidated by their tyranny or weakened by their mischief, but saying:

"Why should we not put our trust in Allah? Indeed He has guided us to the ways [we follow]. We shall certainly bear with patience all the hurt you caused us. For those who put their trust should put their trust in Allah" (Ibrahim: 12)

Putting one's trust in Allah means to take Allah as one's guide, following His commands and depending on Him, as He says:

"[He is] the Lord of the East and the West: there is no God but He, take Him therefore for [your] disposer of affairs" (Al-Muzzammil: 9)

You should take Allah as your disposer of affairs, however, only after you prepare yourself and, take every precaution, then go ahead in confidence that Allah will not abandon you.

Putting one's trust in Allah should by no means be taken to mean neglecting one's work, abandoning the means that lead to ends, ignoring the approved practices or waiting to reap unsown seeds or harvest unattended crops. It means what the Prophet and the Apostles before him did: doing one's best and leaving the outcome to Allah, out of trust in Him, out of conviction in His promise and out of belief in His support.

Our noble Prophet made the best arrangements for his hijra, but the unbelievers managed to reach the cave where he was hiding. When Abu Bakr said, "If any of them looks under his feet, he will certainly see us!", the Prophet said, "What do you think of two people whose third is Allah?"

"Have no fear, for Allah is with us" (Al-Tawbah: 40)

This was also what Moses said to his people when Pharaoh pursued them at the head of his army, and they were caught between the sea before them and their enemy behind them:

"And when the two bodies saw each other, the people of Moses said, "We are sure to be overtaken". He said, "By no means!! My Lord is with Me! Soon will guide me!" (Al-Shuara: 61-62)

We really need this sort of conviction to face up to the grandchildren of Pharaoh and Abu Jahl, trusting that Allah is with us. Those who have Allah with them will not fail:

"If Allah helps you, none can overcome you. If He forsakes you, who is there, after that, that can help you? In Allah, then, let the believers put their trust"
(Al-Imran: 160)

Focusing on Seeking Right in Addition to Pure Intention

In preparing vanguards, we have to insure the presence of a combination of two things: pure intention and correct work. Pure intention and goodwill are required in every Islamic work, because every Islamic work is a worship and a jihad, and no worship or jihad will be accepted unless there was a pure intention behind it, as we have already said. This is why our 'ulama' attach so much importance to the Prophet's hadith saying, *"Deeds are [measured] by the intentions behind them"* that they regard it as a quarter, a third, and even a half, of Islam as a whole.

However, this alone is not enough for steering the Islamic Movement's ship among the waves and winds of the tempest. For besides pure intention, there should exist an ability to distinguish between right and wrong, and even differentiate between the more right of two opinions and choose the lesser of two evils or the best of two good things. It is said that a man in his right mind is that who knows good from evil, but a wise man is that who knows the better of two evils, if there could ever be an evil that is good!

True, a Muslim is required to try and seek what is right; and if he goes wrong, he is excused, even rewarded. However, as the hadith says, one who tries and goes wrong is rewarded only once, while one who tries and goes right is rewarded double: once for trying and making the effort, and once for going right. A double reward is promised to those who go right so that "seeking correctness" may

always be an objective for those who try, and that all wise believers may set their sights on going right in their endeavors.

However, I would like to underscore two points here:

1. He who gets rewarded for trying should be qualified for trying in the first place, i.e. he should possess the minimum qualifications to make an ijtiḥād [personal reasoning]. I do not mean the literal meaning of ijtiḥād as pertaining to the conditions for making such endeavors as they are mentioned in *usul al-fiqh* [principles of jurisprudence] books, but rather to any attempt made in any field that requires special knowledge. Making a trial in politics is certainly different than making a trial in the military, economic or educational fields, as each field requires special knowledge in addition to common sense.

But he who launches himself into a topic that he does not know well, passing judgment in it without proper knowledge, should only wrong himself, his topic and his people, and should get no reward at all, but rather get (a punishment for) an undeniable sin, for he would be passing judgment in ignorance and wading into waters he does not know how to swim in. This was why the Prophet said in hadith:

“Judges are three kinds: one shall go to The Garden, and two shall go to Hell. The first is a judge, who knows right and judges by it, and he shall go to The Garden. The second is a judge who passes judgment in ignorance, and he shall go to Hell. The third is a judge who knows right but passes judgment unjustly, and he shall go to Hell”

(Abu Dawad, Al-Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah, Al-Nasa'i, Al-Hakim)

This hadith makes a judge who passes judgment in ignorance equal to a judge who knows right but passes unfair judgment, as an ignorant judge would be sailing in unknown waters that he would get lost into, and had better leave them to those who can steer the ship safely through them, and give the helm to a skilled master. Even if he does right, a man of this kind will not be rewarded by his right deed, as it is a shot without a marksman, and a right word from the wrong quarter, having no value because: it is not based on a proper methodology. It is said in the hadith,

“He who gives his own opinion [without knowledge] in the Quran and goes right shall be wrong”

(Reported by Al-Tirmidhi who classified it as "gharib". In other Sunna collections it is classified among the "da'if")

He will be wrong, although his opinion is right, because his right opinion came out of a haphazard trial, not through a proper methodology that he followed strictly. Such a haphazardly reached right is not to be depended on.

2. The second point I want to note here is that those who will be rewarded for their ijtiḥād, even with the single reward for trying, will be worthy of reward only if they do their best in seeking the truth and exert every effort to ensure that they understand things right. In so doing, they have to use all the means at their disposal and digest all the available information to discover right. They have also to consult knowledgeable people, so as to arm themselves with sound opinions and valuable experience that will help them do right.

The Importance of Ideological Education of Future Leaders

Preparing Leaderships for the Future

The problem of the Islamic Movement in many countries is that its base is larger than what its leadership can cope with. There is no shame in admitting that. The reason for this situation is that the contemporary Islamic Movement has spread all over the world, driving roots in all countries, its base becoming more expansive.

However, this growth has not been accompanied by the appearance of a suitable number of leaders that can cope with it at ideological, educational and political levels.

This is a situation that the current readerships have to bear in mind and prepare for in the next phase. The first fact that should be taken into consideration here is that being faithful to the Call, making sacrifices for its sake or being among the first to enter its field are not the only qualifications for leadership of the Islamic Movement, though they have their weight as points in favor of candidates and have their own value before Allah and in the eyes of people.

The required type of leadership should enjoy certain mental, psychological and practical abilities in addition to the traditional prerequisites of morals, behavior and faith.

By leadership, I do not mean the figure at the top of the hierarchy, but rather the group that plans for work, launches the work and directs and controls it and gets out the best in those working under its command, so as to divert them from destruction to construction;

from argument to work; and from idleness to serious endeavor. Those who were first to assume leadership should not stand in the way of new leaders, thinking that leadership is a lifelong right that is invalidated only by death, thus denying the youthful talents and young abilities the opportunity to come into the light.

We have to abandon the idea that leaders are selected for life, like the Rightly Guided Caliphs, whom we were commanded to take as an example. In fact, such historical precedents are not a law that the Nation should observe until the Day of Judgment, and we have discussed this point elsewhere.

However, what matters here is that we should, even must, prepare the readerships required for the coming phase, so as to ensure that there will stand at the helm only those leaders who are strong, honest, dependable and knowledgeable. We must prepare ideological, educational and political readerships. This is what we must seriously think of, taking the practical steps and measures to achieve. We have to bring it about from theory to application.

A Special Institute for Preparing Leaderships

I suggest, for this purpose, that an institute be established for preparing Islamic leaders. Its students should be selected from among the faithful talented elements who possess the required mental, psychological, behavioral and belief related qualities. They should also be recommended by prominent figures known to be good judge of men. They should also sit for written and oral examinations of various kinds before they are admitted to this institute.

The institute had better be a boarding school type, so that the students may live as a community in it, leading a life in which religion, knowledge, the Call, brotherhood and jihad will be the basic elements. The curricula of this institute should be comprehensive, profound and diversified, combining traditions with contemporary knowledge, mixing religion with human sciences from an Islamic perspective, and giving due attention to the study of the local, Arab, Islamic and international state of affairs, with emphasis on the examination and analysis of the forces opposing our religion, our Nation and our march. This institute should combine knowledge and work, theory and practice.

The faculty to teach these curricula should be selected from among trustworthy professors who combine high qualifications with mature thought and true belief. They should be far from being either lax or extreme. There should exist among them an integration and a coordination that would ensure that none of them would tear down what another has built, and that there would not be among them Accidentalists and Orientalists or Rightists and Leftists who would wreak contradiction, confusion of thinking and disturbance in the character formation process among the students.

However, I do not mean that the great professors we should seek should be replicas of one another: I only mean that there should be a harmony among them in terms of the general way of thinking of major issues and in terms of the general philosophy that will be adopted in the institute. At this point I would like to discuss some of the features of the ideology we should establish through this ambitious endeavor.

Features of The Ideology Needed

What I would like to assert beyond any doubt or ambiguity is that besides the belief based education that is the foundation of the moral upbringing of future leaders of the Islamic Movement, there should be a strong ideological education that is based on the sort of 'fiqh' explained earlier, which we want for the Movement in its days to come.

Belief, to us Muslims, is not against reason or intellect. On the contrary, it is based on and fed by reason, and the believers are described in the Quran as "*men of understanding*", and the Quran is meant to give signs to "*people who understand*" or "*people who ponder*". Reason to the prominent intellectuals of the Nation is the basis of all [inherited] revealed knowledge, for without it nobody could have proved the existence of Allah or the validity of prophethood.

Through the instructions it contains, the Quran has laid down the foundation of the "*scientific mentality*" which worships Allah superstitions and denounces the imitation of forefathers or prominent figures.

A Scientific Ideology

The ideology on which our aspired education is based has specific features that should be sought and established by teachers and driven home by educational curricula.

First, this ideology is scientific in the full sense of the word. By "scientific", we do not mean that it is scientific as related to abstract and applied sciences though they are a field that should be sought by Muslims by all means but rather that it is an ideology that would

not accept any claim without proof, any result without preamble, any evidence without documentation or any preamble that is not totally free from suspicion.

We want "scientific thinking" and scientific spirit" to guide our life in every way, so that we may view things, issues, situations and people in a scientific way, and pass our tactical and strategic decisions on issues related to economy, politics, education and other fields with a scientific mentality that is free from the influence of emotions, improvisation, self-centeredness, herd effect and the many diversified pretexts given for everything today. Such adverse factors have come to dominate our behavior to a great extent. A decision maker who is under the influence of his or his party's whims will only be seeking to appease the public by doing what they like, not what is good for them and their future in their homeland and their Nation as a whole.

The "scientific spirit" has major characteristics that I have already dealt with in my book, "*The Islamic Solution: A Farida And A Must*" In the course of "self-Criticism" of the Islamic Movement. However, I think it would be better to recall them here for purposes of reasserting the Nation's need to them, not to imported "secularism".

Characteristics of the Scientific Spirit We Need

The scientific spirit has many characteristics, the most important of which are as follows:

1. Adopting an objective attitude towards matters, situations and statements, regardless of who is behind them. Ali Ibn Abi Talib said, *"Do not know Truth by men. Know Truth, and you will easily know the men who belong to it"*

2. Respecting specialization. The Quran says:

"Ask of those who possess the Message" (Al-Nahl: 43)

"Ask, then, about Him of any acquainted [with such things]"

(Al-Furqan: 59)

"And none [O man!] can inform you like Him who is All Aware"

(Fatir: 14)

Religion has its own experts, as do economics, military affairs and other branches of knowledge, especially in this age of ours, here specialized knowledge is the rule. He who knows religion, politics, economics, arts and military arts, giving his opinion on everything, is a jack of all trades who is a master of none.

3. Having the ability of self-criticism, admission of mistakes and learning from them and evaluating past experiences under a fair light that is not dimmed by the "glory seeking" view which sees the past only as being full of glories and victories.
4. Employing the latest and best techniques so as to ensure success, and learning from the experience of others, including

enemies. Wisdom is a believer's quarry, wherever he finds it, he is more worthy of it than any other man.

5. Subjecting everything, except religious and ideological incontestable facts, to tests and accepting the outcome regardless of whether it is in one's favor or not.
6. Avoiding haste in passing decisions and judgments, and adopting attitudes only after a careful study based on examination and evaluation and only after a constructive dialogue [with the other side] that would reveal shortcomings and advantages [of the issue being discussed].
7. Appreciating the other view and respecting the opinions of those who adopt contradictory attitudes towards multifaceted issues in fiqh and all branches of knowledge, so long as each has his own evidence and argument, and so long as the point at issue is not decided by a clear text that would preclude any dispute. Our 'ulema' have established that there is no ban on an ijtiḥad based opinion, as no one who tries to come out with a judgment based on ijtiḥad should be regarded as better than another. However, this should not prevent constructive dialogue and academic, impartial verification in an atmosphere of tolerance and love.

Some Practices that Run Against Scientific Ideology

It is against the scientific way of thinking to oversimplify complicated issues, underrate serious issues, view difficult problems with an alarming superficiality or deal with major issues with the mentality of the uneducated and the practices of the dervishes.

It is detrimental to our thinking that we should see behind anything that we do not like those invisible hands and evil foreign powers that had masterminded our plight wickedly and waited patiently until we stepped into the trap of our own accord. This may be true in some cases, but it is wrong to generalize it.

This explanation of events in our history to be the results of schemes and conspiracies, regardless of whether the events in our countries are political, economic, social or cultural, only bears two bad fruits:

First, if such a feeling escalates, it breeds a sense of "fatalism": that there is nothing we can do about these satanic schemes because of the gigantic financial and intellectual capabilities of the forces of them and our own weaknesses and shortcomings. This way, we become "chessmen on a chessboard", as is often said. Such a feeling would breed only despair and a destructive sense of defeat.

Second, this attitude prevents us from self-criticism and precludes any sincere attempt to understand our deficiencies, remedy our ailments or examine our failures and sins. It impedes any effort to look for the causes of our diseases so that we may find a cure for them. This situation will remain as long as any deficiency, neglect, corruption or ruin is seen as the result of a devious foreign scheme, not as the consequence of our own behavior.

We had often adopted this attitude despite the fact that the Quran teaches us to blame only ourselves whenever we are met by a misfortune or are the target of a calamity or a defeat, as Allah the Almighty says:

"Whatever misfortune happens to you, is because of the things your hands have wrought, and for many [a sin] He grants forgiveness"

(Al-Shura: 30)

After the Muslims had been struck by the calamity of losing seventy of their heroes in the Battle of Uhud while they had scored a dazzling victory in the Battle of Badr, they asked themselves what the reason was. The answer was sent down by Allah in ..

"What! When a single disaster smites you, although you smote your enemies with one twice as great, do you say? "Whence is this?" Say [to them]: It is from yourselves"

(Al-Imran: 165)

A Realistic Ideology

Among the characteristics of the scientific ideology we want for the Islamic Movement in the next phase is that it is based on reality, not on illusion or dreams.

Balancing Ambitions with Capabilities

One of the realities we have to etch on our minds is that we should balance our ambitions with our capabilities and weigh what we wish against what we can actually get, so that we may not commit ourselves to matters for which we are not prepared or for which we do not possess the necessary tools.

The Holy Quran includes an authorization for a warrior to turn his back to battle if "*he is trying to execute a stratagem of war or retreat to a troop of his own people*". A warrior is also authorized to withdraw from battle when the situation is not in his favor as a result of the presence of large enemy numbers that are more than double the number of the Muslim army:

"For the present, Allah has lightened your [burden], for He knows that there is a weak spot in you: But [even so], if there are a hundred of you, patient and persevering, they will vanquish two hundred, and if a thousand, they will vanquish two thousand, with the leave of Allah: for Allah is with those who patiently persevere"

(Al-Anfal: 66)

In the Battle of Mu'ta, the Roman Army was many times the number of the Muslim Army (the Muslims were 3,000 against 150,000 Romans). This correlation of troops made the military genius Khalid Ibn Al-Walid plan for the Muslims withdrawal to safety, preferring that to throwing his army into a battle that would be more like suicide.

When he returned with his companions to Medina, the enthusiastic Muslim youths received them by throwing stones at them, describing them as the deserters, but the Prophet defended them saying, "*No, they will be the attackers by the will of Allah*".

A wise commander is that who cares for his troops lives. This is what made Omar Ibn Al-Khattab early in his reign reluctant to invade the Byzantines, saying to those who urged him to do so, "*By Allah, a single Muslim is dearer to me than the Byzantines Empire and all [the wealth] that it has*"!

A wise Muslim is that who does not get himself involved in things he cannot undertake. Allah the Almighty says: *"So fear Allah as much as you can"* (Al-Taghabun: 16). It is said in the hadith, *"A Muslim should not humiliate himself"*, [said the Prophet]. *"How could he humiliate himself, O Allah's Messenger?"* [asked the people] *"By shouldering such ordeal he cannot carry"*, [answered the Prophet].

A mistake that the Islamic Movement could easily make is to be driven by the emotions of the common people in making vital decisions. In some countries, the Muslim masses may push some of the Movement's leaders into the political battle where they would be fighting with all their might before they are fully in possession of the mental, political and specialized abilities required for that task. In so doing, these leaders would be shouldering more than they can carry, which is sure prescription for failure.

Such failure is the result of haste, miscalculation, overestimation of one's abilities and underestimation of the abilities of others. We have before us the example of the Prophet when he denied his Companions in Mecca permission to initiate an armed clash with the polytheists, even when they were being harmed and tortured. He used to say, *"Hold back hands from fight and establish prayer. The Prophet followed that practice until Allah provided for him a free land and a solid base for launching his operations, whence he started jihad and launched battle. It was then that Allah the Almighty sent down His Words:*

To those against whom war is made, permission is given [to fight], because they are wronged; and verily, Allah is Most Powerful for their aid"

(Al-Hajj: 39)

Burying Old Problems

We want the new ideology to make us bury old problems that have preoccupied Muslim minds and wasted Muslim efforts for some time, such as the problem of divine entity and qualities; attributes are the divine attributes the very divine essence, or rather something else? Or are those attributes neither essence nor anything else? The problem of whether, the Quran was "created" and the ensuing ordeals to which a number of Islam's prominent Imams were subjected; the unneeded exaggeration in raising controversies about Ta'wil (exploring hidden meanings in interpreting religious texts) between early and later generations; the attempts to refute the tenets of Asharites, Maturidites and their proponents among the Muslim world's religious universities scholars of Al-Azhar, Al-Zaytuna, Al-Qarawiyyin, Diobard, etc.

None of those problems should be allowed to preoccupy the minds we prepare for the next phase to face up to Zionists, Crusaders, Marxists and advocates of destructive philosophies that blow on our Nation from East and West alike.

A Debate that We Do Not Need Today

The realistic ideology we need is one that focuses on construction and work, not on haggling and debate. For when Allah wants to punish people, He preoccupies them with debate and denies them [serious] work. By debate, I mean debate on problems that are historical, purely hypothetical or have a controversial nature.

A debate that we do not need, or would not benefit from today is that debate which is raised from time to time about the nature of military jihad (fighting) in Islam: whether it is a "defensive" Jihad for

defending Islam's creed, sanctums and territories, or an "offensive" Jihad for spreading Islam in the world.

Many of the contemporary scholars wrote on this topic, and have been divided into two groups as follows: Those who adopted the first opinion [that jihad should be defensive] include: Sayyed Rashid Reda, Sheikh Mahmoud Shaltut, Sheikh Mohammad Abdallah Diraz, Sheikh AbdelWahab Khallaf, Sheikh Mohammad AbuZahra, Sheikh Mohammad AlGhazali and Sheikh Abdallah IbnZeid AlMahmoud.

Their argument is based on many verses from the Holy Quran, such as, *“Fight in the Cause of Allah those who fight you but do not transgress limits, for Allah does not love transgressors”* (Al-Baqara: 190) and *“Therefore if they withdraw from you but do not fight you and [instead] send you [guarantees] of peace, then Allah has opened no way for you [to war against them]”* (Al-Nisa: 90) etc.

The second group includes Allama Abul A'la Al-Mawdoudi, Imam Sayyed Qutb and others.

Their argument is based on what they call "the Verse of the Sword" which to their claim, has abrogated all the verses that preceded it and were representing a phase that had ended. However, they have differed over the Verse of the Sword itself, being unable to determine unanimously which verse it is in the Quran.

I believe that there is no call for this fierce controversy over this issue at present, for three reasons:

First: we Muslims have not discharged the duty of jihad that is compulsory for every one of us in many Islamic countries to liberate the Muslim land from usurpers and aggressors in Palestine, Eritrea,

the Philippines, Afghanistan, Tashkent, Bukhara, Samarkand, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan and other Muslim republics (and cities) of the Soviet Union, and other similar places in China, Ethiopia and Thailand, etc. No Muslim can argue against the necessity of rescuing them from the hands of anti-Islamic forces, and Allah's judgment in the Holy Quran included in the following verse applies to them,

"And why should not you fight in the cause of Allah and of those who, being weak, are illtreated [and oppressed]? Men, women and children whose cry is, "Our Lord! Rescue us from this town, whose people are oppressors, and raise for us from You one who will protect, and raise for us from you one who will help!" "

(Al-Nisa': 75)

The Muslim Nation has not carried out this compulsory defensive duty, so how can it talk now of offensive jihad?

Second: offensive jihad, to that who advocates it, is removing the forces that block the path of Allah's servants and have taken it upon themselves to prevent Muslims from conveying the Word of Allah to people.

But no force can stand in our way today if we act in earnest and devote our efforts to conveying our Call to the whole world. The spoken, written and televised word can be spread all over the world in all languages by radio, television, book, messages, the Press and the Muslim communities in all countries of the world. However, we are the most abysmally negligent people in this respect, if we compare our efforts to those of the men of Christian missionization and what they do to promulgate their doctrine and translate their Bibles to languages and dialects that may be counted by the thousand, sending their missionaries, male and female, to the four

corners of the earth in hundreds of thousands, to the extent that they now aspire to convert us to Christianity so that we may follow their creed!!

Third: we depend on others for military power. Those against whom we want to launch our offensive jihad are the same people who make all sorts of weapons and sell them to us. But for them, we would be unarmed, defenseless and unable to do anything!

That being the case, how can we talk of launching offensives to subject the whole world to our Message, when the only weapons we can muster are those given us by them and when the only arms we can carry are those they agree to sell us?

A Traditionalist Ideology

Among the characteristics of this ideology is that it is a traditionalist ideology. By traditionalist here we mean that it should be an intellectual methodology based on an application of the understanding of the provisions of the Quran and the guidelines of Sunna by the best generations of the Umma; the Prophet's Companions and those who followed correctly on their path.

Fundamentals of the True Traditionalist Methodology

This methodology is generally based on the following principles and fundamentals:

1. Judging by the infallible texts, not by men's sayings.
2. Having recourse, in determining the meaning of the intricate (texts), to the perspicuous ones of the inconclusive ones to the conclusive ones.
3. Understanding secondary concepts and subsidiary judgments in the light of the principles and generalities.
4. Advocating ijtehad (personal reasoning) and renewal, and denouncing rigidity and imitation.
5. Advocating commitment (to proper conduct), not looseness, in the field of morals.
6. Advocating facilitation, not complication. in the field of jurisprudence.
7. Advocating tabshir (being affable to people and giving them a nice and kind example) rather than tanfir (scaring them away by behaving harshly with them) in the field of guidance.
8. Devoting attention to the cultivation of true and firm belief, not argumentation, h1 the field of faith.
9. Devoting attention to content, not form, in the field of worship.
10. Paying attention to adherence to rules in religious matters, and innovation of rules in earthly matters.

This is the essence of the methodology followed by the early believers and applied in the theoretical and practical education of the cream of this nation's generations, who were praised by Allah in the Holy Quran and by the Prophet in the hadith, and proved to be worthy of that praise as told by history, for they have handed down to their successors the Holy Quran after they had led a life in which they kept the approved practices, accomplished conquests, spread justice and goodwill, established the State of science and belief and laid the foundations of a universal, moralistic, humanitarian and religious civilization whose memory is still alive in history.

The Wronging of "Traditionalism" by Both Proponents and Opponents

The term salafiyya (traditionalism) has been wronged by its proponents and opponents alike. Its proponents those who are claimed by people and by themselves to be its proponents, or many of them, to be precise have confined this methodology to a framework of formalities and polemics on issues of scholastic theology, jurisprudence or Sufism. They spend their days and stay awake all night in a relentless attack against anyone who goes against their opinion on any of these issues or refutes their judgment on any particular detail.

Their attitude has become so absurd that some people now think of traditionalism as the methodology of polemics, not construction and work, or that it focuses on details at the expense of generalities; on disputed concepts at the expense of approved concepts; on form and letter at the expense of content and spirit. The opponents of traditionalism, on the other hand, describe it as being "backward" always looking back but never going ahead, and never caring for the

present or the future. They also describe it as being fanatic, never listening or even paying attention to the other opinion, as they regard it to be against renewal, innovation and ijihad and also far from moderation. In fact, this is an injustice to real traditionalism and to its true advocates.

Perhaps the most prominent advocates of traditionalism in old times were Sheikh Al-Islam Ibn Taymia and his disciple Ibn Al-Qayyim. They were truly the most worthy of being representatives of the Islamic revivalist movement in their time, for theirs was an all-encompassing renewal of the sciences of Islam.

They stood in the face of blind imitation and the ideological, theological and jurisprudential fanaticism that had been dominating Islamic thought for several centuries.

However, although they had stood against the fanatic methodology of imitation, they did give the imams of the schools of jurisprudence their due share of respect and esteem, as manifested in Ibn Taymia's treatise, *"Lifting The Blame Off Prominent Imams"*.

Moreover, in their campaign against the ideological and doctrinal aberrations, especially by the proponents of hulul and ijihad and behavioral deviations that had infiltrated into Sufism, at the hands of the ignorant, the imposters and the mercenary people, Ibn Taymia and Ibn Al-Qayyim did do justice to true Sufism, and paid tribute to its faithful advocates. They produced much literature in this field, including two volumes containing the fatwas (Islamic legal opinions) of Ibn Taymia and a number of books by Ibn Al-Qayyim, the most famous of which are *"Madarij al-Salikin"*, *Sharh "Manazil al Sa'irin"*

("The Pathway of The Travelers", a commentary on "The Stations of The Walkers") in three volumes.

Adopting the Methodology of Early Muslims, Not Just Their Judgments

I have to emphasize here that you should adopt the methodology of early Muslims, not just apply their judgments on specific details, as you could apply their judgments on some details but know nothing of their balanced, integrated, all-encompassing methodology.

You could also apply the spirit of this methodology and seek its goals while differing with some of the opinions given by early Muslims.

This is how I stand from Imam Ibn Taymia and Imam Ibn Al-Qayyim: I do respect and appreciate their overall methodology, but that does not make me accept all that they say. If I accepted all that they say, I would be imitating them in everything, and thus violating the very methodology which they advocated and for which they had to contend with so much trouble and opposition, for their methodology called for contemplation, judging by proof and weighing by the judgment itself, not by its author.

How can one be right in criticizing those who imitate Abu Hanifa and Malik in one is himself imitating Ibn Taymia or Ibn Al-Qayyim? It would also be unfair to the two Imams to mention only the academic and intellectual part of their lives and ignore the other bright sides of their active lives. We should not ignore the righteous trait that made a man like Ibn Taymia say, "*Sometimes I say: "if the people of the Garden are leading a life like mine, then they should be*

leading a good life!". We should also remember that it was the same trait that made him say in his distress and captivity, "What [harm] can my enemies do to me? My captivity is a seclusion [for worship], my banishment is religious travel, and my murder is martyrdom!"

He was a man of godly taste, and so was his disciple Ibn Al-Qayyem, as must be realized by anyone who reads their literature with attention and good faith. Moreover, we should never ignore the aspect of helping the Call and jihad in the lives of the two Imams. Ibn Taymia took part in some of military battles himself, fighting with his hands and raking the flames of enthusiasm in the hearts of other warriors with his words. The two Imams lived in a continuous struggle for renewing Islam, going to prison several times on account of their zealous efforts, until Sheikh Al-Islam Ibn Taymia died in prison in the year 728 A.H. This is what true traditionalism is!

If we examine our contemporary history, we will find that the most prominent scholar who advocated traditionalism in his articles, his books and his magazine, which carried the flag of modern traditionalism, was Allama Mohammad Rashid Reda, owner of the "*Al-Manar*" magazine, in which he published the "*Al-Manar Interpretation*" (of the Holy Quran), and which was famous all over the Muslim World.

Imam Mohammad Rashid Reda was the true renewer of Islam of his time. Anyone who reads his "*Interpretation*", his "*fatwas*" or his books such as "*The Inspiration Of Mohammad*", "*The Facility Of Islam*", "*A Call To The Fair Sex*", "*The Caliphate*", "*The Arguments Of The Reformer And The Imitator*" and many other books and articles, will certainly realize that the man's thought was a real "lighthouse" [manar, the name of

the magazine] that has guided the ship of Islam in modern history. The man's practical life was a real application of his traditionalist ideology. Imam Reda was the originator of the golden rule which was adopted later by Imam Hassan Al-Banna, namely, "*We should cooperate in what we agree upon, and find excuses for each other in what we differ on*". What a marvelous rule, if only it could be properly understood and applied by those who claim to be advocates of traditionalism.

A Revivalistic Ideology

Another characteristic of the ideology we want is that it is revivalistic and would not be confined to the boundaries of the "old", nor would it adhere to inherited forms or accustomed means. It is an ideology that believes in *ijtihad* and adopts creativity, as it rejects imitation and subordination and sees stagnation as death itself. It renews jurisprudence, education, politics and all other fields.

Revivalism is not Opposed to Traditionalism

There is no contradiction between revivalism and traditionalism, as I explained in my book "*The Islamic Awakening And The Woes Of The Arab Muslim world*". On the contrary, the two of them are two faces of the same coin: revivalism is true only when it is traditionalist, and traditionalism is true only when it is revivalistic.

Islam Approves of Revivalism

We should never say that the Movement is Islamic in its origin, direction, goals and principles, that Islam is only one thing that is fixed and cannot be renewed. *First*, we say that Islam itself approves of [the legitimacy of] revival, as told in the accepted and verified hadith:

“Allah shall send [a man] who will revive the religion of this Nation at the start of every hundred years”

(Abu Dawud & Al-Hakim)

Revival is legitimate and required by hadith, and what could be better than the Prophet's? We should not be intimidated by the term revival in religion, now that it has proven to be stated in the [accepted] hadith. What we should do here is to determine the meaning of "revival" so that no manipulators would manipulate the religion in the name of their so-called revival while they are far from revival as can be.

I have explained in a study I had written on this hadith the meaning of "revival". its aspects and who should undertake it. In short, reviving something does not mean eliminating it and substituting something for it, but means restoring it as much as possible to the shape it was in when it first emerged into existence, and maintaining its essence, characteristics and features to the minutest detail without altering them in the least.

This applies to both the concrete and abstract senses. Renovating an ancient building, such as a palace, a temple or a mosque, does not mean demolishing it and building another in its place along the latest lines of construction, but rather means restoring it and taking

every care to return it to its original state as much as possible. This is what true revival is.

Revival of religion includes the renewal of its understanding its fiqh, which is an ideological revival; renewing belief in it, which is a spiritual one; and renewing the effort for its help and the call for its promulgation, which is a practical one. Each age requires its own type of revival that addresses the deficiencies and cures the ailments of this specific age.

However, there is an area that renewal can never enter under any conditions: it is the area of "conclusive" where Islam has passed its decisive judgment in the various aspects of doctrine, worship, morals and legislation, which embody the doctrinal, spiritual, intellectual and behavioral unity of the Muslim Nation.

I have elaborated on this point in other books, which the reader may refer to if he so wishes.

The Necessity of Renewal in Means

Second, we say that the Movement, though it is Islamic in source, orientation, principle and objective, adopts such methodologies and means as it sees fit to serve its religion and establish it on the earth, as appropriate to time, place and conditions.

Methodologies, means and systems are not as immortal as Islam itself. They do not possess the consistency of Islamic fundamentals and principles, as they are tools produced by human endeavor and effort for reviving and renewing Islam in the hearts and in life itself.

Imam Hassan Al-Banna, who laid down the first rules of organized work of the Islamic Movement for the renewal of Islam, did not claim infallibility for himself or for the tools which Allah inspired him with, despite the fact that his tools were so good and powerful that it was right for Sayyed Qutb to call them "*the genius of building*" and for Guide General Omar Al-Telmisani to describe him as "*the inspired, talented leader*" and for Sheikh Al-Ghazali to say that he was "*the reviver of the fourteenth century after Hijra*". These means should be subjected to evaluation from time to time, just as education experts do to their curricula and reference books, bringing them up for revision every few years and making a deletion or insertion here and an amendment there. This is necessary for any human activity, regardless of how close it may be to accuracy or perfection.

Hassan Al-Banna Was Not Stiff

Hassan Al-Banna himself was not stiff, but was always renewing and developing means and approaches for the Movement's structures, institutions and systems.

Hassan Al-Banna would not turn in his grave if some of his children and followers went against him in an issue on which he had passed an opinion in the past, such as the multiparty system in an Islamic state, which I myself have done in one of my studies.

Hassan Al-Banna would not do that either if somebody added to his fundamentals others which that somebody deems as complementary to these fundamentals, which Sheikh Al-Ghazali has done in his explanation of the twenty fundamentals in his book entitled "*The Constitution of Cultural Unity For Muslims*".

There is nothing legal, traditional or mental that prevents the reconsideration of educational means and systems inside the group, such as the (Muslim Brotherhood's) Fraternal Groups and Katiba, with a view to adding new means or systems to them if appropriate.

It should also be right to reexamine political tools in the light of local, regional and international changes and developments, which would make it imperative to enter into fronts or alliances, or resort to truces or partnerships, as dictated by the high interests of Islam, the Nation and the Movement under the current circumstances.

Every country has its unique conditions, every period has its own rules, and every group has its own capabilities, imperatives and conditions that are known to it better than to any other group.

The Islamic Movement, like jurisprudence and other Sharia-related sciences, will not live, prosper and grow without the minds of studious, creative renewers, and will wither, shrink and become impotent only through the minds of the stiff imitators, if what they had in their heads could be called "minds"!

Stiffness is a Serious Disease

Stiffness is one of the diseases that afflict the "systemized" ideologies of the Islamic Movement, and one of the obstacles that hinder the Movement from within, as I have explained in my book "*The Islamic Solution: A Farida And A Necessity*"

[Stiffness' its] sticking to a stiff pattern in organization, stiff methods in education, stiff means in advocating the Call, stiff procedures in attaining an objective and stiff ideas in pursuing politics, so that anyone who tries to change or amend these procedures, means and

methods finds facing zealous refusals, even accusations and denunciations.

Once again, I would like to stress that the renewal we seek does not mean the abolition of the old, it rather means modernizing, improving, upgrading and adding to the old, especially in terms of tools, means and procedures, which are flexible and changeable, with a view to making use of the capabilities afforded by our contemporary age and possessed, and used by others. The word of wisdom should always be sought by believers.

What I Fear for the Islamic Movement

My worst fear for the Islamic Movement is that it opposes the free thinkers among its children and close the door to renewal and ijtiḥād confining itself to only one type of thinking that does not accept any other viewpoints which prescribe different objectives. means or phases for the Movement, give a different assessment of events, situations or men, or differ with that single way of thinking in any other of the pursuits that fall under human ijtiḥād. For human ijtiḥād is always subject to development and change according to the changing conditions and factors. Our felyih. said long ago, "*A fatwa must change with the change of time, place, customs and conditions*". If my fear turns into reality, then the capable minds that can renew and innovate will escape from the ranks of the Movement like water through fingers, leaving behind those conservatives who can only imitate and who like everything to stay as it is regardless of how ancient it is, as they believe that what we know is better than what we do not know and that what we have tried should be better than what we have yet to try.

The end result will be for the Movement to lose the creative minds among its ranks and eventually fall prey to stagnation, or to an impotence that afflicted jurisprudence and literature in the ages of imitation. The remaining members of the Movement will then creep into their shells, despairing of any fruitful effort to help Islam, or they will work individually, disassociating themselves from any collective effort, or they will throw themselves with others in another collective venture whose consequences are unknown.

The worst damage to Muslim minds in all ages, past and present, has been done by that adage which says, "*The predecessors have left nothing to be added by the successors!*" or, in other words, "*It cannot be better!*"

There is nothing that can benefit Muslim minds now more than the adoption of a contrary adage saying, "*The predecessors have left a lot to be added by the successors!*" or "*It can always be better!*" :

"And He has created [other] things of which you have no knowledge"
(Al-Nahl:8)

A Balanced Ideology

Another characteristic of the ideology we seek is that it is balanced in its objectives and orientation, for it is an ideology that reflects an intermediate, balanced, comprehensive attitude towards people and life, a balanced attitude of an evenly balanced nation that is far from being extremist or negligent.

The Balanced Ideology's Attitude Towards Major Issues

The even balance of this ideology is evident in its attitude towards important major issues, as follows:

1. It is balanced between the advocates of strict Madhabiyyah (adherence, in theology, jurisprudence, etc., to one certain school of Islamic law, such as the Malikite, Hanafite, etc.) and the advocates of loose non Madhhabiyah (freeing oneself from any abidance by rules of whatever school of Muslim law).
2. It is balanced between those who support Sufism regardless of whether it deviates or invents, and those who oppose Sufism regardless of whether it is proper and abiding (by Shari'ah).
3. It is balanced between the advocates of an uncontrolled open-door policy, and the advocates of an unjustified closed door policy.
4. It is balanced between those who refer to reason even if it goes against conclusive text, and those who never refer to reason even in understanding the text.
5. It is balanced between those who regard heritage as sacred even if it shows human failures, and those who disregard heritage even when it shows signs of heavenly inspiration.
6. It is balanced between those who indulge in politics at the expense of education, and those who neglect politics completely on the pretext of devotion to education.

7. It is balanced between those who hurry to pick the fruit before it is ripe, and those who fail to see it until it falls into the hands of others after it becomes ripe.
8. It is balanced between those who are preoccupied with the present and do not heed the future, and those who exaggerate in foreseeing into the future as if they were reading from a book.
9. It is balanced between those who regard organizational structures as idols to be worshipped, and those who shirk any organized work as if they were beads in a broken string.
10. It is balanced between those who go to an extreme in obeying a sheikh or a leader, as if they were dead men committed to the hands of the washer, and those who behave with such freedom as if they were not members of a group.
11. It is balanced between the advocates of worldwide action without regard to local conditions, and the advocates of narrow regional action that has no connection with the world movement.
12. It is balanced between the overly optimistic who disregard obstacles and dangers, and the overly pessimistic who see nothing but darkness and never hope for the break of dawn.
13. And it is balanced between those who go to an extreme in forbidding as if there were nothing halal in this world, and those who exaggerate in allowing as if there were nothing haram in it.

This is the balanced ideology we seek. However, the rule in our societies today is to go to either extreme, and the exceptions are few!

The Decline of the Balanced Attitude Among Some Islamists at Some Times

Some Islamists can see only two colors: black and white. They know no other colors, nor can they see any of the original and mixed colors that other people can see and which have countless shades.

Some of these people restrict all colors, and life itself, to only one colorblack. They see people and things through a black film that covers their eyes. It is through this black, pessimistic look that they have formulated ready answers for every question, which they launch like missiles, not caring whom or what they hit.

[To them] the whole society is (as) pagan (as the pre-Islamic people),
Everything in life is a sin;

All people are either unbelievers or hypocrites;

The world is full of monsters;

The universe is full of evil.

[In their eyes] everything that people do in their contemporary life is haram and nothing else:

All singing is haram;

All music is haram;

All acting is haram;

The theatre is haram;

All art is haram.

They venture in their judgments, despite the fact that our predecessors were very careful not to use the word "haram" to describe anything except what they knew to be haram beyond any doubt.

That is why two Quranic verses denounced wine in Surat Al- Baqara:

"They ask you concerning wine and gambling. Say, "In them is great sin and some profit, for men, but the sin is greater than the profit" "(219)

and in Surat Al-Nisa':

"Do not approach prayer in a state of intoxication" (43),

but some of the Prophet's companions continued drinking it, and some said "O Allah, send down to us a decisive judgment on wine", and the decisive verse was sent down in Surat Al-Ma'ida:

"Avoid [such abomination] that you may prosper" (90).

We have to admit that the past period, especially the 1950's and 1960's, was a rich breeding ground for a certain type of dark ideas that proliferated in the Islamic fore, to the extent that the predominant way of thinking was one that advocated rejection of everything, pessimism and suspicion and accusation of others regardless of their beliefs and tendencies, including Muslims.

Yes! The idea of judging others as sinners and heretics, even unbelievers, found a very rich breeding ground, and was helped to grow and proliferate by the oppressive environment in which the Islamic Movement and its advocates lived at that time. In that period, the advocates of the Islamic movement were hanged in public, tortured to death in secret or subjected to all kinds of persecution, while the doors were opened wide to communists, secularists and enemies of Islam from every color.

It was in that period that the books of Sayyed Qutb, which reflected the last phase in his thought, were published. They were full of ideas

that advocated branding society as an unbelieving society, advised the postponement of calling for an Islamic system, made fun of the idea of renewing and developing Islamic jurisprudence and reviving ijihad, advocated isolation from society as a whole, called for launching an offensive jihad against all people in general, and made light of the advocates of tolerance and flexibility, branding them with naively and psychological defeat in the face of Western civilization.

This trend in Sayyed Qutb's thinking is most evident in his interpretation of the Holy Quran entitled, "*In The Shade Of The Quran [lit.]*" in its second edition, as well as in his book "*Signs Along The Road*", most of which was taken from the former book, and "*Islam And The Problems of Civilization*", and other books that had great positive effects but also had negative effects.

There were also the books of Sheikh Said Hawwi, may Allah forgive him and have peace on him, who advocated the same ideas. Meanwhile, there emerged a new type of jurisprudence invented by those whom I call "the neo Zahirites [who interpret the Holy Quran according to its literal meaning] who claim, or are claimed by people, to belong to the school of Ibn Taymia and his disciples, while Ibn Taymia and his disciples were as far as can be from "literal interpretation of the Holy Quran" and never confined themselves to the "forms and moulds" which these people hold so desperately to.

That was how stiffness and obstinacy came to dominate the Islamic way of thinking and the tolerant, easy spirit of evenly balanced thinking was forced to give ground for some time. I believe that the Islamic Movement now has to disentangle itself from the way of thinking peculiar to times of distress, or crisis, so that it may move

on to the moderate, evenly balanced ideology that expresses the evenly balanced Muslim Nation and the evenly balanced Islamic way of life, by which Allah intends facility, not difficulty.

Balancedness Goes Hand in Hand With Facilitation

Being evenly balanced goes, in my view, hand in hand with facilitation, which is a balanced attitude between stiffness and undue exaggeration in religiosity on the one hand and laxity and looseness on the other.

The Movement Should Adopt a Line of Facilitation

The Islamic Movement must adopt a line of facilitation, not complication, in its jurisprudential opinions regarding society and its policies, economy, laws, dealings and international relations. I say that for more than one reason.

First, our Shari'ah is based on facility, mercy tolerance and elimination of difficulty and unease as manifested in many texts. Allah the Almighty says after the verse in which He prescribes fasting:

“Allah intends every facility for you; He does not want to put you to difficulties” (Al-Baqara: 185)

At the conclusion of the verse that prescribes Tahara [cleanliness] we find ..

“Allah does not wish to place you in a difficulty” (Al-Ma'ida: 6)

After the judgments on marriage and forbidden liaisons, Allah says:

"Allah wishes to lighten your [burdens], for Man was created weak [in flesh]" (Al-Nisa': 28)

In the context of prescribing equality in cases of murder and the remission related to that, He says:

"This is a concession and a mercy from your Lord" (Al-Baqara: 178)

Our noble Prophet says:

"Render matters easy, not difficult" (Bukhari & Muslim)

and,

"You are sent to facilitate matters, not make them difficult" (Al-Tirmidhi)

When Amr Ibn Al-As was afflicted by janaba [a ceremonial] impurity on a cold night, he performed prayer without performing ghusl [ritual bathing]. The people who were with him complained to the Prophet, and Amr defended himself saying, "I remembered the saying of Allah,

"Nor kill yourselves, for verily Allah has been to you Most Merciful" (Al-Nisa': 29)

.. and the Prophet smiled. But the Prophet very strongly denounced the attitude of some people who opined that a wounded man who had had a janaba must perform ghusl, and the man bathed and died as a result of their cruel opinion. The Prophet said:

"They killed him, may Allah kill them! Why did not they ask when they did not know? The cure for him who does not know is to ask. It was enough for him to tie a bandage around his wound and perform

tayammum [striking lightly with hands over clean earth, then passing the palm of each hand over the back of the other, blowing off the dust and then passing them over the face. This is performed instead of ablution when water is not available or when it is feared that water will be harmful for some reason]"

(Reported by Abu Dawud, on the authority of Jabir and by Ahmad, Abu Dawud and Al Hakim, on the authority of Ibn-Abbas.

Also in "Sahih al Jam Al Saghir")

Second, in this age of ours, people are in as dire a need as they could ever be for facilitation, out of mercy to them, for their will has eroded and they have become reluctant to pursue the ways of good and charity, as their motives for philanthropic deeds have become less while their motives for doing evil have increased.

It is, therefore, more advisable to give people license of facility instead of ordering them to follow the strictest rules in religious rites. This was what the Prophet did with the people who had taken up Islam recently, or with the bedouins of the desert.

The Prophet used to accept those who vowed not to perform, over and above the basic faridas, any other voluntary acts of worship, saying about any of them,

"He would fare well if he was good as his word", "He would go to the Garden if he kept his promise", or "If any of you wants to see one of the people of the Garden, let him look at this man".

The Prophet only did that out of kindness to such people and consideration of their shard circumstances.

Third, an individual may impose on himself the hardest conditions if he so wishes, testing his will to the limit, though moderation is the best and most appropriate way as the Prophet says,

“Allah likes people to take the [facilitation] licenses He gave them as He hates their committing of sins [that anger Him]”

(Reported by Ahmad, Ibn Hibban and Al Bayhagi, on the authority of Ibn Omar. It is also in the Sahih al Jam' alSaghir)

However, a faqih should not impose hard conditions on Muslims in the matters that concern the wide majority: he has to take into account that among them are the weak, the old and those who have lawful reasons for exception. A hadith says about leading congregational prayers:

“He who acts as imam [leader] in prayer should make his prayer short, for among the people [behind the imam] are the old, the ill and those with errands to run”

Prayer is a symbol of the various aspects of life. Therefore, the faqihs of the Islamic Movement just cannot adopt strict opinions that restrict and do not facilitate, and prohibit but do not allow, especially with respect to the issues related to women, family, arts, entertainment and their likes. It also applies to penal codes, where the least punishment should be imposed, including the opinion that the repentance rescinds the hadd, the opinion that the punishment for drinking wine is a discretionary one, and so on.

I would like our motto in this phase to be the statement of Imam Sufian Al-Thawri: *“Only the trustworthy faqihs can give licenses, but everybody knows how to pass a restraining opinion”*

A Futuristic Ideology

One of the characteristics of the ideology we want for the Islamic Movement is that it is a futuristic ideology that always looks into the future and does not confine itself to the present. It is not strange that the Islamic Movement should care about the future, for this is the logic of Islam, as manifested in the Quran and the Sunna.

The Holy Quran and the Future

A careful study of the Holy Quran should make us see that since the Meccan time, the Quran attracted Muslims' attention to the aspired future, telling them that the world was changing and circumstances were fluid, with victor becoming vanquished and weakling becoming a giant, each having his turn [for assuming power] at both regional and international levels.

Muslims have to put their house in order and prepare themselves for the developments that will come sooner or later, but come they eventually will. If we read Surat Al-Qamar (the moon), which is Meccan, we will find Allah's saying about the polytheists who were strongly built, large in number and heavily armed:

“Soon will their multitude be put to flight, and they will show their backs. Nay, the Hour [of judgment] is the time promised them [for their full recompense]. And that Hour will be most grievous and most bitter” (45-46).

Ibn Kathir says in his interpretation of the Holy Quran that Ikrima said,

"When the verse (Soon will their multitude be put to flight) was sent down, Omar Ibn Al-Khattab asked, which multitude will be put to flight! On the day of [the battle of Badr, I saw the Prophet moving in his armor and saying, "Soon will their multitude will be put to flight! I knew then what was meant by this verse".

Al-Bukhari says,

"Narrated Aisha: Mohammad received in Mecca when I was still a young girl the Quranic verse: (Nay, the Hour [of Judgment] is the time promised them [for their full recompense]: and that Hour will be most grievous and most bitter".

Such verses were aimed at preparing the Muslim mentality and psychology for the inevitable change and the awaited future. At world level, we find the Holy Quran speaking of that historic conflict between the two super powers of their time: the Romans and the Persians a conflict that the two groups in Mecca: the Muslims and the Unbelievers, were concerned about. The Quran promised the Muslims that the days to come would be dominated by the Romans who were people of the Book, while the Persians, who worshipped fire, would be vanquished. Surat Al-Rum asserts:

"Alif Lam Mim. The Romans have been defeated. In a land close by. But they [even] after [this] defeat of theirs, will soon be victorious within a few years, with Allah is the command in the past and in the future: on that day shall the believers rejoice with the help of Allah. He gives victory to whom He will, and He is Exalted in might, Most Merciful" (15)

These verses tell us two things:

1. That the Muslims, small in number and means as they were, were quite aware of the great events in the world and the conflicts of the great powers around them and the positive and negative effects of those conflicts on them.
2. That the Holy Quran recorded those events and attracted the Muslims' attention to the factors of change and the transition from present to future.

In Surat Al-Muzzammil, which is Meccan, we have the last verse which tells of Allah's lightening of the burden of the Prophet and the Muslims staying up [in prayer] and reciting the Holy Quran were concerned, as the Prophet and the Muslims were to be tasked with great missions, meeting with enemies who would fight them and block their advance on the path of Allah, which required that they save some of their strength for that meeting which would be forced on them. Allah the Almighty says:

“Your Lord knows that you stand forth [to prayer] nearly two thirds of the night, or half the night, or a third of the night, and so does a party of those with you. But Allah appoints night and day in due measure. He knows that you are unable to keep count thereof. So He has turned to you [in mercy]: read, therefore, of the Quran as much as may be easy for you. He knows that there may be [some] among you in ill health, others traveling through the land, seeking for Allah's bounty, and yet others fighting in Allah's cause. Read, therefore, as much of the Quran as may be easy [for you]” (20)

The Prophet and the Future

[He] who examines the Prophet's sirat carefully should find that the Prophet was not negligent of the future of his Call, but was always thinking of and planning for it within the limits of the opportunities presented to him and the tools bestowed on him by Allah.

It should be enough for us to read about his effort and activity during the hajj [pilgrimage! seasons had brought members of all the Arab tribes together, and how He {peace be upon him) used to present the Call to them asking for their support and promising them the wealth's of the Roman and future.

Persian empires, to know how much he had his eyes on the Prophet believed in two main principles:

First, that that state of affairs had to change, because it had bred the reasons for its own disappearance, that its substitute was Islam, and that the dark night of Ignorance should be followed by a real dawn, and the Muslims had only to stand fast and be patient and not try to pick the fruit before it was ripe.

When the persecution [by the unbelievers] became too much for the Prophet's Companions in Mecca, especially the weak among them, Khabbab Ibn Al-Aratt came to Allah's Messenger complaining and asking for help. The Prophet was sleeping in the shade of the Ka'ba. Khabbab said, "Will you pray Alla to help us, O Allah's Messenger? Messenger?" The Prophet said:

"There were among those before you some men who would be taken and buried in holes in the ground, then their skulls would be split in half with saws, and their flesh would be parted from their bones with

combs of iron, but that [torture I would not turn them away from their religion. By Allah, He shall make this [Islam] complete so that a caravan would travel from Sanaa to Hadhramout [in Yemen] and the travelers would only fear Allah and [guard against] wolves lest they attack their sheep. But you do not have the patience [to wait to see that come true].

Second, that this aspired future would only come about according to the [approved] practices of Allah in doing one's duty, preparing oneself as much as possible, removing obstacles from the way and leaving everything beyond that to Providence, for what humans cannot do will not be difficult to Allah at all. This was quite evident in the Prophet's hijra to Medina. The Prophet had chosen his place of hijra in the Arabian Peninsula, not outside it, like in Abyssinia for instance, for that was the appropriate place. He took for ansar [supporters] pure Arabs who had pledged to spare and protect him against what they would spare and protect themselves and their families against. He gave precedence to the hijra of his Companions, as that would make it easier for them [to leave Mecca] and because it was more appropriate for him to arrive after them.

After getting Allah's permission, the Prophet prepared the animals he would ride and sought the companion he would ride with and the guide who would lead him, as well as the cave he would hide in until the search for him became less intensive and the enthusiasm of the unbelievers cooled down.

He subjected all his preparations to all the secrecy and precautions that was humanly possible, and left everything else that he had no control over to Providence. That was why he had no doubt whatsoever that Allah would help him. When Abu Bakr said to him

while they were in the cave, "O Messenger of Allah, if any of them should look under his feet, he would certainly see us!" The Prophet said, "Abu Bakr, what do you think of two people whose third is Allah?". It was on this situation that All the Almighty sent down His Words:

"If you do not help him [the Prophet], [it is no matter], for Allah did indeed help him, when the Unbelievers drove him out: he had no more than one companion. They two were in the Cave, and he said to his Companion, "Have no fear, for Allah is with us". Then Allah sent down His peace upon him, and strengthened him with forces which you did not see, and humbled to the depths the word of the Unbelievers. But the word of Allah is exalted to the heights: for Allah is Exalted in might, Wise"

(Al-Tawba: 40)

The Islamic Movement At Political And World Levels

Towards A Rational Political Fiqh

Adverse Ideological Phenomena

There are ideological phenomena that no careful examiner can miss in the sphere of the Islamic Movement, particularly in the political field. There is the ideology of the crisis "which still influences many of the leaders and writers of the Islamic Movement and tints, in one way or another, much of the material written for purposes of promoting the Call or for education, as well as the political tendencies.

The Movement has to shake off this ideology of the crisis and deal with people, life and the world as a whole according to an "ideology of well-being".

There is the "Zahirite ideology", which stops at the letter of [religious] texts and does not go beyond it to deal with the [real] purposes of Shari'ah, thus not heeding the interests of people. Prominent ulema have affirmed that rules are meant to serve the interests of people in earthly life and in the hereafter. Any rule that abandons interest for evil, or neglects wisdom in preference of nonsense, has no relation whatsoever with Shari'ah, even if it is misunderstood as belonging to Shari'ah, as Imam Ibn Al-Qayyem said.

Such an ideology might be acceptable in relation to some rituals or rules that apply to individuals, but it can never be acceptable in the field of "Shari'ah politics" which should be based on flexibility and tolerance and take into account the change in time, place and the humans themselves.

There is the Kharijite ideology whose advocates are characterized by honesty and bravery but are narrow-minded and nearsighted in their attitude towards religion and life, violent in dealing with others and always rejecting, accusing and suspecting everybody, even the Islamists themselves, while they admire their own opinions, which is a fatal shortcoming indeed.

There is the "Imitational ideology" which seeks an answer to every ideological, political or legal problem in the books of the earlier scholars of its school, never breaking out of their boundaries or examining Shari'ah in its broader concept and with its various schools and methodologies, nor addressing this age and its contemporary developments and problems. In adopting this attitude, such an ideology narrows what Allah has made expansive, and makes difficult what Islam has facilitated.

The Islamic Movement will not have a rational political ideology unless it overcomes these adverse ideological phenomena and their effects on its men and nurtures this new type of fiqh that we are focusing on: the fiqh of [approved] practices, the fiqh of goals, the fiqh of balances and the fiqh of priorities.

A Deficiency That Should Be Addressed in Political Fiqh

The Islamic Movement should seek to rectify the defective, strange concepts and decisions that we read and hear, and the methodologies of deduction that are even stranger and more peculiar.

These peculiar concepts, rules and methodologies are most evident in political fiqh, which has not received in the past the same degree of attention devoted to the fiqhs of worship, transactions, marriage etc.

The political fiqh of today is afflicted with much misconception and ill judgments, and its basics are so much varied in the minds of Islamists that the rules applied by some may be far from those applied by others like east is far from west.

We have seen some people who regard shura [consultation] as mere informative, not a compulsory duty, we have seen others who vest the head of state with the right to declare war and conclude treaties without consulting the representatives of the nation, and we have seen still others who consider democracy as a form of unbelief.

We have also seen those who believe that woman has no place in Islamic politics and that her only place is her father's house, from which she may only go to either of two place: her husband's house or her grave. To them, woman has no right to vote in any elections, let alone run in the elections for local governments or the Parliament.

There are also those who see political plurality as an arrangement that is rejected by Islam, and believe that no parties, groups or bodies that have any political views or affiliations should be established in a Muslim state.

I was dismayed when some brothers showed me a treatise that some zealous advocates of the Call had written under the title "Monotheism Is Against Membership Of Parliament", for I saw that as a peculiar confusion of issues of practice with issues of doctrine. Issues of practice deal with right and wrong, not belief and unbelief, and they are part of Shari'ah politics where ijtiḥad is rewarded twice when it is right and once when it is wrong.

The same mistake was made by the Kharijites in the old days when they branded Imam Ali Ibn Abu Talib as an unbeliever on account of a worldly matter related to politics that they had turned into a doctrinal issue, saying "*He had given people control over the Religion of Allah, and none but Allah shall have judgment*". The Imam's reply to their allegation was most eloquent, as he said, "*A word of right intended to establish wrong*"!

An Important Dialogue on Political Fiqh

I was greatly amazed to see among the ulema of Afghanistan, those who have led the jihad so zealously and bravely, some who see the education of women as haram (illegal) and think the same of using elections as a means for selecting people's deputies or the president of the state. They also believe that the determination of the term of office of the president of the state and the saying that shura is obligatory are haram.

One of the brothers who are convinced of such ideas discussed them with me, saying that the failure of the Islamic Movement in modern times had been brought about by its belief in ideas which he regarded as non-Islamic and that we [Muslims] would not succeed unless we used Islamic means to attain Islamic ends.

I asked him, "What makes the determination of the term of office for presidents haram if Muslims deem it as being in their interest?" He replied, "It is against the practice of Muslims since the days of the first Caliph, Abu Bakr Al-Siddiq (may Allah be pleased with him). None of the Caliphs was chosen for a fixed term but they stayed in rule for life, especially the Rightly Guided Caliphs whom the Prophet (peace be upon him) ordered us to cherish and follow every practice they set and cling to it stubbornly. The Prophet warned us in this hadith narrated by Al-Irbad Ibn Sariya against newly invented matters, as he said that every innovation (in religion) is a straying [from the straight path], and this is a new matter that the people have invented".

I countered, "We were ordered to follow the Prophet's Sunna [practices] before following the practices of the Rightly Guided Caliphs, as the Sunna is the second source of legislation in Islam and should be referred to, besides the Quran, in any disagreement, and the hadith you mention that was narrated by Al-Irbad says, *"Follow my Sunna and the practices of the Rightly Guided Caliphs"* Therefore, you have to refer to the Prophet's Sunna first.

The Sunna of the Prophet, as everybody knows, is either a statement, an action or an approval. His actions in particular may not be obligatory in themselves, but indicate only allowance and permissibility, except when they are coupled with other pieces of evidence that indicate recommendation or compulsion.

That is why some of the Rightly Guided Caliphs went against the actions of the Prophet whenever they saw that the interests for which the Prophet had done such actions had changed so that acting in the same way would not be in the interest of Muslims. An example of

that is distribution of [the property in] Khaybar among fighters by the Prophet after its conquest, while Omar did not do the same when he conquered the rural areas of Iraq, as he saw it more fit for his time not to do so.

Many of the prophet's Companions argued against Omar's opinion, particularly as his opinion was contradictory in letter to the general provisions of Surat Al-Anfal:

"And know that out of all the booty that you may acquire tin war], a fifth share is assigned to Allah" (41)

Omar commented by saying, *"I found property that can suffice for the people in present and future. Do you want the people of the future to find nothing left for them?"*

This means that Omar took into account the welfare of coming generation, which is a wonderful act of mutual dependence among the generations of the Muslim nation, so that one generation may not live in luxury at the expense of a coming generation or generations. Omar's argument in so doing was based on the verse of Surat Al-Hashr which stipulated the distribution of the war booty between the Muhajirin and the Ansar: *"And those who came after them" (10)*

Imam Ibn Qudama explained the difference between the action of the Prophet and that of Omar by saying that each had done what was most appropriate for his time.

Now, if the actions of the Prophet, which were a part and parcel of his Sunna, were not compulsory for those who came after him and the companions sometimes acted otherwise for certain consideration,

how can the actions of the Muslims after him be compulsory for those who come after them?

Precedents do not have the property of legal obligation. It is only that they were adequate for their time, place and circumstances. If these factors change, so must the actions built on them.

The focal point here is that we should choose from the systems and legislations of those before us what is suitable for our time, our environment and our circumstances within the limits of the general texts and goals of our tolerant Shari'ah.

As for the argument that Muslim scholars unanimously stand against the limitation of the term of office of rulers, it is somewhat misleading. There is no arguing against the unanimous agreement that a ruler may reign for life. However, the limitation of terms of office, on the other hand, was never discussed or researched, but was a subject of complete silence by these people. It is said that no words should be attributed to a silent man, therefore we should not attribute either affirmation or negation on this issue to them.

On the other hand, as for the saying that the determination of the term of office of the head of state is an introduction of a newly invented matter in Islam and that it is unanimously agreed that every innovation is a straying, we admit that the second part of the saying i.e. every innovation is a straying is accepted. However, the first part of the saying i.e. that such action falls under innovation in Shari'ah it lacks proofs.

In fact, an innovation is what is invented in matters of a purely religious nature, such as creeds and worship and their branches,

while the changing matters of life such as norms, traditions, customs and administrative, social, cultural and political practices are no innovation at all, as they fall under what ulema call 'public interests' as explained by Imam Al-Shatibi in his book "Al-I'tissam". Thus, the Prophet's Companions did some things that the Prophet did not do, such as writing copies of the Quran, using registers, levying land taxes and building a jailhouse.

Those Muslims who came next, after the Prophet's Companions, did, in their turn, things that their predecessors (the Companions) had not done, such as minting money, organizing a mail service, etc.

Muslims have introduced innovations that were unheard of in the days of the Prophet and his Companions, such as recording the sciences that were existent before their time and introducing other sciences like sciences of religion, linguistics and various human sciences.

The Wrong Employment of the Prophet's Sirat for Absolute Inference of Judgments

One of the reasons of error and misjudgment in political fiqh is the confusion of the Prophet's Sunna [practices] and Sirat [biography] in argumentation. The Sunna is a source of legislation and guidance in Islam besides the Holy Quran. The Quran is the basis and the origin, and the Sunna is the explanation and the application.

However, some people make the mistake of putting the Sirat in the place of the Sunna, citing the events of the Sirat as if they were as compulsory as the Quran and the Sunna.

The Sirat is not a synonym for the Sunna, as there are some details in the Sirat that have nothing to do with legislation at all. That is why the ulema of Usul (principles of jurisprudence) have not integrated the Sirat into their definition of the Sunna. They only said, "*The Sunna is what the Prophet either said, did or approved.*" They did not include the Sirat in that. But the ulema of Prophetic Traditions have added to the Prophet's actions, statements and approvals a description of the Prophet: how he looked like, how his morals were like and what his biography was. That's because they usually gather everything that pertained to the Prophet, regardless of whether any of the pieces of information they collected was related to the field of legislation or not. They have told everything in the Prophet's life: his birth, his nursing, his upbringing, his marriage, his conduct, his looks and every other piece of information that pertained to his life and death.

What concerns us here is that some Islamic groups regard the Sirat as an absolute proof to support judgments. and they believe that it is compulsory to all Muslims.

Here I have to point out two things:

First, the Sirat includes many events that have been narrated without irrefutable proof that they have been handed down from one narrator to the next, as they [the narrators] used to narrate the Sirat with a flexibility that they did not use in their narration of the hadith related to legal provisions and matters of halal and haram.

Second, the Sirat represented the practical part of the Prophet's life, i.e. it mostly dealt with the "action" part of the Sunna. Actions are not an indication of obligation and compulsion by itself; it only indicates permissibility, as another proof must be present for

compulsion to be effective. True, we are required to follow the example of the Prophet:

"You have indeed in the Messenger of Allah an excellent exemplar for him whose hope is in Allah and the Final Day, and who remembers Allah much"

(Al-Ahzab: 21)

.. but this verse indicates that it is recommended, not compulsory, to take the Prophet as an example. However, following the example of the Prophet should be in morals, values and general, not detailed, situations.

It is not necessary to copy the example of the Prophet by starting the spreading of the Call in secret, if it is possible and authorized to spread it openly.

It is not necessary to migrate as the Prophet did, either, so long as we have nothing that requires us to migrate from our homelands where we feel safe and are able to spread our Call. It is for this reason that migration to Medina is no longer a farida for every Muslim after the conquest of Mecca, for the Prophet said (there shall be no hijra after the Conquest [of Mecca] but jihad and yearning for it; when you are called you should go forth), which meant that there would be no migration to Medina, but what was allowed was the migration from any land where Muslims are unable to establish their religion.

It is also unnecessary for us to request "help" from those who are strong and powerful as the Prophet did with some tribes and the Aws and Khazraj tribes responded to his call, for this method is no longer adequate for our age.

It is not necessary for us to nurture the creed and spread the Call of Islam for thirteen years as the Prophet did, for we live today among Muslims who believe that there is no God but Allah and that Mohammad is the Messenger of Allah, and therefore do not need such a long time to learn the creed. If we devote our attention today to such issues as social justice, shura, freedom, the Palestinian Uprising or the Afghan struggle, we will not be acting against the guidance of the Prophet who cared about such things only in Medina. For while he was in Mecca before the hijra, the Prophet was living in an ignorant, polytheist community that adamantly rejected the Call, and therefore his first battle with that community was over monotheism and the Message.

Our society is not like that. It believes in Allah, His Religion and His Messenger, though it may have its faults and deviations from the path of Allah. The Movement and the Liberation of Muslim Territories, nobody with a fair judgment on things could deny that the Islamic Movement has made the liberation of Muslim territories all Muslim territories one of its foremost concerns since it emerged into existence.

I heard Imam Hassan Al-Banna in one of his speeches saying, "*Our efforts and our jihad are focused on two main axes: the Islamic idea and the Muslim land*". He combined the two of them because an idea can only be established in an independent, free land where its value is preserved and its judgments are enforced. Hence the importance of "*Dar Al-Islam [the Land of Islam]*" in which Islam lives and out of which it operates and leads the Nation.

This is why the faqihs of Islam have agreed that it is a duty to defend every land invaded by infidels, stating that such jihad is imperative

for Muslims in this land as an individual obligation and that all Muslims must support them with money, arms and men as required until all their land has been liberated from any aggressor who usurps it.

Therefore, the Islamic Movement cannot stand idle and watch while any part of Muslim land is occupied by a foreign aggressor. It is not strange that the general headquarters of the Muslim Brotherhood in Cairo was the home of mujahideen (freedom fighters) and revolutionaries who fought the occupation in all parts of the Arab and Muslim worlds from Indonesia to Morocco.

I heard imam Al-Banna once describing the national demands of the Muslim Brotherhood in a national conference. He spoke of the minor homeland that comprised the Nile Valley, i.e. Egypt and Sudan; the great homeland that comprised the Arab World, which extended from the Gulf to the Atlantic Ocean; and the greater homeland the Muslim World that extended from the Atlantic Ocean to the Indian Ocean. He emphasized that emancipating that greater homeland from every foreign influence imposed on Muslims was a farida for all Muslims and one of the major missions of the Muslim Brotherhood.

Palestine was one of the major issues that Imam Al-Banna put at the top of his list: he attracted attention to its seriousness, urging the masses to pay attention to the Land of Messages, of Isra' and Mi'raj and to be aware of the Jewish threat that was lurking to pounce on it while many Arab and Muslim leaders were unaware of the great conspiracy being staged against the first of the two qiblas, the Al-Aqsa Mosque, whose precincts are blessed by Allah.

Many were the articles that Hassan Al-Banna wrote, many were the marches he led, the conferences he organized, the men he recruited, and much were the funds and arms he collected, for the Palestine cause.

It is enough credit for him to mention the heroics performed by his spiritual children and fighters on the land of Palestine in 1948 those feats that have gone down in the annals of history, as testified to by Major General Al-Mawawi and other Egyptian Army commanders, and even by the Jews themselves.

Kamal Al-Sherifs book entitled "*The Muslim Brotherhood and the Palestine War*" contains more than enough facts that testify to this glorious jihad. This has always been the role of the Islamic Movement in every cause of the Muslim Nation in East and West and against imperialism of all colors, be it Eastern or Western, white or red.

Hence the Movement's interest in the cause of Afghanistan, which represents the first line of defense against the red communist sweep. This interest has been so keen that some people thought that the Movement had forgotten the Palestinian cause. In fact, the Movement has never forgotten and will never forget the Palestinian cause, because Palestine is the first and foremost Islamic cause, and its liberation is the first and foremost duty, as the Afghan Mujahideen themselves believe. It is only that the Palestinian cause required an Islamic flag that would gather people around it, uniting them in one: this has come about since the outbreak of the revolution in the mosques and the Intifada [uprising] which has taken its sole slogan as there is no God but Allah, and Allah is great, and has been crystallized in the steadfast, brave, aware Islamic resistance

movement " Hamas". Hamas is an embodiment of the Palestinian People's belief in its Muslim and Arab origins, and a testimony that this people is still alive and will never die and that its jihad will be carried on by pure hands and clean hearts until victory is achieved with the will of Allah.

The Islamic Movement should consider itself at the beck and call of every Islamic cause, responding to every cry for help wherever that cry may come from. It should stand with Eritrea in its jihad against the unjust Marxist Christian regime that wants to swallow it and keep it as a colony under its rule, with its people as the serfs of the land in feudal systems.

It should stand by Sudan against the treacherous Christian racist rebellion that wants to impose its racist fanaticism on all the territories of Sudan to remove it from the Muslim Nation and the Arab World.

It should support the Muslims of the Philippines against the biased Christian regime that seeks to annihilate them, leaving only those who accept the life of slaves who can do nothing to help either themselves or others.

It should help the Muslims of Kashmir in their struggle for self-determination, until they attain annexation to Pakistan or gain autonomy, so as to foil the conspiracy of the Indian imperialism which is trying to obliterate the province's Muslim identity through nonreligious education and encouragement of sin and drug addiction to turn it into a base of conspiracy on Pakistan and the Muslim World as a whole.

It should support the Muslims of Somalia against the tyrants who kill scholars, persecute the religious and hunt down anyone with religious or intellectual tendencies.

The Islamic Movement should have good information on all these movements. It should have some sort of presence among their readerships and ranks. It must also work incessantly for their unity and solidarity in order to close the gaps in their ranks and remove their minor disagreements for the sake of greater goals. The most serious disease that can afflict jihad is disunity among its groups. Allah the Almighty says:

“Truly Allah loves those who fight in His cause in battle array, as if they were a solid cemented structure. Truly Allah loves those who fight in His cause in battle array, as if they were a solid cemented structure”

(As-Saff:4)

The Islamic Movement should mobilize the Muslims of the world for the Palestinian cause as the Zionist Movement has mobilized the Jews of the world for the Israeli cause. It should even mobilize the support of all the conscientious elements in the whole world for our just cause.

Such efforts by the Islamic Movement are most badly needed at present, for this is a serious stage of the Palestinian cause: a stage where there are plans to bring Soviet Jews into the Occupied Territories at the expense of the Palestinians, in order to realize the old dream of Greater Israel that extends from the Nile to the Euphrates, and then to the land of Hijaz, Medina and Khaybar as a later ambition!

The Movement And Liberation Movements

The Islamic Movement's concern should not be focused solely on the Muslim lands albeit they should enjoy a special attention by virtue of the mutual dependence and solidarity called for by Islam. The Movement should support all the causes of freedom from serfdom, imperialism and injustice all over the world, regardless of whether the subjects of persecution and imperialism are Muslims or not.

Islam was sent down as an all-embracing call for the emancipation of man, on the grounds that man is honored by Allah who made him His vicegerent on earth and subjected all that is in heaven and on earth to his power. Islam came to liberate man from slavery to any Taghut [anything worshipped other than Allah] and to qualify him to stand against any Taghut.

While the Message of Moses was one for liberating the Children of Israel from the tyranny of Pharaoh, Haman and Qarun, the Message of Mohammad was one for emancipating all mankind from all the Pharaohs, "Qaruns" and "Hamans" who enslave people and impose themselves as high and mighty rulers without right, looking down their noses on the servants of Allah, as they seek to share with Allah His Greatness and Grace, and so make themselves into gods that enslave their people.

The Quran has carried the call for freedom loud and clear, sending it through the Messenger of Allah to Caesars and monarchs:

"Come to common terms between us and you: that we worship none but Allah; that we associate no partners with Him; that we do not erect from among ourselves, lords and patrons other than Allah)"

(Al-Imran: 64)

Reb'iyy Ibn Amir declared [it] before Rustom, commander of the Persian troops, saying, "Allah has sent us to turn people away from the worship of humans to the worship of Him alone, from their narrow world to the vast expanses of the whole world, and from the injustice of religions to the justice of Islam".

Allah the Almighty sent down His Books and tasked His Messengers to carry the Messages only for establishing justice on earth, as He says in the Holy Quran:

"We sent aforesaid our messengers with clear signs and sent down with them the Book and the Balance [of right and wrong], that men may stand forth in justice" (Al-Hadid: 25)

Therefore, any injustice by individual against individual, group against group or people against people, is an injustice against all the Messages of Heaven, especially when it is committed by tyrants and powerful men against the weak and downtrodden.

Hence the Quran's fierce attacks on tyrants and fearsome threats to them, as conveyed by the following verses:

"But they sought victory and decision [there and then], and frustration was the lot of every powerful obstinate transgressor. In front of such a one is Hell, and he is given, for drink, boiling fetid water"

(Ibrahim: 15-16)

"Thus Allah seals up every heart of arrogant and obstinate transgressors" (Ghafir: 35)

"So enter the gates of Hell, to dwell therein. Thus evil indeed is the abode of the arrogant" (Al-Nahl: 29)

The Quran also attacked the unjust in its Meccan and Medinan surats, see:

"Verily Allah does not guide a people unjust" (Al-Ma'ida: 51)

"Truly to no good come those who do wrong" (Yusuf: 23)

"Such were the towns we destroyed when they committed iniquities"
(Al-Kahf: 59)

"Now such were their houses, in utter ruin, because they practiced wrong-doing" (An-Naml: 52)

"Such is the chastisement of your Lord when He chastises communities in the midst of their wrong: grievous, indeed, and severe is His chastisement" (Hud: 102)

"Of the wrongdoers the last remnant was cut off. Praise be to Allah, the Cherisher of the Worlds" (An'am: 45)

"And incline not to those who do wrong, or the Fire will seize you; and you have no protectors other than Allah, nor shall you be helped" (Hud:113)

Islam does not only hold injustice at fault and prohibit it to the extreme, it also urges that it must be fought by all means, holding those who do nothing against injustice as participants of sorts who are sinners on earth and will be punished in the Hereafter.

Islam even considers a nation where wrongdoers commit their wrong freely, with nobody facing up to them or denouncing their deeds, as a nation that has brought upon itself the punishment of Heaven and will certainly come to ruin. When the punishment comes down [on such a nation], it will take all of its members: the wrongdoers for their doing, and the silent for their silence.

Allah the Almighty says:

“And fear tumult or oppression, which does not affect in particular [only] those of you who do wrong: and know that Allah is strict in punishment” (Al-Anfal: 25)

A Prophetic Hadith says:

“If people see a wrongdoer and do not prevent him, they come close to a punishment from Allah, coming down on all of them”

Another Hadith:

“When you see my Nation fall victim to fear and does not say to a wrongdoer, "You are wrong", then you may lose hope in them”

The above texts generally include all wrongdoers, regardless of whether their wrongdoing is against Muslims or others, for all wrongdoing is evil. It should not also be strange that Islam blesses every positive step that involves resistance of wrongdoers or support of the wronged and the weak. It even considers that [resistance and support] as an act of worship and jihad in the cause of Allah. We find the Holy Quran urging believers to fight wrongdoers and rescue the weak from their evil, saying:

“And why should not you fight in the cause of Allah and of those who, being weak, are ill-treated [and oppressed]? men, women and children, whose cry is: "Our Lord! Rescue us from this town whose people are oppressors; and raise for us from You one who will protect; and raise for us from You one who will help!” (An-Nisa: 75)

True, the weak [referred to] here are believers, hence their prayers mentioned in the verse, but Islam would not accept injustice for anyone even if he is an unbeliever, as hadith says:

“Beware of the supplication [in complaint] of the wronged, even if he is an unbeliever, for there is no barrier preventing it [from reaching Heaven]”

The Prophet (peace be upon him) once heard the story of a weak woman who had been wronged by a cruel man of power in the land of Abyssinia, and the Prophet commented:

“How does Allah hold as sacred a nation where the right of the weak is not taken from the strong?”

.. Abyssinia was Christian at that time.

Islamic conquests were in their reality a rescue of oppressed, wronged peoples from the tyranny of wrongdoers and the injustice of oppressors, and a liberation of these peoples from the domination of Persian monarchs and Roman Caesars. It was for this reason that these peoples welcomed Islam and took it up voluntarily.

It is the duty of all those who have a true faith and proper morals to urge one another to resist any wrong against a weak person and to support such a person until he gets his right wholly from the person who has wronged him. The Prophet (peace be upon him) told us of an experience of that kind that he had witnessed and participated in during the Age of Ignorance while he was a young man that is Hilf Al-Fudul [the Alliance for Charity]. This pact comprised a group of good, charitable and honest men whose mission was to stand by the weak against the strong so as to get them back their rights and save their pride.

It was in speaking of this pact that the Prophet said:

"I witnessed with my uncles in the house of Abdullah IbnJud'an a pact that I regarded as most precious. Were I to be invited to join such a pact in [the time of] Islam, I would readily agree".

And why does not Islam restore the right of humans when they are wronged, abused, persecuted or forced to do what they do not want to do, when it defends the mute animals that are wronged, tortured or made to carry burdens that they cannot carry?

The Movement And Muslim Minorities

Muslim minorities all over the world should be among the targets of attention of the Islamic Movement.

Important Facts about Muslim Minorities

We must take some factors into account in this connection, including the following:

1. These minorities account for about one quarter of the total number of Muslims all over the world, perhaps even more, as indicated by the studies made in Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud Islamic University in Riyadh about fifteen years ago.
2. One of these minorities represents, in sheer numbers alone, the second largest Muslim community in the world: that is the Indian Muslim minority, which comprises over one hundred million Muslims and has had its historic, scientific and cultural impact on the Indian subcontinent and Islamic culture in general.

3. Some of the so-called minorities are actually peoples of purely Muslim countries that were annexed by force to larger countries so that they might dissolve in them and become oppressed minorities among larger majorities. Examples of these are the "Muslim republics" of the Soviet Union Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan etc., which, on examination, have proven to be part and parcel of the Muslim World.
4. Some of the Muslim minorities counted as such by biased world statistics are in fact quite the contrary, as true figures state that Muslims are an overwhelming majority in the countries in question despite the fake statistics that intentionally cite smaller numbers for Muslims, especially in certain regions, so as to serve the political purposes of the enemies of Islam. The most obvious example of that is the Muslims of Ethiopia: they are a majority, but an oppressed one that is deprived of even the most basic human rights.

What Do These Minorities Need Most?

These minorities need many things from their fellow Muslims in the big Muslim World, such as the following:

1. They need support for their religious institutions, especially educational establishments, so that they may preserve the Muslim character, especially in the face of the fierce campaigns that the advocates and establishments of Christianization wage against Islam to uproot it.
2. They need to obtain the original Islamic references that explain Islam's creed, worships, morals and legislations in the

languages of these minorities, so as to provide them with a proper source of knowledge. They particularly need the interpretation of the Holy Quran and a number of the approved and accepted hadith collections.

3. They need to have some of their members admitted to the Islamic universities of Arab states, so that they may return later and preach and instruct in Islam in their own countries:

“And admonish their people when they return to them that thus they [may learn] to guard themselves [against evil]”

(Al-Tauba: 122)

Unfortunately, such universities have recently been closing their doors to students from these countries, despite the risk posed by such action to the future of Muslim minorities and the Islamic call in these countries, even to the future of the Muslim Nation itself.

4. They need support for the teaching of Arabic and the financing of Arabic schools in their countries, a field where the failure of Arabs has been most abysmal. Advanced countries pay tens, hundreds even, of millions of dollars for spreading their languages, which are the messengers of their civilizations and cultures. But not the Arabs, who hold to their pennies when it comes to spreading their language. If the Muslim minorities were not moved by their own love for their Religion, their Prophet and their Book into learning Arabic and building schools and colleges for teaching this language on the basis that it is the language of the Holy Quran, hadith, worship, Islamic culture and understanding among members of the Muslim Nation, then we would not

find anyone outside the Arab World who knew Arabic or ever heard of it. I am only to speak highly here of the Association of Arab Schools headed by Prince Mohammad Al-Faisal Al-Saud and managed by Dr. Tawfiq Al-Shawi. It has held several useful courses in many African and Asian countries to promote Arabic and help educational establishments that teach Arabic there.

5. They need preachers and teachers who are well versed in the languages of these minorities, so that they may live among their people, teaching the ignorant and admonishing the straying, answering questions and giving fatwas, uniting people on religion and piety and hearts on love and goodwill.

We have, however, to beware of destructive preachers, who only know how to demolish and set fire through useless debate and dissent that only produce hatred. Some of those [preachers] may be good intentioned, but good intentions coupled with foolishness yield more harm than good, as the old adage goes: *God deliver me from my friends, far from my enemies I will deliver myself.*

6. They need frequent meetings and visits with prominent intellectuals, education experts and preachers, as such meetings open new horizons for thought and boost the morale of members of these minorities. Such meetings, visits and symposiums should be arranged as frequently as possible, so that those brother whose destiny is to be living in countries far from the heart of this Nation may not feel neglected by the mother Nation, or isolated from the focus of thought and feeling by the leaders of the Islamic Movement.

7. They need, perhaps before everything else, to be united in one front, so that they may be able to preserve their entity and religious presence. It is unfortunate that we should see minorities all over the world uniting and closing their ranks to form stronger entities against the majorities facing them, except for Muslim minorities, which are always at odds with one another and spending their time and effort on useless and meaningless disputes, especially religious differences over jurisprudential or doctrinal issues.

It is the duty of all Muslims to stand side by side as ordered by Allah. It is enough for them that they have a unity from which to start, for they are united on belief in, Allah, the Prophet and the Holy Quran.

I say this although I know that Muslims living in the heart of the Muslim World have their grievances. So how could those Muslim minorities living outside the Muslim World not complain?

If the Muslims living in Muslim countries are suffering persecution, injustice and oppression at the hands of rulers who are supposed to be Muslims, why should we expect no complaints from those Muslims living in non-Muslim countries and ruled by non-Muslims, be they Christians, Communists or Heathens?

A Nation Without a Leadership [Neither a Caliph nor a Pope]

The most serious problem of Muslims and their minorities scattered all over the world is that our Muslim Nation, expansive and large in numbers as it is, has no leadership that can order it to move, stop, cry or keep silent, or turn right or left. We did have a caliphate system that united Muslims under one flag someday. We did have a caliph who represented the central leadership of the unified Nation. When the enemies of the caliphate system plotted against it and managed to tear down that magnificent edifice which embodied the unity of the Muslim Nation, we no longer had one entity, nor one flag under which to gather.

We lost the caliphate system, and we have found no other system to replace it, so we have lived without any leadership of any kind. Christianity has its leadership recognized by its followers. This leadership is an organized religious one that has its own institutions and its own men; and its financial means come third to those of the United States and Russia. Its preachers are all over the world, including Muslim countries.

But we Muslims have neither a caliph to obey nor a Pope to listen to. We are like orphans that are turned away from every door they knock at. There used to be a position called Sheikh Al-Islam one day. Though there was no official post like that in Islam, some scholars were so knowledgeable, studious and pious that they deserved to be honored by the Muslim masses who gave them this title. Today, with ulema keeping in step with the rulers, not only refraining from speaking the word of right but speaking the wrong word, people have lost confidence in prominent sheikhs, and none of the senior ulema is called "Sheikh Al-Islam" any longer! As for those scholars

who resist temptation' they turn on them with their tremendous resources and with the tools of their masters who dictate their acts and words, trying to isolate or taint them, unless they stop resisting and thus become isolated from the people.

The Movement's Mission In This Regard

The Islamic Movement should play the role of the missing leadership of the Muslim Nation with all its trends and groups. It should seek the support of true scholars until a real "Sheikh Al-Islam" appears from amongst them to claim their loyalty and support and possess the ability to call the great Muslim Nation at the time of need and find a response to his call.

The Movement And Expatriates

Besides minorities that live in non-Muslim countries, there is another group that the Movement should devote its attention to: expatriates who moved from Muslim countries to Western countries in Europe and the Americas, to Australia and to the Far East.

Why The Interest In Expatriates?

Expatriates are no longer few in number: they are counted in millions, especially in France where there are large communities of North Africans; in Britain where Indian and Pakistanis go; in Germany due to the presence of Turks; and in the United States because of the presence of Americans who descend from Muslim ancestors who were kidnapped from Africa long ago as well as the intensive immigration to that country.

There is not a single Western country that does not have transient expatriates, who go there to study or work, anti-permanent immigrants who intended to stay there for good. Despite the numerous recommendations by different Islamic conferences that scholarships should be confined to those scientific and technological fields that Muslim countries do not have, Western countries still receive more newcomers who go there every day at their own expense or at the expense of their countries to study.

More expatriates are also leaving Muslim countries for Western countries in search for employment or to seek protection or freedom. Allah the Almighty says:

“O My servants who believe! Truly, spacious is My Earth. Therefore serve Me [and Me alone]!” (Ankabut: 56)

The presence of the Islamic Movement in Western countries was at first guided by the Almighty and not planned by the Movement. Young men and women had emigrated there to escape with their religion from the rifts tearing their homeland apart and to seek knowledge, freedom and safety, then they found very good opportunities for working and spreading the Call amongst their fellow Easterners, scholars and others alike.

The Necessity Of Islamic Presence In The West

I believe that it is necessary for Islam in this age to have a presence in such societies that affect world politics. Islamic presence is necessary in Europe, the Americas and Australia for several reasons, including the following:

1. Islamic presence is required for spreading the Message of Islam and getting Islam's voice heard among non-Muslims through good word, rational dialogue and exemplary conduct.
2. It is required for taking in new Muslims in order to follow their conduct and nurture their belief in an Islamic environment that helps them lead a healthy Islamic life.
3. It is required for receiving newcomers to Western countries, such as scholars and immigrants, so that such newcomers may find themselves among people like the "Ansar" [the people of Medina who received the Prophet well and supported him at the time of hijrah] who love those who migrate to their land and provide for them an atmosphere of Islam.
4. It is required for defending the causes of the Muslim Nation and the Muslim Land against the antagonism and misinformation of anti-Islamic forces and trends.

It is not right, in my view, that Christianity should monopolize all these countries unrivalled, or rivaled by Zionist Judaism that only joins forces with it against us. This is what I told our brothers in America, Canada, Australia and other countries years ago.

However, it should be done through good plans and proper organization and according to the fiqh of priorities. We should look for the best place, the best work and the best means. Muslims should have their own communities in well-known states and cities, and they should have their own religious, educational and recreational establishments.

They should also have amongst them their own ulema and men of religion to answer their questions when they ask them, guide them when they lose the way and reconcile them when they differ among themselves.

A Conservatism Without Isolation, And An Openness without Melting

I used to tell our brothers in foreign countries, "*Try to have your small society within the larger society, otherwise you will melt in it like salt in water. What has preserved the Jewish character over the past centuries was their small community that was unique in its ideas and rituals and was known as "the Jewish ghetto".*

Try to have your own "*Muslim ghetto then*". I am not advocating self-isolation and keeping our doors closed to the people around us, for this will be the same as death itself: what is required is openness without melting the openness of people with a message who seek to affect and interact, not people who imitate and whose only concern is to go along and be affected to the extent of following in the very steps of others, whatever they do.

We have complained for some time of the drain of Arab and Muslim brains in important fields of specialization as a result of the migration of scientists who fail to find a place for themselves in their home countries but find it in foreign countries.

If this is true, we must not let such geniuses lose their loyalty to their religion, their nation, their culture and their fatherlands. We have to exert every effort to ensure that their loyalty and feelings remain with their people and homeland. This will only be possible if

their loyalty remains with Allah, His Messenger and the believers, and if they continue to be concerned over the woes of their nation and riot their own interests alone.

It is the duty of the Islamic Movement not to leave these expatriates to be swept by the whirlpool of the materialistic trend that prevails in the West, for they must always be reminded of their origins, to which they long all the time. I believe that Islamic student unions have played a praiseworthy role in this respect over the past three decades, after the elapse of the era in which the Leftists, the Nationalists, the Secularists dominated and guided the actions of these unions.

No one with a grain of fairness in him can deny the efforts of the Association of Muslim Students in the United States and Canada. The Association has established branch offices and organized several conferences. Other establishments have emanated from it, such as the Union of Islamic Sociologists, the Society of Muslim Scientists and Engineers, the Islamic Medical Society, the Islamic Association in North America and others. There is an intention to base the Movement in the United States, so that it may assume its natural position in a society based on multiplicity and freedom.

The Five Duties Of The Muslim Expatriates

I have participated in conferences organized by the Union of Muslim Students for several years. What I saw there was a source of gratification. The same applies to the Society of Muslim Students and the Federation of Islamic Societies in Britain and other organizations in Europe.

In my meetings with expatriates, I always reminded them of five duties as follows:

1. The expatriate's duty to himself: to preserve and develop himself.
2. The expatriate's duty to his family: to protect it from disruption and establish it on Islam.
3. The expatriate's duty to his fellow Muslims: to unite with them to form one group.
4. The expatriate's duty to the non-Muslim community living around him: to invite the members of that community to the way of Allah with wisdom and beautiful preaching.
5. The expatriate's duty to the causes of his Muslim Nation: to care for them and support them.

Warning Against Two Things

There are two serious things that I have to warn about: racial and nationalist sympathies, and extremism and differences.

It is regrettable that we should see racial and nationalist sympathies given expression by several Muslim groups, with each closing itself to others and isolating its members from other Muslims, except for those spared [this wrongdoing] by the Grace of Allah.

Even the mosques are attributed to this or that group. It is not strange today that when you visit a city you may be told that this is the mosque of the Turks, that is the mosque of the Moroccans, and the third mosque over there is the mosque of the Yugoslavs and the

fourth is for Indians, the fifth for Pakistanis; the sixth for Arabs, or a certain group of Arabs.

In the United States, in particular, there are special mosques for black Muslims. Islam has come to eliminate the differences among people and make them equal. Mosques are just the tools ordained by Allah for performing this mission, so how can they become a tool for discrimination?

True, the language difficulties had made such separation necessary at first for the first generations of expatriates that did not know the native languages of the countries they had migrated to. But this could have been remedied by the allocation of lectures for each group in the same mosque for some time until there was a common language for all the Muslim community in each country or city.

However, this separation has become unnecessary in most cases, but the mosques remain attributed to certain groups or nationalities! A mosque should be a mosque for Muslims and nothing else, and the flag under which the expatriates should unite must be the flag of Islam alone.

Expatriate Muslims will be strong only if they unite and help each other, for unity is strength, and dissent is weakness. Although solidarity is always required, it is more so in the case of being in an alien land, where one needs others of his kind to help him overcome his loneliness.

The second thing I want to warn about is extremism and differences over minor details, a phenomenon that, while still in its bud in Western countries, dates back to some time ago. Our brothers in the

East should not carry their differences and problems to the West, reviving and reliving them in their new home countries. For the time, place and people have changed, and these expatriates have been taught by their religious teachers that a fatwa changes with the change of time place and people, so why do not they apply what they have been taught?

About ten years ago, I visited the Islamic Center in Los Angeles, where some brothers asked me disapprovingly, "*Is it right to show films in a mosque, even if they are educational films?*" I replied, "*What is in that? If these films teach something good, watching them would be an act of worship, and a mosque is a place of worship and a forum for knowledge and education*".

I added that the Prophet [peace be upon him] had allowed Abyssinians to dance with their spears in his mosque and had allowed his wife Aisha to watch them and had encouraged them to go on dancing.

Others asked, "*May women not wearing Islamic dress be allowed to enter the mosque on Saturdays and Sundays, when lectures and lessons are given?*" I answered, "*Yes, because if we restrict the admission into mosques to women who wear Islamic dress, where would others hear the Word of Islam and receive the Message of Allah? If we deny such women access to the mosque and its lectures and lessons, we will lose them forever, for the Call will not reach them. But if we allow them to go to the mosque, then there is a great hope for them to be guided by Allah to observance of the rules of Islam. Many a true word has been made by Allah to open a heart, even several hearts*".

At the time I was getting this manuscript ready to go to the press, I received a report, or rather a letter, from my honorable brother, the

doctor, scientist, poet and advocate of Islam, Dr. Hassan Hathoot, in which he explained some of the activities performed by the Islamic Center in Los Angeles and the responsibilities carried by the center to help Muslims and non-Muslims alike. It was a letter that would warm the heart of any Muslim who reads it, as it was a true manifestation that Islam will never wither if it has on its side men who combine proper understanding and good intention.

The Movement And Political Freedom And Democracy

It is the duty of the Movement in the coming phase to stand firm against totalitarian and dictatorial rule, political despotism and usurpation of people's rights. The Movement should always stand by political freedom, as represented by true, not false, democracy. It should flatly declare its refusal of tyrants and steer clear of all dictators, even if some tyrant appears to have good intentions towards it for some gain and for a time that is usually short, as has been shown by experience. The Prophet said:

"When you see my Nation fall victim to fear and does not say to a wrongdoer, "You are wrong", then you may lose hope in them".

So how about a regime that forces people to say to a conceited wrongdoer, "How just, how great you are, O our hero, our savior and our liberator!"

The Quran denounces tyrants such as Namrudh, Pharaoh, Haman and others, but it also dispraises those who follow tyrants and obey their orders. This is why Allah dispraises the people of Noah by saying:

“But they follow [men] whose wealth and children give them no increase but only loss” (Nuh: 21)

Allah also says of Ad, people of Hud:

“And followed the command of every powerful, obstinate transgressor” (Hud: 59)

See also what the Quran says about the people of Pharaoh:

“But they followed the command of Pharaoh, and the command of pharaoh was not rightly guided” (Hud: 97)

“Thus he made fools of his people, and they obeyed him: truly they were a people rebel [against Allah]” (Az-Zukhruf: 54)

A closer look at the history of the Muslim Nation and the Islamic Movement in modern times should show clearly that the Islamic idea, the Islamic Movement and the Islamic Awakening have never flourished or borne fruit unless in an atmosphere of democracy and freedom, and have withered and become barren only at the times of oppression and tyranny that trod over the will of the peoples which clung to Islam.

Such oppressive regimes imposed their secularism, socialism or communism on their peoples by force and coercion, using covert torture and public executions, and employing those devilish tools that tore flesh, shed blood, crushed bone and destroyed the soul.

We saw these practices in many Muslim countries, including Turkey, Egypt, Syria, Iraq, [the former] South Yemen, Somalia and northern African States for varying periods of time, depending on the age or reign of the dictator in each country.

On the other hand, we saw the Islamic Movement and the Islamic Awakening bear fruit and flourish at the times of freedom and democracy, and in the wake of the collapse of imperial regimes that ruled peoples with fear and oppression.

Therefore, I would not imagine that the Islamic Movement could support anything other than political freedom and democracy. The tyrants allowed every voice to be raised, except the voice of [Islam, and let every trend express itself in the form of a political party or body of some sort, except the Islamic current which is the only trend that actually speaks for this Nation and expresses its creed, values, essence and very existence.

However, some Islamists still have their reservations on democracy, and are even wary of the word "*democracy*" itself. What I wish to stress here is that Islam is not democracy and democracy is not Islam and that I would rather that Islam is not attributed to any principle or system. Islam is unique in its means, ends and methodologies, and I do not wish that Western democracy be carried over to us with its bad ideologies and values without us adding to it from our values and ideologies in order to integrate it into our comprehensive system.

However, the tools and guaranties created by democracy are as close as can ever be to the realization of the political principles brought to this earth by Islam to put a leash on the ambitions and whims of rulers. These principles are: shura [consultation], good advice, enjoining what is proper and forbidding what is evil, disobeying illegal orders, resisting unbelief and changing wrong by force whenever possible. It is only in democracy and political freedom that the power of Parliament is evident and that people's deputies can

withdraw confidence from any government that breaches the Constitution, and it is only in such an environment that the strength of free Press, free Parliament, opposition and the masses is most felt.

The fears of some people here that democracy makes the people a source of power and even legislation (although legislation is Allah's alone) should not be heeded here, because we are supposed to be speaking of a people that is Muslim in its majority and has accepted Allah as its Lord, Mohammad as its Prophet and Islam as its Religion. Such a people would not be expected to pass a legislation that contradicts Islam and its incontestable principles and conclusive rules.

Anyway, these fears can be overcome by one article stipulating that any legislation contradicting the incontestable provisions of Islam shall be null and void because Islam is the religion of the State and the source of legitimacy of all its institutions and therefore may not be contradicted, as a branch may not run against the main stream.

It should be known that the acceptance of the principle that legislation or rule belong to Allah does not rob the Nation of its right to seek for itself the codes necessary to regulate its ever-changing life and earthly affairs.

What we seek is that legislations and codes be within the limits of the flawless texts and the overall objectives of Shari'ah and the Islamic Message. The binding texts are very few, while the area of "permissibility" or legislative free space is quite wide and the texts themselves are so flexible and capacious as to accommodate more than one understanding and accept more than one interpretation,

which leads to the existence of several schools and philosophies within the expansive framework of Islam.

I perused some laws that were passed in Qatar recently, and have found them to include scores of articles that rest on realizing interests and removing evils, but were not directly introduced by texts except for one or two of them. The most serious danger threatening the Muslim Nation and the Islamic Movement is the rule of the Pharaohs who believe that their opinion is infallible and is right itself that can never go wrong. Such rulers adopt Pharaoh's logic:

"I but point out to you that which I see [myself]; nor do I guide you but to the path of right" (Ghafir: 29)

To these rulers, every opinion that runs against theirs is rejected, even accused, just like Pharaoh spoke of Moses:

"What I fear is lest he should change your religion, or lest he should cause mischief to appear in the land!" (Ghafir: 26)

The Islamic Movement And Ethnic And Religious Minorities

The Islamic Movement must take a decisive attitude towards ethnic and religious minorities in the Arab and Muslim Worlds.

The Problem of Ethnic Minorities is Solved in Islam

Ethnic minorities do not constitute a problem in the Islamic system that the movement advocates, for Islam embraces all races under one creed, on qibla [direction of prayers] and close brotherhood. Islam regards Muslims as one nation, regardless of their origin, color,

tongue or homeland. It sees as equal all Muslims, be the Arabs, Persians, Berbers, Kurds, Turks, Indians or members of any other race; the lowest among them in rank is as entitled to speak in their name as the highest, and they stand as one man against their enemies. They are as Allah the Almighty describes them:

"The Believers are but one brotherhood" (Al-Hujurat: 10)

No Arab is better than a non-Arab, and no non-Arab is better than an Arab; no white man is better than a black man, and no black man is better than a white man, unless by virtue of piety and righteousness:

"The most honored of you in the sight of Allah is [he who is] the most righteous of you" (Al-Hujurat: 13)

The [esteemed] position of Sulayman the Persian, Bilal the Abyssinian and Suhayb the Roman in the eyes of all Muslims in all ages is known to everybody. The position enjoyed by non-Arab scholars who served Islam and Arabic language cannot be denied by any scholar of Islam, either. The history of Islam is full of numerous examples of prominent scholars and geniuses of Islam, such as Al-Hassan Al-Basri, Ibn Sirin, Ata, Said Ibn Jubayr, Abu Hanifa, Al-Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Dawad, Al-Tirmidhi, Al-Nisa'e, Ibn Majah, Sibaway and others.

Although all of them were originally non-Arabs, Islam made them Arabs when it made Arabic their language, so that they spoke, wrote and researched in the language of the Quran. A hadith, reported by Ibn Asakir said:

"Being an Arab is neither father nor mother: it is the tongue. He who speaks Arabic is an Arab"

Those who did not take Arabic as their mother tongue when they adopted Islam, such as the Kurds, the Berbers, the Persians, the Malaysians and other non-Arabs, were Arabized in their hearts and minds through Islamic culture and through Islam itself that was carried to their lands by the Arabs many centuries ago to guide them to the straight path through the Guidance of Allah.

Every Muslim loves Arabic because it is the language of the Quran, Sunna and worship. Every Muslim loves the Land of Arabs, because that is where the Ka'ba and the Prophet's Mosque and Grave are. Every Muslim loves Arabs, because they are the defenders of the Prophet and Islam and have spread Islam all over the world. It is therefore said in the sayings handed down to us by past generations, "*If the Arabs become strong, so will Islam; and they become weak, so will Islam!*". There is no ethnic problem in the Islamic perspective, then.

The Islamic outlook is even the infallible remedy to the ethnic problem. But if the Arabs call for an Arab nationalism that is separate from Islam, the Kurds will also claim their own Kurdish nationalism, and the Berbers will call for a Berber nationalism, and so on, which will certainly tear the one Nation, even individual countries, apart among these ethnic sympathies that were a characteristic of the Age of Ignorance that was replaced with the Islam brotherhood by Islam. Our noble Prophet has disowned anyone who advocates, fights for or dies while believing in a fanatic nationalism or tribalism.

How to Solve the Problem of Religious Minorities?

The problem that should be addressed is the problem of religious minorities or what I called in a previous study the "non-Muslims in the Muslim community".

This problem should be solved within a context of frankness and openness, not through political maneuvers and hypocrisy. I have discussed the attitude of the Islamic solution towards these minorities in the third volume of the "*Inevitability of the Islamic Solution*" study, and I cannot repeat all that I wrote there once again. However, what I want to say here can be summarized in the following points:

1. There are no grounds for the allegations by some people, most of whom are secularists who have no loyalty to either Islam or Christianity, that the tendency for Islamic solutions and Islamic laws is against the principle of freedom for non-Muslims a principle that has been established at both international and Islamic levels. For those people forget, or ignore, a more serious and more significant point: that abandoning Islamic laws and Islamic solutions for the sake of non-Muslims, who are minority, runs against the principle of freedom for Muslims, who are a majority, to do as their religion orders them.

When the right of the minority runs against the right of the majority, which right should we put first?

The logic of democracy, which those people advocate, says that the right of the majority should be given precedence over that of the minority. This is what goes on in all countries of the world, the system that can gain the approval of everybody

is yet to be invented, for people were created different and can never be brought to accept the same thing. It should be enough for any given system to gain the acceptance of the majority, provided that it does not do wrong or injustice to the minority or transgress on the minority's sanctities. Christians and other religious groups will not come to any harm if they give up their right so that their Muslim compatriots may rule themselves by their religion and affect the laws of Allah in order to gain His Grace.

If the religious minority does not do so, insisting that the majority relinquish what it, the majority, believes to be a religion whose relinquishing is punished with the Fire by Allah, then the minority will be imposing a dictatorship on the majority, with three million, for instance, controlling over forty million. Such a situation would not be acceptable to either religious or secular logic.

2. All the above is said on the assumption that there is a contradiction between the right of the Muslim majority and the right of the non-Muslim minority. In fact, there is no contradiction between the two of them.

A Christian who accepts to be a subject to a secular, not religious, rule, would not mind being under an Islamic rule. Moreover, a Christian who understands his religion right should welcome the rule of Islam, as such a rule is based on belief in Allah, the Messages of Heaven and the reward in the Hereafter. Such a rule also seeks to reinforce the values of faith and morals that were called for by all Prophets. It also reveres Christ, Mary and the Injil, and has a special regard for

the people of the Book. So, how could such a rule, with its heavenly, moral and humanitarian nature, be a source of concern or fear for a believer in a religion that recognizes Allah, His Messengers and the Hereafter, while that believer is not concerned or afraid of nonreligious, secular rule that despises all religions and allows them, if it ever does, only a small corner in life?!

It would be good for faithful Christians to accept the rule and system of Islam, looking at them as a rule and system like all rules and systems, while Muslims look at them as a religion that pleases their Lord and brings them closer to Him.

It would also be good for Christians, as Hassan Al-Hudaibi once said, if Muslims look at Muslim rule as a religion, as such a perception would make them guard against mistake in its enforcement, because they will feel that they are under the watchful eye of Allah, not fear of the ruler that can be shaken off in most cases

Therefore, wise, broadminded Christians have welcomed' the Islamic rule as a formidable barrier that can stop the advance of horrid materialism that threatens all religions at the hands of world Communism, as the prominent scholar Faris Al-Khoury said I would like here to put right a mistake that many people make: that is believing that the manmade laws imported from the Christian West are related to Christianity. This is a mistake beyond doubt, and those who study the origins and historical sources of laws certainly know this.

It is a fact that stands to any argument that Islamic fiqh [jurisprudence] is nearer to Christianity and Christians of our countries than these laws because of its religious origins on the one hand and because it is affected by the surrounding environment, of which they are part.

3. The allegation that applying a Muslim regime would involve forcing non-Muslims to do things that run against their creed is also false. Islam has four branches: creed, worship, morals and laws [Shari'ah]. It does not impose its creed or its worship on non-Muslims in any way.

There are two decisive Quranic verses to this effect, one Meccan and the other Medinan. In the first, Allah addresses His Messenger saying:

"Will you then compel mankind, against their will, to believe!"
(Yunus: 99)

In the second, Allah says in a decisive manner:

"Let there be no compulsion in religion" (Al-Baqarah: 256)

The Prophet's companions used to say about Ahl al-Dhimmah, *"leave them and their religion"*. Since the time of the Rightly Guided Caliphs, Jews and Christians have worshipped and performed their religious rights unmolested, as testified to by the documents of treaties between them and Muslims during the eras of Abu-Bakr and Omar, such as the treaty of reconciliation between Omar and the people of Jerusalem.

Islam is so considerate that it does not require non-Muslims to pay zakat [alms] or perform jihad, as these are major

Islamic worships; zakat being a financial tax and jihad a military service. Instead, Islam requires non-Muslims to pay another head tax, of which women, children and poor and disabled men are exempted, that is jizya (polltax).

If some people cannot bring themselves to accept the term jizya, then let them call it whatever they like. The Arab Christians of Banu Taghlib [banu, pl. ibn, means sons of] asked Omar Ibn Al-Khattab to allow them to pay double zakat like Muslims and not pay the jizya, and Omar agreed and signed an agreement with them to that effect. He commented on that, saying, "*These people are fools. They accept the meaning, but refuse the name!*". As for the morals branch of Islam, it is not different from its counterparts in other religions in its origins, for morals are the same in the eyes of religions. This leaves Shari'ah in its particular meaning, i.e. the laws that regulate the interrelations among people. It governs the individual's relations with his nation, his community and his State, and it governs the State's relations with its subjects and with other states. As for family relations and marital affairs, such as marriage and divorce etc., non-Muslims can choose between their religion and ours. They are not forced to accept the rules of Shari'ah. If they opt for the Islamic law in dividing estates for, as they do in some Arab countries, they have their wish. If they do not want to have Islamic laws applied to their affairs, then they are not subjected to them.

As for other domains, such as civil, commercial or administrative laws, non-Muslims are like others under any laws that are derived from East or West and are accepted by the majority.

That is why Ahl al-Dhimmah have their own courts which they can go to; they can also resort to Islamic courts, as recorded by history. So, we see that Islam has not forced non-Muslims to abandon anything that they regard as necessary under their religion, nor has it required them to do anything that they regard as forbidden in their creed, nor has it forced them to believe in anything against their religion. It is only that there are some things that are prohibited by Islam but deemed lawful by non-Muslims, such as wine and pig meat. Lawful things can be abandoned by individuals of their free will, so Christians may give up wine and not be guilty of any sin under their religion. I do not even think that any religion would encourage alcoholic drinking and bless the life of drinking and (the ensuing) running amok. All that the Bible says about wine is that a little of it cures the stomach, and that is why the Christians themselves are divided over drinking.

A Christian can also spend his whole life without taking a bite of pig meat, because eating it is not a religious rite, nor is it a practice handed down the generations by prophets. Pig meat was even tabooed by Judaism before Islam. However, we have seen a number of Muslim ulama who have opined that Christians may eat pig meat and drink wine and trade in both amongst themselves and in their own villages, provided they do not spread them in Muslim communities or defy the feelings of Muslims with them. This is an unequalled tolerance.

The Movement And Dialogue With Others

The Movement should not confine itself in the next phase to addressing itself: it must enlarge its scope to address others as well. Many Islamic writers and men of thought write for themselves, I mean that they write for those who follow their steps and advocate their ideas, not exceeding the limits of what they have to say to each other, as if there were no other people on this earth besides themselves. If they get out of this circle, they write only to the other Islamic groups which share Islam and its call with them but use different means and adopt different concepts.

When they do leave that second circle, they write for the religious in general, regardless of whether they, the religious, were members of any groups or movements.

Now that the Islamic Movement has attained its zenith and broadened its base, it should address itself to those who differ with it in ideology and trend and not leave them to their old, inherited ignorance and mistrust of Islam and its advocates without trying to provide them with guidance or light their path. It is high time for the Islamic Movement to abandon its self-imposed isolation, so that it may regard all Muslims as part of it and enter with them into a dialogue between itself and them first and then between itself and them on one side and opposing, even antagonist, parties on the other side. Perhaps the rational, quiet, academic dialogue will make the reluctant become sure, give confidence to the uncertain, calm down the anxious, and may be even alleviate the animosity of those with a grudge. Allah the Almighty says:

"It may be that Allah will establish love and [friendship] between you and those whom you [now] hold as enemies. For Allah has power [over all things]; and Allah is oft-forgiving. Most merciful"

(Al-Mumtahana: 7)

I recall here the invitation I received some years ago for participating in the symposium called "The Islamic Awakening And The Woes Of The Arab World" which was held in Amman, Jordan. The participants in that symposium included Muslims, Christians, Communists and nationalists of every color. Some of the brothers with whom I discussed the symposium were of the opinion that I should not go, so that my participation might not be used for giving a tint of legitimacy to such symposiums that do not follow a proper Islamic line.

However, I did not heed these fears and vivid imaginations that see a ghost behind every corner. I accepted the invitation and presented a paper that was published in a separate book later. My presence and the presence of a number of Islamists, including Dr. Hassan Al-Turabi, Fahmy Hewaidi and Kamel Al-Sherif, had a very significant effect in making the voice of Islamists heard through the moderate Islamic trend, which I believe in and advocate. Despite the small number of Islamists, their influence was the strongest, and their voice was best heard. I will never forget what one of the participants, a nationalist Christian, said to me at the lunch table. He said, "We have changed our opinion about you completely". I asked, "And what was your opinion?" He replied, "that you are a hard-liner and a fanatic". I said, "Where did you get this idea about me?" He answered, "I don't know, but, frankly, that was our impression about you". I asked "And now?" He said, "Now we have learned through seeing, hearing, discussion and direct contact what has changed this unfair idea about you completely.

We now see you as a man who respects logic, refers to reason and knows how to listen to the other opinion as a man who is not stubborn or adamant, but extremely flexible and tolerant".

What I want to convey by telling this story is that direct contact and reasonable, quiet dialogue that is held on equal footing is in the interest of the Islamic Movement, which stands to gain from it and will lose nothing at all in it. I can testify to that myself out of my experience in all the meetings that comprised both Islamists and non-Islamists. the latest of which was the "Issues Of The Islamic Future" symposium in Algeria.

Therefore, we say that the motto of the Islamic Movement in the next phase should be *"Welcome to dialogue with others"*. By others, we mean those who differ with the Islamic Movement in their ends, means, attitudes, ideologies and their very creeds.

The Movement has to welcome the dialogue with all those who differ with it and keep up the dialogue with those with whom it has already started discussion. It should also seek to enlist the support of all the Islamic forces that agree with it on the main issues and general principles, including both groups and individuals who have intellectual and academic influence. The Quran orders us to hold dialogues with those who differ with us, not to regard them as hopeless cases and isolate ourselves from them. It says:

"Invite [all] to the way of your Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching; and argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious"
(An-Nahl: 125)

All that the Quran requires is that the argument, the dialogue, be in ways that are best, i.e. with the best means that ensure persuasion of

the mind and awakening of the heart. A marvel of the Quranic expression is evident in this verse, as the Quran deems it enough for preaching to be beautiful, but would only accept argument, or dialogue, that is performed in ways that are best, because preaching is usually directed at someone who already agrees, while argument is directed at someone who does not agree and therefore should be addressed in the best manner.

The Dialogue With Rational Secularists

The required dialogue also includes holding a dialogue with secularists, I mean with those of them who are rational and fair and would be willing to hear the Islamists and understand what the Islamists advocate and want.

Those secularists are originally Muslims. Many of them still declare proudly that they are Muslims, and some even perform the Muslim rites, praying, fasting and perhaps also going for umra or hajj. However, their problem is that they never came to learn Islam properly as is the problem with many of the cultured like we said earlier for they never had a chance to take the teachings of Islam from their original, pure sources, nor meet with scholars and men of thought, but have taken their religion from orientalist or (Christian) missionaries or their disciples, or even formed their perception of Islam through the pathetic state of affairs of Muslims or from what they read or hear from extremist or deviated people who claim to belong to Islam.

Anyway, their upbringing, education and way of life never gave them the chance to know an Islam that is clear of the impurities that afflicted it in past and present, including misconceptions,

misapplication and misuse. Besides, the glamour of Western civilization at its zenith has coupled with the darkness that prevails in the Muslim World, which has sunk low in all aspects of life, to provide some excuse for secularists to misjudge Islam and the Islamic sharia and way of life and believe that the way out of the present dilemma lies in following in the steps of the West when it wished to achieve progress. For the West shook itself free of religion and its institutions and clerics, using science as its sole vehicle to reach out to building, innovation, production and creativity, until it has mastered the powers of nature for man's comfort and prosperity.

We started the dialogue with secularists in Cairo in the summer of 1985 with the historic symposium held in Dar Al-Hekma on invitation by the Physicians Association. The Islamists were represented by Sheikh Mohammad Al-Ghazali and the author, while the only representative of secularists was Dr. Fuad Zakariya.

The symposium received a warm welcome from journalists and men of thought, as it was a manifestation of the importance of dialogue among the various sides in the same homeland.

Many writers, including Fahmy Huwaidi, mentioned several benefits of this meeting, the most significant of which being that each side listened to the other directly. However, I found a shortcoming in the meeting: that it took the form of a debate between Islamists and secularists, not a dialogue. A debate breeds heated discussion, especially if there is a large audience. Besides, the representative of secularists in that dialogue was an obstinate man who did not have the least flexibility, tolerance or modesty that could make him listen and understand what the other side of the dialogue had to say so

that he might learn something about Islam, of which I regret to say that he was abysmally ignorant.

He actually realized the weakness of his position and the flimsiness of his argument, so he went to the newspapers to which he was contributing articles and started a ferocious, slashing attack on the audience in general, Islamists in particular and myself by name.

That attack forced me to reply by explaining the whole issue in my book "*Islam And Secularism Face To Face*". Once again, what I am calling for here is "dialogue" not "debate". The word "debate" in itself gives an impression of challenge and a desire to win, with each side trying to deal the other a fatal blow.

I do not think that such a debate could do much good, as neither side would be likely to give ground or abandon its stand as a result of debate, but may even become more obstinate and fanatic.

A debate may be accepted only if the Islamic side is embarrassed as a result of challenges by the other sides that leave it no option but to accept the challenge in order to avoid being accused of fleeing the confrontation and deserting the battlefield.

But the principle is dialogue in which proper manners are observed, as the Quran urges us to "*argue in ways that are best*".

The Dialogue With Rational Rulers

Another type of dialogue that is required is the dialogue with wise, rational Muslim rulers who do not take an aggressive stand based on [different] doctrine against Islam; for those rulers who adopt a different doctrine and stand against Islam are useless: they are a hopeless case because they would like nothing better than to see Islam wither and go to total obliteration, but ..

“Fain would they extinguish Allah's Light with their mouths, but Allah will not allow but that His Light should be perfected, even though the Unbelievers may detest [it]” (Al-Tauba: 32)

However, there are also those rulers who do not hate Islam but fear it, and their fear is in most cases due to their ignorance of the facts about Islam and the characteristics of Islam's Shari'ah and Call. Many of these rulers should be excused, of course, as they have not had a chance to know Islam as it really is, and get their knowledge from the pure sources and the trustworthy scholars. In that ignorance, they are just like the members of our cultured elite that we have mentioned. The concepts are jumbled in their heads, and fact and fiction are one to them.

If Allah the Almighty sends to such rulers those who explain to them true Islam as a whole without division, as a pure subject without innovations, and as a simple matter without difficulty, showing them the good things that Islam carries for the individual, the family and the community, and the evils it wards off to protect the Nation's morale and material property, and if they accept that explanation with an open heart, they will certainly change and adopt attitudes that will be different in part or whole towards Islam and its Call. For rulers are only human, just like us, and they can change and become

influenced and convinced in such a way as to change their ideas and behavior.

History is full of examples of rulers who changed under the influence of well-meaning ulema and scholars. Many of the rulers who are apprehensive of Islam have adopted such an attitude under the influence of false warnings by their ill-intentioned advisers or conspiracies by the "devils" abroad.

This type of rulers can be reached by addressing the goodness that still remains in their hearts and stirring the Muslim blood that still runs in their veins, and also by assuring them that they will retain their thrones and their powers, at least for the time being, if they give freedom to the Call of Islam to discharge its mission of raising the youth to the values of right, good and purity, protecting them from intoxicants, drugs and prostitution and countering the destructive principles that will be the ruin of the ruler and the ruled alike.

There is nothing against holding such a truce, or agreement, with rulers, even though the Movement may not approve of their behavior or their affiliations, for the Movement, guided by the fiqh of balances, believes that such a position would be better than abject refusal or continuous animosity towards them.

However, a word of warning is in order here: such an attitude must never be a prelude to flattery or lip service to these rulers. There is a big difference between pacification and hypocrisy towards them!

The Dialogue With Rational Westerners

Another important dialogue is required from the Islamic Movement, despite the fact that the path of such a dialogue will be strewn with difficulties and obstacles: it is the dialogue with the West.

There are several differences between us and the West. There is a difference of religion, as the West is predominantly Christian while we are Muslim. There is difference of trend, for the West is materialistic and realistic but we are spiritual and idealistic. There is difference of politics, because the West is, in most cases, on the side of Israel and against us, though this attitude may differ in its strength from one Western country to another.

However, we cannot do without a dialogue with the West. It is the West that has been ruling the world for centuries and it owns the civilization that prevails in our contemporary world, whether we like it or not. It ruled our countries and occupied our land for varying durations, then left voluntarily or against its will, but still affects us directly or indirectly, and influences our decision makers one way or another. Its influence on the minds and wills of our rulers cannot be denied, either.

Moreover, it is no longer possible for a group of people to live alone with its creed and principles, isolated from the world around it, in its own Utopia. The fluid technological changes in the field of communications have actually made the world a "global village" as one writer said.

Therefore, a dialogue with the West is a farida and a must for us, so that we may make Westerners understand what we want for ourselves and others, and because we are preachers of a Call, not

hunters for loot; messengers of mercy, not carriers of bad omens; advocates of peace, not callers for war; supporters of right and justice, not helpers of wrong and injustice.

Our mission is to guide the confused humanity to the Way of Allah and link earthly life to the Hereafter, Earth to Heaven and human being to human being, so that a man may like for his fellow man what he likes for himself and hates for him what he hates for himself, and so that mankind may be cured of the illness of all nations: envy and grudge. For this renders humanity bare of religion.

We know that the West still looks at us through the gloomy perspective that has mired its outlook to us since the Crusades and has nestled in the hearts of most Westerners till this day.

Many of the West's free and fair thinkers have admitted to that fact, including Gustave Le Bon, the French philosopher and sociologist, who said it frankly in some of the footnotes of his book, "*The Civilization of the Arabs*". When a Western scholar delves into Islamic causes, he assumes a character other than his normal, independent one with which he deals with all issues, and becomes biased and anti-Islamic even if he does not realize it.

The same was recently said by the orientalist Montgomery Watt in his book "*What Is Islam?*" We also see the spirit of the Crusades raising its head from time to time in various fields.

We see its influence in the West's attitude towards Israel, the aggressor, and towards the Palestinian people, the victimized. We see its influence in the West's attitude towards the Christian Lithuania and the Muslim Azerbaijan in the Soviet Union. We see its

influence in the actions of French, Spanish and Italian officials who are motivated by their fear of the Islamic trend in Algeria. We see its influence in the West's attitude towards the issues of southern Sudan, Eritrea, Kashmir, the Philippines and other political Islamic issues.

We see its influence in several social issues, the most important of which is that of Salman Rushdie who shed his skin and betrayed his Creed and his Nation. And in the issue of the "Hijab (Islamic dress) in France" and how a country that proclaims itself as the mother of freedom could not tolerate a few Muslim girl students whose religion required them to be modest in their dress and who sought to please Allah and avoid Hell with their attire, but the land of freedom and human rights did not give them the right of seeking Allah's pleasure in a purely personal matter.

Unfortunately, the spirit of the Crusades is present in attitudes and situations that defy counting. Even Turkey which is a country that has panted after the West for two thirds of a century and imposed the West's secularism on its Muslims by sword and bloodshed, driving the Islamic Shari'ah out of every corner was unable to gain the favor of the West when it applied for membership of the European Common Market, and the Chancellor of West Germany explained the reason for turning its application saying, *"Turkey has a culture that is different from that of the West. It has a Muslim culture, while we have a Jewish, Christian culture"*.

However, we would despair of the west or leave it alone as a hopeless case that can never be swung around with dialogue, even though our culture is different from their culture, for can there be a dialogue except between two different sides? Let it then be a

dialogue of culture, as it was called by the famous man of thought Rajaa Garoudi .. let it be a dialogue of cultures, not a conflict of cultures. And why should not we hold a dialogue with the West when the Quran has laid down for us the practice of dialogue with those who differ with us, thus making dialogue a means of advocating the Call of Allah.

Moreover, the Holy Quran tells us of the dialogue between Allah and the worst of His Creation, Iblis [Satan]. Allah the Almighty did not close the door of dialogue in the face of the damned Iblis. And what a dialogue it was! a dialogue with the Lord of the Worlds. Read these verses of Surat Sad:

"Behold, our Lord said to the angels, "I am about to create man from clay: When I have fashioned him (In due proportion) and breathed into him from My spirit, fall down in prostration unto him". So the angles prostrated themselves, all of them together: Not so Iblis: he was haughty, and became one of those who reject Faith. [Allah] said, 'O Iblis, What prevents you from prostrating yourself to one whom I have created with My hands? Are you haughty! Or are you one of the high [and mighty] ones? Iblis said, "I am better than him: You created me from fire, and him from clay." [Allah said, "Then get out from here: for you are rejected, accursed. And My Curse shall be on you till the Day of Judgment". Iblis said, "O my Lord! Give me then respite till the Day the [dead] are raised." [Allah] said, "Respite then is granted you till the Day of the Time Appointed". Iblis said, "Then, by Your Power, I will put them all in the wrong, Except Your servants amongst them, sincere and purified [by Your Grace]". Allah said, "Then this is the Truth and the Truth I say. That I will certainly fill Hell with you and those that follow you, everyone"

(Sad: 71-85)

And also let the dialogue with the West be on more than one level:

On the religious level,

On the intellectual level,

And on the political level

The Religious (Islamic-Christian) Dialogue

Let there be a religious dialogue between Islam and Christianity, for various objectives, including the following:

1. Standing in the face of the atheist and materialistic trend that stands at swords ends with all the Messages of Heaven, making fun of belief in the Unseen, and rejecting Allah, His Messengers and His Punishment and moralistic values, as well as the trend of permissiveness and loose morals that have almost completely destroyed the noble characteristics that humanity has acquired with the guidance of the Messages of Heaven.
2. Confirming the points of agreements between the two religions, which are pointed out by the Holy Quran in speaking of how to argue with People of the Book:

"But say, "We believe in the Revelation which has come down to us and in that which came down to you; our God and your God is one; and it is to Him we submit [in Islam]"

(Al-Ankabut: 46)

3. Purifying relations of the remnants of the hostile feelings left over by the Crusades of the past and the imperialism of the present, and promoting the feelings of brotherhood, humanism and charity, to turn a new leaf for purer and

clearer relations. This includes that the Church stop supporting Christians against Muslims in every battle that erupts between the two sides, such as those in southern Sudan and the Philippines and in other regions. The Church would even stand by Communists and pagans against Muslims.

I do know that many Islamists are suspicious of a dialogue of this kind, as they regard it as a suspect dialogue that hides invisible hands that move and exploit it for special purposes, and because they believe Muslims to be the unsuspecting weak side of the dialogue that is used by the strong side without its knowledge. Therefore, anyone who takes part in such a dialogue is a target of accusation in their eyes, for he will be either a fool or a collaborator!

I think that such suspicion is unnecessary. For while their doubts may be right, this is not always the case. Why should we lose confidence in ourselves to this extent? Why should we regard ourselves as the weak side while we are strong with what we have?

Why should we regard anyone who holds a dialogue with those as having abandoned the right of his creed and surrendered to the other side? What is actually important is that we enter the dialogue while standing on firm ground, sure of ourselves and of those who speak in our name, believing that dialogue is better than fighting or escape.

In fact, dialogue was one of the means of promulgating the Call that the Prophet [peace be upon him] started in his historic letters to Hercules, Al-Muqawquis (Chief Copt in Egypt), the Negus (of Abyssinia) and other rulers of People of the Book, which he concluded with the verse:

"Say, O People of the Book! come to common terms as between us and you: that we worship none but Allah; that we associate no partner with Him; that we erect not, from among ourselves, Lord and patrons other than Allah". If then they turn back, say, 'Bear witness that we [at least] are Muslims [bowing to Allah, Will]"

(Imran: 64)

Some dialogue of this sort did take place, and it achieved positive results, as I was told by Mr. Mohammad Al-Mubarak, may Allah have mercy on his soul. This dialogue took place between a delegation of the Muslim World League, headed by the then secretary-general Sheikh Mohammad Al-Harkan, and including Ma'ruf Al-Dawalibi and Mohammad Al-Mubarak, & representatives of the Vatican. This took place in Rome.

The dialogue resulted in improving the image of each side in the eyes of the other, especially the image of Islam that had been distorted unjustly and maliciously. This has reflected on Muslim-Christian relations at some time. Another dialogue took place in Libya between a number of Muslim men of thought and some senior members of the Church. It had good results, as I was told by Dr. Ezz Al-Din Ibrahim, who was one of the main participants in it.

I read his paper that he had presented in the dialogue, and I found it to be very balanced and sound in a moderate way that has neither extremism nor neglect.

The Intellectual Dialogue (With Orientalists)

The religious dialogue with the West should be coupled with another dialogue that complements it: this is the intellectual dialogue with Orientalists and Western writers who are interested in the studies related to Islam and its Quran, Messenger, Creed, history, culture, knowledge, peoples, present and future, especially those scholars who are interested in intellectual trends, modern revivalist movements and contemporary awakening upheavals.

Such a dialogue is necessary for correcting concepts, bringing viewpoints nearer, clearing the air between the two sides and paving the ground for better relations.

If dialogue is possible with clergymen and representatives of the Church, who are more zealous by virtue of their positions and deep-rooted ideological beliefs that have been handed down to them across the generations, then dialogue with orientalists and intellectuals should be easier and more beneficial, though many people say that there is no difference between Western clergymen and Western men of thought, or, in other words, between missionaries and orientalists. They say that the only difference is that the former are dressed in priests' attire while the latter don the cloaks of scholars, but the two of them are only two faces of the same coin.

However, a dialogue should not be impossible if it is sought with a strong will, if the objective is known, and if the road is clear. Universities and intellectual fore can take the initiative by bringing representatives of the two sides together to launch research work on certain topics that be decided in an academic, objective atmosphere that is free from bias or provocation.

We have to take also account here that Orientalists are not equal in their attitude towards Islam, the Muslim Nation and the Islamic Awakening. Many books have been written about Orientalists, such Al-Aqiqi's book, while others were written to reply to their allegations or to defend them. Still other works classified them, such as the treatise prepared by Dr. Mohammad Al-Bahayy, May Allah grant him forgiveness, for which he had chosen the topic of "*Orientalists and their attitudes towards Islam*".

I have to say that there are several points of weakness that are almost common in most orientalists. These are:

Firstly, orientalists are not well-versed in Arabic and cannot fully grasp its different implications, which naturally affects their comprehension of the original Islamic sources, especially the Holy Quran and Sunna. Therefore, their understanding of Islam and its Message is hazy and incomplete.

Secondly, Orientalists suffer from the complex of superiority of the Western man, the Western mind and Western civilization. They regard the West as the master of the world and Europe as the mother of all countries, and they think that history began in the West and will end there.

Thirdly, they start their research from points that are not subject to testing from their point of view, as they believe that the Quran was not sent down by Allah and that Mohammad is not the Messenger of Allah. This way, they form their ideas in advance, prior to starting their research, then direct their research in such directions that may enable them to prove these ideas by any means, thereby accepting narratives of poor credibility, believing lies, magnifying small

events, making a mountain out of a molehill, taking suspicion as evidence and rejecting all that contradicts their ideas even if it hits them in the face!

Fourthly, the studies made by Orientalists are often directed to serving practical goals that are required from the authors by certain countries. In many cases, millions are allocated to these research works, which makes these studies not completely free of bias or ill-intentions.

Nevertheless, the dialogue is still required in many fields, and it can still be held with the number of free men that is increasing every day as more people shed old complexes and rid themselves of new influences. When we set ourselves to start this dialogue, it should be reasonable to choose those Orientalists who are nearer to fairness and moderation among all nationalities, such as Professor J. Berque who was invited to Qatar's University several times.

However, we can feel from the translated works of contemporary Orientalists that today's Orientalists are closer to fairness and farther from exaggeration and fanaticism than yesterday's Orientalists, especially as Muslims now read their works, discuss what they say and counter what they do not like in their statements, while the old Orientalists wrote for themselves, i.e. one for the other, so that their writings were more like special reports than general topics.

The Political Dialogue with the West

After accomplishing these religious and intellectual dialogues, the Islamic Movement should have another dialogue with the West, a political dialogue with decision makers, those of them who stand on stage as well as those who stand in the back scenes.

I believe that the two previous dialogues should pave the way for this important dialogue. The Church, while officially kept away from politics, still wields much influence over men of state, and still plays from behind the scene in the field of foreign policy, especially where Islam and Muslims are concerned.

Orientalists, while appearing as mere academics, have undeniable connections with intelligence and national security agencies and ministries of foreign affairs. There are many who try to sow the seeds of despair of any attempt at political dialogue with the West. There are others who quote the old Western poet's saying: "*East is East, West is West. They never meet!*". But we have seen the West meeting with India, Japan and, most recently, China!. Other says, "*The West may meet with India, Japan and China, or with Hindus, Buddha Communists but not with Muslims*". They may quote missionaries, Orientalists or politicians who slashed at Islam with poison dripping tongues.

There are also those who look with suspicion at anyone who tries to contact the West or hold any sort of dialogue with Westerners, and use such contact or dialogue to smear that who attempts it with their always ready accusation: treason, collaboration, treachery etc. No one can forget what our strong, faithful brother Hassan Al-Hudaybi, second Guide of the Muslim Brotherhood, suffered as a result of his contact with Mr. Evans. Although the Egyptian Revolution leaders

had known and blessed these contacts they eventually turned them into a weapon that they used against him, and into a tool for tainting his image and the images of the Movement and its men and policies!

This is an aspect that we have to take into account and guard against, so that similar contacts may not be exploited by the enemies of the Movement to attack it. I have to say here also that the complexes of fear of Islam and the grudges against it still influence the behavior of Western politicians in general, and the memories of the battles of Yarmuk and Ajnadin, the Crusades and the Arab and Ottoman conquests still haunt their dreams, with names like Khalid Ibn Al-Walid, Tariq Ibn Ziyad, Saladdin Al-Ayyubi and Mohammad Al-Fatih (the conqueror of Constantinople) robbing the sleep from their eyes.

However, we should not ourselves fall victim to fear of these complexes. We have to break psychological barriers and try to shake off all complexes, old and new alike. Despite the wars, feuds and bloodshed that raged over Europe over the past centuries, the countries of that continent are coming together into unity, and will become one country in the near future.

The Americans and the Soviets have also closed the gap between them, having ended their hot and cold wars.

So why cannot there be rapprochement with the Muslims?

The logic of the West is well known: there is no permanent friendship or permanent enmity. There are only permanent interests. We have no objection to starting from the principle of securing mutual interests between ourselves and others.

I believe that the West's interest lies in avoiding the hostility of a thousand million Muslims and winning their trust, friendship and respect. We in turn should seek to improve our image in the eyes of the West, so as to change that image formed over the ages through bitter conflicts that were not free of exaggeration and fiction.

We are not denying that there are some people among us who do not paint the best image of Islam neither by their way of thinking nor by their behavior. They present Islam in an image of violence, fanaticism, bloody collision with others and neglect of freedoms and human rights, particularly the rights of minorities and women.

Perhaps this image have, been helped by the actual state of affairs in many Muslim countries that could be taken to be the result of Islam and Islamic law. Such strong illusions do not just fade away by themselves, or disappear overnight, but can be removed by means of good intentioned, long-lasting dialogue that is based on frankness and straight forwardness, not maneuvering and elusiveness.

Although this sort of dialogue is unlikely in politics, it is not impossible, for nothing in impossible is the world of politics today! If we manage to convince the West's leaders and those who influence its policies that we have a right to live by our Islam, led by its Creed, governed by its Shari'ah and guided by its values and morals, without harboring any ill intentions towards the West or doing it any wrong, then we will have covered a long distance towards our objective of establishing the Muslim community that we wish for our homeland.

There is no doubt that the first obstacle that stands in the path to this objective is our rulers who stand guard over us, watching our every

move and resisting any tendency for establishing Islam as the rule in social, political and cultural life. There is also no doubt that the most influential power that affects our rulers is the West and its leaders, who warn our leaders against Islam and throw fear of Islamists in their hearts, making them suspicious of Islamic movements by direct and indirect means and through covert and overt statements.

Therefore, persuading the West of the necessity of the emergence of Islam as a guiding and leading force, if possible, will be a vehicle for persuading Arab and Muslim leaders as well, and this will certainly be a great benefit.

The Islamic Movement and The Official Religious Institution

The Islamic Movement should work hard in the next phase for winning the official religious institution to its side. This includes the prominent figures of Al-Azhar in Egypt, Al-Zaytuna in Tunisia, Al-Qarawiyyin in Morocco and the religious institutions of Pakistan, India and other countries. The Movement should set its sights on a major objective that should feature in its essential plans: to invade this official religious institution from inside with its ideologies and its members. If the Movement succeeds in this endeavor, it stands to make significant gains, including the following:

1. It will be able to avert the collision with the members of the institution, many of whom still are in favor with the Muslim masses and still possess the ability to distort the image of the movement in the eyes of the uneducated or half-educated public by right or wrong allegations, especially from those who have put themselves at the service of the rulers, as their

allegations will hinder the march of the Movement and cost it much time and effort for defending itself and clearing its image of untrue charges . This way, the Movement will be free to devote its efforts to confronting the true enemies of Islam who want to put out Allah's light with their mouths.

2. There will be hope in reforming this important institution, so that it may carry its original and important responsibility of spreading the true teachings of Islam, and advocating only Islam in its whole, pure and unadulterated form, in such a way that it will free itself from the unjust rulers and communism and Christianity agents and be a formidable fortress that defends the Islamic call against the con of Islam's enemies. If the official religious institution is corrected, it will turn out men who will serve the Message and the creed, not just government officials.
3. It will be possible to draw on the official religious institution's ability of infiltration and influencing people to spread the awareness of Islam's major causes, the problems of Muslims all over the world, the duty of Muslim peoples towards the Islamic idea and Muslim lands, and what the Islamic Movement is doing for effecting the Islamic cultural resurrection in the field of knowledge, work, education and shaping the Muslim personality. It will also be possible to use the official institution's capabilities in combating the false trends that are trying to sneak on the Nation overtly and covertly through the plots of Islam's enemies abroad and the collaboration of the hypocrites inside. Through such cooperation and such integration between the popular movement and the official institution, the front that supports

the Islamic Call and its great cultural efforts will be expanded.

4. It will be possible to refute the excuses of those governments that try to shirk the adoption of Islam's rules as a guide of life and a leader of society. These governments take as a pretext for their attitude the fatwas of some weak and misguided members of the official religious institutions. Another target is to give a legitimate status to the Islamic Movement's demands and efforts for establishing a state that rules by what Allah has sent down and embraces Islam as a creed, a way of life and a message for the guidance and advancement of all people.

Imam Hassan Al-Banna was always keen on keeping his lines open with Al-Azhar scholars, among whom he had many good friends. I once heard him say in a convention that was held in Tanta and attended by a number of Al-Azhar institute there, "you", Ulema are the regular army of Islam, with us behind you as the reserve army.'

Naturally, this does not apply to those institutions that have sold their religion to have the good things of this life, becoming mouthpiece for tyrants, and a sword that unjust rulers brandish in the face of true Islamists. Such institutions should never be rejected or given a respite, as they should be laid bare before their peoples for what they really are, so that their peoples may guard themselves against the evils of such institutions. We have also to differentiate between those who have become tools in the hands of tyrants, or shoes on their feet, and those weak who hate tyrants but are prevented from resisting tyranny by their weakness and fear. For the weak, though intimidated to the extent of keeping silent and not

uttering the word of right, do not get involved in saying the word of wrong, so their circumstances should be taken into account and help provided to them for overcoming their weakness and fear.

The religious institution in Iran was the driving force behind the revolution against the Shah's regime. It was helped in so doing by the right of absolute obedience due to it by the masses of the people, as dictated by the Ja'fari doctrine, as well as by the people's willingness to sacrifice their property and their lives if they were asked to do so by the sheikhs and ayatollahs of the sect.

It was also helped by the funds voluntarily given to it by the people. which represented the "Khums" [onefifth] which the Ja'fari jurisprudence imposes on net income, i.e. at 20% and which is handed to the ulema of the sect in their capacity as deputizing for the "absent Imam".

This way, the Iranian men of religion no longer remained at the mercy of their government that paid their salaries and thus controlled their and their families destinies because it had the power of keeping them in its employ or dismissing them at will.

Therefore, one of the essential principles for reforming the religious institution is that it enjoy academic, administrative and financial independence and restore its usurped awqaf [religious endowments] and the freedom to dispose of them as it deems fit, so that it may regain some of what some old princes said about the secret of power of Imam Hassan Al-Basri: "*We need his religion, and he has no need for our money*". It is a real problem when the religious scholar becomes just a civil servant in a state which does not need his religion while he has every need for its money!

The Movement And The Islamic Awakening's Groups

The Islamic Movement should do its best to unite all the Islamic groups and all the groups of the Islamic Awakening into one front for helping Islam and establishing it in the earth and standing in the face of all the invading currents that oppose Islam's Call. This front must play an active, part in promulgating the proper manners of dialogue and the right ways for dealing with opposing views, so as to lay the groundwork of cooperating in what we agree upon and being tolerant in what we differ on.

Imam Hassan Al-Banna sought with his every effort to close the ranks of Islamic groups in Egypt and laid the famous "twenty principles" as the "minimum" of concepts that should be agreed upon.

This is what the Islamic Movement should always do to achieve its major objectives, for the Movement is strong only through the strength of all the groups working in the Islamic arena, I mean, of course, the serious, faithful groups, not those playing or deviated groups or those groups that are described as Islamic by way of fraud.

Any Islamic group will be making a fatal mistake if it thinks that it can undertake, single-handedly, the establishment of a contemporary Islamic rule that can withstand the internal problems and the external plots.

What all the groups and movements should actually do is that they consolidate their efforts and close their ranks to form a formidable Islamic unity that can support its friends and deter its enemies. What I fear most here is that selfishness overcome the Islamic spirit of brotherhood, with each group trying to prove itself and to show

others as incapable, to the extent of focusing its efforts on destroying others not on building itself into a strong part of a larger edifice comprising the whole.

I also fear that narrow-mindedness supercede and control the way of thinking of Islamic groups, making them magnify their conflicts, running molehills into mountains, branches into main topics and matters of ijtiḥad into fundamentals of Shari'ah, like what was done by the author of the treatise entitled, "*The Right Opinion on the Contradiction Between Membership of Parliament and Monotheism*".

The establishment of a strong Islamic rule that can revive the religion of this Nation and make our earthly life better is a matter that should be collectively undertaken by all the Islamic groups and forces, regardless of their difference and various attitudes and policies in addition to all the faithful individuals who are zealous for their religion without being necessarily members of any group or organization.

I believe that the Islamic Movement will actually succeed if it manages to recruit and unite the efforts of all Islamic forces towards this end, so that all of them may think that the State is their State, the rule is their rule, the victory is for them and the defeat is on them.

CONCLUSION

Having come to the end of my book, I must note that the Islamic Movement at both regional and levels should have a clear outlook into the future, by which it draws a clear detailed plan aimed at specific objectives to be attained by legitimate means.

Such a plan should be based on modern concepts, divided into cohesive phases and following academic methodologies. It should also be flexible, easy to accomplish and practical, with its burdens equally divided among the competent bodies and establishments and not dependent on certain individuals, staying alive only as long as these individuals do. It should be built on documented information, accurate statistics, detailed research, scientific analyses, objective comparisons and a comprehensive study of all the available and potential material and human resources and all the psychological and material obstacles, both from inside and outside and both existent and expected, without underestimation or exaggeration.

Such a plan is to be drawn up by a specialized, integrated body of competent experts of various fields of knowledge, each contributing his skill and knowledge to the team. This team may also seek the help of whoever they may think able to contribute an opinion or a piece of information.

It is necessary before and after drawing up the plan to pay attention to three things: Full-time work, specialization and information. We will discuss the three of them in detail in this conclusion.

The Necessity Of Full-Time Work On The Movement's Duties by Competent Individuals

The Movement should take every care in its future planning to ensure that a number of competent individuals work full-time in all the strategic and important positions, particularly in the fields of science, knowledge, education, information and mass media, politics and planning. The Movement should not remain dependent only on part-time volunteering by persons who have their own jobs that monopolize their time, leaving only snatches on which no major undertaking can be based.

However, this does not go against the presence of volunteers who devote some of their time and effort to the Movement for Allah's sake, for such contributions are vitally important and greatly useful, as the volunteer base is expansive. All members of the Movement are even supposed to be volunteers working without pay, except for those who have to work fulltime for the interest of the Call.

Imam Hassan Al-Banna continued to work as a teacher for some years of the Movement, until he was forced by the demands of the Call and the development of the Movement to devote all his time and effort to the Movement. Many of the Movement's members and leaders in more than one country were university professors, senior civil servants or tree businessmen or tradesmen. But the best effort can be made only when the individual is working fulltime to serve the Movement and promote its objective.

However, it is necessary when selecting fulltime workers that they should be of various specializations that complement each other, so as to cover all specializations and plug every hole without

concentrating on certain specializations at the expense of others, for there has never been undue expenditure without a right wasted in another place.

Money should be no problem in this respect, for spending money for this purpose is one of the best ways for seeking Allah's pleasure. The necessary funding can be obtained from the resources of zakat (compulsory religious tax) sadaqat, (supererogatory spending for charity), awqaf (religious trusts) and similar funds. The interest generated by capital deposited in local and foreign banks may even be spent for this purpose, and we should not shrink from using it on the basis that it comes from a haram source, for it is haram only against the depositor of the capital but halal for use in promoting Islamic interests, at the forefront of which comes the full-time employment of workers for the Islamic movement.

Faithful workers should not be reluctant to accept an adequate pay that equals what their counterparts draw in other places, so that they may continue to work with satisfaction and not grumble because of the low pay they get. What should count is fair payment, with the reward being neither too generous nor too meager.

However, it is necessary to choose elements and put the right man in the right place, without favoring this or that, as competence and honesty alone should be the criteria for selection ..

“Truly the best of men for you to employ is the [man] who is strong and trusty”
(Al-Qasas: 26)

The Qualification of Specialists

This effort should be augmented with the necessary qualification and preparation of specialists in all walks of life.

We are living in the age of specialization even accurate specialization as it is, not in the age of know all geniuses who are well-versed in all arts and can give an opinion in every science. Intelligence alone is not enough; neither is brilliance, genius or talent.

It is necessary to have specialized academic qualification that is able to run abreast with time, cope with need and perfect the work assigned. It is said the in the sound Hadith:

“Verily Allah has prescribed proficiency in all things”

And,

“It pleases Allah that any of you who does anything should perfect it”

This perfection is only possible in this age of ours through specialization, and what a necessary duty cannot be accomplished without becomes a necessity in itself. Take, for instance, a field like mass communication and the many diversified specializations that it requires. Writing a script is a science, and writing it in the form of a screenplay is a science, directing it is a science, and so is performing it and so is marketing it, and so on to the bottom of the long list of specialized sciences.

Directing a production for radio is something and directing for television is another, while directing for the stage and the cinema are two completely different things. Mass media work is a field that

embraces scores of arts today, and there are institutes and colleges for these sciences, in which students sit for high and post-graduate studies.

If we want to "Islamize" these arts, we will never be able to accomplish that without the help of specialized experts who can provide the Islamic alternatives to what we have today.

The Islamic Movement is rich in talent, but its talented children are not properly distributed in the fields and places where they are needed most. We frequently see a concentration of members of certain specializations, such as medicine, pharmacology or engineering, while the Islamic Movement can lay claim to only a few specialists in rare scientific fields, and even none at all in some cases.

This applies to human and social sciences, such as psychology, sociology, economics, political sciences, mass communication and the like, which the youth in shirk and head only for applied science studies, despite the fact that these sciences are closer to the community and affect it more, and that is why the Jews in the United States and other countries have been careful monopolize them and get the lion's share of their positions so that they may direct them to serve their interests at will.

Many a brilliant young man whose personal abilities and academic aptitude makes him good for being a student of human and literary pursuits is forced by the pressure of society to pursue applied science studies, while he would fare better and achieve much more production if he was directed to where his abilities and tendencies made him best suited for his studies.

In fact there is a very evident shortage [of Muslims] in the field of human sciences, despite their importance and serious impact. There is even a shortage in the field of literature, e.g. story writing and criticism, where almost none of the brilliant young men work, in several countries, and of them who do participate are not given the necessary publicity, unlike the leftists and others, who give each other support.

A Center for Information and Research

One of most pressing needs of the Islamic Movement in our contemporary age is the establishment of a data bank, or a center for information and research that can cope with this age the age of the "information revolution", as some people like to call. This center should be staffed by trained, skilled specialists, in accordance with what Allah says:

"And none (Oman!) can inform you like him who is All Aware"

(Fatir: 14)

.. and supported by sophisticated equipment and elements that suit the beginnings of the twenty first century. The sources and means of collection of information have become diversified, so have the means of storage, classification and retrieval of data. Have we made any step towards using all this advancement?

We do not have all or even half the information we need about ourselves, leave alone knowing anything about others, friend and foe alike, while our enemies know all that is to be known about us.

I was in Istanbul with some Arab brothers working in the Islamic banking field. We met some brothers from the Turkmen Republic in

the (former) Soviet Union, who asked us, "*Where is your help for your brethren in Turkmenistan and other republics that were held captive behind the Iron Curtain and are now free to act and interact?*". They need help and expertise of every kind: religious, cultural, educational and economic! Where is this help and expertise? Who is going to give it to them?" Who is going to give it to them?"

"The Christian religious authorities were on the move as soon as glasnost and perestroika started to have their effect. They had all the information and their maps were ready and marked, and the statistics and data were all there. Bibles and books were distributed at once, and the missionaries went everywhere. In the short interval since then to now, about 2000 churches were either built on new sites or refurbished and brought back to life and activity from destruction and ruin. The Church and its men are still at work there. Where, then, is Islamic work in Muslim territories?"

I turned to those around me, asking, "*What do you know about our brothers there? About their number, their country, their history, their material and cultural background about their need?*" I discovered that we know very little about them, and we did not know an Islamic quarter that had adequate and documented information on them that could be of use, either.

The Islamic Movement at regional and world levels should line up to its age and develop itself, recruiting all its efforts and mustering all the energies of Muslims around it towards that end. It should take this prayer as its motto: O Allah! Make today for us better than yesterday, and make tomorrow better than today, and grant us Your Blessing in everything. Amen.

Fatwas Passed By Sheikh Al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah

The Permissibility Of Assuming Public Office In' An Unjust State, If The Occupant Would Alleviate Some Of The Injustice Or Curb Evil And Corruption

Sheikh Al-Islam Ibn Taymia, May Allah grant him forgiveness, was asked about a man, who assumed public offices and undertook responsibility for certain fiefs whose inhabitants were required to pay the State imposed taxes levied as per the practice of all governments. That man chose to lift all the injustice off people's shoulders, seeking to do so with all his effort, knowing that if he resigned his office the injustice would remain as it was, if it did not become worse. The man could alleviate the tax burdens of his subjects, dropping half the taxes but collecting the other half because that half should be collected as repayment for public expenses. Was that man to remain in his office, his intentions and efforts for lifting as much injustice as possible having been known, or should he resign his office and leave the fief for someone else to run, while he knew that his resignation *would lift no injustice but could leave the injustice to proliferate? Would he be sinning if he remained in office? If not, would it be right to ask him to remain?* Which would be better for him: to stay in office and try to alleviate the injustice as much as he could, or resign his office and let the injustice stay and increase? If the subjects in his fief chose to have him remain in office due to the benefit they gained from his stay through his lifting of injustice, should he stay?

The Sheikh answered:

"Praise be to Allah. Yes, he should stay in office if he is a good man who tries to lift as much injustice as he can, if his being in office is better than having another in his place, and if his control of his fief is better than its control by someone else. He may stay in office, and will not be committing a sin if he does so. His remaining in office is even better than leaving it unless he occupies himself with something better.

"This [stay in office] may even be a duty that such a man has to discharge if there is nobody else who can undertake it, for the establishment of justice and elimination of injustice as much as possible is a collective duty, and should be undertaken by any individual who finds in himself the ability to do so while others cannot undertake it, but he who does so should not be asked in this case to lift an injustice that he cannot cope with.

Such a man should not be asked to lift any taxes that the rulers levy on their subjects in his fief if he cannot lift such taxes. Besides, if the rulers and their representatives demand funds that cannot be paid unless some of these taxes are collected, so that if this man does not pay them what they want they will give his position and fief to someone else who will continue, or increase, the injustice, then the collection of some of these taxes on behalf of the rulers would be better than having all the taxes collected. For if this man tries to be as just as he can, then he is better than others, even if he gives evil persons some of what they demand to make it possible for him to avoid their evil. This man will be rewarded for collecting tax from Muslims if he has to collect it but does not do the injustice himself,

and he will not be punished for collecting it if he is collecting it under the aforesaid conditions.

He will not be punished in this life or in the Hereafter if he does his best to insure that justice is served as much as possible. Such a man is like a guardian of orphans, a trustee of waqf (religious trust), a partner in commerce or any such individual who acts on behalf of others by virtue of his guardianship or by proxy: he is like them in their payment of some of the money of their principals or clients to an unjust ruler if this is the only way to serve the interests of their clients. This man will be doing right, not wrong, and what he gives the rulers includes what is given to tax collectors in real-estate tax and sales tax, as anyone who makes a transaction for himself or on behalf of others in these countries has to pay these taxes, and if he does not collect the tax, while he cannot see to the affairs of his subjects without it, the interests of his subjects, and his subjects themselves, will be harmed.

As for those who opine that such a situation should not be allowed to exist in order not to accept a little injustice, if they are followed by people, the injustice and corruption will certainly increase, for they are like travelers stopped by bandits: if they do not pacify the bandits with some of their money, the bandits will kill them and take all their money. If anyone says to these travelers, "It is illegal to give the bandits any of your money", he means to keep that little money he is advising them not to pay, but if they follow his advice they will lose that little money and all their money as well. Nobody in his right mind would give such an advice, let alone that a religion ordain it, for Allah the Almighty sent down His Messengers to establish, attain public interests and eliminate and curb evils as much as possible.

If such a man who tries to collect as little tax as possible, and spares the people much more evil by so doing, and can do nothing else, leaves his offices, he will be succeeded by someone else who will collect all the tax and spare the people nothing.

Such a man will be rewarded for what he does, and will not be punished (for that) in this world or in the Hereafter. Such a man is like orphan's guardians and waqfs' trustees who can do their duty only by payment of unjust tax imposed by the government, for if any of them abandons his job he will be replaced by someone who will aggravate the injustice.

Therefore, their stay in office is permissible, and they will be committing no sin by paying such taxes. Their remaining in office may even be a duty they have to discharge.

This also applies to the soldier appointed to run a certain fief, who collects less tax from the people but cannot deliver all the tax he collects to the government because he is asked to provide weapons, horses and other things that he can acquire only by taking some of the tax. A well-armed soldier serves Muslims well in war. If someone tells him that he has no right to take any of the money and has to leave the fief, and he leaves it to be run by someone else who increases the injustice and does nothing to serve Muslims, this someone will have spoken out of ignorance of the facts of religion. Even the presence of Turkish and Arabian soldiers, who are better than soldiers of others and are closer to justice with people, with the injustice alleviated as much as possible, is better for Muslims than having the fiefs run by others who are less useful and more unjust.

Any of these officials and agents who does his best to be just and charitable will be rewarded for what good they do, and will not be punished for not doing the good that is beyond their means, and they will not be called to account for what they collect or spend if there is nothing else they can do, as not collecting the tax and not spending the money as they do will lead to greater evils.

The Conflict Of Good And Bad Things (In One Situation)

Sheikh Al-Islam Ibn Taymia says in the chapter on the conflict of good and bad things:

Since it is proved that good things lead to benefits, leaving them undone is considered as an evil, and evils are harmful. An undesirable thing may also involve some benefits conflict happens between two good things that cannot be combined together, and so the better one should be taken; between two bad things that cannot be averted, so the lesser of them has to be accepted; or between a good thing and a bad thing which have to be taken together or left together, and so should be taken or left according to which is bigger: the benefit involved in the good thing or the evil inhering the bad thing.

The first type of conflict is such as the one between the duty and the recommended act, such as giving precedence to the repayment of debts over voluntary sadaqat [donations]; or between a farida that has to be performed by every Muslim and a farida that can be performed by any Muslim on behalf of all Muslims.

The second type of conflict is like the conflict between giving priority to spending money on one's wife and family over spending money on a jihad that has not become an individual obligation and also the

financial support of one's parents should have precedence over jihad, as ordained by the sound hadith:

"The Prophet was asked, "Which act is better?" He said, "Praying at the due times of prayer, then treating one's parents well, then jihad for Allah's cause"

Jihad, once it is an individual obligation, comes before hajj if the latter is also an individual obligation and the same precedence is observed when the two are just recommended acts, according to the Quran and Sunnah. Reciting the Quran is given precedence over dhikr [remembrance of Allah] if the two of them require equal involvement of the heart and the tongue, while prayer is given precedence over the two of them if it demands involvement of the heart like them, otherwise precedence should be given to dhikr over the recital of the Quran that does not involve the heart. However, this is a very expansive field of fiqh.

The third type of conflict is like that between a woman's travel alone without a mahram [here: either her husband, or a man of her kin whom she may not marry and therefore would be safe from sin with him such as a brother, a father, an uncle, etc] and her stay in Dar al-Harb, as was done by Umm Kulthum, on whom Allah sent down the Verse of the Test:

"O you who believe! When there come to you believing women refugees, examine [and test] them" (Al-Mumtahana: 10)

Also in the fiqh of jihad, while killing noncombatant women and children and their like is haram, they may be killed if need arises for a type of combat that includes them, such as using mangonels or night raids, as is narrated in the Sunna with regard to striking a

siege around Taif and launching stones on it with the mangonel, and also with regard to raiding infidels, who are residing in the Muslim country, by night. This judgment is also aimed at averting the occurrence of fitna (temptation against one's creed) by killing those who, otherwise, should not be killed intentionally.

And such is the issue of *tatarrus* mentioned by *Jaqihs* (jurists). Jihad is a fight against the dissent sown by unbelief which is fought even if this involves accepting lesser evils. Therefore, *faqih*s agree that when the evil against Muslims can only be averted by means leading to killing those human shields, then they may be killed in some opinions.

Another type of conflict is that which occurs when a Muslim has to eat the flesh of a dead animal in case of extreme hunger, where eating will be a good act that can be done only through this evil act. An opposite case is whether to take an obnoxious medicine, as its harm will be more than the cure it causes, and because other medicines can replace it and also because cure is uncertain. The same applies to drinking wine as a medicine.

An evil may be tolerated in two cases: if it will lead to avoiding a worse evil that cannot be averted otherwise and if it will bring about an interest that can neither be abandoned nor be brought about otherwise. An interest or a benefit may be abandoned in two cases: if it involves the loss of a better interest, or if it entails an evil that is much larger. This is what relates to religious balances.

As for exemption from a duty as a result of a harm in earthly life, or allowing an illegal thing for the sake of a benefit in earthly life, such as exemption from fasting for the sake of travel, and allowing some

taboos in hajj on account of illness, exemption from certain fundamentals in prayer for illness, this is another field that falls under the leniency of religion and the elimination of hardships over which laws of various creeds may differ, contrary to the previous field which cannot be a matter of dispute among creeds, at least on generalities, for they may differ on its details.

This is even determined by reason, as the adage has it, "*A wise man is not that who can tell good from evil, but it is that who can tell the better of two good things and the lesser of two evils.*"

Therefore, it has settled in people's minds that at the time of drought, rain becomes a blessing, for although it makes the harvest of tyrants bigger its absence is harmful to all people. People also prefer having an unjust ruler to having no ruler at all. A wise man once said: "*Sixty years under a tyrant ruler are better than one night with no ruler.*"

Moreover, a ruler is held responsible for the aggressions he commits and the rights he neglects if he is in complete control of matters. However, I say that if a ruler or an official cannot discharge his duties and keep away from all the illegal things, but tries to avoid making mistakes while others make them intentionally, then he may, or should be given the office, because if the public office involves certain duties that have to be done, such as jihad against enemies, dividing the Fay enforcing hudud (major punishments) and ensuring security, then it has to be filled. It is only to be filled by someone who does not deserve it, and the official in question cannot prevent that, then his action will fall under the classification of (what is inevitable for discharging a duty becomes a duty) and so its harm would be accepted if it is less than the benefit of that duty.

Moreover, if public office is not a duty and is assumed by an unjust person, and someone else assumes it to lessen the injustice and lift its larger part by accepting its lesser part, then his action will be good according to this intention, and the evil will be committing in the course of his action to avert a larger evil will be a good deed.

This is a field where the intention is the determinant factor. If a tyrant asks a man to pay a certain amount of money and a mediator intervened to avert the injustice, taking only part of the money from the man and giving it the tyrant to ensure that his injustice is averted, and seeking to spare the man payment altogether, then this mediator will be doing a good deed. However, if he interferes to aid the tyrant, he will be committing an evil deed.

But the intention and act are foul in most of these cases. The intention is foul because it is aimed at power and wealth, and the act is foul because it is intentionally aimed at doing the unlawful and leaving out the obligations, not because of conflict or for the sake of the best interest.

Besides, while public office may be permissible, desirable or imperative, there could be other things that are more imperative or desirable to the man appointed to it, so he gives precedence to the better of the two good things, sometimes out of obligation and sometimes out of preference.

This classification includes the Prophet Joseph's assumption of responsibility for the store houses of the land for the King of Egypt, even his asking for this position, while the King and his people were unbelievers:

"And to you there came Joseph in times gone by, with Clear Signs, but you did not cease to doubt of the [mission] for which he had come" (Ghafir: 34)

Allah says about Joseph,

"O my two companions of the prison! [I ask you]: are many lords differing among themselves better, or Allah the One, Supreme and Irresistible? Whatever you worship apart from Him is nothing but names which you have named, you and your fathers" (Yusuf: 39-40)

Unbelievers as they were, they had to have a system and a tradition for collecting money and spending it on the King's court, soldiers and subjects, and such a system and a tradition did not agree with the practices and justice of prophets. So, Joseph was unable to do all that he wanted by way of establishing the [approved] practices of Allah, for these people would not go along with him. However, did what he could to establish justice and good, and he gained, through his power, for the believers among his family members what he could not have achieved otherwise. All of this falls under Allah's saying:

"So fear Allah as much as you can" (Taghabun: 16)

If two duties coincide but only one can be done and the more important is chosen, then the other is no longer a duty, and he who leaves it for the more important duty will not be shirking a duty.

Similarly, if two prohibited things combine so that the lesser of them has to be committed in order to avert the larger one, doing the lesser one will not be prohibited in fact. However, the action is called in the first case a shirking of duty and in the second case a committing of a prohibited action. It is said in this connection, "The duty was left

for an excuse and the evil was done for the sake of preponderant interest, or for the sake of necessity or for averting a worse evil".

This field of conflict is very expansive, especially where the inherited practices of Sunna and Caliphate are rare and hence these conflicts become more. The more the rarity of them, the more the aspects of conflict and the causes for dissent in the Nation. When interests and evils are confused, ambiguity occurs, with some people seeing the interests and choose a certain thing that involves great evils, others seeing the evils and choose another thing: that leaves out many interests, and still others who ponder the two things.

A wise scholar should consider these matters carefully, for he may have, as I have already said, to be flexible in passing decisions on certain affairs instead of firmly allowing or banning something, such as when he is about to order a duty that involves a greater evil, in which case he must not order the duty in order to avert the evil. For instance, one might turn over a guilty man to a tyrant ruler who sentences him to a punishment that exceeds his crime, or order a ban on doing some evil things that involve a good thing that exceeds the goodness done by stopping these evils, in which case one should not order the ban so that it may not involve leaving what Allah and His Messenger have ordered, which could be greater in benefit than leaving these evils.

GLOSSARY

Ahl al-Dhimma	Lit. the people under protection covenant; the non-Muslim subjects of a Muslim government, belonging to the Jewish Christian or Sabeian creed, who for the payment of polltax, enjoys security of their persons and property in a Muslim country
Ahl al-Kitab	Lit. the people of scripture; Jews & Christian
Awqaf	Religious trusts or endowments
Dar al-Harb	The land of warfare; a country in which peace has not been proclaimed between muslim and unbelievers
Dar al-Islam	The land of Islam; territories in which Islam and Islamic religious law prevail
F'arida	An enjoined duty; compulsory act of worship
Fatwa	A legal Islamic opinion
Fiqh	Literal sense: a framework of understanding Terminological sense: provisions of Islamic Law
Ghusl	Major ablution; ceremonial washing of the body
Halal & Haram	Respectively, what is lawful and what is forbidden in Islam
Hijra	The migration of Muslim to Medina
Jahiliyya	The pre-Islamic era The adoption of the pagan practices of that period
Janaba	A ceremonial impurity (that necessitates Ghusl)
Jihad	Striving in the cause of Allah
Masaleh mursala	Public interests
Mawali	Non-Arab Muslims
Nafila	An optional, supererogatory practice of worship, in contrast to farida
Ribat	Guarding Muslims from infidels
Sadaqat	Supererogatory spending for charity of Zakat
Tahlil	Uttering the formula of faith "La ila ha illa Allah" (No god but Allah)
Takbir	Uttering the formula "Allahu Akbar" (Allah is the Greatest)
Takfir	Judgment of someone as unbeliever
Tasbih	Uttering the formula "Subhana Allah" (Glory to be Allah)
Usul al-Fiqh	Principles of jurisprudence