CIRCUMSTANTIAL PRAGMATISM: THE FLEXIBLE IDEOLOGY OF THE LIBANESI HIZBULLAH

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Since its founding in the early 1980s, Hizbullah, the ‘Party of God’, is now in the international limelight as it never has been before. Hizbullah’s founding principles were its militant resistance to foreign occupation and influence in Lebanon and the establishment of an Islamic system in Lebanon based upon the doctrines derived by Ayatollah Ruhallah Khomeini in the Iranian Revolution. Upon examination, Hizbullah’s ideology and major goals of resisting Israeli occupation and establishing a more just society under an Islamic structure seem to remain much the same since its founding, though the movement’s behavior and decisions both within the Lebanese political system and in the international community indicate a reprioritization of its objectives to solidify its power and popularity gains and ensure its continued existence in response to changing circumstances and new challenges.

According to the party, the only restraint on its operational choices, ranging from social services provision to armed resistance to political participation, is the Islamic law, or shari’ah, based on the interpretations of the wali al-faqih (Jurist-Consult, also the Supreme Ayatollah of Iran under this doctrine). However from its initial articulation of purpose in the Open Letter of 1985 Hizbullah has demonstrated a pragmatic acknowledgment and adaptation to its circumstances based on a flexibility that is built into its guiding ideology, increasing responsiveness to domestic political demands as well as to the movements of the international community. The flexible pragmatism of Hizbullah has only been further galvanized by its participation in the Lebanese elections of 1992 and subsequent elections that have integrated it into mainstream Lebanese political life.

Within the structure of the Ta’if Agreement, the negotiated peace settlement that officially concluded the Lebanese civil war, Hizbullah chose to participate in the parliamentary elections in 1992 after much internal debate. This decision was a watershed moment for the party, which demonstrated its realization that participation in the Lebanese peace process was crucial to the guarantee of its future existence. In exchange for the acquiescence to its militant resistance activities by other Lebanese factions, Hizbullah bound itself to the future political structure of the country. Hizbullah began as a fledgling opposition party, albeit with a significant popular base in its core strongholds of the Beirut suburbs, the Bakaa valley and to a lesser extent in south Lebanon, and steadily grew in
popularity over the last fourteen years through a pragmatic program of resistance to occupation, provision of social services, coordinated political activity and international media outreach. Due to its approach and activities, Hizbullah has grown into the largest political party and most powerful Shi’ite movement in Lebanon’s confessional system. Remaining in the opposition after the 1996 and 2000 elections, Hizbullah continued to espouse an ideology of resistance first while pursuing an Islamic society, yet at the same time took strategic decisions to maintain popularity and ensure continuity that have required the party to be more inclusive and less dogmatic about its pursuit of an Islamic state. The party’s decision to join the national unity government following the 2005 elections can be seen as a response to widespread opposition of Syrian influence in Lebanon after the assassination of former prime minister Rafik Hariri, reflecting a major change in policy and strategy for the movement. With the withdrawal of Syrian forces from the country in Spring 2005 and in contradiction of previously stated ideological articulations and positions, Hizbullah’s leadership chose to take this pragmatic step to ensure its survival and shore up its influence, further integrating itself into Lebanese political life.

In order to better understand Hizbullah’s choices with the hope of predicting future behavior, it is important to examine several questions. First how has Hizbullah’s conception of its purpose and elaboration of its ideology changed since its founding? Has participation in the Lebanese political system had a moderating effect on the movement through a ‘Lebanonization’ of the party’s behavior as some analysts contend, increasing the likelihood of Hizbullah eventually demilitarizing its operations? How have Israel’s and Syria’s withdrawals from Lebanon and international developments in the US-led effort to combat terrorism affected Hizbullah’s military and political activities? Looking forward, what do Hizbullah’s choice to participate in government and its response to international events indicate about the potential roles Hizbullah will choose to play within the context of Lebanese social and political life and the international relations of the Greater Middle East? Answers to these questions require an analysis and interpretation of both Hizbullah ideology and its behavior.

**Ideological Foundations**

There are four main components to Hizbullah’s ideology that help to understand its choices and to predict how it may behave in the future: resistance, construction of an Islamic society, jurisdiction of the Jurist-Theologian, and use of jihad as a means to pursue its objectives. In its ‘Open Letter’ of February 16, 1985, Hizbullah announced its existence, purpose and objectives for the first time:
“The sons of our umma are now in a state of growing confrontation with them (the Lebanese Phalangists, Israel, France and the US), and will remain so until the realization of the following three objectives:

a) To expel the Americans, the French and their allies definitely from Lebanon, putting an end to any colonialist entity on our land;

b) To submit the Phalanges to a just power and bring them all to justice for the crimes they have perpetrated against Muslims and Christians;

c) To permit all the sons of our people to determine their future and to choose in all the liberty the form of government they desire. We call upon all of them to pick the option of Islamic government, which alone is capable of guaranteeing justice and liberty for all. Only an Islamic regime can stop any further tentative attempts of imperialistic infiltration into our country. These are Lebanon’s objectives; those are its enemies.”

Resistance and the establishment of the Islamic system

From the outset Hizbullah declared its main purpose to be resistance to any foreign occupation in Lebanon and more specifically, to Israeli occupation of any land in the Middle East. Interwoven into the resistance to the occupation, is the call to embrace Islam as the most complete and true faith for all people. Addressing non-devout Muslims and all non-Muslims alike the ‘Open Letter’ exhorts all to embrace Hizbullah’s interpretation of Islam as a life system, under the guidance of the wali al-faqih. According to this interpretation, a devout Muslim must embrace internal and external jihad against injustice and one’s oppressors as a duty, and must strive to implement an Islamic social system as a means of establishing God’s authority on earth. In its letter, Hizbullah gives resistance to oppression and occupation priority, however some analysts such as Ahmad Hamzeh argue that, “Whatever its operational choices, Hizbullah’s ultimate goal is the same: to seize political power and establish an Islamic order.”

Though the establishment of an Islamic society is an integral component of the Hizbullah vision, it would be misleading to say simply that Hizbullah originally or currently intends to remake Lebanon as an Islamic state. Rather the Open Letter calls for the establishment of a system in which “all the sons of our people (are able) to determine their future and to choose in all the liberty the form of government they desire.” As Beth Davies-Stofka argues, “Hizbullah’s Open Letter asserted that a struggle for the cause of Islam is just and that an Islamic society is the best sustainer of peace and justice. Hizbullah also as-
asserted a certain democratic vision, in which the Lebanese people would be allowed to see the virtues of Islamic society and freely choose it for themselves.” From the beginning, Hizbullah understood and accepted that the establishment of an Islamic system in Lebanon was a long-term project, not to be realized through an abrupt revolution, but rather as a mutually reinforcing project to the resistance effort. Moreover, the party’s articulation of its goals indicates the understanding that its continuation and success are built on popular support. Furthermore, by encouraging and drawing on the consensus against occupation among non-Muslim and non-Shi’a circles, Hizbullah gained support or at least sympathy from outside its home confessional community. Resisting occupation of Lebanon and supporting the Palestinians in their effort to liberate their lands was and is a critical component of establishing an Islamic system, just as the establishment of an Islamic system requires each Muslim to do everything in his power to resist occupation.

Jurisdiction of the jurist-theologian

A third component of Hizbullah ideology, one that originates in its conception of the implementation of an Islamic system and is core to its organization, operational choices and geo-political position, is the Jurisdiction of the Jurist-Consult or wilayat-e-faqih. Hizbullah regards the leadership of the Islamic umma to reside in the hands of the Jurist-Consult as articulated by the doctrines of Ayatollah Ruhallah Khomeini. According to the wilayat-e-faqih doctrine, the supreme marja’ (or interpreter of the law also known as the Jurist-Consult) has the final authority to alter ideology or guiding principles to varying historical circumstances. The Jurist-Consult may grant permission or forbid virtually any operational choice or strategy. Thus, depending on the circumstances, the Supreme Ayatollah may sanction or forbid election activity, use of the whole range of military maneuvers against occupation, participation in government or the conduct of peace negotiations with a given enemy, etc. Without delving into the particulars of the wilayat-e-faqih system any further, the main benefits of Hizbullah’s adoption of this doctrine are twofold: the flexibility it gives the movement to adapt its practices and choices to changing circumstances and its emphasis on obedience and uniformity. Hamzeh summarizes the benefit of flexibility: “Hizbullah’s actions or practices are not bound by one rigid rule but by many rules according to the circumstances decided upon by the wali al-faqih.” This benefit amounts to a built in pragmatism within Hizbullah’s ideology that allows the organization to adopt or reject strategies and tactics, make potentially significant changes to its program and choose its enemies as circumstances dictate, thus avoiding charges of hypocrisy or ‘selling out’ by the party faithful, as long as they are approved by the Jurist-Consult.
Hamzeh’s summary alludes to the other benefit available to Hizbullah of the doctrine of the wilayat-e-faqih, the obedience of members and believers. If one subscribes to the wilayat-e-faqih, which implies that Hizbullah is the extension of the Supreme Jurist-Consult’s authority in Lebanon, then one must abide by the movement’s authority as representative of the wali al-faqih. Through its adoption and implementation of the doctrine, however, Hizbullah binds itself to the decisions of the leader of Iran. Regardless of Hizbullah’s insistence that its leadership and apparatus remain separate from that of Iran, in the end, the final authority and interpreter of what is allowed and forbidden for both is the same individual. As Hamzeh says, “Hizbullah under wilayat al-faqih not only is legally bound by the commands of the jurisconsult but also bears the politico-religious responsibility for executing the legitimate commands of the wali al-faqih.” By binding its authority and support to the decisions of the Supreme Leader of another state with no direct control over that leader’s decisions, Hizbullah exposes itself to potential pressure from international actors that are exerting pressure on Iran.

In addition to exposing itself to Iranian directed international pressures, the party leadership, particularly those who are clerics, exposes itself to domestic pressures from the faithful as well as the immediate face of the Jurist-Consult and must be accountable to the faithful, lest it lose popular support. As Davis-Stofka argues, in its initial few years of operation in southern Lebanon, Hizbullah attempted to enforce a stricter interpretation of Islamic law requiring major changes in the areas of southern Lebanon that it had occupied. Initially, she argues, “Hizbullah’s ‘Islamic Revolution’ was not responsive to the needs of southern Lebanon, and as a result, Hizbullah lost the support of a population experienced in conducting a resistance in its own self-defense.” The pursuit of an Islamic system in its territories of control then began to take a back seat to cultivation of support among the population.

**Jihad**

The final component of Hizbullah ideology is the concept of jihad and the tactics that such a concept gives rise to. The movement views jihad as a basic tenet of a devout Muslim’s life that includes both struggle within oneself for faithfulness right action and against an enemy, with the conduct of both being bound by the guidance of the Jurist-Consult. For our purposes, the focus is on the jihad that involves struggle with an enemy, which Hizbullah refers to as ‘defensive jihad’. According to Qassem, “To him (the wali al-faqih) is referred the task of evaluating the objective circumstances, weighing the advantages and hardships and exercising the jihad option...Jihad may be required for the sake of affirming rights and laying their proper foundations without foreseeing
immediate practical results. It could thus be a resurrection movement aimed at mobilizing the nation...it could thus be a long-term plan during which the levels of sacrifice differ, amassing from one phase to another until victory is achieved.”

To Hizbullah, jihad is a relatively abstract concept that can have many manifestations depending on the situation and the guidance of the Jurist-Consult. Throughout its existence, Hizbullah has consistently refused to limit the tactics at its disposal, viewing martyrdom operations, conducted with deference to the opinion of the wilayat-e-faqih, as a legitimate component of jihad. As Hamzeh points out, “The armed jihad employed by Hizbullah has included a variety of techniques, among them martyrdom operations, guerrilla warfare, hostage taking and forceful seizure of power.” For Hizbullah all of these tactics are justified when combating an enemy with disproportionate power to one’s own, particularly if that enemy is an occupier: “Martyrdom and jihad operations conducted by the Islamic Resistance in Lebanon have marked many objectives and achievements, the most prominent of which are the following: compensation for military imbalance and infliction of painful losses on enemy ranks...the Israeli command’s reconsideration of its military approach in Lebanon...and the surge of patriotic fervor across the region.” From its perspective, jihad that includes martyrdom operations is a legitimate and effective resistance tool that serves as a clear deterrent to further aggression against Lebanese territory.

Pragmatic interpretations of ideology

As Hizbullah has grown into its role in the political sphere, it has displayed the circumstantial pragmatism built into its ideology. At different times and in various ways Hizbullah has adjusted its priorities and tactics to extend its domestic appeal, strengthen relationships with critical supporters and even to limit criticism and pressure from key enemies, a description that is perhaps not very different than that of many political actors throughout the world. Strategic, operational and political approaches have adjusted to changing realities to guarantee the continued existence and expansion of the party in three main areas: social services provision, establishment of the Islamic system, resistance methods and domestic political alliances.

Social services

Prior to its participation in the 1992 parliamentary elections, Hizbullah had already begun to realize the impact that the effective provision of social services, free from corrupt practices, could have on its support and popularity. Beginning soon after the publishing of the Open Letter, Hizbullah philanthropic organizations began to repair war damage and improve the provision of basic
utility and social services such as waste collection and water distribution that the crippled Lebanese government was unwilling or unable to provide, particularly in the parties home base of Beirut’s southern suburbs\textsuperscript{10}. Throughout the late 1980s the party developed new institutions within its administrative structure that specifically addressed the health, educational and welfare needs of Lebanese citizens not being served by the Lebanese government. When it took the decision to participate in the parliamentary elections of 1992, Hizbullah further indicated its commitment to the provision of social services by devoting nearly as much text in its 1992 Electoral Program to the ‘Administrative, Social and Educational Levels’, as it did to the ‘General Political Level’. The program called for the developing infrastructure in oppressed regions, improving technical research capacity and education recognition for Lebanese institutions, and enacting health and social security benefit laws to cover all Lebanese\textsuperscript{11}.

Throughout the 1990s Hizbullah increased its social services work dramatically, by creating new entities within its organizational structure and expanding Hizbullah-sponsored development projects to address health care, educational and utilities services for municipalities primarily in its home territories of the Beirut suburbs, Bekaa valley and southern Lebanon, which are also the most underdeveloped provinces and those that felt the impact of Israeli occupation the greatest. Between 1988 and 2002, the Jihad al-Bina’, the construction organization of Hizbullah’s Social Unit, built or rehabilitated 35 schools, 9,643 homes, 800 shops, 5 hospitals, 8 infirmaries, 100 mosques, 8 cultural centers and 7 agricultural cooperatives. Hizbullah’s Islamic Health Unit has also operates 6 hospitals, 21 dispensaries, 12 mobile dispensaries, 10 dental clinics and 7 civil defense centers with the potential to serve over 400,000 beneficiaries per year. Finally between 1996 and 2001, Hizbullah’s Educational Unit provided over 21 million Lebanese lira (approximately $14 million) in financial aid and scholarships to needy and worthy students\textsuperscript{12}. Though Hizbullah contends that such efforts are born our of the movement’s commitment to Islamic social justice for all and a fulfillment of its responsibilities rather than a direct ploy to woo potential voters and solidify its core support, it clearly recognizes the potential of such activities to encourage popular support. Qassem acknowledges this fact by saying, “While such services do have a considerable effect on the populace, the essence of participation ultimately resides in belief in the overall path. Social work serves to enrich supporters’ confidence in the viability of the Party’s cause and course, as it cooperates, collaborates and joins forces to remain strong and tenacious in its political and resistance roles.”\textsuperscript{13} Whether or not support comes from the general populace’s belief in Hizbullah’s ideology of resistance and adherence to the leadership of the wali al-faqih is perhaps a secondary point. The commitment to provision of social services and the acknowledgment of the critical role such services play in buttressing support for the party indicates
that the party understands that its power depends to a significant degree on the
maintenance of popular support.

Establishment of the Islamic system

From the time of the publishing of the Open Letter, Hizbullah has understood that the establishment of its interpretation of the Islamic system in Lebanon would require long-term efforts and in the process the ideal has perhaps become what Harb and Leenders call a 'legal abstraction'. Though that system remains a goal of the organization, its behavior and statements, particularly since the 1992 Election Program, indicate that Hizbullah is willing to set aside that goal when it is conducive to expanding support for the party and increasing its popular reach. Hizbullah's election programs are significant indicators of the importance of the objective both for what they say and what they do not. In the 1992 Program Hizbullah does not even directly mention the establishment of such a system as a discrete objective in its own right. The program states:

"These fundamentals (of resisting occupation and restoring Lebanese self-determination in all spheres) have become an integral part of our people's mindset, turning into a daily jihad and political track that rests on two pivotal objectives:

a) To liberate Lebanon from Zionist occupation and from being an addendum to the powers of hegemony;
b) To abolish political sectarianism."

The establishment of an Islamic state does not factor into the basic objectives outlined by the party in its first program and has not in subsequent revisions. Moreover, as Harb and Leenders point out, "since Hizbullah's subsequent participation in Lebanon's post-war political system since the early 1990s, it has never mentioned the establishment of an Islamic state in its election programmes, nor have its members in parliament or in elected positions of local government called for an Islamic state or striven towards legislation or policies suggesting an opportunistic strategy towards this presumed goal." This lack of emphasis contrasts with the statement in the Open letter that "Only an Islamic regime can stop any further tentative attempts of imperialistic infiltration into our country". Such a lack of emphasis can be seen as a sort of deprioritization of the establishment of an Islamic state or society with the replacement of political activity.

Hizbullah has not only refrained from mentioning the goal of an Islamic system in its campaigns and election programs but has actually guaranteed the rights of confessional minorities in these statements. The 1992 Election Program includes as one of the major tenets of its political program "Guaranteeing freedom of creed and religious expression, respect for the sanctity of all divine religions." Though some could argue that this is a simple political appeal to
garner support for Hizbullah from non-Shi’a sectors of Lebanon, even that in itself is significant because it is an acknowledgment by the party that successful pursuit of its major goals of resistance to occupation and the abolishment of the Lebanese confessional system according to its election program will require support broader than its own confessional community.

Given that the Shi’ite population is projected to grow into the largest confessional group in terms of population in Lebanon, perhaps even reaching majority levels in the next 20-25 years, Hizbullah’s goal of abolishing the system of confessional representation in Lebanese political life could be seen as a move to insure its future dominance, a situation in which it would then seek to establish an Islamic system. Some may argue that Hizbullah views the abolition of the Lebanese sectarian system as a way for the party to gain numerical hegemony and institute its vision of Islamic system through that method. However such an argument would rest on the faulty assumption that all Lebanese Shi’a are Hizbullah supporters who would turn out to support the movement and its program if a ‘one man, one vote system’ were implemented. Statements by the party reflect its understanding that even if an Islamic system were achieved, it would require safeguards for Lebanon’s various confessional communities. As Sheikh Qassem says, “We need not fear for the sects, since suitable laws that safeguard freedom of religion and worship can indeed be enacted.”

Hizbullah’s positive statements about behavior with respect to the establishment of an Islamic system since the inauguration of its political participation program only serve to reinforce the notion that the party recognizes that goal to have its limits.

Resistance operations

Due to international pressures, over time Hizbullah has modified the prosecution of its resistance to occupation by moderating its choice of resistance tactics. Early in its history, the movement planned and endorsed suicide bombings as a means to weaken the Israeli occupation forces. Hizbullah continues to maintain its right to use whatever methods it deems necessary to resist oppression and occupation of Lebanon as Sheikh Qassem argues in his book: “It is neither possible to delineate a unique channel for resistance operations, nor to limit their margin of maneuver to pre-specified methods...It is best to beleaguer the enemy and cause ti to worry over what surprises may be in store.” However following the withdrawal of Israeli forces from southern Lebanon in May 2000, and particularly since the 9/11 attacks and the subsequent initiation of the ‘war on terrorism’, Hizbullah has contained its militant operations and to an extent even its rhetoric.

Through Harb’s interviews with Hizbullah members, she contends that Hizbullah has admitted the party is ‘lying low’ since May 2003. Since that period
she goes on to argue that “the organization has shunned any spectacular actions on the border while instigating only minor incidents designed to remind Israel that Hizbullah is still very much alive.”20 Hizbullah has also condemned the 9/11 attacks and the violent tactics used by Egyptian Islamists against the Egyptian state, has denied training Palestinian militants and has stated that it has no intention of pursuing its agenda outside the context of Lebanon and the Israeli-Palestinian situation21. The limits of militant operations as well as the statements made by the organization indicate a flexible, pragmatic response to international pressures. Though Hizbullah claims that it is committed to resisting US and Israeli-led pressure against it using whatever means it deems necessary, as the US and other Western governments stepped up their tactics and rhetoric the organization responded by choosing the option of ‘lying low’, operationally speaking. In addition, although Hizbullah condemned the US-led occupation in Iraq, it has modified its stance somewhat as Iraqi Shi’a leaders have negotiated with the US22. The self-imposed limits Hizbullah has enacted have shown the party’s willingness to adapt its positions in order to ensure that its future potential remains.

**Lebanese political Alliances**

Though Hizbullah has never totally excluded the possibility of joining the executive branch of government in Lebanon, it chose to join the opposition following the 1992, 1996 and 2000 elections. The party has argued that the confessional arrangements of Lebanese political system are an unfair representation of true voter turnout and will. In addition it has argued that the system leads to the pervasive corruption prevalent in the Lebanese social services system and public sector employment. Moreover, Sheikh Qassem points out “Individuals in government are charged with implementation and defense of any (sic) policies, even where they stand at odds with it. As such, all ministers bear responsibility for government actions, which renders Hizbullah’s acceptance of working from within the government a factor of the availability of the appropriate conditions that are in harmony with the Party’s beliefs.”23 Hizbullah was not interested in participating in government because it did not wish to be seen as endorsing a political system that it thought was unjust nor was a position in government feasible because it would restrict the party from choosing which initiatives and legislation to support on a case by case basis. Being in the opposition allowed the party to work in an ad hoc fashion with any other parliamentary groupings to pursue its agenda as it saw fit.

The governing coalition that emerged after the 2005 elections highlighted a major change in Hizbullah strategy. With the passage of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1559, which calls for the withdrawal of all foreign
occupying forces from Lebanon and the disarmament of all existing militias in the country, as well as in light of the Syrian withdrawal from the country shortly before the election, Hizbullah’s main goal became to ensure that the survival of its armed components was guaranteed. Through the machinations of Lebanon’s confessional system, Hizbullah entered into coalition voting lists with the other three main Lebanese political groupings in different regions, making it clear to them that party faithful would not be encouraged to vote for any coalition candidates that did not agree to support Hizbullah’s right to continued armed resistance. Directly ahead of the third round of parliamentary voting, Hizbullah Secretary-General Nasrallah announced that Hizbullah would for the first time consider entering government in order to safeguard the resistance. After the completion of voting Sheikh Qassem further articulated the party’s position with respect to joining government, saying: “The election alliances have developed into political alliances which will preserve the resistance movement and strengthen Hizbullah’s position against international pressures that may threaten the resistance.” The decision shows that the party realized that its continued armed resistance would be better safeguarded if it could cement the support of other Lebanese factions for the armed resistance and that it understood the best tactic for doing so would be to engage in political alliance.

Hizbullah’s future moves

Based on the mix of ideology and pragmatism that has characterized the movement’s strategies and tactics throughout its history, Hizbullah will continue to behave in much the same way as many political parties do, performing constituent service through social services provision, entering into advantageous coalitions with other parties and entering and leaving government when such a move advances its political agenda. Hizbullah’s prioritization of resistance to occupation and its relationship with Iran, particularly through the wilayat-e-faqih system, indicate that the movement will not end resistance activities until comprehensive Middle East peace agreements are reached and the confessional system of Lebanon is reformed. There is very little incentive that any international pressure can provide to do so and any domestic pressure for the movement to demilitarize is likely to be stemmed by Hizbullah’s constituent service. Hizbullah will however continue to participate in government as long as it deems that to be a significant protection against pressure to demilitarize. Despite recent disagreement within the current governing coalition, Hizbullah has not withdrawn its ministers nor indicated that it plans to do so, however this position is contingent on the continued support of all the factions for Hizbullah’s militant activities against pressure stemming from UNSC 1559. The withdrawal of Israeli forces may have lessened the influence of a major justifica-
tion for Hizbullah’s militant approach, but the persistence of the Sheba ‘a Farms issue continues to supply the movement with justification for its activities for the time being. Moreover the Israeli withdrawal perhaps convinced the Lebanese public in both Shi’a and non-Shi’a communities that Hizbullah’s resistance is a key deterrent to future Israeli aggression. Syria’s withdrawal from Lebanon may lessen the country’s direct influence in Lebanese affairs, however Hizbullah is only one of many Syrian conduits into Lebanon, albeit the most well known one. A comprehensive demilitarization of Hizbullah will only be achieved if the Supreme Leader of Iran, whether Ayatollah Khamenei or a future leader, sanctions such a step and if Hizbullah’s place as a major Lebanese political party is accepted by Western governments.

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NOTES

1 “An Open Letter to all the Oppressed in Lebanon and the World.” Hizbullah announcement delivered by Sheikh Ibrahim al-Amin in Beirut Lebanon on February 16, 1985 and subsequently published in As-Safir newspaper.
5 Hamzeh, A.N., p. 34.
6 Hamzeh, A.N., p.34.
8 Qassem, N., p. 40.
9 Qassem, N., p. 50.
11 Qassem, p. 277.
12 Hamzeh, A.N., pp. 50-54.
13 Qassem, N., p. 86.
15 Qassem, N. pp. 272-3.
16 Harb, M. and Leenders, R. p. 179.
17 Qassem, N., p. 275.
18 Qassem, N. p. 213.
19 Qassem, N., p. 266.
20 Harb, M. and Leenders, R., p. 177.
21 Ibid, pp. 178-180.
22 Ibid, p. 182.
23 Qassem, N., p. 196.