

PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE AND THE TERROR OF ANTI-TERRORISM

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In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE AND THE TERROR OF ANTI-TERRORISM

*“When it is said to them: ‘Make not mischief on the earth’,
They say: ‘Why, we only want to make peace!’ Of a surety,
they are the one who make mischief, but they realize (it) not.”
[Quran 2:11,12]*

A] DEFINITION

Definitions of terrorism are normally given by academics, government spokespersons and journalists. These are the ones who report terrorism, analyze it and comment on it. And they also have a vested interest in it. In most cases they use prescriptive definitions and not descriptive definitions.

As a result of these prescriptive definitions it appears that terrorism is only terrorism when it targets the West.

There are basically two approaches to terrorism: the LITERAL approach and the PROPAGANDISTIC approach. The latter uses it as a weapon to be exploited in the service of some power or system,

“Act of terrorism means any activity that:

- (i) involves a violent act or an act dangerous to human life.
- (ii) appears to be intended:
 - (a) to intimidate or coerce a civilian population.
 - (b) to influence the policy of government by intimidation or coercion.
 - (c) to affect the conduct of a government by assassination or kidnapping.

The U.S.A. Army Manual states that it must have religious, political or ideological objectives

B] STATE DIRECTED INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM

*“. The United States and its friends are the major supporters, sponsors and perpetrators of terrorist incidents in the world today.”
[Prof. Noam Chomsky in Western State Terrorism, edited by Alexander George]*

He is also of the opinion that America is officially committed to international terrorism; that is the systematic use of coercive intimidation as a domestic or foreign policy.

OPPRESSION IS TERRORISM

Oppression is above everything else the practice and institutionalization of violence. The problem of oppression is the problem of violence.

Those who MONOPOLIZE and BENEFIT from violence always portray that violence as NECESSARY and for the BENEFIT OF ALL.

The oppressed submit because of fear of physical death but **BECAUSE** they submit they become sick more easily and more frequently, and they die at an earlier age.

Their personal integrity, dignity and humanity is violated. They are diminished as human beings.

Yet it is the oppressed who have the SOLE JUSTIFICATION for using violence to RESIST and eventually ERADICATE oppression.

Private success and personal security can never be achieved at the expense of the collective aspirations of the masses. By doing so you endorse the status quo.

COLLECTIVE ACTION alone can question, confront and stop structural violence, institutionalized violence and criminal violence.

C] ENTER THE PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE

*“Verily Allah will never change the condition of a people unless
and until they change their own condition.”*

[Quran 13:11]

“People cannot be developed but can only develop themselves.”

[Julius Nyrere]

Klaus Seitz in a book called Adult Education Development (VOL. 57 of 2001) states: “We need to place the theory and practice of our own global learning within an international framework,” but “If we regard our own point of view as absolute and confuse a global world view with a godlike extraterrestrial perspective, we shall be taking a hegemonic stance which is irreconcilable with the goal of global learning.” (Page 78)

The history of mankind is permeated with Prisoners of Conscience. To name a few: Socrates, Galileo Galilee, Giordano Bruno, Ash-Shaheed Sayed Qutb, Ash-Shaheed Imam Abdullah Haron, Sheikh Omar Abdurahman, etc.

WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE AND MARTYRDOM?

Prisoners of Conscience share the following characteristics:

1. they are able to distinguish between right and wrong; good and bad.
2. they are able to fulfil their responsibilities.
3. they are willing to fulfil their responsibilities.
4. they retain their integrity by fulfilling their obligations.
5. they know that their wishes and personal interests cannot take precedence over their duties.

The Battle of Karbala provides us with a set of powerful psychological typologies:

THE CHARACTERS

TYOLOGY ONE: ZUHAYR IBN QAYN did not belong to the followers of Imam Husain. It appears he opposed Imam Husain. He ignored the Imam; he avoided him. He was incited by the Imam but refused, declined the invitation. His wife then persuaded him and he went. Only then did he join the Imam and became an important advisor and supporter and died fighting at Karbala.

TYOLOGY TWO: 'UBAYDULLAH IBN HURR had professed some support for the Imam - but this was only lip service; all talk, no action. The Imam invited but he declined.

He regretted this decision for the rest of his life. After the martyrdom of Imam Husain, he went to Karbala and recited a poem of sadness, regret and remorse:

“O how much I regret that I did not help him! Indeed every soul that does not set upon the right course, regrets. Indeed because I was not among the defenders, I have a great grief that will never depart.”

TYOLOGY THREE:

HURR IBN YAZID was commander of the horsemen who came to intercept the Imam before he reached Kufa. That is, he was an enemy. On the morning of the battle he went over to the Imam, asked for forgiveness and joined him. He died in the battle at Karbala.

Which one are you?

- a) the one who has to be persuaded by someone else?
- b) the one who cannot be persuaded? Or
- c) the one who has enough intellect (aql) to decide for himself? Or

- d) the one who is like Imam Husain - the one who leads the way, whether others follow or not!

The choice is yours. For not to choose is still a choice.

1. Become aware; make yourself aware.
2. Choose a direction.
3. Commit yourself to that direction.

From the above typologies we can determine who acted conscientiously and who did not.

There are many who are guilty of crimes of commission against the oppressed masses, but there are many more who are guilty of crimes of omission. Both of these groups are in no position to criticize those who sacrificed their properties, their families and their lives in the struggle against oppression.

In short it is obscene and immoral for the oppressors and their contributors to tell the oppressed how they should respond to oppression.

Prisoners of Conscience are also characterized by the fact that they exert themselves to the utmost of their ability - they are engaged in a jihad.

“Actions will be judged in accordance with intentions.” [Hadith]

TYPES OF JIHAD

- | | | |
|-------------------|---|-------------------|
| 1. Jihad-un-Nafs | - | self-purification |
| 2. Jihad-bil-Maal | - | wealth |
| 3. Jihad-bil-'Ilm | - | knowledge |
| 4. Jihad-bis-Saif | - | the sword |

A particular Hadith which is often used to discourage people from understanding Jihad reads: the Companions of the Prophet returned victorious from battle and were told that they had just fought “Jihadul asgar” and that now they enter “Jihadul akbar” i.e. self-purification. What must be remembered is that Rasullullah (pbuh) was talking to combatants and not to non-combatants!

There is an urgent need to differentiate between terrorism, self-defence, resistance and liberation struggles. Every human being and animal has a legitimate right to self-defence.

1. We are non-violent to non-violent people only.
2. When others resort to violence they make nonsense of our non-violence.
3. Unless our legitimate rights (like freedom of thought, expression and association) is protected by the legitimate right to self-defence all our other rights are going to be rendered useless and impotent.

We also contend that: racism is violence; racism is terrorism; war itself is the most potent and sophisticated form of terrorism.

SOUTH AFRICA: PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE

The Muslim community in South Africa was primarily established by what is now known as “prisoners of conscience”. These consisted of slaves, freed slaves, prisoners of war, political prisoners and those forced into political exile. The most prominent of these are:

- (i) **Ebrahim of Batavia** - a stowaway slave in the hold of the ship of Jan van Riebeeck on 6th April 1652.
- (ii) **Sheikh Yusuf of Macassar** - leader of resistance against Dutch colonialists - political exiled to Faure in 1694 - Died in exile in 1699. Established first officially recognized Muslim community in South Africa. Presented Governor Simon Van der Stel of the Cape Colony with a copy of the Quran; some of his works have been translated by Prof. S. Dangor of University of Durban-Westville (Zubdat as-Asrar: The Essence of Secrets). Other works are located in Leyden University.
- (iii) **Tuan Guru (Sheikh Abdul Qadir As-Salaam)** - brought to the Cape, together with three others. As political prisoners - imprisoned on Robben Island in 1781. He was freed in 1793. He wrote the Quran from memory whilst imprisoned and also several works on fiqh - copies of these are still in the possession of his descendants in S.A.

In 1793 he led the demand to establish jumu’ah in the Cape because since 1657 Muslims could be sentenced to death for practising Islam in public. He defied the authorities and held jumu’ah in a stone quarry in Strand Street, Cape Town. He also acquired property in Dorp Street and established the first masjid (Auwal) in S.A. in 1793. He was the quadi of the Muslim Community in S.A. until he died in 1807.

The British on their arrival in the Cape in 1804 found ±400 slave children and freed slaves being taught in the masjid. This would then be the first school for slaves in S.A.

So-called “freedom of religion” was granted to the Cape in 1804. Ironically slavery was abolished in the Cape on 1st December 1834!

- (iv) **Dr Abdurahman (1847 - 1940)** - born of slave parents in Wellington - studied medicine in Britain. Founder of the African Peoples’ Organization (A.P.O.) Prominent City Councillor and political activist.
- (v) **Sheikh Ismail Ganief (19 - 1958)** - died in a car accident. Author of numerous works - first publication in Arabic in Cairo in 1931 - Politics? My Father’s teacher.
- (vi) **Ash-Shaheed Imam Abdullah Haron** - Detained in May 1969; killed in detention after being held incommunicado for 133 days. Killed on 27th September 1969. Post-mortem and subsequent inquest found nobody responsible for his death although autopsy report stated 27 wounds on the body - some of them six days old.
- (vii) Others killed in detention (±100) included:

- | | | |
|----|---------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. | Suleiman Salojee | 9 th September 1964 |
| 2. | Unknown person | 1968 - reported in Parliament |
| 3. | Ahmed Timol | 27 th October 1971 |
| 4. | Unknown person | 5 th October 1976 |
| 5. | Dr. Hoosen Haffejee | 3 rd August 1977 |

Between 1960 and 1990 there were 78 000 detainees.

Bannings:

1. Shabaan “Barney” Desai
2. Toefy Bardien
3. Achmad Cassiem
4. Ahmad Ajam
5. Sedick Isaacs
6. Abdurahmaan Abrahams
7. Abdurahmaan Jattiem
8. Allie Fataar
9. Suleiman Keraan

A detailed analysis of the following lists

- a) Deaths in detention
- b) Assassinations
- c) Detainees
- d) Banned persons
- e) Prisoners
- f) Political Exiles

will reflect that per population group - the Muslims as an ideological unit had the highest proportion of sacrifices. This can be attributed to the fact that the early Muslims suffered the following handicaps:

- (i) they were considered infidels, that is, they weren't Christians.
- (ii) they were slaves, that is, they had no rights.
- (iii) they were not **indigenous** slaves; they were political exiles because of their resistance to European Colonialism.
- (iv) they were black, that is, they were not Europeans.

They also had the following advantages

- a) they had **ideological clarity**; they understood the dynamism of the ideology of Islam.
- a) they were **fearless**; this moral obligation to be fearless is still one of the most important obligations on its adherents.
- a) they were experienced in liberatory warfare against the colonialist conquerors in other parts of the world.

This was a formidable advantage for the first ideological community in South Africa - the community of Muslims. And it is this intellectual and ideological heritage which is being squandered by the majority of Muslim leaders in South Africa.

The total population of South Africa according to the last census (1996) was 40 million; and Muslims were 554 000. Our unofficial estimate is 1,2 million Muslims. Assuming that the official census is correct then the Muslims contribution is even more remarkable. A scientific comparative study needs to be made.

In the book “A Crime Against Humanity” - analyzing the repression of the Apartheid State edited by Max Coleman, the following is detailed

X	Bannings and Restrictions	1950 - 1989	.....	3 000 people
X	Political trials	1948 - 1989	.....	15 000
X	Publications banned for possession and distribution		.....	10 000

Persons Banned:

X	1966 – 1978	.....	841 people
X	1979	.....	152 people
X	1980	.....	24 people
X	1981	.....	11 people
X	1982	.....	82 people
X	1983	.....	61 people
X	1984	.....	11 people
X	1985	.....	10 people

The author's, of this paper, banning expired on 31st March 1986. And he was arrested on 2nd May 1986 and held in indefinite detention until charged under the Terrorism Act on 2nd December 1986; and the trial started in July 1987 and sentence passed on 28 October 1988. Released from Robben Island on bail on 22nd February 1991 but restricted under the following bail conditions:

1. R5 000 bail
2. May not travel beyond 100 km radius from his home in Cape Town.
3. May not act as a spokesperson for Qibla and P.A.C.
4. May not call for mass mobilisation or promote unlawful violence
5. Sign at the nearest police station twice a week.

These bail conditions expired on the day judgement was given in the Supreme Court Appellate division on 27th September 1993!

We can immediately see that all oppressive systems launch systematic and intensive attacks on freedom of thought, freedom of expression and freedom of association. A more comprehensive analysis show that the following facets of the oppressed peoples lives are controlled:

Bonding of families and extended families

Energy - by controlling a slave or workers diet'
Movement - by restricting them physically
Identity - you are what the oppressor calls you
Space - a homeland, a ghetto or a prison cell
Time - oppressors decide not only what you are allowed but also when you are allowed to do it.

It is in fact difficult to determine whether in fact we should present one, some or all of the following:

- a. a factual analysis
- b. a scientific analysis
- c. a statistical analysis
- d. an historical analysis
- e. a political analysis
- f. a sociological analysis
- g. a psychological analysis
- h. a philosophical analysis

If I had the time, the facilities and assistance, I have no doubt which course I would take. The more comprehensive the analyses the better. Each facet would be but a different perspective of the same social reality. But obviously the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. For our purposes a systems analysis is far better than a components analysis.

CONCLUSION

“It is He (Allah) Who has sent His Rasul with Guidance and the Deen of Truth in order to proclaim it over all other systems of life, and enough is Allah as a Witness. Muhammad (?) is the Messenger of Allah.”

[Quran 48:28,29]

“Thus have we made of you an Ummah justly balanced (on justice), that ye might be witnesses over the nations, and the Rasul a witness over yourselves.”

[Quran 2:143]

“Ye are the best of peoples evolved for Mankind, enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil, and believing in Allah.”

[Quran 3:110]

Islam is not an “ism” amongst other “isms”; it is neither an hypothesis nor a theory. Islam is not a religion amongst other religions. It is in fact **the** definition of religion.

Perhaps it might be helpful to distinguish between islam and Islam; and also between Islamic history and the history of Islam. The first two reflecting the phenomena which manifests itself with the revelation in 610 AD; and the latter two referring to the creation of man and the history of mankind!

All the great achievements of Muslims and all the great achievements of mankind/humankind generally have been attained through great sacrifices. The essence of all great achievements is sacrifice.

To sacrifice means to give up a thing of value for the sake of something else that is more important, more worthy or more valuable.

In Islam we have various degrees of sacrifice that we make daily. In order to understand the Kalimah Shahada and to live it, we have to sacrifice all the idols that we hold so dear: the idolatry of money; the idolatry of the family; the idolatry of status; and the idolatry of race superiority. We can never fathom the depths of the Kalimah Shahada if we want to cling to these idols.

“Be sure we shall test you with something of fear and hunger, some loss in goods or lives or the fruits (of your toil), but give glad tidings to those who patiently persevere, who say, when afflicted with calamity: ‘To Allah we belong, and to Him is our return’: They are the ones on whom (descend) blessings from Allah, and mercy, and they are the ones that receive guidance.”

[Quran 2: 155-157]

Sacrifice is a **law of personal transformation**. All human beings must understand this principle and practice it daily.

We must understand that the concept of sacrifice in Islam is not a mere contingency, it is a fundamental principle.

It is such an important principle that we celebrate its importance on Eid-ul-Adha in order that its significance, necessity and obligation is never lost sight of.

“Verily never will Allah change the condition of a people unless and until they change their own condition.”

[Quran 13:11]

Hajj is the occasion when the Ummah as a global community of truth, justice and peace commits itself to the total destruction and eradication of oppression and exploitation. On this occasion, we commit ourselves to speak as one, sacrifice as one and **act** as one!

Mankind is one, and mankind’s destiny is one. Physical presence alone does not establish unity. One can either go to Mecca or go on Hajj. One is either a tourist, an on-looker or a participant, an activist. The most potent form of active service is jihad and the greatest mobilization is Hajj.

- * **Hajj** is about freedom and struggle; unity and brotherhood; power and strength; faith and commitment.
- * **Hajj** is about faith in the unity of creation and faith in the unity of the faithful. We tawaaf in one direction; we move in one trajectory. We have one **Qibla**, one **Ummah**, one **Destiny**.
- * **Hajj** is the time and place where we **must** unite!

- * **Hajj** is a sanctuary for man and beast alike.
- * **Hajj** is collective striving; we think together and we take action together.
- * **Aql** (intellect) can only function correctly in a social-order which is free of greed, selfishness, egoism and egotism. **Hajj** provides us with this opportunity.
- * **Hajj** is a profound political statement: “Anti-racist; anti-racialist; classless and supra-national”.
- * **Hajj** is a profound economic statement: “the only privileged ones amongst humanity are those who have nothing - because they must receive”.
- * **Hajj** is a profound sociological statement: “there is no Islam without Jama’ah, (without communal life, without collective effort).
- * **Hajj** is a profound philosophical statement: “you are here because you want to be here”.

Sacrifice (and therefore Hajj) is also **a law of social transformation**. Not only must we make sacrifices individually, we must also do so collectively. When we do something collectively we create something bigger than ourselves.

Every time we act in jama’ah (in congregation) we are reflecting this principle. And every time the Hujjaaj (pilgrims) demonstrate this divinely ordained principle.

In order for us to establish a just social order this law of social transformation must be implemented explicitly and sincerely. A Hadith states:

“There is no Islam without jama’ah (that is, without social co-operation, social cohesion, social co-ordination and communal effort)”.

The greater the goal the greater is the sacrifice required.

“Verily We have created man into toil and struggle.” [Quran]

The future of our country and the future of the world is going to be determined by the nature and the extent of our sacrifices. The sooner we make that decision the sooner we cease to be victims of oppression, exploitation and injustice.

By basing the social order on truth and by outlawing crimes against truth and reason, Islam has laid the most stable and progressive foundation for effective social organization.

“The best human being is he who is most beneficial to humankind.” [Hadith]

Muslims are not only sensitive to the needs of Muslims, but supersensitive to the needs of humankind.

“And they feed for the love of Allah the indigent, the orphan and the captive -

(saying) we feed you for the sake of Allah alone: no reward do we desire from you nor thanks."

[Quran 76:8,9]

"Feed the hungry and visit the sick and free the captive if he be unjustly confined; assist any person oppressed, whether Muslim or non-Muslim." *[Hadith]*

Collective action for the benefit of the community is necessary and will always be necessary. It is our responsibility to eradicate illiteracy, feed the hungry and the destitute, provide shelter for the homeless, and defend the defenceless. How does one mobilize the forces of a community, of a nation, of nations in order to do what needs to be done?

"And why should you not fight in the Cause of Allah and of those being weak, are ill-treated (and oppressed)? - men, women and children whose cry is:

'Our Lord rescue us from this place whose people are oppressors, and raise for us from Thee one who will protect, and raise for us from Thee one who will help.'

Those who believe fight in the Cause of Allah, and those who reject Faith fight in the Cause of Evil: so fight ye against the friends of Satan: feeble indeed is the cunning of Satan."

[Quran 4:75,76]

We do need doubt in order to increase our knowledge; but to act we need certainty. To perform Hajj, and to establish Hajj, one needs certainty. Certain that one is a believer; certain that one is believing correctly; and certain that one wants to die a believer.

"Certainty (absolute conviction of the truth) is the whole of Emaan." *[Hadith]*

It is not our conscience which imprisons us, it is the stupidity, the ignorance, the arrogance, brutality and bestiality of the oppressors that imprisons us.

Our conscience liberates us from falsehood and the resultant injustice.

"One who makes up without feeling concern for the affairs of Muslims is not a Muslim." *[Hadith]*

This superconscious Ummah whose representatives assemble annually for Hajj, have no time for political games and compromise politics.

We are duty bound to discuss the liberation of the oppressed peoples; to devise strategies for their removal and to mobilize and consolidate the forces of justice.

Our Deen commands us to revolutionize the entire social order. We are commanded to move from a society of drunken stupor and alcoholic fumes to one of sobriety; from a society of intellectual mediocrity to one of intellectual excellence based on truth; from a society of criminal and inhuman acts to one in which Sadaqah becomes a way of life; from a society of racist indoctrination to one of freedom from ignorance.

And in order to achieve this, we must revolutionize the oppressed people in order to revolutionize the social order.

In our present position of oppression and exploitation, we can never remain neutral. Turning a blind eye to oppression and a deaf ear to exploitation only makes oppression and exploitation worse.

The reality of oppression will not disappear by itself. We have to destroy and eradicate it!

There is therefore no way in which the Muslims can go cap-in-hand to the oppressors to beg for concessions or for crumbs from their tables. There is no way in which Muslims out of fear for their lives and property are going to negotiate with murderers and robbers. The only real enemy of oppressors is Islam. In order to support oppressors we must abandon Islam!

We are convinced, and will convince others, that negotiations with oppressors and criminals cannot further the cause of justice; peaceful coexistence with murderers will only increase the massacres of the oppressed and the killing of defenceless detainees. We therefore reject negotiations with the oppressors and we reject peaceful coexistence with plunderers and murderers.

No just social order can be established by unjust people.

We are certain that we prefer to die fighting for a just cause than to live and die comfortably in an unjust cause.

Hajj is meant for the upliftment of mankind and it is only a just social order that can do this without fear of contradiction.

Arise! And bear witness that we are witnesses to that truth!

Allahu Akbar! Allahu Akbar! Allahu Akbar!

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