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Attitudes Toward and the Politicization of a Religious Terrorist Organization: A Causal Process. Analysis. Part III.

Editor

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Hizbullah's franchises are being established in Egypt, Iraq, Israel, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey. In October 1989, Hizbullah's delegates to a Tehran conclave met with over 200 representatives from Algeria, Afghanistan, Bulgaria, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ivory-Coast, Jordan, Libya, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Tunis, Yemen, and the West Bank. At that meeting, they formed a joint transnational organization that transcended Islamic sectarian schisms The Islamic Holy War (al-Jihad al-Islami) (Al-Ahad, November 1989). The name and networks of this organization imply its objectives and goals. One of those units is the military arm of Hizbullah in South-Lebanon.

The following information is provided to document the changes in the structure and constitution of Hizbullah commands and operations: (a) Iranian intelligence officers, such as Muhammad Hasan al-Askari and Ahmad Sadiqi, are the architects of Hizbullah's electoral machine. (b) The above two Iranian intelligence officers are also members of Hizbullah politburo. (c) The above two Iranian intelligence officers were commanders of Hizbullah's two main combat units [the Islamic Resistance (al-Muqawamah al-Islamiyyah) and the Islamic Holy War (al-Jihad al-Islami)] as well. (d) Over 2500 Iranian Revolutionary Guards volunteers (Arabic speaking, combat trained, and under the age of 23) and 30 Palestinian electronic experts (cellular and radio control) compose the main elements of both sections. (e) Death or disability limits the tour of duty in South-Lebanon of those Jihad al-Islami's elements. (f) They are in Lebanon to confront Israel only and have pledged to surrender their lives before their weapons. (g) Two out of every three Hizbullah elements killed (in non-sectarian conflicts) in South-Lebanon are Iranians. (h) Hizbullah's 11 politburo members, who are Lebanese nationals control Hizbullah's political and preachers network (Al-Hawzat al-'ilmiyyah). (i) These 11 politburo members have no direct knowledge of, or contact with Hizbullah's military commanders (until they are relieved from command by replacements dispatched from Iran). (j) All ex-Hizbullah military commanders, to include those labeled by the U. S. State Department and the FBI as Specially Designated Terrorists (e.g., Moughnia, Shames-el-Dean, etc.), have residence in Iran and have Iranian protection while they travel. (k) Hizbullah Lebanese membership is estimated at 10,000 elements (Hamzeh, 1993). (Most of the above information was reported to this researcher by ex-combatants/Hizbullah members; Hamzeh 1993). (See also note 5)

This rapprochement between Hizbullah and the Lebanese political system is parallel to that between Iran and the West after the death of Khomeini. Syria, Iran, and Mohammad Hussein Fadlallah orchestrated Hizbullah apparent excursion into politics by endorsing the nomination and appointment of Sayyid Hasan Nasrallah to its General Secretariat position. Had they endorsed Sayyid Ibrahim al-Amin's nomination, Hizbullah would have stayed at arm's length from Lebanon's parliament. For the latter "sought to keep Hizbullah in a state of perpetual jihad against all those who opposed their vision of an Islamic Lebanon" (Hamzeh, 1993, p. 324; Shukayr 1992).

Musawi and his family were killed when on February 5, 1992 an Israeli Helicopter Gun Ship intercepted his motorcade.

1

International Bulletin of Political Psychology

The eight Politburo members elected & reelected to the Lebanese parliament are: Shaykh Abu Salem Yaghi, Sayyid Ibrahim Amin al-Sayyid, Shaykh Khoder Ali Tlays, Al-Hajj Muhammad Finaysh, Al-Hajj Muhammad Ra'ad, Al-Hajj Muhammad Ahmad Berjawi, Ali Hassan Taha, and Moustapha Nasrallah. Four of the remaining 7 politburo members are Iranian nationals.

Nasrallah organized a group of 12 Iranian intelligence experts, 800 election workers, and a massive membership mobilization machine that contacted people, transported them to voting centers, and paid their travel and lodging expenses in order for Hizbullah's ideology to be presented in the Lebanese parliament. He was able to carry it out, three times so far, over Shaykh Subhi al-Tufayli's objection because the latter had call on his supporters to burn the polling centers in Brital, Taraya, Shmoustar, Boudnayal, Hermil, and Nabi Sheet--(Based on the various activities that were reported by Al-Ahed between 1988 and 1997; Hamzeh 1993).

The fatwa states: "Every man will be asked about his vote on judgment day--any adherent to the supreme Islamic interest should hold the list high and drop it as is in the voting box--and it is illicit to elect anybody else who is not on the list" (Hamzeh, 1993, p. 323).

On September 14, 2000 Al-Nahar reported that actual unemployment in Lebanon is reaching 46%, and that over 1 million Syrian laborers/employees are aggravating Lebanon's critical unemployment.

The number of cases in each sample necessary to test this study's hypothesized attitudes of Lebanese, between the ages of 18 and 26, toward Hizbullah is 601 [$n= 601 = (z/e)^{\wedge}(p) (1-p)$ where $z = 1.96$ for a 95% confidence level, the proportion of sampling error is represented by e , and the incidence of cases by p]. This means that this study would need to test a minimum of 601 young Lebanese to meet the minimum sample size required to formulate a sample representative of the whole Lebanese population that are between the ages of 18 and 26.

However, the number of cases in each sample necessary to maintain the statistical significance of its scales' outcomes, which contain 29 items or less each, is 61. From this perspective, this study's samples of 69, 73, and 81 exceed the minimum sample size required to maintain the statistical significance of its outcomes.

In 1932, the only census in Lebanon's history was taken. This pre-independence census was conducted by a French mandate, and its records confines offspring's polling place.

These conditional changes may have taken place, if some Lebanese are not implicating Hizbullah in the Israeli occupation and/or attributing Israel's withdrawal to Hizbullah. They may also experience slight and/or transient changes in attitudes toward Hizbullah if they perceive its civic activities to be essential to rebuild their communities' infrastructures.

Lebanon, in view of a leading cleric of Hizbullah, Sayyid Ibrahim al-Amin, "is an impure realm that has to be cleansed," and in which "the Shi'a state that found its fulfillment in Iran should be duplicated. . . by Hizbullah" as a step toward a world's central Islamic state. In addition to liberty and freedom from imperialism, Hizbullah's objectives include Israel's obliteration from existence, Phalange (Maronites militia) submission, and the consolidation of the Islamic international liberation movements (Schbley 1990).

2

International Bulletin of Political Psychology

The four primary Lebanese Newspapers, Al-Hayat, Al-Nahar, Al-Safir, and L'Orient Le-Jour, reported on September 6, 1992, September 15, 1996, and September 3, 2000, allegations of fraud, coercion, and bribes that were levied against Hizbullah.

Reported by all four Lebanese Newspapers, Al-Hayat, Al-Nahar, Al-Safir, and L'Orient Le-Jour, on September 6, 2000.

At each occasion, a Lebanese Interior Minister attested to the results to be accurate and legitimate.

Hizbullah's involvement in Lebanese politics is a great act of terrorism in and by itself, as perceived by many Lebanese. Like most other religious terrorist organizations, their "potential for still more and even greater acts of violence cannot be prudently discounted" (Hoffman 1999, p. 5).

On 16 July 2000, Radio Lebanon (Beirut) reported a clash between armed Hizbullah and Amal militants in the south Lebanese town of Markaba that left two dead and one wounded. Security forces intervened and arrested several people. Relations between the two militias have deteriorated since the Israeli withdrawal from south Lebanon. A series of similar clashes last month left at least seven people wounded (Middle East Intelligence Bulletin August 2000).

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3

International Bulletin of Political Psychology

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