

The Eye of the Beholder

THE MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD OVER THE PAST 70 YEARS

SHEIKH YUSUF AL-QARADAWI

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THE MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD OVER
THE PAST 70 YEARS

الإخوان المسلمون
سبعون عاما
في الدعوة والتربية والجهاد

Sheikh Yusuf al-Qaradawi

AL-FALAH FOUNDATION

For Translation, Publication & Distribution

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PUBLICATION & DISTRIBUTION 1424/ 2003.

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Published by:

AL-FALAH FOUNDATION FOR TRANSLATION,
PUBLICATION & DISTRIBUTION

24 At-Tayaran st., Nasr City, Cairo, Egypt

Tel. & fax: (202)2622838

Website: www.falahonline.com

E-mail: info@falahonline.com

I.S.B.N.: 977-5813-52-2

رقم الإيداع: ٩٩/١١٠٠٩

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Preface

Whoever does not seek lessons in history cannot be qualified to deal skillfully with the present nor can he be well aware of what he should do in his way towards the future. The Muslim Brotherhood is the mother of the contemporary Islamic movement; it is the first of them in terms of time, the largest in terms of number, and the most widespread among them. Perhaps due to this prominent position, there is no other organization in the contemporary history that has ever been afflicted with so many accusations and doubts as the Muslim Brotherhood.

Following a scientific, authenticated way, away from prejudice, exaggeration, and extravagance, the great scholar, Sheikh Yusuf al-Qaradawi, has shouldered the responsibility of wiping the dust off the Call of the Muslim Brotherhood Organization, shedding light on the reality of its objectives, approach, characteristics, history, trials, and accomplishments, and refuting the doubts and accusations raised against it.

Under such circumstances where people are approaching the abyss of devastating destruction today, and with the terrible sufferings that the human nature and the human soul are undergoing, one may wonder: what is the way to salvation from this universal crisis? Definitely, the answer is provided through the Divine statement,

﴿... whosoever follows My guidance, will not lose his way, nor fall into misery...﴾

(Taha: 123)

Hence, Islam is the only way to salvation. Those who faithfully and sincerely shoulder the responsibility of *da`wah* to Islam today, backed by their knowledge and understanding of historical lessons, are seeking to achieve the prospective salvation, so that the world will step towards a new world full of happiness, tranquility, and prosperity and free from suffering and misery.

Al-Falah feels indebted to Sheikh al-Qaradawi for giving it the chance to present this valuable work to our English-speaking readers.

Finally, all praise and thanks are due to Allah, without Whose help and guidance nothing can be accomplished.

Al-Falah supervisor

Sheikh Muhammad `Abdu

Introduction

Praise be to Allah, and the blessings and peace of Allah be upon his Messengers, their seal Muhammad, his Companions, and whoever follows in their steps.

In July 1998, *Al-Jazirah* channel of Qatar presented an interesting show in its famous program '*Al-Ittijah al-Mu'akis* (Opposite Direction) about "the Muslim Brotherhood organization" on the occasion that seventy years had passed since it began.

The first party in the debate was Prof. Dr. Tawfiq ash-Shawi, a former professor in the faculty of Law, Cairo University. He is a well-known Islamic writer and a member of the constitutional body of the Organization.

The other party was Major General Fu'ad `Allam, one of the officers who were known of tormenting Muslim Brotherhood members in 1965, that he was called "the king of tormenting."

After his retirement, it was assumed that he would confess his sin and ask for Allah's forgiveness, but he wrote a book entitled "Muslim Brotherhood and I" in which he declared himself innocent and the Muslim Brotherhood as having the problem.

Anyway, the testimony of such a man is not accepted for a number of reasons, the first of which is that he is a rival, and a rival can neither be a witness nor an arbiter. That is why it was strange that this program hosted him more than once, although he is not a scholar or a thinker, nor is he a theologian. It was also strange that Dr. Ash-Shawi accepted to debate with him.

A number of issues were discussed in this episode, part of which were through phone calls, but they were not perfectly clarified. Likewise, there were questions that were not answered, perhaps because of the lack of time, the lack of forbearance, or whatever.

Some Brothers asked me to write something to defend Muslim Brotherhood's right in the face of the accusations raised by their rivals, and to refute these accusations. Due to the fact that I was brought up under the shade of this Organization and learned from its Imams and their students, I see that I have to write these papers to wipe the dust off their Call. I also have to shed some light on this Organization's goals, approaches, characteristics, biography, process, accomplishments, effects, sufferings, and tribulations. Moreover, I will refute the doubts and accusations raised against it. In this work, I will essentially concentrate on the position of the founder of this movement, the Martyr Imam Hasan al-Banna, seeking testimony in his words and quoting from his tracts. It has come to represent the whole *jihad*, practice, and ideology of the major Islamic trend, which has followed in Al-Banna's path, derived from it, added to it, and, perhaps, caused some change in it.

I am not dealing here with the movement from the viewpoint of a historian but I am speaking somewhat in brief, answering some questions and reconciling matters. This is because I am a man who has been living among Muslim Brotherhood members, and I was one of those Brothers who faced tribulations before and after July revolution in 1952, those Brothers who persevered patiently and whom suffering made more firm and righteous:

﴿ But they never lost heart if they met with disaster in Allah's way, nor did they weaken (in will) nor give in. And Allah loves those who are firm and steadfast. All that they said was: 'Our Lord! Forgive us our sins and anything we may have done that transgressed our duty: establish our feet firmly, and help us against those that resist faith.' ﴾

(Al `Imran: 146-147)

In fact, I did not expect that research would take that much time, but it is not much considering the fact that this is the first and biggest of Islamic organizations, the Organization that has existence and followers in more than seventy countries.

I blamed, and still blame, Muslim Brotherhood members for their negligence of registering their history in an authenticated, objective, and scientific way, away from the way of those who launch attacks on them, or

the way of those who see their history as nothing but glories. Rather, the Organization must be looked at in a methodological, mediate perspective that declares both what is for and what is against it. There must be a differentiation between the Organization's sources and goals and the human efforts and positions of its members. This would be on the consideration that they are a group of Muslims who do their best to serve Islam, promote its nation, and support its issues. If their *ijtihad* brings them to what is right, they will receive two rewards, and if it brings them to what is wrong, they will receive only one reward, as the Prophet (pbuh) taught us. Meanwhile, no just man can deny that most of the Organization's endeavors have proved true.

But, to be fair and scientific, we should not get events out of their historical context, and we should understand them just as texts are understood in the light of their occasions, implications, and objectives.

A number of the members of the Organization have already started writing individually, including Mahmud `Abd al-Halim, `Abbas as-Sisi, and others. Some of them have written about the founder of the Movement, Imam al-Banna, may Allah be pleased with him. All these are steps towards a scientific writing of the history of the Organization, which will supervise it and give its responsibility to specialized scholars who are capable of sufficient criticism and analysis.

It is wondrous that I write this introduction in the middle of February, 1999, exactly after fifty solar years since the assassination of Imam al-Banna on the twelfth of February, in 1949 AC. He had been assassinated to be presented to king Faruq on his birthday, which was celebrated on the eleventh of February, in 1949 AC. I still remember that day.

Thus, this book is written on two important occasions: the first one is that seventy solar years, or more than seventy two lunar years, have passed since the foundation of the Muslim Brotherhood Organization.

The second occasion is that fifty years have passed since the murder of Imam al-Banna. On the occasion that thirty years had passed since his murder, I wrote my book entitled *At-Tarbiyah al-Islamiyyah wa Madrasat Hasan al-Banna* (Islamic Education and Hasan al-Banna's School).

Anyhow, this is my testimony that I register for truth and history, because everyone's writings will be subject to account.

﴿ O our Lord! Truly Thou dost know what we conceal and what we reveal: for nothing whatever is hidden from Allah, whether on earth or in heaven. ﴾

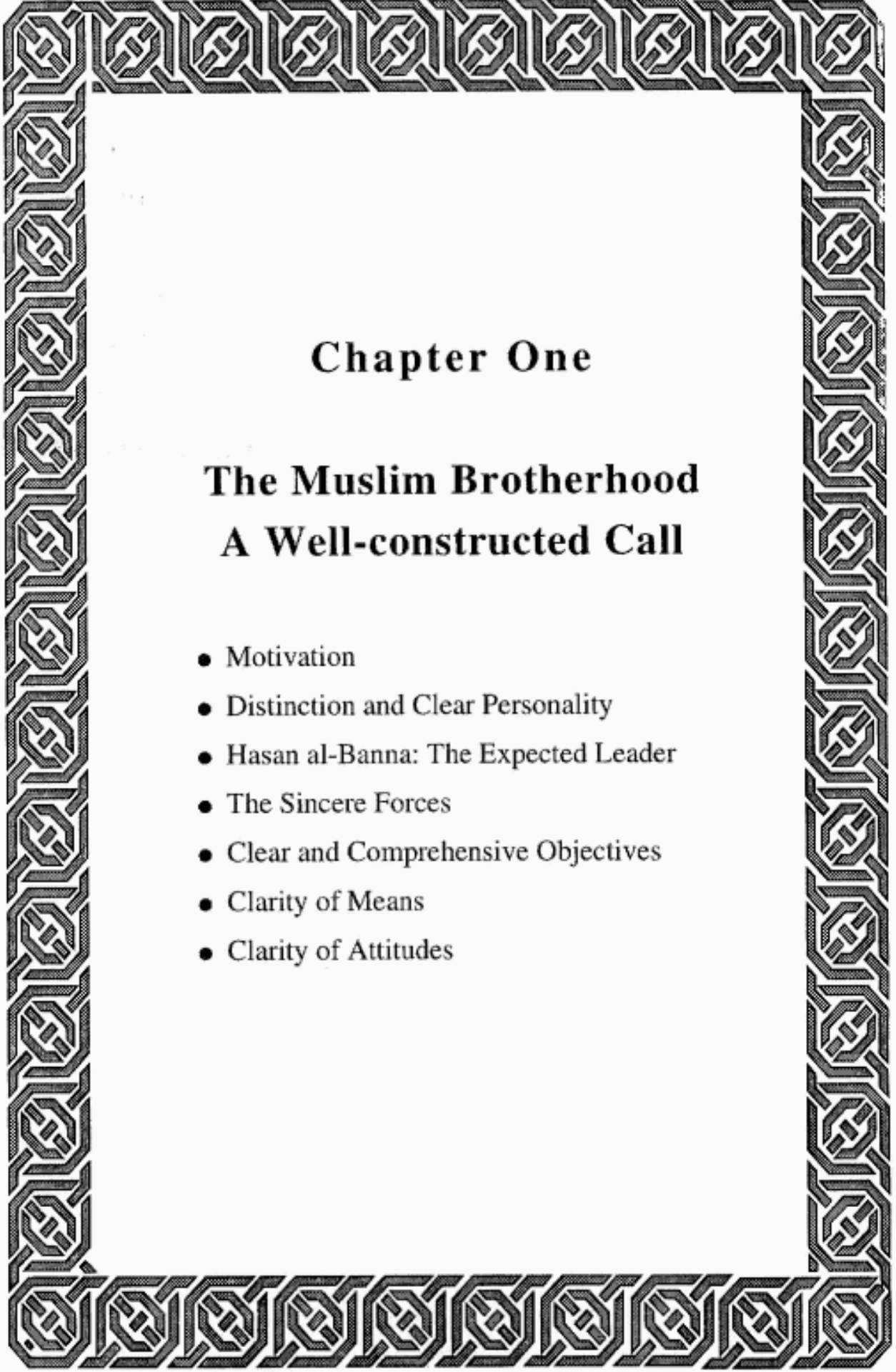
(Ibrahim: 38)

Doha

Dhul-Qa`dah, 1419 AH

February, 1999 AC

Yusuf al - Qaradawi



Chapter One

The Muslim Brotherhood A Well-constructed Call

- Motivation
- Distinction and Clear Personality
- Hasan al-Banna: The Expected Leader
- The Sincere Forces
- Clear and Comprehensive Objectives
- Clarity of Means
- Clarity of Attitudes

A Well-constructed Call

A well-constructed call should have principles and integrals that fulfil its role in revitalization, illumination, education, purification, restoration, reconstruction, *Jihad*, liberation, and unification. And, Muslim Brotherhood has such principles.

The seven principles which characterize the Muslim Brotherhood are:

1. Motivation
2. Distinction and clear personality and features
3. A wise leader
4. Faithful followers
5. Clear objectives
6. Clear means
7. Clear attitudes

Whoever reads the history of the Muslim Brotherhood since it was founded in Al-Isma`iliyyah by the Suez Canal in Egypt will find that this Call has the above principles.

1. Motivation

The motivation behind the Call was very necessary. It was necessary to have a new call to reconstruct and reform what the colonization and the rulers had demolished. This is because people were in a dire need to revive their minds with knowledge and their hearts with faith, to renew their way of life with commitment to religion, and to fight against the destructive ideas, perverted calls and diverted corporations which were attacking people's minds through misconceptions and their souls through desires.

Islam was also in need of a call that would fill the field and encourage the *Ummah*. Yet, there was no one among those who represented Islam at that time capable enough to undertake this duty. For, Al-Azhar scholars were only interested in local issues. The authorities, following foreign occupation, would isolate Al-Azhar from life and make things difficult for its scholars and students to make them only search for subsistence and preoccupy them with bread winning.

Likewise, sufi schools were occupied with their rituals rather than the reformation and restoration of Islam. Still, they themselves were in great need of such reformation. For, he who lacks something cannot in turn give it.

Therefore, the Muslim *Ummah* was in need of a new call to revive the Prophet's call. There must be people who shoulder the responsibility as did the Companions of the Prophet (pbuh). Such people are characterized as the adherents to religion in the time of affliction and adversity as stated in the Prophetic *hadith*:

"There will be a time in which patience will be like holding blazing stones. The good-doer will deserve the reward of fifty people who do like you."

Another version added,

"It was said, 'O Messenger of Allah! A reward of fifty people of us or of them? He (pbuh) said, 'The reward of fifty people of you.'"

A Well-timed Call

The timely appearance of the Brotherhood Movement was a sign of success. The Brotherhood Call came at a time when Muslims were in great need of it, when their countries were eaten one by one by the predatory imperialism and controlled by it right after World War I. Britain and France had distributed the Muslim lands among themselves according to the famous agreement of Saics Bico. Egypt, Sudan, Iraq, Palestine, India (before being divided into India and Pakistan), Malaysia, Nigeria, and other African countries went to Britain. Syria, Lebanon, Northwest Africa (Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco), Mauritania, Senegal, and other countries went to France. Even Holland, whose population did not exceed five million souls at that time, had colonized Indonesia which had a population of fifty million souls! The Muslim world as a whole - except for the Hejaz, Nejd, and Yemen - had fallen into the ruthless clutches of imperialism.

Afterwards, the Muslim *Ummah* suffered from one of the greatest catastrophes of its time, that is the fall of the Caliphate. A single Muslim state would be torn into individual scattered states, and a united Muslim Ummah would be split into smaller nations that offended, antagonized, and even fought one another. Unfortunately, these littered states behaved, and are still behaving, toward each other in such a way on the plea of different claims that reflect nothing but blind fanaticism based on ethnic, territorial, or lingual differences. The single home of Islam - as expressed by Muslim jurists - became a group of estranged states disputing about the borders which the extortive imperialism made between them.

The man-made law, which the colonists came with, displaced Islamic *Shari'ah* - which had remained for thirteen centuries the source of legislation for the Muslim *Ummah* - and has been governing Muslims against their will.

The philosophical, moral, social, political, economic, and cultural thought of the West became the source of influence and planning instead of Islam over all spheres in our Muslim society.

Islam was no longer the pillar of identity, belonging, and loyalty for Muslims as it had always been before. It was rivaled, and rather resisted by other identities, and other pictures of belonging and loyalty. Postulates

concerned with Islamic faith, intellect, and legislation became a subject for doubt. Some books appeared in Egypt with this aim such as Dr. Taha Husayn's *Fi ash-Shi'r al-Jahili* (Pre-Islamic Poetry), published in 1926, and Sheikh `Ali `Abd ar-Raziq's *Fi Usul al-Hukm* (Fundamentals of Governing), which appeared in 1925, and in which the writer denied any relation between Islam and government; he looked upon Islam as a mere spiritual message, the view which was never held by anyone in the past and which is totally corrupt.

And, with the fall of the Caliphate, that the shelter of Islam became open before everybody, even cowards, to violate. The fall of the Caliphate in the year 1924 was one of the most severe disasters which had violently shaken our Muslim *Ummah* and which was similar to the Crusades' usurpation of Jerusalem, and the Tartars' occupation of Baghdad in the past.

What made the disaster more grievous is that the one who abolished the Caliphate was the same man who misled the Muslims for quite a long time and whom they considered one of the heroes of Islam. And, after winning some battle, Ahmad Shawqi himself - one of the most celebrated Egyptian poets - likened him to Khalid ibn al-Walid (the well known Companion of the Prophet (pbuh)).

Whenever Mustafa Kamal Atatürk achieved any victory, Muslims would cheer and chant, "Kamal the conqueror!" Unfortunately, they would also regard it as a victory for Islam, support for the caliphate, and the Muslim *Ummah* as a whole, and a backup to the efforts of reform and revolution. But they came to realize that this hero was only an illusion that had deceived them for so long. For, Kamal had become an enemy of Islam, and a destroyer of its fort and Caliphate.

Muslims everywhere became furious and summits were held for restoration of the Caliphate. But, it is of no use to cry over spilled milk. The conspiracy was greater and deeper than the angry and sad efforts in India, Egypt, and other Muslim countries.

The battlefield became empty and in need of a new hero who could plan for the battle with a new mind, a new weapon, and new soldiers.

The Violent Wave of Westernization

The violent wave of intellectual and social westernization is the thing that urged the appearance of a new call. Imam Hasan al-Banna (may Allah have mercy upon him) gave this westernizing wave the name of "Materialism's dominant influence over Muslim countries". Imam al-Banna emphasized the consequences of this intense Western invasion whose dangerous effects appeared clearly throughout the different Muslim peoples, especially in Egypt despite its Islamic status and its glorious history in defending Islam. He clearly pointed this out in the tract of *Between Yesterday and Today*, saying:

"The Europeans worked hard to enable the tide of this materialistic life, with its corrupt traits and its fatal germs, to overwhelm all the Muslim lands that destiny brought under their hands. In the same time, they were careful to appropriate for themselves the means of power and prosperity through science, knowledge, industry, and good organization, while barring these very nations from them. They laid their plans for this social aggression in a masterly fashion, invoking the aid of their political acumen and their military predominance until they had accomplished their desire. They deluded Muslim leaders by granting them loans and entering into financial dealings with them, making all of this easy and effortless for them. They were thus able to obtain the right to infiltrate the economy and to flood the countries with their capital, their banks, and their companies, to take over the operation of the economic machinery as they wished, and to monopolize, to the exclusion of the inhabitants, enormous profits and immense wealth. After that, they were able to alter the basic principles of government, justice, and education, and to imbue political, juridical, and cultural systems with their own peculiar character in even the most powerful Muslim countries.

They imported their half-naked women into these regions, together with their liquor, their theaters, their dance halls, their amusements, their stories, their newspapers, their novels, their whims, their games, and their vices. Here they countenanced crimes they did not tolerate in their own countries, and decked out this frivolous, strident world, reeking with sin and redolent

with vice, to the eyes of deluded, unsophisticated Muslims of wealth and prestige, and to those of rank and authority. This being insufficient for them, they founded schools and scientific and cultural institutes in the very heart of the Muslim domain, which cast doubt and heresy into the minds of its sons and taught them how to demean themselves, disparage their religion and their fatherland, divest themselves of their traditions and beliefs, and to regard anything Western as sacred, in the belief that only things that had a European source could serve as a model to be emulated in this life. These schools took in the sons of the upper class alone, and became a preserve restricted to them. The sons of this class consisted of the mighty and the ruling group, and those who would shortly hold within their grasp the keys to all important matters that concerned these nations and peoples. Those whose characters were not completely molded in these local institutes found all that would guarantee them this in the continuing series of student missions.

This drastic, well-organized social campaign achieved great success, since it was rendered most attractive to the mind, and would continue to exert a strong intellectual influence on individuals over a long period of time. For this reason, it was more dangerous than the political and military campaigns by far, and some Muslim countries went overboard in their admiration for this European civilization and in their dissatisfaction with their own Muslim character, to the point that Turkey declared itself a non-Islamic state and imitated the Europeans with the utmost rigor in everything they did. Amanullah Khan, king of Afghanistan, tried this, but the attempt cost him his throne. In Egypt, the manifestations of this mimicry increased and became so serious that one of its intellectual leaders could say openly that the only path to progress was to adopt this civilization with all it contained of good and evil, sweet and bitter, the appealing and the hateful, the praiseworthy and the reprehensible. From Egypt, it began to spread rapidly and vigorously into neighboring countries, until it reached Morocco and circumambulated the very shrines in the purlieu of the Hejaz. We may subdivide the Muslim countries, according to the degrees to which they were affected by this materialistic civilization and the domination of its materialism over them, into three groups:

1. Countries in which this influence has reached serious proportions, penetrating even the mind and the feelings, apart from outward forms and conventions. Among these countries are Turkey and Egypt, where even the slightest trace of Muslim ideology has disappeared from all social situations, and has been driven off to take up quarters inside mosques and sufi establishments and retreats.
2. Countries which have been influenced by this civilization in their official observances and conventions, but in which it has not triumphed over their inward sensibilities. Such are Iran and the countries of North Africa.
3. Countries which have not been influenced by this civilization, except for a particular class consisting of the well-educated persons and the ruling group, to the exclusion of the common people and the masses. Such are Syria, Iraq, the Hejaz, many sections of the Arabian Peninsula, and the remainder of the Muslim Countries.

Nevertheless, this wave is spreading out with the speed of lightning to reach into minds, social classes, and things that it has not yet penetrated. Enemies of Islam can deceive Muslim intellectuals and draw a thick veil over the eyes of the zealous by depicting Islam itself as being defective in various aspects of doctrine, ritual observance, and morality, besides the accommodation of a host of rites, superstitions, and inane formalities.

What helps them to carry out this deception is the Muslims' ignorance of the true meaning of their religion, so that many of them are satisfied with this presentation, rest content with it, and accept it. For so long time this has been true of them that it is difficult for us to make any of them understand that Islam is a perfect system of social organization which encompasses all the affairs of life. As a result, it is possible for us to say that Western civilization, with its materialistic ideology, has triumphed in this social struggle over Muslim civilization, with its sound ideology comprising both thought and matter, in the very territories of Islam, and in a ruthless war whose battlefield has been the spirits and minds of Muslims as well as their beliefs and intellects, exactly as it has triumphed on the political and military battlefield. It is no wonder, for the phenomena of life are not fragmented; what is strong is wholly strong, and what is weak is wholly weak:

﴿Such days (of varying fortunes) We give to men and men by turns.﴾

(Al `Imran: 140)

However, the principles and teachings of Islam are still powerful in their essential nature, abundantly fertile and vital, attractive and enchanting their splendor and beauty. They will remain so because they are the truth, and human existence will never achieve perfection and virtue through any other means, and because they are part of Allah's creation and under His Care:

﴿We have, without doubt, sent down the Message; and We will assuredly guard it (from corruption).﴾

(Al-Hijr: 9)

﴿But Allah will not allow but that His Light should be perfected, even though the Unbelievers may detest it.﴾

(At-Tawbah: 32)⁽¹⁾

Egypt and the Arab and Muslim World under the Spotlight

To conclude: the state of affairs in Egypt, as well as in the Arab and Muslim world was asking persistently for a new call, the call which Imam al-Banna named "*Da`wat al-Ba`th wal-Inqadh*" (the Call of Revival and Deliverance).

We should discuss the state of affairs in these areas objectively and as it really was, away from the influence of emotions, in order to realize how al-Banna's call was a religious obligation and a practical necessity.

I will shed light upon Egypt's conditions in the coming paragraphs, with some adaptation, making use of what Dr. Mahmud Abu as-Su`ud wrote in his foreword to Richard. B. Michele's book about the Muslim Brotherhood concerning the state of affairs in Egypt:

1. An undistinguishable country torn out of its origin after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire which was torn limb from limb by the triumphant allies, and the overthrow of the Muslim Caliphate by Kamal Ataturk who carried high the banner of secularism instead. The English at the same time implemented the secret Saics Bico agreement, held in Moscow in 1915,

1. The tract, *Between Yesterday and Today*.

according to which Egypt became under the control of the British Empire although it was ornamented with the pretense of independence.

Egypt found itself isolated from the rest of the Muslim world in the Middle East and deeply felt the incapability of Muslims, during the period it was suffering greatly under the yoke of imperialism. The imperialists encouraged the wave of fanatic nationalism aiming at replacing "religion" with "homeland" directing all loyalty to one's country not to Allah, making Muslims swear by their country instead of Allah, and making them die for the sake of their country not for the sake of Allah.

2. A believing people - the Egyptians - who had strong faith in Allah and Islam, yet the majority of them were illiterate. They were poor people unfairly exploited by others, although they originally have a glorious and deep-rooted history, a noble and gracious origin, a good nature besides a great portion of intelligence and wisdom. Their environmental and historical conditions implemented in their character love for peace and not for surrender or submission, as many people think. The Egyptian - Muslim or non-Muslim - may submit for sometime to an oppressive ruler or he may stop striving materially if defeated by some imperialist, yet his heart is always throbbing with feelings of rebellion against oppression. One can see this obviously in the Egyptian's sarcastic smile and hear it clearly in his biting joke. Rather when he gets the chance his rebellion will make him get rid of the overcoming conditions and realize what he thought before to be impossible.

The Egyptian people during this period were completely helpless, and were never to stage the 1919 revolution except for the utter loss they felt. This revolution - for them - was a sort of identification and an expression of existence. Through it they wanted to feel their humanity by expressing their will plainly.

The Egyptians' revolution was not a demand for bread although the people were starving, nor for abolishing land ownership though they possessed nothing of it⁽¹⁾, nor for canceling the class of beys and pashas although the majority belonged to the lower poor class. It was a different

1. Ninety percent of the population possessed ten percent of the agricultural land and ten percent of the beys and pashas possessed ninety percent of it.

thing, it was a faithful expression of real feelings which rejected imperialism strongly. The Egyptians by all odds asked sincerely for independence, yet they never thought or imagined even the faintest picture of their country under the shade of independence.

Amidst this great revolution Islam never lost its stature among the Egyptians. It was still alive in their hearts, minds, and conscience. The demonstrations came out from Al-Azhar, the symbol and academy of Islam at that time. The people regarded anyone that was killed in this revolution by the English or the ruling authority, as a martyr who is worthy of the eternal Garden in the Hereafter. Islam was really in the core of the 1919 revolution.

3. A sly, intelligent, strong, and mean imperialism which had studied Egypt's conditions thoroughly and closely, and established itself firmly in its land with the help of some rulers, mainly the class of ministers. This imperialism paved the way for itself in order to control Egypt through two means:

- a. The ideological imperialism: Imperialists, since the very beginning of the occupation worked earnestly to remove Islam from the helm of affairs, to isolate it from legislation and to restrict it to personal law. It managed to separate knowledge from religion, and to separate the civil and religious schools. A bottomless gap was created as a result between Islam and materialism which the imperialism had imposed through legislation and education.
- b. The material imperialism: Imperialists directed the country's economy toward the production of the raw material which the agricultural land offered. When we were in school we used to read in the school's books that Egypt is an agricultural country that lacks the basics of industry! In addition, imperialism succeeded in drawing the youth toward the government, as the schools graduated the students to be civil servants. A person's value in the balance of social ethics became weighed according to his civil service. The career of the person who studied Islamic sciences was restricted to being a mosque's Imam, a *ma'dhun*, an employee in the religious court, a teacher of Arabic and Qur'an in the civil schools, or a teacher in the religious institutes from which he had graduated.

If the case is so, it becomes very clear how the imperialist policy succeeded in fighting Islam as a philosophy of life, a way of dealing with others, and a constitution that draws for people the limits of equality and freedom, and the responsibility they bear toward solidarity, learning, and work.

4. An oppressive regime: The king was dictatorially imposed on the people, and the constitution was established in a way that restrained the authority and sovereignty of the Egyptian government. According to the constitution, laws concerned with the foreigners differed from those concerned with the Egyptian citizens. The judge responsible for implementing these laws was not to be an Egyptian.

The king was far away from his people and could hardly speak their language, not to mention his alienation from them in their feelings, sufferings, and hopes. His first and last concern was to remain on the throne to relish the superiority and welfare it conferred upon him. He looked upon Egypt as if it were a captive whom he owned and managed the affairs of its people as he pleased.

5. A ruling upper class selected by the king and approved by the imperialists most of whose members were either Albanians or Turks who had inherited, from their parents or grandparents, vast areas of agricultural lands which were nationalized by the state during the era of king Muhammad `Ali the great, and were afterwards distributed by khedive Isma`il among his relatives and close friends.

This class knew nothing about the Qur'an except its form and nothing about Islam except some of its rituals. They were brought up in European schools and spoke their language more fluently than the language of the Qur'an and of their citizens. It continued to hold the reins of government even after the 1919 revolution and the 1923 constitution. Nevertheless, the political scene witnessed the appearance of some men who were absolutely Egyptian and who joined Al-Wafd party which represented the majority of the Egyptians. Such men were to hold the helm of affairs whenever a crisis appeared in the horizon and their government remained only for a very short period of time. Then, the king dismissed them with their government in the

wake of a crisis fabricated by him or by the imperialists who were occupying the country.

The ruling class consisted of the rich and educated people who possessed the resources of wealth in Egypt. Although there were many parties, most of the people were adhering strongly to one party, that is, Al-Wafd party whose leader Sa'd Zaghlul was from among the Egyptians themselves, and his successor was Mustafa an-Nahhas.

Al-Wafd did not support Islam as a way of life nor was it in its agenda to restore Islamic legislation to life, or to spread Islam again among people as a perfect way of life, and a complete legislation sent down by Allah through revelation to His Messenger (pbuh) in order to set for people the example they should follow and to establish for them the basis of ethical, economic, social, and political dealings. Nevertheless, the leaders of this party were completely aware of how Islam was deeply inculcated in people's souls, so they made use of it as a means that could win people's support. The non-Muslim leaders of Al-Wafd memorized some verses of the Gracious Qur'an which they used to read in their public addresses because they knew very well the influence these verses would have on people, and the great impact they would leave in their hearts.

This was Egypt and these were the Egyptians: a country over which isolation was pitched; a people having strong faith in Allah yet ignorant and helpless; an imperialism - whether masked or unmasked - clutching the reins of power; a king completely isolated from people's feelings, thought, and even language; a ruling class possessing illegally the resources of wealth in the country and separating itself from the people in its ivory tower; a westernized legislation alien to the Egyptians traditions and beliefs; a new national trend, and a forced separation of Islam from the realities of life; education not directed from an Islamic perspective; culture not resting on Islam's notions; traditions having no relation to Islam's ethics; and laws not stemming from the Islamic *Shari'ah*.⁽¹⁾

1. See Dr. Abu as-Su'ud's foreword to Michele's book about the Brotherhood pp. 20-24. See also my book entitled *Al-Hulul al-Mustawradah wa kayfa Janat 'ala Ummatina* (The Imported Solutions and How They Harmed our *Ummah*), the chapter concerned with how Islam was separated from leading the society.

6. The Arab and Muslim world whose case was similar to that of Egypt, in that there was the same imperialism which dominated its capacities, and which gave birth to a class that suckles from the breast of its culture, was brought up in its lap, and prepared for governing people according to its way. There were also the same social gap between the filthy rich and the wretchedly poor, and the deceitful secular philosophy which isolated religion from life, spread the notion of "regional nationalism" or "racial nationalism" among the Muslim peoples, and planned to demolish the concept of "the single Muslim *Ummah*", which Allah intends for Muslims so that these Muslim peoples would remain scattered into smaller, separated nations that antagonized and rather fought one another. These Muslim peoples, though, were once merged in one nation, that is, the Islamic nation, governed by a single law, namely the Islamic *Shari`ah*, and unified by one state, that is, the caliphate.

Amidst this dark and gloomy atmosphere shone the ray of the Brotherhood's Call when Egypt, and the great Arab and Muslim world were in bad need for it. It was really "the call of revival and deliverance" as Imam al-Banna named it.

This call sprang from al-Banna's thought and overflowing emotions instigating into him the feeling of duty towards his Muslim *Ummah* and urging him to spare all his energy in order to revive Islam in its soul.

And, some of the factors that helped set al-Banna firmly on the path of *da`wah* were his upbringing and education. His life in Cairo - as he lived there after leaving Damanhur (an Egyptian province) to complete his study - and what he saw, heard, and experienced in the capital of Egypt encouraged him strongly to initiate his call.

The Call was at first simple yet still deep, limited but strong, limited in quantity yet great in quality, short of funds and facilities yet rich in its firmly established faith, unshaken trust, and unwavering ambition. All these things can - if brought into light - change the face of the earth.

2. Distinction and Clarity of Personality

From the very first of establishing the Muslim Brotherhood it was known that distinction and clear personality were what characterized its Call. From the very beginning, it declared that it was a genuine Islamic call. It was a call derived from Islam, depending upon Islam, aiming at Islam, proceeding with Islam, and arising from Islam.

By adhering to Islam this call specifies its targets, and from Islam it appoints its means and course, and from Islam it identifies its reference.

Its slogan is Islamic: "Allah is our objective, the Messenger is our example, the Qur'an is our law, *jihad* is our way, and dying for Allah's sake is our greatest wish". Its hailing is Islamic: "Allah is the Greatest and praise be to Allah, there is no god but Allah, and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah; we live upon it, we die for it, and for its sake we strive until we meet Allah". Its anthems are Islamic.

People asked: What is your mission, O Muslim Brothers? We have not understood you yet, so define yourself for us and give yourself a title by which you can be known, just as the institutions are known by titles. Are you Sufis, or are you a charitable association, or a social foundation or a political party?

Answering these questions, Imam Hasan al-Banna said to his Brothers, "Say to those people, 'Our mission is the comprehensive and inclusive call of the Qur'an: a sufi way, a charity organization, a social institution, and an honest political party. After all this, they may say, 'You are still ambiguous'. Then say to them, 'This is because you do not have the switch with which you can turn on the light through which you can see us. We represent Islam, O people. So whoever comprehends it in a right way will know us just as he knows himself. Thus, you should first comprehend Islam and then say whatever you wish about us.' "

In another situation, Al-Banna clarified the essential nature of the Muslim Brotherhood Call, saying in brief but strong words,

"O Brothers, you are not a charity organization, nor a political party, nor a local association with strictly limited aims. Rather, you are a new spirit making its way into the heart of this nation and reviving it through the Qur'an, a new light dawning and dissipating the darkness of materialism through the Knowledge of Allah; a resounding voice rising and echoing the call of the Messenger (pbuh). It is simply the truth, and no exaggeration, that you know that you are bearing the burden after the rest of mankind have forsaken it. If someone should ask you, 'To what end is your appeal made?' say, 'We are calling you to Islam, which was brought by Muhammad (pbuh); government is part of it, and freedom is one of its religious duties'. If someone should say to you, 'This is politics,' say, 'This is Islam, and we do not recognize such divisions'. If someone should say to you, 'You are agents of revolution', say, 'We are agents of the truth and of peace in which we believe and which we exalt. If you rise up against us and offer hindrance to our call, Allah has given us permission to defend ourselves, and you will be unjust rebels'. If someone should say to you, 'You are asking for the help of individuals and associations', say, 'We believe in Allah alone, and reject that which you were associating with Him'. And if they persist in their hostility, say, 'Peace be unto you! We have no desire for the ignorant'."

The Islam of the Brotherhood

In his old tract *Our Call*, Al-Banna said under the title "Our Islam",

"Listen, Brother! Our Call is one described most comprehensively by the term "Islamic" though this word has a meaning broader than the narrow definition understood by people generally. We believe that Islam is an all-embracing concept which regulates every aspect of life, adjudicating on every one its concerns and prescribing for it a solid and rigorous order. It does not stand helpless before life's problems, nor the steps one must take to improve mankind. Some people mistakenly understand by Islam something restricted to certain types of religious observances or spiritual exercises, and confine themselves and their understanding to these narrow areas determined by their limited grasp.

But, we understand Islam - as opposed to this view - very broadly and comprehensively as regulating the affairs of men in this world and the next. We do not make this claim out of presumption, nor do we enlarge upon it on the basis of our own preconceptions; rather, it is based solely on our understanding of the Book of Allah, the *Sunnah* of His Prophet, and the biographies of the early Muslims. If the reader wishes to understand the Call of the Muslim Brotherhood in a sense broader than the mere word "Islamic", let him take up his Qur'an and rid himself of whims and prejudgment. Then, he will come to understand what the Qur'an is about and will see in it the Call of the Muslim Brotherhood.

Yes indeed, our Call is "Islamic" in every sense of the word. With that taken into account, understand by it what you will, as long as this understanding is confined to the Book of Allah, the *Sunnah* of His Prophet, and biographies of the early righteous generation of Muslims. The Qur'an is the foundation of Islam and its pillar, and the *Sunnah* of His Prophet is explanation and commentary on the Book, while the biographies of the early righteous generation (may Allah be pleased with them) embody their execution of its commands and their obedience to its teachings. They are the practical examples and the ideal models of these commandments and teachings."

Muslim Brotherhood Is an Effective Islamic Movement

Just as the Muslim Brotherhood's Call was distinguished by its obvious Islamic characteristics: its Islamic origin, its Islamic starting point, its Islamic objective, and its Islamic means, it was also distinguished by its being not merely a group for preaching people and kindling their sentiments by means of eloquent speeches, or a charitable association for serving the society, spreading piety, and helping the poor and the weak. Its mission was not specifically any of these things, despite the fact that preaching and guiding are among its means, and performing righteous deeds is part of its job.

However, its founder, may Allah have mercy upon him, wanted it to be a positive and effective Islamic movement, acting as an incentive for the *Ummah* and representing Islam as a whole. This is particularly after people had ripped it (Islam) into pieces and parts, disregarded it as a whole, and failed to get the nation to adhere to it, advocate it, and strive for its cause.

This concept was clear in the mind of Al-Banna since he started his Call, as evident in his articles and in his early tracts. He also expressed this concept in more than one place using optimistic phrases, some of which were what he mentioned in his tract *The Muslim Brotherhood under the Banner of the Qur'an*, under the title "The Nature of our Ideology":

"O Muslim Brotherhood! O all people! We are not a political party though politics based on Islam is really an integral part of our ideology. We are not a benevolent, reformative organization in spite of the fact that benevolence and reformation are among our great objectives. We are not sport teams, though physical and spiritual exercises are of our important means. We are not any of these associations for all of them are warranted only for a confined and limited end. They may also be constituted merely for the wish of forming an association and enjoying its administrative titles.

O people! We are, however, an ideology and a belief, an institution and a way that is not restricted to a certain place or race, nor limited by a geographical barrier and that will be applicable until Allah inherits the earth and all beings thereon. This is because it is the institution of Allah and the way of His honest Messenger.

O people! We are - without being proud - followers of Allah's Messenger (pbuh), and carriers of his banner after him. We raise his flag as they (his Companions) raised it and convey it as they did. We keep his Qur'an by heart as they kept it and convey his message as they did, and we are mercy for all creatures. ﴿And ye shall certainly know the truth of it (all) after a while.﴾ (Sad: 88)"⁽¹⁾

This shows how Imam Hasan al-Banna was so keen that his Call or his group would not be mere administrative, sporting, scouting, or benevolent associations, but a positive Islamic movement, possessing the spirit of the Companions of the Prophet who lived in the first century, in the fourteenth century of the *Hijrah*.

1. The tract, *The Muslim Brotherhood under the Banner of the Qur'an*.

The Term "Islamic Movement"

The term "Islamic Movement" became widespread in the writings of the Muslim Brotherhood long ago in Egypt. It also became widespread in the writings of the "Islamic Group" that was founded by Abu al-A`la al-Mawdudi in India before it was divided into two countries: India and Pakistan (The Eastern that became now Bangladesh, and the Western), and it is pronounced in the Urdu language in its Arabic name "*Tahrik Islami*."

However, the famous term that represented the Islamic current during the days of Jamal ad-Din al-Afghani and Imam Muhammad 'Abduh was "The Islamic League".

Each of the two titles or terms expressed its own phase and the content or the summary of its mission. In the phase of "The Islamic League" the most important thing was uniting the *Ummah* and all its classes to confront imperialism, whereas in the phase of "The Islamic Movement", the most important thing was stirring the *Ummah*. The latter aimed at stirring the minds of the *Ummah* to comprehend, stirring its hearts to believe, stirring its will to be firmly set and stirring its hands to work, in addition to uniting the *Ummah*, which was one of the essential targets of the Movement as well.

It seems that this term became widespread in opposition to another term that, at a certain period, became well known in various Arab and Muslim countries, and this term was "The Patriotic Movement" or "The National Movement." Many of the advocates of these movements, especially those of the national movement, used to show enmity towards the Islamic current and towards the Islamic advocates of reformation. They regarded the West, its philosophy, and its civilization as an intellectual and valuable authoritative source for them. It was their source of inspiration and the source of obligation for them.

This is clear for those who study the emergence of the Turanian National Movement that appeared in Turkey, the center of the Ottoman Caliphate, and that showed enmity towards Arabism and Islam. This Movement founded the *Ettihad wat Taraqqi* (Unity and Progress) party that led to the throw of the Caliphate that represented the last unity for the Islamic Nation under the banner of Islam.

It is also clear in the emergence of the first "Arab National Movement" that was related to Masonry, and that was originally led by non-Muslims.

Anyway, the term "Islamic Movement" became widespread and became a concept that was attributed to it. It was thus said, the organized thought, the organized call, the organized *tarbiyah*, the organized work... etc, in accordance with the name "The Islamic Movement".

The Muslim Brotherhood Is the Largest Islamic Movement

There is no wonder thus that Professor Ishaq Musa al-Husayni, in the year 1947 as I remember, published a book under the name "*The Muslim Brotherhood Is the Largest Modern Islamic Movement*". This book is an objective scholarly study that is neutral to a great extent in contrast with some studies that were published by currents hostile to Islam in general and to the Muslim Brotherhood in specific. Such studies were characterized by being offensive and partial, not only so but also by triggering suspicions and fabricating accusations sometimes.

Professor al-Husayni was also fair with the Muslim Brotherhood in the title of his book, for he called them "the largest modern Islamic movement" and this description has proved true up to this day. It has furthermore gained larger and wider credibility when the movement was extended and came to have participating members and supporting advocates from all around the Arab and Muslim world, and also from Europe, America, the Far East, and other countries (more than seventy countries from the five or six continents).

It was out of the grace that Allah bestowed upon the Movement that the drastic ordeals which surrounded its advocates in Egypt, the mother country of the Movement, made them, when coming out of its kiln, break forth on Allah's wide earth seeking freedom and security. Some of them went to Europe, Eastern and Western, some went to America, Northern and Southern, and some went to Australia, Japan, and other countries of the Far East. In this manner they spread and scattered and became the fruitful seeds of the Call. Everywhere they went they established an Islamic current and this was exactly how the ordeal had turned to be a gift, for every cloud has a silver lining, and one may dislike a thing that is good for him.

The Muslim Brotherhood is not only the largest Islamic Movement but also the mother Movement of all other Islamic movements. It is considered - especially in the Arab world - the base and origin of all the other movements. As for the other Islamic movements, they either emerged after it, or are a branch of it or a dissent from it.

What Is Meant by the Term "the Islamic Movement"

What is meant by the term "the Islamic Movement"? In other words: What is the definite scholarly concept of the word "Islamic Movement"? It is important to define concepts, so that they will not be left floating for every group to interpret them as it likes. So what do we mean exactly by "Islamic Movement"?

I tackled this point in my book *Awlawiyyat Aa-Harakah al-Islamiyyah* (The Priorities of the Islamic Movement), where I said,

"What we mean by 'Islamic Movement' is organized collective public work that aims at restoring Islam back to the leadership of society, and to directing life according to its commands and prohibitions, legislation and recommendations."

The Islamic Movement is considered to be work before anything else. It is continuous, industrious work. It is not words said, or speeches delivered, or lectures prepared, or books written, or articles published, although all these things are no doubt necessarily required. However, they are all part of the Movement not all the Movement. Allah the Almighty says,

﴿And say: 'Work (righteousness): soon will Allah observe your work, and His Messenger, and the Believers.﴾

(At-Tawbah: 105)

The Movement Is Work on Various Levels

The Islamic Movement is an integrated work on various levels:

It is intellectual illuminating work that enlightens the minds. It is an inciting Call that stirs the emotions. It is constructive educational work that builds the Muslim personality. It is social work that participates in solving the problems of the society and in spreading welfare in it. It is economic

work that liberates the economy of the Muslim countries from absolute dependence on the West, from the filth of usury, and from the forbidden transactions. It is political work for establishing the government of Islam, restoring its state, applying its law, and uniting its *Ummah*. And, finally, it is also *jihad* for liberating the land of Islam in the East and the West from any foreign sovereignty or any interior tyranny.

The Movement Is Public Work for the Sake of Allah

It is public work that is essentially based upon personal motive and individual conviction, and it is a movement that aims at acquiring Allah's reward not that of the people.

The origin of this motive is the tension a Muslim feels when he awakens and becomes conscious of this awareness. He feels this tension boiling inside of him as a result of the contradiction he finds between his faith on the one side and the reality of his own nation on the other side. He thus starts to act out of his love for his religion, and out of his desire to deliver advice for the sake of Allah, His Messenger (pbuh), His Book and his own nation. This desire to act is also the result of his feeling that he and the group around him had been negligent, and that he should carry out his duty, fill the gaps and revive the inoperative obligations. Examples of these obligations are the following: ruling with Allah's Decree, uniting the Muslim *Ummah* upon the word of Allah, supporting the advocates of Allah, showing enmity towards the enemies of Allah, liberating Muslim land from any aggression or non-Islamic sovereignty, restoring the Islamic Caliphate to the leadership once again, renewing the duty of *da`wah* and the duty of advocating good actions and forbidding evil actions, and finally renewing the duty of *jihad* with all its kinds and means, whenever it was hand or tongue or heart, and this is the least degree of faith, so that Allah's word will be exalted to the heights.

Inadequacy of Official Work

This public work which is done for the sake of Allah is what helps the Islamic movement to emerge. But, the official governmental work or the semi-official work, like establishing supreme assemblies, unions, or leagues for the Islamic affairs that are all supervised by the ministries of *Waqfs*

(Endowments) or other government bodies, are less beneficial. Such establishments may share more or less in serving Islam and its people according to the intention, the will, and the degree of loyalty to religion of those who are responsible for them.

Nevertheless, this kind of official work is always inadequate and defective for many reasons:

1. It moves in the orbit of the local policy of the state that establishes it and that spends on it. That is why this kind of work moves or stops, speaks or keeps silent according to this policy, and that is why such kind of work represents this specific country not the genuine Islam or its great *Ummah*.
2. It is not often built upon hardworking people, or people who are accustomed to *jihad*, but rather it is built upon people who are nominated by the country, and who are convenient for this country and who seek to please it either out of will or out of fear. Such people are thus unable to question the country's commands, or say why or no. I am speaking here about the majority, for there are certainly some of these officials who are more loyal to Allah, more jealous about their religion, and more zealous in consolidating it than the public workers.
3. It often lacks the sincere intention of supporting Islam, for it is always intended to acquire pure political gains. This kind of work usually wears the cloak of piety and worship on the outside, but in reality it is a means for sowing the seeds of dissension between the believers, and for obstructing the devoted workers.
4. For all these reasons, this kind of work is accused by the public and the people and it is also isolated from their feelings and support. Even the official scholars, who have dedicated themselves to serving the politics of the country, speak only if they are permitted to speak and keep silent only if they are wanted to keep silent. They lack the trust of people who call them "the scholars of authorities" or "the agents of the police".

Because of all these things official - or semi-official - Islamic work, in the absence of the Islamic ruling, cannot construct a true Islamic movement. However, it can offer the public Islamic work and its institutions some scholarly and practical services, and can provide them

with materialistic and literary provisions, especially if there are some courageous and loyal men behind this kind of work.

The Movement Is an Organized Collective Work

Besides being public work done for the sake of Allah, the Islamic Movement is organized collective public work as well. It is not enough to have scattered individuals working for Islam, even if what they are doing is useful and accounted for them by Allah, for Allah never overlooks the work of any male or female human being, and everyone is rewarded according to his intention and his performance. Allah the Almighty says,

﴿Then shall anyone who has done an atom's weight of good, shall see it.﴾

(Az-Zalzalah: 7)

﴿Allah is never unjust in the least degree.﴾

(An-Nisa': 40)

However, individual work does not fit the contemporary reality of the Muslim *Ummah*. It is not sufficient for filling gaps or fulfilling longings and hopes. This means that there should be some collective work; it is what religion and reality necessitate. For, religion advocates working in a group and hates deviation, because Allah's Hand is with the group, and whoever deviates from the group (i.e., the Muslim community) will be deviated in Hellfire. It is also said that the wolf eats only from sheep that wander far away from the flock, and no prayer is counted for an individual behind or in front of the row. It is one of the religious obligations to cooperate upon piety and righteousness, and to advocate the right and to have patience, and this will be a guarantee to be rescued from forfeiture.

Reality requires work to be collective in order to be fruitful. This is because the one hand cannot clap alone, the individual is weak by himself but strong by his brothers, the great achievements are the result of joining efforts, and decisive battles can only be won by joining forces. The Glorious Qur'an says,

﴿Truly Allah loves those who fight in His Cause in battle array, as if they were a solid cemented structure.﴾

(As-Saff: 4)

This is confirmed by the fact that the enemies of Islam and its *Ummah* do not work individually or in the form of small-scattered groups. They rather work in the form of extremely organized blocs and troops that have their own frameworks, their own systems, and their local, regional, and international leadership.

We must thus fight our enemies with their weapon. We are not allowed, for example, to fight canon with stick, or tank with horse or a mule. Likewise, we are not allowed to resist the collective work with the individual work, or the organized work with the disorganized work, simply because chaos cannot resist order, and the individual cannot resist the group and the pebble cannot resist the mountain. The Glorious Qur'an warns us against this when it says,

﴿The unbelievers are protectors, one of another: unless ye do this (protect each other), there would be tumult and oppression on earth, and great mischief.﴾

(Al-Anfal: 73)

It means that if we do not support each other and join our forces, this will certainly lead to serious affliction and great corruption on earth. And there is no serious or great affliction and corruption more than seeing the forces of blasphemy and falsity being united, and watching the forces of Islam and the right being torn apart.

And, collective work must be organized as well. It must be based upon responsible leadership, correlated soldiers, and clear concepts that are built upon consultation and obedience, to identify the relation between the leader and the soldiers.

Islam never approves of any group without order, even the minor group in prayer is based upon order, for Allah does not look upon a twisted row, and all rows must be lined up and joined. It is not permitted to leave a gap in the row without filling it, for in this case the Devil will gladly fill it. That is why the shoulder must be adherent to the shoulder, and the foot adherent to the foot. There must be unity in the motion and the appearance, as well as in the doctrine and the destination. The Prophet (pbuh) said,

"Do not differ lest your hearts become different."⁽¹⁾

The Imam adjusts the row behind him to be straightened up and to be joined. He advised those behind him saying,

"Be flexible in the hands of your brothers."⁽²⁾

This is because the congregational prayer requires an amount of flexibility and elasticity to conform with the rest of the row. After this comes the obedience to the Imam,

"The Imam is appointed to be followed: say Allahu Akbar (Allah is Greater) when he says Allahu Akbar, bow when he bows, and prostrate when he prostrates."⁽³⁾

Nobody is permitted to deviate from the row or to precede the Imam, because this will cause disharmony in this harmonious symmetrical structure, and whoever does this, Allah may transform his head into that of a donkey.

Nevertheless, if this Imam makes a mistake, then it is obligatory on those behind him to correct him. They have to correct him whether it was some fault or due to forgetfulness, and whether this mistake was in a saying, in an action, in the recitation, or in any of the other pillars of the prayer. Even the woman in the far rows can clap her hands to draw the Imam's attention to his mistake.

This is a minimized picture of the order of the Islamic group, and how the relation between the leader and the soldiers should be. This relation does not require an infallible leadership or an absolute and blind obedience.

Hasan al-Banna, the genius young man, was fully aware of this when he, at the age of twenty-two, founded his blessed Islamic Movement. He was not satisfied with just delivering sermons and lessons, preaching, and guiding, though they were all undeniably important, for with his insight he was able to see that after warning there must come the molding and construction, and after founding there must come the teaching.

1. Narrated by Ahmad and Abu Dawud.

2. Narrated by Ahmad and Abu Dawud.

3. Narrated by Al-Bukhari and Muslim.

The Mission of the Movement Is Renewing Islam

What is the mission of the Islamic Movement?

The Islamic Movement was established to renew Islam and to restore it to the leadership of life, after it had been isolated from various fields of life. It was isolated from politics and ruling, from legislation and codification, from thought and culture, from education and media, from morals and traditions, and from finance and economy.

It was the imperialism that had cunningly, deceivingly, and maliciously isolated Islam from its place in life and society. It was the same imperialism that had usurped the countries of the Muslims and that had enchained them with various fetters and shackles.

“Renewing Islam” is not an expression from my imagination, it is a prophetic expression that was mentioned in the *hadith* narrated by Abu Dawud, on the authority of Abu Hurayrah who said that the Prophet (pbuh) said,

“At the beginning of every hundred years, Allah sends for this Ummah someone to renew its religion for it.”

Renewing religion here means renewing the way of understanding it, renewing faith in it, renewing the way of applying its rules and manners, and renewing strife for its sake and the *jihad* for its cause.

The majority of those who interpreted this *hadith* said that “someone” here means a specific individual. They actually tried to appoint him from among the famous scholars and Imams whose death was close to the beginning of a previous century, like ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Aziz in the first century (died 101 AH), and ash-Shafi‘i in the second century (died in 204 AH). They failed to agree on the renovator of the third and the fourth centuries, but they agreed on Al-Ghazali in the fifth century, and Ibn Daqiq al-‘Id in the seventh century.

This is how they regarded the renovators in the honorable *hadith*. However, some of them regarded the word “someone” in the *hadith* as a word fitting for the group as well as for the individual. So, the renovator could be a group not an individual and this was considered to be more likely by Ibn al-Athir in his book *Al-Jami‘ lil-Usul* and by Adh-Dhahabi and others.

As for me, I believe that if those who renovate are a group, that does not necessarily mean that they should be a number of specific individuals, because a group here may mean a school or intellectual, practical, and *da`wah* movements that try to renew religion cooperatively.

I believe that the school or the first movement that represented the Islamic renovation in this century, during the last seventy years, is the Muslim Brotherhood Movement. However, this does not negate the fact that other groups and individuals might have more or less shared in this renovation, for we must not underestimate the achievements of others.

The Basic Constituents of the Renovation

The renovation, which was accomplished by the Islamic Movement, was embodied in three things that are considered to be the basic constituents of the renovation, and these three things are:

First: Developing an Islamic generation of pioneers, a generation that is capable, through integration and cooperation, of leading the contemporary society by means of Islam, without its being secluded or decomposed; a generation that is capable of finding the remedy for the Muslims' maladies from the pharmacy of Islam itself by renewing *ijtihad*, with its standards and conditions, and by preparing those who can practice it and who are capable of joining between partial stipulations and comprehensive purposes of the *Shari`ah*, without their being fanatical about an old opinion or their being enslaved by a new opinion; a generation of pioneers that take from the past, live the present, and expect the future; a generation of pioneers who are joined by deep faith, accurate comprehension, and intimate attachment.

Second: Forming an Islamic public opinion to represent the broad public that wants Islam to be applied in all the fields of life. This broad public that wants to win victory for Islam, that sees its welfare and felicity in it, and that supports its advocates after realizing their objectives and trusting their loyalty and capabilities. This broad public that succeeded in shaking off the dust of confusion, and in realizing the reality behind the distortion of Islam, its men and its movements.

Third: Preparing a general international atmosphere that is ready to accept the existence of the Islamic *Ummah*, and this can take place only

when it realizes the truth about the Islamic message and its civilization. It will be possible only when this international atmosphere frees itself from the malicious complexes that exist deep down in its soul, and that were the result of the fanaticism of the middle centuries, and from the false charges that were the result of lying and messing with its mind. It needs a public opinion that is ready to give Islamic power a chance to stand side by side with the other international powers, realizing that, being the majority in their countries, the Muslims have a right to rule themselves according to their doctrine as their democratic principles state. It should also be clear that Muslims have a right to advocate their Divine, humanitarian, and international message, being one of the largest messages or ideologies in the world, and being the religion of twenty-four percent of the inhabitants of this world, which means that among every four persons there is one Muslim.

To prepare such an atmosphere, the Movement must try to explain Islam to the world in a language that can be understood in this age. It must present Islam to the people in its comprehensive, integrated, and balanced image, and with its easy and tolerant characteristics. It must also defend Islam against any suspicion or false accusation.

The Role of the Islamic Movement in Renewing Islam

The Islamic Movement, in its wide significance, is the greatest renewer of religion in this century, and this makes me feel honored to write this book about it today.

However, I do not have the time, the effort, or the knowledge to write about all the Islamic movements. So, I will be satisfied here with writing about the mother movement, that of the Muslim Brotherhood, which was founded by the Martyr Imam Hasan al-Banna (may Allah be pleased with him).

I shall start by saying that, unfortunately the history of the Movement up till this day has not yet been written by any of its sons. They have not yet written it in an authenticated scholarly manner that is built upon comparison and analysis, and that is far from underestimation and exaggeration. They may have started to do this, and we hope that they will continue to do it.

I can confidently say that the Islamic Movement, represented by the Muslim Brotherhood, has achieved remarkable results in renewing Islam in this century.

The renewal of Islam does not mean publishing a new polished edition of it, for the origins of this religion are fixed and eternal and on top of them come the Glorious Qur'an and the authentic *Sunnah* that clarifies it. Nobody can come with a new Islam to offer, for there is no Islam but that of the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*.

And, however hard the orientalist try to spread the idea that there is more than one Islam according to the various ages and regions, this will never erase the definite truth that the only acknowledged Islam is that which is presented in the Glorious Qur'an and the *Sunnah*, and that was understood and applied by the Companions and those who followed their example.

A number of studies dealt with the Movement of the Muslim Brotherhood. They were published in Arabic and in other languages. They varied in their intentions, their methodology, and their results. However, there is no doubt that some of them were prejudiced against the Movement. They did not write about it except to distort its image, exaggerate the negative points if found, and if not then make them up, hide its merits, and charge it with false accusations.

Whereas, some others tended to be fair with the Muslim Brotherhood, or tried to seem to be fair, however they were restricted by certain things that are obvious for the contemplative learner. These restrictions are as follows:

1. The inadequacy of the information available about the Muslim Brotherhood, their different relations, their various stances, their hopeful goals, their inciting motives, and their firm standards.

Such things are unknown to the majority of writers, other information is still imprisoned in chests, while the other is still in documents that are not published or that are not gathered to be available for the learners.

2. The sources upon which many are depending are misleading, for they were made by the opponents of the Muslim Brotherhood, whether from the inside or the outside. That is why many facts were perverted, or were placed in a place and time to which they do not really belong, as a result of which they may seem bigger or smaller than they really are.

3. Every writer regards the Movement from his own intellectual point of view, and judges it according to his mental and ideological axioms.

That is why we find the Marxist judging it in a way different from the way the Liberal judges it, and the same thing goes with the religious person and the secularist, the extremist from among the religious and the moderate, the Salafi and the sufi and so on.

3. Hasan al-Banna: The Expected Leader

One of the Almighty's norms in His world is preparing for every phase the man who fits it, and sending this *Ummah*, every century, someone to renew its religion and restore its vitality.

It is natural for the *Ummah* to be struck by weakness, to be afflicted by diseases, or to fall into deep sleep. However, it never dies, for it has enough potential energies and stored capacities to help it in times of hardships and ordeals, when the proper leader is there to set such energies and capacities off and draw them out of their ambush. In this context, Imam `Ali ibn Abi Talib (may Allah honor his face) once said, "The earth will never be free from someone who defends Allah's religion with the conclusive argument."

The great scholar, Abu al-Hasan an-Nadawi, mentioned in his valuable book *Rijal al-Fikr wad-Da`wah fil-Islam* that in all the phases of the Islamic history there were certain men who appeared when the circumstances necessitated their appearance. They appeared to fill the gap, to fulfil needs, and to carry out the required duty of awakening the *Ummah* and repairing what had been damaged and cracked in its structure.

The desired man could be a great Imam like `Umar ibn `Abd al-`Aziz, or a prince or an army leader like Nur ad-Din Mahmud or Salah ad-Din. He could also be an Imam of *da`wah* and thought like Abu Hamid al-Ghazali, and he could be a spiritual educator like `Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani, or a renewing jurist, educationist, and reformer like Abu al-`Abbas ibn Taymiyah. Every one of those shared in renewing the essential and basic aspects that his era and environment lacked.

The conditions of the Islamic world in general, and of Egypt and the Arab world in particular, needed a man with sharp wits, sharp senses, outflowing faith, and firm will. It needed a man who could feel the suffering of the *Ummah*, a man who could diagnose the malady and prescribe the

medicine, and who could patiently observe his patient moving from the stage of sickness to that of recovery and finally to the stage of being powerful.

This desired man or this expected leader was Hasan al-Banna. Allah prepared him since his tender age to fit the required mission. His father was a righteous man occupied with knowledge and strife together. He was one of those who studied the science of *Hadith*, and his efforts in this field are appreciated by scholars. He was also one of those who earned their living from repairing watches or from bookbinding.

His environment was religious, conservative, and rural. It was away from the noise of cities, the imitation of foreigners, and the imported non-Islamic concepts and traditions that were existent there. He had righteous teachers who surrounded him with much care after realizing his intelligence, distinction, zeal, enthusiasm, decency, and politeness. He was also affected by a sufi way known as *At-Tariqah al-Hasafiyyah*. It awakened his spiritual sense, taught him something of the manners of the way and its adherents. Nevertheless, it did not satisfy his desire nor did he find his long-sought objective in it.

This is besides the religious associations that he established or participated in. Such associations aimed at either spreading goodness, resisting evil, or preventing prohibited acts, yet they were all below his ambitions, despite the fact that he had learned from them about collective spirit and collective work.

The boy also kept the Glorious Qur'an by heart. He moved from his small town "Al-Mahmudiyyah" to a bigger city "Damanhur", the capital of "Al-Buhayrah" region, to continue his education in the school of Al-Mu'allimun (teachers) there.

Then came the major move when he went to Cairo. At that time he was strong, mature, and open-minded, and his knowledge and readings were extended. He was aware to some extent of the suffering of his country Egypt and his big *Ummah*. He was also aware of the way his *Ummah* was confronting its spiritual, mental, and social crisis. He learned about those

who were carrying the burden of the *Ummah*, and he met some of the scholars and some of the high-class people, but unfortunately he did not find any response except from a few. The most important thing was that, felt he could do something.

The American writer, Richard B. Michelle, described this period of moving to Cairo and its effect upon the progress of Hasan al-Banna saying, "The arrival of Al-Banna at Cairo coincided with the period of severe political and intellectual outbreak that changed the twenties in Egypt. He looked at this scene with the eyes of the religious countryman and he deduced what he considered to be serious problems. In his point of view, these problems were: (1) the conflict between the two political parties "Al-Wafd" and "Al-Ahrar" to rule Egypt, (2) the political argumentation and the resulting dissension after the revolution of 1919, (3) advocating atheism and libertinism in the Islamic world, and (4) attacking the prevailing traditions and beliefs. This attack was supported by the revolution of Kamal Atatürk in Turkey. The attack was at first organized by the social and intellectual liberating movement in Egypt, then by the non-Islamic currents at the Egyptian University which were reorganized at that time. Apparently, they derived their thoughts from the idea that the University could not be a secular university unless it revolted against religion, and fought the social conventions that were taken from it; in addition to the atheists and the liberals who led the social and literary seminars, and the associations, the parties, the books, the newspapers, and the magazines that were all propagating ideas aiming at only one thing, and that was weakening the influence of religion.

The reaction of Al-Banna and his likes to this image was expressed in Al-Banna's words when he said, "None except Allah knows how many nights of ours were occupied by these thoughts and problems. We spent many nights in scrutinizing the hopeless condition of the nation in different phases and aspects of life. We analyzed the maladies and diseases and thought out ways of treating the illnesses. We were so affected and moved by our deplorable and depraved condition that we wept bitterly."⁽¹⁾

1. The tract, *The Fifth Conference*.

As soon as he arrived at Cairo, Imam al-Banna made contacts with the members of his sufi way, *At-Tariqah al-Hasafiyyah*, but he soon found that it was useless. In the second year he joined another religious association known as *Jam'iyyat Makarim al-Akhlaq al-Islamiyyah* (The Association of Islamic Noble Manners) which was concerned with delivering lectures about some Islamic topics. However, this too was not enough to overcome the problem of the gap that seemed (to him) to be separating between Muslims and Islamic creed and its teachings.

And, due to his fears and his increasing conviction that the mosque alone was not sufficient for spreading the creed among the people, Al-Banna took his next step. He organized a group from among the students of Al-Azhar and the college of *Dar al-'Ulum*, from those who wanted to be trained to carry out the mission of preaching and guiding. After a short period, these students entered the mosque as preachers. Their manner of preaching achieved great success owing to the fact that they sought direct communication with the people in their gatherings at the cafes and at other public places. Their aim was to reinforce the Islamic concept and to spread it once again.

Al-Banna's great concern about the problem of seeing educated youth turning their backs on the religious life prompted him to seek the advice of those who were older than him from among the religious scholars. He would frequently go to the *Salafi* library that was run at that time by Muhibb ad-Din al-Khatib. He also used to sit with Rashid Ridah who was the successor of Muhammad 'Abduh and the editor of *Al-Manar* magazine. He truly admired Farid Wajdi and Ahmad Taymur because of their support to the Islamic cause.

Eventually, Al-Banna expressed his fears and apprehensions about this situation to the Sheikhs of Al-Azhar, the pillar of Islamic ideology, but he did not find any encouraging response. He bitterly criticized their inefficient opposition and their clear submission to the missionary and atheistic currents that had torn the Islamic society apart, and he felt that the time to do something about this had come. The experience which he acquired at the beginning of his life sharpened his sense to the extent that it kept pushing him all his life. For the rest of his life he was haunted by these painful memories of the deep spiritual anxiety he had experienced in this period of

his life in Cairo when he resorted to the official religious scholars. At this point he began to see clearly the kind of work that was required in order to rescue Islamic society, and he realized the role he had to carry out in the field of practical efforts to achieve this goal. And, at his last year in *Dar al-'Ulum*, it was required of every student in his class to write an article about the following topic: "Express your greatest hopes after finishing your studies, and clarify the means you intend to use to fulfil such hopes".

Al-Banna started by saying, "I think that the best person is the kind person who finds his felicity in guiding people and making them happy." He went on confirming, "The best means to achieve this is either to follow the path of true sufism that can be summed up in adopting sincerity and working for the sake of humanity, or to follow the path of education and guidance that shares in the sincerity and work with the first path, but that varies from it in mixing with the people."

Al-Banna then added, "I think that my people deviated from the objectives of their religion because of the political stages that they had been through, the social effects to which they had been subjected, and the influence of Western civilization, the materialistic philosophy, and the imitation of the foreigners. The youth therefore inherited a corrupt creed and were consequently overwhelmed by suspicion and confusion and this led to replacing their faith with atheism."

It thus became clear for al-Banna that converting these currents would be his message in life. He realized that, to achieve this, he had to be a teacher and a guide, dedicating himself to children in the morning and to their parents in the evening, so as to teach them all the objectives of the religion and the sources of their felicity and their welfare in life.

The Establishment of the Muslim Brotherhood

Al-Banna started to have an active presence in the society of Isma'iliyyah besides performing his essential duties at the school there. The mosque and the school, both were his essential ways to get acquainted with the religious institutions and the eminent personalities in the city. He did not only concentrate upon his daily classes at school, but he also used to teach the students' parents at night. At that time the majority of those whom he

taught were from among the workers, the low-class merchants, and the governmental employees. Once again he used the cafes, besides the mosque and the school, to attract his listeners just as he did in Cairo. His method was to deliver speeches and to try to notice those who were affected by his words. After that he would invite such people in small groups to some other place where he could teach and preach them. He would discuss the issue of Islam with them, trying to trace and reach through this primary activity the sources of power in the society.

Soon, it became obvious for him that the sources of power were arranged in the following way: (1) the scholars at first, then (2) the Sheikhs of sufi ways, then (3) people of the upper class, i.e., the well known and large families and the gatherings in general, then (4) came the clubs by which he meant the religious and social associations. He directed his attention towards these categories in order to influence those who formed the public opinion.

His observations about this society increased his awareness of the specified role of this city, being the center for both British military occupation and foreign economic occupation. Not only so, but it was also the center for the Suez Canal Company which was an equally disturbing situation. This is because it represented absolute foreign mastery over the public utilities. It also resulted in that foreigners built elegant and luxurious houses compared to the miserable workers who lived in wretched houses. Al-Banna noticed as well that the signboards of the streets in the Egyptian popular districts were written in the language of those who were occupying the economy.

However, despite the fact that Al-Banna's attention was necessarily concentrated on the new environment, he was constantly thinking about Cairo. This was the reason for his being careful to perform his prayers with the Islamic groups there and with the friends who had promised to help him in serving the message of Islam. He gave *Jam'iyyat ash-Shubban al-Muslimin* (The Association of the Muslim Youth) special attention and he participated in its foundation in 1927. He also worked as a representative for Al-Fath magazine that was published at that time by Muhibb ad-Din al-Khatib, the manager of the sufi library, and one of the founders of the Association of the Muslim Youth.

Soon after the foundation of the Association of the Muslim Youth, Al-Banna's own association was born and that was in the year 1347 AH (March 1928 AC), as he recorded. Six members of those who worked in the British camp met with Al-Banna and officially announced the beginning of the Association of the Muslim Brotherhood."⁽¹⁾

Such a great message required of him perseverance, sacrifice, studying, and comprehension. It also required of him a body capable of enduring the hardships (and his soul that he sold to Allah). Al-Banna then ended his article with these words: "This is a vow between me and my Lord".

This devoted young man finished his studies at *Dar al-'Ulum* in the summer of the year 1927, when he was twenty-one years old, after which he was likely to join one of the annual governmental expeditions for studying abroad. However, he did not join it, and for an unknown reason he changed his mind and accepted the appointment in the field of teaching in Egypt. His mission was to teach the Arabic language in the Al-Isma'iliyyah al-Amiriyyah primary school in the Canal region. He moved to his new house and his new job in 19/9/1927. For nineteen years he remained in the field of school teaching until he resigned in 1946.

Hasan al-Banna: the Man of the Phase

This was how the Islamic world was suffering from the rupture of its entity, the cracking of its structure, and the organized destruction of its materials and morale.

But, fate was preparing a man to carry out a certain mission and fill out a certain gap. This man was Hasan al-Banna and the mission was awakening the *Ummah* from its deep sleep, i.e. reviving the mind and the conscience of the *Ummah* and making its potential energies explode. This was possible only by renewing Islam in the *Ummah*, uniting it around its message, and pushing it to have faith in Islam as a method of life, and encouraging it to strive for its sake.

The *Ummah* was in dire need of a new mind, a new heart, new will, and new blood. It needed all these meanings to be embodied in a man who could

1. See Michelle, *The Muslim Brotherhood*, pp.71-76 of the Arabic translation.

put his hand in the Hand of Allah so that Allah will light up the way for him and guide him to the right path.

Al-Afghani performed his role in awakening the sentiments of the *Ummah* to resist imperialism and Muhammad `Abduh performed his role in awakening the mind of the *Ummah* to resist the intellectual stagnation that it was adopting. Then, after them came the great scholar, Rashid Ridah, who performed a huge and undeniable role in renewing and legally consolidating the course of reformation.

Nevertheless, the *Ummah* was in need for a new generation from among those referred to in the verse:

﴿Who preach the messages of Allah, and fear Him and fear none but Allah.﴾

(Al-Ahzab: 39)

It was in need of a generation prepared by Allah from among those whom He saved to support His religion and acquire victory for it:

﴿A people whom He will love as they 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.﴾

(Al-Ma'idah: 54)

It needed a generation that understands Islam well, believes in it, applies it, advocates it, strives for its cause, and dyes general life with its color:

﴿(Our religion) takes its hue from Allah and who can give a better hue than Allah?﴾

(Al-Baqarah: 138)

No man could have ever raised such a generation or prepared it for such a great assigned mission except an inspired man; a man who dedicated himself, his thinking, his efforts, and his life to Allah, the Lord of all creatures. This desired man was Hasan al-Banna who was chosen by Fate to be the leader of the pious. One of the reporters once asked Hasan al-Banna, "Who are you?" His reply was, "I am a traveler searching for the truth and a human being searching for humanity among people with the help of a lamp. I am an unbiased person who realized the secret of his existence, and then he called people declaring,

«Truly, my prayer and my service of sacrifice, my life and my death, are (all) for Allah, the Cherisher of the Worlds.»

(Al-An`am: 162).”

In the middle of forties of the twentieth century, I heard Al-Banna addressing the teachers in the city of Tanta saying, "People are in need for a man whose heart flows upon the hearts of those around him, and from this godly flow their hearts will flow upon those around them. In this way they will move from one state to another and they will come out from the darkness to the light."

It was as if Hasan al-Banna were talking about himself, for he had got the benefit of both the heart and the mind, and, still, Islam is always based upon pure hearts and intelligent minds which result in two things: strong will and upright behavior.

I listened to Hasan al-Banna delivering a speech in the memory of the Prophetic *Hijrah*, when I was a student in the first primary year at the religious institute in Tanta. I still remember his words up to this day because he simply said new, concentrated, arranged, and useful things that were totally different from what I used to hear from the preachers and the orators every year in on occasion like this.

Afterwards I used to listen to him whenever he came to Tanta, and I traveled more than once to some of the cities of Lower Egypt like Kafr az-Zayyat, Dusuq, Al-Mahallah al-Kubra and Mahalat Abu `Ali, just to listen to him.

I almost read all what Al-Banna wrote: his tracts, his researches, his articles and his pamphlets. I learned about him and knew that he was successful, inspired, and prepared by Allah. He was greatly loved and appreciated by his companions and his followers, and this is something rare, for there are only few people who can win the love as well as the appreciation of others.

Some people might have criticized the Brothers of Al-Banna who almost regarded him as a sacred and infallible man. However, Al-Banna had no hand in this, for it was he who said in his twenty principles that everybody's words are liable to be taken or left except the infallible (pbuh). He also used

to rebuke some of the Brothers whenever he felt them exaggerating in praising him in any of the occasions. He would tell them, "Talk about *da`wah* for it is everlasting unlike people who are mortal".

Those who met him praised him, and those who lived with him loved him and whoever mixed with him more would grow to love and appreciate him more.

A foreigner gave him the name "The Qur'anic Man", which was a very truthful name, and `Umar at-Tilmisani, the third *Murshid* of the Movement, said that he was the inspired and talented man, and both were tangible qualities in him.

So, the majority of those who praised him were from among the close brothers who knew him well and who mixed with him and succeeded him like, Al-Hudaybi, At-Tilmisani, Abu an-Nasr, and Mashhur.

Also, take a look at what has been written about him by Muhammad `Abd al-Khaliq, `Abbas as-Sisi, Mahmud `Abd al-Halim, and others from among those who accompanied him, lived with him, and knew everything about him.

Here I think it is sufficient to mention what two of the greatest men of *da`wah* in Egypt had said about Al-Banna.

The Testimony of Sheikh Muhammad al-Ghazali

The first testimony is that of the first *da`iyah* of his era, Sheikh Muhammad al-Ghazali (may Allah have mercy upon him). He said in the introduction of his book *Dustur al-Wihdah ath-Thaqafiyyah*, in which he explained the "twenty principles" of Hasan al-Banna,

"The inspirer of this book and the creator of its subject is Imam Hasan al-Banna whom I, and many others than me, agree about describing him as the renewer of the fourteenth century of the *Hijrah*. He had laid down a number of comprehensive principles that clarified the blurred objective and that wanted to return the Muslims to the Book of their Lord and the *Sunnah* of their Prophet. His principles also dealt carefully with the crookedness and slackness that had befallen Muslims.

It would be wrong to say that Hasan al-Banna was the first to lift the banner of resistance in this abject century, for he was preceded in the Arab

East, the Arab West, India, Indonesia, and other places by men who were engaged in the battlefield against enemies. They fought in the fields of war, politics, education and upbringing, and they showed extreme courage in fighting and in serving their religion and their *Ummah*.

It was not their fault that they were defeated at the end, for they had performed their duty towards Allah and they left the rest for those who came after them.

Al-Banna was able to benefit from the experiences of the leaders who preceded him. And, his personality, out of Allah's grace, contained numerous talents that were naturally distributed upon many people.

He was addicted to reciting the Glorious Qur'an in a mellow voice and he was good at interpreting it as if he were At-Tabari or Al-Qurtubi. He also had a remarkable ability for understanding the most difficult meanings in it and presenting them to people in a clear and easy manner.

He was not one of the sufis though his environment belonged to that trend. And, despite this, his manner in upbringing, in looking after his followers, and in radiating feelings of love for Allah's sake was similar to that of Al-Harith al-Muhasibi and Abu Hamid al-Ghazali.

He learned the purified *Sunnah* from his father who rearranged the *Musnad* of Ahmad ibn Hanbal. He also learned in brief about the doctrinal *Fiqh* and that made him fully aware of the methods of the ancestors and the successors.

Al-Banna was acquainted with the method of Muhammad `Abduh and his student Rashid Ridah, and he had a gentle conversation with the latter. Although he admired the scholarly ability of Sheikh Rashid, he refused to be involved with him in what he was doing.

He was the most capable person of raising the intellectual level of people upon the causes of disagreement and the manifestations of fanaticism.

He was aware of Islamic history and he deeply and thoroughly studied Islam at the present and the conspiracies that were prepared against it by foreign occupation.

Then in strange silence, this righteous man kept on travelling all around the Egyptian cities and villages, and I think that he visited three thousand villages out of the four thousand Egyptian villages.

Twenty years after, he was able to form the masses that succeeded in cracking down cultural and military occupation, and that succeeded as well in transfusing life into the motionless body of the *Ummah*."

The Testimony of the Martyr Sayyid Qutb

The second *da'iyah* who spoke about "Hasan al-Banna and the ingenuity of construction" was the martyr Sayyid Qutb (may Allah have mercy upon him), and that was in one of his articles that were gathered in a book under the title *Dirasat Islamiyyah* (Islamic Studies). Sayyid Qutb did not accompany Hasan al-Banna, although they both lived in the same age and they were both graduates of *Dar al-'Ulum*. However Qutb knew Al-Banna from his traces upon his Brothers, his Movement, and his effect, upon Egypt and the Muslim world. It is a testimony from a later martyr to a former martyr.

Sayyid Qutb (may Allah have mercy upon him) said,

"Sometimes accidental coincidence may appear to be predestined by fate and a designed wisdom in a written book. "Al-Banna" (meaning in Arabic "the constructor"): is it just a coincidence that this is his surname? But, who can say that this is a coincidence when the biggest truth about this man is the ingenuity of construction?

The Islamic doctrine knew many *du'ah* throughout its history, however *da'wah* is something different from construction. You can rarely see a *da'iyah* who can construct, and not every constructor is gifted with this great ingenuity in construction.

This huge structure, the Muslim Brotherhood, is a manifestation of this huge ingenuity in constructing groups. They are not just a group of people whose sentiments were provoked by a *da'iyah* and so they gathered around a certain doctrine. No, it is not like that; it is simply the ingenuity of construction which appears clearly in every step of this order, starting from *usrah* (family) to *shu'bah* (department) to *mantiqah* (district) to the administrative center to the founding institution and finally to the office of guidance.

This is the case for the external appearance, which is the simplest manifestation of this ingenuity. As for the internal structure of this group, it is more precise and cohesive and it portrays his ingenuity of organizing and constructing even more. What is great here is this spiritual construction that binds the members of the *usrah*, the *katibah* and the *shu`bah* together. These common studies, common prayers, common instructions, common picnics, common camps, and finally common responses and feelings make the system of the group a belief that works inside the self before it takes the form of instructions, orders, and arrangements on the outside.

It is the ingenuity of employing the energies of the individuals and the groups in activities that occupy their time and do not give them the chance to search for something to fill up their free time with. Stirring up religious sentiments is not enough and if the *da`iyah* concentrates his attention upon this alone, this will lead the youth in particular to a sort of religious fanaticism that cannot construct anything. Theoretical study of doctrine is not as well enough, for if the *da`iyah* concentrates only on it, this will lead to drying out the spiritual fountains that bestow its moistness, its warmth, and its fertility upon this kind of studies. Again, stirring up both the sentiments and the desire to study cannot consume energy, for there will still be the muscular energy, the practical energy, and the natural energy that is represented in the desire to acquire one's livelihood, properties, and fame and the desire to work and to fight.

Al-Banna was able to think about all these things, or let us say that he was inspired by all of these things. He made the activity of the Muslim Brother, while working for the group, reach all these fields according to the organization of the group itself. He was able to use up all natural energies during the work and the construction of the group. His way to achieve this was establishing the *katibah* system, that of the camps, and that of the Brotherhood companies. This was in addition to the system of the *du`ah* and that of the *fida'iyyun* (soldiers who are prepared to sacrifice themselves) whose efforts were witnessed in Palestine and the Canal battles.

This wonderful ingenuity of construction appears as well in gathering different types of people, minds, ages, and environments in one whole structure and succeeding in uniting their destination in a quarter of a century, just as the different tunes are gathered to form a genius melody.

So, was this an accidental coincidence that this was his surname? Or was it the Supreme Will that coordinates the smallest coincidences with the greatest destinies?

When Al-Banna died, the structure was already founded and his death in this way was a new process of construction. It was a process for fortifying the basis and strengthening the walls, and no speeches or orations would have inflamed the Call in the souls of the Brothers as the spilled blood of Al-Banna had done.

Our words remain as dolls made of wax until we die fighting for them, only then they become alive.

When the tyrants persecuted and tortured the Muslim Brotherhood, it was too late. The structure was too high to be destroyed and too deep to be pulled out. It had turned to be an idea and the idea could never ever be destroyed by violence. So the ingenuity of the construction was too difficult for the tyrants to destroy or even to reach.

Every now and then some men, from among the Brotherhood, would be afflicted by whims, however each time such men would fall just like the dry leaves fall from a big tree. Again, every now and then the enemies of the Movement would cling to a branch of this tree, hoping that if they pulled it they would pull out the whole tree. Nevertheless, every time they tried to do so, this branch would come out in their hand as dry as firewood.

It is the ingenuity of the construction that is extended after the departure of the constructor."

The Testimony of the Famous Scholar Abu al-Hasan an-Nadawi

I shall add to the testimonies of Al-Ghazali and Qutb another two testimonies from outside the medium of the Movement and from outside Egypt. They are testimonies of two people who did not meet Al-Banna personally, but who were able to see him through his traces upon his students and his companions.

The first testimony is that of a pious man of his age, the famous scholar, Abu al-Hasan an-Nadawi (may Allah preserve him). In his introduction of Al-Banna's book *Mudhakhirat ad-Da`wah wad-Da`iyah*, he said,

"The one who knew the Muslim, Arab East in the very beginning of the twentieth century, and in particular the weakness of beliefs and sentiments, morals and unity, will and determination, and the heart and the body that had befallen that major sensitive part of the Muslim world, would certainly realize the favor of this personality. It is the personality of a person who came suddenly into being and surprised Egypt, the Arab, and the whole Muslim world with his Call, his manners, his strife, and his unique power. He was a man whose personality was a container of various talents and energies that may seem contradicting to some scholars of psychology and moralities and some historians and critics. This man had a brilliant tremendous mind, a broad-minded vivid understanding, a strong kindled passion, a blessed outflowing heart, a fresh blooming spirit and an eloquent fluent tongue. He believed in asceticism and contentment without any constraints on the individual level, and cared, without ever getting bored, about spreading his Call. He had an infatuated and ambitious soul, a towering and leaping resolution, a piercing and penetrating vision and a sense of honor and vigilance, and when it came to a personal level, was extremely modest and humble just as a sparkling light. In order to appreciate such a man, one must be aware of the sediments of the Mameluke and Ottoman ruling, and aware of what the foreign materialistic civilization, the non-religious modern education and the factional self-seeking policy had added to it.

Things were so bad at that time but what worsened them more was the weakness of the scholars and their yielding to materialistic things and power. The majority of them gave up the job of Imamate and instruction and withdrew from the field of *da`wah*, guidance, struggle, and strife. They gave in to the bitter accomplished fact, and they stood watching the voice of enjoining good and forbidding evil fading and dying away.

This was in addition to the vigor of the advocates of corruption and destruction, the advocates of profligacy and dissoluteness, and atheism and disbelief. In addition to this were the newspapers and the magazines that were widespread and very influential and that led the corruptive calls, the destructive movements, the underestimation of religion and its values, morality, and its principles. One must put into consideration also the state of vulgarity and indecency, weakness and deterioration, rebellion and chaos,

and the moral and spiritual collapse which the Arab countries in general and Egypt in specific had reached in the first third of this century. This was all magnified and depicted in the issues of Al-Ahram, Al-Muqattam, Al-Hilal, and Al-Musawwar. It was also depicted in books that were published by Egyptian writers from among those who were loved and favored by the youth. This was evident as well in the Egyptian feasts, festivals, parties, and celebrations.

The person who can truly appreciate Al-Banna is the one who heard the way the university students talked in their clubs and assemblies, the person who visited Alexandria, its beaches and its summer resorts, and who accompanied the scout troops and the sporting teams. Also, he is the person who entered the cinemas, watched the foreign and local films and read the novels that were published by the Arabic library in Egypt every now and then and that obtained great popularity among the youth. He is the man who lived in contact with the people and who pursued the events and did not isolate himself in an ivory tower. He is the one who felt the disaster of Islam and the Muslims, and the calamity of the Islamic *da'wah* in this part that should have been the leader of the whole Arab and Islamic world; that part which was for many centuries the quiver of Islam and the source of knowledge and gratitude; the part that relieved the Arab world and rescued it in times of hardships and difficulties and that still embraces the biggest and oldest cultural Islamic center - Al-Azhar.

Anyone who knew these things closely would certainly realize the great value and the great favor of Hasan al-Banna.

Such unique talents and qualities cooperated in creating an unprecedented religious and social leadership in the Arab world. It was the most powerful, the most influential, and the most productive social and political leadership in the world, which had not witnessed such a leadership for many centuries. In the Arab world specifically, it was the largest, the most active, the most powerful, and the most obsessive Islamic movement at all.

The ingenuity of this *da'iyah* was evident specifically in two aspects that could be rarely found in any other *da'iyah*, educator, leader, or reformer.

The first aspect was his strong passion for his Call, his deep faith and conviction of it, his wholehearted devotion in serving it, and his dedication

of all his talents, his energies, and his means to support it. This is the essential condition and the major quality of the *du`ah* and the leaders who are prepared by Allah to be the cause of great welfare.

The second aspect was his deep influence upon his companions and students and his wonderful success in education and production. He was the constructor of a whole generation, the educator of a nation, and an advocate of a moral, intellectual and scholarly doctrine. He affected tendencies, tastes, the way of thinking, the way of expression, the language, and the speeches of those who were in contact with him from among the educated people and the workers. His effect was everlasting and is still the slogan of his Followers."

The Testimony of Sheikh `Abd as-Salam Yasin

The second testimony is that of the great educator, Sheikh `Abd as-Salam Yasin, the founder of the "Justice and Charity Group" in Morocco and the author of many well-known Islamic books about raising, *da`wah*, and active strife. He said,

"Any renewal would be meaningless and purposeless, even if the Muslims had great leaders, until faith is renewed in the *Ummah* by the renewers, and this was the case with Hasan al-Banna. He was magnetic and a radiating center. He was the cause for the rising of the Muslim Brotherhood and his words and sayings are still the provision for many writers and readers of Islamic subjects. May Allah have great mercy upon him!

Al-Banna's thoughts were a proper magnet for his age, and his spiritualism, during his life, was one of Allah's marvels. He was very keen to keep his group away from the defects of his sufi way, *At-Tariqah al-Hasafiyyah* upon which he was raised as a child and as a young man. Nevertheless, he was anxious to derive the essential principles of Sufism and develop them so that they would be flexible enough to include *jihad* that was rejected in the inherited formula of sufism. His pledge was thus a double pledge, between the sword and the Qur'an, taking some of the aspects of sufism and some of the aspects of the modern organization.

Al-Banna (may Allah have mercy upon him) paved the way for the conditions of his covenant in the tract of *The Teachings*. He explained the

basic concepts of his thoughts and work. He clarified what he meant by the word "comprehension" which was to understand his twenty principles and to distinguish between a *bid'ah* and an act of the *Sunnah*. He also explained what he meant by "Devotion", "Action", "*Jihad*", "Sacrifice", "Resoluteness" as well as the word "Brotherhood". He finished explaining his concepts by that of "Trust" and he said,

"In the Muslim Brotherhood the leader has the rights of a father by virtue of his cordial relationship to the Brotherhood; the rights of a teacher by virtue of his educational aid to them; the rights of a preacher by virtue of his contribution to their spiritual advancement; and the rights of a commander by virtue of his political leadership."

He was a brilliant and broad-minded person and that was why his leadership was a right and fruitful one. It was also the reason why his covenant remained a heavy heritage even after his departure. He (may Allah have mercy upon him) stated not less than thirty-three conditions for the person who wanted to join his group. Some of these conditions were related to certain personal obligations like avoiding the extravagance of drinking tea and coffee and giving special care to cleanliness. However, some of them were concerned with worship like perfecting purification, performance of prayer, and the rest of the ordinances. Other conditions were concerned with *ihsan* (perfection) like observing the vigils and studying the Glorious Qur'an, and some were about morals like being dissident and being merciful with people and helping the weak. In addition to this were the conditions that were concerned with the Movement like the continuous activity and the action of being trained to perform the public services, and those that were concerned with politics like boycotting the civil courts and never seeking governmental posts. Finally, some of these conditions were about economy like boycotting usury transactions and saving money for emergencies.

Sheikh Yasin focused then upon the condition number twenty-six where Al-Banna (may Allah have mercy upon him) said,

"Always be conscious of Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He); seek His Pleasure with determination and resoluteness; and bring yourself closer to Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) by observing night vigil, fasting at

least three days every month, contemplating Allah and mentioning His Names, and reciting the respected supplications of the Prophet (pbuh)."

Sheikh Yasin then said, "These are exalted conditions and whoever succeeds in fulfilling them must, no doubt, be among the pious. However, there is one matter that cannot be performed except in the company of someone and this matter is "bringing oneself closer to Allah". Here the companion should be a living man who keeps on getting closer to Allah until Allah loves him and makes his heart a lantern, a lamp, and a glittering light. This degree cannot be achieved through a pass from a pious and blessed person nor by following one of the leaders of the nation, but only by following the infallible Prophet (pbuh), who is Allah's mercy to all creatures and His beloved servant."

Sheikh Yasin believes that influential companionship is that of the living not of the dead even if they were of the honest godly men. By this he is confirming what some said in *Fiqh*: It is not permitted to imitate the dead, and it is only the interacting living jurist who can be imitated. However, many disagreed with this, saying that opinions do not die with the death of their people, and this is true but it cannot live except with the help of strong living students who can stir it in their hearts and minds.

Al-Banna was a gift from Allah to Egypt and to the Arab and Muslim *Ummah* and these four testimonies are enough to make us realize the true value of this great man.

A Huge Goal and a Tough Way

Hasan al-Banna knew that his goal was big and that his way was tough, long, and difficult.

His target was renewing Islam in the life of the *Ummah*, starting with Egypt and ending with the whole Muslim *Ummah*, and leading it to greatness, dignity, and a stable honorable life, seeking the desired unity and the missing Caliphate, and aiming at spreading Islam in the whole world as Allah the Almighty wanted:

﴿We sent thee not, but as a Mercy for all creatures.﴾

(Al-Anbiya': 107)

His means was teaching the *Ummah* the comprehensive and the integrated meaning of Islam and chasing the invading ideas that were carved in the minds of many Muslims, especially the upper-class people or the cultured people who were isolated from Islam by Westernization. He also wanted to chase away the lingering ideas that were inherited from the deteriorating ages when the *Ummah* misunderstood and misapplied Islam. It was his duty as well to correct the *Ummah's* concepts of its religion and its duty towards it and by this he aimed at forming an Islamic public opinion that would call upon the necessity of returning to Islam.

Al-Banna called this means "the means of proclamation", after which comes the means of "formation" which is an educational long-run means. This means depends upon trying to change the human being and to guide him from the inside. It can be achieved by selecting those who are ready to sacrifice and to give in order to create a new generation that is capable of understanding Islam in a comprehensive manner and that believes deeply in it and does its best to conform with it.

In his tract *The Fifth Conference*, Al-Banna clarified how he started to think about this Call saying,

"Therefore, from all of this it should become obvious that the idea of (establishing) the Muslim Brotherhood is purely Islamic, in its resources and goals. It has absolutely nothing to do with anything un-Islamic.

I carried these thoughts as points requiring personal contemplation and meditation. Sometimes I mentioned them to the people around me. And if I had an opportunity, these thoughts found an outlet in the form of invitation to individuals, a general address, lecture or religious discourse. Sometimes I was able to persuade some Islamic scholars to actively work to save the people and then to guide them towards the goodness of Islam.

A number of incidents and events in Egypt and some other Muslim countries then fired me to action. The hidden wishes of my heart raised their head. I intensely felt that struggle, efforts and actions were inevitable. I felt that we initially needed to warn the people and then organize them so that they could prepare themselves in order to establish the foundations of the work. I do not wish to go into the details of these incidents; they came to an end and they did not leave any lasting effect except that the people connected with them had now developed a sense of awareness.

Then I met the leaders of the community and told them that action and struggle on the part of the people was necessary for their well-being and that the leaders had to address this problem. Sometimes I would be encouraged and sometimes discouraged by their response. Occasionally I was met with hesitation. But the will to organize the practical efforts, which I wanted, could not be found anywhere. It would be a great ingratitude if I do not mention the late Ahmad Taymur Pasha. Whenever I met him, I found him to be a man of courage and manners. Whenever I spoke to him on any problem of the nation, he displayed mature wisdom, perfect capability, and vast knowledge. He was a heartening example of intense activity. May Allah bless him with an abundant reward!

Then, I approached my brothers and friends who had assembled on account of our companionship, pure love, and sense of responsibility. I found in them good and admirable readiness. They joined with me in a spirit of concern and anxiety, and they also felt the necessity of struggling and acting with full courage and swiftness. Among the best examples of these were Ahmad Effendi as-Sukkari, Sheikh Ahmad `Abd al-Hamid, Sheikh Hamid `Askariyyah, and many others. May Allah give them a place in His Vast Paradise!

Now we made a firm affirmation and agreement to the effect that each one of us would remain active and would continue the struggle until the objective was achieved, that is until the mind of the *Ummah* acquired an Islamic base.

None except Allah knows how many nights of ours were occupied by these thoughts and problems. We sustained many nights in scrutinizing the hopeless condition of the *Ummah* in different phases and aspects of life. We analyzed the maladies and diseases and thought out ways of treating the illnesses. We were so affected and moved by our deplorable and depraved condition that we wept bitterly. We were surprised in that while we were in this state others seemed to be falling prey to emotions and losing themselves in useless day-dreaming. They crowded into coffee-houses, clubs and joined in gatherings of vice. When we asked them about the benefit of these empty gatherings, they would reply that they were passing time. Those pitiful people did not know that passing time meant killing oneself, as time is merely another name for life.

We were amazed to find that most of them were educated and were more deserving of carrying this burden than ourselves. We would ask each other, whether this too was not a disease in the *Ummah*, perhaps the most deadly, since it is not regarded as a disease and therefore the *Ummah* does not work towards curing it.

These were some considerations that motivated us towards struggle and activity. We have offered our lives in order to correct these faults. We find comfort in this work, and we are grateful to Allah that He has chosen us for this important work and that He has given us the courage to work for the religion.

As time progressed the four of us separated. Ahmad Effendi as-Sukkari went to Mahmudiyyah, Sheikh Hamid `Askariyyah left for Zaqaziq and Sheikh Ahmad `Abd al-Hamid was transferred to Kafr ad-Dawwar. I stayed on in Isma`iliyyah.

It was in Isma`iliyyah, dear Brothers, that the first seed of this thinking was sown and came the first organization which we worked under and carried its flag, vowing to spread this thinking by starting its activity and sacrificing their lives for the cause by the name of "Al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun" - the Muslim Brotherhood. This was in Dhul-Qa`dah 1347 AH.⁽¹⁾

These reflections, thoughts, and emotions overwhelmed Imam Hasan al-Banna before he established his blessed movement. They disturbed his night, occupied his daytime and seized his heart. They reflect his suffering, pains, and hopes, and indicate that he was not only wailing over the exalted past history of the Muslims, but he rather was searching for a missing thing, a remedy, and a hope, and dreaming of a great thing to be achieved in reality, that is the group which would raise the banner after it had fallen, awake the *Ummah* after their decline, and fire their enthusiasm. This was the condition till the hour of parturition when the Muslim Brotherhood was born without a ceremony!

1. The tract, *The Fifth Conference*.

4. The Sincere Forces

The norms of Allah in our human life reflect clearly that none of the messages of Allah or the calls which invite to His way can prove success or achieve any goals except through the aid of its adherents, the sincere forces who devote themselves wholeheartedly to bring about victory to the message or call they belong to. Truth can not prevail by itself, but it can through the support of brave sincere men.

A foreign man commented after reading about, and being overwhelmed by Islam and its teachings: "What a great religion which lacks the support of real men!" Allah speaks about this idea of support in His Glorious Book, saying

Should they intend to deceive thee, verily Allah sufficeiceth thee: He it is that hath strengthened thee with His aid and with (the company of) the believers, and (moreover) He hath put affection between their hearts: nor if thou hadst spent all that is in the earth, couldst thou have produced that affection, but Allah hath done it: for He is Exalted in might, Wise.

(Al-Anfal: 62-63)

In these verses Allah points out that He supported His Messenger (pbuh) not only by His aid, but also by the believers who believed in him, honored him, helped him, followed the light which is sent down with him. Fraternity, unity, and concord were some of the best and most significant qualities of such believers. They were great blessings with which Allah endowed them.

Allah has promised the believers that He will protect His religion and will keep its embers always glowing even if some of them recant it. He will prepare some of His distinguished forces for the duty of protecting Islam against any apostates. Allah says,

O ye who believe! If any from among you turn back from his Faith, soon will Allah produce a people whom He will love as they 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 pleaseth. And Allah encompasseth all, and He knoweth all things.﴾

(Al-Ma'idah: 54)

These are the features of true, devout believers on whom the long desired victory of Islam hangs. These features manifest themselves in three main points:

1. The mutual affection between them and Allah. They love Allah and Allah loves them,

﴿Those of faith are overflowing in their love for Allah.﴾

(Al-Baqarah: 165)

This affection which they have in their hearts for Allah makes them prefer Allah to all other things in life - whatever they are - such as one's family, children, money, and country. Allah says,

﴿Say: 'If it be that your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your mates, or your kindred: the wealth that ye have gained; the commerce in which ye fear a decline: or the dwellings in which ye delight-are dearer to you than Allah or His Messenger, or the striving in His cause; then wait until Allah brings about His Decision: and Allah guides not the rebellious.﴾

(At-Tawbah: 24)

2. Being humble with the believers and mighty against the rejecters. What is noteworthy is that Allah has never praised the characteristic of being humble with others except in two cases:

- a. Feeling humble towards one's parents. Allah says,

﴿And, out of kindness, lower to them the wing of humility.﴾

(Al-Isra': 24)

- b. Being humble with other Muslim brothers. This was a trait of the Prophet's Companions whom Allah describes in the Qur'an by saying,

﴿... and those who are with him are strong against unbelievers, (but) compassionate amongst each other.﴾

(Al-Fath: 29)

They were strong against the unbelievers who were violating the sacred rituals and places of Muslims, and who were a symbol of injustice and oppression.

3. Fighting in the cause of Allah without fearing people or blame. This reflects their thorough devotion to the end they work to achieve and their earnest striving to please the Creator not the creatures. Concerning these great people Allah says,

«(It is the practice of those) who preach the Messages of Allah, and fear Him, and fear none but Allah. And enough is Allah to call (men) to count.»

(Al-Ahzab: 39)

Hasan al-Banna realized the importance of these major characteristics to the full and believed greatly in the utility of their application. He burned the candle at both ends to raise a Muslim generation that would bear such qualities; a generation that would be able to liberate all Muslim countries and make Islam firmly established on earth. Preparing a generation as such was Al-Banna's prior duty. Allah endowed this man with precious, endless talents that qualified him to undertake this great task which has always been the task of the Prophets.

Allah strengthened Al-Banna with many supporters, from all categories, gifted with pure souls, acute minds, and strong wills. They were men who adhered to Islam's teachings and obligations and prepare themselves gladly to be its forces.

The supporters of Imam al-Banna were not only men but there was a considerable space left for women. In an early stage Al-Banna established the "Department of Muslim Sisters". That is because the role of women cannot be ignored in the field of *da`wah*. The first voice which uttered the first words of support to the Prophet's call was the voice of a woman, Khadijah (Prophet Muhammad's first wife, may Allah be pleased with her). The first blood, which was shed in the cause of Islam, was that of Sumayyah (mother of `Ammar), the first martyr in Islam. However, the female participation in the field of *da`wah* is still limited and undeveloped if compared to the male participation and this is due to many reasons which are mentioned in another book.⁽¹⁾

1. See "Awlawiyyat al-Harakah al-Islamiyyah," the chapter of "Al-Harakah wal-'Amal an-Nisawi."

The youth got the biggest share of Hasan al-Banna's care and attention. He dedicated one of his tracts wholly to them, believing that they are the strong pillar of the *Ummah*, and the carriers of its banner.

«They were youths who believed in their Lord, and We increased them in guidance.»

(Al-Kahf: 13)

In this context Imam al-Banna pointed out, "Any idea is doomed to success only when there is strong belief in it, increasing enthusiasm for it, devotion for its sake, and preparation for sacrifice and action to achieve it. These four qualities are nearly the characteristics of youths. This is because the belief is based on a righteous heart, devotion on a pure heart, enthusiasm on a strong emotion, and action on a strong resolution. These characteristics are confined to the youth."⁽¹⁾

Much of his attention was focused on students whether in the university, or in different institutes and schools. Students are always in the center of interest owing to their awareness, culture, and congregation. They feel very zealous toward the causes of their country and toward the Muslim *Ummah* as a whole. They are the objects of competition between the different bodies and political parties.

Therefore, the "Department of Students" is a very important one, rather it is the most important active of all departments of the "General Center of the Brotherhood" as well as of those of every administrative center, *mantiqah* (district) or *shu'bah*. All the great *du'ah* and guides who come out of the melting-pot of the Brotherhood have been brought up under the shade of this department. Sheikh Muhammad al-Ghazali, Manna' al-Qattan, `Abd al-Mu`izz `Abd as-Sattar are some examples.

When Al-Banna was in a visit to the regions in which the Brotherhood were concentrated, in Cairo, upper Egypt, and lower Egypt, He was very keen to meet the youth living there. When he visited Tanta he met with its students more than once although they were still young, studying at the secondary schools. The only university at that time was in Cairo, then another one was established in Alexandria.

1. The tract, *To the Youth*.

I remember that the last time he met with us was in Tanta, and in this meeting he threw light on the following three recommendations: to excel in acquiring knowledge, to be religious and righteous, and to have strong ties of love among ourselves.

In the tract of *The Fifth Conference*, Imam al-Banna said, "Some years back, six young men from the University joined the Muslim Brotherhood, and they endowed their lives for the sake of Allah Who was aware of their sincerity and toils. He helped them and blessed their efforts, till a day came, when the whole university became supporters of the Muslim Brotherhood. The same is the case of Al-Azhar. It is not surprising that Al-Azhar regards the Call of the Muslim Brotherhood as its own call and the objective of the Muslim Brotherhood as its own objective. Many of those from Al-Azhar are the resolute youth, dignified scholars, teachers, and *du`ah* of the Muslim Brotherhood. For, Al-Azhar has always been a fortress of the Islamic *da`wah* and a refuge for Islam."

Imam al-Banna paid fitting tribute to Al-Azhar's role, which enabled Egypt to be in the lead surpassing all countries of the Muslim *Ummah*.

In one of the public gatherings which Imam al-Banna attended in Tanta, he addressed the sheikhs and Muslim scholars of Al-Azhar, who were so many, by saying: "You really are the official army of Islam, whereas we are the substitute one, we are your supporters."

Amongst the Brotherhood there are many great distinguished sheikhs of Al-Azhar such as: Muhammad Farghali, Al-Ghazali, Sayyid Sabiq, and many other Muslim scholars who prefer not to be mentioned.

Henceforth, what Richard Michelle wrote in his book about the Brotherhood concerning the wide gap between the Brotherhood and Al-Azhar is baseless and untrue.⁽¹⁾ Al-Banna's censuring of many of the Azharite scholars because of their negligence in confronting the fierce assaults against Islam does not reveal the existence of any gap between the two sides.

In our age - exactly at the beginning of the fifties - Al-Azhar seemed to be the fort of the Brotherhood. Almost all its members joined the

1. See Dr. Richard Michelle, *The Muslim Brotherhood*, translator: Mahmud Abu as-Su`ud, commentator: Salih Abu Ruqayyiq, publisher: The American Press, 1st edition.

Brotherhood, Al-Azhar's sheikhs, the deans of its faculties, its professors, and even the students all were in support of the Brotherhood's Call.

Concerning the intense and unceasing efforts of the Brotherhood in serving their society, either through their positive participation in solving its problems, in resisting the danger of the missionary work directed toward the poor and weak people, in establishing schools, spreading education among people, building hospitals, etc. Imam al-Banna said,

"You may be amazed to know that the Muslim Brotherhood who achieved these great things did not receive any governmental aid or depend on the finance of any body at any time. The only exception is the five hundred pounds which they received from Suez Canal Company as a donation for the restoration of the mosque and school in Isma`iliyyah. People, however, invent lies, suspect, and say things of which they have no knowledge against the Muslim Brotherhood. This will not harm us. It is sufficient that Allah knows that these achievements are due to His help and through the private finances of the Brotherhood which were spent sincerely and as a result bore their fruits. The only thing that we will say in frank, clear words, defying every human being and every body whatever they are: 'In all their projects, the Muslim Brotherhood did not seek help from anybody other than its members. They are proud of this, for they feel the pleasure of sacrifice and spending for the sake of Allah'. You may also be amazed to know that the financial subscription which the Muslim Brotherhood pay is voluntary not compulsory. If a member does not pay his subscription, he will not be deprived out of any of his rights. Though this is a clear article of the basic law of the Organization, the Brothers, may Allah bless them with abundant reward, hasten to sacrifice for the sake of Allah whenever they find it necessary and they make astonishing examples. Let me tell you:

While building the mosque of Isma`iliyyah, their leader asked them for fund-raising. One of the Brotherhood craftsmen promised to give three pounds and fifty piasters after three days. He was a poor craftsman. How could he then earn such a sum of money? He wanted to ask for a loan, but he was reluctant to do this and feared that he might extend the time of paying it back. He sought for another outlet but it was not easy. Finally, he had no way but to sell his bicycle, which he rode for the distance of six km

from his home to work and vice versa. He really did this and presented the money at the end of the appointed time. Thus, he fulfilled his promise and made the donation. The leader of those Brothers noticed that he then used to come late to after the '*Isha*' lesson (a lesson given after the '*Isha*' Prayer) and only attended it after a great effort. He asked him about this, but he gave no answer. His friend who knew his secret answered on his behalf and told the leader that he sold his bicycle to fulfil his promise and therefore he returned on foot and came late to the lesson. The leader and the Brothers boasted of his enthusiasm, respected his act, and accepted his donation. They contributed in buying a new bicycle better than his former one to be a symbol of their admiration of his act.

By those personal traits which resemble - to some degree - the traits of the first pious generation of Muslims, the idea of the Muslim Brotherhood arose, their institutions succeeded, and their projects were completed. They were poor but generous; they had little wealth but generous souls. They spent out of this little wealth and therefore it became abundant and Allah blessed it so it brought plentiful goodness.

In this way, I think that I uncovered an aspect which was hidden from many of those who witnessed the efforts of the Brotherhood. They did not understand the secret of their success but instead they accused them of begging bodies and seeking for their own interests and purposes. They, praise be to Allah, are innocent of all these accusations."⁽¹⁾

Imam al-Banna sheds light on another aspect of the Brotherhood's endeavor in the cause of *da`wah*, he said,

"Very few people are aware that the *da`iyah* from among the Muslim Brotherhood finishes his work on Thursday afternoon; he then makes speeches in Al-Minya in the night; in Manfalut he leads the Friday prayers; lectures in Asyut in the afternoon and in Suhaj after '*Isha*'; and then attends to his duties in Cairo, early in the morning when there may be no trace of the other employees and the officers at that time. The *da`iyah* of the Muslim Brotherhood participates in four big gatherings, in thirty hours and then he returns thanking Allah, with contentment, satisfaction, and happiness of heart that He enabled him to do all of this, and only the participants and the listeners can appreciate his work.

1. See the tract, *Are We Practical People?*.

Had someone else done this, he would have publicized himself everywhere. But due to the reasons mentioned above, the Muslim Brotherhood prefer that only the people themselves should see them at work. If someone is satisfied with these activities, it is all right; otherwise one who is not impressed by these activities will definitely not be guided by the speeches.

Very often our brother remains away from his home, wife, and children for a month or two and is busy in the *da`wah*. He delivers speeches by night and travels during the daytime. One day he is in Hazwa and the next day he is in `Aqiq; he makes sixty speeches from the eastern corner of the country to the western corner. The gatherings comprise thousands of people representing different classes and then in spite of this tremendous activity, he insists that he should not be publicized."⁽¹⁾

This does not mean that members of the Brotherhood are angels or saints, on the contrary they are human beings created from the clay which undoubtedly contains some dirt. Experience proved that they are, by virtue of their strong belief in their Call and their religious upbringing, the best among all other associations existing at that time.

It outmatches them because it gathers between its arms a group of people who have very pure souls and devout hearts. They are earnestly enthusiastic to do and defend what is good and to stand firmly against what is evil. They are eager to sacrifice all what they have for the sake of Islam.

Kamil ash-Sharif is an eyewitness who has personally seen the heroic stands and situations of the Brotherhood and wrote about them in his book *Al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun fi Harb Filastin* (The Brotherhood in the War of Palestine). Hasan Duh is another eyewitness who praised the Brotherhood's efforts in the speech he delivered on "The strife of university students in the Suez Canal." What these two mentioned about the members of this association throws light on an outstanding example of the positive believer who has been refined by the upbringing he has received at the hands of the Brotherhood which seeks to wash the hearts of its members from the dirties of selfishness and of other forbidden lusts through a series of worships such as: standing forth to offer prayers at the dead of night, fasting, reading the Glorious Qur'an, and remembering Allah much.

1. The tract, *The Fifth Conference*.

The First Generation of the Brotherhood

It is not astonishing yet to find such great examples of believers who sacrifice themselves for the cause of Allah and His call. Since, the beginning of this honorable Call, we have fully realized the value of these pious and industrious believers, especially the first group of the inhabitants of the Isma`iliyyah. They pledged their allegiance to Imam al-Banna, after attending many of his lectures through which they became acquainted with his thought and character. They said in a tone filled with faith and confidence to Al-Banna,

"We have listened to, recognized, and been affected greatly by your views, yet we do not know the best way that would enable us to restore Islam to its previous glory and superiority, and liberate us from the life of humility and submission. Of course, you see how the Arabs and Muslims living in this country are deprived of the least degree of dignity and prestige. They are nothing but poor way workers subservient to the foreigners. They - or we - have nothing to offer except the blood which runs in our veins loaded with honor, the pure souls which are shining with faith and strong belief, and these few pennies which we earn. Since, we do not know how to serve our country, religion, and our Muslim *Ummah*, we need only one thing from you: to offer you all what we owe and to entrust you to be responsible for us before Allah so that we can free ourselves from responsibility before Him."

Al-Banna commented on these words by saying, "An association of sincere believers like you who make a covenant with Allah that they will live to serve and support His religion and will welcome death for its sake, seeking nothing behind this but the pleasure of their Lord are worthy of His victory even if they are few in number and short of tools."

Al-Banna was deeply touched by their words and accepted to carry the burden of such great responsibility on his shoulders. He pledged to make out of these men along with himself devout forces that would be capable of defending Islamic *da`wah*. He said, "We are "brothers" in the service of Islam, so we are the Muslim Brotherhood."⁽¹⁾ And, from here he chose the name of his association.

1. See Al-Banna, *Mudhakkirat Ad-Da`wah wad-Da`iyah* p. 61 and Richard Michelle, *The Muslim Brotherhood*, pp. 76-77 of the Arabic version translated by Mahmud Abu as-Su`ud.

These are the preliminaries of the Call; the pioneers who set a great example for others to follow.

﴿And for this let those aspire who have aspirations.﴾

(Al-Mutaffifin: 26)

In the School of the Call

The first generation of the Brotherhood which nursed on the milk of the Call and was brought up in its lap set a matchless example through their strong faith, hard work, and straight behavior.

Warm feelings of love and friendship that are translated to action and behavior, and the thorough cooperation among them represent the strongest factor behind the formation, and the continuation of this association.

I remembered once when I was in the shop of our brother Sayyid Abu as-Su`ud, a haberdasher, I met there Brother Mustafa Yusuf who was buying a bottle of perfume. What is astonishing here is that the buyer (Mustafa) insisted to pay ten piasters for the perfume whereas the seller insisted to take only eight piasters. Therefore, I interfered and asked for the bill, and I found that the actual price which Brother Abu as-Su`ud paid for the dozen bottles of perfume was ninety-six piasters, in other words, he wanted to sell the bottle of perfume to his Brother Mustafa at the same price he bought it at.

I said to him, "Brother Abu as-Su`ud, if you do not want to gain any profit from your friend and normally your enemy does not buy from you, so how can you earn your living?" He answered me, "There is no difference between me and my brother, and really I will be very pleased if he accepts to take the perfume for eight piasters." Then I asked Brother Mustafa, "Why do you not accept the offer of your Brother?" He replied, "I paid ten piasters for a similar bottle of perfume which I bought from abroad so my Brother is worthier of this profit, and if he was to accept more than these two piasters surely I would give him more." At last, we reached a compromise by buying it at nine piasters.

But the point here has nothing to do with money, as it is not the money that matters here. It is this peerless inner purity and the moral significance behind this situation that matter. This sublime altruistic behavior if spread

among people, if they are really affected by it and apply it to themselves, undoubtedly all the problems in this life will come to an end.

Some of the Brotherhood heard that one of their Brothers lost his job; therefore more than ten of them decided to call on him. Each Brother talked to him in private, offering him a sum of money that he was saving to use as a capital for a project he could benefit from. The unemployed Brother said, "Indeed, I took money from some of them and I thanked the others who left me feeling sad because they missed the merit of helping a Muslim brother."

Some Specimens Reflecting the Morals of the First Generation

Imam al-Banna spoke about the first generation of Brotherhood that flourished under his hands in Isma`iliyyah and about certain specimens which reflect the moral attitude of this generation. He said,

"These Brothers represent a unique example of people who adhere strictly to the rules of Islam, affected deeply by its ethics and teachings, and apply all this to their behavior.

Hasan Mursi is one of our Brothers who were working for Mr. Maniu, one of the foreigners who were living in Egypt at the time of the English occupation. Hasan's job was to manufacture radio boxes, and he was very skillful at his work. Each radio box cost one pound. Another foreign man, a friend of Mr. Maniu, came intending to bargain with Hasan to manufacture some radio boxes for him, without informing Mr. Maniu of anything so that Hasan could have half their price and he could benefit from the other half.

Mr. Maniu had great confidence in Hasan. He even entrusted Hasan with all the tools and materials in the shop. Hasan was not by all means the one who would sell out others who trusted him. The foreign man was not able to recognize this fact, so he tried to selfishly use this trust, but Brother Hasan gave him a very strict lesson in morality. He said to him, "Islam and all other religions forbid treachery, yet you are thinking seriously of betraying your friend and trying to tempt me to do the same thing. You man! You must regret this foul thinking, and be sure I will not mention this to Mr. Maniu not to spoil your friendship, but with one condition, that is, to promise me that you will not return to such a bad behavior again."

All the same, this foreign man was morally too bad to be touched by the words of Brother Hasan. He said to him, "Ok then, I will tell Mr. Maniu that you are the one who contrived such a treachery, and he will certainly believe me as I am his favorite. Accordingly, you will be expelled from your work, and you will lose your position and stature. Thus, it is better for you to cooperate with me and to fulfil what I want." At this point, brother Hasan got angry and said to him, "Do what you want, but I am sure your reward will be utter failure and disgrace."

The man carried out his threats and Maniu started to investigate the whole matter. He asked Hasan about what had exactly happened between him and the other foreigner. Brother Hasan told him everything from beginning to end. Mr. Maniu did not have any shadow of doubt in Hasan. He believed all what he related him. Mr. Maniu therefore kicked out his false friend, broke off his friendship with him, and rewarded Hasan for his honesty by increasing his wage.

`Abd al-`Aziz Ghulam an-Nabi, an Indian Brother who was working as a tailor in the English camp, is another specimen of the Brotherhood that invites to contemplation and admiration. The wife of one of the high officers called him at her house with the plea that she wanted him to do some work for her. The fact was that she wanted to be alone with him and tried earnestly to seduce him. He on the other hand tried all kinds of means to deter her; first by advising her then by chiding and frightening her. Instead of feeling ashamed or guilty the woman threatened Brother `Abd al-`Aziz that she would reverse the case against him declaring that he tried to rape her. Then, she resorted to another means of threatening. She held the pistol to his chest. But, he remained firm rejecting strongly her temptation saying, "I do fear Allah the Lord of the Worlds".

How significant and funny at the same time this situation is! She seemed falsely insisting on killing him telling him that she would be excused for because she would say that he tried to assault her in her house. Under the threat of her pistol he closed his eyes shouting in faith, "I bear witness that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is His Messenger". The woman got alarmed by this shout, the pistol dropped from her hands, and she could not do anything but pushing him away of her house. Brother `Abd al-`Aziz kept running till he arrived at the house of the Brotherhood.

These are the morals of the first Brotherhood. In fact, incidents which reflect their elevated behavior are countless. Allah has blessed this Call actually because of such great and devout men. Allah says,

«Seest thou not how Allah sets forth a parable? A goodly word like a goodly tree, whose root is firmly fixed, and its branches (reach) to the heavens, it brings forth its fruit at all times, by the leave of its Lord so Allah sets forth parables for men, in order that they may receive admonition.»

(Ibrahim: 24-25)⁽¹⁾

Al-Banna's School of Islamic Education

Hasan al-Banna is a landmark in the field of education. He was - whether by his nature or afterwards through practice - cut out to be an educator. He made great use of his experience and talents in educating the generation of believers which he was yearning to establish for the duty of pushing our Muslim *Ummah* to the path of progress. He was very keen to sow certain qualities in their hearts; the qualities which would bind them to achieve comprehensive reform not only to their country, but also to the Muslim *Ummah* as a whole. He formed a group of teachers and educators to help him in this task. He established a very distinguished school in the field of education and formation about which I wrote in my book, *At-Tarbiyah al-Islamiyyah wa Madrasat Hasan al-Banna* (Islamic Education and Hasan al-Banna).

Distinctive Features of the Brotherhood

By all odds, this school had great impact on the minds and souls of its students. It affected their manners and behavior greatly and marked them with distinctive features and traits.

Yearning to sacrifice without limits is one distinctive feature of theirs. Every member of this generation believed that his first and last duty was to give not to take, to sacrifice not to benefit. Al-Banna considered sacrifice a basic pillar of his Call. Elaborating on it he said, "By Sacrifice I mean giving one's self, wealth, time, energy, and everything else for the cause of Islam. There is no *jihad* without sacrifice, nor will there be sacrifice without

1. See Al-Banna, *Mudhakkirat ad-Da'wah wad-Da'iyah*.

generous reward from Allah. Those who renege and offer no sacrifice are sinners. Allah says,

﴿Allah hath purchased of the Believers their persons and their goods; for theirs (in return) is the Garden (of Paradise).﴾

(At-Tawbah: 111)

﴿Say: 'If it be that your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your mates, or your kindred: the wealth that ye have gained; the commerce in which ye fear a decline: or the dwellings in which ye delight - are dearer to you than Allah or His Messenger, or the striving in His cause; then wait until Allah brings about His Decision: and Allah guides not the rebellious.'﴾

(At-Tawbah: 24)"

Being ready to face any kind of difficulties is another feature that distinguishes this generation. Al-Banna made it clear to the adherents of his Call since an early stage that the path of *da'wah* is not decorated with flowers and lilies, but it is surrounded by prickles and thorns, stained with the blood of martyrs, and filled with the limbs of the victims of oppression.

Al-Banna's words are paralleled with what Imam ibn al-Qayyim wrote in one of his books. He wrote, "To you who are of unmanly determination! On the path of *da'wah* Adam extremely suffered, Nuh faced for long the rebellion of his people, Ibrahim was thrown into the fire, Isma'il was about to be slain, Zakariyya was cut-up by the saw, and the noble, chaste Yahya was slaughtered."

In the thirties Imam al-Banna brought out his tract entitled *Between Yesterday and Today*. He concluded this tract by expressing his will to prepare his Brothers (or forces) psychologically and spiritually for the burdens and hardships which were in store for them, and of which they were inadvertent. Al-Banna's words concerning this matter have been learned by heart and are often repeated by the Brotherhood in different occasions. Imam al-Banna (Allah's mercy be upon him) said under the title "Obstacles in our Path",

"I would like to avow to you frankly that your Call is still unknown to many people, and that on the day they find out about it and grasp its import and its aims, you will encounter violent antagonisms and sharp hostility.

You will find many hardships ahead of you, and many obstacles will rise up before you. Only at that time you will have begun to tread the path of those who come with a call. At the present time you are still unknown, and you are still smoothing the way for your Call and getting yourselves ready for the necessary struggle and campaign. The ignorance of the people as to what constitutes true Islam will stand as an obstacle in your way, and you will find among the religious people and the official religious establishment those who will regard your understanding of Islam as backward and outlandish, and censure your campaign on that account. Chiefs, leaders, and men of rank and authority will hate you; all governments will rise as one against you, and every government will try to set limits to your activities and to put impediments in your way. The spoliators will use every pretext to oppose you, and to extinguish the light of your Call. And, to achieve that purpose they will invoke the aid of weak governments and weak morality, and of the hands stretched out to them in beggary and toward you in malignity and hostility. They will all stir up around your Call the dust of suspicion and unjust accusations, and they will try to endow it with every possible defect and to display it before the people in the most repugnant possible guise, relying on their power and authority and fortified by their wealth and influence.

﴿Their intention is to extinguish Allah's Light (by blowing) with their mouths: but Allah will complete His Light, even though the unbelievers may detest it.﴾

(As-Saff: 8)

It is without doubt that you will then experience trials and tribulation, you will be imprisoned, arrested, transported, and persecuted, and your goods will be confiscated, your employments suspended, and your homes searched. This period of trial may last a long time.

﴿Do men think that they will be left alone on saying, 'We believe,' and that they will not be tested?﴾

(Al-'Ankabut: 2)

But, Allah has promised you afterwards the triumph of those who have striven and the reward of those who work for the sake of good:

﴿O ye who believe! Shall I show you a bargain that will save you from a grievous Chastisement?... But We gave power to those who believed against their enemies, and they became the ones that prevailed.﴾

(As-Saff: 10-14)

Are you resolved to be the helpers of Allah?"⁽¹⁾

From the handful of their distinctive features there lies the rose of hope: hope in the victory of Allah, hope which assures that the future is for Islam and the Muslims. This is the real hope whose light never fades and whose foliage never wanes. Al-Banna dealt with hope as an essential part of true faith, and gave many proofs for this. First, he offered a proof from the Qur'an:

﴿It is He Who has sent His Messenger with Guidance and the Religion of Truth, that He make it prevail over all religion, even though the Pagans may detest (it).﴾

(As-Saff: 9)

He provided another proof from history which tells that Islam becomes in its strongest, firmest, and purest condition when hardships surround it, and sufferings descend in its open space. In the battles of apostasy, the Western Crusades, and in its war with the Eastern Tartars Islam has always been victorious proving to its enemies, who had thought that its banner had fallen for ever, that it is always here.

The history of different nations sheds light on some great and unexpected movements that have changed the way we live, and presents us as well with a third proof. In these nations there were some great men who succeeded in realizing their great dreams despite their few numbers and limited preparations. King `Abd al-`Aziz ibn Su`ud (Allah's mercy be upon him) is an example.

With regard to this proof Al-Banna said, "Today's reality was yesterday's dream, and today's dream will be tomorrow's reality."

The cycle of life is another proof, as Imam al-Banna called it. He explained this fourth proof by pointing out that in the too distant past, when the ancient Eastern civilizations, the pharaonic, the Phoenician, the Assyrian and Babylonian, the Persian, and the Indian, were existing, the East was in

1. The tract, *Between Yesterday and Today*.

charge of the world's leadership. Then, the Greek philosophy and the Roman constitution appeared strongly and imposed their own influence and power on the whole world. Hence, the world's leadership was handed over to the West.

Nevertheless, it did not rest there. It turned back again to the East, kneeling before the Arab Islamic civilization, which controlled the world for centuries.

The Islamic civilization, yet entered the phase of deep slumbering, and began to dwindle. At the same time the West was so mindful and keen to suck up Eastern knowledge to the last drop. They made great use of its empirical and deductive methods. The new Western culture drew its material from the East, added to and developed it by resorting to modern science and technology till it managed to be on the top of progress. However advanced the Western culture may seem it is still missing a very essential element, namely, the spiritual and ethical pillars. It fails to provide the world with complete and efficient leadership. It fails to keep justice, support what is right, and make goodness prevail, so it is not worthy of governing the world.

This is Allah's law on earth, leadership must be handed to who is more entitled to it, and we Muslims are worthier of it than others. Allah says,

«Before this We wrote in the Psalms, after the Message (given to Moses): 'My servants the righteous, shall inherit the earth.'»

(Al-Anbiya': 105)

This is our turn to be back at the helm of affairs as the wheel of time should come full circle. When signs of trouble began to appear in the horizon following the disturbance in relations between the Brotherhood and the Egyptian government at that time Imam al-Banna concentrated his efforts on reviving hope in the hearts of his Brothers. He wrote several essays about this meaning in *Al-Ikhwān al-Muslimūn* daily newspaper for example, the essays entitled "Between a Sever Trial and a Sweet Grant", "Even if...", and "Four Proofs". These essays came to push the clouds of despair away from these believers' hearts, and to remind them that no one despairs of Allah's soothing mercy except those who have no faith.

Hope Is Set on Sincere Brothers

Hasan al-Banna was aware of the fact that people vary in their readiness, capabilities, and faith. With regard to this point Allah says in the Glorious Qur'an,

«Then We have given the Book for inheritance to such of Our servants as We have chosen: but there are among them some who wrong their own souls; some who follow a middle course; and some who are, by Allah's leave, foremost in good deeds; that is the highest Grace.»

(Fatir: 32)

Therefore, Al-Banna divided the Brotherhood into levels according to the degree of maturity, education, awareness, and sacrifice. The uppermost level of all is that of "the sincere Brother" or that of the "*mujahid*". To these two kinds of people Al-Banna dedicated the tract of *The Teachings*, which is not composed merely of eloquent words to be memorized, but it contains important instructions, which should be carried out. Concerning the other levels of the Brotherhood there are other directions and formalities for them.

Accordingly, Al-Banna's prior objective was to elevate his Brothers to the rank of devoutness in religion along with the other aspects of life. The Muslim who reaches this rank becomes one of the sincere people with whom Allah orders us to be. Allah says,

«O ye who believe! Fear Allah and be with those who are truthful.»

(At-Tawbah: 119)

These sincere people are those whom Allah describes by saying,

«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)

About them Allah sent down these verses,

«Among the Believers are men who are true to their covenant with Allah: of them some have died and some (still) wait: but they have never

changed (their determination) in the least: that Allah may reward the men of Truth for their Truth...﴾

(Al-Ahzab: 23- 24)

They are portrayed in *Surat al-Baqarah* as being pious and righteous. Allah says,

﴿It is not righteousness that ye turn your faces toward East or West; but it is righteousness to believe in Allah and the Last Day, and the Angels, and the Book, and the Messengers; to spend of your sustenance, out of love for Him, for your kin, for orphans, for the needy, for the wayfarer, for those who ask, and for the ransom of slaves; to be steadfast in prayer, and give Zakah, to fulfil the contracts which ye have made; and to be firm and patient, in pain (or suffering) and adversity, and throughout all periods of panic. Such are the people of truth, the God-fearing.﴾

(Al-Baqarah: 177)

Twelve Thousand Sincere Believers

Hasan al-Banna was certain that if he had a group consisting of twelve thousands of these devout and true believers who had fully grown up spiritually, morally, intellectually, and physically he could defy with them the grave dangers of life. They are people whose strong faith in Allah qualifies them to break into any difficulty.

Al-Banna fixed this number in particular on basis of the Prophet's *hadith* that reads,

"A group of twelve thousand (believers) are not to be defeated because they are few in number."

The twelve thousand believers whom the Prophet (pbuh) meant in this *hadith* are those whose upbringing and faith become completely ripe. The Prophet (pbuh) would not accept even a hundred fold of this number if its members were of lesser faith and low morals, simply because a hospital full of patients can not face even one healthy man.

Quality matters much than quantity. The Glorious Qur'an echoed this fact in addressing Muslims in the era of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) by saying,

﴿Assuredly Allah did help you in many battle-fields and on the day of Hunayn: behold! Your great numbers elated you, but they availed you naught; the land for all that is wide, did constrain you, and ye turned back in retreat.﴾

(At-Tawbah: 25)

In another place Allah says,

﴿Allah had helped you at Badr, when ye were helpless: then fear Allah: thus may ye show your gratitude.﴾

(Al `Imran: 123)

Despite the false accusations ascribed to the Brotherhood and their Call, the Brotherhood has among its members in Egypt and in the other Arab countries some elite believers who are - without fear or favor - of brilliant minds, pure souls, effluent emotions, firm will, sublime manners, and most importantly strong faith. They are in the lead among other groups by virtue of their awareness, flexibility, faith, and good behavior. They are the fruit of Islamic education which can work miracles.

5. Clear and Comprehensive Objectives

The objectives of the Brotherhood's Call, as drawn by Imam al-Banna, are not ambiguous or obscure. On the contrary, they are very clear and of a very wide scope.

The Brotherhood's aims are great, numerous, various and of a wide range. The Brotherhood does not direct all its aims toward the intellectual side like the pick of intellectuals who focus all their effort on enlightening people's minds. This does not imply that the Brotherhood neglects this side; on the contrary illumination and civilization of minds are one of their silent goals.

Likewise, their aims are not completely directed to the social side, which is the main interest of socialists who pay much attention to social justice and social solidarity. However, social justice and solidarity plus melting the divide between the rich and the poor are among the first priorities of the Brotherhood.

Of great importance are economy and development for all economic reformers who seek earnestly to increase production, rationalize consumption, and bring about fair distribution and honest circulation. Of the same importance are they in the program of the Brotherhood which stresses on the necessity of liberating the economy from subordination, yet they are not the predominant elements in it.

The Brotherhood is an integral and comprehensive association, and not a pure political party. Politics is on top of its agenda, yet it is not the only thing on which they focus their objectives. The attention which the Brotherhood pay to politics originates from their will to liberate the country from foreign dominion and influence. They also strive to achieve people's demands represented in the application of the Islamic *Shari'ah* and liberation from heteromony, cultural subordination, and other forms of imperialism.

To be limited within the boundaries of Egypt was not and will never be one of the Brotherhood's aims. It is true that Egypt is the place of birth in which their Call was born, grew up and from which it was transmitted to many other nations. Therefore, Egypt wins the big share of their thought, care, and efforts. Moreover, it is not only the birthplace of this Call, but it is the nation which left the greatest impact on the history of Islam and Arabs. It is also the country on which hopes hang. In spite of all this, the Call of the Brotherhood extends to embrace all Arab nations from the Arab Gulf to the Atlantic and all Muslim nations as well extending from the Pacific to the Atlantic or between Jakarta to the West and Morocco to the East.

The Brotherhood care much about the causes of the Arab world beside these of the Muslim world too. They consider that their prior duty toward any Muslim land is to protect and defend it from any aggression, to help establish Islam firmly in all domains of life there, and to push it towards development and progress.

The Brotherhood's goals do not stop at this, rather they believe that Islam is not a limited message which is sent down to a certain race, area or class. On the contrary, it is an international call which is sent down to all races and colors, to all peoples and nations, and to all tongues and classes. Allah says to His Prophet (pbuh),

﴿Say: 'O men! I am sent unto you all, as a Messenger of Allah.

(Al-A'raf: 158)

Allah says also,

﴿Blessed is He Who sent down the Criterion to His servant, that it may be an admonition to all creatures.﴾

(Al-Furqan: 1)

These are the aims and goals of the Brotherhood. They are as clear and comprehensive as the Message, i.e. Islam, which they emanate from. They tackle carefully and with great heed all aspects of the individual's life whether intellectual, psychological, spiritual, educational, or physical. They also comprehend the larger aspects of life, that is, the familial, social, economic spheres. The borders of these objectives begin from Egypt to the Arab world, the Muslim world, and the whole world.

Seven Major Objectives

Concerning these seven major objectives the founder of the Brotherhood, Imam al-Banna, said, "We are in dire need for a truly Muslim individual, family, community and government. We are yearning for communicating our Call throughout the whole world."

To elaborate on these seven major aims there are no more eloquent and significant words than those of Imam al-Banna. In his tract *To the Youth*, he said, "The way of the Muslim Brotherhood has its identified stages and clear steps. We know completely what we want and the means to achieve these aims. What we want is summarized in the following sequence:

1. We, firstly, want to build a Muslim personality that abides by Islam in its thought, belief, manners, emotions, work, and behavior. This is our individual construction.

2. Then we want to establish a Muslim home that abides by Islam in its thought, belief, manners, emotions, work, and behavior. That is why we are concerned about women equally as men and we care for children in the same way as youths. This is our familial construction.

3. Then we want to establish a Muslim society which abides by Islam in the former aspects. Therefore, we strive for making our Call enter every home, spread everywhere, and penetrate into villages, hamlets, cities, and metropolises. We spare no effort or means in this regard.

4. Then we want to form a Muslim government that leads the people to the mosque and makes them adhere to the guidance of Islam as they adhered to it by the governments led by the Companions of the Prophet (pbuh) like Abu Bakr and `Umar. Thus, we do not acknowledge any governmental system that is not based on Islam or does not rely on it. Also, we do not acknowledge these political parties or traditional forms according to which the enemies of Islam and unbelievers enforced us to rule and work. We will work for restoring the Islamic system in all its aspects and forming the Islamic government on its basis.

5. Then we want to gather together all parts of our Muslim homeland after it was divided by Western policy and European greed and covetousness. Therefore, we do not acknowledge these divisions or accept

the international agreements that make the Muslim world weak, divided countries that are easy to be swallowed by the aggressors. We will not accept that the freedom of their peoples is usurped and that they are exposed to oppression.

Thus Egypt, Syria, Hejaz, Yemen, Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, and every span of the earth where is a Muslim bearing witness that there is no god but Allah, all are parts of our big homeland which we seek to liberate, rescue, and unite all its parts together. If the Reich employs itself as protector of all Germans, the Islamic belief makes it obligatory for every Muslim to protect whoever absorbed the teachings of the Qur'an. Thus, in Islam it is not acceptable for the ethnic tie to be stronger than the tie of belief. Belief is the most essential part of Islam. Is belief nothing more than love and hate for the sake of Allah!

6. Then we aim at raising the Islamic banner again over those parts which once flourished and prospered under the rule of Islam for a period of time, where the voice of the caller to prayer was raised with the glorification of Allah and acknowledging His Oneness. Both the Mediterranean and Red sea must return to the Islamic domain as they were before.

If Mussolini believes in restoring the Roman empire as a legal right though this alleged empire was based on covetousness and desires, then we have the right to restore the glories of the Islamic empire which was based on the principles of justice, equality, and the spread of light and guidance among humanity.

7. After all these aims and also with them we want to proclaim our Call to the whole world, make it reach all people as well as the remotest parts of the earth, and force every oppressor to submit to it:

﴿... until there is no more persecution, and Religion becomes Allah's in its entirety.﴾

(Al-Anfal: 39)

﴿On that Day shall the Believers rejoice - with the help of Allah. He gives victory to whom He wills, and He is Exalted in Might, most Merciful﴾

(Ar-Rum: 4-5)⁽¹⁾

1. The Tract, *To the Youths*.

Objectives within Reach and Objectives Far from Reach

The founder and guide of the Brotherhood feared that people would think that the Brotherhood is only one of those associations that are concerned with public utility and dedicated wholly to serving the society.

He agreed that the Brotherhood in some of its facets may be classified under these kinds of associations. But also he strongly denied that this is the sole end which the association endeavored to reach. On more than one occasion he took upon himself the responsibility of differentiating between the within-reach ends - which the Brotherhood shares with others - and the far ends, which separate and distinguish them from other associations and parties.

And, Hasan al-Banna emphasized that the Brotherhood works for two ends, one is near and the other is far. The near end is that whose fruits appear as soon as the individual joins the Brotherhood or the association itself steps into the arena of activity and work. Whereas, the far end requires long span of time, watching for opportunities, and good, accurate preparations.

The near end is represented in participating, if possible, in public utility of whatever kind and in social service.

From the moment of joining the Brotherhood the new Brother should bind himself to certain commitments and fulfillments. He is responsible first for his own self. He should purify his heart from the filth of sins, rectify his behavior and prepare his soul, mind, and body for the long and hard *jihad*, which is awaiting him. He should apply the rules of Islam to himself, and push himself toward what is good and deter it from what is wrong otherwise he does not deserve to be a Muslim Brother.

By the Soul, and the proportion and order given to it; and its inspiration as to its wrong and its right; truly he succeeds that purifies it, and he fails that corrupts it!

(Ash-Shams: 7-10)

The Brotherhood consists of groups of these Brothers and has a center through which it administers its affairs. The association takes upon itself the responsibility of abolishing illiteracy, acquainting people with the teachings

of Islam, guiding and advising them with beautiful preaching. It spares no effort in reestablishing normal relations between any parties at odds, in paying alms to the needy, and in taking part in charity works. Moreover, it has been setting up many useful establishments such as schools, hospitals, and mosques. It does all this and is ready to offer more than this if and whenever possible.

Still a question remains: Is that only what the Muslim Brotherhood want? Is that what they are preparing themselves for?

Al-Banna provided us with the answer when he said, "No, my Brothers, this is not only what we want. They are some of our aims which we seek for the sake of Allah. This is the first within-reach hope, that is to spend time in obedience and goodness until the suitable time and the hour of hopeful, comprehensive reformation comes. The fundamental and main aim of the Brotherhood is an entire, comprehensive reformation in which the entire forces of the *Ummah* cooperate and towards which they direct. It is also the reformation that alters all the current situations. The Muslim Brotherhood proclaim a call, believe in a way (of reformation), support a belief, and work for guiding people to a social system that deals with all aspects of life called "Islam". With it came down the Truthful Spirit, to the heart of the master of the Messengers that he may admonish in the perspicuous Arabic tongue. They aim to revive the model Muslim nation that abides by true Islam which is its guide and leader. Thus, it is known to be the state of the Qur'an from which it takes its hue. They defend and call to it, strive for its sake, and sacrifice their wealth and their souls in its cause.

Islam came as a system and a leader, a religion and a state, and a law and implementation. Then, the system remained while the quality of leadership disappeared; the religion continued while the state (that protected and applied it) was lost; the law flourished while its implementation ceased. Is this not the reality, O Brothers? If not, then where is the application of the laws that Allah has revealed with regard to bloods, property, and honors?

And this (He commands): judge thou between them by what Allah hath revealed, and follow not their vain desires, but beware of them lest they beguile thee from any of that (teaching) which Allah hath sent down to

thee. And if they turn away, be assured that for some of their crimes it is Allah's purpose to punish them. And truly many men are rebellious. Do they then seek after a judgement of (the Days of) Ignorance? But who, for a people whose faith is assured, can give better judgement than Allah?﴾

(Al-Ma'idah: 49-50)

The Muslim Brotherhood work for supporting the system by governors, restoring the state of Islam, implementing these laws, establishing a Muslim government supported by a Muslim nation which rules their life according to a Muslim law. Allah ordered His Prophet (pbuh) in His book to follow it saying,

﴿Then We put thee on the (right) Way of Religion: so follow thou that (Way), and follow not the desires of those who know not. They will be of no use to thee in the sight of Allah: it is only wrong-doers (that stand as) protectors, one to another: but Allah is the Protector of the Righteous.﴾

(Al-Jathiyah: 18-19)⁽¹⁾

General Objectives and Specific Objectives

Imam al-Banna divided the Brotherhood's objectives from another different perspective into general and specific. Under the title "Our General Objectives," he said,

"What do we want, Brothers? Do we want to hoard wealth, which is an evanescent shadow? Or do we want abundance of fame, which is a transient accident? Or do we want dominion over the earth? We read the Speech of Allah (Exalted and Almighty be He),

﴿That Home of the Hereafter We shall give to those who intend not high-handedness or mischief on earth: and the End is (best) for the righteous.﴾

(Al-Qasas: 83)

May Allah witness that we do not want any of these, that our work is not toward these ends, and that our Call is not on their behalf. Rather always bear in mind that you have two fundamental goals:

1. The tract, *The Sixth Conference*.

1. that the Muslim homeland be freed from all foreign domination, for this is a natural right belonging to every human being which only the unjust oppressor or the conquering exploiter will deny.

2. that a free Muslim state may arise in this free homeland, acting according to the precepts of Islam, applying its social regulations, proclaiming its sound principles, and broadcasting its sage call to all mankind. For, as long as this state does not emerge, the Muslims in their totality are committing sin, and are responsible before Allah, the Lofty, the Great, for their failure to establish it and for their slackness in creating it.

Under these bewildering circumstances, it is counter to humanity that a state should arise, extolling an ideology of injustice and proclaiming a propaganda of oppression, while there should be no one among all mankind working for the advent of a state founded on truth, justice, and peace. We want to realize these two goals in the Nile Valley and Arab domain, and in every land which Allah has made fortunate through Islam; a religion, a nationality, and a creed uniting all Muslims.

Following these two aims, we have some specific aims without the realization of which our society cannot become completely Muslim. Brothers, recall that more than sixty percent of the Egyptians live at a subhuman level, that they get enough to eat only through the most arduous toil, and that Egypt is threatened by murderous famines and exposed to many economic problems of which only Allah can know the outcome. Recall too that there are more than three-hundred and twenty foreign companies in Egypt, monopolizing all public utilities and all important facilities in every part of the country; that the wheels of commerce, industry, and all economic institutions are in the hands of profiteering foreigners; and that our wealth in land is being transferred with lightning speed from the possession of our compatriots to that of these others. Recall also that Egypt, out of the entire civilized world, is the most subject to diseases, plagues, and illnesses; that over ninety percent of the Egyptian people are threatened by physical infirmity, the loss of some sensory perception, and a variety of sicknesses and ailments; and that Egypt is still backward, with no more than one-fifth of the population possessing any education, and of these more than a hundred-thousand people have never gone farther than the elementary school level. Recall that crime has doubled in Egypt, and that it is increasing

at an alarming rate to the point that there are more graduates of the prison than the school; that up to the present time Egypt has been unable to outfit a single army division with its full complement of material; and that these symptoms and phenomena may be observed in any Muslim country. Among your aims are to work for the reform of education; to war against poverty, ignorance, disease, and crime; and to create an exemplary society which will deserve to be associated with the Muslim Law."

An Entire Objective and Detailed Objectives

In another situation Imam al-Banna explained the aims of the Brotherhood both in brief and in detail. First, he threw light on one entire objective and crystallized it in the following:

"To stand against the overwhelming wave of materialism and the civilization of desires and lusts - which overwhelmed the Muslim countries, drove them away from the guidance of the Prophet and the Qur'an, deprived the whole world from it, and postponed its progress for centuries - until it is removed from our countries and our people are protected from it. We will not stop at this point but we will pursue this wave in its own land until the whole world believes in Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and the teachings of the Qur'an and Islam spreads all over the world.

﴿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 wills, and He is Exalted in Might, Most Merciful.﴾

(Ar-Rum: 4-5)

Dear Brothers, this is our task in brief. Some of its details are that there should be the following institutions, firstly in Egypt as it is the leader of the Muslim countries and then in the other Muslim countries as well:

- An internal system of governing based on Allah's saying,

﴿And this (He commands): judge thou between them by what Allah hath revealed, and follow not their vain desires, but beware of them lest they beguile thee from any of that (teaching) which Allah hath sent down to thee.﴾

(Al-Ma'idah: 49)

- A system for international relations according to the verse,

«Thus have We made of you an Ummah justly balanced, that ye might be witnesses over the nations, and the Messenger a witness over yourselves.»

(Al-Baqarah: 143)

- A practical system of judiciary in accordance with Allah's saying,

«But no, by thy Lord, they can have no (real) Faith, until they make thee judge in all disputes between them, and find in their souls no resistance against thy decisions, but accept them with the fullest conviction.»

(An-Nisa': 65)

- A system of defense and military service achieving the objective of the verse,

«Go ye forth, (whether equipped) lightly or heavily, and strive and struggle, with your goods and your persons, in the Cause of Allah.»

(At-Tawbah: 41)

- An independent economic and financial institution achieving the interests of the state as well as of individuals on the basis of the verse,

«To those weak of understanding give not your property, which Allah hath assigned to you to manage.»

(An-Nisa': 5)

- An educational cultural institution to fight against ignorance and illiteracy as the first verse of the revelation states,

«Proclaim! (or Read!) In the name of thy Lord and Cherisher, who created...»

(Al-'Alaq: 1)

- An institution for family that leads to bringing up a true Muslim child, woman, and man according to Allah's saying,

«O ye who believe! Save yourselves and your families from a Fire whose fuel is Men and Stones.»

(At-Tahrim: 6)

- A system for the individual in his private behavior that achieves success as mentioned in the verse,

﴿Truly he succeeds that purifies it.﴾

(As-Shams: 9)

- A general spirit that prevails the whole *Ummah* - whether leaders or subjects - on the basis of the verse,

﴿But seek, with the (wealth) which Allah has bestowed on thee, the Home of the Hereafter, nor forget thy portion in this world: but do thou good, as Allah has been good to thee, and seek not (occasions for) mischief in the land.﴾

(Al-Qasas: 77)⁽¹⁾

In the wake of World War II Imam Hasan al-Banna launched into enormous activity with the Brotherhood in particular and the Egyptians in general. He held meetings in the Brotherhood's houses, and organized great national conferences in the big towns all over Egypt. In these meetings and conferences he emphasized the national aims of Egypt, the Arab world, and the Muslim world in Asia and Africa. These aims revolved round a main idea, which is, liberation from the clutches of foreign power and resorting instead to an independent national rule originating from Islamic *Shari'ah*. What Imam al-Banna said about this matter is too long to mention here. Therefore, it will be sufficiently good for the reader to read what Al-Banna said in the historic address he gave regarding the national rights of Egyptians, Arabs, and Muslims in the meeting of the heads of regions and centers of *jihad*.⁽²⁾

The Comprehensive Objectives and Islam

The comprehensive nature of the Brotherhood's objectives is due to their belief in the comprehensiveness of Islam. They do not consider Islam a religion concerned only with spirituality and worships or morals and behavior. They look on it from a broader scope. They regard it an extensive message that encompasses all aspects of life. It focuses on spirituality, worships, ethics, conventions, and legislation. Islam seeks seriously to

1. The tract, *The Brotherhood under the Banner of the Qur'an*.

2. See Al-Banna, *Majmu' ar-Rasa'il* (The Collection of the tracts).

create a society based on brotherhood, a state which works through justice, a nation that is justly balanced, and a civilization that is complete.

This comprehensive concept of Islam is the distinctive characteristic of the Brotherhood's thought. Imam al-Banna named it "The Brotherhood's Islam." Certainly, he did not mean that they come with a new Islam differing from the Islam with which Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was sent long centuries ago. What he meant is that Islam was dealt with through a very narrow and incomplete perspective owing to the cultural invasion which accompanied the political imperialism. Muslims looked on Islam as a religion which was restricted in certain worships such as prayers, fasting, and some other rituals. For example, *Zakah*, which is a financial social worship, lost its true significance in the hearts of Muslims: *Zakah* is enacted in the Qur'an and *Sunnah* as a social system for which the state is responsible by collecting and distributing it through those people when the Qur'an named those employed to administer the (funds). It is taken from the rich to be given to the poor.

Much effort had to be exerted to bring about true and better understanding of Islam, and to make Muslims aware that Islam is an extensive divine message that includes all aspects of life.

The Muslim Brotherhood had a great and significant role in this direction. It succeeded in attracting many supporters from all classes and areas of life to its comprehensive idea about Islam along with its comprehensive objectives in general. Comprehensive thought is the trademark of the Brotherhood's *Da`wah*.

More Objectives, More Work

The more extensive the Brotherhood's objectives become the more fields of work are. The extensive nature of these objectives is reflected in its including of all aspects of life and its expanding throughout the Muslim world. This is exactly what Imam al-Banna meant when he discussed the item of Action in the tract of *The Teachings*. He explained that the Brotherhood's action moves within seven fields, just the same number of the major objectives mentioned before. All these fields require great effort, long patience, and strong will.

In elaborating on what is meant by action here Imam al-Banna said,

“By action I mean the fruit of knowledge and devotion:

﴿And say: 'Work righteousness: soon will Allah observe your work, and His Messenger, and the Believers: soon will ye be brought back to the Knower of what is hidden and what is open: then will He show you the truth of all that ye did.﴾

(At-Tawbah: 105)

Our sincere Brothers are requested to work according to the following steps:

1. Reforming the self. A Muslim should strive to attain correct belief, true worship, good character, cultured thought, and strong body. He should be able to earn his own living, improve his own condition, and solve his own problems. He should be able to discipline and control himself. He should be careful about his time, organized in his affairs, and willing to offer help and service to others. These comprise the duties of every Muslim as an individual.

2. Establishing an Islamic home. A Muslim should induce his family to respect his ideology and observe Islamic manners in all aspects of life at home. He should be wise in selecting his wife and should advise her about her rights and obligations. He should bring up his children under his supervision, according to the principles of Islam. These, too, are the duties of every individual Muslim.

3. Instructing and guiding the society by spreading the call of righteousness, fighting atrocities and detestful things, encouraging virtue, enjoining all that is good, helping the people, trying to win the public opinion to the side of Islam, and observing the Islamic principles in all aspects of public life. This is the duty of the individual Brothers as well as the whole Organization as a working unit.

4. Liberating the homeland from all non-Islamic or foreign control, whether political, economic, or ideological.

5. Reforming the government so that it may become a truly Islamic government, performing as a servant to the nation in the interest of the people. If the government neglects its duties and falls short of its

responsibilities, then it will be the duty of the people to first advise and guide, then to dismiss and remove the government, for no obedience is due to a creature who is disobedient to the Creator.

6. Rebuilding the international prominence of the Muslim *Ummah* by liberating its lands, reviving its glorious heritage, bringing closer the cultures of its regions, and uniting its countries so that one Islamic Caliphate may be established.

7. Instructing the world about the Islamic ideology by spreading the call of Islam to all corners of the globe

﴿... until there is no more persecution, and Religion becomes Allah's in its entirety.﴾

(Al-Anfal: 39)

﴿But Allah will not allow but that His Light should be perfected.﴾

(At-Tawbah: 32)

The responsibility of the last four steps falls upon the Organization as a whole and upon every Muslim Brother because of his membership in it. The program as a whole is ambitious and far-reaching and, indeed, involves great responsibilities. Other people may consider it dreams and imaginations, but we see it as a reality. We shall never despair, for our faith in Allah is limitless.

﴿And Allah hath full power and control over His affairs, but most among mankind know it not.﴾

(Yusuf: 21)⁽¹⁾

1. *The Teachings.*

6. Clarity of Means

The Call of the Muslim Brotherhood is characterized by clarity of means and methodology as well as the clarity of goals and objectives. Again, since its goals are purely Islamic concerning their sources, incentives, orientation, and subject, its means are also Islamic in all their aspects.

The means that Imam al-Banna adopted to achieve his end were clear and undoubted. These means are based on the following pillars:

1. Making the whole *Ummah* aware of their negligence of applying Islam in real life and that they are far from adhering to true Islam in all aspects of life.
2. Explaining the necessity of returning to Islam because of the pledge of belief and also in order to achieve national glory and preserve the original entity of the *Ummah*.
3. Emphasizing the fruits gained by adhering to Islam in all material, spiritual, cultural, political, social, and economic aspects of life.
4. Appealing to the rulers and those in authority for reformation so as to discharge one's responsibility and presenting practical proposals for reformation and change to them.
5. Selecting men of sacrifice and molding them through a comprehensive course of *tarbiyah* so that they may shoulder the responsibility when those in responsibility arrogantly refuse the appeals of the reformers.
6. Gradual progression in steps and stages, starting with *ta`rif* (proclamation), then *takwin* (formation) and ending with the stage of *tanfidh* (implementation).

Now, we will discuss some of these means in detail:

Explaining the Negligence of the True Application of Islam

Through his sermons, lectures, tracts, essays, and in both private and public meetings, Imam Hasan al-Banna explained how the *Ummah*

neglected the true application of Islam, how they deviated from the truth of religion, and how they misunderstood and misused religion. An example of this is his speech in his tract *The Brotherhood under the Banner of the Qur'an*, which he directed to all people in general and to the Muslim Brotherhood in particular. He said,

"Allah has sent to you a Messenger (as a leader), prescribed a system, and explained some rulings. He has revealed to you a Book, permitted some things and prohibited others, guided you to what secures prosperity and welfare for you, and guided you to the right path. So, have you followed His Messenger, respected His system, fulfilled His commands, sanctified His Book, done only what He has permitted and avoided what He has prohibited?

If you answered frankly, you would discover the truth that all the institutions you follow in all the vital aspects of your life are absolutely away from Islam and not based or dependant on it.

These institutions are interior government, international relations, judiciary, military defence, economic and financial institutions, educational and cultural institutions, family institution, and finally the institution for the individual in his private conduct. In brief, the general emotion that overwhelms the rulers and the subjects and affects all the aspects of their life is absolutely not inspired by Islam and its teachings. Thus, these great established mosques are visited by only the poor and the weak where they offer *rak`at* of prayer which are devoid of spirituality and humility except those offered by the ones whom Allah guided.

As for the days of fasting (during the month of Ramadan), they have been turned into some days devoid of work and activity but confined only to eating and drinking. Thus, it is rare to find a soul that is purified during them.

﴿Not so do those who believe and work deeds of righteousness, and how few are they!﴾

(Sad: 24)

There are also the deceptive appearance and manifestations such as carrying rosaries, wearing beards, and dressing in certain clothes,

ceremonies and rituals, and using special words and phrases. Do these things represent Islam which Allah sent as a great Mercy and Bounty for all creatures? Are these things the guidance of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) whom Allah sent to lead mankind out of the depths of darkness into light? Are they the legislation of the Qur'an that tackled and treated all the diseases of nations and peoples and set the most accurate principles and the basic pillars of reformation?

The Wave of Imitating the West and its Effects on the Life of Muslims

In fact, we should admit that a strong wave and a trend of thoughts and ideas afflicted our minds in a period when Muslims were preoccupied with luxury and welfare. Therefore, some principles, missions, systems, and philosophies appeared and also new civilizations were established. All these rivalled the Islamic idea in the minds of Muslims, surrounded them everywhere, and entered their countries, houses, beds, and even their hearts, minds, and emotions. They possessed unprecedented strength, attraction, and temptation, swept through some whole Muslim countries, deceived other countries, which were originally Muslim countries, and greatly affected the rest. Then, a generation appeared, which was more deviant from Islam and nearer to non-Muslims. They came to power and took the intellectual, spiritual, political and executive lead of the Muslims. They deceitfully pushed the Muslim *Ummah* towards their own desires or what they were accustomed to while the *Ummah* was unaware of neither their intention nor the end they were heading for. Moreover, the advocates of the Western idea raised their voices: 'Liberate us from the remains and effects of Islam and accept with us contentedly not unwillingly the requirements of the Western life, its burdens, ideas, and aspects. Clear your minds and souls from the remains of the old fashioned idea (of Islam). You should not be stubborn, deceitful, and hypocritical who imitate the Westerners while saying and speaking like the Muslims.'

We should really acknowledge that we have deviated from the guidance of Islam, its principles and bases. Islam does not prevent us from borrowing what is useful or from taking the wisdom wherever we find it. Islam,

however, refuses that we imitate non-Muslims in all things while departing the beliefs, obligations, boundaries, and rulings of Islam in order to follow a people whom this world has lured and whom devils have made into fools.

In fact, science, art, and thought have now advanced, money has increased, the world has exposed its pleasures, the earth has become clad with its golden ornaments and decked out in beauty and people have lived in luxury and prosperity. However, have these things made them happy? Has any of these things secured life or brought tranquility and calmness to their souls? Have backs rested on beds? Have the eyes ceased to shed tears? Have the crimes been fought or has the society avoided the criminals' evils? Have the poor become self-sufficient and the innumerable millions (of pounds) made the hungry satisfied with food? Have the pleasures and temptations spread every where removed the grief of the miserable persons? Have the peoples found rest and tranquility and been safeguarded against transgression and oppression?

Nothing of these happened! So, how can this civilization be preferred to other civilizations!"

Thus, it was necessary that Imam Hasan al-Banna explained to people the fact that they deviated from true Islam lest devils should deceive them and convince them that they were really (true) Muslims as long as they offered certain rituals though devoid of spirit, sincerity, and perfection and celebrated certain ceremonies with ornamentation. That is why the first step he adopted was to inform them about the truth of themselves.

Explaining the Effects of the Corruption of the Egyptian Social Institution

Though Imam Hasan al-Banna was looking forward to conveying his Call to the whole Muslim world, and believed in the universality of Islam and the unity of its *Ummah* and its land, he was a realistic man who was knowledgeable about the laws of Allah in the universe and society. Therefore, he concentrated his efforts on Egypt to liberate it and establish the whole comprehensive Islam therein. Egypt was the cradle of his Call and the leader of the Arab and Muslim countries due to its struggle and role in resisting and dismissing the Crusaders and Tartars and owing to the Egypt-based Al-Azhar which has preserved the Islamic religion and the

Arabic language for a thousand years. That was why he was concerned about the situations in Egypt in detail.

He explained the effects of the corrupt social institution prevailing in Egypt since the age of colonization and after independence. Imam Hasan al-Banna unmasked this corruption and explained some of its consequences and effects on social and economic life so that people might perceive that there is no alternative for these imported institutions except the original way which is based on the *Ummah's* belief and expresses its spirit. This is the comprehensive system of Islam that starts with reforming and rectifying the human soul and ends with reforming the whole *Ummah* and the state.

Following are some examples of the statistics made by Imam Hasan al-Banna in the tract of *The Sixth Conference*. Though these numbers have changed, they show how the Muslim Brotherhood cared for the problems of society and its different classes, particularly the weak and poor ones. Imam al-Banna said,

"1. The farmers in Egypt are eight millions while the agricultural land is six million feddans. Thus the proportional share of each person is nearly two-thirds of a feddan. However, we will realize the extreme poverty and awful low standard of living that the Egyptian farmers suffered when we take into consideration the following: (1) the Egyptian soil loses some of its features and richness due to the great number of drains and heavy cultivation and thus it needs several amounts of chemical fertilizers than other soils, (2) the population is increasing rapidly and (3) the distribution of agricultural land leaves nearly four millions of the population owning nothing, two millions, each of them does not own more than half of a feddan, and the majority of the rest, each of them owns not more than five feddans...

2. The workers in Egypt are about six millions and nearly half million of them, among whom are great numbers of graduates, are suffering unemployment. How can a person in such a situation feel his human dignity and have a sense of belonging to his home and nation while his country can not provide him with sustenance?"

Then, he explained how low the level of education was and the prevalence of illiteracy saying,

"After this long struggle, there are still many thousands of those who are not able to read and write in Egypt. The literate persons are still only twenty percent including the students of schools, who are not qualified to accomplish anything correctly, and of whom many did not end their primary school. There are also many complaints that the university graduates are not so qualified that they can achieve success in their practical life. These complaints are reiterated by the ministers of education and the managers of many working and administrative circles and others."

Regarding the moral and spiritual aspects, he said,

"As for morals, they have amazingly declined. In 1938 the number of those who had been tried for committing crimes was more than one million Egyptian people, of them nearly one hundred thousand were jailed, not to mention the number of those who had not been tried or whose crimes had been unknown. Moreover, many youths are not afraid to commit the religiously prohibited actions which are not punishable under the positive law such as drinking alcoholic beverages, gambling, lottery, and other countless crimes, without fear of shyness.

We have lost the potentialities and requirements of material life such as useful worldly science, wealth, money, and health. Have we instead preserved and safeguarded any of our spiritual strengths and values? The answer is 'No.'

How many are the Egyptians who believe in Allah truly and depend wholly on Him? How many are those of them who boast of their national glory and Islamic entity? How many are those who offer their daily prayers, and how many among them are those who offer these prayers rightly with their due humility and acknowledge their rulings and secrets? How many are those of them who pay *Zakah* to its due recipients and are keen to achieve its objective? How many are those of them who fear Allah and avoid major sins and indecent deeds? The grievous and painful answer of these questions which grieves every jealous believer is indicated by our reality."⁽¹⁾

Explaining the Advantages of the Islamic Orientation

Imam Hasan al-Banna adopted many methods of *da'wah* among them was explaining the advantages and benefits of Islamic orientation. He addressed those in authority saying,

1. The tract, *The Sixth Conference*.

"Now you will see two ways before you, each one urging you to orient the nation in its direction and to proceed with it along its path. Each one has its particular characteristics, its advantages, its effects, its results, its propagandists, and its promoters. The first is the way of Islam, its fundamental assumptions, its principles, its culture, and its civilization; the second is the way of the West, the external features of its life, its organization, and its procedures.

It is our belief that the first way, the way of Islam, its principles and its fundamental assumptions, is the only way which is to be followed, and toward which the present and future nation should be oriented.

If we take the *Ummah* along this path, we shall be able to obtain many benefits, among which is the fact that the Islamic way has been tried before and that history has testified as to its soundness. It has produced for the benefit of mankind an *Ummah* which is one of the strongest, most excellent, most merciful, most godly, and most blessed for all of humanity. It possesses a sanctity and stability in the minds of men which make it easy for all to adopt it, to understand it, and to respond to it, as well as to adhere to it once they are properly oriented to it, and to say nothing of pride nationalism and the extolment of sincere patriotism. For them we will construct our lives on our own principles and fundamental assumptions, taking nothing from others. Herein lie the highest ideals of social and existential independence, after political independence.

To take this course means to strengthen Arab unity, in the first place; and in the second, to strengthen Islamic unity. The Muslim world in its entirety will support us through its spirit, its sensibility, its sympathy, and its endorsement, and will see in us brethren whom it will stand behind as they stand behind it, and whom it will support as they support it. And herein lies a great moral advantage which no intelligent person will spurn.

This course is complete and all-encompassing, guaranteeing the establishment of the most excellent institutions for public life in the *Ummah*, both practically and spiritually. This is the advantage that distinguishes Islam, for it places the institutions of the life of nations on two important bases: adherence to the good, and avoidance of the harmful.

If we pursue this path, we shall be able to avoid the vital problems which beset the other nations which have neither known of this way nor followed it. Indeed, we shall be able to solve many complicated problems which present institutions are unable to.

And, after all this, if we follow this path, Allah's Support will stand behind us, fortifying us at moments of weakness, sustaining us in difficulties, easing our toil for us, and urging us forward:

﴿And slacken not in following the enemy: if you are suffering hardships, they are suffering similar hardships: but you hope from Allah what they do not. And Allah is full of knowledge and wisdom.﴾

(An-Nisa': 104)⁽¹⁾

Appealing to Governments for Reformation

The Muslim Brotherhood used to appeal to the Egyptian governments and those in authority to carry out necessary reforms in all cultural, educational, social, economic, political, medical, and moral aspects of life in the society. A clear example of this methodology was the comprehensive message sent by Imam al-Banna to king Faruq, the former king of Egypt and Sudan, prime minister and leader of Al-Wafd party, Mustafa an-Nahhas Pasha, and to the kings, princes, and rulers of the Islamic world as well as to a great number of civic and religious leaders in those countries. Imam Hasan al-Banna explained to them that the *Ummah* was at the crossroads and that there were two ways before them. The first is the way of subordination and imitation of the Western civilization and ways of life. Its requirements are the imitation of Western civilization in laws, culture, and traditions. The second is the way of Islam which requires following its *Shari'ah* and adhering to the Islamic values, morals, and civilization.

He explained that the way of Islam was the way that ought to be followed and elaborated the advantages of the Islamic orientation and its fruitful effects on both soul and life. He warned against the danger of following the Western civilization and imitating it in all aspects of life which in turn led to the loss of identity, religion, and this worldly life. In this message, Imam Hasan al-Banna stated that Islam guaranteed to supply the nascent nation with all what it requires in both spiritual and material

1. The tract, *Towards the Light*.

aspects. It supplies the *Ummah* with national greatness and individuality and originality. Islam also provides the *Ummah* with all sources of physical health and military strength and creates the necessary atmosphere for the flourishing of science and forming the scientific mentality. Islam shows the *Ummah* how to build a strong economy and creates a healthy atmosphere for self-purification and the implantation of good morals.

Again, he explained how perfect and just the Islamic institutions are with respect to the individual, the family, and the whole *Ummah*, that Islam protects minorities and safeguards the rights of the foreigners, and that Islam is not a disturbing influence on relations with the West. He did not forget to explain to the Muslim leaders that the fundamental sources of the renaissance in the East are not those of the West and that the Western hostile attitude towards religion does not mean to compel faith, for the clerics are not religion itself. He called them to be the first to come forward in the name of Allah's Messenger (pbuh) bearing the vial of Qur'anic healing, to save the tormented, sick world! It would be a bold, but one crowned with success, Allah willing!

Then the Martyr Imam explained to the Egyptian, Arab, and Muslim leaders some steps toward practical reformation in the following fields:

1. Political, judicial, and administrative fields.
2. Social and scientific fields
3. Economic field

These steps of reformation are explained in detail in the tract of *Towards the Light*.

It is worthy mentioning that some people reprove the Muslim Brotherhood for requesting reforms from governments, kings and princes in spite of the fact that they know that those in authority will turn a deaf ear to their requests and continue to stumble blindly on their path.

﴿ It is the same to them whether thou warn them or do not warn them; they will not believe. ﴾

(Al-Baqarah: 6)

I wish to tell such people that the duty of the Muslim Brotherhood is to convey their message to people and discharge their duty to Allah by calling

all people including the rulers, perchance some of them still have some faith or goodness. So, if they answered their call, it would be a good achievement; if they answered some of it, it would be good and better than rejection; and if they refused it totally, then the Muslim Brotherhood would have fulfilled their duty and would be rescued from punishment. Allah, Most High, says,

﴿When some of them said, 'Why do ye preach to a people who Allah will destroy or visit with a terrible punishment? Said the preachers, 'To discharge our duty to your Lord and perchance they may fear Him.' When they disregarded the warnings that had been given them, We rescued those who forbade evil: but We visited the wrongdoers with a grievous punishment, because they were given to transgression.﴾

(Al-A`raf: 164-165)

General Means and Additional Procedures

On many occasions, Imam Hasan al-Banna elaborated the means of achieving his goal and bringing victory to his Call. He divided them into general means and additional procedures. He explained this saying, "Speeches, pronouncements, letters, lessons, lectures, diagnosis of the ailment, and prescription of the medicine-all these by themselves are useless and will never realize a single aim, nor will they advance a single agent of our Call to any one of his goals. Nevertheless, calls do have certain means of procedure which the adherents of these calls must adopt and according to which they must operate. The general procedural means used by all calls are invariable and unchanging, and they are limited to the three following matters:

1. Deep faith
2. Precise organization
3. Incessant work

Besides these general procedures, there may be additional ones which must be adopted and strictly adhered to. There are negative and positive ones, some of which accord with people's customary behavior and others which go against such behavior, differ from it, and contradict it. There are mild ones and rigorous ones, and we must train ourselves to put up with all

of these and to prepare ourselves well in order to guarantee success. We may be asked to go against entrenched habits and usages, and to rebel against regulations and situations which people take for granted and are familiar with. But then, in its deeper essence, our Call is actually a rebellion against accepted usage and a change in habits and situations. Are you then prepared for this, O Brothers?

Many people will say: what do these methods mean? Of what use can they be for building a nation, and rebuilding a society burdened with these chronic problems and sunk in such a welter of corruption? How will you manage the economy on a nonprofit basis? How will you deal with the woman issues? How will you obtain your rights without the use of force?

Know, Brothers, that Satan whispers his suggestions into the aspirations of every reformer. But, Allah vanishes all that Satan whispers; then Allah decrees His Signs, for Allah is the Knowing, and the Wise. Remind all of these people that history, in telling us of past and contemporary nations, also gives us admonitions and lessons. And a nation that is determined to live cannot die."⁽¹⁾

What Is Meant by General Means?

Again Imam al-Banna explained what is meant by the general means saying,

"As for our general means, they are as follows:

1. Persuasion and conveying our Call with all means until the public comprehends and supports it with belief and faith.
2. Selecting good people to constitute the fundamental pillars of the idea of reformation.
3. Constitutional struggle until the voice of this Call is heard in official institutions and is supported by the executive power. Therefore, the candidates of the Muslim Brotherhood will introduce themselves to represent the *Ummah* in the representative councils when the time is appropriate. We are certain that we will succeed with Allah's help as long as we do this for His sake:

1. The tract, *Between Yesterday and Today*.

﴿'Allah will certainly aid those who aid His (cause); for verily Allah is Full of Strength, Exalted in Might, (Able to enforce His Will).﴾

(Al-Hajj: 40)"

In this way Imam al-Banna clearly abided by peaceful and constitutional struggle to achieve his end. After that he said,

"As for other means than these, we will not resort to them except when we are compelled to do so and when it becomes necessary. But, even then we will be frank and honorable and we will not refrain from declaring our attitude clearly without any confusion or ambiguity. We are completely ready to bear the consequences of our actions whatever are they. We will not then put the blame on others nor will we resort to others. We know that the reward of Allah is better and more lasting, that dying for the sake of Allah is the real life and that there is no call without *jihad*, no *jihad* without oppression and then the hour of victory and winning comes as Allah says,

﴿(Respite will be granted) until, when the messengers give up hope (of their people) and (come to) think that they were treated as liars, there reaches them Our help, and those whom We will, are delivered into safety. But never will be warded off Our punishment from those who are in sin.﴾

(Yusuf: 110)

This speech cannot be understood to mean resorting to political assassination, destruction of institutions, random killing, or killing innocent civilians as unfortunately some groups, which are attributed to Islam, do. Thus, frankness, honor, and declaring our attitude frankly and obviously contradict the violence practiced by some groups whose actions belong to neither Islam nor humanity.

The Means of the Muslim Brotherhood in the Field of Public Service

Imam Hasan al-Banna distinguished the Muslim Brotherhood's means in the field of public service from those in the field of *da`wah*. He said,

"There is no doubt that the Muslim Brotherhood serve society as a whole. They build mosques and look after them, establish both ordinary schools and Qur'an schools and supervise them, establish clubs, and

constitute teams and look after them. They also celebrate the Islamic occasions with their due celebration. They settle quarrels between people in villages and cities in order to save their efforts and property, and play a mediating role between the poor and the rich by regulating charity and collecting alms to be distributed during Feasts and Islamic occasions. Praise be to Allah, the Muslim Brotherhood undoubtedly carry out all these activities which have a recognizable effect on society. Their activity in all these fields multiplied greatly, particularly due to the fact that people accepted and supported them. The means of the Muslim Brotherhood in these fields depends on organization, voluntariness, consulting the people of opinion, and experience, financing these projects by the money taken from the subscriptions of the members of the Muslim Brotherhood on one hand, and that taken from the donations on the other hand. We do not say that the Muslim Brotherhood have attained perfection in this regard, however, we say that they are advancing towards perfection. It is Allah Who grants success and Whose help we seek. These are the efforts of the Muslim Brotherhood as one of the groups working in the field of public service.

The Means of the Muslim Brotherhood in the Field of *Da`wah* and Thought

But, the Call of the Muslim Brotherhood is not confined to this only. However, the essence of their Call is an idea and a belief that they convey to people so that the public may be brought up on it, the hearts may believe in it, and the souls gather around it. This is working for the sake of Islam and applying it in all aspects of life. The means to achieve this end is not wealth. History tells us that all calls are not established firstly on wealth or dependant on it anyway. They need it during some of their stages. However, wealth cannot be their essence or pillar. *Du`ah* and their supporters often have little wealth. This is a fact recorded by history.

Also, the means is not power, for the true call firstly addresses the souls, hearts, and the locked-up selves. It is impossible to be established by the use of a stick or reach hearts by arrows and spearheads. The means for conveying and establishing any call into the hearts is well-known to whoever comprehends the history of groups. It can be summarized in the following words: belief and work, and love and brotherhood.

In order to establish his call in the hearts of the first generation of his Companions, the Messenger of Allah did not do anything more than calling them to belief and work, then he united their hearts through love and brotherhood. In this way they possessed the strength of belief as well as the strength of unity and their group became the model one whose call was to be supported and granted victory even if all the people of the world confronted it. The *du`ah* in all past and present times adopted this course. They convey their idea and explain it and call people to believe in it and work for achieving it, then their number increases and as a result the idea comes to have more and more supporters until it spreads to all places and defeats all other ideas. Such is the practice approved of Allah: no change will you find in the practice approved of Allah.

The Call of the Muslim Brotherhood is not a new call. But, however, it is an echo of the first call, established in the hearts of the believers, reiterated on their tongues and with which they try to strengthen belief in the hearts of the Muslims until it affects their conduct and their hearts are united by it. So, when they attain this stage, Allah will aid them, grant them victory, and guide them to the straight path."⁽¹⁾

Gradual Progression

The means of the Muslim Brotherhood are characterized by gradual progression, which is one of Allah's laws both in His universe and in His legislation.

Imam al-Banna said,

"Gradual progression, *tarbiyah*, and a clear method are given great importance within the Muslim Brotherhood because the following three stages are inevitable for any call:

1. *Ta`rif* (introduction): The Call should be introduced and publicized to the maximum extent; and it should be propagated to each and every class of the general public. This is the first stage.

2. *Takwin* (formation): The Call should have an organization and structure. Sincere men of sacrifice should be chosen. The best of these men should be the soldiers of this Call. This is the second stage.

1. The tract, *Our Call in a New Phase*.

3. *Tanfidh* (implementation): In the third stage, principles will be applied to reality though much hard work is required to fulfil this.

In many cases these stages are being applied side-by-side because these stages are overlapping and inter-connected. The *da'iyah* will call; at the same time he will choose some people and train them, and he will simultaneously be busy in some practical efforts.

The ultimate objective and the net results can only be seen after determined efforts in the Call, the gaining of mass support and effective organization.

Our Call has started and is progressing along these lines at the moment. As the first step, we placed the Call before the *Ummah*, regularly providing lessons, made constant tours, published a good deal of literature, held general and special meetings regularly, produced a newspaper for the Muslim Brotherhood and took advantage of the weekly *An-Nadhir*. In this way we continued to present the Call and will continue to do so in the future, until there is not one single individual left who has not been introduced to the Muslim Brotherhood in the real sense.

﴿But Allah will not allow except that His Light should be perfected.﴾

(At-Tawbah: 32)

The second step was adopted through the implementation of three ways:

1. We established *kata'ib*⁽¹⁾, in order to enhance mutual introduction so that different individuals could meet each other, to encourage towards the resisting of divisive customs and habits, to favor the development of a good relationship with Allah, and to favor relying solely upon Allah. This is the spiritual training of the Muslim Brotherhood.

2. Then we established teams for scouting and physical exercises, so that the Brotherhood should become physically trained and familiarized with discipline, obedience, and high morality. Islam regards this as obligatory for every Muslim. This is the physical training of the Muslim Brotherhood.

3. Next we arranged for the teaching of the principles of the Muslim Brotherhood within *kata'ib* and their clubs so that their minds and thinking

1. Look it up in the glossary of the book.

could be developed for them to have a correct religious insight and full worldly knowledge. This is the section for the development of the knowledge and thinking of the Muslim Brotherhood.

In addition to this, there are other activities, by means of which the Brotherhood are being educated. They are being prepared for the important duty, which awaits them. It is a movement, which has before it the leadership of the entire *Ummah*, or rather the guidance and the leadership of the entire world.

After fully satisfying ourselves regarding the second stage (*takwin*) we shall, by the Will of Allah, enter the third stage (*tanfidh*) and this would be the practical step, after which the expected result will emerge and then we shall reap the rewards of our efforts."⁽¹⁾

Confronting the Impatient Persons

There were amongst the Muslim Brotherhood some individuals who were hasty, enthusiastic, unaware of Allah's laws in His creation, the law of gradual progression, and the qualities of perseverance and patience, and wished to yield the fruit before its due time. Imam al-Banna suffered much because of such people. Some of them could not bear, lost their patience, and departed the group while others remained but were anxious and said that the way was too long. It is those whom Imam al-Banna addressed in *The Fifth Conference* saying,

"Muslim Brothers! Especially the enthusiastic, impatient Brothers. Listen to my clear words in this great conference! The steps of your way have been marked, their limits have been fixed and I will never cross these limits, as I am completely satisfied that they are the safest way of reaching the goal. It is possible, that the journey may prolong itself in this manner, but there is no other way. And manhood can only be tested by patience, endurance, constant work, and seriousness. But if anyone of you wishes to pick a fruit before it is ripe and to pick a flower before it blossoms, I shall never agree with them. It would be better for him to take leave of us. If, however, you exercise patience and wait for the seed to germinate, the plant to grow, the fruit to ripen, and the most suitable time for the plucking of the

1. *The Fifth Conference*.

fruit to come, then your recompense shall remain safe with Allah. And we shall receive the reward of the virtuous, whether this will be victory and success or martyrdom."⁽¹⁾

Among the eloquent words with which Imam al-Banna addressed the Muslim Brotherhood in this situation was his saying,

"Muslim Brothers!

Check your emotions with the controls of wisdom and stimulate your thought by your emotions. Check your dreams with reality, and ascertain the reality in the light of your dreams. Never lean too much towards one way that you may lose your balance. Do not fight the forces of nature, because they will always win, yet enjoy the benefit of its service by changing its direction and seeking its help against itself. And wait for the hour of victory.

Muslim Brothers!

You seek the pleasure of Allah and ask for His reward; you are guaranteed this provided you remain sincere. Allah has not made you responsible for results and consequences. However, He has obliged you to be sincere in your struggle and to prepare yourself well. After all this, either we would be in error so we would receive the reward of the *mujtahidun* or we are correct in which case we would receive the reward of the successful. The past and the present have shown that this is the only successful way of achieving this aim, that results cannot be realized except through this plan, and that there is no better procedure than this. Therefore, do not take risks with your efforts and do not gamble with your success. Allah is with you. He will not waste your efforts. Those who are active shall succeed.

﴿And never would Allah make your faith of no effect. For Allah is to all people most surely full of Kindness, Most Merciful.﴾

(Al-Baqarah: 143)

When Will our Practical Step Be Taken?

Muslim Brothers!

I regard this conference of yours as a family conference, which comprises the Muslim Brotherhood family. I want to clarify our message to you so that there may not remain any point of confusion.

1. Ibid.

The man who dreams is different from the man who talks, the man who talks is different from the man who works, the man who works is different from the man who strives, and the man who strives is different from the man who strives hard with wisdom and productivity, and the number of these is obviously very small. Even those that are able to endure the hardships of the struggle may follow the wrong route and therefore would only attain success if they were to be helped by Allah. The story of Talut (Saul) is the best example of what I am saying. Therefore, prepare yourselves well, develop yourselves correctly, and examine yourselves minutely. Expose yourselves to the hardship of struggle and keep away from pleasure and enjoyments.

Dear Brothers!

If three hundred *kata'ib* (units) from amongst you have prepared themselves spiritually with faith and belief, fully equipped with knowledge and culture, and have physically endured the rigor of exercise and sports and then you demand of me to lead you, I will lead you through the obstacles that are placed in our way and I will fight every tyrant and arrogant man. The Messenger (pbuh) said,

"Twelve thousand (persons) can never be overpowered due to their short number."⁽¹⁾

If the help of Allah continues and the commands of Allah are fully observed, then Allah willing, that time is not far off. And if you, the representatives of the Muslim Brotherhood work courageously and speed up your efforts, then this time could be reduced. But if you slacken, then this estimate will prove incorrect and the results will also be different. Therefore, you should realize the heavy burden that is placed on your shoulders, form more *kata'ib*, eagerly apply the teachings, train hard, and take the Call to where it has not yet reached. Do not let any minute pass without you performing some work.

I am afraid that this talk of mine may create a misunderstanding in someone's mind that the number of the Brotherhood is small and their efforts are not productive. This is not my purpose and there is no room for this misunderstanding here. Praise be to Allah, the number of the

1. Narrated by Abu Dawud, At-Tirmidhi, and others.

Brotherhood is huge. Just think: thousands of workers are participating in this gathering and each worker is representing a *shu`bah* (branch), then, could the number of the workers of that organization be called small or their efforts unproductive?

My objective is nothing except what has already been said that the man who talks is different from the man who works, the man who works is different from the man who strives, and the man who strives is different from the man who strives hard with wisdom and productivity. This would mean that the wise and productive *mujahid* would produce maximum gains from the least amount of sacrifice."⁽¹⁾

1. *The Fifth Conference.*

7. Clarity of Attitudes

The last of the seven principles that characterize the Muslim Brotherhood lies in its clear attitudes towards social, political, intellectual, and religious issues that concern people and arise questions amongst them.

In declaring the attitude of the Muslim Brotherhood towards a certain issue, Imam al-Banna, may Allah have mercy upon him, never avoided a question by beating around the bush or ending the discussion or brushing it aside. However, he used to answer all questions wisely and courageously, declaring the attitude of his Call towards several important and sensitive issues of which many others would steer clear of.

Sometimes Al-Banna's answers were brief and lacking detailed juristic evidence and scientific clarification, but still, they were enough for everyone who wanted to understand. This is because Al-Banna was not a researcher, but a reformer who used to speak in brief. In addition to this, Al-Banna avoided talking in detail lest this would lead to difference of opinion.

Imam al-Banna expressed the attitude of the Muslim Brotherhood towards several issues in several tracts such as *The Fifth Conference*, which celebrated the tenth anniversary of constituting the group, *The Sixth Conference, Towards the Light*, in which Al-Banna spoke to the kings, presidents and leaders of political parties, groups, as well as senior and distinguishing characters in the Egyptian and Arab and Muslim societies, and *Our Call in a New Phase* which he wrote in 1942. Here, we are going to mention some of those issues which were tackled by Imam al-Banna, may Allah have mercy upon him.

The Muslim Brotherhood and the Use of Force

In the tract of *The Fifth Conference*, Imam Hasan al-Banna answered the question raised by many people as to whether it was the intention of the Muslim Brotherhood to use force so as to achieve their objectives. He said,

"Power is a principle of Islam and this should be obvious as Allah very clearly says in the Glorious Qur'an,

﴿Against them make ready your strength to the utmost of your power, including steeds of war, to strike terror into the hearts of the enemies, of Allah and your enemies.﴾

(Al-Anfal: 60)

And the Prophet (pbuh) said,

'A strong believer is better than a weak believer.'⁽¹⁾

The Brotherhood consider the consequences of each matter as deeply as that particular issue requires. They are cautious and exhibit foresight in their method. They assess the pros and cons of each matter. They know well that the most basic power is that of faith and belief. Then comes the power of unity. Thereafter follows physical strength. An organization cannot be called powerful unless it has all of these. If it uses physical force while it is disunited, organizationally disjointed, weak in faith, and feeble in belief, then it will surely meet disaster and will disappear.

When Islam regards power as being part of the Islamic way of life; does it suggest that power should always be used irrespective of the situation and the condition? Or has it fixed some limits for it, stipulated certain conditions, and restricted it to certain special circumstances?

Is power the first or the last remedy? And is it not a duty of man that he should weigh the useful results with the harmful results of the use of force? Or should he use force whatever the consequences may be?

The Brotherhood will consider all of these aspects before using force. After this introductory talk, I shall say that the Muslim Brotherhood will certainly use physical force, but only when there is no other way out and when they will be fully satisfied that they have also gained the power of belief, confidence, and unity. And when they will use force, they will be the epitome of gentleness, bravery, and boldness. First of all, they will warn, then they will wait; thereafter they would proceed with honor and dignity. They will face all consequences gladly and agreeably."

1. Narrated by Muslim.

The force referred to by Imam al-Banna does not mean political assassination, killing of civilians, or destruction of institutions. These are underground activities, which are operated secretly. Al-Banna, however, might drive at that kind of peaceful force used by the armed forces when they become convinced of the Islamic ideology, as it was the case with the recent coupe undertaken by "The Salvation Revolution" in Sudan, or that which was lead by Jamal `Abd an-Nasir after the assassination of Imam al-Banna.

"As far as revolution is concerned, the Brotherhood do not have any such intention. Neither do they support it nor do they rely on it and they do not regard it as useful or beneficial. But, they want to inform all those responsible for governing the country that if the present situation continues and the government does not arrange to put matters in order and no remedial measures are taken, then the lava of revolt will certainly break out and rebellion will be the result of the situation itself. This will be the consequence of carelessness in reformation on the part of the government. The Brotherhood and their activities have nothing to do with this. Certainly the increasing complications and gravity of the situation is a signal of an alarming and tremendous danger. Therefore, the reformers should rise to this challenge."

The Muslim Brotherhood and Governing

Do the Muslim Brotherhood include governing within their program? What are their means to do so?

Answering these questions, Iman al-Banna said,

"They should know that the Brotherhood follow the guidance of Islam in all matters of life. In the very beginning of this talk, I explained our understanding of Islam. We regard governing as being a pillar of Islam. Just as it guides and leads, it also implements. Accordingly, the third Caliph said, 'Allah prevents wrongful actions by means of authority, those actions which may not be prevented by means of the moral exhortation of the Qur'an.'

And the Prophet (pbuh) regarded governing as a pillar of the building of Islam. The religious scholars also included governing amongst the *usul*

(principles of faith), and not amongst *furu`* (details or branches). Therefore, just as Islam is ruling and implementation, legislation and education, it is also law and enforcement. None of them can be separated from the others, as they are part and parcel of one another. If today's reformers concern themselves solely with *Fiqh* i.e. the do's and don'ts, and the explanation of the *usul* and *furu`* while the authorities are left to formulate their own laws (which Allah has not allowed) and even to force these laws on the *Ummah* by virtue of their power. Then this can only serve to reduce the effect of the reformer such that he is one voice in the wilderness. It stands to reason that if the authorities in power accept the commandments of Allah and propagate the teachings of the Qur'an and *Sunnah*, then the reformers of the *Ummah* may content themselves with preaching and instructing. Today we can see that Islamic law is not being applied and this means that the reformers of the *Ummah* are failing in their duty. There is no expiation for this crime, except that the reformers themselves stand up and take the authority from those who are not obedient to the righteous religion.

This is in the instructions of Islam and is not from amongst our desires. The Brotherhood do not want the rule for themselves rather they are willing to be the supporters, helpers, and even the soldiers for those who are prepared to bear the burden of this responsibility, hold this trust, and fulfil it in accordance with the Qur'anic injunctions. If there is nobody willing to bear this responsibility then governing is a part of the Brotherhood's program and the Brotherhood will recover it from those who are averse to the rule of Allah."

After that, Imam al-Banna referred to an issue of paramount importance, that is, preparing the people intellectually, psychologically, and morally to accept the law of Islam. He said,

"But wisdom and prudence advise the Brotherhood against proceeding to rule particularly when the *Ummah* is so far from the correct understanding of Islam. It is, therefore, essential that the thinking and views of the Brotherhood be given full prominence such that they can secure the maximum possible coverage. Then, the *Ummah* should be taught the preference of public interests over personal and private benefits."

In other words, there must be a graduation in the application of the Islamic *Shari`ah*, but on the condition that the demand for application must not be forgotten. Graduation, however, means to set the target and devise plans for its implementation on gradual steps.

Imam al-Banna brought this topic to a close saying, "The Brotherhood have not found any contemporary government (whether past or present) that is shouldering this burden and they have not found any government that is even showing its support to the Islamic idea. Therefore, the *Ummah* should demand their legitimate Islamic rights from those in power, the Brotherhood should accompany this by constant struggle towards this aim."

The Muslim Brotherhood and Constitution

In his tract *The Fifth Conference*, Imam al-Banna expressed the stance of the Muslim Brotherhood towards constitution saying,

"The constitutional system of government includes: the guarantee of personal freedom, the establishment of an advisory system of government, the consent to authority from the *Ummah*, the accountability of the officers to the people (whatever they do, they should be accountable for it), and the demarcation of the sectors of power. When a conscientious man casts an eye over these principles of constitutional government, he clearly finds all these principles in conformity with the Islamic teachings, Islamic system, and the Islamic laws of government.

Therefore, the Brotherhood find the constitutional system of government to be the closest system of government to Islam. And, the Brotherhood do not know of any system from amongst today's prevalent systems of government which is closer to the Islamic system.

After this, two issues remain. The first is the words used to formulate these principles, and the second is the method of implementation, i.e., the means through which the words are translated into action. A good and sound principle maybe used in an ambiguous way and this may allow room for abuse of principles. Likewise, sometimes the principle is very nice and correct and the words too are clear and evident, but its enforcement is under the influence of selfishness. Thus, the implementation blemishes some of the expected benefits.

In the eyes of the Brotherhood, the words of some of the Egyptian constitution are very ambiguous, and this leaves much room for self-interest and malevolence. It is, therefore, necessary that the wording of these parts of the constitution should be further explained, clarified and their meanings fixed. Again, the method of enforcing the constitution prevalent in Egypt and establishing a constitutional government is very defective and experience has proven its failure. Therefore, amendments to the constitution are necessary in order to make it effective and this would help in the attainment of its objective."

Imam al-Banna referred to the law of election explaining its defects and that they should be avoided. Then he said, "The Brotherhood, therefore, demand that the ambiguities in the Egyptian constitution be removed and that its system of implementation and establishment be changed. And, this should show where the Brotherhood stand."

Again Al-Banna elaborated on this subject in his tract *Our Problems from an Islamic Perspective* when he tackled the issues of the government system, the ministers' responsibility, and the constitution's ambiguity. He quoted some of what Dr. Ibrahim Madkur and Mr. Murit Ghali said about the ambiguities in the constitution, the authority of the ministers, their relation with the people through their representatives, their relation with the president, etc.

The Muslim Brotherhood and Law

Concerning the stance of the Muslim Brotherhood towards law, Imam al-Banna said,

"Islam is not passive concerning law. For, Islam has provided religious principles and supplementary rules whether they are civil, criminal, commercial, or international. All of them are found in the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*, and they are also covered in the books of jurisprudence. This was acknowledged by the top lawyers of the world when they acted as representatives at the World Conference of Le Havre (Hague).

It is not acceptable at all that a law that is in complete contradiction to the religious teachings of Islam, Qur'anic rules and the traditions of the

Prophet (pbuh) be enforced amongst a Muslim nation, since it is altogether different from the guidance of Allah and the Prophet (pbuh). Therefore, Allah warned about it and emphasized this to His Messenger:

﴿Judge thou between them by what Allah hath revealed, and follow not their vain desires, but beware of them lest they beguile thee from any of that (teaching) which Allah hath sent down to thee. And, if they turn away, be assured that for some of their crimes it is Allah's purpose to punish them. And, truly many men are rebellious. Do they then seek after a judgment of (the days of) Ignorance? But who, for a people whose faith is assured, can give better judgment than Allah?﴾

(Al-Ma'idah: 49-50)

Before these two verses we read the following three:

﴿... if any do fail to judge by what Allah hath revealed, they are unbelievers.﴾

(Al-Ma'idah: 44)

﴿... and if any fail to judge by what Allah hath revealed, they are wrong-doers.﴾

(Al-Ma'idah: 45)

﴿... if any do fail to judge by what Allah hath revealed, they are those who rebel.﴾

(Al-Ma'idah: 47)

What is the reaction of the Muslim who believes in Allah and His rules, listens to these clear verses and traditions, and then discovers that he himself is in the strangle-hold of a law that contravenes Islamic injunctions? If he demands reforms and amendments he is told that the foreigners would not agree to this as they are against these demands. And then, in this atmosphere of dependence it is asserted that the Egyptians are free, though the Egyptians have not even been able to achieve religious freedom.

Again, these man-made laws clash with the constitution which states that the religion of the state should be Islam, and furthermore they clash with the religion and its rules. So, I ask the intellectuals to tell us: how should we reconcile the two?"

I state that as the old constitution only stated that Islam is the religion of the state, the present one adds another article of paramount importance, that is, the principles of the Islamic *Shar'iah* act as the main source of laws."

Then Al-Banna added,

"What should the Muslim think when the law backs those who commit adultery and fornication, makes interest compulsory, gives free leave to alcoholic drinks, and promotes the cause of gambling, whereas, Allah and the Prophet (pbuh) made adultery and fornication absolutely prohibited, rendered gambling inadmissible; forbade the consumption of alcoholic drinks, and declared war against interest? Should this Muslim be obedient to Allah and the Messenger (pbuh) and disobey the government and the law, or disobey Allah and the Messenger (pbuh) and be obedient to the government in this manner, and in doing so purchase the misfortunes of this world and the next? We ask the President of the government, the Minister of Justice, and the dignified scholars to reply to this.

The Brotherhood can neither agree to this law nor can they give their consent to it. They are ready to use every possible way to replace this law by Islamic *Shari'ah* which is equitable and based on justice. And this is not the occasion, on which such doubts should be discussed."

The Muslim Brotherhood and Political Parties

In more than one tract, Imam al-Banna declared the attitude of the Muslim Brotherhood towards political parties. He wholeheartedly rejected political parties, as they, in his opinion, split and cause divisions amongst the people of one nation. To this reason, he neither favored nor affiliated with any of the political parties during his time.

Al-Banna stressed the fact that many of the members of those political parties had worked together in supporting the Egyptian political issue and struggled for its sake until Egypt garnered the fruits of this struggle, be they little or great. So, he did not ignore the role of those people.

However, none of these parties had an accurate reform program or determined the goals it was going to achieve. That is why we find no difference among them from the viewpoint of programs, goals, and targets.

Moreover, all these political parties have not yet been convinced with the duty of social reform on the grounds of Islam and its teachings, as they understood Islam as spiritual and devotional acts that have nothing to do with people's social and secular life.

Furthermore, these political parties succeeded one another experiencing the rule of the country, but they had not made changes that meet the desires of the people and achieved secular or spiritual progress. As a result, none-party-based governments have been formed even in the most delicate situations.

Thus, the difference among the Egyptian political parties was a mere formal one that was due to personal affairs about which the Muslim Brothers are not concerned. So, the Muslim Brotherhood view all political parties as one and equal, and their Call is not affiliated with any of these parties. However, they call for the unity of the Muslim *Ummah* under the teachings of the Qur'an.

﴿The way of Allah, to Whom belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on earth. Behold (how) all affairs tend towards Allah.﴾

(Ash-Shura: 53)

Despite this, Al-Banna said, "We have no controversies with any party, for we are in need of this time spent in debate and controversy to be spent in productive work and positive struggle. We do not reckon them, but we deeply believe that only the best and good will survive.

﴿For the scum disappears like forth cast out; while that which is for the good of mankind remains on the earth.﴾

(Ar-Ra`d: 17)"⁽¹⁾

Thus, Al-Banna's view was to dissolve all political parties and to form a national organization that leads the *Ummah* to freedom and reformation.

In fact, Al-Banna's view was based on the actual reality of political parties in his time and Egypt's dire need for unity in the face of British occupation. So, the dissolution of political parties and the formation of a

1. The tract, *The Sixth Conference*.

national organization was truly the best solution. Consequently, July revolution in 1952 was based on the dissolution of parties. It excluded the Muslim Brothers at first, but joined them later when Jamal `Abd an-Nasir constituted the Socialist Union so as to unify the working powers in the country. However, this was not absolutely what Al-Banna intended.

Hence, I opine that the multi-party system is almost similar to the different schools of *Fiqh*. Each school has its own principles and views which are different from that of the others, but still, this difference has its positive results on practical issues and situations. Parties, I maintain, are regarded as schools of politics and schools are also regarded as parties of *Fiqh*.

In adopting my *ijtihad*, the Muslim Brotherhood has set an example of flexibility and respect of different views. *Fatwa* de facto changes with the change of time and circumstances, and if Al-Banna were to live in a society suffering from the domination of a one-party system, he would, I think, change his opinion.

The Muslim Brotherhood and Islamic Organizations

A question now remains: What is the attitude of the Muslim Brotherhood towards the other religious groups and Islamic organizations? In the tract of *The Sixth Conference*, Imam al-Banna declared the attitude toward them saying,

"As far as our attitude towards other Islamic organizations is concerned, we love them much and cooperate with them. No effort is spared in bringing the different points of view closer to each other and bringing about harmony between various thoughts in such a way that truth can gain victory in the light of cooperation and friendly relations. No difference of opinion due to a certain school of *Fiqh* or a special sect will be an obstacle of mutual esteem. The religion (of Islam) is not complicated, and whoever tries to make it complicated will be overpowered by it. Allah has guided us to an ideal plan where we seek the truth in a flexible way that captures hearts and convinces minds. We believe that there will come a day when names, titles, formal and theoretical differences are removed and replaced by battalion of Muslim brothers who work for Islam and strive for Allah's sake.

﴿As to those who turn (for friendship) to Allah, His Messenger, and the Believers, it is the party of Allah that must certainly triumph.﴾

(Al-Ma'idah: 56)"

In my opinion, the unification of all Islamic groups under one group or battalion is a strong and desired wish, but afar from reach in reality. And, as I stated in many of my books, there is no objection to having various groups and organizations working for Islam, but it should be a variety of specialization and diversification and not conflict and opposition. The field of work is so spacious and tolerates more than one group or movement. But, all groups should cooperate with one another and form a strong cemented structure in the face of decisive issues. Allah says,

﴿Truly Allah loves those who fight in His Cause in battle array, as if they were a solid cemented structure.﴾

(As-Saff: 4)

The Issue of Religious Differences

In many of his tracts, Imam Hasan al-Banna touched on the issue of religious differences among the various Islamic movements and organizations, whether these differences pertain to subsidiary matters of Islamic creed, *Fiqh*, or conduct. The Imam, may Allah have mercy upon him, settled such disputes in a very wise and moderate way, namely through the twenty principles of understanding.

These twenty principles should be a common basis for those who sincerely work for Islam. They should settle such minor disputes and join their hands together in order to uphold Islam and confront their enemies. They should bear in mind that the enemies of Islam differ among themselves in so many things, but when they are to confront Islam, they unite together against it. Allah the Almighty says,

﴿It is only wrong doers (that stand as) protectors, one to another.﴾

(Al-Jathiyah: 19)

﴿The unbelievers are protectors, one of another.﴾

(Al-Anfal: 73)

In these principles, he did not completely reject *tasawwuf* as did some groups and did not approve of it with its defects and innovations as did others. However, he accepted the *Sunnah* and truth and rejected *bid'ah* and falsehood in it. He refused innovations in worship especially those which are baseless and have no support from the Qur'an or *hadiths*. As for committing *bid'ah* by deliberately adding something or abiding by a certain form of the acts of worship he mentioned that it is a problem over which there is a disagreement among the Muslim scholars.

He also stated that making supplication to Allah through an intermediary, such as a Prophet, a righteous man, or an angel, and the like, is also a relatively minor problem of *Fiqh*, it is not a problem of belief, so long as the supplicant is making his supplication to Allah, the Almighty.

Here are some of what he said in these principles:

- The opinions of any person other than the infallible Prophet (pbuh) may be either accepted or rejected on their merits. All that has reached us of the opinions and rulings of the *Salaf* is acceptable to us as long as it is in agreement with the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*. In case of disagreement, the Book of Allah and the practice of His Prophet are more deserving of our adherence. However, we do not criticize or attack any of those individuals who were in disagreement, since we do not know what their intentions were nor the circumstances that necessitated their decision.
- Every Muslim who reaches the level of understanding the arguments of legal deduction and jurisprudence is encouraged to investigate the works of the four great Imams of *Fiqh* and see which of them attracts him most. With the help of the arguments of that Imam and the proven opinions of trustworthy scholars of his own age, he should be able to increase his knowledge of Islamic *Shari'ah* and find Islamic solutions to the contemporary problems of his society. Those Muslims who are unable to do so are advised to exert the necessary efforts to acquire such a level of understanding.
- Differences in opinion regarding secondary matters should not be allowed to cause division, contention, or hatred within the ranks of the Muslims, for to every seeker of knowledge is a reward. In cases of disagreement, however, there is no harm in objective scientific investigation in an

atmosphere of love (for the sake of Allah) and cooperation with the aim of realizing the truth. Fanaticism, obstinacy, and controversy have no place among true Muslims.

- Wasting time and effort in investigating trivial matters that will not lead to action is prohibited in Islam...

These principles, as we notice, are based on a very deep and wise understanding of religion as well as the reality of the world in which we live. To act upon these principles is a way of narrowing the gaps between different groups and organizations, as all of them will adopt, like Imam al-Banna, the rule which states, "Let us work together in matters on which we agree and excuse one another in matters in which we disagree".

Joining not Separating

In his tract *Our Call*, Imam Hasan al-Banna explained the stance of the Muslim Brotherhood concerning religious differences saying,

"I will now speak to you on the subject of our Call vis-a-vis religious differences and sectarian opinions.

The Call of the Muslim Brotherhood is a general one unaffiliated with any particular sect. It does not favor any opinion known among people as possessing a parochial cast and parochial preconceptions and conclusions. It addresses itself to the heart and core of religion, and we would like to see various interests and points of view unified so that our work may be more productive and our results greater and more significant. For, the Call of the Muslim Brotherhood is pure and unsullied, unblemished by any stain, and it is on the side of truth wherever it may be found, warmly espousing unanimity and detesting deviance. The greatest trial from which Muslims have suffered has been that of separatism and disagreement, while the basis of all their victories has been love and unity. The last of this *Ummah* will never prosper except through the same means as did the first: this is a fundamental principle and acknowledged goal to every Muslim Brother. It is an article of belief firmly anchored within our hearts - we owe our origin to it, and we appeal to others to accept it."

Differences Are Inevitable for a Number of Reasons

Imam al-Banna said,

“Withal, we believe that differences in the subordinate aspects of religion are absolutely unavoidable. It is impossible for us all to be united on these subordinate aspects, opinions, and schools of thought for a number of reasons. Among these are difference of intellectual capacity to undertake profound investigation, or incapacity to do so, conscious grasp of rigorous proofs, or ignorance of them, and varying ability to penetrate into the depths of ideas and the interconnectedness of essential truths. Formal religion is contained in Qur'anic verses, *hadiths*, and texts subject to intellectual exposition and judgment within the bounds set by language and its rules, and on this score people are very much at odds and there is no escaping dissension.

Also, among these factors are breadth and paucity of knowledge. For, one individual will have heard of something that another has not, and the next one will be in a similar predicament. (Imam) Malik said to Abu Ja`far, ‘The Companions of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) have been scattered about in the various military settlements, and each group has its store of knowledge. If you compel them to accept one opinion, there will be civil strife.’

Also, among these factors is difference of environment, so that adaptation to each will differ according to the different nature of each environment. You would see Imam ash-Shafi`i (may Allah be pleased with him) delivering legal opinions according to the old school of Iraq and according to the new school in Egypt. In each case he was acting in accordance with what seemed perfectly clear and lucid to him: in neither case did he go beyond ferreting out the truth.

And, among these factors are differences in the degree of inward confidence placed in a received tradition as it is promulgated. This is because while you may regard this particular tradition as authoritative, according to this particular Imam, and feel quite satisfied with him, accepting him wholeheartedly, you may find him regarded as otherwise by another Imam, because of what he may know of his real circumstances.

Also, among these factors are differences in the evaluation of evidence, for this one would consider, for example, that the course of action adopted

by the people as a whole has priority over the welfare of the individual while that one disagrees with him, and so forth.”

Unanimity on Minor Details Is Impossible

Imam al-Banna said,

“All these contributing factors have convinced us that unanimity on even a single question culled from the minor details of religion is a hopeless desire. Nay, it is even incompatible with the nature of religion, since Allah desires only that this religion lasts, survives, and endures for ages and eons. It is for this reason easy, flexible, simple, and mild, without rigidity or severity.

We believe this, and apologize sincerely to those who differ from us in some details. We feel that this difference will never be an obstacle to friendly relations, mutual esteem, and cooperation for the good, and that the broad, sweeping concept of Islam will contain both us and them within its excellent bounds and capacious limits. Are we not Muslims as they are? Do we not wish to achieve peace of mind as they do? Do we not claim that we wish for our brothers what we wish for ourselves? In what way do we then differ? Why should our views not be a subject for discussion among them, as their views are among us? Why should we not understand one another in an atmosphere of serenity and affection, when the instigation to mutual understanding exists?

The Companions of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) used to have differences of opinion, but did this create essential differences between them? Or did it affect their unity or dissolve their solidarity? By Allah, no! And you may recall here the tradition concerning the performance of the *‘Asr* (afternoon prayer) in the the Banu Qurayzah.

If these men differed with one another even though they were, of all mankind, the closest in time to the Prophetic age and the most familiar with the context in which its precepts were revealed, who are we to cut one another to bits over trifling differences of no importance whatever? If the Imams, who were the most erudite of mankind with respect to the Book of Allah and the *Sunnah* of His Messenger, differed with one another, why should we not be satisfied with what satisfied them? If differences arose concerning the most well-known and unambiguous questions of detail, such as *adhan* (the call to Prayer) which is performed five times a day, with

relevant texts and historical traditions being handed down in attestation, what have to do with the minute points of such questions, which originate in learned discussion and painstaking research?

There is one more matter worth looking into. People used to have recourse to the Caliph - who is the Imam of the Muslims - when they differed, and he would judge between them, and his decision would settle the dispute. Where is the Caliph these days? If this is the way matters stand, the best thing that Muslims can do is to look for a judge and submit their case to him, since if they disagree without resorting to competent authority, it can only propel them into further disagreement.

The Muslim Brotherhood are acquainted with all these considerations, and are therefore the most forbearing of men with those who differ with them. They recognize that every person has some knowledge, and that there is some truth and falsehood in every propaganda. They are keen to search out the truth and hold fast to it, and they try with forbearance and sympathy, to satisfy those who disagree with their viewpoint. If they are satisfied, then all is well and good; and if they are not satisfied, they are still brethren in the faith, and we ask the Guidance of Allah for us and them.

This is the program of the Muslim Brotherhood vis-a-vis their opponents on questions of minor details in the religion of Allah. Perhaps I can summarize it for you by saying that the Brotherhood permit differences of opinion, detest fanaticism of outlook, and try to arrive at the truth and to convert men to it by the gentlest methods of forbearance and affection."⁽¹⁾

Avoiding the Bones of Contention

Imam al-Banna pointed out that one of the distinguishing features of the Muslim Brotherhood is avoiding the subject about which there is disagreement among the different schools of *Fiqh*. They believe that differences in the subordinate aspects of religion are absolutely unavoidable. This is because the fundamentals of Islam are contained in Qura'nic verses, *hadiths*, and actions which are subject to intellectual exposition and judgment, and on this score people are very much at odds and there is no escaping dissension.

Moreover, even the Companions of the Prophet, may Allah be pleased with all of them, differed with one another, and disagreement is still going

1. The tract, *Our Call*.

on and will remain so until the Day of Judgment. Imam Malik, furthermore, said to Abu Ja`far when the latter wanted to compel the people to accept the opinions of Imam Malik contained in his book *Al-Muwatta'*, "The Companions of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) have been scattered about in the various military settlements, and each group has its store of knowledge. If you compel them to accept one opinion, there will be civil strife."

Such an attitude towards disagreement had its positive impact in gathering people and unifying them under one ideology. It is sufficient for people, as Zayd, may Allah be pleased with him, said, to be unanimous on what renders a person Muslim. In addition to this, it was a necessary attitude due to the state of the country at that time where people differed about minor and unfruitful issues.

The Muslim Brotherhood Stance towards the Western Nations

In response to those who claimed that adhering to Islam would muddle the clarity of our relations with Western nations and make them fear us and be suspicious of us, Imam Hasan al-Banna said,

"Similarly, people may imagine that Islamic institutions in our modern life create estrangement between us and the Western nations, and that they will muddle the clarity of our political relations with them just when these were on the point of being settled. This too is a notion rooted in pure fantasy. For, those nations which are suspicious of us will like us no better whether we follow Islam or anything else. If they are truly our friends, and mutual trust exists between us, their own spokesmen and leaders have already declared that every nation is free to adopt whatever organization it wishes within its own borders, provided that it does not infringe on the rights of others. It is up to all the leaders of these nations to understand that the honor of international Islam is the most sacred honor known to history, and that the principles set down by international Islam to guard this honor and to preserve it are the most firmly fixed and solidly confirmed of principles.

It is Islam which spoke out for the safeguarding of treaties and fulfillment of obligation. Allah said,

﴿And fulfil (every) engagement, for (every) engagement will be inquired into (on the Day of Reckoning).﴾

(Al-Isra': 34)

﴿(But the treaties are not) dissolved with those pagans with whom ye have entered into alliance and who have not subsequently failed you in aught, nor aided any one against you. So fulfil your engagements with them to the end of their term: for Allah loveth the righteous.﴾

(At-Tawbah: 4)

Allah also said,

﴿As long as these stand true to you, stand ye true to them.﴾

(At-Tawbah: 7)

And He said, regarding the generous reception of refugees and the good neighborliness of those who receive them,

﴿If one amongst the pagans ask thee for asylum, grant it to him, so that he may hear the Word of Allah; and then escort him to where he can be secure.﴾

(At-Tawbah: 6)

If this is the treatment accorded to polytheists, how do you suppose People of the Book would be treated?

Islam which prescribes these principles and takes its adherents along this path must surely be regarded by Westerners as guaranteeing another type of security, namely, for themselves. We maintain that it would be to Europe's benefit if these sound concepts governed her own internal relations - this would be better for them and more enduring!"⁽¹⁾

The Muslim Brotherhood and the Western Civilization

In more than one of his tracts, Imam al-Banna tackled the issue of explaining the Muslim Brotherhood's attitude towards the Western civilization, particularly when explaining the social and cultural conflict between Islam and the West. In this context, Al-Banna said,

"The European nations which came into contact with Islam and its peoples in the East through the wars of the Crusades, and in the West

1. The tract, *Towards the Light*.

through the proximity of the Arabs of Spain and their intercourse with them, did not profit from this contact solely in terms of heightened sensibility, cohesion, or political unification, but they profited through a great intellectual awakening, acquiring numerous sciences and branches of knowledge. A scientific and cultural renaissance, vast in scope, made its appearance among them, and the Church rose to combat this strange phenomenon with all the strength at its command. It subjected their scholars and men of letters to the bitterest punishments; the Courts of the Inquisition waged war upon them and aroused the wrath of states and people against them. But, all this served it nothing, and its teachings could not stand up before the truths and discoveries of science. The scientific Renaissance emerged entirely victorious, and the state thereby awoke and it too fought the Church until it overcame it and European society was delivered completely from its authority. Its men were driven into the shrine and the cloister, the Pope was confined to the Vatican, and the work of the clergy was limited to a restricted area in the affairs of life beyond which they could not go and to which their efforts were confined. Europe retained its Christianity only as a historical heirloom, as one factor among others for educating the simple-minded and naive among the masses, and as a means for conquest, colonization, and the suppression of political aspiration.

The domain of science stretched out before Europe, and the scope of invention and discovery broadened. The machine doubled production and gave an industrial cast to all of life. All this proceeded hand in hand with the rise of the strong state whose authority reached out to many lands and regions. The world eagerly welcomed these European nations, arousing their cupidity for the profits to be gained everywhere. It poured out its wealth to them from all sides, and it was only natural thereafter that European life and culture should rest upon the principles of the elimination of religion from all aspects of social life, especially as regards the state, the law-court, and the school, the domination of the materialistic outlook, and its enthronement as the criterion for everything... As a result, the character of this culture became purely materialistic, demolishing what the revealed religions had promulgated and utterly contradicting those principles which Islam had established and made the foundations of its culture which united the theoretical and the material. Among the most important traits of European civilization are the following:

1. Atheism, doubt in Allah, denial of the spirit, obliviousness to reward or punishment in the world to come, and fixation within the limits of material, tangible existence:

﴿They know but the outer (things) in the life of this world: but of the Hereafter they are heedless.﴾

(Ar-Rum: 7)

2. Licentiousness, unseemly dedication to pleasures, versatility in self-indulgence, unconditioned freedom for the lower instincts, gratification of the lusts of the belly and the genitals, the equipment of women with every technique of seduction and incitement, and excess in pernicious practices until they shatter both body and mind, destroying the integrity of the family and threatening the happiness of the home:

﴿... while those who reject Allah will enjoy (this world) and eat as cattle eat; and the Fire will be their abode.﴾

(Muhammad: 12)

3. Individual selfishness, for every man wants the good only for himself; and class selfishness, for each class vaunts itself over the others and seeks to appropriate all profits to itself; and national selfishness, for each nation is bigoted on behalf of its members, disparages all others, and tries to engulf those which are weaker.

4. Usury, granting it legal recognition, regarding it as a principle of business dealings and expertise under its various form and varieties, and making it a general practice among nations and individuals. These purely materialistic traits have produced within European society corruption of spirits, weakening of morality, and flaccidity in the war against crime, while problems have multiplied, destructive ideologies have made their appearance, devastating and ruinous revolutions have burst forth, and economic, social, and political institutions have been shaken and no longer stand upon stable foundations.

Nations have been torn apart by sects and parties, and peoples have fought one another savagely because of their greed and hatreds. This modern civilization has confirmed its absolute impotence to guarantee the security of human society and to establish peace and tranquillity within it,

just as it has confirmed its failure to grant men happiness, despite all the truths of science and knowledge that it has disclosed to them, as well as all the means to wealth and opulence it has made available to them, and despite the power and authority it has brought to the states which embody it throughout the earth."⁽¹⁾

In another situation, Al-Banna explained,

"The civilization of the West is now bankrupt and in decline. Its political foundations are being destroyed by dictatorships and its economic by its wretched unemployed, and the hungry offer their testimony against it, while its social foundations are being undermined by deviant ideologies and revolutions which are breaking out everywhere. Its people are at a loss as to the proper measures to be taken and are wandering far astray. Their congresses are failures, their treaties are broken, and their covenants torn to pieces: their League of Nations is a phantasm, possessing neither spirit nor influence, while their strong men are overthrowing its covenant of peace and security. This is one side of the matter. Meanwhile, on the other side, too, they are being dealt violent blows, so that the world, thanks to these tyrannical and self-seeking policies, has become like a ship in the midst of the sea, with its captain distraught while blustering gales assault it on all sides. All of humanity are tormented, wretched, worried, and confused, having been scorched by the fires of greed and materialism. They are in dire need of some sweet portion of the waters of Islam to wash from them the filth of misery and to lead them to happiness.

The leadership of the world was at one time in the hands of the East entirely, then it fell to the West after the rise of the Greeks and Romans. After that, the Mosaic, Christian, and Muhammadan dispensations brought it back to the East for a second time, but then the East fell into its long sleep, and the West enjoyed a new rebirth. It was Allah's decree which may not be gainsaid, that the West inherited world leadership. But, look and behold! it was tyrannical, unjust, insolent, misguided, and stumbling blindly, and it only remained for a strong Eastern power to exert itself under the shadow of Allah's Banner, with the standard of the Qur'an fluttering at its head, and backed up by the powerful, unyielding soldiery of the faith.

1. The tract, *Between Yesterday and Today*.

And there was the world turned Muslim and at peace, and the universe singing out:

﴿Praise be to Allah, who hath guided us to this (felicity): never could we have found guidance, had it not been for the guidance of Allah.﴾

(Al-A`raf: 43)

This is not in the least a product of the imagination: this is no other than the true verdict of history. And if it is not fulfilled through us,

﴿Soon Allah will 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.﴾

(Al-Ma'idah: 54)

Withal, we, the Muslim Brothers, are very keen to be of those who gain this virtue and honored with this task:

﴿Thy Lord does create and choose as He pleases.﴾

(Al-Qasas: 68)"

Some people would say that Al-Banna was strict in criticizing the Western civilization, for he seemingly denied its good aspects. However, Al-Banna's stand might be a strong reaction so as to fight the Eastern Movements that planted to combat the Muslim identity of the *Ummah*. Admittedly, the stronger the action is, the stronger the reaction will be. No one, of course, can deny the significance of the Western civilization in the fields of science, technology, and management and administration of the secular affairs. In his tract of *The Teachings*, Al-Banna said, "Islam welcomes all that is good and beneficial to mankind: 'Wisdom is the objective of the believer. Wherever he finds it, he is more deserving to it.'"⁽¹⁾

Al-Banna, moreover, wrote to someone who was delegated by the ministry of education to England, saying,

1. For further information see my book, *Al-Islam Hadarat al-Ghad* (Islam, The Future Civilization).

"Amongst those people, you should be clear-sighted critic and knowledgeable, just judge. Do not be fascinated by their good aspects that you might ignore their evil ones, and do not be affected by their evil aspects that you might ignore their good ones. Carefully and thoroughly study everything about them; acquaint yourself with all their affairs according to your capacity. Then, examine all this with deep sight: what you find good, bring it to your *Ummah* and people. While, on the other hand, you should leave them what is not good and do not pay attention for it. Do not come back unless you have no trace of such ideas."⁽¹⁾

Apparently, the above advice of Al-Banna is accurate evidence of his stance towards the Western civilization. He approved taking advantage of its benefits and avoiding its harms. This is of course, the straight attitude.

The Muslim Brotherhood and the Three Unities: the National, Arabian, and the Islamic Unities

With respect to the above three unities, the Muslim Brotherhood has a clear stand. Some people erroneously think that these three are contradictory and working for one of them contradicts working for the other two.

However, the Muslim Brotherhood see no contradiction in working for the three unities, since what is particular does not necessarily contradict what is comprehensive and what is partial does not necessarily contradict what is complete. The Muslim, if capable, is required to work for the three unities and if incapable, he should work for his country first, then for his people, and then for the entire Muslim *Ummah* according to his capacity.

The Muslim Brotherhood and the Egyptian Nationalism

Al-Banna refuted the claim of those who accused the Muslim Brotherhood of disloyalty to their countries thinking that working for Islam is in conflict with working for homeland.

Al-Banna was clear when he assured this concept, saying,

"Islam makes it obligatory on every Muslim to struggle for the welfare of his nation and to make sacrifices for the sake of its good and benefit. In this connection, he should give preference to the nearest relative and

1. Al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun weekly newspaper, dated in 23 Rajab 1303 AH, November 1939 AC.

neighbor. Islam does not even permit that the *Zakah* should go further than the *qasr* (shortening in prayer) limit (about sixty miles) unless there is an unavoidable need. In this way it is the duty of every Muslim that he should protect the frontier of the land on which he lives. He should serve the country, in which he has been brought up. A Muslim understands his duty to his nation and is of most benefit to his countrymen. The Brotherhood too are most desirous of the welfare of their country. They lay down their lives in the service of the country. They are desirous of all kinds of honor and prestige, progress, elevation, good, and success for this dear and respected country, particularly when the leadership of the Muslim *Ummah* has fallen to our nation due to the prevailing circumstances. The love of Madinah did not affect the Prophet's (pbuh) longing for Makkah."

Al-Banna, in another tract, falsified the claim of those who accuse the Muslim Brotherhood of dividing and separating the Muslims and Christians confirming the Islamic rule that reads, "They (the Christians) have the same rights as we (Muslims) and carry, in turn, the same of our obligations."

Egypt: The Base of Islamic *Da`wah*

Al-Banna regarded Egypt as the base from which Islamic *da`wah* is directed and therefore focused all the effort of his group on it. This is due to many reasons: first, Egypt is the motherland of the Brotherhood's Movement. Second, it is the fort of Islam which protected it against the Crusaders and the Tartars throughout history. Third, it is the land of the honorable Al-Azhar and thereby the cultural center of all Muslims.

The following are some expressive quotations from the tract of *Our Call in a New Phase* in which Al-Banna (may Allah have mercy upon him) said,

"We have inherited Islam which colored our souls with its unfading dye that drenched our consciences and hearts. Egypt as a whole has been mixed thoroughly with Islam in all its features, i.e. its faith, language, and culture. It defended Islam against the aggressors and sacrificed its money and blood in fighting in its cause. Egypt snatched Islam from the jaws of the Tartars and the Crusaders on whom it inflicted a crushing defeat.

Egypt, the land of Al-Azhar, the oldest Islamic University set for the purpose of guarding and serving Islam, became the seat of Islamic sciences and knowledge. It took the reins of social and cultural leadership among the other Muslim nations and became the center of attention, and the object of hope.

This Islam - its faith, regime, language, and culture - is Egypt's revered and dearly precious heritage. To lose this heritage or to be separated from it is by no means easy or possible for Egypt despite all the destructive efforts exerted in this direction.

The spirit of Islam is strongly and vividly reflected in many aspects of the life in Egypt. Its people's names are Islamic, its language is Arabic, and its great mosques, from which the call for prayers comes very loudly day and night, are continually echoing the remembrance of Allah. Our emotions - as Egyptians - are not shaken by anything like that related to Islam.

However, the Western civilization managed to invade us strongly through knowledge, money, politics, luxury, means of pleasure and entertainment, and through this style of aimless and tempting life which is both new and strange and to which we therefore were greatly attracted. Actually, this invasion affected us deeply.

Islam's influence on the Egyptian society and on many of its important affairs faded away as a result. We rushed toward changing our shape and coloring it according to the European taste. We imprisoned Islam within the bounds of hearts and *mihrabs* and away from the practical affairs of life. Hence, our life becomes double and contradictory."

Imam al-Banna shed light on the Egyptian life and its wavering between the intrinsic, the inherent, and the alien, Islam and westernization. What worried him most was the feeling that this wavering might lead to complete detachment from Islam and full indulgence in the Western life, especially that "Many cries rose loud asking for this life, a lot of calls appeared specifically for this aim, and many other peoples and governments preceded us to its way."

It seems that he was referring to the cry of Taha Husayn, Salamah Musa, and `Ali `Abd ar-Raziq, the call of Lotfi as-Sayyid and Al-Ummah party, and Ataturk's government which seceded from the Islamic *Shari`ah*.

Like a skilled physician, Imam al-Banna described the medicine for this dilemma by saying,

"We are afraid of this end, yet we entreat Allah to restore Egypt to the rules and teachings of Islam so that it can build its new development on them, and set its social status in the future - Allah willing - under their shade.

Islam in the meanwhile urges us to pick from everything its best, and sets a rule that wisdom is the believer's long-sought goal which he should search for and be the most keen to seize. In other words, Islam does not prevent Muslims from benefiting from anything useful and good. It is not forbidden to take from others what is useful as long as we apply it in our countries according to the rules of our religion, our traditions, and the needs of our people.

The effect of this fluctuation and wavering on our life is deep and evident. Further, this wavering may be the source of many problems in the domains of education, judicial system, family life, culture, and the other public affairs. Is there any nation except Egypt in which education, from its early stages, adopts two different courses; the first is the religious education which has to do with the first half of the nation and is represented by Al-Azhar with its institutions and faculties, and the second is the civil education which is concerned with the other half, bearing in mind that the two courses are of totally different nature? Is there any reason for this except that the first section represents the remaining traces of Islam within the people of this nation whereas the second one is the upshot of following and mixing with the West? Why is it impossible to unite the education in its early stages and to set it on Islamic national basis, then specialization can come next? Is there any nation in which the judicial system is divided into legal and non-legal other than Egypt? Is there any other explanation for this except that the first kind stems from Islam's influence on the Egyptian society whereas the second is the outcome of imitating the West? Why is it not permitted to unite the courts of law in Egypt on basis of the Islamic *Shari`ah* and to regard this *Shari`ah* as the state's constitution and source of legislation?

Even the Egyptian family cannot escape the bad effect of this contradictory, wavering life. It is true that many of the Egyptian families still adhere to their inheritance of Islamic teachings and ethics, but nevertheless many other families become disengaged from these teachings, transgress Islam's ethics, and rush blindly to imitate the West in everything. Even some of us go beyond this limit by becoming more westernized than the westerners themselves.

It is necessary and essential to put an end to this strange disparity and divergence in our life in order to bring about one united Muslim *Ummah*. Without unity no development can be realized and no nation can enjoy the taste of honorable life.

Therefore, the Muslim Brotherhood prompts the call to establish the development of Egypt on unified life aspects based on Islamic rules and principles. Egypt thereby can build itself strongly and can set to the whole world the most perfect example of the proper human life."⁽¹⁾

This long citation reflects the great concern which the founder of the Brotherhood paid to Egypt as well as the historical role it played in supporting Islam, and the leading place it has amongst the Muslim peoples today. It also stresses on the necessity of pushing Egypt toward development and progress in all life's domains. Thereby, Egypt can lead the developing Muslim procession of *da`wah* and *jihad* and make the banners of Islam float high on earth.

This development is dependent on, for example, abolishing the duality of aspects in Egypt represented in the religious and the civil education, the legal and the non-legal judicial system, and the Islamic and the westernized foreign life. If this is achieved, Egypt will witness a real unity, that is to say, a unity of culture, legislation, and society beside the public national unity.

Al-Banna was not against paying heed to the history of ancient Egypt and to the sciences and fields of knowledge, which the ancient Egyptians approached. He welcomed ancient Egypt as a history portraying glory and the greatness of science and knowledge. What he strongly opposed is to conceive Egypt in light of this history alone and to push it to return its back to its beliefs after its being guided to Islam and cleaned of the dirts of paganism.

1. The tract, *Our Call in a New Phase*.

The Arab Unity

Al-Banna pointed out his view with regard to the Arab unity by saying that this true religion, Islam, was born and brought up in the lap of the Arabs and reached the other nations through them. Its Gracious Book came in the perspicuous Arabic tongue with which all Muslim nations were united when Muslims were truly Muslims. It was mentioned in the traditions that "If the Arabs will degenerate, Islam too will degenerate."

This meaning comes true when the political sovereignty of the Arabs was over and the reins of power were passed to the foreigners. For, the Arabs are indeed the protectors of Islam.

Al-Banna made it clear that Arabism is not that of race and blood, but it is that of culture and tongue. The Muslim Brotherhood conceives Arabism as the Prophet (pbuh) defined it. Ibn Kathir narrated on the authority of Mu`adh ibn Jabal (may Allah be pleased with him) that Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said,

"Behold! Arabism is that of the tongue, Arabism is that of the tongue."

The return of Islam's glory, its stage, and dominion comes down accordingly to the unity of Arabs. It is obligatory therefore on every Muslim to burn the candle at both ends to revive and support the Arab unity. This exactly is the stance, which the Muslim Brotherhood adopts toward this unity.

This is what Al-Banna said in 1936, many years before establishing the Arab league, and what he emphasized in many of his tracts, essays, and addresses.

He (may Allah have mercy upon him) emphasized, "All the nations, covering the vast area from the (Persian) Gulf to Morocco and Tangiers on the Atlantic coast, are all Arabs, united by belief and language. They are brought together by relating circumstances and a single stretch of land which has no boundaries dividing it and no distinction within its borders. And, we take it that if we work for the cause of Arabism, we will in reality be working for the welfare of Islam and the World."⁽¹⁾

1. *Our Call in a New Phase.*

The Brotherhood, since far back, see no contradiction between working for Arabism and for Islam unless Arabism gets mixed with some alien concepts that clash with Islam as being mixed with some anti-Islamic theories like Marxism. By the same token, they do not accept an Islam transpierced by notions opposing to Arabism like this Islam which is blended with nationalism that hates the Arabs.

Arabism is the body of Islam and Arabic is its tongue. The book of Islam is Arabic, its Messenger (pbuh), and his Companions who communicated its message to the world are Arabs. The flowing of Islam came out from the land of Arabs, which embraces the three sacred mosques. Foreign Muslims therefore love the Arabs and honor them especially because of the blood relationship they have with the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). The core of Arabic nationalism is tongue and history; the tongue of the Qur'an and the history of Islam.

There is no wonder then that the Brotherhood in many countries are on good terms with the moderate nationalists who participated in the Islamic national conference which was held in Beirut in 1994, with a number of Muslim thinkers among them there were many members of the Brotherhood. This conference is held every several years and through it some recommendations and resolutions are issued.

The Islamic Unity

Imam al-Banna pointed out the Brotherhood's stance toward a strong tie as well. Islam puts an end to the relative disparity between people. Allah says,

﴿The Believers are but a single Brotherhood.﴾

(Al-Hujurat: 10)

The Prophet (pbuh) said,

"The Muslim is the brother of the Muslim."⁽¹⁾

He (pbuh) also said,

"The life of each Muslim shall be equally respectable. Even if a Muslim of subordinate position will give refuge to anybody, it shall be respected; and all shall be one against their enemies."⁽²⁾

1. Narrated by Al-Bukhari and Muslim.

2. Narrated by Abu Dawud and Ibn Majah.

Islam accepts neither geographical borders nor national or ethnic discrimination. It considers all Muslims one person and looks on the Muslim countries as one nation whatever the distance between them may be. The Muslim Brotherhood allows this unity and believes deeply in this league. It works in order to unite the word of Muslims and to enhance the Islamic brotherhood. Their nation is every spot of land on which there is a Muslim bearing witness that "There is no god but Allah and that Muhammad (pbuh) is His Messenger".

This is what Imam al-Banna said. I may add that Islam, by conceiving Muslims as one united nation as the following verses reflect: ﴿*Ye are the best of peoples, evolved for mankind*﴾. (Al-`Imran: 110), ﴿*Thus have We made of you an Ummah justly balanced*﴾ (Al-Baqarah: 143), and ﴿*... and verily this Brotherhood of yours is a single Brotherhood*﴾ (Al-Mu`minun: 52), it stresses on the importance of Islamic unity through three major things:

1. A single supreme authority represented in the Glorious Qur'an and the Honorable *Sunnah*.
2. A single home of Islam, as all Muslim nations form one home.
3. A single general leadership for this single Muslim home incarnated in the great Imam or Caliph.⁽¹⁾

It becomes clear for everybody how the feeling of patriotism which the Brotherhood have toward their country, Egypt, is strong, and it is the base on which the hoped-for future Islamic development is set. It does not object to any person who works to support his own country and gives it all priority. It backs the Arab unity regarding it the second link in the chain of Islamic development. The Organization works hard to achieve the unity of Muslim peoples as it is the protective fence for the greater Muslim *Ummah*. Above all, it seeks goodness for the whole world and calls for the universal unity which is - in essence - the objective of Islam. Allah says,

﴿*We sent thee not, but as a mercy for all creatures.*﴾

(Al-Anbiya': 107)

1. See my book *Al-Ummah al-Islamiyyah Haqiqah la Wahm*.

Imam al-Banna thereby proved that there is no contradiction between these various unities and that each one of them backs the others to realize their goals. If some group or party uses the weapon of personal patriotism as a weapon against any feeling towards other nationalities, the Brotherhood does not agree to this, and this is the difference between it and many other groups and parties.

The Brotherhood and the Caliphate

What is the Brotherhood's stance toward the Islamic caliphate? To what extent does it care about it? How does it work to restore it? These are questions for which many people need answers.

These points are tackled in several tracts of Imam al-Banna such as the tracts of *The Fifth Conference*, *The Sixth Conference*, and *The Teachings*. Al-Banna shed more light on these points in the tract of *The Fifth Conference* by saying, "The Brotherhood regard the caliphate as the symbol of Islamic unity and a sign of the bond between the various Muslim nations. It is a religious duty on every Muslim to think about the caliphate and to be concerned about its return. There are many rules⁽¹⁾ of the religion of Allah that are to be fulfilled by the caliphate. This was the reason that before the burial of the Prophet (pbuh), the honored Companions (may Allah be pleased with them) were so anxious about the matter that they did not consent to the burial of the Messenger until the issue of electing a caliph had been resolved.

A review of the traditions which emphasize the election and the correct functioning of Imam (leader) should make it clear that since the demise of the caliphate, it is now obligatory on Muslims that they should prepare for the establishment of the caliphate and should realize its great importance. For this reason, the Brotherhood have given top priority to the revival of the caliphate. They are conscious that they will have to make many preparations before the last step for the return of the caliphate is taken.

It is essential that there should be a complete economic, social, and cultural cooperation amongst all the Muslim nations and groups. Thereafter,

1. For example: the obligation of swearing fealty to Imam of Muslims, the obligation of establishing a single imamate, the forbiddance of swearing fealty to two Imams at the same time, the necessity of canceling the imamate of the second of them, etc. (Al- Qaradawi).

political pacts and agreements should be concluded between them and meetings and conferences should be held."

Imam al-Banna's view concerning the cause of the caliphate rests actually on a full recognition of Islamic *Shari`ah* and of the facts of our life. The caliph is not merely a ruler who applies *Shari`ah*, rather he is the one who rules the whole Muslim *Ummah* with its vast area, numerous countries, different tongues and colors. In other words, the caliph - as defined by our Muslim scholars in the past - is the successor of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) who is responsible for applying the rules of Islam and for guiding life according to it.

To realize this kind of caliphate, we should pave the way for it. We should rebuild what imperialism, whether military, political, cultural, or legislative, destroyed. The Muslim peoples should be reunited in a single great nation ruled by the light of the Qur'an and *Shari`ah*.

The caliphate is not a mere slogan to be chanted or an eloquent word to be circulated. It is not this kind of caliphate that can be established as soon as its idea is announced as the shallow-minded persons in some of the Islamic parties claim!

Toward Universal Humanity

The boundaries of Hasan al-Banna's thought do not end at Egypt, the Arab world, or even the great Muslim *Ummah*. His hope flies in a more extended horizon and over a boarder world, it soars in the wider space of humanity. Al-Banna said,

"Universality is our highest objective and greatest aim-the last link in the chain of reform, and the world is moving towards this. The only way forward is by joining together all nations, races, and communities. This should include the weak who would then have the opportunity to become strong; this interaction will improve the chances of a long lasting unity. As, all this will prepare the grounds for this universal call and will put into perspective the ideas of nationalism and patriotism, which mankind have been staunch believers in before.

In the beginning, it was necessary to advocate racial and nationalistic ideals. However, it was necessary to drop such ideals in order to be accepted

as part of a much larger community. In order to fulfil this complete and universal unity, we must realize that it is something that will surely come about, although slowly, with the advent of time. Therefore, we must make it a part of our target, placing it in front of our eyes. We must commence with the construction of humanity, one brick at a time. We are not responsible to complete the construction, for every deadline has its divine decree.

If in the world where we live today we find a great number of associations and organizations that are built on the principles of national fanaticism, attracting the hearts of the people and moving in them the narrow-minded sentiments of the one and only nation, then there are painful and harsh lessons to be learned from this. The world is now suffering the effects of racist trends, this should be enough for mankind to take refuge in religious guidance and return to the path of brotherhood and mutual co-operation."⁽¹⁾

1. *Our Call in a New Phase.*



Chapter Two

The Brotherhood: Distinctive Features

- The Comprehensive Outlook on Islam
- The Tendency to Unite and Reconcile
- The Concern about the Integral Structure

Some of the Distinctive Features of the Brotherhood's Movement

The Brotherhood - as mentioned earlier - is a reformative Islamic movement whose first duty is to revive Islam in Muslims' hearts.

This Movement has some distinctive features that distinguish it from other Islamic revivalistic movements' calls which are prior to or contemporary of it.

The most salient of these features are the following three:

- 1- The comprehensive outlook on Islam.
- 2- The tendency to unite and reconcile, not to repel and separate.
- 3- The concern about the integral structure.

1. The Comprehensive Outlook on Islam

One of the most prominent characteristics of the Brotherhood's Movement is the comprehensive view it adopts about Islam.

It has a special understanding of Islam differing from the other ways of understanding which were prevalent at the time of cultural backwardness. It has never perceived Islam as a pure spiritual message restricted in certain worships and beliefs which have nothing to do with the society's problems, the state's affairs, or with politics, economy, and culture.

The Western imperialism, which occupied most of the Muslim nations and controlled their lives, encouraged this stagnant attitude which keeps Islam within the bounds of spiritual worship.

The Brotherhood refuses this exclusive view on Islam. They believe that Islam is uniquely comprehensive, fit for all times and for all people. Hasan al-Banna expressed the same idea efficiently in one of his articles entitled *Min Wahi Hira'* (Lessons from Hira'). In this article he said that Islam is the message that has been extending over the past, present, and future, penetrating to the ends of the earth, and comprehending all the affairs of this life and the life to come.

Muslims have eliminated enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong, which is regarded as a very weighty Islamic duty, from their account. They have destroyed thereby one of Islam's main elements. It is this duty which entitled Muslims as the best among all other people. Allah says,

﴿Ye are the best of Peoples, evolved for mankind, enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong, and believing in Allah.﴾

(Al 'Imran: 110)

It is noteworthy that Allah in this verse makes this duty prior to performance of prayers and paying of *Zakah*.

This honorable duty is also expressed in Allah's saying,

﴿... and (those who) join together in the mutual enjoining of truth.﴾

(Al-'Asr: 3)

It is also referred to in the Prophet's (pbuh) words when he said, "*Religion is counsel.*" His Companions said, "For whom, O Messenger of Allah?" He said, "*For Allah, His Messenger, His Book, the leaders of Muslims, and their folk in general.*"⁽¹⁾

Fighting in the cause of Allah, which is situated on top of other divine obligations, has been cancelled as well. For, resorting to this grave duty is very pressing especially on time of being (any Muslim land) vulnerable to foreign attacks. As the Muslim world was exposed to several attacks like those of imperialism which occupied its lands in the past, communism which invaded its countries in Asia, and Zionism which seized Palestine, the land of Jerusalem, of the *Aqsa* Mosque, and the *Mi`raj* journey (Prophet Muhammad's journey from earth to heaven).

Muslim jurists have unanimously declared that if unbelievers occupy any Muslim nation, its people must resist and kick them out from their land. It is compulsory on all Muslims in general to supply their Muslim brothers in this nation with money, forces, provisions, ammunitions, and all what they need.

To judge according to what Allah has revealed is an Islamic obligation, which has now become something considered out-of-date, although Allah says,

﴿If any do fail to judge by what Allah hath revealed, they are Unbelievers.﴾

(Al-Ma'idah: 44)

﴿And if any fail to judge by what Allah hath revealed, they are Wrong-doers.﴾

(Al-Ma'idah: 45)

﴿If any do fail to judge by what Allah hath revealed, they are those who rebel.﴾

(Al-Ma'idah: 47)

1. Narrated by Muslim on the authority of Tamim ad-Dari.

It is true that these verses were sent down to the People of the Book, namely the Jews and Christians, yet they are applied to Muslims too. If Muslims fail to judge according to what Allah has revealed in the Qur'an they may be listed among the unbelievers, wrong-doers, and rebellious men of the Jews and Christians who turned away from what Allah revealed to them in the Torah and the Gospel, as these Qur'anic words are of general meaning and refer to all what Allah has revealed.

Unity of all Muslim nations, a slogan that is now buried in the land of luxuriant imagination and no longer exists in real life in spite of Allah's saying,

﴿Verily, this Ummah of yours is a single Ummah.﴾

(Al-Anbiya': 92)

This principle of Islamic unity is crystallized in the following three axes :

1. Unity of the source: in other words, all Muslims must resort to one divine legal source, which is the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*.
2. Unity of place: all Muslim counties - even if they are far from one another - symbolize one place and one unit.
3. Unity of leadership incarnated in the great caliph of the Muslims who unites and leads them.⁽¹⁾

One of the Prophet's *hadiths* emphasizes that electing a caliph or an Imam to rule the Muslim nations as a whole is obligatory. Ibn 'Umar narrated that the Prophet (phuh) said,

"One who dies without having bound himself by an oath of allegiance (to an Imam of the Muslims) will die as one belonging to the days of (the pre-Islamic period of) ignorance."⁽²⁾

Nevertheless, relations among Muslim countries nowadays reflect nothing but disunity, division, and rupture. This is what Islam emphatically rejects. It calls on Muslims to hold fast, all together, by the rope which Allah stretches out for them, and be not divided among themselves.

To be on the side of Allah's supporters and against His enemies is another Islamic principle which has faded into oblivion. Muslims seem to have forgotten what Allah says in *Surat al-Ma'idah*,

1. See the book entitled *Al-Ummah al-Islamiah Haqiqah la Wahm*.
2. Narrated by Muslim.

﴿And he amongst you that turns to them (for friendship) is of them.﴾

(Al-Ma'idah: 51)

Muslim societies - consisting mainly of the family, the school, and the mosque - have neglected the role of Islamic education and culture which are essential for the formation of truly Muslim generations.

Many of the absolute regulations established by Islam are invalidated, for example, the Islamic regulations concerned with civil law such as prohibiting usury, monopoly, gambling, and those concerned with criminal law such as carrying out the penalty of robbery, adultery and fornication, false accusation, wine drinking.

After all, can any true Muslim accept this distortion of Islam and its principles? Can he remain silent while seeing people make what is forbidden lawful and vice versa? How can he agree to imprison Islam in a very narrow scope while leaving the door wide open before alien philosophies, cultures, regimes, and positive laws to influence Muslims' life?

In the past many Muslims were fond of adding more worships and rites, which were of their own invention, to Islam. The Muslim scholars who were firmly grounded in knowledge and adhered strictly to the rules of the Qur'an and the *Sunnah* ascribed these additions to their originators who had added to the religion without the permission of Allah acting in this according to the Prophet's *hadith*:

"If somebody innovates something which is not in harmony with the principles of our religion, that thing is rejected."⁽¹⁾

The Muslims of the present age are preoccupied by cutting out very essential parts from Islam to make it an exclusive religion that lacks real influence on events in life.⁽²⁾

That is why restoring to Islam what had been taken from it was Al-Banna's first priority. He always asserted that it is the only call, which embraces all aspects of life whether spiritual or material, individual or social, economic or political, ethical or cultural, and domestic or global.

1. Narrated by Al-Bukhari and Muslims.

2. See my lecture entitled *Al-Islam al-ladhi Nad'u ilayh*, (Islam that We Call for) in a series entitled *Muhadarat al-Qaradawi* (Al-Qaradawi's Lectures).

The Brotherhood's Call conceives Islam as consisting of five branches:

1. A branch that is concerned with the soul which Islam cares much to refine through its teachings, worships, and morals.
2. A branch that is directed toward society seeking to reform it through achieving development, social justice, and comprehensive solidarity.
3. A branch that is directed to the state which, according to Islam, should be set upon the bases of justice and mutual consultation.
4. A branch that focuses round the idea of uniting all Muslim peoples into one great nation.
5. And a branch that revolves round the whole universe trying to fill it with life and prosperity through stimulating people to perform their duty as the vicegerents of Allah on earth.⁽¹⁾

The history of Islamic thought throughout the different ages proves that none of its men - whether jurists, archeologists, mystics, or even philosophers - claim that Islam is a pure spiritual message that must be separated from the state and rule.

Sheikh `Ali `Abd ar-Raziq, one of the people of modern age, was the first to call for this concept in his famous book *Al-Islam wa Usul al-Hukm* (Islam and the Principles of Government), which won the approval and support of missionaries, orientalist, and westernizers.

This book provoked fierce controversies, particularly because its writer was one of Al-Azhar's sheikhs. Some of the greatest and most outstanding Muslim scholars such as sheikh Muhammad Bikhit al-Muti`i and sheikh Muhammad al-Khidr Husayn devoted themselves to refute his views.

An organization consisting of the high scholars of Al-Azhar at the time decided to withdraw his scholarship, and to deprive him of all civil and religious offices.

In some of his books, Dr. Muhammad `Imarah cited what this writer himself said about backing down all the views, he implied in his book,

1. See the explanation of these branches in my book *As-Sahwah al-Islamiyyah wa Humum al-Watan al-'Arabi wal-Islami* (Islamic Awakening and the Worries of Islamic and Arab Homelands).

contradicting the consensus of Muslim scholars, that Islam is merely spiritual.

Hasan al-Banna and Politics

Sufferings and hardships were obstacles in the way of Al-Banna's efforts to direct the Muslims' attention toward the political dimension of Islam, which is no lesser in importance than the spiritual one. A Muslim should not dedicate himself to prayers and fasting while not caring a fig for what is going on in the political arena of all Muslim nations. All Muslims should realize that they are brothers who should be united in one great nation.

The opponents of the Brotherhood's Call tried to wrong it through circulating that it is a call that mixes up religion with politics. They called comprehensive Islam "the political Islam" as if there were several kinds of Islam, viz the spiritual, the ethical, the social, political, etc.

Islam as drawn by Allah and communicated by His Messenger (pbuh) is political in essence. The Islamic *Shari`ah* leaves no field untouched and Islamic *Fiqh* tackles all affairs of life from beginning to end.

Al-Banna condemnably commented, "If Islam is something else than politics, society, economy, and culture so what is it? Is it a number of *rak`at* of prayer consisting of systematic movements that have nothing to do with humbleness of hearts? Was for this Islam sent down as an elaborate, perfect system, ﴿... explaining all things, a Guide, a Mercy, and Glad Tidings to Muslims.﴾ (An-Nahl: 89)?⁽¹⁾

Flashbacks of Egypt on the Emergence of the Brotherhood

After the fall of the Islamic Caliphate by nearly four or five years and after the appearance of the book *Al-Islam wa Usul al-Hukm*, the Brotherhood's Call was born. It emerged as a reaction to the westernizing vogue which spread among Muslims, especially the intellectuals who were alarmingly infatuated by Western civilization, its concepts and philosophies. Most of them believed so much in the Western way of thinking as regards religion. They were very convinced that the West could not achieve any

1. See the part concerned with Islam and politics in my book *Shumul al-Islam* (Comprehensiveness of Islam).

progress unless it separated religion from politics. Therefore, they were of the opinion that Islam should be separated from politics and rule if we want to be advanced.

The attitude of many Islamic groups in Egypt almost confirmed the West's view in respect of religion and politics. For, these groups assert that their identity is only religious and by no means political. And, it was bad enough that the relations among these religious groups, in spite of the good efforts they exerted in the religious direction, lacked feelings of intimacy and love, true understanding and communication among themselves. They accordingly failed to form one united power in front of the westernizing, secular trends that invaded our nations, armed with the weapon of cunningness and addressed in the vestment of modernism.

"*Ansar as-Sunnah al-Muhammadiyah*", "*Al-Jam'iyyah ash-Shar'iyyah*", "*Shabab Sayyidina Muhammad*", "*Jam'iyyat ash-Shubban al-Muslimin*" and the sufi groups are examples of the Muslim groups existent in Egypt. However united in religion these groups were, their behavior towards one another at that time revealed exchanged accusations and chauvinistic claims that each one's group was the best, and the only one based on truth whereas the others were built on falsehood. This firing of accusations would even incite them to accuse each other of *kufir* (unbelief).

The Attitude of the Religious Groups in Egypt when Al-Banna's Call Appeared

In one of my books, I have discussed the attitude and position of these religious groups and reached the conclusion that there was one main flaw which all these groups commonly shared. Each one of them focused complete attention on one aspect of Islam while completely neglecting the other aspects and even censuring those who cared about any of them.

The group of "*Ansar as-Sunnah al-Muhammadiyah*" has no other concern except in *'aqidah* which they work hard to filter from the impurities of the major and minor *shirk*. This includes fighting the heretics who cherish saints as if they were gods. They launch fierce attacks on those who interpret Allah's Attributes in the *Qur'an* and *Sunnah* by way of metaphors such as the group of "*Al-Jam'iyyah ash-Shar'iyyah*" and others. Their

archenemy is the *mutasawwifah*⁽¹⁾ whether the contemporaries or the old, the theoretical or the practical of them.

The group of "*Al-Jam`iyyah ash- Shar`iyyah*" cares a lot about worships especially prayers which - they believe - must be performed in complete accordance with the Prophet's (pbuh) *Sunnah*. This group spares no effort to extirpate heresy. It sets up mosques under its authority. However, its scholars like most of Al-Azhar's scholars, follow the *Asha`irah* school (a school concerned with the Islamic creed) in interpreting the Qur'anic verses and Prophetic *hadiths* dealing with Allah's Attributes. Therefore, very heated debates flared up between them and the "*Ansar As-Sunnah*" and lasted for long years.

The group of "*Jam`iyyat ash-Shubban al-Muslimin*" focuses on the cultural aspect of Islam through the holding of symposiums and lectures. It also pays a lot of attention to sports and physical training, the thing which attracts a good number of youth to it.

Whereas, the group of "*Shabab Sayyidina Muhammad*" concerns itself with the subjects of the removal of the veil represented in the intermixing between men and women and all things related to Muslim women. It deals with these things as its chief concern and stands strongly in front of the trends of dissoluteness and libertinism. It adopts the most fixed and inflexible views in relation to family affairs and the Muslim woman especially her mixing with men, her clothing and toilet. It offends whosoever permits women to unveil their faces and regards this as prohibited.

With regard to the sufi groups, some of them are truly sincere while the others are either mere ignorant imitators or mercenary quacks. Even the sincere of them choose to live in a very narrow corner of the huge building of Islam. All that preoccupies them is the spiritual aspect which is restricted only to individual worships and at times collective worships within the limits of one's group. Nevertheless, most of them adopt errant beliefs, perform heretic worships, and retain a passive behavior.

1. The term "*mutasawwifah*" usually refers to those who claim to be true sufis and ascetics.
(Revisor)

This was the position of the religious arena in Egypt immediately before the emergence of Al-Banna's Call. These Islamic groups were completely preoccupied with partial causes that were too limited to reflect on the comprehensive nature of Islam.

The idea of uniting Muslims in one great nation and the necessity of confronting positive laws, foreign philosophies, Western libertinism and imperialism - which undermine Islam and have mastery over its *Shari`ah*, philosophy, conventions and power - however grave duties are, were not among the priorities of the previous religious groups. In spite of this, there was a few number of people in these groups who were aware of the importance of such duties.

The attitude of these religious groups towards Islam is - despite their good intention and efforts - similar to the blind men's attitude towards the elephant in the famous Indian story: a couple of blind fellows come across an elephant and each of them holds one part of it thinking that it is the whole body. When they are asked to describe the elephant, every man of them describes it as if it was the one part he is catching. All of them fail to describe the elephant as a whole although every fellow describes accurately and correctly the part he touches. He describes what he knows of it, and if he was to know the whole of the elephant as Allah creates it and as those people endowed with eyesight (and with insight) know it, he would surely change his description and opinion.

And, so did the groups in question when each of them cared for one part of Islam and neglected the other part. Islam seemed fragmented owing to their failure to emphasize its extensive nature.

Every group has the right to specialize in one Islamic field and to focus all its efforts and activities on it. Still, if these groups are joined together, they can represent very bright aspects and various - not conflicting - views of Islam. However, what is wrong and unlawful is to spread that Islam is embodied only in one specific aspect to which this group or the other devotes its whole attention, to deny the other aspects of Islam in which the other groups are interested, and to refuse to cooperate with other groups.

The Attitude of the Political Parties

Groups of different kinds existed in Egypt at that time along with the above-mentioned Islamic groups. Their goals were political and they were called "parties". These parties in general were colored by secular patriotism, as the notion of patriotism preceded that of nationalism particularly in Egypt. These political parties yet contained among their members some men who were religious in attitude and behavior.

The majority of the leaders of these parties were brought up in the lap of foreign cultures which they drew from different sources. Groups of exchange students sent to Europe, foreign and missionary schools established in Muslim countries, the envenomed curricula put by Dunlop, other missionaries and pro-imperialists who were in charge of education in these countries, were means through which foreign cultures were pierced into the minds of these leaders. They looked on Islam in exactly the same way the Europeans look on Christianity. They regarded it as a peer theological religion that has nothing to do with the state's regime, rule, or politics, or any of the life's affairs. All these things - in their opinion - submit only to time and to the human experience which both push forward the boundaries of our civilization.

Knowledge and religion are accordingly two parallel lines that can never meet. The advanced notion which seriously seeks progress is the one which follows the way of knowledge only and places religion at a distance.⁽¹⁾

Resisting Partitioning of Islam

This was the picture of Islam in people's minds before the appearance of the Brotherhood's Call. It lay on Al-Banna, its founder, to correct this wrong understanding of Islam and to shed light on its cultural, legal, social, and political dimensions.

He took upon himself the responsibility of aborting the efforts which tried to transform Islam into another Christianity through fragmenting its cohesive structure.

1. I have refuted this wrong understanding in the chapter dealing with religion in the age of science in my book *Bayyinat al-Hall al-Islami* (Clear Proofs of the Islamic Solution).

The comprehensiveness of Islam is a theme that always recurs in the tracts and essays which Imam al-Banna wrote and the speeches and lectures he delivered. This theme is what distinguishes the Brotherhood from other religious groups.

There is no wonder that Al-Banna confirmed this fact in the first principle of the twenty principles of "understanding" in the tract of *The Teachings* through which he explicated the basic elements of his Call. He said, "Islam is a comprehensive system which deals with all spheres of life. It is a state and a homeland, or a government and a nation; it is morality and power, (or mercy and justice; it is a culture and a law, or knowledge and jurisprudence; it is material and wealth, or gain and prosperity; it is *jihad* and a call, or an army and a cause; and finally, it is true belief and worship."

The Brotherhood's Call focused on the Islamic aspects which were, intentionally or unintentionally, neglected such as the state and its affairs, the larger Muslim *Ummah*, *jihad*, economy, culture, education, intellect, and law. The Brotherhood's efforts in this direction stood firm in front of the destructive endeavoring of the imperialists who spent millions of money and implanted generations of adherents in the Muslim soil to separate Islam from the rule and the state. This is what their loyal follower `Ali `Abd ar-Raziq called for and falsely proved in his book *Al-Islam wa Usul al-Hukm* and exactly what Kamal Ataturk applied in Turkey. They wanted to strip Islam of power and to inactivate the principle of *jihad*. Ghulam Ahmad al-Qadyani, an Indian who was an obedient follower of the English, worked with might and main to achieve this end. Therefore, his chief preoccupation was to prove two things. The first is that the Muslims should obey whosoever is charged with authority even if he was an unbeliever. The second is to nullify the duty of *jihad*. Of course the only one benefiting from these two points was the imperialists who wanted always to control all Muslim nations and to spoil them of their wealth.

Why Comprehensiveness?

Imam al-Banna and his group had no other choice but to support the idea of comprehensive Islam because of the following three reasons:

Frist, Islam as laid down by Allah does not deal with some aspect of life and ignore the other. Islam by its nature comprehends all aspects of life

whether material or spiritual, individual or social. The longest verse in the Qur'an for example revolves round one of the material aspects of life, that is to say, debt. It reads,

«O ye who believe! When ye deal with each other, in transactions involving future obligations in a fixed period of time, reduce them to writing and let a scribe write down faithfully as between the parties: let not the scribe refuse to write: as Allah has taught him, so let him write. Let him who incurs the liability dictate...»

(Al-Baqarah: 282)

Whereas, another verse, in the same *surah*, deals with a purely spiritual aspect, namely fasting. Allah says, *«O ye who believe! Fasting is prescribed to you...»* (Al-Baqarah: 183). A third verse, also in the same *surah*, lays stress on another issue. Allah says, *«O ye who believe! The law of equality is prescribed to you in case of murder...»* (Al-Baqarah: 178). Death and some of the things related to it are mentioned as well in this *surah*. Allah says, *«It is prescribed, when death approaches any of you, if he leave any goods, that he make a bequest to parents and next of kin, according to reasonable usage.»* (Al-Baqarah: 180). In another verse presented through this *surah* Allah points out another issue; He says, *«Fighting is prescribed upon you, and ye dislike it. But it is possible ye dislike a thing which is good for you.»* (Al-Baqarah: 216).

It is noticeable that in all these verses Allah expresses His obligations by using the phrase "*prescribed to you*". This implies that performing these matters is obligatory on all believers. Fasting in this *surah* represents the aspect of worships prescribed to all Muslims. The principle of retaliation in cases of murder stands for the aspect of criminal law. And, the writing of wills refers to the aspect of personal status, while fighting in the cause of Allah is related to the aspect of international relations.

All these are Islamic legal obligations whose application is regarded a kind of worship through which Muslims can bring themselves nearer to Allah. They are complementary worships; in other words, it is unpleasible for a Muslim to perform fasting and overlook the other obligations like retribution in cases of murder, writing of wills, or fighting.

Comprehensiveness of Islam is a fact that is asserted throughout the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*. Allah in addressing His Messenger Muhammad (pbuh) says,

﴿... and We have sent down to thee the Book explaining all things, a Guide, a Mercy, and Glad Tidings to Muslims.﴾

(An-Nahl: 89)

The Prophet (pbuh) did not leave any thing that can bring Muslims nearer to Allah except he ordered them to follow and vice versa he did not leave anything that drives them away from Allah except he forbade them to do it. Thus, he dived deeply all affairs of life and left everything for us crystal clear. Islam truly is the timeless message of life and of humanity.

Second, Islam itself rejects the partitioning of its rules and teachings as well as following some of them while ignoring the others. The Qur'an emphatically rebukes the children of Israel because of partitioning their own religion. Allah, the Most High, says to them,

﴿Then is it only a part of the Book that ye believe in, and do ye reject the rest? But what is the reward for those among you who behave like this but disgrace in this life? And on the Day of Judgement they shall be consigned to the most grievous chastisement for Allah is not unmindful of what ye do.﴾

(Al-Baqarah: 85)

And, when some of the Jews were willing to adopt Islam on the condition that they retain some of their Mosaic Law such as the sanctifying of the Sabbath, Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) emphatically refused this and asserted that entering Islam means to follow only its law (*Shari`ah*) with all its rules. Concerning this situation Allah sent down the following verse,

﴿O ye who believe! Enter into Islam wholeheartedly; and follow not the footsteps of the Satan for he is to you an avowed enemy.﴾

(Al-Baqarah: 208)⁽¹⁾

1. In interpreting this verse Ibn Kathir said, "Allah, the Most High, addresses His servants who believe in Him and in His Messenger (pbuh) to bind to Islam's laws and rules and to abstain from whatever He forbids as far as possible". *Tafsir Ibn Kathir* (Ibn Kathir's book of interpretation of the Qur'an) Vol.1.

In another verse Allah says to His Prophet (pbuh),

﴿And this (He commands): judge thou between them by what Allah hath revealed, and follow not their vain desires, but beware of them lest they beguile thee from any of that (teaching) which Allah hath sent down to thee...﴾

(Al-Ma'idah: 49)

In this verse Allah warns His Prophet (pbuh), and whoever will undertake the responsibility of the Muslim *Ummah* after him, against the unbelievers who try to dissuade him from some of the rules of the Islamic *Shari'ah*.

Actually, Islamic teachings and rules related to the fields of *'aqidah*, *Shari'ah*, ethics, worships, and social behavior cannot yield any fruit unless all of them are applied. They are like the medical prescription which is composed of various complementary elements which cannot bring about any remedy except if carried out thoroughly.

Third, life as well cannot accept this partitioning, as it is a complete whole that is unsusceptible of separation. For, life cannot go through any reform if Islam is restricted to spiritual worships, while the other dimensions of life are controlled by human thought and positivistic ideologies. And, neither can man's behavior be refined if he recommends his spirit to religion whereas his mind is utterly dominated by materialist, atheistic thought.

In fact, life does not allow this duality in its affairs. It does not admit any partitioning or separating of its aspects.

All revolutionary ideologies and philosophies which history witnessed throughout its long span are of comprehensive dimension. They stand against partitioning of life and refuse to focus on one aspect without the other. They regard life a complete, undivided whole which should be subjected to their sways.

One of the celebrated Arab socialists,⁽¹⁾ in justifying this attitude of thinking, said, "Considering socialism a pure economic system is wrong. It

1. He is Dr. Munif ar-Razzaz who was elected the secretary general of Al-Ba'th al-Ishtraki al-'Arabi Party. He wrote this in his book *Dirasat fil-Ishtrakiyyah* (Studies in Socialism) which was published in 1960 and included some articles of some of this party's leaders.

is true that socialism provides a lot of solutions for many economic problems, yet viewing socialism on basis of this aspect only is exclusive and superficial. This is because it does not penetrate into the core of socialism and the fundamentals on which it is built, nor can it prospect for its far reaching goals.

Socialism is a way of life and not only an economic theory. It is a comprehensive philosophy that extends to include economy, politics, education, social affairs, health, ethics, literature, science, history, and all domains of life.

To be a socialist means to view all the previous domains from a socialist perspective and to have a socialist endeavor in each of them."

The writer emphasizes that these domains are not restricted to the socialist experience; on the contrary, they represent the basis of all social ideologies.

He explains why all the social doctrines and ideologies should be of comprehensive character, saying, "The reason behind this comprehensiveness of ideologies dealing with life is that life itself is one inseparable part which does not accept any division. The human mind is responsible for the partitioning on which it depends in order to recognize and analyze its facts and phenomena. Then, man forgot all about this partitioning and regarded it as the main feature of life since creation.

Life does not know economy separated from politics or social affairs. For example, the political conditions in any society determine its economic status and vice versa. Moreover, the society's attitude in relation to economic systems identifies its stance toward democracy, imperialism, moral behavior, education, literature, history, and all the rest of this endless chain of life."

In conclusion, the socialist writer said, "Accordingly, socialism is not an exclusive doctrine limited to economy. It is a comprehensive way of life that includes all fields and aspects."

If comprehensiveness is the main feature of all revolutionary ideologies so why is it denied to Islam? Why should the message of Islam, which is

known to be comprehensive by its nature, be imprisoned in the narrow scope of mosques and Islamic legal courts?⁽¹⁾

Christianity which its Gospel says, "Leave to Caesar what he owes and to Allah what He owes" when was able to capture power it left nothing for Caesar and kept to itself absolute authority over everything in life. Popes had the right of choosing the Caesar who should follow their instructions and bind himself by what appealed to them. Christianity in this is one example of the religions or secular ideologies which existed in the past and are still existing in the present.

If this was the case with Christianity so what about Islam, the divine message which rejects the division of man into two separate elements, that is, the body and the soul, refuses to split life between Allah and Caesar, and which commits Caesar along with all he owes to Allah the One and only God?

﴿Say: 'Shall I seek for judge other than Allah?-when He it is Who hath sent unto you the Book, explained in detail.﴾

(Al-An'am: 114)

﴿Do they then seek after a judgement of (the Days of) Ignorance? But who, for a people whose faith is assured, can give better judgement than Allah?﴾

(Al-Ma'idah: 50)

Comprehensiveness between Theory and Application

The Brotherhood's understanding of Islam's comprehensiveness is not limited to theories, but extends to application and work.

In the tract of *The Fifth Conference* Imam al-Banna declared that the Brotherhood's movement includes all reformative principles and all positive aspects which our Muslim *Ummah* lacks. It (the Brotherhood) is the focus at which the various, different views and interests of Islamic groups meet.

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1. The secular governments in a number of Muslim states like Turkey and Tunisia laid hold of the only laws which were applied according to the Islamic *Shari'ah* viz. the laws concerned with family affairs which were called later personal law. Even the mosques in these nations became no longer allowed to follow the word of Islam, but they were made to follow that of the state! In Tunisia, for instance, performance of congregational prayers in the mosques is a charge that subjects those who do so, especially youth, to legal questioning. Schools established for making children memorize the Qur'an in Turkey are considered illegal as they contravene the constitution!

To those conciliatory souls who recognized it and understood its objectives and aspirations, it became a center of their hopes. Therefore the Brotherhood is:

1. A *salafi* call, because they call people to return to the pure sources of Islam: the Book and the *Sunnah*.
2. A *sunni* way of thought, because they adopt the traditions of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) in all matters, especially in matters of belief and worship in as much as they are able to do so.
3. A *sufi* fact, because they realize the importance of virtue, purification of the heart, cleanliness of the self, persistency of action, spirit of forgiving, love of Allah, and collective enjoining of the good.
4. A political organization, because they demand the reformation of the government, amendments to its foreign policy, the development of honor and prestige amongst the subjects, and the defense of nationhood to the last limit.
5. A physically-trained team, because they care for health and well-being. Their faith is that a strong believer is better than a weak believer. The Prophet (pbuh) said,

"Your body has a right on you."⁽¹⁾

Besides, all the duties of Islam cannot be correctly performed unless the body is strong and sturdy. It is necessary for the performance of religious duties such as Prayer, Fasting, *Zakah*, and *Hajj*, that the body be able to endure the difficulties involved in earning a living. That is why the Brotherhood make such elaborate arrangements for their physical teams and exercise units; these arrangements set such a high standard that sometimes even professional athletic bodies cannot complete with them.

6. An institution of culture and knowledge, because in the eyes of Islam the acquisition of knowledge is the duty of every Muslim male and female. The Brotherhood is in reality, schools of culture and knowledge, and training institutes for the body and the soul.

1. Narrated by Al-Bukhari and Muslim.

7. A commercial firm, because Islam orders the earning of money by lawful means. The Prophet (pbuh) said,

"The best way a good man can benefit himself is by earning through lawful means."⁽¹⁾

Likewise, he (pbuh) said,

"Whoever enters into evening exhausted because of the work of his own hand will be forgiven as he goes to sleep."⁽²⁾

"Allah loves the believer who is skillful (in his work)."⁽³⁾

8. A social system, because it attends to the maladies of the Islamic society, discovers their cure, and attempts to keep the *Ummah* healthy.

In this way, the comprehensiveness of Islamic thought has made our thinking a combination of all the facets of reformation. All these aspects have come within the activities of the Muslim Brotherhood, whereas others may lean to one side only. The Brotherhood attends to all forms of activities, as Islam demands attention to all aspects of life.

Hence, people may see inconsistency amongst the Brotherhood, whereas there is no inconsistency at all. We find that our Muslim Brother is a picture of diligence, politeness, humility, and subservience while performing prayers, busy in weeping and sobbing before Allah. The same Brother would then warm up people with his preaching and sermons. Again he would hit the ball like an expert player, practicing racing and gaining skill in swimming. After that, the same person would perform his duty in a shop or a factory with honesty and sincerity. All of this work seems disconnected and incoherent to some people. But, if they are aware that Islam not only demands attention to all of these things, but at the same time encourages and emphasizes them also; then they will not see any contradiction in it. However, the Brotherhood avoid those aspects of activities that are likely to lead to fanaticism."⁽⁴⁾

1. Narrated by Ahmad on the authority of `Amr ibn al-`As.

2. Mentioned by As-Suyuti in *Al-Jami` as-Saghir*.

3. Ibid.

4. *The Fifth Conference*.

2. The Tendency to Unite and Reconcile

The person who studies the Movement of the Muslim Brotherhood cannot overlook the fact that since its very beginning it was anxious to bring those who are in conflict into reconciliation, and to unite those who are diverged and separated from among the people who work for Islam, whether they were groups, individuals, or institutions.

Al-Banna declared long ago that his Call is there to construct and not to destroy, to unite and not to separate, and this made the Brotherhood, from the very beginning of their emergence, care about four main matters:

First, being moderate in regarding matters and in judging things, situations, people, institutions, and actions without exaggeration or negligence.

Second, being tolerant in dealing with the opposition and this is the fruit of the first situation. It was what Imam ash-Shafi'i (may Allah have mercy upon him) expressed when he said, "My opinion is the right that is liable to be wrong, and the opinion of others is the wrong that is liable to be right." Here our Imam, Al-Banna, adopted the golden rule originated by the famous renovator Muhammad Rashid Rida (may Allah have mercy upon him) that says, "We cooperate in the things that we agree about and excuse each other in the things that we disagree about."

Many of the Brothers thought that it was Al-Banna who set this rule because it was mentioned in some of his tracts and he actually used to follow it in dealing with others.

Third, being lenient with the opposition, for Allah loves lenience, which adorns whatever is characterized by it and disgraces whatever is void of it. The *du'ah* are worthy to be lenient more than any other people. They must have room for everybody and must never lose patience with anybody.

And, here we have the best and perfect example in the Prophet (pbuh) whom Allah addresses by saying,

﴿It is part of the Mercy of Allah that thou dost deal gently with them. Wert thou severe or harsh-hearted, they would have broken away from about thee...﴾

(Al `Imran: 159)

And He (Exalted and Glorified be He) says,

﴿Now hath come unto you a Messenger from amongst yourselves: it grieves him that ye should suffer, ardently anxious is he over you: to the Believers is he most kind and merciful.﴾

(At-Tawbah: 128)

Fourth, adopting the Prophetic method in facilitating things instead of making them difficult for people, and preaching them instead of scaring them away. This was what the Prophet (pbuh) told Abu Musa al-Ash`ari and Mu`adh ibn Jabal when he (pbuh) sent them to Yemen; he said,

"Facilitate things (to people concerning religious matters), and do not make (them) hard (for them) and give (them) good tidings and do not make (them) run away (from Islam)."⁽¹⁾

This method of facilitating and preaching always unites and never separates, and it always reconciles and never repels.

The Twenty Principles: a Way to Uniting

In the light of this great concept Al-Banna wrote his famous twenty principles of understanding in his tract of *The Teachings* and made them the basis of the unity of understanding between the faithful and striving members of the Muslim Brotherhood.

Many people were keen to explain and comment upon such principles and I was among those people. I explained them long ago in a number of tapes that became popular among those who were interested in the intellectual aspect from the Muslim Brotherhood and sometimes from outside them. Then, I explained them in detail in a series of books under the name *Nahwa Wihdah Fikriyyah lil-`Amilin lil-Islam* (Towards an

1. Narrated by Al-Bukhari and Muslim.

Ideological Unit for Those Who Work for Islam), and four parts of it have been published.

It is all right if I quoted some of what I wrote about these principles, their nature, and their advantages and those who are addressed by them from my explanation of the first principle that is concerned with the idea of the "comprehensiveness of Islam."

To Whom Are These Principles Addressed?

We shall answer the important question here, that is: Whom did Al-Banna address by these twenty principles?

It is obvious that he addressed two categories of people by these principles.

The first category is restricted in the active or striving Brothers from among the Muslim Brotherhood.

It is known that the Brotherhood is a general institution that was founded to renew Islam as a doctrine, a belief, a morality, and a behavior in the Muslims' minds, souls, and lives. It included different varieties of people, the *salafi*, the *sufi*, the one who clings to his doctrine and the one who does not believe in following a certain doctrine, the conservative who has a tendency to the old and the liberal who has a tendency to the new, the one with a religious culture and the one with a civil culture... etc.

These various moods and trends need common denominators for uniting their ways of thinking and their basic concepts about the overall cases and the most important religious matters, even if there is still disagreement about marginal cases and minute details upon which people can never unanimously agree.

The second category is represented in the various religious groups that existed at the time when Al-Banna wrote these principles. These groups were very much like those that exist today. An Arab poet once said, "Tonight is very much like yesterday", and one of the westerners said, "History repeats itself".

People may disagree about the credibility of this saying but they can never deny the fact that many situations and positions are likely to be repeated or to resemble each other to a great extent.

Yes, Al-Banna (may Allah have mercy upon him) was concentrating, when writing these principles, upon the religious groups that were always exchanging accusations and that were always in conflict and disagreement with each other.

Al-Banna saw and felt this by himself since the very beginning of his Call in Al-Isma'iliyyah. There, he saw the religious groups that represented the *salafi* or the *sunni* trend on the one hand, and he saw them exchanging accusations in between themselves. On the other hand, he saw the groups that represented the *sufi* trend which was the opposite and the contradiction of the first, and in between the first trend and the second there was a controversial war that never cooled down.

Also, there were the scholars, the preachers, and the orators who did not belong to any of the two trends, and who were not liked by any of them nor did they like any of them.

This was beside what he saw in Cairo, on a larger scale, between the various religious trends.

Al-Banna was thus obsessed and preoccupied by the objective of uniting the Muslim *Ummah* that was torn apart because of such conflicts and disagreements everywhere. These conflicts caused its people to fight against each other in World War I and caused the national and patriotic trends to appear and replace Islamic unity and Islamic nationalism.

That is why it was essentially necessary to unite the Islamic interior front by all possible means. The advocates of Islam who raise its various slogans represented this front. It was also necessary to restrict the scope of the religious and intellectual disagreements between them and to unite them around the least number of the Islamic principles and concepts that gather and unite and never separate or repel.

When the union for the religious groups was established in Egypt, Al-Banna presented his concentrated principles to be the core and the heart of these various groups.

Some of the Advantages of These Principles

Firstly, these principles are often directed towards the objects of disagreement between the old and the modern religious trends, like the disagreement between the ancestors and the successors from among the advocates of *'Ilm al-Kalam*,⁽¹⁾ the disagreement between the sufi and the *salafi* trends, and the disagreement between the supporters of the doctrinal imitation and those who are against following a certain doctrine.

Secondly, they are wisely and moderately phrased because they have a tendency to unite and reconcile the followers of these various trends, if there is the least degree of understanding, faithfulness, and tolerance between them.

Thirdly, Al-Banna meant for these principles to be brief and concentrated because elaborating and speaking in detail about such matters give a bigger opportunity for disagreeing about them, and this was exactly the opposite of what he aimed at.

Fourthly, they were not meant to address the secularists and those whose culture is originated from the West.

That is why when I wanted to present the features of Islam for such a type of people, in my book *Al-Islam wal-'Almaniyyah Wajhan li-Wajh* (Islam versus Secularism), I mentioned other totally different twenty principles. I think if Al-Banna had been in my place, he would have done the same thing.

The Tendency to Unite and Reconcile

There is no doubt that the tendency to unite and reconcile is very obvious in these principles. Therefore, when I started to publish some of what I had of their explanation, I gave it a main fixed title which was "Towards an Islamic Intellectual Unity", and that was when 'Umar at-Tilmisani, the third Murshid, started to publish *Ad-Da'wah* magazine in the early seventies.

1. *'Ilm al-Kalam* (The science of *Kalam*) deals with Allah's Divine Being, Attributes, and Names in the Light of the teachings of Islam. (Revisor)

It was out of Allah's grace that Sheik al-Ghazali (may Allah have mercy upon him) observed the same thing later on and that is why he named the book in which he had explained these twenty principles *Dustur al-Wihdah ath-Thaqafiyyah bayn al-Muslimin* (The Constitution of Cultural Unity among Muslims).

This was actually emerging from the mental and psychological structure of Al-Banna; this structure that all the way long had a tendency to construct and not to destroy, to unite and not to separate. That was the reason for his leaving some matters hanging without giving final decisions about them so as to give the chance for every team to think about them and see what is best according to the proof and evidence that each of them has.

However some of those who are enthusiastic about a certain point of view blame Al-Banna (may Allah have mercy upon him) for not giving decisive verdicts regarding certain matters. They blame him because they look at the whole thing from a different angle seeking a different target and adopting a different method.

For, Al-Banna only wanted to gather the *Ummah* around the supreme objectives. He wanted to unite its ranks and join its forces, despite its different trends, in order to confront those who declared their enmity to Islam and those who were fighting it in secrecy. He wanted the whole *Ummah* to fight its enemy as one whole strong structure despite the existing partial disputes.

Nevertheless, this does not mean at all that he wanted to give up the principles of Islam. On the contrary, he denied all the pretensions of having inspiration, visions, and dreams and refused to consider them authentic references for religious judgments. He also denied the superstitions that have to do with talismans, incantations, divination, visiting grave sites and the excessiveness in venerating the pious and considering their *karamah*.⁽¹⁾ Besides, He denied innovation into religion which has no authentic foundation, and so on.

He called upon clinging to Allah's Book and to the *Sunnah* of His Prophet and resorting to them alone for knowing the rulings of Islam. Thus, this tendency to unite and reconcile had to do only with the matters upon

1. *Karamah* is an Arabic word that denotes a miraculous act that Allah bestows upon a faithful and devoted person with the objective of honoring him/her. (Revisor)

which many may disagree and have different points of view and which would better be left without being finally resolved.

This is always the case with the firmly established scholars who when often asked they may say, "we do not know", or they may mention what the scholars before them said and how they disagreed but without showing preference to a certain saying over another.

This is like what was related about Imam ash-Shafi'i (may Allah be pleased with him) in a number of matters, and here Imam ar-Razi commented on this, saying, "This only shows how perfect he is in knowledge and religion".

He is perfect in knowledge because the person who is more perceptive, more meditative, and more familiar with the fundamentals and the branches, the conditions and the proofs has got more complexities and various views than others. Whereas, on the other hand the one who spends all his life insisting on one opinion - regarding subsidiary and minor matters - must be surely characterized by stagnancy and dullness, lack of perspicacity, weak faculties, and ignorance of the conditions of proofs and objections.

As for his perfection in religion, this was due to two reasons:

First, when it was not clear for him which opinion should be given preference, he was not ashamed to admit that he did not know. He declared his inability to decide what he could not decide instead of trying to conceal it with flattery and adulation, and this is only an indication of his strong religiosity.

It was related about `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) that he used to admit his inability to decide in many matters and all the Muslims counted this among his merits and virtues, so how could it be considered a defect here?

Second, he did not say right from the beginning, "I do not know this matter", but he found the matter falling between two origins and so he clarified this and showed the resemblance between them. And, when it seemed difficult for him to give preference to any of them, he left it like that so that others would think about it and try to develop an independent judgement.

This, as ar-Razi said, is "The attitude that signifies strong religiosity, sedate mind, and perfect knowledge. Not only so, but the one who is fair

enough to admit the truth knows quite well that this shows his excellence over the rest of the scholars in knowledge and religion."⁽¹⁾

We still observe today what Imam al-Banna observed half a century ago: the need to unite and reconcile. In the conferences and debates, in the various regions of the world, in which I participated, there was always this question that was repeated every time and everywhere. This question that was always directed to, the advocates of Islam and the members of the Islamic groups and movements, was: Why is there always disagreement between the Islamic groups? Why can they all not be united in one huge international Islamic group or movement instead of these divided scattered groups? It is unity that strengthens the minority and disagreement that weakens the majority, so why is there disagreement between them? Are they all not working to support Islam and establish the Islamic country? Do they all not spring from Islam and aim at Islam? So, why are they separated instead of being gathered and why do they disagree with each other instead of being united together?

Sincere *du`ah* have always longed for having one international Islamic movement in this age of ours. They have always longed for such a kind of movement that can comprise all movements and embrace all energies and potentialities and that can thus be more capable of confronting the hostile united forces, the conspiracies of zionism, contemporary crusaders, communism and paganism; these forces that may disagree with each other but agree on showing enmity towards us.

However, there are many obstacles and impediments in the way of this long-sought unity that needs the agreement upon many things like:

1. To agree on the objectives and their arrangement.
2. To agree on the methods and the means that are necessary to achieve these desired objectives.
3. To agree on the leadership and to trust its loyalty, its efficiency, and its capability of employing these means to achieve these objectives.

1. See Ar-Razi, *Al-Mahsul fi `Ilm Usul al-Fiqh*.

However, it is not easy to find all these things available except within each group separately.

That is why I think that having one group or one movement that comprises all groups or all movements is only a beautiful dream that is very difficult to be fulfilled when coming to real life.

In more than one book I wrote that it is not necessary to unite the Islamic groups and put them all in one mold. It will be sufficient if we can only bring them closer to each other and erase all the causes of disagreement and disputes between them. If we can achieve such coordination, understanding, and cooperation between them, they will certainly come to complete each other and will form one united front line when it comes to the major cases. In this way any minor disagreement will not be the cause of any conflict or clash, but instead it will be a source of variety and richness.

3. The Concern about the Integral Structure

One of the advantages of the Call of the Muslim Brotherhood is its great concern about the structure, the structure of the pathfinders or the guards who represent the generation of the desired victory.

This Movement tries to spread awareness among people. It calls the public to Islam then tries to extract from them the righteous elements that are ready to give, sacrifice, and carry the burdens of the strife for Allah's cause. It is towards those people that the integral structure is directed.

The most important constituents of this structure are three main things which are:

1. Cultivation of the mind.
2. Spiritual awakening.
3. Brotherly attachment.

Al-Banna once named these three constituents as follows:

1. Correct understanding.
2. Deep faith.
3. Intimate love.

And the famous *da'iyah*, Dr. Sa'id Ramadan, once named them, in an article of his that was concerned with the obligations of the believers' groups: the sentiment, the idea, and the organization.

What is important here is that this structure with its three constituents is one of the advantages of the Muslim Brotherhood Call. Whereas, the calls of Jamal ad-Din al-Afghani, Muhammad `Abduh, Rashid Rida, `Abd ar-Rahman al-Kawakibi and their likes from the Islamic reformers never cared about the structure, the upbringing, or the construction, for they used to care about the enlightenment, the awakening, and the public edification.

As for al-Banna, he believed that spreading public awareness could not alone reform or change the *Ummah*. He felt that there was no alternative for recruitment, upbringing, and construction to achieve the long-sought goal.

For him the best way was to follow the Prophetic tradition, for it was the Prophet's greatest concern during his stay in Makkah to construct the divine generation and the first Qur'anic leading group through constant care, blessed companionship, and positive watchfulness. The house of Al-Arqam was the most famous institution for education and it was from this house that the first and the best Islamic generations graduated. Such great generations are described in the Glorious Qur'an in the verse that says,

﴿ Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah; and those who are with him are strong against unbelievers, (but) compassionate amongst themselves (in prayer), seeking Grace from Allah and (His) Good Pleasure. On their faces are their marks, (being) the traces of their prostration. This is their similitude in the Tawrah; and their similitude in the Gospel is: like a seed which sends forth its blade then makes it strong; it then becomes thick, and it stands on its own stem, (filling) the sowers with wonder and delight. As a result, it fills the unbelievers with rage at them... ﴾

(Al-Fath: 29)

1. Cultivation of the mind

The first constituent of this structure is mind cultivation or mind edification. Islam is a religion that builds a scholarly mentality and rejects the superstitious or the colloquial mentality. Here the Glorious Qur'an dispraises the polytheists saying,

﴿ But they have no knowledge therein. They follow nothing but conjecture; and conjecture avails nothing against Truth. ﴾

(An-Najm: 28)

Allah, the Almighty, says in the same *surah*,

﴿ They follow nothing but conjecture and what the souls desire! Even though there has already come to them guidance from their Lord! ﴾

(An-Najm: 23)

And in a different *surah*, He says,

﴿Such are men whose hearts Allah has sealed, and follow their own lusts.﴾

(Muhammad: 16)

Scholarly mentality is the mentality that rejects blind imitation whether of the grandfathers and the fathers as Allah, the Almighty, says,

﴿When it is said to them: 'Follow what Allah hath revealed': they say: 'Nay! We shall follow the ways of our fathers.' What! even though their fathers were void of wisdom and guidance?﴾

(Al-Baqarah: 170)

or of the masters and the powerful, as He says,

﴿And they would say: 'Our Lord! We obeyed our chiefs and our great ones, and they misled us as to the (right) path. Our Lord! Give them double Chastisement and curse them with a very great Curse!﴾

(Al-Ahzab: 67-68)

This meaning was repeated in a number of *surahs* in the Glorious Qur'an.

Scholarly mentality, which Islam is very careful to build, is the mentality that believes in the necessity of examining and thinking about Allah's Creation, Heaven, and Earth, the histories and the destinies of nations and the human being with his physical and spiritual aspects, for the whole universe is a huge theater for contemplation and meditation. Here Allah, the Almighty, says,

﴿Do they see nothing in the kingdom of the heavens and the earth and all that Allah hath created?﴾

(Al-A`raf: 185)

﴿Say: 'Travel through the earth and see how Allah originates creation...﴾

(Al-`Ankabut: 20)

﴿Say: 'Travel through the earth and see what was the end of those who rejected Truth...﴾

(Al-An`am: 11)

﴿On the earth are Signs for those of assured Faith, as also in your own selves: will ye not then see?﴾

(Adh-Dhariyat: 20-21)

This Islamic mentality never accepts a claim without proof. It depends upon the evidence in reasoning, the documentation regarding transmission, and experience in what is sensory. The Qur'an addresses those of different beliefs,

﴿... Say: 'Produce your proof if ye are truthful.'﴾

(Al-Baqarah: 111)

﴿Bring me a Book (revealed) before this, or any remnant of knowledge (ye may have), if ye are telling the truth!﴾

(Al-Ahqaf: 4)

﴿Tell me with knowledge, if ye are truthful.﴾

(Al-An'am: 143)

That is why the Glorious Qur'an started with the coming verses,

﴿Proclaim! (or Read!) In the name of your Lord and Cherisher, Who created - created man, out of a leech-like clot: proclaim! And thy Lord is Most Bountiful, He Who taught (the use of) the Pen, -taught man that which he knew not.﴾

(Al-'Alaq: 1-5)

This is because reading is the key of knowledge.

And, this explains Al-Banna's great concern for making culture, knowledge, and understanding among the constituents of the Muslim's personality. Thus, according to what was mentioned in Al-Banna's tract *The Teachings*, the Muslim must attain cultured thought, correct belief, true worship, a good character, and a strong body.

In his tract *Our Call in a New Phase*, Al-Banna talked about the desired Muslim individual, saying that Islam needs someone who is sensitive to beauty and ugliness, someone who can differentiate between what is right and what is wrong. It wants someone who is decisive; who does not become weak nor soft when he is defending the truth. He also talked about the believing mind that believes in the unseen and in matter, and this is the balanced mind of the Muslim.

Imam al-Banna then talked about the basic elements of the *bay`ah*⁽¹⁾, putting "understanding" on top of these elements. By "understanding" he meant that a Muslim Brother should be certain that his cause is in full agreement with the principles of Islam, and that he should understand Islam as the Brotherhood understand it within the bounds of the following twenty concise principles.

These brief twenty principles were meant to be signals and landmarks that can guide the Muslim Brother when he is at crossroads and light the way for him so that he may adopt an intermediate attitude between exaggeration and negligence.

So, Al-Banna took the best of sufism and rejected whatever is considered to be a heresy therein. He also took a fair stand from the various doctrines and those who belong to them. He did not thus necessitate following them, nor did he totally forbid them, but said,

"Every Muslim not having reached the degree of authenticating the proofs of subsidiary rulings, has to follow an Imam of religion.

Along with this it is recommendable for him to do his best in order to understand the proof held by his Imam, and to accept every direction accompanied with proof as long as he is sure that his director is pious and sufficient. If he is one of the people of knowledge but has not yet reached the degree of authenticators, he should make effort to reach this degree."⁽²⁾

In the eighteenth principle he said, "Islam liberates the mind, urges contemplation of the universe, honors science and scientists, and welcomes all that is good and beneficial to mankind: *Wisdom is the missing goal of the believer. Wherever he finds it, he is more deserving to it.*"⁽³⁾⁽⁴⁾

Then, in the nineteenth principle he drew attention to an important fact that completes the previous principle and so he said, "Islamic principles may be evident or uncertain, as are pure scientific principles. The evident principles of the two classes will never conflict; that is, it is impossible for

1. Pledge of allegiance, but this term is confined to the pledge of the Muslim Brotherhood Organization in the form identified in the tract of *The Teachings*.

2. *The Teachings*.

3. Narrated by At-Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah.

4. *The Teachings*.

an established scientific fact to contradict an authentic Islamic principle. However, this may happen if one or both of them are uncertain. If one of them is uncertain, then it should be reinterpreted so as to remove the contradiction. If both are uncertain, then the uncertain Islamic principle should be given precedence over the uncertain scientific notion until the latter is proven."⁽¹⁾

We, Muslims, have never had conflict between the mind and the revelation, or between knowledge and religion, unlike what happened in Europe in its middle centuries. As I clarified in a number of my books, we, Muslims, consider knowledge to be religion and religion to be knowledge, for they are both integrative and not contradictory.

That is why Al-Banna was always keen to teach his Brothers either by means of his tracts and articles or by his Tuesday speeches (*Hadith ath-Thulatha*) where he used to answer questions, clear obscurities, and rectify concepts.

There was also the weekly magazine, then the daily magazine, of the Muslim Brotherhood, which provided them with the prior sources for mind cultivation.

During the last period of his life, Al-Banna felt that the Muslim Brotherhood needed a culture more profound and concentrated than the kind of culture that the daily or the weekly magazine or the tracts that he directed to the Brotherhood offered. He thus worked upon establishing Ash-Shihab magazine to fill this gap. It was actually a great scholarly magazine that was expected to succeed the famous magazine Al-Manar which was published by Rashid Rida (may Allah have mercy upon him).

Al-Banna used to edit most of the magazine's sections. He used to write about the interpretation of the Qur'an, creeds and cults, the principles of Islam as a social system, narration and ascription (in the field of the Prophetic *Hadith*), the principles of *Hadith*, its methodology, and the Islamic history.

Also, a number of the great scholars and specialists used to write in the magazine like for example the martyr `Abd al-Qadir `Udah, Mustafa az-Zurqa, and so on.

1. Ibid.

However, unfortunately only five editions of this magazine were published then the Brotherhood Movement was disbanded and its leader assassinated, dying as a martyr (may Allah have mercy upon him).

Had he lived longer and had he been supported furthermore by Allah's aid, Al-Banna would have left the Muslim Brotherhood a great Islamic cultural heritage. Anyway, he left them his twenty principles through the aid of which they can proceed on the right path.

Today the Islamic library, in which the Muslim Brotherhood and their supporters participated, is rich with different sources of Islamic culture. These sources are available for whoever wants to know his religion better, its message, its civilization, and its *Ummah*.

2. Spiritual awakening

The second constituent in the Brotherhood structure is the spiritual awakening that is concerned with renewing faith in Allah, the Almighty, and the Afterlife. It is also concerned with renewing the Divine meanings in the heart like trusting in Allah, resorting to Him, being loyal to Him, loving Him and loving His believers, cheering up when remembering Him, seeking His mercy, fearing His torment, being proud of belonging to Him, trusting in His victory and His support, being diffident with Him and feeling His watchfulness, being grateful for His blessings and forbearing His affliction and being content with His fate, fearing Him in every act and in every state.

Reaching this stage is not an easy thing to do. It needs continuous training and long strife against the soul that is always a source of evil inspiration. It also needs strong determination for purifying the soul by discarding all aspects of polytheism, hypocrisy, and ignorance and for seeking to acquire the virtues of monotheism, faith, submission, and benevolence. This is the way to attain victory in this life and in the Afterlife as Allah, the Almighty, says,

﴿By the Soul, and the proportion and order given to it; and its inspiration as to its wrong and its right; truly he succeeds that purifies it, and he fails that corrupts it!﴾

(Ash-Shams: 7-10)

This also cannot be achieved except in a proper atmosphere that may help it where one can find the guide who directs him to Allah, the clean

environment that encourages him to perform whatever is good, and the righteous brother and companion who accompanies him on the right path.

That is why Imam al-Banna declared that his Movement besides its being a *salafi* call, a *sunni* way, a political organization, etc., it is also a sufi fact.

See how he started with that great Divine meaning and gave it precedence over the social, charitable, patriotic, and political work, simply because it is the first condition for attaining victory.

Furthermore, Al-Banna established the educational institutions that may help in constructing this desired structure like for example the *usrah* (family) which is a small circle with a leader responsible for it. In the *usrah*, the Brothers raise each other by mutual learning, counsel, understanding, and cooperation. There is also the *katibah* (battalion) which is a night dedicated to worshiping Allah by reciting the Qur'an, remembering Allah, performing prayers during the night, attending the evening and dawn lessons, saying *ma'thurat* (quoted supplications), performing the morning physical exercises, sleeping for a short period, and taking the guard duty at night by shifts. Likewise, there is the *mukhayyam* (camp) that is held for a number of days and that is full of lectures, discussions, and Islamic hymns.

The Importance of the Psychological (Spiritual) and Moral Aspects

Being aware of the history of nations, risings, calls, and messages, Imam al-Banna knew that the rising of nations, the messages of Prophets, and the calls of reformers can never succeed or attain victory except through strong and faithful men who can act as constructors and guards. Allah, the Almighty, addresses His Messenger,

﴿He it is that strengthened thee with His aid and with (the company of) the believers.﴾

(Al-Anfal: 62)

That is why al-Banna felt that the most important thing that deserves the reformers' care and attention is building such strong and faithful men. Those who succeeded Al-Banna in leading the Movement realized this well and followed his example. It is enough here to mention what Hasan al-Hudaybi,

the second Murshid of the Brotherhood, said, "Establish the teachings of Islam in your hearts and it will rise on your land."

From Where should We Begin?

In his tract *To What Do We Call People*, Imam al-Banna said under the title, "From where should we begin?":

"The creation of nations, education of people, realization of hopes, and defense of principles necessitate the nation which tries to achieve this or the group which is calling for this at the very least a mighty spiritual strength which may be manifested in numerous ways: a strong will which no weakness can penetrate; a steady loyalty unassailable by fickleness or treachery; a noble spirit of self-sacrifice, unaffected by greed or avarice; a knowledge of the principles, having faith in them, evaluating them, and making sure they are immune to error. They must ensure that there is no deviation, quibbling, or betrayal about it. Upon these primary principles, which are characteristics of the soul only, and upon this great spiritual strength, high principles are built, rising nations are educated, zealous peoples are formed, and life is renewed in those who have been deprived of it for many years.

People that have lost these four qualities, or at any rate, whose leaders and callers of reform have lost them, are wretched and frivolous people who can neither come to any good nor accomplish their hopes. They live in a world of dreams, idle speculation, and fancies:

﴿... Truly conjecture can be of no avail against Truth...﴾

(Yunus: 36)

This is the law of Allah in terms of His creation; you will find no alteration in Allah's law:

﴿Verily never will Allah change the condition of a people until they change what is in themselves...﴾

(Ar-Ra`d: 11)

This is elaborated by the *hadith* that says that once the Prophet (pbuh) said, "(There will be) nations about to advance upon you as people eat from a dinner plate." Someone asked, "Is it because we will be few at that time?"

He replied, *"No indeed, you will be many at that time, but you will be rubbish like the rubbish borne along by a flash flood. And Allah will surely remove the fear of you from the hearts of your enemies, and He will surely cast wahan into your hearts."* Someone said, "And what is wahan?" He (pbuh) replied, *"To love this worldly life and hate death."*⁽¹⁾

Here the Prophet stressed on the causes of the weakness and humiliation of nations and concluded that they are the feebleness of their spirit, the weakness of their minds, and the emptiness of their hearts devoid of any morality and the true qualities of manhood, even if they are many in number and their resources and products are abundant.

A nation that wallows in luxury, grows accustomed to affluence, drowns itself in the charms of material existence, and is seduced by the glamor of the life of this world. It soon forgets how to bear hardship and misfortune and neglects to strive in Allah's way, and as a result, it will inevitably bid farewell to all its glory and hope.

Many people assumed that the East would rise up and compete with the nations which had stolen its rights and oppressed its people, but for the fact that it is lacking in material strength in the form of money, equipment, and combat vehicles. This is true and important; but what is more important and necessary is spiritual strength consisting of great moral character, high-mindedness, confidence in and knowledge of its rights, a determined will, and finally, self-sacrifice in the line of duty and good faith upon which trust and unity are built. Upon these two - trust and unity - strength is created.

If the East believed in its right, brought changes within itself, concerned itself with the strength of the spirit, and took pains to rectify its moral fiber, then the means of achieving material strength would come to it from every direction, for the unquestionable facts are in the pages of history.

The Muslim Brotherhood believes in this fervently, and are therefore diligently purifying their souls, strengthening themselves, and rectifying their moral character. And, it is for this reason that they are striving to fulfil their mission, convincing people to accept their principles, and demanding that the *Ummah* reform itself and rectify its moral character.

1. Narrated by Abu Dawud and Ahmad on the authority of Thawban.

They have not innovated in the context of what they have to say: rather have they drawn their inspiration from the Mightiest Ocean, the Boundless Sea, the Firm Constitution, and the Loftiest Source - the Book of Allah (Blessed and Exalted be He). You have already heard that

﴿... Verily never will Allah change the condition of a people until they change what is in themselves...﴾

(Ar-Ra`d: 11)

The Qur'an discloses this theme in many of its verses; indeed, it has given us a proverbial example, in the saga of the Children of Israel, that magnificent saga which depicts to every grieving nation the way to rebuild.

The Awakening of the Soul: Belief, Honor, and Hope

In his tract *Our Call in a New Phase*, Imam al-Banna stressed this meaning, saying, "People always look to the outward actions and characteristics of a movement. However, many neglect looking into the spiritual and moral aspects, which are really the backbone and the source of nourishment of any movement, and upon which its success and growth depend. No one can question this fact, except he who is unaware of the history of movements and their secrets. Behind the outward forms of all movements, their secret lies in their spirit; their spiritual strength keeps them going, has full control over them and defends them. It is impossible for any community to make progress unless the hearts, souls, and emotions of the people are well and truly awakened:

﴿... Verily never will Allah change the condition of a people until they change what is in themselves...﴾

(Ar-Ra`d: 11)

Therefore, what we attach most importance to is the spiritual awakening, as the growth, progress, and success of this movement depends on it. What we seek first of all is to raise the spirits, to invoke the consciousness of the people, and to awaken their inherent emotions. Such talk about what we want from this call (about the different aspects of practical reform) is not as important to us as standing by what we say and establishing ourselves with regard to this ideology.

We are in search of spirited, energetic, and strong young people, new hearts that are filled with life; fiery, jealous, and dynamic emotions; souls that are full of ambition, aspiration, and vigor and that have great goals, *rising and aspiring to reach them until they eventually arrive at their destination.*"

Then, Imam al-Banna proved the validity of this idea by the action of the Prophet (pbuh) and the meanings and emotions he ignited in the hearts of his Companions, which made them unique and raised them to the supreme ranks. Al-Banna desired to place his Call on the lines of the very first call trying to make this new call an echo of the old one, which started in the valleys of Makkah thirteen and a half centuries ago. He wanted to stand before the First Teacher (pbuh) who is the master of all to learn from him once again the lessons of reformation.

What did the Prophet (pbuh) Teach His Honorable Companions?

- a. First, the Prophet managed to drive into the hearts of his Companions the firm conviction that only the religion with which he (pbuh) came with was right and that all the other religions were false. His (pbuh) message was the highest, his way the noblest and his system the most perfect system, on which depends the welfare of the world. He regularly recited to them verses from the Book of Allah which strengthened them in their conviction and gripped their hearts. They were fully convinced of this and proceeded to meet its demands.
- b. They were also convinced that as long as they remained the people of truth and the bearers of the message of light, while others remained disorientated in darkness, and as long as the heavenly guidance to guide the entire world lay between their hands, it was their duty to play the role of teachers to mankind. They were sympathetic and affectionate, guiding their pupils, rectifying their shortcomings, supporting them and leading them to the good.
- c. The idea that as long as they remained firm believers in this truth, they would be amongst the honorable and the valiant. If people rejected them, then surely Allah would be with them, helping them, guiding them,

giving them victory, aiding them, and supporting them. If they were attacked He would defend them. He would be with them wherever they would be. If the armies of this world would not stand by them, then support from the Heavens would descend upon them. This is what they clearly understood when they read the Book of Allah.

Belief in the greatness of the Message of Allah, pride in embracing this Message, and hope in His support, were the three things, that the first guide (pbuh) managed to embed in the hearts of his Companions. He defined for them their objective in this life. They, therefore, boldly embarked throughout the world carrying with them their message. They were highly pleased with the honor bestowed upon them by Allah and confident of His victory and support. The earth was indebted to them as they brought to this world a civilization of virtue and morals. They replaced the evils of materialistic stagnation with the blessings of eternal life.

﴿... But Allah will not allow but that His light should be perfected...﴾

(At-Tawbah: 32)

The Effect of Spiritual Awakening on Attaining the Hoped Change

Imam al-Banna believed that psychological and spiritual change is the basis of any change or reform and that the *du`ah* must exert their intellectual and practical efforts to awaken the spirits and emotions, revive the hearts, alert consciences, and renew faith. The results and fruits will come into effect according to the decree and law of Allah in His creation. Thus, this spiritual awakening is the solution of the problems of humanity. Imam al-Banna explained this by his eloquent and clear words, saying,

"(a) This awakening will have its effect on the individual; he will represent the true example of a Muslim, and will be there whenever Islam may need him. Islam needs someone who is sensitive to beauty and ugliness, someone who can differentiate between that which is right and that which is wrong. It wants someone who is decisive; who does not become weak nor soft when he is defending the truth. A strong body is also desired; one that can bear all the burdens that mankind demands of him. His tools and instruments (for carrying out the message) should be finely tuned so that the plan can be perfectly executed, and truth and righteousness can prevail.

In Islam, individual responsibilities create these qualities within man. Therefore, the best forms of Islamic worship are those that link the heart with Allah, nurture internal feelings, and delicate sentiments, those things that expand the intellect and compel it to discover the secrets and miracles of the universe.

Likewise, Islamic morals give rise to resolute will and long standing, and solid determination. The Islamic manner of eating, drinking, sleeping, sitting, and everything concerning day to day activities of life will keep the body safe from incurable and fatal diseases.

Therefore, we make it incumbent on our fellow Muslim Brothers to obey what Allah has commanded so that they may progress in life. We also make it obligatory on them to study as much as they can to add to that which we already know. We should nurture ourselves with Islamic morals so that we can develop strong will, and we should observe the Islamic manners of eating, drinking, sleeping, etc., so that Allah may protect our bodies from weaknesses. When Islam laid down these rules it did not confine them to only men or only women, but as an individual duty on both. The Muslim sister has the same responsibility as the Muslim brother, in her life, the extent of her knowledge, her place in creation, and her health.

b. Reforming one's self will also affects the family, because the family consists of a group of individuals. If the husband and wife reform themselves, they will be able to create an exemplary home, as both of them are the pillars of their home. Islam has laid down the rules and regulations for family life in the most perfect way and urges people to make the right choice. It has shown the best method of having a good relationship and has defined rights and obligations of both parties. And, it has been made the responsibility of each spouse to take care of the fruits of marriage, so that they always stay ripe. They should, at no cost, be neglectful or careless. Islam has provided an accurate cure to the frequent problems encountered in marital life. It has chosen in all aspects the path of moderation, without overlooking anything or being excessive.

c. And, if the family has been reformed, then surely the nation would also have been reformed, as the nation is made up of individual families. You can say that the family resembles a small nation and a nation resembles

a large family. Islam has laid down some rules for leading a blissful social life. For this purpose, it has linked the descendants of Adam with a mutual bond of brotherhood and has made this an essential part of belief. It has raised the degree of this relationship beyond one of love to that of self-sacrifice and has put an end to all things that sever or weaken this connection. Islam has defined such relationships as well as one's rights and duties. Thus, the father has his rights alongside his duties. And, the same goes for the mother, children, and relatives. For, it has differentiated in detail the roles of the ruler and the ruled and has very clearly elucidated the ways in which humans make transactions and dealings. It has made no difference between people except by the degree of their consciousness of Allah and therefore there is differentiation between a master and servants or princes and slaves. However, in the sight of Allah, all people are equal, yet their ranks differ according to their good deeds. It has defined the relations between nations and stated the duties and rights of each to the extent that it has not left out anything small or great.

3. Brotherly attachment

The third fundamental constituent in the Brotherhood structure is brotherly attachment. Al-Banna was greatly concerned with this constituent since he started his group. He even chose a name that clearly indicates this meaning, "Muslim Brotherhood", i.e. Islam and Brotherhood together.

He concentrated on the meaning of brotherhood and joined it with love for the sake of Allah and these are the tightest loops of faith, for faith is nothing but love and hatred for the sake of Allah.

Al-Banna even used to start Tuesday speeches by enkindling this inflamed sentiment of faith. He would mention the verses and the *hadiths* that would keep such a sentiment warm and alive in the hearts of the Brothers. He would mention for example the verse where Allah the Almighty says,

﴿Friends on that Day will be foes, one to another, except the righteous.﴾

(Az-Zukhruf: 67)

He would also mention the *hadith* of the Prophet (pbuh) where he said,

"Whoever possesses the following three qualities will have the sweetness (delight) of faith: that Allah and His Messenger becomes dearer to him than any thing else; that he loves a person only for the sake of Allah; and that he hates to revert to disbelief as he hates to be thrown into the fire."(1)

The Prophet (pbuh) also said, *"Seven people will be shaded by Allah under His shade on the day when there will be no shade but His..."* He (pbuh) mentioned among them, *"... two persons who love each other only for the sake of Allah, and they meet and part in Allah's cause."*(2)

I also heard Al-Banna on more than one occasion mentioning this *hadith*,

"Verily, Allah, the Almighty, will say on the Day of Resurrection, 'Where are those who loved each other for the sake of My Glory? Today I shall shade them in My shade when there is no other shade but Mine'."(3)

For, Al-Banna believed that brotherhood in faith is everlasting, stronger and loftier than any other human relation in this life. It is stronger, more lasting and more precious than the blood and kinship relations, the bond of land and language, and that of the common welfare and any other worldly or mortal relationship.

Al-Banna also believed in the necessity of collective work to support Islamic *da`wah*, to liberate Islamic land, and to unite and fulfil its great hopes of rising, developing, progressing, and guiding the whole world to the light of Allah. He was thus the first to put the basis for Islamic collective work.

The religion advocates working in a group and hates deviation, because Allah's Hand is with the group, and whoever deviates from the group will be deviated in Hellfire. The wolf eats only from the far away sheep, and no prayer is counted for an individual behind or in front of the row. It is one of the religious obligations to cooperate upon piety and righteousness, to advocate the right, and to have patience, and this will be a guarantee for one to be rescued from forfeiture.

1. Narrated by Al-Bukhari and Muslim.

2. Narrated by Al-Bukhari and Muslim.

3. Narrated by Muslim.

Reality requires any work to be collective in order to be fruitful, for one hand cannot clap alone, and the individual is weak by himself but strong with his brothers, great achievements are the result of cooperating efforts, and the decisive battles can only be won by joining forces. As, this is confirmed by the fact that the enemies of Islam and its *Ummah* do not work individually or in the form of small scattered groups. But, they rather work in the form of extremely organized blocs and troops that have their own frameworks, their own systems, and their local, regional, and international leadership.

Thus, we must fight our enemies with their weapon. We are not allowed, for example, to fight the canon with the stick, or the tank with the horse or the mule, nor are we allowed to resist collective action with individual work, or the organized action with the disorganized action, simply because chaos cannot resist order, and the individual cannot resist the group and the pebble cannot resist the mountain.

This group, which is an obligation and a necessity, needs a strong bond to tie its members together so that they will act as one whole structure. Allah the Almighty says,

﴿Truly Allah loves those who fight in His Cause in battle array, as if they were a solid cement structure.﴾

(As-Saff: 4)

This bond cannot be anything except true brotherhood which is an indication of true faith as the Almighty says,

﴿The Believers are but a single Brotherhood...﴾

(Al-Hujurat: 10)

The Prophet (pbuh) said,

"A Muslim is a brother of a Muslim, so he should not oppress him, nor should he forsake him. Whoever fulfils the needs of his brother, Allah fulfils his needs."⁽¹⁾

This kind of true brotherhood must be void of any worldly vanities and must only exist for the sake of Allah. Once the Prophet (pbuh) said,

1. Narrated by Al-Bukhari and Muslim.

"Amongst the servants of Allah are some people who are neither prophets nor martyrs; and Prophets and martyrs admire them (on the Day of Judgment for their status with Allah)."

They (the Companions) said, "O Messenger of Allah! Who are they so that we may love them?" He said,

"They are the people who loved each other for the sake of Allah though there was no blood or marriage relation between them. Their faces are light, and they stand on pulpits of light, neither are they afraid when others are, nor are they sad when others are."

Then he (pbuh) recited,

﴿Behold! Verily on the friends of Allah there is no fear, nor shall they grieve.﴾⁽¹⁾

Once a man said to Mu`adh ibn Jabal, "I swear by Allah that I love you for the sake of Allah." So he said, "For the sake of Allah?" The man said, "I said for the sake of Allah." So Mu`adh pulled him towards himself and said, "Be happy for I heard the Messenger (pbuh) say,

"Allah the Almighty said, 'My love is due for those who love each other for My sake, and those who sit with each other for My sake and those who visit each other for My sake.'"⁽²⁾

These *hadiths* and those similar to them became widespread among the Brothers. Under their shade they were able to form an incomparable bond between them; a bond that is built upon outflowing emotions and feelings of love for the sake of Allah. It is just like what Sa`id Ramadan (may Allah have mercy upon him) said, "No bond is stronger than *`aqidah* and no *`aqidah* is stronger than Islam."

Al-Banna considered this brotherly bond the second manifestation of the desired power, after the power of the *`aqidah*, then comes the power of the arm and the weapon. The thing he was afraid of most for the Brotherhood that they become divided and neglect their brotherhood.

That is why Imam al-Banna used to say to his Brothers, "I am not afraid of the English, the Americans, the Russians, or the tyrants of the East and the West for your sake. What I fear of is represented in only two things: that you disobey Allah and neglect your duties towards Him, and therefore He

1. Narrated by Abu Dawud.

2. Narrated by Malik and Ibn Hibban.

leaves you alone for yourselves, and that you become disunited and divided. Allah the Almighty says,

﴿And fall into no disputes, lest you lose heart and your power depart...﴾
(Al-Anfal: 46)

In the tract of *The Teachings*, he made brotherhood one of the elements of the bay`ah (covenant) and explained it saying, "By Brotherhood I mean that our hearts and spirits should be united by the bond of belief. Common belief is the firmest and most precious of all bonds. True brotherhood is the companion of faith, and division is the companion of unbelief. Unity produces strength, but there cannot be unity without love. The lowest degree of love is purity of intentions and unspitefulness of the heart; the highest degree of love is complete selflessness:

﴿And those saved from the covetousness of their own souls, they are the ones that achieve prosperity.﴾
(Al-Hashr: 9)

The truthful Brother considers his Brother's interests more important than his own. This is because the group can survive with or without him, while he can only survive with the group.

'The wolf preys upon the sheep that strays from the flock.'

'The believers are like a solid structure whose parts support one another.'

﴿The believers, men and women, are protectors, one of another...﴾
(At-Tawbah: 71)

This is how we should be."

These are concentrated words that signify great meanings, however Al-Banna was not satisfied with words alone. It was one of his advantages that he used to join knowledge with work, meditation with motion and theories with application. That is why he founded the system of *usrah* (family) which is a very unique and genius system. He developed three pillars for this system which are:

1. Acquaintance:

He meant by this that the Brothers must be acquainted with each other and must love each other for the sake of Allah. They must feel the full and

true meaning of brotherhood in between them. They must also work hard for preventing anything from spoiling such a relation. This means that they must be honest with each other and each of them must know his Brother's circumstances, needs, problems, abilities, and capabilities.

2. Mutual understanding:

By this he meant walking on the right path, performing Allah's Commands, and avoiding His prohibitions. He also meant that every Brother must advise his Brother whenever he sees a flaw in his character and that every Brother must happily accept his Brother's advice and appreciate it. They must both continue to love each other for the sake of Allah knowing that "advice" is one of the pillars of the religion.

3. Solidarity:

This is the third pillar and by this he meant that the Brothers must forbear each other's burdens. They must inquire about each other, be good to each other, and help each other whenever possible.

Al-Banna then advised each *usrah* to hold a weekly meeting where they should do a number of things:

a. Discussing their private affairs and the problems they may meet in their personal life or on the path of *da`wah*. They must sincerely and lovingly try to find solutions for such problems because "*the believer acts as a mirror for his brother*"⁽¹⁾ and they must do this for the sake of Allah.

b. Studying the affairs of Islam and reciting the tracts and the instructions of the leadership. There must be no room in the *usrah* for any disputation or quarrel but instead, they must ask for further explanation or clarification within the limits of good manners and appreciation.

c. Making useful discussion of one or more of the valuable books.

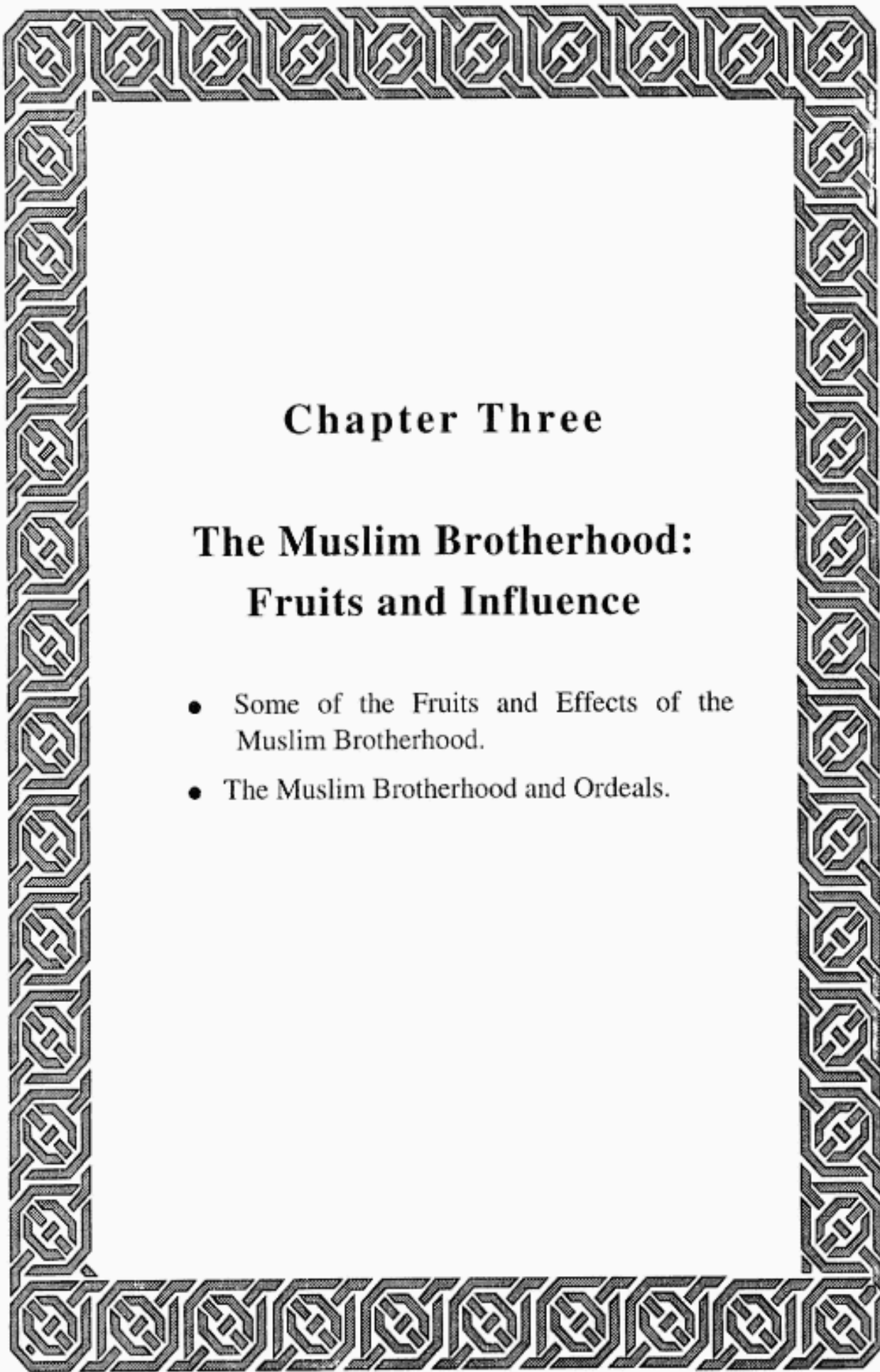
He also laid down a system for cultural and sporting trips and assigned for the *usrah* one day of the week to be fasted collectively, besides performing the congregational dawn prayer at least once a week together.

The Muslim Brotherhood then developed the system of the *usrah* and put entire educational systems that are still developing and progressing.

1. Narrated by Al-Bukhari.

Such spirit, concepts, and systems had great influence upon the Brothers to the extent that they became an example for their strong attachment and their love for each other. An Egyptian reporter⁽¹⁾ once said, "If one of this group sneezed in Alexandria, his Brother in Aswan would say to him, 'May the mercy of Allah be upon yoy'."

1. He is Mr. Ihsan `Abdul-Quddus.



Chapter Three

The Muslim Brotherhood: Fruits and Influence

- Some of the Fruits and Effects of the Muslim Brotherhood.
- The Muslim Brotherhood and Ordeals.

Some of the Fruits and Effects of the Muslim Brotherhood

Through its *jihad* in this century, the Muslim Brotherhood has achieved many goals in the fields of intellect, sentiment, and action.

1. In the Field of Intellect

In the intellectual field, the Movement has succeeded in resisting cultural imperialism and defeating it, and restoring to the Muslim *Ummah* their trust in Islam: its mission and civilization.

From a time not far of, the western thought predominated and its currents influenced and took the lead in the fields of education, culture, and media.

On the other hand, the Islamic movement used to address it in defending language and in an apologetic manner; but nowadays the Islamic thought has surpassed this position and transferred from defending to attacking; from apologizing to confronting; and from admiring the Western civilization to discovering its emptiness, deficiency, and shortage.

Moreover, those who used to call for imitating the Western civilization in all aspects: good or bad, right or wrong, and what is pleased or abhorred, became in need of defending themselves. Furthermore, they were in need of declaring themselves free of their claim. Some of them, however, joined the group of the *du`ah*.

The Islamic identity became a reality of fact after it had been a controversial issue among different currents. Belonging to Islam, moreover, became a source of pride and glory after the general tendency of affiliation to the West, to the Mediterranean sea, or to the ideologies of pre-Islamic era which Islam freed the Muslims from by guiding them to Islam and its creed.

The problem of identity and belonging to Islam no longer exists as it did in the presence of the domination of cultural imperialism and intellectual

invasion. We now say we are Muslim Arabs, Muslim Indians, Muslim Indonesians, Muslim Malaysians, Muslim Persians, and Muslim Africans. Furthermore, most of us proclaim, saying, "We are Muslims in the first place".

Also, Islamic ideology has even attracted many of previously anti-Islamic intellectuals and writers who transferred to be in defense of it. We saw, for example, the Darwinian thinker Isma'il Mazhar, Dr. Mustafa Mahmud who transferred from doubt to firm belief, and Khalid M. Khalid who attacked the Islamic idea of comprehensiveness in his books *Min Huna Nabda'* (Here We Can Start), *Ad-Dimuqratiyyah Abadan* (Democracy for Ever), *Likay la Tahruthu fil-Bahr* (Lest You Plant in the Sea), etc., but he sooner transferred to his original pattern and wrote his *Ad-Dawlah fil-Islam* (The State in Islam) and his other valuable works.

The Movement has confronted the alien secular ideology that laid a barrier between religion and society, state, and politics and tried to restrict it to worship, religious rites, and individual religiosity. In doing so, the Islamic movement shouldered long struggle to prove the comprehensiveness of Islam and to demonstrate its firm connection with society. In consequence, the majority of Muslims now believe that Islam is a religion that regulates all aspects of life including worship and leadership, Prayer and *jihad*, spirit and work. This is fully demonstrated in the Glorious Qur'an and the *Sunnah* as well as in what was reported about the Companions of the Messenger (pbuh) and the rightly-guided Caliphs. This is also clear throughout the long history of the *Ummah*, which have never experienced such disastrous duality which separated religion from the aspects of life because it was affected by the viewpoint of the church which says that religion is only worship. According to the teachings of the church, God owns the church only while Caesar owns the entire life. In this regard, their motto is: Leave for Caesar what Caesar owns and leave for God what God owns. Islam, on the contrary, adopts the principles that life is a whole construction that cannot be divided, that Man cannot be divided into parts, and that Caesar and what he owns belongs to Allah, the One and Only, Who possesses what is in the heavens and what is in the earth, and to Him is the decision of creation and all affairs.

In the sphere of law and economics, the Islamic ideology has proven the efficiency of Islamic legislation, its virtue over the man-made laws, its ability for application in every time and place, and its precedence in enacting many principles and theories, which the Western law has never been acquainted with except from a short time; yet it is not comparable to the Islamic pattern.

The Islamic law, furthermore, was not restricted to civil law only but went beyond it to arrange the criminal, international, constitutional, and financial laws. Also, the Islamic thought has attracted many supporters of the man-made law and economy who became callers for the application of Islamic legislation. Sufficient here is to state some of them like Hasan al-Hudaybi who was the second Murshid of the Muslim Brotherhood, `Abd al-Qadir `Udah, Muhammad `Abdullah al-`Arabi, `Isa Abduh, Mahmoud Abu as-Su`ud and Ahmad an-Najjar as well as many others of the latter generations. A great number of Ph.D. and M.A. theses were presented in the fields of law, economy, education, politics, sociology, philosophy, history, etc.

The Islamic library is full of books and encyclopedias in all fields of the Islamic culture. The distribution of the Islamic books surpassed the distribution of other books, particularly amongst the cultured youth. Statistics of the book fairs in the Islamic and Arab countries proves this fact.

2. In the Field of Sentiment and Feelings

In the field of sentiment and feelings, the Islamic movement incited the feelings of the Muslim masses all over the Muslim world, in the East and the West, to be concerned with the Muslim affairs everywhere and kindled enthusiasm in every Muslim's chest. This enthusiasm is meant to support Muslims, to liberate the Islamic lands, from Indonesia in the east to Morocco in the west, and the land of prophecy, namely, Palestine and the *Aqsa* Mosque which take priority over the other lands, to support the Muslim minorities persecuted all over the world, and to support the *da`wah* and *jihad* for the sake of Islam.

The Islamic movement led Muslims to go beyond the narrow patriotism and limited nationalism to a wider scope - Islam - so as to disregard their differences in language, color, and countries, since their homeland - Muslim

Ummah - is one according to Allah's order, and not according to the imperialism which plots to divide their unity.

In the city of Tanta, I heard Imam Hasan al-Banna's speech in the conference of "The Egyptian National Claims" in which he concentrated on elaborating three points: our issue, our means, and our Call.

With respect to the first point, al-Banna said, "Our issue includes the issues of the small, the large as well as the larger homelands." For, the small homeland is the Nile valley, from the north to the south, which it was a must that the English people evacuate and that it be united.

Al-Banna, also, said that Egypt is the Northern Sudan and the Sudan is the Southern Egypt.

And, regarding the large homeland, al-Banna pointed out that it is the Arab homeland, from the Atlantic Ocean to the Persian Gulf, which is called so because it is Persian from one side and Arabian from the other and therefore it was later called the Arabian Gulf.

The headquarter of the Muslim Brotherhood was a shelter for those who were expelled from their countries.

Al-Banna also shed light on the Palestinian issue: its status and seriousness. He, further, proved the obligation of confronting the Zionist cunningness and warned the *Ummah* against Zionist aspiration in the scared land, in Jerusalem, and in the *Aqsa* Mosque.

As, Al-Banna was one of those who preceded others in getting acquainted with the danger of Zionism in Palestine and in all the Arab and Muslim countries. He had unforgettable attitudes and exerted great efforts in resisting Zionism.

Also, in explaining the meaning of "the larger homeland," Al-Banna said, "Our larger homeland is the Muslim land from Jakarta to Morocco, or from the Pacific Ocean to the Atlantic Ocean. Any land that is defiled by imperialism must be liberated. Muslims in the occupied territories must confront the enemy until its evacuation, and Muslims all over the world must aid them by all means until they obtain liberation."

In this context, Al-Banna quoted the Islamic rule that says: If a Muslim woman in the East is taken captive, setting her free will be the duty of the Muslims (even those who live) in the West.

By the same token, Muslim peoples from Mauritania to Jakarta, regardless of the attitude of their governments, support the Palestinian issue. Furthermore, Muslim minorities in spite of their hard conditions and critical situations feel responsibility towards Palestine. Here, it is worth mentioning that one of the causes of the Muslims' ordeal in the Philippines was their demonstration against the Israeli embassy in Manila in sympathy with the Palestinians.

3. In the Practical and Educational Field

The fruits of the Islamic movement in the practical and educational level are the most eminent ones. The movement succeeded in bringing up Muslim generations in spite of the dangers that surrounded them: the Western currents, the rancorous crusaders, the atheist communism, and the relics of the ages of backwardness. In doing so, the movement made its greatest concern educating a Muslim generation in order to understand the comprehensiveness and balance of Islam, to believe firmly in it, to call for it, and to sacrifice their lives and property for its sake.

The Movement also concerned itself with uniting this Muslim generation intellectually by uniting their aims, their concepts, and their basic principles; emotionally by deepening the meanings of brotherhood and love for the sake of Allah; practically by linking them in a single movement based on obedience to true Muslim leadership, respecting the principles of consultation, enjoining each other to do good, and being patient and cooperative in doing good.

And, to achieve this goal, the Movement has laid down ideologies and set the required means: *usrah*, *katibah*, *mukhayyam*, etc. The Movement, moreover, insisted that bringing up this generation must be based on an integrated program in terms of the physical aspect, which must be cared for by sport, the mental aspect by enlightenment, the spiritual aspect by worship, and the moral aspect by adhering to virtues. Thus, the individual, must be physically and spiritually prepared to avail himself and his *Ummah* by disciplining himself and reforming the others. A Muslim must not restrict himself to performing religious practices such as Prayer, Fasting, remembering Allah, etc. Rather, he must add to this the positive aspect of faith by calling people for uprightness, enthusiasm for the truth, enjoining the good and forbidding the evil, and collective work to serve Islam.

In this context, Al-Banna said, "We want a generation which bears the mission of Islam, not a generation which is a wearisome burden on Islam."

The Glorious Qur'an rebukes such a kind of person, saying,

﴿Allah sets forth (another) parable of two men: one of them is dumb, with no power of any sort; a wearisome burden is he to his master; whichever way he directs him, he brings no good...﴾

(Al-Nahl: 76)

In contrast to this class of people, there are some people who believe in Islam as a creed, good manners, enjoining good and patience, calling the entire world to the straight path of Islam, so that Muslims may abide by its *Shari'ah*, and non-Muslims may be guided to its light and transfer from polytheism to monotheism, from immorality to virtue, and from excessiveness to moderation. Those people are the heirs of the Prophets⁽¹⁾ and the link between heaven and earth. This is the generation which Al-Banna endeavored to bring up in the shade of and under the banner of Islam and the Glorious Qur'an.

As, all social classes represent this generation, including the enlightened elites - such as physicians, engineers, accountants, scientists, teachers - and students, religious scholars, merchants, officials, workers, farmers, noblemen, officers, soldiers, and men and women of all ages.

It is worth while to mention that the first thing that caught the attention of the second *Murshid*, Hasan al-Hudaybi, to the Call of the Brotherhood was the religious awareness of some of his relatives from amongst the farmers and villagers. And, on inquiring about the reason, he was informed that they were members of the Brotherhood. However, in my *At-Tarbiyah al-Islamiyyah wa Madrasat Hasan al-Banna* (Islamic Education and the School of Hasan al-Banna), I have discussed the methodology of education adopted by the Brotherhood and its characteristics and fruits in detail, so the reader can refer to it.

Here, it suffices us to say that the military wars in which the Brotherhood participated and the consecutive ordeals that befell them

1. This is a reference to the Prophet's *hadith*, in which he (pbuh) proclaimed that scholars are the heirs of the Prophets. (Editor)

proved the faithfulness of their educational ideology, which have created a peerlessly-devoted generation. This generation, we can say, sticks firmly to Islam, in thought, emotions, spirit, and behavior, and so it is worthy of belonging to “the Party of Allah” and “the Servants of (Allah) Most Gracious⁽¹⁾”. Like the pious forefathers, this generation is “devout worshipers by night and knights by daytime”. Likewise, hardships and distresses do not shake them. Rather, ordeals confirm their resolution like those whom Allah praises, saying,

﴿When the believers saw the confederate forces, they said: 'This is what Allah and His Messenger had promised us, and Allah and His Messenger told us what was true.' And it only added to their faith and their zeal in obedience.﴾

(Al-Ahzab: 22)

In times of distress and ordeals, they proved their faithful brotherhood.

4. In Jihad

The Islamic movement has worked hard to revive the notion of *jihad*. In doing so, it did not confine itself to the *jihad an-nafs* and *jihad ash-shaytan*⁽²⁾. Rather, it launched *jihad* against imperialism and tyranny. It focused on two goals: the implementation of the Islamic system and the liberation of the Muslim land.

The implementation of the Islamic system requires the establishment of integrated Islamic life, a life guided by creed guarded by worship, ruled by *Shari`ah*, disciplined by Islamic ethics, and adorned by refined behavior. In that life, a Muslim can lead an upright life and freely practice the rituals of his religion without obstacles or persecution.

The liberation of the Muslim land means that all the lands that ruled by Islam must be liberated from any foreign dominance and dictatorial rule. According to Islam, liberating the occupied Muslim country is *fard `ayn* (individual duty) upon its people, and on their neighboring countries.

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1. “The Party of Allah” and “the Servants of (Allah) Most Gracious”, are references to the descriptions of the true believers in *Surat al-Furqan* (verse no. 63) and in *Surat al-Mujadalah* (verse no. 22). (Translator)
 2. *Jihad an-nafs* and *jihad ash-shaytan* are forms of *jihad*. The former denotes disciplining one's self and controlling it, while the latter means fighting Satan by all means.

Muslims, all over the world, must aid their fellow Muslims in an occupied territory and support them with money, soldiers, weapons, and all military supplies until they gain victory.

Therefore, the members of the Movement, whose birthplace is Egypt, have supported and advocated all the Islamic issues, all over the world. The central headquarter of the Muslim Brotherhood had a department called the Muslim world communication department whose aims were to contact, and care about Muslims everywhere.

The Movement's banner presents the Glorious Qur'an surrounded by two swords and under it is written the following phrase "against them make ready", as a reference to the Qur'anic verse,

﴿Against them make ready your strength to the utmost of your power, including steeds of war, to strike terror into (the hearts of) the enemies of Allah and your enemies...﴾

(Al-Anfal: 60)

Likewise, the Movement's motto is "Jihad is our way, and death in the cause of Allah is our supreme aim". The Movement has put to practice its banner and motto and launched wars against Zionism in Palestine and against the British occupation in Egypt. Consequently, a big number of its members died martyrs. In fact, this outline is insufficient to shed light on the *jihad* of the Brotherhood in the Suez Canal and in Palestine. However, I recommend to the reader the following books in order to get detailed information in this regard:

- Kamil ash-Shrif, *Al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun fi Harb Filistin* (The Muslim Brotherhood in the War of Palestine), and his *Al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun wa al-Muqawamah as-Sirriyyah fi Qanat as-Suways* (The Muslim Brotherhood and the Secret Combat in the Suez Canal).

- Hasan Duh, *Kifah ash-Shabab al-Jami'i fi Qanat As-Suways* (The Combat of the University Youth in the Suez Canal).

Up till now, the members of the Movement, Hamas, fight the Zionist enemy in Palestine in order to liberate the land of prophecy, Jerusalem, and the *Aqsa* Mosque.

5. In Economy

In the realm of economy, the Movement has launched a campaign against *riba*, which the Messenger of Allah considered one of the seven destructive sins. Against the dealers in interest, Allah and His Messenger declared war. In a *hadith*, the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said,

"May Allah curse the one who takes interest, the one who pays it, the one who writes the contract, and the one who witnesses the contract."

In the meanwhile, the Movement has published many books demonstrating the advantages of Islamic economy and getting rid of capitalist and socialist economy. By the same token, it has also held conferences and symposiums. Campaigns were conducted with the purpose of establishing Islamic banks that are free from interest. The statement that argues that "economy is the cornerstone of life; banks are the cornerstone of economy; and accumulative interest is the cornerstone of banks, so do not expect the establishment of banks that would be free of interest" is proven to be null and void. Tens of Islamic banks have been established and are constantly increasing to the extent that many of the famous usurious banks, even some international ones, began to establish branches for Islam-based dealings. Islamic companies and institutions have based their systems on the rules of *Shari'ah* such as Islamic insurance companies which are based on cooperation and solidarity, not on interest.

This, in turn, led to the revival of "*Fiqh* of Transactions" and the emergence of innumerable Islamic studies in the field of economics, administration, and accounting. Likewise, research centers and scientific departments, at universities, specializing in Islamic economics have been founded. Therefore, many university professors have specialized in Islamic economics and some related magazines have been issued.

6. In the Realm of Society

In the realm of promoting the society, the Islamic movement has played a great role. Al-Banna (may Allah have mercy on him) founded within the branches of the brotherhood what related to the beneficial and social affairs. The Movement has cared about the poor, the orphans, the widowed, and other crushed downtrodden classes. In a *hadith*, the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said,

"Do you not (know that you) are provided with sustenance and granted victory only for the sake of the weak amongst you?"⁽¹⁾

The Brotherhood has founded infirmaries and clinics for treating patients, and homes for orphans. They have also established committees for removing the cause of quarrel amongst people and schools for educating Muslims. In this regard, Muhammad Shawqi Zaki wrote his *Al-Ikhwān wal Mujtama' al-Misri* (The Brotherhood and the Egyptian Society).

1. Narrated by Al-Bukhari.

The Muslim Brotherhood and Ordeals

No writer, historian, or even observer can speak about this Movement without mentioning the consecutive ordeals, which have become outstanding features in the history of the Movement. For, it is not a history of walking on roses but rather a history full of hateful hardships and obstacles and above all it is a bloodstained history. This is the norm of Allah with the bearers of guidance and the norms of Allah can not be changed:

Or do ye think that ye shall enter the Garden (of Bliss) without such (trials) as came to those who passed away before you? They encountered suffering and adversity, and were so shaken in spirit that even the Messenger and those of faith who were with him cried: 'When (will come) the help of Allah?' Ah! Verily, the help of Allah is (always) near! ﴿

(Al-Baqarah: 214)

These ordeals include suffering and adversity concerning property, body, and belief.

No wonder the Movement called for a new way of life, the philosophy of which is totally based on the principles of Islam. It is a call that draws its fundamental principles from the judgements and precepts of Islam. It contradicts what people have been acquainted with in the social, economical, and political aspects as well as in legislation, culture, and art. This Call clashed with notions, interests and desires of people. In addition, many non-Muslims feared this Call lest their rights should be harmed. However, some of them hated it due to sheer ignorance or bigotry.

Many non-Muslims, both inside and abroad, had tremendous fears when they felt the ever increasing success of this Call and the mass response told that it was about to achieve its great goals, if things went right. To these we may add their complete ignorance of the meaning of Islam and their inexplicable fear of its victory. All this was helped by old historical factors

based on grudge as well as some new imperialist factors having imperialist aspirations as their basis.

Thus, all antagonist, rancorous, fearing, greedy, bearing hatred, opposing, traitorous, and misleading powers joined together to block the way of this growing power. This appeared clearly when the British, American, and French ambassadors met in Fayed, where the camp of British Forces was, in the Suez Canal region and unanimously agreed on the necessity of dissolving the Muslim Brotherhood group and practicing pressure on the Egyptian government headed by Mahmud Fahmi an-Nuqrashi. The government answered favorably and carried out their demands.

This is no longer a secret after every thing has been revealed and by the passage of time it has become possible to know facts from secret documents.

This procedure was done for the sake of the newborn Israel, the state created to survive as the major powers stated. They believed that the existence of such Islamic-oriented Movement would be a great danger threatening the existence, survival, growth, and expansionist aspirations of Israel that yearned - and still yearns - to a dominion from the Euphrates to the Nile.

The First Ordeal for the Muslim Brotherhood Was in the Times of Faruq

The first dissolution of the group was in the times of Faruq and the government of an-Nuqrashi on the eighth of December 1948. Concentration camps in At-Tur and Haykstop included thousands of the Muslim Brotherhood with the exception of the leader and founder of the group. Everyone marveled how the members of the group were detained and its leader left at large. But on knowing the cause there was no astonishment. The leader was left to be assassinated later in one of the largest streets of Cairo during daytime while he was getting out of the house of *Ash-Shubban al-Muslimin* society just before sunset.

He had received unknown summoning to the society headquarters. After being shot, he could still have been rescued. Nevertheless, the doctor responsible for him refused to give him blood transfusion, of course in

obedience to the high commands. The hirelings of king Faruq assassinated the Qur'anic man, the religious educator, and the Islamic reformer, with sinful bullets as present to him on his birthday on the eleventh of February 1949. This was proven after the post-revolution investigation and the planners of the assassinations and those who carried it out were sentenced to different periods of imprisonment.

It is noteworthy that the detained members were able to turn their concentration camps into mosques for worship, universities for gaining knowledge, clubs for practicing sports, seminars for literature and culture, academies for education, and parliaments for consultation. An hour before the break of dawn those detained used to get up to perform supererogatory night prayer and recite the Glorious Qur'an until the Dawn Prayer which they would perform with humility. Their Imam was Sheikh Muhammad al-Ghazali who was at his thirties and was very intelligent, enthusiastic, and energetic that the detained members charged him with their leadership to claim to their right pertaining to food or whatever. After the dawn prayer and its post-praising of Allah there used to be symposia with Sheikh Sayyid Sabiq or Sheikh al-Gazali or any other one. Then, they would practice some sports and then, after having breakfast, begin general lectures followed by discussions regarding various Islamic and cultural issues and their day was busy as so.

The Second Ordeal (after the Revolution, January 1954)

The second dissolution of the Muslim Brotherhood took place in the times of the Revolution which was originally supported by the Brotherhood from the very beginning. They were the first to back the Revolution and defend it at the time it had nobody to support and defend. This dissolution was on 13th January 1954 when the Cairo University students belonging to the Brotherhood clashed with the supporters of the government. In this meeting Nawab Sunwi, leader of *Fida'iyyat* Islam Movement in Iran and I myself were attending there. When a car, belonging to the pro-government party, was fired, the situation became aggravated. Then the Revolution council convened in the evening and decided to dissolve the group and detain its members or at least its leaders. So, some were jailed in the military prison others in Al-'Amiriyyah concentration camp near Alexandria. I was firstly sent to the latter then I was transferred to the

military prison along with some of the Brothers and we did not know the reason for our transfer.

Anyway, the relationship between the members of the Brotherhood and the Revolution became worse and they did not accept to be led as flocks to carry out what `Abd an-Nasir wanted. Therefore, he ordered that they be detained and jailed so that they may be humiliated but matter did not take the same course `Abd an-Nasir wished. There occurred movements in the army advocating Muhammad Najib, the official leader of the Revolution, and also popular demonstrations were made, the greatest of which was `Abdin demonstration led by `Abd al-Qadir `Udah. As a result the detained members were released and `Abd an-Nasir visited Hasan al-Hudaybi, the *Murshid* of the group, in his house and apologized to him for what happened to the Brotherhood. This was considered a kind of reconciliation. However, he intended to revenge himself on them after he overcame the dilemma.

The Third Ordeal (October 1954)

The third ordeal was some few months after the previously mentioned reconciliation. When `Abd an-Nasir had a firm hold on power and got rid of Muhammad Najib, he began to detain some of the Brotherhood individually and persecute them as he did with Muhammad al-Mahdi `Akif and others. The crises began to be more and more crucial until `Abd an-Nasir's assassination trial in Al-Manshiyyah in October 1954, and suspicions began to arouse and war was massively declared on the Muslim Brotherhood. Thousands were detained and underwent unprecedented forms of persecution and torture. Whips tore their flesh and horrible machines crushed their bones, dogs were used as means of dehumanization, and men were hung in jails then they were so severely persecuted that some of them died during this persecution. I myself was an eyewitness of this ordeal as well as the precedent two ordeals (12/1948 and 1/1954), but this ordeal surpassed the previous ordeals and went beyond all limits in dehumanizing, offending, and humiliating man both physically and spiritually.

The Fourth Ordeal (1965)

In spite of its cruelty and enormity, the third ordeal was somewhat less severe than the fourth one, which occurred in 1965. Nasir declared from

Moscow that he would adopt harsh procedures and show no mercy. So, orders were issued to detain tens of thousands of the Brotherhood from towns and villages and from different classes and ages. This ordeal was more violent than its precedent ones to the extent that some women were detained. This time they used means that were so horrible that one feels shy to mention.

Undoubtedly, this ferocious ordeal hindered the Movement and frightened many of those who liked to join it. It had also the effect of depriving the country from some of the best efficiencies who were made absent from the arena either forever by martyrdom or for a long time behind prison bars. It had also a physical as well as a spiritual effect on the thousands of the detainees including students who were prevented from their universities. The apparent activity of the Movement was almost absent for many years which was a great loss for the Egyptians and for the Arab and Islamic world as a whole.

Presents after Ordeals

All these ordeals were in essence and consequences precious as the Martyr Imam, Al-Banna, said that an ordeal may turn out to be of great benefits.

These ordeals were a means of screening and distinguishing the good personalities, for Allah said,

﴿Allah will not leave the Believers in the state in which ye are now, until He separates what is evil from what is good.﴾

(Al `Imran: 179)

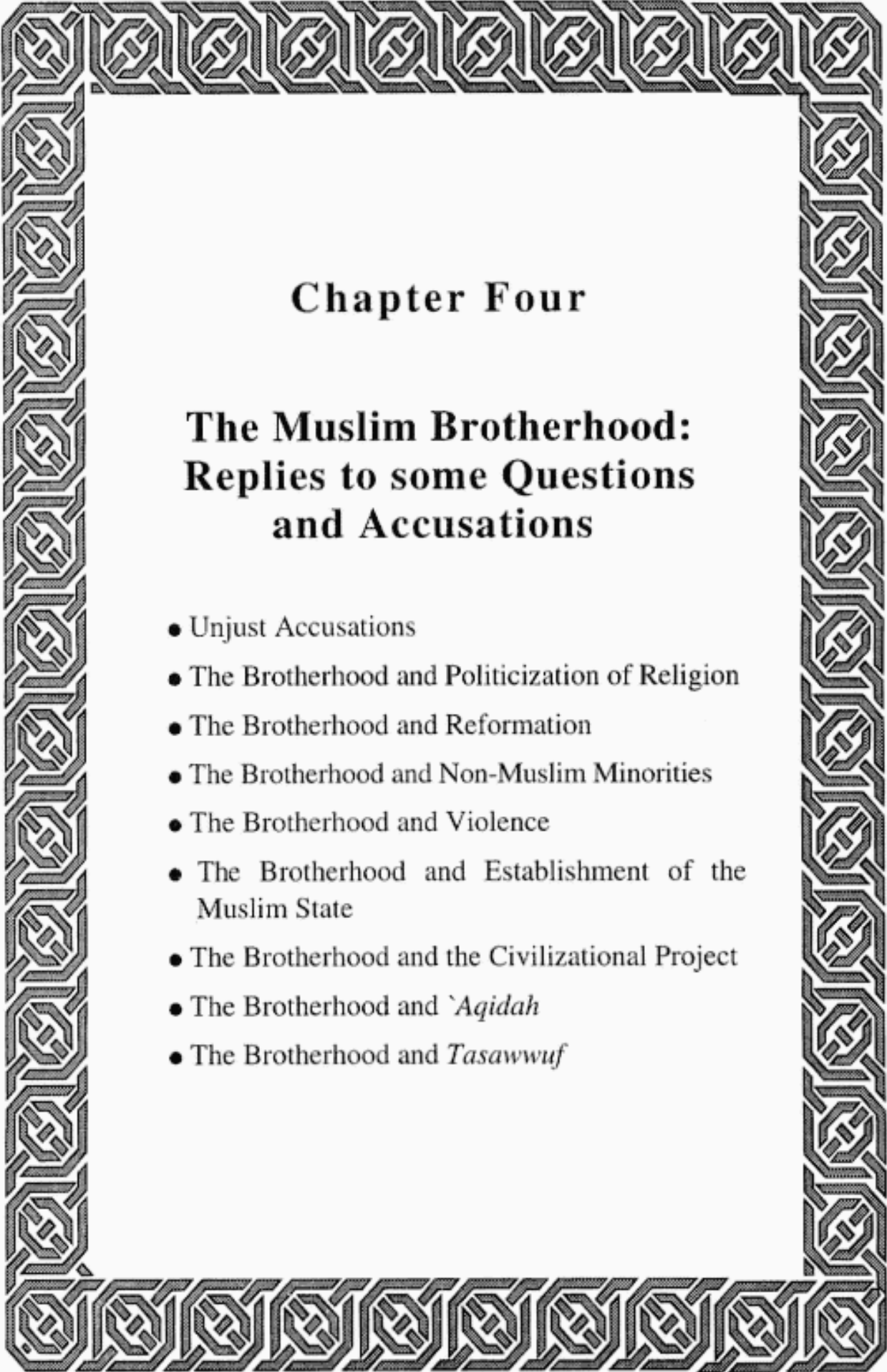
The Movement is in no need of those who serve Allah as it were, on the verge: if good befalls them, they are well content with it; but if a trial comes to them, they turn on their faces. In this way they lose both this world and the Hereafter. The ordeals were thorough examination and purification for the members of the Movement. Man becomes nearer to Allah in times of hardship and returns to his good nature. Distresses try man and show his true value. Allah, Most High, says,

﴿But (all this was) that Allah might test what is in your breasts and purge what is in your hearts. For Allah knoweth well the secrets of your hearts.﴾

(Al `Imran: 154)

These ordeals had the effect of strengthening and reinforcing the links tying the members of the Movement. These ordeals were a clear proof of the genuineness, firmness, and the ability of the Movement to survive and to resist dissolution and extermination.

It may keep itself concealed or may reduce its activity for some time but it never dies. The secret of such strength is mainly due to the strength of the truth it believes in and calls for, that is the everlasting Islam and its familiarity with the nature and common sense of Muslim peoples. It is deep-rooted in their hearts and particularly the Egyptian people who are strongly motivated by faith. Also, this strength may be attributed to the deep-rooted Islamic education of the Muslim Brothers. They are qualified by means of voluntary fast by day, supererogatory night prayer, reciting the Glorious Qur'an, remembrance of Allah, reflection on his creation, good understanding of the religion, sharing brotherly feeling, generosity, and the familiarity of sacrificing themselves in the cause of Allah to bear the hardships in the cause of Allah.



Chapter Four

The Muslim Brotherhood: Replies to some Questions and Accusations

- Unjust Accusations
- The Brotherhood and Politicization of Religion
- The Brotherhood and Reformation
- The Brotherhood and Non-Muslim Minorities
- The Brotherhood and Violence
- The Brotherhood and Establishment of the Muslim State
- The Brotherhood and the Civilizational Project
- The Brotherhood and *'Aqidah*
- The Brotherhood and *Tasawwuf*

Unjust Accusations

In modern history, I have never known a group that was oppressed and with so many accusations laid against it as the Muslim Brotherhood

The strangest, notable thing is that they are accused of simultaneously contradicting things, a thing which makes all these accusations of no weight.

There are the so-called "progressives" who accuse the Group of backwardness, narrow-mindedness, inflexibility, and conservatism. There are also some of Islamic writers who accuse the Group of ceasing the renewal Movement after Al-Afghani and Muhammad `Abduh and returning to rigidity and conservatism.

At the same time we find some of the religious individuals and Islamic societies accusing the Group of being over-liberalized and of being lenient regarding some religious affairs. Some disapprove of their resort to *ijtihad* to extract new judgements to suit modern times instead of imitating the classical schools of *Fiqh*.

There are also the Sufi adherents who consider that the group adopts the views of Muhammad ibn `Abd al-Wahhab, Ibn Taymiyah, and Ibn al-Qayyim. They classify them among the Salafi adherents and regard them as the biter enemy of *tasawwuf*.

The Salafi adherents classify the Brotherhood among Sufis for the mere fact that Hasan al-Banna was a sufi in his early life and since he regarded supplication to Allah via an intermediary as a minor difference of opinion, more to do with the method of performing supplication rather than a question of *`aqidah*.

As for the political parties and secular authorities they view that the Brotherhood is a religious group that involved itself in politics and endeavoring to seize power. It had better, they say, keep away from the dirt of politics and cease struggling for holding power.

In the meantime, some other Islamists accuse the Brotherhood of neglecting its political role and of not making good use of its power and popularity to seize power either by force or by law from the hands of tyrants and corrupters who humiliate people.

In the opinion of king Faruq, his successive governments, and the feudalists, the Brotherhood is regarded as fanatic revolutionary group, hostile to the king, aristocratic classes and capitalism, since it incites poor farmers and workers to revolt against feudalists and capitalists and tries to overthrow the government by force.

In the view of communists, left-wingers and the like of them, it is considered as a rightist, conservative group, supports the king, the feudalists. In spite of the persecution and torture the Brotherhood underwent at the hands of those classes, they forgot the victims and the martyrs of the Movement at the top of them was the founder of the Brotherhood.

The Brotherhood has also been accused of violence, terrorism, and blood thirst by the mass media in the times of kingship and that of the Revolution. These campaigns made use of some anti-British and anti-Jewish actions committed by the members of the Group.

The Brotherhood has also been accused by some groups, which are attributed to Islam, of weakness, relaxation, infidelity to the principles of *jihad*, failing to defend its members and letting them be detained. They blame the Brotherhood for not fighting the policemen who arrested its members.

This is the case with moderate ideologies; they are constantly attacked by both the negligent and those who exceed the proper limits.

Western Accusations

Besides the accusations made against the Brotherhood by political and religious groups at home, they have received many accusations from the Westerners, Orientals, leftists, rightists, capitalists, and communists.

In the preface of his translation of Richard B. Michelle's book about the Brotherhood, Dr. Mahmud Abu as-Su`ud said,

"The Westerners whether orientalists or politicians view the Brotherhood according to their Christian and Jewish emotions or in accordance with their imperial interests. In both perspectives they fear the re-establishment of the Islamic State and the spread of the Call of the Brotherhood which reminds them of Islamic supremacy. Thus, knowledge and honesty did not change their bias opinion or even make them view the true facts.

If we scan over the Western writings about the Brotherhood, we will find that the left-wingers consider it a conservative, backward group while capitalists accuse it of being a leftist revolutionary group. While some Western writers consider it a dangerous progressive group, others describe it as hard-line, violent, and fascist group, and so on.

Communists regard it as an opportunist agent of the English imperialism, while the supporters of capitalist democracy regard the members of the group as socialists, fascists, and terrorists. Moreover, Europeans view that the Brotherhood's call for the re-establishment of the Islamic Empire, in order to compel people to adopt Islam. Ironically, in Egypt it was said that king Faruq believed that the Movement received financial aid from Japan.

All these are mere nonsense and fabrications, which are historically groundless. On the contrary, history records the great influence of this Call which attracted millions of people, made them call for the application of the rulings of the Qur'an and *Sunnah*, and still survived though the persecution it faced.

In the following pages we will deal with the charges the Group is accused of and we will refute them by means of clear proofs. Allah says,

﴿And say: Truth has (now) arrived, and falsehood perished: for falsehood is (by its nature) bound to perish.﴾

(Al-Isra': 81)

﴿... For the scum disappears like forth cast out; while that which is for the good of mankind remains on the earth...﴾

(Ar-Ra'd: 17)

1. The Brotherhood and Politicization of Religion

One of the repeated accusations that have been directed to the Brotherhood is the politicization of religion or mixing religion with politics. A ruler once said, "There is no place for religion in politics nor is there any place for politics in religion".

In the recent years the phrase "political Islam" has become common among people. By this phrase, many writers mean Islam which calls for judgement according to Allah's Law, applying His *Shari`ah*, freeing Islamic territories, resisting the aggressive imperialists, and working for unifying the Arab and Muslim *Ummah* or at least bringing them closer together. However, when the opponents of the Brotherhood explain the meaning of political Islam, they also attribute to it violence, random killing, terrorism, fanaticism, and backwardness. Thus, if one admits that politics is part of Islam when it follows its guidance, they will accuse him of advocating violence, terrorism, and bloodshed. It must be made clear that the Muslim Brotherhood did not politicize religion themselves, but it is Allah Who has politicized religion by ordaining the rulings that tackle politics. There are many Qur'anic verses which clearly tackle political issues. Allah, Most High says,

﴿ Allah doth command you to render back your Trusts to those to whom they are due; and when ye judge between people, that ye judge with justice: verily how excellent is the teaching which He giveth you! For Allah is He Who hearth and seeth all things. O ye who believe! Obey Allah, and obey the Messenger, and those charged with authority among you. If ye differ in anything among yourselves, refer it to Allah and His Messenger, if ye do believe in Allah and the Last Day. ﴾

(An-Nisa': 58-59)

Imam ibn Taymiyah made these two verses the focus of his book *As-Siyasah ash-Shar'iyyah fi Islah ar-Ra'i wa ar-Ra'iyyah* (*Shari'ah-oriented Policy concerning the Reformation of the Ruler and the Subjects*). Nearly after these verses comes the verse,

﴿But no, by thy Lord, they can have no (real) Faith, until they make thee judge in all disputes between them, and find in their souls no resistance against thy decisions, but accept them with the fullest conviction.﴾

(An-Nisa': 65)

Also in *Surat an-Nur* Allah says, ﴿They say, 'We believe in Allah and in the Messenger, and we obey': but even after that, some of them turn away: they are not (really) Believers...﴾ until He says, ﴿The answer of the Believers, when summoned to Allah and His Messenger, in order that he may judge between them, is no other than this: they say, 'We hear and we obey': it is such as these that will prosper.﴾ (An-Nur:47- 51)

Do these verses not tackle purely political issues even the principles of politics?

What can those who cast doubts over the politicization of religion say about the following verses?

﴿... If any do fail to judge by what Allah hath revealed, they are unbelievers.﴾

(Al-Ma'idah: 44)

﴿... If any fail to judge by what Allah hath revealed, they are wrong-doers.﴾

(Al-Ma'idah: 45)

﴿... If any do fail to judge by what Allah hath revealed, they are those who rebel.﴾

(Al-Ma'idah: 47)

They will say that the People of the Book (the Christians and Jews) are the ones meant in these verses. This is actually the case but we must be interested with the general indication not the particular occasion of the verses. Then, can it be reasonable that when Christians and Jews disregard the principles of Islamic legislation as to the regime of government and political affairs they are deemed unbelievers, wrong-doers, and rebellious and when Muslims do so they are not deemed so? Or can we describe Allah as using

different measures or different criteria out of partiality? Then, we are implicitly attributing injustice to Him, highly Exalted be Allah above that!

Whoever recites the Qur'an will find many verses regarding internal and external policies, and the relation between Muslims and non-Muslims in times of war and peace. This is apparent for even those who have little knowledge of the Qur'an. Among the parts of the Qur'an revealed in Makkah, for example, are verses which kept Muslims in touch with the political world and military struggle of the two major powers, the Persian Empire in the east and the Roman Byzantine Empire in the west. The Qur'an refers to the dispute between the Muslims and the pagans regarding who would eventually be victorious in this struggle. The Muslims hoped the Romans would be victorious since they were closer to each other in religion as they were Christians, that is, from among the People of the Book. On the contrary, the pagans of Makkah hoped the Persians would be triumphant for the same reason of closeness in religion since the Persians were Magi who worshiped fire. And the Qur'anic verses were revealed supporting the Muslims:

﴿A. L. M. The Roman Empire has 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 wills, and He is Exalted in Might, Most Merciful.﴾

(Ar-Rum: 1-5)

Whoever reads the *Sunnah* of the Prophet (pbuh) as well as his biography will find that the political issues are tackled in detail. The Messenger (pbuh) himself was the grand Imam, the judge, and the learned Mufti. He was the head of the state without any rival. He was the political as well as the religious leader. He led people in prayer and in the times of war and peace. He concluded treaties, met delegates, appointed judges, and sent people to teach Islam in new Islamic districts.

The jurists of all schools of *Fiqh* unanimously agree that the *Shari`ah* of Islam is so comprehensive that it presents rulings and guidance for all the affairs of Muslims. The Qur'an asserts this comprehensiveness as it addresses the Messenger (pbuh),

﴿... and We have sent down to thee the Book explaining all things, a Guide, a Mercy, and Glad Tidings to Muslims.﴾

(An-Nahl: 89)

And at the end of *Surat Yusuf* Allah says,

﴿There is, in their stories, instruction for men endued with understanding. It is not a tale invented, but a confirmation of what went before it, a detailed exposition of all things, and a Guide and a Mercy to any such as believe.﴾

(Yusuf: 111)

The scholars concerned with the principles of the religion stated that religion is one of the five or six necessities for preserving which legal obligations were prescribed. They are religion, self, progeny, reason, and wealth; and some scholars add honor to them. Thus, Islam cannot be restricted to religion alone.

Accordingly, the comprehensiveness of Islam is not innovated by the Brotherhood, yet it is established and deeply rooted by the Qur'an, *Sunnah*, and the consensus of the Muslim *Ummah*.

A survey of great reformers who tried to promote their *Ummah* in the modern age will show us that the principle of religion-politicization was a common denominator with all of them. Among them are Muhammad `Abd al-Wahhab, As-Sunusi, Al-Mahdi, Al-Amir `Abd al-Qadir, Al-Afghani, Al-Kawakibi, Muhammad `Abduh, Rashid Rida, and Ibn Badis. So, Hasan al-Banna is by no means different from those as an innovator. Even the ruler who declared that politics has nothing to do with religion and vice versa was heard speaking in the name of religion in order to gain support for his policy and asked the Muslim scholars to issue *fatawa* in advocacy of his policy.

Those who abide by the teachings of Islam like other citizens have the right to practice their political rights in accordance with their beliefs and precepts. They should not be deprived of these rights for the mere fact that they are religious.

Thus, the first accusation is groundless and can easily be refuted.

﴿And say: Truth has (now) arrived, and Falsehood perished: for Falsehood is (by its nature) bound to perish.﴾

(Al-Isra': 81)

2. The Brotherhood and Reformation

One of the many accusations directed to the Brotherhood is that they deviate from the course of reformation and innovation adopted by Jamal ad-Din al-Afghani, Muhammad `Abduh, and Rashid Rida who represented open-minded Islamic rationalism that is not confined to the literal meaning of texts but understands their meaning. They balanced between texts and interests, reason and transmitted proof, and between the laws of the religion and wisdom.

Indeed, the Brotherhood did not deviate from the line of reformation or from such trends adopted by the previously described school of reformation. They balanced between sound transmissions and clear rational proof, the special texts and the general objectives of *Shari`ah*, making good benefit of the useful old heritage and welcoming the new useful views.

It must be made clear here that the school of reformation led by Al-Afghani took several phases to develop in its way of thinking, its concepts, and its trends. At the beginning, he called for a general philosophy which may be summed up as an anti-imperialist revolution calling for unity. This was the trend of this school under the leadership of Al-Afghani who was more a philosopher and a statesman than one specialized in Islamic *Shari`ah*.

And, when his student Muhammad `Abduh, the Azharite scholar, appeared, the school of reformation began to have clear-cut features with his enlightened legal culture and his rational way of thinking. Then came his student Muhammad Rashid Rida who further contributed to promoting the school of reformation.

Similarly, Imam Hasan al-Banna followed the example of Sheikh Rashid Rida, yet he tended sometimes to be somewhat hard-line in some issues concerning women, consultation, plurality of parties and so on. It has to be taken into consideration that the rational school of reformation represented

by Jamal ad-Din al-Afghani and Muhammad `Abduh has been accused of over admiration of the Western civilization to the extent that they would sometimes interpret definite texts in a way that keeps up with the Western way of thinking.

Some Islamic scholars are of the opinion that Sheikh Jamal ad-Din al-Afghani was more liberal than Sheikh Muhammad `Abdu and the latter was more liberal than Sheikh Rashid Rida who in turn was more liberal than Hasan al-Banna. This may be true but it is better to say that Sheikh Muhammad `Abduh was nearer to be governed by the principles of *Shari`ah* than Al-Afghani and so was Sheikh Rashid Rida compared with Muhammad `Abduh and so is the case with Hasan al-Banna compared with Rashid Rida. The Call of Hasan al-Banna, moreover, was not restricted to the elite, yet it addressed all people and all classes. It should never be forgotten that Hasan al-Banna who died in his forty-three's had an open and flexible mind and was by no means inflexible. He began as a sufi and ended nearer to salafism.

And, I could safely say that the most prominent feature in the school of Al-Banna is moderation based on integration and balance, without excessiveness or negligence. Imam al-Banna was the founder of this school of thought but he did not forbid any of its members to extract judgements through surveying the texts in the framework of consistency with the aims of legislation even if they contradicted his own personal judgments. In the six principle of understanding Al-Banna stated, "Everyone's opinion except that of the infallible Prophet (pbuh) is liable to changes and modifications. We accept all that has reached us of the opinions and rulings of the pious predecessors as long as it is in agreement with the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*. If this is not the case, the Book of Allah and the practice of His Messenger are more deserving of our adherence. However, we do not scorn and attack those individuals who differed, since we do not know what their intentions were nor the circumstances that necessitated their decision."

In the fifth principle of understanding, Imam al-Banna explained the matters in which the opinion of the Imam is acceptable, and the conditions pertaining to this. He stated that it might change in light of circumstances, customs, and habits like any other human opinion.

In many of his tracts Imam al-Banna spoke about the flexibility and comprehensiveness of Islam. It introduces the basic, universal rules that organize all matters of life in all nations, in all times, and in all places, giving basic principles or all-embracing laws that are apt to cover all these matters.

Again in the tract of *The Fifth Conference*, he stressed that we should understand Islam according to the Qur'an and *Sunnah* not according to the understanding or practice of a particular place or era. He said,

"It is also the conviction of the Muslim Brotherhood that the foundation of Islam is Allah's Book and the *Sunnah* of His Messenger. If the *Ummah* firmly grasps this, then it will never go astray. Much of today's knowledge and thought is stamped with the stamp of its period by reflecting the influence of the nations in which these ideas were born; it is inevitable that the Islamic way of life, towards which the *Ummah* has to be led, should therefore be irrigated from this clear and limpid spring. We should understand Islam as the Companions and the pious predecessors understood it. We should limit ourselves to the above points so that we are bounded only by the boundaries that Allah himself has fixed and we should not apply Islam using methods that were designed for specific times and specific situations, since Islam is the religion for all nations, and for all times."

These words show Al-Banna's broad-mindedness and profound understanding of religion and show also that the Islamic institutions which Muslims are to abide by must not be taken restrictedly from a certain country, a certain book, a certain ideology, or a certain school of thought or *Fiqh*. They must be taken from the ever-guiding sources - the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*. From this spring the Companions of the Messenger (pbuh) themselves and their followers who were the most well versed as to the objectives of Islamic *Shari'ah* and the spirit of Islam derived the Islamic rulings. They avoided rigidity and adopting hard opinions.

Confession and Self-criticism

I do not deny that there are among the Brotherhood some members and leaders in some countries who are sometimes inflexible as an effect of other current Islamic schools of thought. This may be clearly shown in strictly adhering to the past views, resisting innovation, or tending to hard-core

opinions which are based on the literal meaning of specific texts regardless of the general objectives of Islamic *Shari`ah*. They also may insist on taking precautions and thus adopt hard views at time when people are badly in need of facilities. Anyhow, such persons represent only a minority.

Islam Approves of the Lawfulness of Innovation

It must never be said that Islam is an anti-innovation religion. Islam itself approved of the lawfulness of innovation in the *hadith* reported by Abu Dawud that the Messenger (pbuh) said,

"At the beginning of every hundred years, Allah sends for this Ummah someone to renew its religion for it."

So, innovation for the sake of keeping abreast with the present circumstances and constant changes is religiously legitimate and supported by the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*. Therefore, we must not fear the word innovation but it must be used with a definite meaning to block the way of those who manipulate religion.

I myself have explained what is meant by innovation or renewal stated in the *hadith* and the fields of innovation as well as the people qualified for doing so.

To sum up, innovating something does not mean removing it and replacing it by another, but it rather means restoring it to its first state of being and preserving its essence and features. This meaning is applicable to material and immaterial aspects. It is a process of restoration. Innovating religion means intellectual innovation represented in developing a good understanding of its basic principles, spiritual innovation by developing belief in it, and practical innovation in terms of adopting new means of *da`wah* and action.

But, innovation is forbidden in some aspects like religiously definite matters such as *`aqidah*, worship, ethics, and legislation which are known as invariable and which represent the ideological, intellectual, emotional, and behavioral unity for the Muslim *Ummah*.

The Necessity of Innovating New Means

The Brotherhood, though pure Islamic in source, orientation, objectives, and principles, adopts discretionary ways, means, and systems and all that is

believed to be beneficent for serving the religion in accordance with time, place, and state of affairs.

These ways, means, and systems do not have that feature of immutability as the basic Islamic principles, but they are only means, which are prone to change, capable of development. All these means and innovated systems must be submitted to occasional processes of amendment necessary to any human piece of work no matter how perfect it is.

Hasan al-Banna Was by no Means Inflexible

Al-Banna was very keen to introduce new ways and develop modern means to serve the Movement, its institutions and systems. He did not feel annoyed when some of his followers disagreed with him. There is no legal, conventional, or rational objection to reconsidering the means and systems adopted by the Brotherhood both in the fields of politics and *tarbiyah* as long as it is for the common interest of the Muslim *Ummah* and since the circumstances, and necessities differ from nation to nation and from country to country.

Inflexibility Is Dangerous

Inflexibility is one of the internal ideological obstacles of the Islamic Movement. It means restriction to a certain style of call, a certain shape of organization, certain means of education and raising, certain steps for achieving the goal, and certain political thoughts while rejecting and condemning any changes or amendments.

It has always to be stressed that innovation does not mean abrogating the firmly-established and deep-rooted principles. It instead means understanding them and benefiting from them in originating practices suitable to the present state of affairs and modern circumstances conforming in all this to the spirit of those established principles.

My Fear of Inflexibility

The first thing I am afraid of to afflict the Islamic Movement is inflexibility and rigidity of thinking which result in intellectual barrenness and preclude benefiting from great intellectuals and pioneer reforms.

Praiseworthy Development

I have noticed in the last few years that the Muslim Brotherhood began to hold meetings, symposiums with the purpose of introducing amendments, averting drawbacks and points of weakness, providing remedies for imperfections, and knowing praiseworthy points to encourage them. This is very positive self-criticism. Also, I have noticed that they have begun to issue distinguished decisions regarding the issues of women and political plurality. These decisions are away from inflexibility and rigidity.

3. The Brotherhood and non-Muslim Minorities

The Muslim Brotherhood are further accused of being fanatical against non-Muslim minorities and of depriving them of their rights of citizenship. They also are accused of demanding them to pay tribute in humiliation, not greeting them on meeting, and preventing them from assuming official jobs especially military ones whether in the army or in police.

To those we say that Islam no doubt confesses the plurality of religions and the Qur'an and *Sunnah* stated this meaning clearly and that if Allah had willed, he would have made people adopt one religion. But, Allah left for man the freedom of faith and warned those who disobey him or adopt a religion other than that of which He approves. And, on the Day of Judgment there will be the reckoning of those who disobey His orders.

Moreover, it is worth mentioning that Islam gives the Jews and Christians a special status. It calls them the People of the Book (i.e., of the Torah and the Gospel) though they altered and distorted the original versions of their Scriptures. However, they mainly believe in heavenly revealed religions. Generally speaking, they believe in Allah, His Messengers, and the Hereafter. They further worship Allah and acknowledge moral values. So, no wonder that Islam permitted sharing meals with Christians and Jews and also permitted a Muslim to marry a Jewish or Christian woman. Allah, Most High, says,

﴿The food of the People of the Book is lawful unto you and yours is lawful unto them. (Lawful unto you in marriage) are (not only) chaste women who are believers, but chaste women among the People of the Book, revealed before your time...﴾

(Al-Ma'idah: 5)

This reflects the unique tolerance of Islam that permits a Muslim to marry a Jewish or Christian woman which means that his children will have

Jewish or Christian maternal grandfathers, grandmothers, uncles, and aunts, yet they will have the rights of kinship. But, Islam considers Christians more friendly to Muslims than Jews who are actually very hostile to the Islamic *da`wah*.

The *dhimmis* who live within the Muslim territories have special rights as well. Moreover, Islam orders us to treat Copts more kindly than others. Umm Salamah reported that Allah's Messenger (pbuh) recommended his Companions,

"Fear Allah concerning the Copts of Egypt, since you would certainly conquer them and they will be (a source of) strength and support for you in the Cause of Allah."⁽¹⁾

Abu Dharr reported Allah's Messenger (pbuh) as saying,

"You would soon conquer Egypt. When you conquer it treat its people kindly, for they have a right of kinship upon you."⁽²⁾

The Muslim scholars said that by "kinship" the Messenger meant Hajar the mother of Isma'il, for she belonged to them.

The Position of the Brotherhood

1. Imam Hasan al-Banna

Imam al-Banna realized these Islamic teachings well and worked accordingly. Therefore, the political committee of the Muslim Brotherhood had some famous Coptic statesmen.

When asked about the issue of tribute imposed on non-Muslims, Al-Banna said that the issue of tribute is completely outdated now since all citizens alike share in military service and in defending the country. Tribute was paid by non-Muslims as return for being defended by Muslims in times of war. Al-Banna meant that tribute was paid for exemption from military service and the non-Muslims were happy to do so.

Furthermore, when Al-Banna stood as a candidate in the parliamentary elections, he had a Coptic representative in one of the electoral headquarters. Also, when Al-Banna was assassinated and the government prevented people to take part in the funeral the only two who attended his

1. Narrated by At-Tabarani.

2. Narrated by Muslim.

funeral were his father and Makram `Ibid, a Christian politician. There is also more evidence proving that the Brotherhood was not fanatic against Christians.

It is enough to mention that Tawfiq Ghali, an Egyptian Copt, refuted the accusations raised by Salamah Musa in his essays that the Brotherhood work for inciting a sectarian conflict. In his reply, Ghali asserted that the Muslim Brotherhood work for noble goals and have good manners and that they show respect to their Christian neighbors.

2. Hasan al-Hudaybi

The attitude adopted by al-Banna was also adopted by his followers. In his book *Hasan al-Hudaybi al-Imam al-Mumtahan* (Hasan al-Hudaybi: The Tried Imam), Jabir Rizq stated that Al-Hudaybi, the second guide of the Brotherhood, was appointed as a judge in Jirja (a town in Upper Egypt). There he had the chance of making good relations with Christian enlightened classes as well as his counterpart senior officials. They fully appreciated him and hoped to have in their Christian community a man like him!

3. `Umar at-Tilmisani

Under the title "Where is our share in this love?", the Kuwaiti Da`wah magazine published the following words of the third *Murshid* of the Brotherhood, `Umar at-Tilmisani:

"Claiming that the Muslim Brotherhood was established on a religious basis inciting Muslim-Christian dissension is actually groundless and can easily be refuted by many proofs as follows:

Firstly, in Egypt there are two main religions: Islam and Christianity. The Muslim majority is so tolerant towards the Christians that the Egyptian cabinet includes some Christian ministers, and even the people assembly once was headed by a Christian...

Secondly, since the Muslim Brotherhood was established in 1928 it has never called for dissension, religious fanaticism, or deprivation of non-Muslims from their rights of citizenship. Even the clergymen used to attend the celebrations of the Brotherhood and deliver speeches in them to express their viewpoints without being interrupted.

Thirdly, how can it be claimed that the Muslim Brotherhood call for disunity of the nation while they have never forbidden Christians to build a church, to occupy jobs, or to perform their religious rituals safely? If the Christians asked for establishing a party, why would there be fear? Does this nation not in reality consist of Muslims and Christians and each party call for their religion and the reformation of society?"

4. Muhammad Hamid Abu an-Nasr

In an interview with Muhammad Hamid Abu an-Nasr *Al-Hayah* newspaper published:

Q. Many people have been pre-occupied with the issue of the relationship between opposition parties and the Copts and the attempts of opposition parties to gain their votes. Do you believe there is cooperation between Copts and the Brotherhood in elections?

A. Our relationship with Copts has always been good throughout the last seventy years since the establishment of the Brotherhood. Al-Banna himself had some Coptic advisors. When al-Banna was exiled to Qina, the clergymen there wrote some bills doing Justice to al-Banna and sent them to the government.

Q. Do you agree that the Copts establish a political party?

A. The establishment of a political party aims at attaining power and running the government according to a certain ideology so do you think the Copts who are but five percent of Egyptian population can aspire for this? The Copts have never thought of establishing a political party in 1940s in spite of the freedom of establishing political parties. However, we favorably accept and welcome their establishment of a political party if they want." (Al-Hayah, September 4, 1995)

5. Mustafa Mashhur

In an interview with Mustafa Mashhur, *Al-Mustaqillah* newspaper published:

Q. If the government agrees that you - the Muslim Brotherhood - establish an Islamic party, will the Copts not demand a Coptic party, which may in turn cause sectarian conflict?

A. "Sectarian conflict" is an imaginary expression that was applied by Anwar as-Sadat since there is no sectarian tension between Muslims and Copts in reality. I remember that Sheikh al-Banna once went to Upper Egypt and gave some lectures and on returning to Cairo some of the priests in Qina governorate appealed to the prime minister for applying the Islamic law. This was because the lectures they attended showed the rights Islam grants the Copts living in a Muslim society. Hence, we can say that there is no sectarian conflict in Egypt and that we care for the rights of the Coptic citizens.

Q. We suppose that the Copts demanded a political party, so what is your opinion?

A. We fully support that. In Egypt there are thirteen parties. Why should they not become fifteen or even twenty and the public opinion is given the chance to choose among them? Is this not the very democracy the government speaks about?" (*Al-Mustaqillah* newspaper, 23/10/1995)

In an interview with *Al-Hayah* newspaper, he said,

"Since the days of Imam al-Banna there have been good relations between the Brotherhood and the Copts. Some of the Copts were representatives in a political committee during the days of the first *Murshid* of the Brotherhood. Along its history there have been no disputes with the Copts. The Egyptians still remember the role the Brotherhood played in containing the sectarian violence erupted in Az-Zawiyah al-Hamra' quarter before the assassination of As-Sadat." (*Al-Hayah*, 24/1/1996)

In another interview:

Q. If the government permits the Brotherhood to establish a political party, is it possible that it include the Copts in its system?

A. If there are some Copts who accept the Islamic program of the Brotherhood and the principle that Islam is the solution, why shall we not accept them?" (*The Middle East* newspaper, 16/7/1996)

A Distorted Speech concerning the Copts and Jizyah

Some newspapers published a speech attributed to Mustafa Mashhur, the current *Murshid* of the Brotherhood, concerning the Copts and *jizyah* (tribute). However, he denied it and stated that it was distorted.

How Can the Problem of Non-Muslim Minorities Be Solved?

This issue is used by the enemies of the *Ummah* to incite sectarian conflict. In America for instance they - under Zionist effect - allege that Copts are religiously persecuted in Egypt, which is a groundless allegation. Our position can be summarized as follows:

1. The allegation of some people, most of whom are secularists who have no loyalty to Islam or Christianity, that the application of Islamic law contradicts the principle of non-Muslims' freedom which is an international and Islamic principle is baseless. For, they forgot that turning away from Islamic law for the sake of non-Muslim minorities contradicts the freedom of Muslims to work in accordance with their religious principles while they are the majority.

And, if the rights of the minority and those of the majority should contradict, which of them must be given priority?

According to democratic logic in which they believe, priority is to be given to the rights of majority and this is prevalent in all countries of the world, for never can any system secure the satisfaction of all people. It is sufficient for any system to secure the satisfaction of the majority of course without doing injustice to the minority or violating their sanctities or oppressing them. Yet, if the minority insists that the majority should abandon their law that is a religious obligation, the negligence of which is punishable, then the minority is imposing its dictatorship on the majority, a thing which is religiously and even secularly unacceptable.

2. This is the case if we admit the existence of conflict between the rights of the Muslim majority and the non-Muslim minority. In reality there is no conflict. A Christian who accepts to subjugate himself to a secular regime of government will not in the least be harmed if he submits to an Islamic regime. A Christian who understands his religion would more favorably prefer an Islamic regime since it is based on belief in Allah, heavenly messages, and reward in the Hereafter. It inculcates the religious values and the principles of ethics for which all the Prophets called. Moreover, Islam venerates Christ, his mother, and the Gospel, and gives a special treatment to the People of the Book. Then, how can such regime of government with its divine, moral, and humane features be regarded as a

source of fear for one who likewise believes in a revealed religion while an irreligious, secular, religion-despising regime does not alarm him?

Hence, broad-minded Christians welcomed the application of the Islamic law in its capacity as a solid block in the face of atheist materialism represented by international communism which is a threat to all religions.

Here, I want to correct a common error that the positive laws are related to Christianity. Those who study the origins of laws and their historical sources know this well. However, undoubtedly, Islamic jurisprudence is nearer to Christianity and Christians than these laws due to its religious origin and the influence of the environment of which they are a part.

3. The allegation that applying the Islamic institutions will enforce non-Muslims to practices contrary to their religion is absolutely untrue. For, Islam has four branches: *`aqidah*, worship, morals, and law. As for the first two aspects, they are not imposed on any of the non-Muslims and in this meaning we read the two Qur'anic verses,

﴿... Wilt thou then compel mankind, against their will, to believe!﴾

(Yunus: 99)

﴿Let there be no compulsion in religion...﴾

(Al-Baqarah: 256)

At the times of the rightly guided Caliphs, the Jews and Christians preformed their rituals and their worship in complete freedom and safety as stated in the covenants made to them in the times of Abu Bakr and `Umar such as the covenant `Umar made to the people of Jerusalem.

Islam does not impose *Zakah* or *jihad* on non-Muslims in spite of the fact that *Zakah* is a monetary tax and participation in war is a military duty. Islam exempted them from these two duties and charged them with paying tribute, from which it exempted women, children, the poor, and the weak.

As for morals, they fundamentally do not differ from one religion to another.

As for Islamic law in its special meaning, it is concerned with the regulation of the relation of the individual with his nation, with his community, with his government, the relationship between the government and its subjects, and international relations.

As for family relations regarding marriage, divorce, and so on, non-Muslims have the choice to be judged by the laws of their religion or by ours.

But, as for the civil, commercial, and administrative affairs, they should be judged by the Islamic law.

Some Muslim schools of *Fiqh* do not impose Islamic criminal law on non-Muslims concerning *hudud* and legal penalties, such as cutting off the hand of the thief, flogging the fornicator and the false accuser, etc. But, instead they apply discretionary and disciplinary penalties on them.

A Muslim state may adopt this opinion if it is beneficial for realizing a certain interest or preventing an evil as the Islamic Republic of Sudan did concerning districts inhabited by a majority of non-Muslims. The history records that the *dhimmis* had their own courts and they could resort to Islamic judiciary if they wanted this.

Thus, we notice that Islam does not force non-Muslims to leave anything they consider a religious obligation or to do anything prohibited in their religion or adopt a certain set of religious ideas.

It is only in some issues that differences arise. Typical of these issues are drinking intoxicants and eating pork, which are prohibited in Islam whereas Christians consider them lawful. Still, man is permitted to abstain from lawful things, so a Christian can refrain from drinking intoxicants or eating pork without being religiously blamed. I do not think that there is a religion that encourages drinking intoxicants and leading a corrupt life. All what is in their book about wine is: "A little of wine is good for the stomach."⁽¹⁾ Therefore, Christians themselves differed in their position regarding drinking intoxicants.

A Christian can abstain from eating pork all his life for eating it is not a religious rite nor a tradition of the Prophets. It was even forbidden in Judaism before Islam. However, some Muslim scholars permitted the *dhimmis* to eat pork or drink wine and deal in them among themselves but they should not do so publicly in Muslim districts but respect the feeling of Muslims. This is a unique model of religious tolerance.

Dr. George Isaac's Questions

Several years ago I was invited by the Egyptian medical syndicate to participate in a symposium on "the Islamic project of civilization". I spoke

1. A saying of Paul not of Messiah (peace be upon him).

about fundamentals of our Islamic project that reforms society, establishes a just and virtuous nation, and promotes all aspects of life. At the end of my speech I was asked several questions by Dr. George Isaac. He asked: What about us - the Copts - under the shade of the Islamic project? Shall we be given our natural rights of citizenship or still treated as *dhimmis*? Shall we be demanded to pay tribute or pay what Muslims pay? Shall we be deprived of occupying jobs in the state, or will the jobs be occupied by those most qualified for and most worthy of them?

I answered Dr. George saying,

"Islam aims at comprehensive reformation and promotion of the whole society including Muslims and non-Muslims. Muslim jurists agree on that *dhimmis* are ordinary citizens belonging to the Muslim homeland though they are non-Muslims, since they live in a Muslim country. Thus, they are Muslims in terms of belonging to the Muslim homeland, culture, and civilization. This meaning was properly expressed by the Coptic leader Makram `Ibid who said about himself, 'I am a Christian by religion yet a Muslim by citizenship.'

The (Arabic) word *dhimmah* is always misunderstood. Many people think that it is a word of reproach, though it means covenant and protection in the sense that they are protected and guaranteed safety by the covenant of Allah, His Messenger, and Muslims and no one is permitted to violate their covenant.

In my book *Fiqh az-Zakah*, I stated that the Muslim ruler is permitted to collect a tax equal to the amount of *Zakah* from non-Muslims living in the Muslim state and name it "solidarity tax" so that the citizens are equally treated. I quoted legal proof from books of *Fiqh* to support my view. Sudan has been applying this procedure since the days of An-Numiri.

And, in the same book, I mentioned that many Muslim jurists permitted paying *Zakah* to non-Muslims. This was also reported from `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him).

Also, history recorded that some of the People of the Book contributed in building the Islamic civilization in the days of its flourishing. Some of them also assumed ministerial posts. The important requirements in this respect are the existence of mutual confidence between the two parties, and that non-Muslims should not look forward to posts of a religious character,

and that Muslims are forbidden to interfere in the religious affairs of non-Muslims.

The general principle governing the relationship with non-Muslims is the well-known rule, "They are given the same rights as ours and required to shoulder the same duties." The only exception to this rule are the aspects that have a religious hue. Thus, they are not required to fulfil the religious duties of Muslims such as Prayer, *Zakah*, Fasting, and so on.

Moreover, it is very important that the Muslim majority must have the right to apply their divine law (*Shari`ah*) provided that they should not deny the non-Muslim minority their natural rights. The minority should be content with this as the former Copts were in the past ages before Western imperialism. We saw broad-minded Christians in Egypt and other countries favorably demanding the application of Islamic *Shari`ah*, regarding this measure as the best remedy for the spread of crimes and vices in our societies.

The non-Muslim minority above all has accepted and applied the imported foreign laws then it is worthier for them to submit contentedly to the Islamic *Shari`ah* which is nearer to them than the secular foreign laws. Besides, they are the laws of the country in which they live. A Muslim accepts *Shari`ah* as the religion of Allah to which submission is necessary whereas non-Muslims accept them as the system and the law like any other systems or laws."

On ending my speech, all the attendees admirably clapped and Dr. Isaac came to me and said I wish you would come to the church and explain this to the Copts since they have apprehensions over the application of Islamic law. I told him that I would favorably accept if I was invited, for our duty is to explain and clarify the facts lest they may be misunderstood and distorted, and thus used by the enemies to incite sedition between the citizens of the country.

Hard-core Juristic Opinions

As for hard-core juristic opinions, which adhere literally to what was written in different time, society, and conditions, we do not have to abide by them. The great Muslim scholars have decided that *fatwa* (legal opinion) is

liable to changes in accordance with the change of time, place, *`urf* (customs), and circumstances. Undoubtedly, things have changed a great deal from the age of these opinions.

As for what is stated in the *hadith* about non-Muslims which reads, "*Do not start them with greeting and force them to walk on the narrowest parts of the road*", it is restricted to times of struggle and war, not to times of peace.

Then, is it reasonable that Islam permits a Muslim to marry a Christian woman and forbids him to greet her? Or is it reasonable to forbid the child to greet his Christian mother, or his maternal aunt, uncle, grandfather, or grandmother while Allah commands him to show kindness to his relatives?

In this respect it is sufficient to refer to the Qur'anic verse,

﴿Allah forbids you not, with regard to those who fight you not for (your) Faith nor drive you out of your homes, from dealing kindly and justly with them: for Allah loveth those who are just.﴾

(Al-Mumtahanah: 8)

Here, the Qur'an not only encourages justice in dealing with peaceful non-Muslims, but it also encourages kind treatment along with justice.

4. The Brotherhood and Violence

Violence is an accusation, which has always been attributed to the Muslim Brotherhood and whenever violent groups are mentioned, those people motivated by special desires include the Muslim Brotherhood among these groups.

This is, no doubt, sheer arbitrariness, falsification, and manifest injustice. The Muslim Brotherhood has not permitted the use of force except in certain fields and under certain circumstances explained by Imam al-Banna in his tracts. Among these fields are resisting English occupation in Egypt and the Zionist occupation and settlement in Palestine.

The Muslim Brotherhood already took part in the fight against Zionists in 1948 in the war of Palestine, where they presented pious martyrs and proved wonderful heroism, to which the leaders of the Egyptian army testified. Nevertheless, they were taken from the battlefield to concentration camps. Also, their role in the battles at Canal is well-known. The youth of the Brotherhood in Al-Azhar and the Universities took part in the battles and their martyrs are known.

They resorted to violence out of the battlefield in a very limited scope, with the aim of attacking the Jewish and British interests in retaliation for the horrible massacres that the armed guerrilla carried out in Palestine. If all violent actions carried out by the Muslim Brotherhood are accumulated, they will not reach 1/100 of what armed groups in Egypt and Algeria did in one day.

It was never said that the Muslim Brotherhood killed a tourist, a woman, a child, an old man, or a Coptic as done by those who slay people and do not even refrain from killing women, children, and monks who have nothing to do with war. So, it is unreasonable to classify the Muslim Brotherhood with these criminals.

Generally speaking, there are a number of violent acts attributed to the Muslim Brotherhood but occurred in special circumstances. Take for example the assassination of a judge called Al-Khazindar in circumstances known to all, which made some enthusiastic young men assassinate him. However, Al-Banna did not give orders to assassinate him. He even did not formerly know of such assassination and when he knew he condemned it. And, this did not happen again. The Muslim Brotherhood have never again thought of taking revenge from martial judges whose judgements on them were undoubtedly arbitrary and unjust.

Among the violent acts carried out by the Muslim Brotherhood was the assassination of An-Nuqrashi the prime minister who was responsible for dissolving the Muslim Brotherhood, detaining its members, persecuting them, starving them, and expelling them. Even those who were fighting Zionists in Palestine were taken from battlefield to concentration camps. Therefore, a young man, helped by some of his colleagues, killed An-Nuqrashi, the thing which Al-Banna tried to prevent when he warned senior officials against rashness on the part of the Brotherhood but they mocked at him. After the assassination, Al-Banna was summoned, questioned, and then released for not having any connection with the assassination.

The third of these violent acts was the attempts to blow up the appeal court that would pass judgements on the Muslim Brotherhood. This made Al-Banna very angry and he issued his famous statement, which was published in the newspaper, saying that those are neither Brothers nor even Muslims. Indeed, the Muslim Brotherhood after its dissolution is not responsible, for such violent acts happened after these acts except the attempt to assassinate `Abd an-Nasir in Al-Manshiyyah square in Alexandria in October 1954, an incident which was surrounded by many uncertainties and doubts.

Anyhow, this is old history and it has not been proven that the Brotherhood has resorted to violence since 1954 in spite of the persecution and oppression they suffered. Their leaders were sentenced to death and hanged by martial judiciary such as the martyrs `Abd al-Qadir `Udah, Muhammad Farghali, Yusuf Tal`at, and Ibrahim at-Tayyib. Also, the youth of the Brotherhood suffered persecution in the military prison; they were shot and twenty-three of them were killed as a result without committing

any crime except asking for reforming their conditions and permitting their relatives to visit them.

Then, Sayyid Qutb, `Abd al-Fattah Isma`il, and Muhammad Yusuf Hawwash were executed though they did not shed even a drop of blood but were accused of intending to do so. Despite of the protests and the numerous intercessions to prevent the execution of Sayyid Qutb, `Abd an-Nasir turned deaf ears to them and killed him. Moreover, thousands of the Brotherhood were driven to prisons and concentration camps and put through unprecedented torture and persecution. Some of them were killed due to severe persecution and flogging.

All these made some people demand the Muslim Brotherhood to take revenge from the officers who cruelly persecuted them in military prisons like Hamzah al-Basyuni who used to say arrogantly to the Brotherhood, "There is no law here; it is only my law." He even spoke impudently about Allah. He said to the Brothers, who invoked Allah while being tortured, "Where is your Lord? Bring him here and I will put him into a cell." The Brotherhood let this tyrant and his assistants to be punished by Allah and he died when his car was destroyed on the Cairo-Alexandria road. The most important thing here is that the Brotherhood did not think of taking revenge from those who oppressed and persecuted them. Then, why is it that such a tolerant group be accused of violence!

The Responsibility of the Brotherhood for the Emergence of Groups That Advocate Violence

The Brotherhood are constantly accused that the groups that advocate violence appeared from among the Brotherhood such as *Jihad*, *Al-Jama`ah al-Islamiyyah*, *At-Takfir* and many other groups which resort to violence to achieve their goals.

Actually, some of these groups, *At-Takfir* for example, split off from the Brotherhood but they are not an extension to the Brotherhood.

It originated in the military prison and its members eventually labeled as unbelievers all those who mercilessly persecuted them, the rulers who ordered their persecution, and even the people who adopted a passive attitude in this regard.

Moreover, this group secluded themselves from the Muslim Brotherhood in prisons and did not offer prayers with them. Its leader and founder, Shukri Mustafa, accused the leaders of the Brotherhood of treachery because they did not resist the police and left their fellows to be led to concentration camps, flogged and hanged.

How then can the Brotherhood be responsible for those who split off from them and accused them of such charges? However, it is the Egyptian and Arab mass media and secular and Marxist writers who are antagonist to the Brotherhood that constantly repeat these accusations.

As for *jihad* and *Al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyyah*, they did not split off from the Brotherhood but originated as criticism of and protest against the Brotherhood accusing them of deviating from the principle of *jihad* they declared to be their way. They interpret the word *jihad* in terms of using violence to resist the rulers who do not rule according to the principles revealed by Allah, for this act is a manifest disbelief.

In fact, the Brotherhood did not betray their principles as these groups alleged, for *jihad* is such a comprehensive word that it does not only mean using force or fighting. It is rather classified by Imam ibn al-Qayyim into thirteen types only one of which is fighting unbelievers which has its conditions. Examples of this type of *jihad* are the Muslim Afghani fight against the Soviet invasion, the Bosnians' combat against Serbian brutality, the Muslim combat in Kosovo, and that of other Muslims suffering from religious and racist persecution all over the world.

We must also mention the Palestinian struggle against the Israeli aggression. The Brotherhood fully supports Palestinians in their struggle. They support this *jihad* by sacrificing their lives, money, and all means they possess, since Muslims are one nation and should be one against the enemies. A Muslim is the brother of a Muslim; he neither oppresses him nor forsakes him.

The Islamic resistance Movement *Hamas*⁽¹⁾ is the representative of the Muslim Brotherhood in this struggle. Besides this military struggle they

1. Hamas is an abbreviation of the Arabic words "*Harakat al-Muqawamah al-Islamiyyah*" (Islamic resistance movement). (Reviser)

adopt many forms of *jihad* which are undoubtedly necessary and obligatory such as the obligation of *da`wah* and conveying Allah's message. Allah says,

﴿Therefore listen not to the unbelievers, but strive against them with the utmost strenuousness, with the (Qur'an).﴾

(Al-Furqan: 52)

This form of *jihad* is within reach through mass media such as radio, TV, newspapers, satellite channels, Internet, and other means of communication. This *jihad* needs huge human energies, much finance, and intensive efforts. Furthermore enduring ordeals and pains patiently in the cause of *da`wah* is another form of *jihad*. In *Surat al-`Ankabut* Allah says,

﴿A. L. M. Do men think that they will be left alone on saying, 'We believe,' and that they will not be tested? We did test those before them, and Allah will certainly know those who are true from those who are false. Do those who practice evil think that they will get the better of us? Evil is their judgment! For those whose hopes are in the meeting with Allah, the Term (appointed) by Allah is surely coming: and He hears and knows (all things). And if any strive (with might and main), they do so for their own souls: for Allah is free of all needs from all creation.﴾

(Al-`Ankabut: 1-6)

Struggling against oppressors, enjoining the good and forbidding the evil, and saying "No" to the corrupters is another form of *jihad*. This is clearly stated by the *hadith* narrated by Muslim on the authority of Ibn Mas`ud that the Prophet (pbuh) said,

"There was no Prophet whom Allah had sent before me to his nation but had among his people, (his) disciples, and companions who followed his Sunnah and obeyed his command. Then, there came after them their successors who said whatever they did not practice, and practiced whatever they were not commanded to do. He who strove against them with his hand was a believer; he who strove against them with his tongue was a believer; and he who strove against them with his heart was a believer; and beyond that there is no faith even to the extent of a mustard seed."⁽¹⁾

1. Narrated by Muslim.

Resorting to force in struggling (military *jihad*) against unjust rulers is the responsibility of those who have the ability to do so, but those who are incapable are ordered to struggle by the word, and those who are still incapable of doing so have only to reject their injustice even by their hearts which is the least of faith.

It has to be taken into consideration that resorting to force is conditioned by the fact that the removal of a corruption must not lead to a greater one. Nowadays, military *jihad* is restricted to the armed forces, which is subject to the government, as it is one of its bodies. Those who think of resisting the armed forces are wrong on both the military and religious levels since they do not understand the faculties of modern armies and since they jeopardize themselves. Our Prophet (pbuh) said, "*A Muslim should not humiliate himself.*" It was said, "How can a Muslim humiliate himself, O Messenger of Allah?" The Messenger (pbuh) said, "*By exposing himself to an affliction greater than what he can bear.*"⁽¹⁾

In the same way they may kill some people whose killing is prohibited. The general rule concerning blood shedding is inviolability.

The groups that raise the motto of *jihad* in Algeria, Egypt, and other countries, however, see that they can fight the armed forces forgetting the formidable difference between the two parties. They also forget the fact that a soldier in the armed forces willingly or unwillingly carries out the orders given to him. He cannot disobey the orders, so why should he be killed?

On the other hand, those violence groups are indifferent concerning the innocent like the old, women, and children who are killed in such disputes while having nothing to do with what is going on. The Messenger (pbuh) forbade Muslims to kill women, children, and the old in the battlefield against unbelievers and thus they are allowed to kill only those who actually take part in the fight.

In short, the Muslim Brotherhood's understanding of *jihad* and reformation is different from that of those groups. The Muslim Brotherhood believes that reformation must begin within the human soul. The Qur'an states,

1. Narrated by At-Tirmizi.

﴿Verily never will Allah change the condition of a people until they change it themselves (with their own souls)...﴾

(Ar-Ra`d: 11)

This is a long way, but it is the only way that leads to the goal.

I have refuted the thought of these groups in many lectures and episodes. I pointed out that good intention on the part of these violent groups and their motive of serving their religion do not justify what they do. The Kharijites performed prayer, fasting, and other forms of worship but this did not avail them and the Messenger ordered to kill them because of their danger on society and the *hadiths* reported in dispraising them are correct. Hence, good intention is not sufficient since some people are deceived to see their bad deeds as good ones.

Moreover, these violence groups adopt some approaches different from those adopted by the Muslim Brotherhood in the political, social, intellectual, artistic, and informational aspects. They are hard-core concerning the issues of women, political plurality, and democratic methods such as elections, voting, and consultation.

They also have their special approaches concerning Muslim and non-Muslim relationship, the relation with other countries and whether it is a peaceful or a hostile one, and to what extent the state should interfere with economy.

So, it is not logical to attribute the emergence of these violence originated groups to the Brotherhood though they completely contradict them in thought and method.

The Frequent Statements of the Brotherhood Condemning Violence

During the last years the Brotherhood has declared its attitude towards violence in published statements condemning violence and refusing all its forms, sources, and motives on the basis of good understanding of Islamic values, principles, and teachings. They have frequently stressed the necessity of ceasing violence and contra-violence for the sake of protecting the nation from bloodshed which is prohibited by Islam, and safeguarding

the society against social deterioration and economic destruction desired by the enemies of Islam.

The Muslim Brotherhood have done their best concerning this issue (i.e. violence). They have held symposiums, given lectures on conferences, and issued statements, pamphlets, and newsletters. They have done every thing within their capacity to enlighten citizens and to warn the public opinion against the dangers of violence and counter-violence and its passive effect on Egypt's safety and stability. By means of *tarbiyah* and direction the Muslim Brotherhood succeeded in precluding the involvement of thousands of young men in the nets of violence.

Undoubtedly, it is now clear to the Egyptian people and the whole world that the Brotherhood's Call is a wise, moderate, and far-sighted one, aiming at the common interest of humanity. The Muslim Brotherhood has never made use of the past and present crises - though numerous and dangerous - to square its accounts with its opponents, practice any violent actions even individually, conclude agreements (with violence groups), or encourage practices that endanger the public interest. However, on the grounds of its belief in Allah, love for Islam, and adherence to the principles of its Call, the Brotherhood has always been fully keen that its country and society be safe, secure, and stable. (The Brotherhood's statement on 18/5/1994)

The Brotherhood issued several statements condemning violence and expressing their view of this issue. All newspapers in Egypt published these statements or parts of them, so the opinion of the Brotherhood is completely known. On 30 Dhu al-Qa`dah 1415 AH/30 April 1995 AC the Brotherhood issued a comprehensive statement in which they said how they often declare that they participate in the political life abiding by legal means and armed by the free, truthful word in all the fields of social work. They are certain that the conscience of the nation and the awareness of its citizens will be the fair judge for these political and intellectual trends that honestly compete under the shade of law and constitution. They always declare their renunciation of violence and all revolutionary actions, which cause disunity and political instability.

The statement went on to say that, if the atmosphere of the repression, unrest, and disorder which overwhelms the *Ummah* has made some groups

become involved in terrorist activities that made the innocent panic, shook the stability and security of the *Ummah*, and threatened the economic progress, the Muslim Brotherhood declare that they are free of the various forms and sources of violence, that they renounce all forms of terrorism, and that those who shed the inviolable blood or aid in this are sinful and must strictly return to the right path. A Muslim is the one of (the harm of) whose hand and tongue Muslims are safeguarded. The Muslim Brotherhood also appeal to violence groups to remember the recommendation of the Messenger in the farewell pilgrimage

"O people! Surely your blood, property, and honor are inviolable until the Day of Judgement just as this day, this year, and this city (Makkah) are inviolable."

The statement, moreover, mentioned how some people unjustly accuse the Muslim Brotherhood of taking part in these violent actions and in such terrorism. The reason for this - they claim - is that the Muslim Brotherhood constantly demand the government not to confront violence by violence, to abide by law, and to understand the causes and circumstances of violence phenomena. These accusations are groundless and can easily be refuted by surveying the glittering history of the Muslim Brotherhood. They sometimes took part in representative counsels and legislative elections. Some other times they were excluded but they incessantly maintained their adherence to the law and the constitution.

Officials' Testimonies in Favor of the Brotherhood

It is convenient here to set some testimonies in favor of the Brotherhood to refute the false accusations.

1. President Husni Mubarak

President Husni Mubarak of Egypt said in his declaration to French *Lemond* newspaper during his visit to France 1993, "There is an Islamic movement in Egypt which prefers political struggle to violence. It participated in some social institutions and succeeded in the elections of professional syndicates such as medical, engineering, and lawyers' syndicates." (*Al-Ahram* newspaper 1/11/1993)

2. Egyptian Minister of Interior

It was not only the president Husni Mubarak who stressed the absence of any connection between the Muslim Brotherhood and violence. When asked if there was any connection between the Muslim Brotherhood and violence groups the ex-minister of the interior general Hasan al-Alfi said that the Muslim Brotherhood - unlike these terrorist organizations - do not commit any act of violence. (*Al-Jumhuriyyah* and *Al-Ahram* newspapers 14/4/1994)

3. UN Expert

In an expanded meeting about "terrorism and extremism," the Egyptian UN world terrorism expert general Ahmad Jalal 'Izz ad-Din declared, "The Muslim Brotherhood is a religious and political movement which has no connection with terrorism and extremism. It is even considered by violence organizations to be supporter of the governing authorities..." (Kuwaiti *Al-Anba'* newspaper 13/8/1994)

4. Dr. Mustafa al-Fiqi

In "Supreme Administration Conference" held in Alexandria, the manager of President Husni Mubarak's office for information affairs Dr. Mustafa al-Fiqi declared, "We accept the participation of the moderate Islamic trend represented by the Muslim Brotherhood and granting it legality provided that it firstly declares renouncing violence, resists it publicly, and accepts the democratic principle in all its forms, first of which are power circulation, parties, and dialogue." (The Egyptian *Al-Wafd* newspaper 1/11/1993)

The Brotherhood and Secret Organizations

The Muslim Brotherhood has no secret organizations and does not have the intention to establish this kind of organization since this does not suit their orientation not to mention its bad effects on the *da`wah* activities. This is quite clear in their activities, and the signs and posters everywhere in Egypt which bear their name indicate that they work openly. They took part in the People Assembly elections in 1984 and 1987. They were also candidates in the *Shura* Council elections in 1989 and the consecutive vocational syndicate elections. In all these elections they worked in public, held meetings, and expressed their opinions, mottoes, and declarations openly. Now, they take part in the administration of professional syndicates,

University Staff clubs, and local councils and societies through pure, free elections. They also had undeniable role in the People's Assembly in 1984 and 1987 when they formed a parliamentary bloc and enriched the parliamentary life with their views, thoughts and their directions in political, economic, and social fields.

The Muslim Brotherhood moreover believes that secret organizations have bad effects on their activities on the path of *da`wah* since secret organizations work clandestinely and do not have the freedom of movement. In such an atmosphere a movement cannot keep its eyes on the acts, belief, thoughts, morals, and behavior of all its members and cannot know to what extent they are in accordance with the true belief, thoughts, and morals of Islam. The Muslim Brotherhood has pure belief, methods, and understanding drawn from the Qur'an and the *Sunnah* and they do not want their Call to be defamed by anyone or deviated and hence they renounce secret organizations.

The work for *da`wah* in public makes it possible to discover any deviation in thought or belief and any behavior contradicting Islam and its guidance in its first phases and consequently it can be cured.

However, some unjust writers try to deceive the public opinion claiming that the Muslim Brotherhood has a long history of secret organizations, violence acts, and assassinations trying to prove their baseless allegation by referring to some individual violence acts already condensed by the leadership of the Muslim Brotherhood at that time.

In fact, the situations during 1940s and the early 1950s necessitated that the Brotherhood like all other patriotic groups form a special organization of those who love *jihad* and sacrifice to carry out acts of *jihad* against the English occupation in Egypt and Zionism in Palestine. This special organization played its role perfectly in the Canal and Palestine where the Brotherhood performed extraordinary heroism and unique martyrdom acts of which every patriot boasts. However, this special organization ended with the end of the causes of its establishment more than forty years ago.

Courts-marital for the Muslim Brotherhood

What is then the reason beyond the security measures taken against the Muslim Brotherhood and what is the reason for military trials for them?

To answer this question I will tell you this story:

Once an important officer in the state security investigation department visited me in my house and said to me, "Do you mind if I ask you some questions?" I said, "Of course not." He asked, "What is your opinion concerning the military trials and the judgements issued in them?"

I said that they were very severe. These who were tried did not commit any crimes or any violence acts and you know very well that since the release of the Muslim Brotherhood from `Abd an-Nasir's prisons it has not been proven that they committed or even participated in any violence act. You also know well that the clashes occurred between the Muslim Brotherhood and violence groups as a result of the latter's accusation that the Brotherhood abandoned the principle of *jihad*.

Then he said that there are still among the Brotherhood those who are trained in using weapons. I replied that this was the case in the past where there was no obligatory military service. But now, the military service is obligatory and thus there is no need for such training. Then, he further added that the Muslim Brotherhood establish anti-law organizations. I said, "If we admit this, then why do you force them to do so? Why do you not allow their existence as you allowed the existence of communists, nationalists, Nasserists and other trends? Are they not Egyptians? Or is their adherence to Islamic principles the cause of denying them their legal rights?" I added that the solution consists of the recognition of the Muslim Brotherhood as a group with its own entity, aims, and activities within the framework of law. For, we need to cooperate for the sake of promoting our *Ummah*.

A Testimony of a Fair Writer

In an article published in *Ash-Sharq daily* newspaper in Qatar, Salah `Isa, a well-known journalist who is not a supporter of the Muslim Brotherhood but rather considered to be a leftist thinker, wrote under the title "Hasan al-Banna: No Violence, no Harshness," that those who attribute the emergence of violence groups to Hasan al-Banna are contradicting historically established facts. They ignore the fact that the formation of semi-military organizations was a common fashion of all political trends in 1930s. They also ignore the fact that the Muslim Brotherhood were not the first to resort to force in local political struggle. Resorting to force in political strife began in 1922 six years before the formation of the Muslim Brotherhood.

Furthermore, using violence against the British occupation in 1940s was not restricted to the Muslim Brotherhood. It was rather a general orientation among all new political trends.

‘Isa went on to say that those who attribute the emergence of religious violence which spread all over the Arabian region to Al-Banna ignore the responsibility of those who conspired to unrightfully establish a religious state in the Arab region using horrible means of violence to guarantee safe migratory influxes and safe settlement for these influxes. These influxes became Zionist political parties each one having a secret military wing all of which cooperated in practicing violence against the Muslim and Christian natives of the country. So, Al-Banna was not the one responsible for the emergence of violence. What he did was actually a reaction, a counter violence rather than violence action. Unfortunately, those to whom the bullets of the special organization of the Brotherhood were directed did not differentiate between Al-Banna and those who misunderstood his thoughts and dealt them equally. So, they assassinated him thinking that they were putting an end to violence but they instead caused it to spread everywhere. Undoubtedly, had Al-Banna been still alive, the second part of the 20th century would have completely changed as well as our celebrating the new third millennium.

In fact this is a fair objective article explaining the writer’s knowledge of history and the motives behind different incidents. It also represents seeking truth, scientific accuracy, and objectivity.

5. The Brotherhood and Establishment of the Muslim State

The following question is always directed to the Brotherhood by their opponents: since seventy years you have been calling for the establishment of a truly Muslim state, which abides by the instructions of Allah, establishes His religion in people's life, constructs the hopeful Muslim society that worships Allah and fulfills His obligations, but you have not established such a state yet. Does this not indicate that your way is wrong or that your goals are impossible to be achieved?

The answer is as follows:

a. The Truly Muslim State Is not our Sole Goal

The establishment of a truly Muslim state is an essential goal and a desired hope, but it is not the only goal since the Brotherhood has a number of goals which it struggles to achieve. Some of these goals have been realized and still the others have not yet been attained. The founder of the Movement declared that he endeavored to achieve the goals of having a truly Muslim individual, a truly Muslim family, a truly Muslim government and a truly Muslim nation. From Al-Banna's tract *To the Youth*, we quote the following:

- "1. Firstly, we want to found a Muslim personality that abides by Islam in its thought, belief, manners, emotions, work, and behavior. This is our individual construction.
2. Then, we want to establish a Muslim home that abides by Islam in their thought, belief, manners, emotions, work, and behavior. That is why our concern for women is equal to that of men and we care for children in the same way we care for youths. This is our familial construction.
3. Then, we want to establish a Muslim society which abides by Islam in the former aspects. Therefore, we work for making our Call enter every home, spread everywhere, and penetrate into villages, hamlets, cities, and metropolises. We spare no effort or means in this regard.

4. Then, we want to form a Muslim government that leads the people to the mosque and make them adhere to the guidance of Islam as they adhered to it by the governments led by the Companions of the Prophet (pbuh). Thus, we do not acknowledge any governmental system that is not based on Islam or relies on it.
5. Then, we want to gather together all parts of our Muslim homeland after it was divided by Western policy and European greed and covetousness. Therefore, we do not acknowledge these divisions or accept the international agreements that make the Muslim world weak and divide it into scattered countries that are easy to be swallowed by the aggressors."

The Muslim Brotherhood undoubtedly achieved some of these goals particularly those of founding a truly Muslim individual, family, and society. No unbiased person doubts the influence of the Islamic Movement on the thoughts, feelings, and behavior of many of those who had previously submitted to the overwhelming Western civilization and literally followed it. This influence resulted in the existence of the Muslim family and Muslim society.

As for the truly Muslim government, it has not yet been achieved in Egypt but the public opinion has been made ready to accept it. If people were left free in their choices, they would choose the Islamic trend and its representatives. This clearly appeared in Algeria as well as in the elections in professional syndicates, student associations, and university professors clubs in Egypt. As for the establishment of one Muslim nation, it also has not yet come into existence, yet it does exist in the mind and feelings of many Muslims.

b. Emergence of Truly Muslim Governments

It must not be forgotten that there exist two Muslim governments: a Shi'ite one in Iran and a Sunni one in Sudan. There also appeared for some time partially Muslim governments as in Jordan, Yemen, and Turkey. If the Muslim people were given the chance of actual choice, they would no doubt choose Islam.

c. The Establishment of the Muslim State Is the Responsibility of Every Muslim

The establishment of the Muslim state is not the responsibility of the Muslim Brotherhood alone but it is also the responsibility of every Muslim individual. It is a religious obligation on all Muslims to be governed by a truly Muslim government that rules over them according to what Allah has revealed not according to its own desires.

We all must ask ourselves, "What is our contribution to the establishment of the Muslim State?" and not "Why did the Muslim Brotherhood not establish it?"

To Sow the Seed or Bring forth the Fruit?

It is very significant to know that the responsibility of every Muslim is to endeavor and spare no effort for the establishment of the Muslim state and the Muslim government so that Muslims may have an Imam who leads them, represents their unity, and applies their *Shari'ah*, for fear that they will not die as Muslims. The Prophet (pbuh) said,

"Whoever dies without swearing allegiance (to the Imam of Muslims), would die the death of one belonging to the days of Jahiliyyah."⁽¹⁾

A Muslim may rescue himself from his sin by working to have this Imam. However, realizing success is not his responsibility.

Once I discussed with some members of At-Tahrir party in Jordan who believed that any movement endeavoring to establish the Muslim state for twenty-three years without achieving its aim then there must be something wrong concerning its method. I asked them about Prophet Nuh (pbuh) and they said that he was one of the Messengers of firm resolution. Then, I asked them about his call and the style and methods he used and they praised them. Then, I told them that Prophet Nuh (pbuh) continued to call his people for guidance for nine hundred and fifty years, yet they did not accept his call. The Qur'an states,

﴿He said: O my Lord! I have called to my People Night and Day: but my call only increases (their) flight (from the Right). And every time

1. Narrated by Muslim on the authority of Ibn `Umar.

I have called to them, that Thou mightest forgive them, they have (only) thrust their fingers into their ears, covered themselves up with their garments, grown obstinate, and given themselves up to arrogance. ﴿

﴾ (Nuh: 5-7)

In spite of this long period and the generations he passed by a very few number of them believed, even neither his son nor his wife believed in his call. Therefore, he invoked Allah against them saying,

﴿ O my Lord! Leave not of the unbelievers, a single one on earth! For, if Thou dost leave (any of) them, they will but mislead Thy devotees, and they will breed none but wicked ungrateful ones. ﴿

﴾ (Nuh: 26-27)

A Muslim's responsibility towards the call of Islam is like the farmer's responsibility that in sowing the seeds, watering them, adding fertilizers to the soil, etc. However, something may preclude them from yielding fruit.

On the Day of reckoning Allah will not ask people: why did you not succeed? Why did you not secure victory? He will rather ask them: why did you not work hard? Why did you not struggle? Why did you not try hard? Al-Banna said in this respect:

“One carries out a duty firstly for the sake of doing so, then secondly for a reward in the Hereafter, and thirdly for personal advantage. If he works in this way and performs his duty, he will thenceforth win Allah's approval - there is no doubt of this as long as all the conditions are fulfilled; then only his personal advantage remains, and this is a matter which is in Allah's hands. Perhaps an opportunity, quite outside his calculations, will arise and render his act productive with the most blessed fruits; while if he refrains from acting, the sin of negligence falls upon him, thus losing the reward of *jihad*, and being absolutely deprived of any personal benefit. Which of these two alternatives stands fairer and is more noble? The Noble Qur'an has pointed this out clearly and unequivocally in these verses,

﴿ When some of them said, 'Why do ye preach to a people whom Allah will destroy or visit with a terrible punishment?' Said the preachers, 'to discharge our duty to your Lord, and perchance they may fear him.' When they disregarded the warnings that had been given them, We

*rescued those who forbade evil; but We visited the wrongdoers with a
grievous punishment, because they were given to transgression. ﴿*

(Al-A`raf: 164-165)""(1)

1. The tract *To What Do We Call People?*.

6. The Brotherhood and the Civilizational Project

The Muslim Brotherhood has been accused that they have no distinctive projects to offer civilization so that people can solve their problems. They only - as it is claimed - have general principles and thoughts, and emotional statements that affect feelings, but cannot solve problems. The Brotherhood - they claim - deliver sermons and lectures, write essays and tracts, and publish books and pamphlets, but they do not provide an integrated project for civilizational reformation, development, and reestablishment of the *Ummah* on clear bases.

In fact some people may be deceived by these accusations. The Muslim Brotherhood has undoubtedly provided a civilizational project, which is based on a certain number of pillars

The Pillars of the Civilizational Project of the Muslim Brotherhood

1. Believing in the necessity of referring to Islam (i.e. the Qur'an and *Sunnah*) in all cultural, social, political, economic, and educational aspects of our life.
2. Calling for the renewal of religion and practicing *ijtihad* in understanding the religion by qualified scholars but within the limits of issues that *ijtihad* can be used in. They also should take into consideration not to contradict firmly established principles of Islam on one hand, and the present age and how to find solutions for current problems on the other hand.
3. Benefiting from the achievements of all the Islamic schools and trends in solving our contemporary problems especially the reformative, renovating schools of thought and *Fiqh* and adding to their accomplishments.

4. Denouncing the backward misconceptions associated to Islam during the ages of backwardness and defeatism.
5. Selecting the beneficial aspects of the Western civilization, for we must not completely accept or refuse all its aspects. We must take everything consistent with our religious values and *Shari`ah* and abandon all that contradicts our religion. Therefore, we should benefit from their achievements in scientific, technological, and administrative aspects.
6. Our plan of reformation is a comprehensive one having Egypt as its starting point because of its religious, cultural, geographical, and historical situation. It is, moreover, the land of Al-Azhar, the motherland of the Islamic Movement, and its people show favorable reaction to reformation plans.
7. The Islamic revival is firstly based on liberating the Egyptian, Arab, and Islamic homeland from the cultural, legislative, educational, and social relics of imperialism.
8. Establishing a strong Muslim state to put into effect the belief, *Shari`ah* and values of Islam. This state resorts to *shura* (consultation), draws from the past and keeps up with the present. It believes in Allah, fulfills its duties, guarantees the rights of people, and secures their sanctities and freedoms.
9. Endeavoring to establish a virtuous, elevated society which is worthy of belonging to Islam. It is a society free of injustice, compulsion, and fear, and capable of achieving a comprehensive human development and complete social justice and solidarity. In this society the hungry can find food, the patients can find medicine, the unemployed can find jobs, the homeless can find homes, and the oppressed can regain their freedom.
10. The Islamic project aims moreover at uniting the Islamic countries into one Muslim *Ummah* which is a must now in view of the necessity of being among the major power blocs. However, it believes in the necessity of gradual progression and that the unity and might of the Arab countries are necessary for the unity of the Muslim *Ummah*.
11. The project of reformation is a gradual one beginning with reformation of the individual. It aims at building him spiritually by worship, mentally

by culture, physically by sports, and morally by virtues. It focuses on self-change since it is the basis. The Qur'an states,

﴿Verily never will Allah change the condition of a people until they change it themselves (with their own souls)...﴾

(Ar-Ra'd: 11)

Then, it aims at building the truly Muslim family, the truly Muslim society, and the truly Muslim nation in gradual steps and stages.

12. The Islamic civilization project is based on mass enlightenment, the *tarbiyah* and molding of young generations, peaceful and constitutional struggle, coalescence with the people until the nation is reformed from within and its hopes are achieved.

The Islam for which We Call

In our debates with the secularists in Egypt they once said to us, "You call for Islam but we do not know exactly which Islam you call us for. Is it the Islam of Iran, Pakistan, Sudan, or Saudi Arabia?" They would even attribute Islam to the rulers of these Islamic countries saying, "Is it the Islam of Al-Khumini, Diya' al-Haqq, An-Numiri, etc.?"

As a matter of fact we call for Islam not for an Islam. The Islam we call for is by no means restricted to any country, person, school of thought, or age. It is the Islam stated in the Qur'an and *Sunnah*. It is the Islam that draws from the past, keeps up with the present, and looks forward to the future. It is the Islam that combines originality and modernity, maintains its aims but develops its means. It is well-established concerning fundamental principles but flexible as to minor issues, and is free from any fanaticism for the past or any bondage for modern thought.

I have elaborated the features of the Islam we call for in my book *Al-Islam wal-`Almaniyyah Wajhan li-Wajh* (Islam and Secularism Face to Face) in which I pointed out the attitude of the Muslim Brotherhood towards a number of important issues such as: the use of force, government, the constitution, law, political parties, Islamic organizations, religious differences, the western nations, the western civilization, the national, Arabian, and the Islamic unities, the returning of the caliphate, and universality.⁽¹⁾

1. These attitudes of the Brotherhood are explained in this book under the title "*Clarity of Attitudes*," Chapter One. (Reviser)

Did Al-Banna not Have a Reformatory Project?

In his interview with *As-Safir* newspaper in 1998, Muhammad H. Heikal said that Hasan al-Banna had no reformatory project.

This is quite wrong since Al-Banna did have a reformatory project with well-established principles, clear aims, means, and apparent expected obstacles. Al-Banna's project was purely Islamic in its ends, its means, and its bases since its first and sole source is Islam. But, it is "the true Islam" or as Al-Banna called it "the early Islam" of the Messenger (pbuh) and his Companions in its pure nature - before being distorted with the stains and additions of ages - and introduced in a contemporary shape to suit the present and keep up with modern developments.

It is a matter of fact that whoever reads the tracts of Al-Banna - despite their limited quantity - will find that Al-Banna introduced a comprehensive, integrated, and balanced project for renaissance, progress, and development. It combines matter and spirit, religion and life, idealism and realism; harmonizes reason and heart; and draws a balance between the individual rights and the interest of society, and the national, Islamic, and universal perspectives.

If Heikal had read Al-Banna's two little tracts of *The Fifth Conference* and *Our Call in a New Phase*, he would have seen a focused perspective of a very distinguished project in its bases, goals, and means. In the tract *Our Call in a New Phase*, he talked about the metaphysical superstitions mentality and scientific positive purely materialistic mentality and pointed out the characteristic of the Islamic mentality which is balanced. It believes in the unseen but not to the extent of believing in superstitions and it equally believes in the power of the reason but not to the extent of denying the revelation. In this tract, he explained the way to the Islamic renaissance starting with Egypt, which is the leader of the Muslim countries that protected Islam against the attacks of the Tartars and the Crusaders, and which now wavers between Islam and westernization, a state which leads to the existence of two systems of education, religious and civil; two systems of judiciary, *Shari'ah*-based and positive; two ways of life, Islamic and Western. He showed that Egypt has to end this dualism and establish its life on the bases of Islam. This is what Al-Banna clearly called for.

Some may say that taking Islam as a source and a criterion will not solve the problem since every class interprets Islam from its own perspective. So,

it is difficult to know the exact attitude of Islam towards major issues and intricate problems which require solutions presented to people in the form of a project. And, Al-Banna - they claim - did not do so at the beginning of his career since he was busy gathering people round the general principles and was not interested in minor issues lest people would differ about them. But, later he began to explain his project in articles he published in *Al-Ikhwān al-Muslimūn* newspaper which were collected in a book entitled *Mushkilatuna fi Daw' an-Nizam al-Islami* (Our Problems from an Islamic Perspective). He talked about the national issue, the issue of unity, as well as the constitutional and economic issues and provided solutions for them in light of Islam.

The Muslim Brotherhood and Political Reformation

As for internal reformation, it suffices to quote some passages mentioned by Richard B. Michelle in his book about the Muslim Brotherhood and their opinions about political, administrative, and parliamentary reformation. He said that the Muslim Brotherhood's proposals concerning parliamentary reformation include:

1. Making a list of the qualities that should present in the candidates whether they represent organizations or not.
2. Laying down regulations governing the electoral propaganda.
3. Reforming the electoral tables and ways of voting to avoid manipulation and compulsory voting.
4. Imposing deterrent sanctions on bribery and election rigging. Al-Banna also suggested the application of the system of slate-based election and preferred it to the direct election of candidates for it would guarantee the public interests not the personal ones.

As for the other internal reformation i.e. the administrative bodies in general and the government departments in particular, Al-Banna had these views,

1. Spreading Islamic values in all government departments.
2. Observing the behavior of all officials is necessary.
3. Reorganizing times of work to facilitate its proper fulfillment and avoid staying awake at night.

4. Keeping an eye on all official departments to make sure they abide by the religious teachings.
5. Employing a greater number of Al-Azhar graduates in both civil and military jobs.

As for military reformation, Al-Banna had a number of views as follows:

1. Reinforcing the army and increasing its number regardless of expenses.
2. Providing good training for officers and soldiers and making brotherhood the prevalent feeling among them all.
3. Making military service compulsory to include all capable persons after a certain age.
4. Making military training compulsory in schools and universities
5. Forming a provincial army for those who do not join the Military.
6. The government liability to establish military industries.

Economic Reform

Dr. Michelle talked about the economic reform as proposed by the Muslim Brotherhood, and said that the economic problem preoccupied the Muslim Brotherhood even before al-Banna as a result of the mounting economic crises in Egypt after World War II.

The Muslim Brotherhood believed that economic reform depends on two factors:

1. Economic independence is the basis of political independence.
2. Economic improvement in the form of economic and social security for poverty-stricken masses in Egypt is very necessary for bridging the gap in class structure, and hence national disunity due to class struggle can be avoided.

In this respect, the Muslim Brotherhood has proposed a number of measures for economic reform. Following are some of them:

1. Usury with all its forms must be abolished and the government must play a pioneer role in this respect by refusing usury in all its dealings. Applying this procedure, capitals will be incapable of increasing except

by two general means: firstly, investing them directly in useful and profitable projects in the fields of industry, commerce, or agriculture, and secondly, investing them profitably in company shares where the value of these shares increases or decreases. Both of the two means are religiously permitted and do not harm economic life.

2. Sources of wealth must be nationalized and foreign control on public utilities must be terminated. The national capital, moreover, must take the place of foreign capital. And, all these measures must be accompanied by good utilization of natural wealth whether in agricultural or in mining fields.
3. Paying great attention to industrialization especially to the domestic-raw-material-based industries and military industries. Home industries should also be encouraged not only with the purpose of helping the poor and the needy, but also with the purpose of encouraging the trend of industrialization in the fields of weaving, textile, soap, and perfume industries.
4. The Egyptian Bank must be nationalized as a step in the way of monetary reformation and Egypt must have its own currency printer and its coinage house.
5. Abolishing the stock market of contracts and reforming the commercial policy regarding cotton.
6. Reforming taxation law in such a manner that taxes are imposed progressively on the capital as they are imposed on profits and the taxation revenue is to be used in public utilities, in raising the standard of living and serving the interests of people.
7. Continuing the agricultural reform. A maximum of agricultural ownership must be made and what exceeds this maximum can be sold at reasonable prices to those who do not possess land.
8. Laws concerning the renting of land must be enacted to protect the tenants from the greed of landowners.
9. Laws governing work must be reconsidered and attention be paid to reformation plans that insure all workmen including farm workers against unemployment, disease, injuries, old age, and death, that

organize work, and that guarantee a worker a just share in the increasing production. Moreover, farm and industrial workers must be provided good training to increase their efficiency.

10. Reformative plans must provide social insurance for workmen in case of being unable to work. They must be provided with their needs from *Zakah* which must be distributed among the needy living in the district on which *Zakah* is levied so that both the rich and the poor may feel mutual responsibility. In case the revenues of *Zakah* are not sufficient for the needs of the poor and the needy, the rich are demanded to pay a larger amount than what they are to pay and they must be forced if they refuse to pay willingly.

These are only some features of the Muslim Brotherhood reformative project. I think that if those who accuse Al-Banna of having no reformative project read his articles and tracts, they will surely change their minds.

7. The Brotherhood and *`Aqidah*

Secularists accuse the Brotherhood of being fanatical about their *`aqidah* and belief and are hard-core towards the followers of other sects. However, some Islamic groups accuse the Brotherhood of being lenient as regards the matter of *`aqidah* as in their attitudes towards the issue of overestimating pious people, supplicating to Allah via an intermediary (the Prophet, the Angels, and the pious friends of Allah), visiting the grave sites, their position towards the verses and *hadiths* dealing with the attributes of Allah in which they adopt the opinion of the Ash`arite school, and the issue of loyalty to fellow Muslims and rupture of any relations with non-Muslims.

The Muslim Brotherhood are moreover accused of establishing relations with unbelievers, Jews, and Christians while they must rupture any relationship with them. They are also accused of providing special interpretations of definite texts that order Muslims to fight them and take tribute from them. They are also accused of not labeling as unbelievers the rulers who contradict the commands of the Qur'an by not applying the *Shari`ah* in all social, economic, and political aspects of life.

All these accusations are groundless and this is indicated by their contradiction. The secularists' accusations are refuted by those of the hard liners and vice versa.

***`Aqidah* Is the Essence**

`Aqidah in the Muslim Brotherhood's thought is the fundamental principle, the infrastructure, and the essence of Islam. Islam is a *`aqidah* on which a *Shari`ah* is based and from which a system of morals and ethics springs. In this *`aqidah* a society believes and is governed by a Muslim state according to its teachings.

The Muslim Brotherhood believes in the *`aqidah* of Islam but they do not adopt hard line attitudes towards their opponents. But, if venerating the *`aqidah*, boasting of it, enthusiasm for it, and confidence in its supremacy

are considered fanaticism, then they are proud to be called fanatics. In the Qur'an and *Sunnah*, *`aqidah* is given the name "*iman*" (faith, belief, and certitude) whereas *Shari`ah*, worship, and ethics are included under the concept of "*a`mal*" (deeds). Both, *iman* and *a`mal* are inseparable. No *a`mal* are accepted without *iman* and no *iman* avails without *a`mal*.

From the very beginning of his Call, Al-Banna followed the example of the Messenger (pbuh) in inculcating the fundamentals of *`aqidah*, the principles of monotheism, the worship of Allah alone, and avoidance of associating anything with him.

He also inculcated in the minds and souls of his followers various virtues and good manners. The methodology of *tarbiyah* adopted by the Muslim Brotherhood is based on considering faith the basic pillar and considering the pleasure of Allah their most supreme end. The Muslim Brotherhood endeavors to establish a truly Muslim society and a truly Muslim nation, to liberate the Islamic land, and to unite the Muslim *Ummah*, yet their supreme end beyond all this is gaining the pleasure of Allah.

The importance of *`aqidah* has been stressed in the writings (such as his tract entitled *Al-`Aqa'id* (Creeds)) and lectures of Al-Banna the founder of the Movement and in the writings and lectures of the intellectuals of the Movement. Among their books which tackle the issue of *`aqidah* are Muhammad al-Ghazali's *`Aqidat al-Muslim* (Creed of the Muslim), Sayyid Sabiq's *Al-`Aqa'id al-Islamiyyah* (The Islamic Creeds), Sa`id Hawwa's *Allah* (Allah) and *Ar-Rasul* (The Messenger), and so on. There are also many books on *Tafsir*, *Hadith*, *da`wah*, and *tarbiyah* which indirectly tackle the issue of *iman* and *`aqidah*.

In explaining and presenting *`aqidah*, the Muslim Brotherhood depends on two important sources:

First, the texts of the Qur'an which is the first spring of *`aqidah*, and sound *Sunnah* which is an interpretation and explanation of the Qur'an.

Second, the mental and scientific proofs which modern science has provided us with. Such proofs confute the materialists, the unbelievers, and the atheists.

The Way the Muslim Brotherhood Presents `Aqidah

The Muslim Brotherhood emphasizes the effect that `aqidah must have in the life of the individual.

When the Glorious Qur'an presents to us the faith of the believers, emphasis is laid on the good manners, and internal and external good deeds. Allah, the Ever-Exalted, says,

﴿For, Believers are those who, when Allah is mentioned, feel a tremor in their hearts, and when they hear His revelations rehearsed, find their faith strengthened, and put (all) their trust in their Lord; who establish regular prayers and spend (freely) out of the gifts We have given them for sustenance: such in truth are the believers...﴾

(Al-Anfal: 2-4)

﴿Successful indeed are the believers, those who humble themselves in their prayers; who avoid vain talk; who are active in giving Zakah; who guard their modesty...﴾

(Al-Mu'minun: 1-5)

The Muslim Brotherhood rejects *shirki* practices (deeds which are done in a way that suggests associating others with Allah), superstition, and falsehood as many Muslims from among the common people do. Typical of these deeds are circumambulating the mausoleums of pious men, making vows for them, invoking them, or seeking their help.

Al-Banna pointed out that these are major sins that must be fought. He said,

- "Every innovation introduced by the people into the religion of Allah on the grounds of their whims and without authentic foundation, whether by adding to the principles of Islam or taking away from them, is a serious deviation which must be fought and abolished by the best means that does not lead to a greater evil.
- Love of pious people, respecting them, and honoring their righteous achievements brings one closer to Allah, the Most High. These (the ones who are close to Allah) have been mentioned by Allah in the Qur'anic verse, ﴿Those who believe and (constantly) guard against evil﴾ (Yunus: 63). Honor and prestige are due to them with the conditions prescribed

by the Islamic *Shari`ah*, but we must firmly believe that they (may Allah be pleased with them) had no power over their own fates and, thereby, cannot avail or harm anyone after their death.

- Visiting grave sites and tombs is an authentic act of the *Sunnah* if done in the manner prescribed by the Prophet (pbuh). But, seeking the help of the dead, whomever they may be, appealing to them, asking them to fulfil certain requests, vowing to them, and swearing with their names instead of the name of Allah, building high tombs, covering them with curtains, illuminating them, are evil innovations that are equally prohibited. We do not need to interpret such actions giving them excuses.
- Supplication to Allah via an intermediary is a minor difference of opinion - more to do with the method of performing supplication rather than a question of *`aqidah*.
- Belief is the basis of action. Sincere intentions are more important than outward actions. However, the Muslim is requested to attain improvement in both spheres: purification of the heart and performance of righteous deeds."⁽¹⁾

Supplication to Allah via an Intermediary (*Tawassul*)

As for supplication to Allah via an intermediary (such as the Messenger, the Prophets, the Angels, the pious people and so on), Imam al-Banna said that this is a minor difference of opinion among Muslim scholars more to do with the method of performing supplication rather than a question of *`aqidah*. But, the *salafi* adherents disapproved of Al-Banna's opinion and attacked him severely while the man did not say anything that deserves such defamation. The issue is actually a matter of difference. Whoever reads the books of famous schools of *Fiqh* will know this. Many jurists permitted supplication to Allah via the Messenger and the pious people, some abhorred it, and others prevented it. Each group provided proofs to support its view.

Those who permitted supplication via an intermediary based their opinion on a strong proof. They quoted the *hadith* narrated by Ahmad on the authority of `Uthman ibn Hanif that a blind man came to the Prophet (pbuh) and said to him, "Invoke Allah to cure me (of my blindness)." The

1. *The Teachings*.

Messenger said to him, "If you wish, I can do so and if you wish to postpone it, it will be better" - in another version: "If you wish to bear it patiently, it will be better for you?" The man said, "Invoke Allah for me." Thereupon, the Messenger (pbuh) ordered him to make *wudu'* (ablution) and offer two *rak'at* of prayer and say this *du'a'*, "O Allah I ask you and invoke you via your Prophet, the Prophet of mercy. O Muhammad I invoke Allah via you in fulfilling my wish. O Allah I beg You to accept the Prophet's intercession for me." Then, the man did so and was cured.⁽¹⁾

The argument that *tawassul* is a minor difference of opinion among Muslim scholars that is more to do with the method of performing supplication rather than a question of *'aqidah* is correct, for the one being asked and invoked is Allah, Most Exalted and Glorified. As for its legitimacy, it is a matter of *Fiqh* not a question of *'aqidah*. Al-Banna was not the first to say this, as Imam Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab also stated that *tawassul* via the Prophet (pbuh) or the pious people is a controversial issue and preferred the opinion of the majority of scholars that it is detestable (*makruh*) and that it is a question of *Fiqh*. This is clearly what Al-Banna said, so there is no reason to attack him.

In his introduction to *Sharh al-'Aqidah at-Tahawiyyah*, the *salafi* Sheikh Nasir ad-Din al-Albani talked about seven important issues and stated that they are all related to *'aqidah* except the last one (meaning *tawassul* via the Prophets). Since, the issue of *tawassul* is a question of *Fiqh* not *'aqidah*, it is discussed in all the books of *Fiqh*. Moreover, there are some scholars who permitted *tawassul* such as the *salafi* Imam Ash-Shawkani, while others permitted *tawassul* via the Prophet only like Imam 'Izz ad-Din ibn 'Abd as-Salam.

This indicates that what Al-Banna said in this regard was correct.

I myself tend to prefer the opinion that forbids *tawassul* via the Prophet and the pious people and adopt the opinion of Ibn Taymiyah in this respect for a number of reasons:

First, the proofs that forbid *tawassul* are stronger than those that permit it in the scale of knowledge. Moreover, one can invoke Allah directly and since Allah is very near to all people even to those who disobey Him. Allah says in the Glorious Qur'an,

1. Narrated by Ahmad, At-Tirmidhi, and At-Tabarani.

﴿Say: O my servants who have transgressed against their souls!
Despair not of the Mercy of Allah...﴾

(Az-Zumar: 53)

Second, permitting *tawassul* may be a means to invoking other than Allah and seeking his help and common people mix the two matters. So, blocking the means is preferable.

Third, the approach that I often adopt is that if we can worship Allah according to unanimously and religiously accepted ways, there is no need to worship him in disputable ways.

Ibn Taymiyah himself who refused *tawassul* and considered it to be religiously forbidden did not label as unbelievers those who permit it as many of his followers nowadays claim. In his *Fatawa*, he mentioned the different views regarding this issue and then said, "None said that those who adopt the first opinion (i.e. permitting *tawassul*) are unbelievers, for this is an obscure issue for which there is no definite proof. One is labeled as unbeliever only when he refuses to acknowledge a fundamental principle of Islam or the agreed upon rulings and so on. Those who describe people as unbelievers for permitting *tawassul* deserve severe punishment, since the Messenger (pbuh) said,

'When a person calls his fellow Muslim an unbeliever, it returns (at least) to one of them.'⁽¹⁾

Wala' (Making Friends with Muslims) and Bara' (Antagonizing their Enemies)

According to the Muslim Brotherhood, a true Muslim must make friends with whoever supports the religion of Allah, His Messenger and the fellowship of believers. Allah, Exalted be He, says in the Glorious Qur'an,

﴿Your (real) friends are (no less than) Allah, His Messenger, and the (Fellowship of) Believers - those who establish regular prayers and regular charity, and they bow down humbly (in worship). As to those

1. i.e. if the accused fellow is truly an unbeliever (by committing any thing that deserves this judgement) then he is rightly accused, but if he does not deserve to be described as unbeliever then his accuser deserves the description. (Translator)

who turn (for friendship) to Allah, His Messenger, and the (Fellowship of) Believers - it is the Fellowship of Allah that must certainly triumph. ﴿

﴾
(Al-Ma'idah: 55-56)

Also, a Muslim must antagonize those who antagonize the religion of Allah, His Messenger, and Muslims since Allah also says in the Glorious Qur'an,

﴿O ye who believe! Take not My enemies and yours as friends (or protectors)... ﴿

﴾
(Al-Mumtahanah: 1)

Al-Banna stressed this meaning in his tracts and pointed out that faith is based on loving all those who love Allah, His Messenger, His religion, Muslims, and hate those who hate Allah's religion, His Messenger, and Muslims. In the tract of *The Teachings* Al-Banna said,

“By “resoluteness” I mean that you commit yourself to your ideology and abandon all other principles. This is because your ideology is elevated and more worthy than all other ideologies,

﴿(Our religion) takes its hue from Allah and who can give a better hue than Allah?... ﴿

﴾
(Al-Baqarah: 138)

﴿There is for you an excellent example (to follow) in Ibrahim and those with him, when they said to their people: ‘We are clear of you and of whatever ye worship besides Allah: we have rejected you, and there has arisen, between us and you, enmity and hatred forever, unless ye believe in Allah and Him alone’... ﴿

﴾
(Al-Mumtahanah: 4)

In the eyes of a sincere Brother, people belong to seven categories:

1. striving Muslims,
2. reluctant Muslims,
3. sinning Muslims,
4. non-Muslims living peacefully under the Islamic Law in a Muslim state (i.e. *dhimmis*),
5. non-Muslims having treaties with Muslim states,

6. neutral non-Muslims, and
7. non-Muslims at war with Muslim states.

Each group has its own status within the Islamic Law. And on the basis of this classification, we should judge each individual and determine whether he is a friend or an enemy."

No objective scholar can claim that the writer of these words did not know whom to love or whom to hate for the sake of Allah. He taught a generation whom to love and make friends with as well as whom to hate and take as enemies for Allah's sake.

The Muslim Brotherhood had a great role in fighting Zionists and imperialists who occupied Muslim countries. They struggled to resist them. So how can they be described as their supporters?

Showing Brotherly Feelings towards Non-Muslim Citizens

The Muslim Brotherhood make distinction in treatment between occupation forces whether Jews or Christians, and non-Muslim citizens residing in the Muslim countries whether Christians or Jews or whatever. The security of those non-Muslim citizens is fully guaranteed. Their selves, property, and all their rights are inviolable. They peacefully coexist with Muslims having the same rights and shouldering the same duties of citizenship just like Muslims.

These we are ordered to treat kindly and to do justice to them. Allah, Exalted be He, says in the Glorious Qur'an,

﴿Allah forbids you not, with regard to those who fight you not for (your) Faith nor drive you out of your homes, from dealing kindly and justly with them: for Allah loveth those who are just.﴾

(Al-Mumtahanah: 8)

And, dealing "justly" with them means giving them their rights and dealing "kindly" with them means to give them more than they deserve. Also, dealing "justly" with them means to take your rights from them and dealing "kindly" with them means to relinquish some of your rights for them.

We consider them our brothers since brotherhood is not restricted to religious brotherhood. There is the citizenship brotherhood, national brotherhood, and human brotherhood. This is evident in the Qur'anic verses,

﴿The people of Nuh rejected the Messengers. Behold, their brother Noah said to them, 'Will ye not fear (Allah)?'﴾

(Ash-Shu`ara': 105- 106)

﴿The `Ad (people) rejected the Messengers. Behold, their brother Hud said to them, 'Will ye not fear (Allah)?'﴾

(Ash-Shu`ara': 123-124)

﴿The Thamud (people) rejected the Messengers. Behold, their brother Salih said to them, 'Will you not fear (Allah)?'﴾

(Ash-Shu`ara': 141-142)

﴿The people of Lut rejected the Messengers. Behold, their brother Lut said to them, 'Will ye not fear (Allah)?'﴾

(Ash-Shu`ara': 160-161)

﴿To the Madyan people (We sent) Shu`ayb, one of their own brethren...﴾

(Hud: 84)

Allah in these Qur'anic verses describes the Messengers as brothers of their nations who disbelieved in them. So, there is no objection to describe our non-Muslim fellow citizens as our brothers.

Labeling Rulers as Unbelievers,

The Muslim Brotherhood is accused of not regarding the rulers who do not put into effect the *Shari`ah* of Allah as unbelievers. They are accused of seeking to satisfy rulers at the expense of religion.

But, Allah knows best and people have witnessed the persecution of the Muslim Brotherhood's members at the hands of despotic rulers, the sacrifices they offered, and their suffering in jails and concentration camps whether at the times of monarchical governments, liberal rightist governments, or socialist left-wing governments.

But, in spite of their persecution at the hands of the rulers, the Muslim Brotherhood observes the Islamic principles in evaluating and judging the rulers. They never deviate from them due to persecution, shedding their blood, and confiscating their property at the hands of dictatorial rulers.

One of these basic principles is that attributing disbelief to anyone is a dangerous matter which has serious consequences. Therefore, it must be based on clear evidence and definite proof. Since, labeling a man as an unbeliever leads to separating him from his wife and family, to deprive him of the rights of Muslims, and above all he must be killed according to the majority of jurists.

Therefore, Al-Banna said,

"Never label as an unbeliever any Muslim who has confessed the *shahadataan* (two declarations of faith), acts accordingly, and performs the obligatory duties of Islam unless he clearly professes the word of unbelief, refuses to acknowledge a fundamental principle of Islam, denies the purity of the Qur'an, or commits an evident act of unbelief."

I wrote a treatise about the phenomena of excessiveness in labeling others as unbelievers, since some groups have attributed disbelief to nearly all the *Ummah*. They labeled the rulers as unbelievers, since they did not put into effect the Islamic *Shari'ah* and called the masses unbelievers since they passively remained silent, claiming that whoever does not label as unbeliever a disbelieving person is himself unbeliever. Indeed, they are ignorant of the fact that this is applicable only in the case of unbelievers whose disbelief is apparent such as atheists, idol worshipers, the People of the Book who have distorted it, and so on.

In his book *Madarij as-Salikin*, Ibn al-Qayyim tackled this issue and fully explained the Qur'anic verse, ﴿... If any do fail to judge by what Allah hath revealed, they are unbelievers﴾ (Al-Ma'idah: 44) saying,

"*Kufr* (disbelief) is of two types: a major one and a minor one. The punishment for the major *kufr* is perpetual torturing in Hellfire, whereas the punishment for the minor *kufr* is torturing in Hellfire for a certain period. Examples of the latter type are mentioned in the following *hadiths*:

"Two of the acts of kufr in my nation are unrightfully impugning the parentage of a child and wailing."

"Whoever has a sexual intercourse with a woman in her anus, is disbeliever in what was revealed to Muhammad."

"Whoever comes to an augur or a soothsayer and believes him is a disbeliever in what was revealed to Muhammad."

The unbelief stated in the Qur'anic verse, ﴿... If any do fail to judge by what Allah hath revealed, they are unbelievers﴾ (Al-Ma'idah: 44) is interpreted by the majority of the Companions of the Prophet (pbuh) and Muslim scholars as minor *kufr*. Ibn `Abbas said that it is not a *kufr* that puts one outside Islam like disbelieving in Allah and the Day of Judgment. `Ikrimah said that the ruling of this verse is restricted to those who deny judging according to what Allah has revealed. But, this is a weak interpretation for mere denial is *kufr*. `Abd al-`Aziz al-Kinani said that the ruling is applied to whoever does not judge by all what Allah has revealed, but it is also a weak opinion. Some scholars interpreted it to be confined to intentional judgement which contradicts the *Shari`ah* without ignorance or misinterpretation. Other scholars, including Qatadah and Ad-Dahhak, stated that the ruling of this verse is confined to the People of the Book, but this is against its apparent meaning. And, others view that *kufr* in the verse is that which puts one outside Islam.

To sum it up a ruler who does not adhere to the Islamic *Shari`ah* regarding an issue yet believing that adhering to it is obligatory and confessing that he deserves punishment, then he commits an act of minor *kufr*. But, if he does not adhere to the *Shari`ah* believing that it is not obligatory to apply its rulings or that he is given the choice of applying or not applying them although he is sure that it is Allah's judgment, then it is major *kufr*.

The Verses and *hadiths* Dealing with the Attributes of Allah

The Muslim Brotherhood have always been attacked for their attitude towards the interpretation of the verses and *hadiths* that deal with the attributes of Allah.

Al-Banna tackled this issue in two positions:

1. In the tract of *The Teachings*, he said, "Recognizing Allah's existence, Exalted be He, believing in His oneness, and glorifying Him are the most sublime beliefs of Islam. We believe in the Qur'anic verses and authentic traditions of the Prophet (pbuh) which describe the exalted Attributes of Allah and glorify His Name. We also believe in the *mutashabihat* (the

Qur'anic verses which are not entirely clear), which serve this same purpose, without rejecting any part of them or attempting to interpret them on our own. We stand aloof from the disagreement which exists among the scholars concerning these verses and *hadiths*; It is enough for us to adopt the attitude of the Prophet (pbuh) and his Companions:

﴿... And those who are firmly grounded in knowledge say, 'We believe in it; the whole of it is from our Lord'...﴾

(Al `Imran: 7)"

2. In the tract of *Creeds*, he wrote about this issue in the year 1932 though he was still in his twenties. Though the tract was concise, he tackled the subject in due detail. Under the title "The Positions of the Scholars regarding the Verses and *Hadiths* Dealing with the Attributes of Allah". Here we shall mention the most important elements of this issue.

Different Positions regarding These Verses and *Hadiths*

Imam al-Banna mentioned that with regard to this question people have split into four groups:

1. The Position of the *Mushabbihah*

This group took things literally and so they attributed to Allah a face like the face of human beings, a hand like their hands, laughter like their laughter, and so on until they portrayed Allah as an old man, and others portrayed Him as a young man. These are the so-called "*mujassimah*" (anthromorphists) and "*mushabbihah*" (comparers [of Allah to human beings.]) Neither of these two groups has anything to do with Islam. What they say is absolutely incorrect. And, it suffices in response to what they said to quote what Allah, the Most High, says in the Qur'an,

﴿... There is nothing whatever like unto Him, and He is the One That hears and sees.﴾

(Ash-Shura: 11)

He, the Most High, also says,

﴿Say, 'He is Allah, the One; Allah, the Eternal, Absolute; He begetteth not, nor is He begotten; and there is none like unto Him.'﴾

(Al-Ikhlās: 1-4)

2. The Position of the *Mu`attailah*

This group ignored the meanings of these words completely, claiming that they do not refer to Allah, Exalted be He, at all. In their view Allah, Exalted be He, does not speak, nor does He hear, nor does He see, because this can only take place with an organ of the body and body organs must not be ascribed to Him, Glorified be He. In this way, they annul the Attributes of Allah, Exalted be He, whilst purporting to glorify Him. These are the so-called *mu`attillah* (nullifiers). Some scholars of the history Islamic creeds call them *jahmiyyah* (followers of Jahm ibn Safwan). No one who has any sense whatsoever would accept this foolish understanding.

Now that it has been proven that some people can speak and hear and see without an organ, how can the speech of Allah, Exalted be He, be dependent on an organ? Indeed Allah is far too exalted for that.

These are two misguided opinions which are not worthy of consideration. There remain two other opinions which have been considered by theologians, namely the opinions of the *Salaf* and the *Khalaf*.⁽¹⁾

3. The Position of the *Salaf*

The *Salaf*, may Allah be pleased with them, said, "We believe in these verses and *hadiths* as they are, and we leave aside explanation of their meanings to Allah, Exalted be He." Thus, they affirm their belief that the words that explicitly express Allah's hand, eye, eyes, settling Himself firmly on the Throne, laughter, wondering ... etc., cannot be explained in terms that we can understand, and therefore their explanation should be left only to Allah, Exalted be He, Who knows their true meaning. The Prophet (pbuh), moreover, forbade this, saying,

"Ponder over the creation of Allah and do not speculate on the Essence of Allah, because you will never be able to give Him His due."

Here are some of their sayings.

- a. Abu al-Qasim al-Lalika'i narrated in *Usul as-Sunnah* that Muhammad ibn al-Hasan, a companion of Abu Hanifah, may Allah be pleased with them both, said, "All jurists from the east to the west have agreed on the belief in what is contained in the Qur'an and the authentic *hadiths* regarding the attributes of Allah, Exalted be He, without interpretation, description,

or comparison. Whoever, in these times, tries to interpret any of that will be going against the practice of the Prophet (pbuh) and the consensus of the Muslims, because they did not describe nor interpret, but only quoted what is in the Qur'an and the *Sunnah* and no more."

- b. Al-Khallal said in his book *As-Sunnah* that Ahmad ibn Hanbal (as was stated in Ibn Hanbal's own books such as *As-Sunnah wal-Mihnah*) said, "I asked Abu `Abdillah about the *hadiths* which state that 'Allah, Exalted be He, comes down to the lower heavens', and 'Allah sees', and 'Allah places His foot' and such similar *hadiths*." Abu `Abdillah answered, "We believe in them as true without inquiring how (these actions are done), nor what they mean, nor do we reject any of them. We know that, whatever the Prophet (pbuh) brought was true provided that it is attributed to him through reliable transmission. We do not reject what Allah says; and Allah, Exalted be He, is not to be described with anything better than what He said about Himself. Nothing is like unto Him."
- c. Harmalah ibn Yahya said, "I heard `Abdullah ibn Wahb say, 'I heard Malik ibn Anas say, 'Whoever talks about the nature of Allah and for example when explaining the verse which says, ﴿The Jews say: Allah's hand is tied up...﴾ (Al-Ma'idah: 64) points with his hands to his neck, or when explaining the verse ﴿... And He is the One that hears and sees﴾ (Ash-Shura: 11) points to his eyes or part of his hand, may it be cut off because (he was so blasphemous that) he likened Allah to himself.' Then Malik added, 'Have you not heard the statement of Al-Bara' when he said that the Prophet (pbuh) did not permit a sacrifice of four (sheep) and Al-Bara' made a gesture with his hand in the way that the Prophet did, and added 'and my hand is shorter than the hand of the Prophet (pbuh). Thus, Al-Bara' was reluctant even to describe the hand of the Prophet (pbuh), out of reverence for him who is, after all, a human being. How then do they describe the Creator Whom nothing is like unto Him?'"
- d. Abu Bakr al-Athram, Abu `Amr at-Talmanki and Abu `Abdillah ibn Abi Salamah al-Majishun narrated a long story which he concluded with the following:

"What attributes Allah used for Himself and conveyed to us through His Prophet are what we use to refer to Him and we do not make up any other attribute for Him. Neither do we ignore what He said to describe Himself, nor do we invent new attributes for Him."

4. The Position of the *Khalaf*

The *Khalaf* said, "We definitely believe that the meanings of the words of these verses and *hadiths* should not be taken literally but they should be understood as metaphors, the interpretation of which can do no harm." In this way, they tended to interpret "the face" as "essence/self", "the hand" as "ability"... etc., in order to avoid any doubt that may appear as to comparing Allah to His creatures. Here are some of their statements in this respect.

a. Abu al-Faraj ibn al-Jawzi, a Hanbalite, stated in his *Daf' Shubhat at-Tashbih* (Refuting the Misconception of Comparing Allah to His Creatures) that Allah, Exalted be He, said,

﴿But will abide (forever) the Face of thy Lord, full of Majesty, Bounty and Honor.﴾

(Ar-Rahman: 27)

Commentators explained that it is Allah Himself Who will abide (forever).

Commentators also said with regard to the verse, ﴿Send not away those who call on their Lord morning and evening, seeking His Face...﴾ (Al-An'am: 52) that "face" in this verse refers to Allah Himself.

Ad-Dahhaq and Abu `Ubaydah said with reference to the verse, ﴿Everything (that exists) will perish except His Face...﴾ (Al-Qasas: 88) that the "face" here also refers to Allah Himself.

Ibn al-Jawzi included a chapter at the beginning of the above-mentioned book in which he responded to those who said that taking these verses and *hadiths* literally was the position of the *Salaf*. The summary of what he said is that taking these verses and *hadiths* literally amounts to anthropomorphization and to comparing Allah to His creatures. This is because the literal meaning of a word is what it was coined for, thus the only meaning of the word "hand" is the actual hand and so on. However, the position of the *Salaf* was not to interpret these words literally, but to refrain altogether from inquiring into them.

Ibn al-Jawzi also maintained that the terms *ayat as-sifat* and *ahadith as-sifat* (attributes verses and attributes *hadiths*) are an innovation because they are not mentioned in the Qur'an nor the *Sunnah*, and calling them as

such is inaccurate because they are merely epithets. He supported his argument with several proofs which are not to be mentioned in this brief discussion.

- b. In the first chapter of his book *Ihya' `Ulum ad-Din*, Imam al-Ghazali said in the course of discussing metaphorical expressions and their interpretation that the third type is of objects which, if referred to explicitly, would be easily understood without any difficulty, but they are in fact used metaphorically or semantically in order to create a strong effect on the mind of the listener such as the saying of the Prophet (pbuh),

"The mosque contracts from phlegm like skin contracts from fire."

The meaning is that, in view of the spirit of the mosque and its great status, spitting in it amounts to contempt of the mosque and contradicts its sanctity in the same way as fire affects the skin. Needless to say, that the space of the mosque does not literally contract from spitting.

The same thing applies to the saying of the Prophet (pbuh),

"Does he who lifts his head before the Imam not fear that Allah may turn his head into the head of a donkey."

With respect to figure and shape, this has never happened and does not happen. But, taken as a metaphor, it is possible because what is meant is not the head of a donkey in its actual shape and form but its quality which is stupidity. Thus, whoever lifts his head before the Imam, his head is like the head of a donkey in terms of stupidity. This metaphorical meaning is what is intended, not the literal one.

The meaning of an expression can be taken to be metaphorical either on rational grounds or on the basis of evidence from the *Shari`ah*. The rational reason is that the literal meaning would be implausible, as, for example, in the case of the Prophet's saying,

"The heart of a believer is between two fingers of (Allah) the All-Merciful."⁽¹⁾

Of course, if we look inside the body of the believers, we will not find any fingers. Therefore, you should understand this as a metaphor for might

1. Narrated by Muslim.

which is "the secret of the fingers and its hidden spirit". Fingers are used metaphorically to refer to might because this has a stronger effect in explaining the meaning of absolute might.

Thus, you have seen clearly the approaches of the scholars of the *Salaf* and the *Khalaf*. These two approaches gave rise to serious controversy between leading Muslim theologians, and each party supported their position with arguments and proofs. In fact, if you consider the matter carefully, you will realize that the difference between the two approaches would have been insignificant if each of them refrained from adopting an extremist position. Consideration of this question, however lengthy it may be, will only lead to a single conclusion which is: the matter should simply be left in the hands of Allah, Exalted be He. Now let us try to explain this point in detail, with the help of Allah.

The Position of the *Salaf* Is Preferable

We believe that the position of the *Salaf*, which was to refrain from inquiring into the meanings of Allah's attributes and leave the explanation of their meanings to Allah, Exalted be He, is safer and should be followed in order to avoid problems resulting from metaphorical interpretation on the one hand, and the nullification of Allah's Attributes on the other. If you are one of those whom Allah has endowed with the tranquillity of faith and whose hearts have been blessed with the serenity of certitude, you do not need to other positions.

On the other hand, we believe that the metaphorical interpretations of the *Khalaf* do not sanction any judgement on them as having gone outside Islam or to have strayed from the right path, nor do they justify that long dispute between them and others, past and present, because Islam is vast and comprehensive enough to accommodate all of them. Even the most hard-core adherents of the position of the *Salaf*, may Allah be pleased with them, were forced to resort to metaphorical interpretation in numerous instances. Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal⁽¹⁾, for example, may Allah be pleased with him, gave a metaphorical explanation for the *hadith* of the Prophet (pbuh) in which he said,

1. This was reported by Imam al-Ghazali from some Hanbalites in his time but Ibn Taymiyah denied it.

"The Black Stone is the right hand of Allah on earth,"⁽¹⁾
and his saying,

"The heart of a believer is between two fingers of (Allah) the All-Merciful,"⁽²⁾

and his saying,

"I feel the breath of (Allah) the All-Merciful coming from the direction of Yemen."⁽³⁾

I have come across a statement by Imam an-Nawawi, may Allah be pleased with him, which narrowed down the difference between the two positions to such a degree that there should be no room left for dispute or argument, especially since the *Khalaf* qualified their metaphorical explanations with the condition that those explanations have to be acceptable rationally, to be in line with the *Shari'ah* and, and not to go against any of the fundamentals of Islam.

Ar-Razi in his *Asas at-Taqdis* said, "If we sanction metaphorical interpretation, we do not go into too much detail, and in the instances where we do not sanction metaphorical interpretation we leave the explanations to Allah, Exalted be He. This is the general binding rule with regard to all the statements which are not entirely clear (*mutashabihat*) (in the Qur'an and in the Prophet's *hadiths*), and success comes only from Allah."

Finally, the conclusion is that the *Salaf* and the *Khalaf* did agree on the fact that what is meant by those "*mutashabihat*" is not their literal meaning as commonly understood among people. This in effect amounts to *ta'wil* (metaphorical interpretation) generally speaking. They also agreed that any metaphorical interpretation which goes against the fundamentals of *Shari'ah* is inadmissible. In this way, the dispute was limited to interpreting words in accordance with what is acceptable in the *Shari'ah*, and this is not a significant matter as you can see. Metaphorical interpretation was an approach which was resorted to by some from the *Salaf* themselves. The most important aim which all the efforts of Muslims should be directed to at

1. Narrated by Al-Hakim.

2. Narrated by Muslim.

3. Narrated by Ahmad.

present should instead be to unify our ranks and speak with one voice at every possible opportunity.⁽¹⁾

The Salafi Objections against Al-Banna

The *Salafi* adherents object to Al-Banna's views in the following points:

1. He regarded that the position of the Salaf is to refrain from inquiring into the meanings of Allah's attributes and leave the explanation of their meanings to Allah, Exalted be He. But, they say that the position of the Salaf is to affirm these attributes and not to leave the explanation of their meanings to Allah.
2. He tried to reconcile the two positions claiming that the differences between them are not great, though the position of the *Khalaf* is completely *ta'wil* (metaphorical interpretation).
3. He did not regard the *Khalaf* who resorted to *ta'wil* as sinful or astray but he tried to find excuses for them, though they opposed the opinions of the first generation of the Companions and their successors.

Now I shall reply to these objections.

As for the first objection, we say that this opinion is not of Al-Banna alone but it is also the opinion of many Imams and great scholars. This is stated by the Hanbalite Sheikh Mara'i ibn Yusuf al-Karmi (d. 1032 AH) in his book *Aqawil ath-Thiqat fi Ta'wil al-Asma' was-Sifat* (The Sayings of the Trustworthy Scholars in Interpreting Allah's Names and Attributes). He stated that the majority of the scholars of *Ahl as-Sunnah*, including the *Salaf* and the scholars of *Hadith*, agree on believing in these Attributes but they leave the explanation of their meanings to Allah, Exalted be He. They do not interpret them metaphorically nor compare Allah to human beings.

Abu al-Qasim al-Lalika'i narrated in *Usul as-Sunnah* that Muhammad ibn al-Hasan said, "All jurists from the east to the west have agreed on the belief in what is contained in the Qur'an and the authentic *hadiths* regarding the attributes of Allah, Exalted be He, without interpretation, description, or comparison".

1. The tract, *Creeds*.

This indicates that the *Salaf* did not interpret these texts but they refrained from inquiring into the meanings of Allah's Attributes and left the explanation of their meanings to Allah, Exalted be He. This is because they believe that man's intellect and knowledge are limited. Allah, Exalted be He, says,

﴿He knows what (appears to his creatures as) before or after or behind them: but they shall not compass it with their knowledge.﴾

(Taha: 110)

As for the reconciliation of the two positions, Al-Banna was not the first to try this, but it was the approach of some great scholars and *Muhaddithun* like the *Salafi* and sufi scholar Al-Wasiti and the *Salafi* scholar Jamal ad-Din al-Qasimi (d. 1332 AH). Thus, we find that Al-Banna did not deviate from the way of the verifying Imams who are keen on building not destruction and joining not separating.

As for not labeling those who resort to metaphorical interpretation (*ta'wil*) as sinful or astray, it is the same position of Imam ibn Taymiyah and his disciple Ibn al-Qayyim. If the *salafi* adherents are to be condemned for their excessiveness in labeling some Muslims who resort to *ta'wil* as unbelievers, sinful, or corrupt, also their opponents are to be blamed for labeling them as astray and accusing them of anthropomorphization and comparing Allah to His creatures.

The Methodology of the Qur'an in not Gathering the Attributes of Allah together

I want to direct your attention to an important issue concerning the attributes of Allah. While teaching or introducing them, according to the position of the *Salaf*, we should follow the style of the Qur'an and the *Sunnah* in separating them, for we should believe in them as they are and in the way they are presented. Therefore, we should not gather all these attributes in one context that may seem not befitting to Allah's Perfection, such as to say that one should believe that Allah has a face, eyes, hands, fingers, foot, leg, etc. This context leads one to think that the Divine Being is composed of several parts. Neither the Qur'an nor the *Sunnah* made this. The Prophet (pbuh) did not make a condition to believe in Allah in said detail to enter Islam. Also, this was not the way of the Companions and their

successors. Whenever, the Muslim recites the Qur'an or reads the *hadiths* and comes to a verse or a *hadith* containing one of the attributes of Allah, he should believe in it as it is without distortion, rejection, explanation of how it is, or comparison.

The Muslim Brotherhood and the Asha'irah

The Muslim Brotherhood are accused of belonging to the *Asha'irah* school. Nevertheless, this is not to be considered underestimation since the majority of the Muslim *Ummah* belong to either the *Asha'irah* school or the *Maturidiyyah* school.⁽¹⁾ The *Maliki* and *Shafi'i* scholars belong to the *Asha'irah* and the *Hanafi* followers belong to the *Maturidiyyah*. Furthermore, most of the Islamic universities including Al-Azhar University are *Asha'irah*. Moreover, the *Asha'irah* belong to *Ahl as-Sunnah* and both they and the *Maturidiyyah* have defended the *Sunnah* of the Prophet. They may be mistaken in some points but we are all humans and are prone to errors. The Muslim Brotherhood nevertheless are not *Asha'irah* and do not oppose the *Asha'irah*. They take their principles basically from the Glorious Qur'an then from the authentic *Sunnah*, and then they benefit from the best opinions of all other Muslim schools on the basis of good proofs without fanaticism or inflexibility.

1. *Asha'irah* and *Maturidiyyah* are the two Muslim schools of theology that together form the doctrine of *Ahl as-Sunnah*.

8. The Brotherhood and *Tasawwuf*

The *Salafi* adherents who oppose *tasawwuf* accuse the Muslim Brotherhood of being a sufi group. They take as their evidence the fact that Al-Banna himself wrote in his autobiography that he followed in his early life a sufi way, namely the *Hasafiyyah* way. Also, he described the Call of the Brotherhood as a sufi fact. They also maintain that the sufi education has its effect on the Muslim Brotherhood in many aspects like their extreme love for each other, and over-estimation of their Imam, Al-Banna, to the degree of sanctification and regarding his tracts and words as if they were a revealed inspiration.

On the contrary, the sufi groups accuse the Muslim Brotherhood of being a *Salafi* group which disapproves of the sufi thoughts and practices and describes them as heresies and falsehood, such as their circumambulating the mausoleums of pious men, seeking help from them, and celebrating the occasions of their birthdays.

In fact, the Muslim Brotherhood Call is a wonderful blend of these two currents. It is as its founder explained, "a *Salafi* call and a sufi fact." It is a *Salafi* call because they call people to return to the pure sources of Islam: the Book of Allah and the *Sunnah* of His Messenger (pbuh), and a sufi fact because they work on the basis of the importance of virtue, purification of the heart, cleanliness of the soul, persistency of action, love for the sake of Allah, and joining together for the sake of good.

These are indeed the principles of true *tasawwuf* which Al-Banna adopted, not the polytheistic practices regarding *`aqidah*, innovation in religion, or education of negativity. According to Al-Banna, true *tasawwuf* is represented in the following aspects:

- Purification of the soul and cleanliness of the heart. Purification of the soul is the first step on the way of eternal prosperity. Allah says,

﴿By the soul, and the proportion and order given to it; and its inspiration as to its wrong and its right; truly he succeeds that purifies it, and he fails that corrupts it!﴾

(Ash-Shams: 7-10)

As for the heart, it is that lump of flesh in the body; if it is sound the whole body is sound as well, and if it is decayed, the whole body is decayed as well. Its soundness is the basis of salvation on the Day of Resurrection. Allah, Exalted be He, says,

﴿The Day whereon neither wealth nor sons will avail, but only he (will prosper) that brings to Allah a sound heart.﴾

(Al-Shu'ara': 88-89)

So the heart must be cleared and purified of its sins and diseases.

- Persistency of good deeds is obligatory on every Muslim, for the most beloved deeds by Allah are those which man is consistent in even if they are minor good deeds.

- Devotion to Allah and fearing Him alone as His due regardless of any human power. Allah says,

﴿(It is the practice of those) who preach the Messages of Allah, and fear Him, and fear none but Allah...﴾

(Al-Ahzab: 39)

These are also those who are described in the verse,

﴿O ye 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...﴾

(Al-Ma'idah: 54)

They fear no one except Allah because they are certain that any creature cannot harm them since all creatures are helpless regarding their life, death, and sustenance:

﴿... When their term is reached, not an hour can they cause delay, nor (an hour) can they advance (it in anticipation).﴾

(Al-A'raf: 34)

● Love for the sake of Allah is one of the main fundamentals upon which the Muslim society is based. Its members are linked by means of mutual conceptions, mutual ideology, as well as mutual emotions. The greatest, deepest, and most everlasting of these emotions is love for the sake of Allah. It is love for no worldly interests; it is based on belief in Allah, drawing near to Him, and wish for the victory of Islam.

● Joining together for the sake of good is one of the aspects of love for the sake of Allah. It means mutual understanding, solidarity, and enjoining the good:

﴿... and do good; that ye may prosper.﴾

(Al-Hajj: 77)

﴿Let there arise out of you a band of people inviting to all that is good...﴾

(Al-Imran: 104)

﴿... Help ye one another in righteousness and piety, but help ye not one another in sin and rancour...﴾

(Al-Ma'idah: 2)

﴿By the time, verily man is in loss, except such as have faith, and do righteous deeds, and (join together) in the mutual enjoining of Truth, and of patience and constancy.﴾

(Al-Asr: 1:3)

The Prophet (pbuh) said,

"He who calls (people) to righteousness, there will be reward (assured) for him like the rewards of those who adhere to it."⁽¹⁾

"Actions are but by intentions (behind them) and for every one is what he intended."⁽²⁾

Also, Al-Banna benefited from his sufi experience. This appears in many of the Brotherhood's mottoes like "Allah is our goal" (meaning that Allah's pleasure is the end of all our action and Call) and "the Messenger is our example." This also appears in some of the pillars of the *bay'ah*

1. Narrated by Muslim.

2. Narrated by Al-Bukhari and Muslim.

(covenant) like sincerity, resoluteness, brotherhood, action, *jihad*, perseverance, and trust. Moreover, Al-Banna had a discriminatory mind; he took all that is good and left all that is bad.

It is worthy mentioning that sheikh ibn Taymiyah and his student Ibn al-Qayyim were not absolutely against *tasawwuf* as some of their followers may allege. They adopted some of the sufi principles which appeared in ibn Taymiyah's *Majmu' al-Fatawa* and Ibn al-Qayyim's *Madarij as-Salikin*. Even Imam ibn al-Jawzi (d. 597) was amongst those scholars in spite of his criticism of *tasawwuf* in his book *Talbis Iblis*.

Also, we find that many of the Muslim Brothers enjoy some kind of emotional taste, spiritual brilliance, and direction to Allah, which make their words reach the hearts and souls of people and affect them. This is evident in the writings of sheikh al-Bahiyy al-Khuli, Sa'id Ramadan, Muhammad al-Ghazali, Abd al-'Aziz Kamil, At-Tilmisani, Mashhur, As-Sisi, and many others.

An Opinion of Al-Banna concerning *Tasawwuf*

Al-Banna said that when Muslims conquered many countries after the death of the Messenger (pbuh) and when their social and economic conditions improved, they turned from the life of asceticism to the life of luxury. Some Muslim scholars feared that luxurious life might divert people from working for their life in the Hereafter, so they began to advise people not to indulge in worldly pleasures and not to prefer the transient life to the permanent life. Among those Muslim scholars who recommended leading an ascetic life was Hasan al-Basri who called for the purity of the heart, praising Allah constantly, and disciplining the souls to obey and be mindful of Allah.

These facts as other Islamic facts took the shape of a science that regulates man's behavior and formulates for him a special way of life through the stages of remembrance, worship, recognizing Allah's existence, that ends with entering Paradise and pleasing Allah. This branch of the sciences of *tasawwuf*, which Al-Banna called the sciences of raising and behavior, is one of the firmly established Islamic principles. The sufis must have benefited from this science as a remedy for hearts to make them willingly submit to the orders of Allah and refrain from what He prohibited.

However, the sufis many times exaggerated in their practices such as their exaggeration in silence, hunger, staying wake at night, and seclusion. All these practices have their origins in religion. Silence has its origin in refraining from idle talk, hunger in observing supererogatory fast, staying wake at night in offering voluntary prayers during it, and seclusion in disciplining the soul. All these are religiously praised but exceeding the limits in these practices is not religiously approved.

The first generation of sufis unfortunately was followed by a class of sufis, who mixed sufism with philosophy, logic, and the heritage of previous nations. Thus, they mixed religion with other things and many breaches had been opened. Sufism began to have different sects each formulating its ideology according to its mentality and even politics interfered in Sufism. And, sometimes sufi sects were formed like military systems or special societies and so on until sufism took its present form.

There is no doubt that *tasawwuf* and the sufi ways were among the factors of spreading Islam in many countries and far reached regions such as in Africa, its middle, and its deserts as well as in many Asian districts. Following sufi principles concerning raising and behavior no doubt has a great effect on the heart and the soul, but the previously mentioned mixing of *tasawwuf* with alien thoughts, spoils the benefits of *tasawwuf*.

It is the duty of reformers to shoulder the responsibility of reforming these sects and ways. They already have disposition to be reformed. It needs only the efforts of sincere scholars and *du`ah*.

Also, in one of his articles, Al-Banna talked about *tasawwuf* in light of the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*.

He said that Islamic *tasawwuf* in its true sense draws its fundamental principles and its rules from the Qur'an and the *Sunnah* as any Islamic branch of knowledge." This fact is supported by the opinions of the sufi Imams and sheikhs. Al-Junayd said, "Our knowledge is tied to the Qur'an and the *Sunnah* so whoever does not listen to the Prophet's *hadiths* and does not sit with jurists to learn from them, then he will corrupt whoever follows him."

Sahl ibn `Abdullah said, "Our basic fundamentals are six: the Book of Allah, the *Sunnah* of His Messenger (pbuh), protecting people from harm, consuming the lawful, avoiding sins, repentance, and giving people their rights."

Abu al-Qasim an-Nasr Abadi said, "*Tasawwuf* originally means adhering to the Qur'an and the *Sunnah* and renouncing heresies and evil desires."

However, people now describe as sufi anyone in a worn-out garment, anyone who neglects his personal cleanliness, and anyone who seems to be an idiot or neglects his religious obligations and commits violations, giving unaccepted excuses. So, if he is asked why he does not offer prayers, he says that he does so in the *Ka`bah*. And, if he is asked why he commits sins, he says that he is predestined to do them or that he has now reached a degree in which he is free from any religious obligation.

True *tasawwuf* is totally free from this allegation. A true sufi is one who adheres to the Qur'an and the *Sunnah* as his sources of guidance.

As for the accusation that the Muslim Brotherhood exaggerates in loving each other as an effect of *tasawwuf*, it is an advantage to our credit and not a defect to be blamed for. For, this strong love yields its fruit in times of ordeals. We found the Muslim Brothers sharing the smallest amount of food in prisons. Their Brothers outside prison used to supply their families with their sustenance, though they were often trailed for this act.

As for the claim that the Muslim Brotherhood overestimates their leader to the degree of sanctification, it is actually an unacceptable exaggeration. Our love for Al-Banna is the natural love and due respect for a leader. It is love which is free from any worldly interests; it is just paying the due regard for senior scholars and in the *hadith*,

"He does not belong to us he who does not show mercy to our juniors and does not pay due regard for our seniors."⁽¹⁾

But, if any one exceeds the proper limits of love then it is religiously unacceptable and Al-Banna is not to blame for this.

I myself was one of the students of Al-Banna, yet I sometimes disagreed with him concerning certain issues. Where is then the so-called sanctification?

Sanctification is unacceptable and so is infallibility as it is the quality of Messengers only. Our leaders deserve only our love and honoring which is one of the ethics of Islam.

1. Narrated by At-Tirmidhi.

Conclusion

Why Is there a Hostile Attitude towards the Brotherhood?

I conclude my book by answering an important question, namely why do different groups, both inside and outside, adopt a hostile attitude towards the Muslim Brotherhood? Are the Muslim Brotherhood themselves responsible for such attitude? Or is it the responsibility of those who adopt it?

Satisfying All People Is an Unattainable End

In this respect, two important facts have to be made clear.

First, nobody can satisfy all people. According to the Israeli narrations, it is reported that when Musa (pbuh) spoke to Allah, he asked Him to make the people not say bad words about him and be pleased with him. Allah said to him, *"I did not do so for Myself, how should I do it for you?"*

Second, the whole universe is based on disparity, variation, and contrast. Examples of this fact are: the day and the night, light and darkness, fertility and barrenness, eyesight and blindness, life and death, truth and falsehood, guidance and misguidance, monotheism and polytheism, morality and immorality, believers and unbelievers, and pious people and corrupt people. This is the *Sunnah* of Allah.

That is why Allah created Adam and Satan, Ibrahim and An-Namrud, Musa and Pharaoh, Muhammad (pbuh) and Abu Jahl. The Qur'an stressed this fact in the Qur'anic verses that read,

﴿Likewise did We make for every Messenger an enemy, satans among men and Jinns, inspiring each other with flowery discourses by way of deception...﴾

(Al-An'am: 112)

*﴿Thus have We made for every prophet an enemy among the sinners:
but enough is thy Lord to guide and to help.﴾*

(Al-Furqan: 31)

﴿O ye who believe! Take not My enemies and yours as friends...﴾

(Al-Mumtahanah: 1)

Thus, if there are among people some that are enemies of Allah Who created them and provided them with their sustenance then it is not strange that people have enemies no matter how righteous they are. Then, what about a call having principles and goals with which all people cannot be contented?

- Some people believed that the Muslim Brotherhood would restrict their thefts, aspirations, interests, and privileges. Then, no wonder that this group shows enmity for the sake of defending their interests though they do not frankly declare this intention in order to hide their deception and corruption.
- Others believed that the Muslim Brotherhood would restrict their pleasures and illegal desires such as gambling, drinking alcoholic beverages, adultery and fornication, and other forbidden acts which positive laws do not oppose. So, it is natural to find this group resist the movement that restricts their desires as the people of Lut who called them to belief and purification but their reply was, "Drive them out of your city: these are indeed men who want to be clean and pure."
- There are some people who show enmity to the Muslim Brotherhood because of ignorance. They do not know the essence of the Brotherhood's Call, its aims, its methodology, and its means. There is a saying which reads, "A person who is not familiar with a thing may show enmity to it." Allah, the Most High, says,

*﴿Nay, they charge with falsehood that whose knowledge they cannot
compass...﴾*

(Yunus: 39)

- Mass media - whether inside or outside and both in the East or the West - antagonizes the Brotherhood and tries to distort their picture and hide the truth of their Call from people. They present them as the enemies of

progress, who call to backwardness, stand against freedom, freeze the course of life, take all non-Muslims as enemies, and declare war against the whole world.

- There are also some powers that antagonize the Muslim Brotherhood because they antagonize Islam itself, its message, its civilization, and its *Ummah*. These powers are represented in Zionism, communism, and today's Crusaders and their followers. They fear its revival. They are motivated by ancient grudge, present aspirations, and constant apprehensions. They insist on their enmity in spite of the efforts of the Muslim Brotherhood to point out the flexibility of their Call, to initiate mutual talks, and to adopt moderate attitudes. They will not cease to fear the so-called Islamic danger. These powers began even to warn people against "moderate Islam" instead of the "extremist Islam" saying that the "moderate Islam" is of more lasting effect, and longer age! The followers of these powers who are affected by their philosophy and thought adopt their thoughts and attitudes whether consciously and intentionally or unconsciously by imitation.
- There are actually some Muslims who do not want Islam to prevail. They do not want their *Ummah* to prosper. They hate Islam, its teachings, and its legislation, but they cannot declare their enmity to Islam, so they direct all their enmity to the Muslim Brotherhood as a way of giving vent to their hatred and grudge against this religion. These actually will not feel satisfied unless the Muslim Brotherhood abandons their religion and Call. Once Mu`awiyah said, "I can make all my enemies satisfied except one person." He was asked, "Who is he?" He answered, "He is the envious person, for he will not be satisfied unless all the favor bestowed on me is removed."

Satisfying any opponent is possible by some means or another except for those who hate Islam since they will not feel satisfied unless they see the deterioration of Islam. That is why Allah says,

﴿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).﴾

(At-Tawbah: 32)

﴿Never will the Jews or the Christians be satisfied with thee unless thou follow their form of religion...﴾

(Al-Baqarah: 120)

This means that nothing satisfies them except abandoning Islam altogether and adopting their religions.

Allah declares the intention of these who hate Islam in the Qur'anic verse,

﴿... Nor will they cease fighting you until they turn you back from your faith if they can...﴾

(Al-Baqarah: 217)

There are three verses in the Qur'an which state that Allah will cause Islam to prevail over all religions:

﴿It is He Who hath sent His Messenger with Guidance and the Religion of Truth, to cause it to prevail over all religion, even though the pagans may detest (it).﴾

(At-Tawbah: 33) and (As-Saff: 9)

﴿... to make it prevail over all religion: and enough is Allah for a Witness.﴾

(Al-Fath: 28)

O Allah, the revealer of the Glorious Qur'an, the One Who sends the clouds, the One Who is swift in account, the One Who defeats falsehood, please disappoint our enemies and their evil schemes, guide us to the straight path, and grant us a mighty victory!

﴿Our Lord! Make us not a trial for those who practice oppression: and deliver us by Thy mercy from those who reject (Thee).﴾

(Yunus: 85-86)

May peace and blessings of Allah be upon our leader and teacher, Prophet Muhammad, his household, and followers until the Day of Resurrection!

Amen!

Glossary

AC: After Christ.

AH: After *Hijrah* (the Prophet's Emigration to Madinah).

Ahl as-Sunnah: Literally it means "the people of the *Sunnah*". The Asha`irah and Maturidiyyah are two Muslim schools of theology that together form the doctrine of "*Ahl as-Sunnah*".

`Aqidah: *`Aqidah* literally means "creed" and it refers to the basic Islamic creeds and beliefs.

Bid`ah: Any newly-innovated matter in religion.

Da`iyah (pl. *du`ah*): A Muslim who shoulders the responsibility of *da`wah*.

Da`wah: This word involves the meaning of calling people to Islam through the best and most suitable means.

Fatwa (pl. *fatawa*): A legal judgment generally issued by a scholar of *Fiqh* (Islamic Jurisprudence).

Fiqh: The science dealing with Islamic jurisprudence in all aspects, worship, marital affairs, and transactions, etc.

Hadith: Any of the traditions of the Prophet (pbuh), which contain his sayings and practices. It also refers to the science concerned with these traditions; this is always used with capital initial (*Hadith*).

Ijtihad: Personal Reasoning: a secondary source of Islamic Law.

Imam: A term with numerous connotations, all revolving about the idea of "leadership."

`Isha' (Prayer): Evening Prayer. Its time starts about one and a half hours after sunset.

Jahiliyyah: This term is used to signify the pre-Islamic period. Literally, it means ignorance. It may also be used to denote a perpetual state of

ignorance as compared with the ignorance that prevailed during the pre-Islamic period.

Jihad: Fighting in the cause of Allah or any kind of effort to make Allah's word superior, which is regarded as one of the principles of Islam.

Karamah: The Arabic word *karamah* denotes a miraculous act that Allah bestows upon a faithful and devoted person with the objective of honoring him or her.

Katibah (pl. *kata'ib*): (In this book) the word *katibah* (literally translated as "battalion") refers to a group of people who would meet and spend the night together.

Khalaf: The descendants who came after the generation of the *Tabi'un* (any one who knew, met, or heard *hadiths* and the like from a Companion of the Prophet) and those who followed them (*Tabi'u at-Tabi'in*).

Ma'dhun: An official concerned with executing marriage and divorce contracts.

Mi'raj: Ascent of the Prophet (pbuh) to Heavens.

Mihrab: A place of Prayer.

Mujahid (pl. *mujahidun*): A Muslim who shoulders the responsibility of *jihad*.

Mujtahidun (sing. *mujtahid*): Independent religious scholars who do not follow religious opinions except with proof from the Glorious Qur'an and the Prophet's *Sunnah*, from all over the Muslim world.

Murshid: The title of the Leader of the Muslim Brotherhood Organization. It literally means "guide" or "director".

pbuh: Peace be upon him.

Rak'ah (pl. *raka'at*): The prayer of Muslims consists of *raka'at* (singular-*rak'ah*), and each *rak'ah* consists of one standing, one bowing and two acts of prostration.

Riba: In Islam, *riba* (commonly known as usury or interest) is of two major kinds: (a) *Riba an-Nasi'ah*, i.e. interest on lent money; (b) *Riba al-Fadl*, i.e. taking a superior thing of the same kind of goods by

giving more of the same kind of goods of inferior quality, e.g., dates of superior quality for dates of inferior quality in greater amount. Islam strictly forbids all kinds of *riba*.

Salaf: This term refers to the righteous predecessors including the Prophet's Companions, the *Tabi`un*, and those who followed them (*Tabi`u at-Tabi`in*).

Salafi: Generally in this book, "*Salafi*" pinpoints or describes any of the followers of the Muslim group known as *Salafiyyah* (that some refer to as "Salafism"). The followers of this group, as indicated by its name, follow the way that was followed by the *Salaf*.

Shari`ah: Islamic law, which contains all the ordinances that Allah the Almighty has prescribed for Muslims.

Sunnah: All the traditions and practices of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) that have become a model to be followed by Muslims.

Surah: Any of the chapters of the Qur'an.

Tarbiyah: According to the Brotherhood, *tarbiyah* is a teaching and educational process where the elder and more experienced people train and raise the younger ones in a right way that achieves their sense of humanity and dignity according to everyone's stages of growth.

Tasawwuf: *Tasawwuf* may be defined as being faithful with Allah, getting oneself free from the control of worldly pleasures and attractions, and dealing with people in good manners.

Ummah: This word refers to the Muslim nations and communities all over the world, as one entity.

Usul al-Fiqh: The science dealing with the principles of Islamic jurisprudence.

مطابع دار الطباعة والنشر الإسلامية/العاشر من رمضان/المنطقة الصناعية ب٢ تليفاكس : ٣٦٢٣١٣ - ٣٦٣٣١٤

Printed in Egypt by ISLAMIC PRINTING & PUBLISHING Co. Tel: 015 / 363314 - 362313



The Eye of the Beholder attempts to wipe the dust off the call of the Muslim Brotherhood, to shed light on all aspects of this movement: its objectives, approach, procedure, characteristics, history, trials and accomplishments, and also to refute the doubts and accusations raised against it. With concentration on the position of the founder of the Movement, the Martyr Imam Hasan al-Banna, this book seeks testimony in his words and quotes from his tracts. It then depicts the practice and ideology of the major Islamic trend that followed al-Banna's path, derived from it, added to it, and perhaps, caused some change in it.

Born in Egypt, **Sheikh Yusuf al-Qaradawi** graduated from the Faculty of *Usul ud-Deen* (Theology), al-Azhar University, in 1953 before going on to obtain a teaching certificate in 1954 and a Ph.D. in 1973. He has served as a member in the Supervision of Religious Affairs in the Ministry of *Awqaf* (Religious Endowments), the founder and dean of the Islamic Department at the Faculties of *Shari'ah* (Islamic Law) and Education in Qatar, and the chief of the World Center for Sunnah and Sirah. He was appointed as a chairman to the Islamic scientific councils of Algerian universities and institutions. An advocate of Islamic moderation, he grew up among the mother Islamic movement. Among his teachers were Imam Hasan al-Banna, Sheikh al-Bahiy al-Khuli and Sheikh Muhammad al-Ghazali.



Al-Falah is an institution devoted to developing a better understanding of Islam among all the people of the world, Muslim and non-Muslim. Of all religions, Islam is the most maligned and misunderstood in the West. Though Oriental Studies have long been established in European and American universities, *real* Islam has seldom been presented to the world. Our aim is to clear the way for a fair appraisal of the fastest-growing religion in the world.