LEBANON'S HIZBOLLAH MOVEMENT:

THE PARTY OF GOD

by

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This thesis is dedicated to the men and women of this country who have put service to our nation before self interest and have sacrificed at times personal freedom in order to ensure the freedom of the United States of America.

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ABSTRACT

In the summer of 1982 in Lebanon, a group of radical Shi'a Muslim clerics in association with Iranian Revolutionary Guardsmen formed the secretive and at times deadly movement known as Hizbollah, or the Party of God. The group quickly developed a worldwide reputation for carrying out spectacular bombings against western interests while still maintaining an enigmatic cloud around its existence. Over time, this veil of secrecy slowly slipped away and after the movement entered the 1992 Lebanese political arena, Hizbollah openly revealed its structure and organization to outsiders.

This thesis endeavors to expound on the Party of God's creation, its development over the last decade and a half, its major acts of violence in Lebanon and abroad, and the group's evolution into a political party. By presenting this information, the author seeks to accomplish three objectives. The first is to present a multifaceted picture of this much maligned (at least from a Western perspective) movement to give the reader a more complete understanding of the Party of God. Second, by reviewing this information, determine whether or not Hizbollah will be able to continue as a political party if Israel withdraws from the south Lebanon security zone. And third, this thesis seeks to assess whether or not the Party of God continues to possess the ability to strike targets in the international arena. After addressing these three areas, the reader should have a much more complete understanding of the movement and its capabilities of attacking enemies outside its normal area of operations.

Introduction

In 1982 a conglomeration of radical Shi'a Muslim elements converged in Baalbek, Lebanon, to form Hizbollah, or the Party of God. In the early years after its creation, a veil of mystery surrounded all aspects of this group's identity and operations. Members of the academic community and agents from intelligence services often speculated on information about the group, but the simple fact was that little hard, reliable data existed about this clandestine radical movement. However, over time Hizbollah evolved from an extremely secretive organization bent on establishing an Islamic Republic based on the model of Iran, to one that today runs candidates in the mainstream secular Lebanese Parliamentary elections. As this transformation has occurred, more and more information has become available about this once very enigmatic movement.

The purpose of this paper is three-fold. The first purpose is to provide a solid historical understanding of Hizbollah by examining its creation and development over the past decade and a half. Secondly, by examining this information, determine whether or not the Party of God has established itself to the point that it will survive when and if Israel ever withdraws from the south Lebanon security zone. Thirdly, by reviewing the available material on this group, speculate as to whether or not it continues to have the ability to carry out spectacular non-conventional attacks against western targets not only in Lebanon, but internationally as well. This comprehensive review of Hizbollah should provide insight into these three areas.

A special emphasis will be placed on documenting and analyzing several of the non-conventional violent operations carried out by the Party of God both in Lebanon and abroad. This focus is not meant to steer the western reader to view or classify Hizbollah as simply a terrorist entity, determined to carry out suicide attacks against its enemies. Rather, this focus reflects the author's interest and desire to closely review the group's

capabilities and glean lessons from these operations. The western media and western intelligence services have created the impression outside Middle Eastern countries that Hizbollah operates exclusively as a terrorist organization. This perspective will potentially carry weight with many western readers because the violent acts carried out by Hizbollah are on many occasions indisputable. However, it should be kept in mind that to gain a full understanding of this or any other resistance movement, one must review not only the spectacular bombings, but all aspects of the group as well. Reviewing and presenting only one facet of resistance movements such as Hizbollah simply perpetuates misconceptions about the groups. So, although this paper does focus on several of the violent operations carried out by Hizbollah, it also endeavors to present a well-rounded understanding of how Hizbollah came to be and what the group stands for today.

The information available on Hizbollah from non-Arabic sources has grown over time. In particular, since Hizbollah won eight seats in the Lebanese Parliament in 1992, the group has come out of the shadows and provided a greater amount of information on its structure and organization. Hala Jaber, a journalist, wrote the most definitive work on Hizbollah in her 1997 book *Hezbollah: Born with a Vengeance*. It is an outstanding comprehensive in-depth examination of the Party of God, and to the best of my knowledge, the only book dedicated exclusively to the subject of Hizbollah. Jaber's book and items written by another journalist named Robin Wright provide probably the most insightful and intriguing information about this movement. These two authors (Jaber in particular) developed a rapport with Hizbollah officials that enabled them to conduct interviews that yielded a plethora of information on how this movement began, its evolution over time, and what role it now plays in Lebanese society.

The Shi'a in Lebanon Before 1982

Before delving into the actual creation of Hizbollah, it is useful to take a brief look at the historical development of the state of Lebanon as well as examine how Shi'a Muslims existed in this state. Before 1920, the area referred to as Lebanon actually described only Mount Lebanon, a small mountainous enclave of mostly Maronite Christian and Druze communities relatively isolated from the outside world. From the late 1500s to the end of World War I the Ottoman Empire exercised authority over Mount Lebanon, yet because of its rugged terrain and remoteness, this region developed relatively free of outside influence. At the conclusion of WW I, which had as one of its results the defeat of the Turks, the allied powers carved up the once mighty Ottoman Empire. At the San Remo Conference in 1920, France obtained "mandatory rights" in Syria and Lebanon.[1] In this same year after gaining authority over the region, France created what the world now recognizes as present day Lebanon when it incorporated Jabal Amil (the area of present day south Lebanon), the Bekaa Valley, and the coastal cities to Mount Lebanon.[2] By creating this "new" state, France brought together the Maronite and Druze communities of Mount Lebanon with both Shi'a and Sunni Muslims whose populations dominated these other areas.

Lebanon obtained its complete independence from France in 1943.[3] During the mandatory period from 1920-1943, France supported the Christian community and sought to establish an environment which enabled Christians, particularly the Maronite Christians, to exercise political hegemony over Lebanon.[4] In 1943, Lebanon developed the National Pact which created a confessional form of political rule. The National Pact, which was an unwritten agreement between Christian and Sunni Muslim leaders,[5] organized power along lines of religious affiliation[6] and was based on a census which was taken in 1932. In 1932, "Christians outnumbered Muslims by a six-to-five ratio."[7] As a result of this

majority, as well as France's influence, Christians gained more seats in the Lebanese parliament and quickly established hegemony over the political structure of the country. An example of Christian primacy was the new government's implementation of a constitutional law which stipulated that only a Maronite could serve as the president of Lebanon.

The Shi'a Muslim community in Lebanon constituted the third largest religious sect in the country at the time of independence behind the Christians and Sunni Muslims. Despite this standing, they lacked meaningful representation in the Lebanese government. The few Shi'a Muslims who participated in the confessional system came from elite families and sought to exploit rather than assist the poor Shi'a communities. In addition to this, the Christian and Sunni Muslim sects repressed and marginalized the Shi'a Muslims of Lebanon. One author wrote, "Sunnis, Maronites, and other sects had openly discriminated against the Shi'a."[8] As a result of their marginalization and the discrimination they received, the Shi'a Muslims became the most economically backward and least developed religious sect in Lebanon. Sickness, illiteracy, poverty, and lack of drinking water described the plight of a large majority of Shi'a Muslims. Almost all of the Shi'a communities lagged behind the rest of Lebanon in electricity, doctors, roads, schools, hospitals, and telephones.[9]

As Shi'a Muslims continued to maintain their position as the least socioeconomically developed sect in Lebanon, their population began to increase at a rapid pace. In the 1940s they were the third largest religious sect in Lebanon and by the 1980s they constituted over one third of the entire Lebanese population and were by far the largest religious sect in the country.[10] Despite this rapid growth of population, they did not obtain a greater share of political power nor did they experience a relief to their economic deprivation. They remained marginalized from mainstream Lebanese society.

This continued state of repression created an atmosphere of discontent amongst the Shi'a Muslims which made their community fertile ground for any movement or ideology that sought to alleviate their destitute situation. This feeling of communal despair converged with several other factors in the early 1980s which then led to the formation of Hizbollah in 1982.

The Creation of Hizbollah

In 1982, several events coalesced in Lebanon which led to the inception of the Party of God. The first factor, as discussed previously, was clearly the enormous amount of discontent among the Shi'a Muslims caused by their political and socioeconomic status in Lebanese society. This atmosphere of discontent collided with other significant events that had a tremendous impact on Lebanon. These events included Israel's 1982 invasion of Lebanon and subsequent occupation of the south Lebanon security zone, the growing secularization of the Shi'a militia AMAL, and Iran's efforts to spread its Islamic revolution. All of these events would eventually lead a group of Shi'a Muslim clerics, along with Iranian assistance, to form Hizbollah in the summer of 1982.

Arguably the most significant factor that played a role in creating the Party of God was Israel's 1982 invasion of Lebanon which was code named "Peace for the Galilee." Many scholars have debated the reasons behind this invasion. What is significant for the purposes of this paper is not necessarily the reasons behind the invasion, but rather the result of Israel's incursion into Lebanon. Therefore, suffice it to say Israel justified its invasion of Lebanon as a security necessity to wipe out the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and eliminate this group from threatening its northern border. The PLO had been operating out of Lebanon for a number of years prior to Israel's 1982 invasion. FATAH, the largest faction in the PLO, began conducting attacks into Israel from Lebanese territory shortly before the 1969 Cairo Accord sanctioned such operations.[11] In the early 1970s, the PLO moved its headquarters from Jordan to Lebanon after King Husain cracked down on the group and then expelled the movement from his country. Once the PLO moved its headquarters to Lebanon, the group subsequently increased its attacks on Israel from its new primary base of operations. Between the late 1960s and 1982, the PLO and Israel engaged in a low intensity conflict across Israel's

northern border. In this conflict, both the PLO and Israel carried out major bombings and attacks against each other.

In 1982, Israel felt that if it invaded Lebanon and militarily overwhelmed the PLO, the threat this organization posed to Israel's northern border would be eliminated. Ironically, the Shi'a community, especially those in south Lebanon, initially welcomed the Israeli invaders for two reasons. First, the majority of Shi'a Muslims had grown increasingly hostile towards the PLO's existence in Lebanon because this outside or foreign group competed for resources and influence in the southern part of the country.[12] Most Shi'a Muslims felt that if Israel eliminated the PLO, this would ultimately aid them by giving the Shi'a greater influence and access to resources in the south. A second reason stemmed from the fact that many Shi'a communities endured collateral damage from Israeli military attacks on PLO camps because the PLO established themselves in close proximity to Shi'a Muslim villages. When Israel attacked the PLO and the Shi'a community suffered, the Shi'a began to blame the PLO for causing these catastrophes. Because of these reasons, the Shi'a Muslims initially saw the Israelis as a liberating force. However, once the Shi'a community realized the Israelis planned to occupy at least a portion of their land, their positive reaction to the invasion quickly changed to one of vehement resistance.[13]

In 1985, Israel withdrew from the majority of Lebanon. However, Israel established what it termed as a 10 mile wide "security zone" in southern Lebanon as a buffer between Israel and Lebanon.[14] Israel's 1982 invasion and occupation of Lebanon failed to destroy its preeminent enemy at the time (the PLO) and in a twist of irony gave a huge impetus to the creation of another enemy, Hizbollah. This new group gained popularity among the Lebanese population because it offered resistance to Israeli

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occupation forces. The Party of God quickly proved to be just as deadly and dangerous as the PLO, not only for Israel, but for the United States and other western powers.

A second factor that contributed to the creation of Hizbollah was the growing secularization of the Shi'a militia group named "AMAL" in the early 1980s. Musa al-Sadr, a Shi'a cleric from Iran who migrated to Lebanon in 1959, created the AMAL militia in 1975. Musa al-Sadr was the leading voice in the Shi'a Muslim community in the 1960s and 1970s who repeatedly petitioned the Lebanese government to improve the conditions of the Shi'a Muslim sect. He was extremely active in the Shi'a community and formed groups such as the Movement of the Deprived[15] in an effort to mobilize Shi'a Muslims to better their communities as well as garner greater support from the Lebanese government. In 1975, Musa al-Sadr formed the AMAL militia to protect the Shi'a Muslim community from the growing religious sectarian strife which erupted into the Lebanese civil war that same year. Musa al-Sadr was extremely popular among the Shi'a community; however, in 1978 he mysteriously disappeared on a trip to Libya under circumstances yet to be explained today. As a result of Musa al-Sadr's disappearance, the leadership of AMAL changed and in 1980 ended up in the hands of Nabih Berri, a man much less revered than Musa al-Sadr. By 1982:

> AMAL's primary identity was as a Shi'a nationalist organization. It sought political and economic parity for the Shi'a community, working within the multiconfessional political system; thus its goal was reform, not revolution. In contrast to Iran and to Hizbollah, it did not seek to establish an Islamic State.[16]

Berri successfully maneuvered AMAL away from its clerical origins and managed to steer it down a path of secular reform.[17] As he was taking AMAL down this new, more secular path, Israel invaded Lebanon in 1982. This invasion then provided Iran with a reason to seek approval from Syria to initiate direct Iranian support to the Lebanese Shi'a under the

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stated intention of assisting Shi'a Muslims in their resistance efforts against Israeli occupation. As Iran stepped into the Lebanese quagmire under the auspices of aiding the Shi'a against Israel, the new Iranian regime focused on propagating its Islamic Revolutionary ideology. This revolutionary message took root and flourished among many of the disaffected AMAL militiamen who left AMAL because of its secular ideology as well as among the more radical elements of Lebanese Shi'a Muslim society.

Iran played a central role in creating Hizbollah in Lebanon by providing the group with two critical aspects of its livelihood. First and foremost, the successful Islamic Revolution in Iran led by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini in 1979 provided the ideological foundation for the Party of God. Second, Iran sent an enormous amount of logistical and financial support to Hizbollah to get the group started which enabled it to function on a day-to-day basis as well as carry out military operations against Israeli and western targets.

To gain a better understanding of how Iran's Islamic Revolution provided an ideological basis for the creation of Hizbollah, several factors must be examined to include the historical tie between Lebanese and Iranian Shi'a Muslims, Ayatollah Khomeini's re-interpretation of Shi'ism, and Iran's desire to spread its Islamic Revolution. The historical tie between Iran and Lebanon can be seen as far back as the 16th century, when Safavid rulers in Iran imported Shi'a ulama from Jabal Amil (present day south Lebanon) to teach proper Shi'a Muslim practices to the Iranian population.[18] Author Fouad Ajami stated, "The traffic between Iran and Shi'a Lebanon that brought Sayyid Musa [al-Sadr] to Lebanon is more than four centuries old."[19] This historical tie was clearly demonstrated by the Lebanese Shi'a Muslim's overwhelming acceptance of al-Sadr when he arrived in Lebanon and rose to lead this sect for almost two decades.[20] Because of this historical tie,

Iranian influence and the Lebanese Shi'a Muslim willingness to accept it was fairly strong among the Shi'a community.

The Iranian and Lebanese Shi'a link was further solidified because of the influence and persona of Ayatollah Khomeini himself. The Ayatollah Khomeini spent a number of years (1964-1978)[21] in Najaf, Iraq, where he was one of the leading Shi'a instructors in this city. During his stay there, a significant number of Lebanese Shi'a clerics received religious instruction from Ayatollah Khomeini and as a result, his ideology and teachings carried a tremendous amount of influence and respect within Lebanese Shi'a clerical circles.[22] As a result of this historical tie and the Najaf connection between Lebanese and Iranian Shi'a Muslim clerics, Ayatollah Khomeini's government saw Lebanon as fertile ground for the export of the Iranian Islamic Revolution.

Ayatollah Khomeini strongly endorsed Shi'a Muslim activism and called on Shi'as to stand against repression as a central theme of the Islamic Revolution. His ideas ran contrary to the commonly accepted Shi'a practice of *taqiyah* or dissimulation. The concept of taqiyah enabled Shi'a Muslims to hide their religious identity if they were in hostile territory and felt their lives were threatened. The practice developed because since the advent of the Shi'a Muslim sect, the Sunni Muslims, who make up approximately 80% of the Muslim population and therefore constitute a significant majority, have consistently persecuted and repressed the Shi'a. As a result of this repression, the Shi'a developed this practice to ensure their survival. By practicing taqiyah, the Shi'a removed themselves from standing against repression and facing the possibility of persecution. Ayatollah Khomeini denounced the practice of taqiyah and instead emphasized the concept of fighting oppression, even if it led to martyrdom as glorified and demonstrated by Prophet Mohammed's grandson, Imam Husain.[23] The concept and practice of martyrdom as

endorsed by the Ayatollah Khomeini would become a fundamental aspect in the ideological foundation of Hizbollah.[24]

Ayatollah Khomeini emphasized the story of Imam Husain to draw attention to Husain's willingness to sacrifice his life for the sake of justice. Imam Husain was the son of Ali, the fourth Caliph, as well as the grandson of Prophet Mohammed. In the seventh century A.D., Husain tried to defend his family's right to lead the Islamic empire which at the time was under the Umayyad dynasty. Husain's small band of warriors faced a vastly superior Umayyad army at Karbala. Husain and his 72 followers could have chosen to give up their cause and surrender; however, Husain "deemed it more honorable to die for belief than to live with injustice."[25] Ayatollah Khomeini stressed the point that Husain's decision to fight a superior enemy and essentially his willingness to martyr himself for the sake of justice set an example that should be emulated by Shi'a Muslims. Essentially, Ayatollah Khomeini emphasized the idea that resistance, even if it ended up in martyrdom for the individual, led to eventual victory.[26] Author John Esposito described how Husain's martyrdom directly fit the Lebanese Shi'a predicament:

> As in Iran, Shi'a history and belief were interpreted to provide an ideology
> of protest against social injustice and to champion the rights of the
> disinherited and oppressed. Early Shi'a suffering at the hands of Sunni rulers,
> in particular the martyrdom of the revered Shi'a Imam Husain by the army of
> the caliph Yazid at the battle of Karbala in 680, were equated with the
> discrimination and exploitation suffered by Shi'a under the Christian-dominated
> confessional system [in Lebanon].[27]

As the events of 1982 unfolded in Lebanon, more and more radical Shi'a Muslims began to contemplate Ayatollah Khomeini's appeal to stand against the forces of injustice as the only alternative to their desperate situation.

After Ayatollah Khomeini came to power in Iran in 1979, his regime quickly focused on spreading their ideology of Islamic Revolution to other countries. In March,

1980, Khomeini delivered a speech in Tehran where he outlined the need and Iran's desire to spread the revolution:

> . . . Be fully aware that the danger represented by the communist powers is no less than that of America; the danger that America poses is so great that if you commit the smallest oversight, you will be destroyed . . . We must strive to export our Revolution throughout the world, and must abandon all idea of not doing so, for not only does Islam refuse to recognize any difference between Muslim countries, it is the champion of all oppressed people. Moreover, all the powers are intent on destroying us, and if we remain surrounded in a closed circle we shall certainly be defeated. We must make plain our stance toward the powers and the superpowers and demonstrate to them that despite the arduous problems that burden us, our attitude to the world is dictated by our beliefs.[28]

Iran spread its revolutionary ideology in a number of ways. It used broadcasting facilities to beam its Islamic message to other Muslim countries, it held annual "revolutionary" conferences in Tehran, and it relied heavily on support from the Shi'a clerical network that existed in the Middle East because the majority of clerics received training in Najaf while Ayatollah Khomeini had been in exile there.[29] In the case of Lebanon, Iran employed all three of these assets and in 1982 after the Israeli invasion, the new Islamic regime managed to directly insert Iranian Revolutionary Guardsmen, or Pasdaran, onto Lebanese soil to further propagate Ayatollah Khomeini's message. These Revolutionary Guardsmen brought with them a significant amount of Iranian logistical and financial support which directly contributed to the establishment of the Party of God.

Within one week after Israel's 1982 invasion of Lebanon, Iran dispatched somewhere between 1,000[30] and 5,000[31] Iranian Revolutionary Guardsmen to Baalbek, Lebanon. (One scholar stated radical Iranian fundamentalists went to Baalbek as early as 1979;[32] however, the consensus appears to be that Iran's introduction of Pasdaran onto Lebanese soil took place only after Israel invaded Lebanon in 1982.) Iran managed to gain Syria's approval to move men and supplies through Syria and into Lebanon. In fact,

the Pasdaran allegedly set up their headquarters on the Syrian border town of Zebdani and then moved logistical support into Baalbek from there. Robin Wright stated:

> In Zebdani they established the largest single base of operations outside of Iran . . . Zebdani was the operational, logistics and supply headquarters for a fluctuating three to six hundred Pasdaran, who were stationed in scattered buildings just across the border on the Bekaa plains.[33]

It is unclear exactly how or on what precise date Hizbollah was created. However, shortly after the Pasdaran mixed with the radical Shi'a clerical leaders in Baalbek, Hizbollah was born in the summer of 1982.

The Pasdaran, which included Islamic instructors as well as military trainers,[34] carried out a number of missions after their arrival in Baalbek. These included: 1) They brought a significant amount of Iranian financial support to the Party of God which some scholars estimated at over half a billion American dollars from 1982-1990 (one source stated that in the 1980s, Iran funneled between what was equivalent to $90 to $100 million dollars per year through banks in Austria and Switzerland to Hizbollah),[35] 2) They provided military and weapons training to Lebanese Shi'a Muslim,[36] and 3) They indoctrinated the Shi'a population with the ideas and concepts of the Iranian Islamic Revolution. One author wrote, "They (Pasdaran) were significant . . .in terms of mobilizing revolutionary zealotry and creating a mechanism to nurture Islamist terrorist organizations."[37] The Pasdaran acted not only as military trainers and financiers, but also as missionaries, serving as representatives from their country of Iran propagating Iran's (specifically Ayatollah Khomeini's) ideology about the tenets and need for an Islamic Revolution.[38] As the Iranian Revolutionary Guardsmen continued to have a presence in Baalbek, the town began to take on a distinctively Iranian ambiance. Posters of the Ayatollah Khomeini appeared everywhere, women began veiling, liquor stores closed, and

the prominence of Persian speakers became common place.[39] Clearly Iran, through the Pasdaran, played a key role in creating Hizbollah.

A key point to address at this juncture is why Syria gave Iran tacit approval to funnel weapons, men and funds through Syria and into Lebanon to support radical Shi'a Muslims seeking the establishment of an Islamic Republic similar to Iran. Syria, which was and still is a secular regime, did not seek the same result in Lebanon as Iran. Even though this was the case, Syria and Iran allegedly signed an official military agreement which allowed the Pasdaran into Lebanon in 1982.[40] U.S. intelligence sources stated Ghazi Kenann, the head of Syrian military intelligence, supervised the distribution of goods to Hizbollah.[41] In the early 1980s, it appeared as though Syria was content to allow the Party of God and the Pasdaran relatively free reign in Baalbek.[42]

Syria's acquiescence to allow Iran's initial assistance to Hizbollah seemed to be driven by the country's regional strategic goals. These goals included a desire to draw closer to Iran to counter Iraq's increasing strength in the early 1980s,[43] the Syrians wanted to see another "front" opened up against the Israelis which it (Syria) could not be directly linked to,[44] and Syria felt that by aiding Hizbollah, the group could assist in getting the United State's influence out of Lebanon and preclude the entrenchment of Christian rule in Beirut.[45] Syria has continued to allow Iranian support to the Party of God up to today.

Arguably, Syria could cut off the weapons supply to Hizbollah if it chose to do so. "Weapons deliveries to Hizbollah from Iran are only possible with Syria's consent, since shipments must pass through Syrian ports and cross the Syrian border to reach the Bekaa Valley, where Damascus's troops are heavily concentrated."[46] However, Syria has never chosen to block Hizbollah's supplies. The Party of God is not the only faction in Lebanon which Syria supports though. Syria seeks to back a number of Lebanese factions to varying degrees so as to create a state of equilibrium that prevents any one group from

becoming too powerful.[47] By preventing a sole militia from gaining hegemony, Syria manages to maintain a state of insecurity in Lebanon which then ensures Syria's continued heavy influence to bring stability to that region.[48] Thus, Syria's regional goals, as well as its desire to maintain a large presence and influence in Lebanon, has caused it to support Hizbollah.

The Iranian Embassy in Damascus, Syria, allegedly played a key role in coordinating, supplying and providing overall direction for the Pasdaran and their activities in Lebanon.[49] Ali Akbar Mushtashimi, the Iranian Ambassador to Syria in the mid 1980s, was instrumental in facilitating and directing this support. Nabih Berri, the leader of the Lebanese Shi'a group AMAL, described Mushtashimi as the "Kingpin in the embassy group that 'wrote, composed, and directed' Hizbollah."[50] Another prominent player who worked closely with the Pasdaran and Hizbollah was Husain Ahromi Zadeh, the Iranian military attaché in the embassy. He worked as a liaison between the embassy and Iranian camps in Zebdani and Baalbek.[51] Clearly, the Iranian Embassy in Damascus had a central role in getting Hizbollah started.

In summary, as the summer of 1982 unfolded, the Party of God was conceived and began to stir in Baalbek. Several factors came together in Lebanon at this time to create this movement. These included the desperate situation of the Lebanese Shi'a Muslim, the Israeli invasion of that year, the secularization of AMAL, and finally the external influence of Iran. When all of these forces collided, Hizbollah resulted. It would be several years before much would be known about the group. Almost all of the Party of God's operations, activities, and structure would be shrouded in secrecy and uncertainty for many years to come. Despite this fact, the name Hizbollah and its association with suicide car bombers and kidnappings would repeatedly make the front pages of papers around the world.

Hizbollah/AMAL Split and Their Relationship

Hizbollah and AMAL consist exclusively of Shi'a Muslims. Despite the similarity of their Shi'a Muslim faith, these two groups are markedly different and take ideological positions which stand in stark contrast to one another. A brief look at these differences adds further insight into the Party of God.

Hizbollah, particularly during the 1980s, called for the establishment of an Islamic Republic on the ashes of the present political structure in Lebanon. The Party of God refused to participate in Lebanese parliamentary elections and until 1992 completely rejected the Lebanese confessional system. AMAL, in contrast, continually sought to have a larger role within the Lebanese governmental apparatus so as to reform the system from within. AMAL distinguished itself by a "commitment to Lebanon as a distinct and definite homeland."[52] One author described AMAL by stating, "The ideological bent of AMAL is reformist in nature . . ."[53] Initially, Nabih Berri attempted to downplay the differences between the two groups; however, by 1984, the two movements had frequent armed clashes in various locations in Lebanon. Augustus Norton wrote, "Although Berri and his deputies strove to minimize the differences between the two organizations, their profound disagreement over the establishment of Islamic rule guaranteed their irreconcilability."[54] Simply put, Hizbollah's leaders came from the Shi'a clerical establishment which sought to establish an Islamic Republic governed by Shi'a religious figures. AMAL, in contrast, professed and pushed a secular platform that sought greater participation in the Lebanese government. As discussed earlier, AMAL's secular approach disheartened several of its followers who parted from the movement and then went on to play a role in creating Hizbollah.

From 1985 to 1989, Hizbollah and AMAL engaged in a bloody militia conflict over Hizbollah's staunch anti-Israeli position as well as AMAL's desire to keep Hizbollah

from gaining a solid foothold in south Lebanon.[55] This conflict was further exacerbated when Hizbollah kidnapped U.S. Marine Lieutenant Colonel William Higgins in February, 1988. Higgins was an unarmed observer for the United Nations Interim Forces in Lebanon (UNIFIL). AMAL supported UNIFIL in south Lebanon because they saw this group as an "international listening post" which aided in bringing security to south Lebanon. Hizbollah, on the other hand, saw UNIFIL as just another form of superpower intervention and occupation. Thus, the Party of God objected to UNIFIL's presence in Lebanon. When Hizbollah kidnapped LtCol Higgins, AMAL viewed the Marine's abduction as an attack on their authority and prestige. AMAL quickly responded by mounting a massive manhunt to locate LtCol Higgins and carrying out a violent attack against Hizbollah positions in south Lebanon to eliminate Hizbollah's presence there. AMAL succeeded in eliminating the Party of God's foothold in the south; however, they did not locate LtCol Higgins. Hizbollah responded to AMAL's actions by mounting a successful offensive in the Beirut suburbs. The fighting became so fierce that only after the intervention of Syria and Iran did the conflict cease in January, 1989.[56]

Both AMAL and Hizbollah continue to operate in the Lebanese theater. Since Hizbollah entered the Lebanese political scene in 1992 and subsequently tempered its call for the creation of Islamic Republic, the two groups have gone from violent armed clashes to heated political battles to gain support from the Shi'a community. Over time, Hizbollah's popularity outside of the Bekaa Valley has increased in Beirut, while AMAL has stayed more popular in south Lebanon.[57]

Other Groups Associated with Hizbollah

In the 1980s, several different radical Shi'a Muslim movements took credit for carrying out acts of violence against Israeli and western interests in Lebanon. Almost all academic scholars and western intelligence services described these groups as components of the larger Hizbollah organization. The degree to which Hizbollah directed these numerous groups is difficult to determine with complete certainty; however, almost all of them have in some way been traced back to the Party of God. It appears as though Hizbollah used a variety of "cover" names to take credit for various operations in an effort to create misinformation and cause confusion concerning which particular Shi'a movement actually carried out a specific operation. In some cases, groups such as Islamic AMAL and al-Dawa were at one time distinctively separate movements, yet then at some point Hizbollah incorporated them into themselves. A brief discussion of the various names and associations of the more significant of these "other" groups gives insight into how they relate to Hizbollah.

Two groups, Islamic AMAL and al-Dawa, both constituted separate groups at one point, yet sometime after Hizbollah was created in 1982, found themselves being absorbed by the Party of God. Husain Musawi, a one time chief lieutenant to Nabih Berri in AMAL, broke from Berri's movement in 1982 to form Islamic AMAL. Husain Musawi allegedly took this step as a result of Berri's participation on the "Committee of National Salvation" which was formed in 1982. Lebanese President Elias Sarkis formed the Committee of National Salvation in response to the Israeli invasion. This committee consisted of an alliance of Lebanese confessional groups formed with the intent of negotiating with the Israelis.[58] President Sarkis asked Nabih Berri to join the coalition and play a role in the negotiations. Berri, despite pressure from leading Shi'a clergy and the Iranian Ambassador in Lebanon to decline this invitation, decided to participate on this

committee with the other confessional groups. As a result of Berri's action, Husain Musawi left AMAL and went to the town of Baalbek where he and a group of his followers formed Islamic AMAL.[59]

By 1983, Islamic AMAL and Hizbollah had become one in the same.[60] Several authors described Islamic AMAL as being the elements within Hizbollah which carried out attacks against western targets in Lebanon. Shimon Shapira wrote, "In short order AMAL al-Islami [Islamic AMAL] became a logistics and operational center for the terrorist acts perpetuated by the first units of Hizbollah . . . ."[61] Despite the fact that one author stated Syria had to intervene to stop armed clashes between Islamic AMAL and Hizbollah in 1984,[62] the preponderance of information available suggests Husain Musawi's group was incorporated into Hizbollah shortly after its arrival in Baalbek. Hizbollah would continue to absorb elements of another distinct group called Lebanese Hizb al-Dawa around this same time.

Allegedly, several Shi'a clerics who received religious instruction from Ayatollah Khomeini in Najaf, Iraq, formed the Lebanese Hizb al-Dawa in the early 1970s. This group was modeled after the Iraqi Shi'a resistance movement al-Dawa which sought to change ruling regimes in the Middle East to Islamic Republics based on Ayatollah Khomeini's teachings.[63] (At this point in the early 1970s, the Iranian Revolution had not taken place yet and therefore Ayatollah Khomeini's teachings guided them versus the example set by Iran). The religious precepts of activism and resistance, professed by Ayatollah Khomeini and the Lebanese Shi'a cleric Sayyid Mohammed Husain Fadlallah, appeared to guide the Lebanese Hizb al-Dawa movement.[64] The activities of Lebanese al-Dawa in the early 1970s are unclear, but in 1975, Ayatollah Khomeini directed Hizb al-Dawa to become a part of AMAL.[65] Supposedly, as AMAL became more and more secular Ayatollah Khomeini encouraged al-Dawa members to break from AMAL and join

with Hizbollah, which they did in the early 1980s.[66] After the Party of God came into being in Baalbek in 1982, both Lebanese Hizb al-Dawa and Islamic AMAL melted into this newly formed movement.

Several other Lebanese Shi'a groups have taken credit for numerous attacks in Lebanon and abroad. All of the following movements, although they have taken credit under a different name, are believed to be a part of Hizbollah. The most prominent of these groups is Islamic Jihad (not to be confused with Palestinian Islamic Jihad which split from the Muslim Brotherhood and operates in the Occupied Territories),[67] which claimed responsibility for several spectacular attacks against U.S. Diplomatic and military missions in Lebanon. Author Bruce Hoffman wrote, "Islamic Jihad is in fact now known to be a cover name for operations carried out by Hizbollah, sponsored by Iran, with additional support provided by other Middle Eastern countries . . . ."[68] By the mid 1980s, Hizbollah included a number of groups which all sought the same ends, the establishment of an Islamic state. These "revolutionary" groups included Islamic AMAL, Jund Allah (Army of God), the Husain Death Squad, the Revolutionary Justice Organization, and al-Jihad [Islamic Jihad].[69] It is unclear why such a wide array of groups claimed responsibility for various attacks against western targets. Whatever the reasons, it appears that the myriad of names swirling around in the media to describe what specific group carried out a certain attack simply were guises for Hizbollah operations. Inevitably, almost all of the fundamentalist Shi'a Muslim activity in Lebanon seemed to be connected to the Party of God in some manner.

Hizbollah's Ideology

The Party of God's ideology has become slightly muddled since its inception in 1982. To tackle this issue and bring clarity to it, the group's ideology must be broken down into two time periods. The first stretching from 1982 to 1991, which was a time when Hizbollah's manifesto guided its stringent, uncompromising belief in the establishment of an Islamic Republic and complete rejection of the Lebanese confessional system. The second time period, from 1992 to present, has been typified by a more pragmatic approach to political issues, typified by its involvement in the Lebanese political process.

For the first decade after its creation, Hizbollah acted in accordance with the ideological stance it presented in its 1985 publication of what could be described as its manifesto. On 15 February, 1985, the Party of God published an open letter entitled Nass al-risala al-muftuha allati wajjaha hizbu allah ila al-mustad 'afin fi lubnaan wa-al-'alam (Text of the Open Letter Addressed by Hizbollah to the Downtrodden in Lebanon and in the World. A translation of this document can be found as Appendix B in Augustus Norton's book, *AMAL and the Shi'a: Struggle for the Soul of Lebanon*). An entire thesis could be dedicated to reviewing and analyzing this document; however, for the purposes of this paper, only the major themes will be addressed. In its open letter, the Party of God declared:

> We, the sons of Hizbollah's nation, whose vanguard God has given victory
> in Iran and which has established the nucleus of the world's central Islamic state,
> abide by the orders of a single wise and just command currently embodied in the
> supreme Ayatollah . . . Khomeini, the rightly guided imam . . . .[70]

The first major theme from the group's manifesto was that Hizbollah viewed the Ayatollah Khomeini as their ultimate leader and guide. Since Ayatollah Khomeini's death in 1989, Hizbollah has not identified another Ayatollah as being a successor to Khomeini's vision.

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A second major theme was that they viewed the West, particularly the United States, as the root of all problems for Muslims.

> We are moving in the direction of fighting the roots of vice and the first root of vice is America. . . . Khomeini, the leader, has repeatedly stressed that America is the reason for all our catastrophes and the source of all malice. By fighting it, we are only exercising our legitimate right to defend our Islam and the dignity of our nation.[71]

Ayatollah Khomeini's, and hence Hizbollah's, anti-American stance comes through clearly in the group's manifesto. The Party of God goes on to state that they believe Israel and the Phalangist are agents of the United States and they feel these entities have collaborated to exploit and suppress Muslims. Hizbollah states that the only way to successfully throw off the yoke of repression is through confrontation with the United States and its agents.[72] Following this line of thinking, the Party of God believes that open struggle will then lead to the third and final theme which is Hizbollah's belief that the establishment of an Islamic Republic is the ideal form of government.

Between 1982-1991, the Party of God repeatedly called for the creation of an Islamic state similar to, if not included as a part of, a greater Islamic Republic governed by Shi'a clerics. Hizbollah articulates this desire as they reveal their objectives in their manifesto. These goals read: 1) Israel's departure from Lebanon to be followed by its "final obliteration from existence," 2) The departure of America, France and other imperialist elements from Lebanon, 3) Submission of the Phalange to "just rule" and 4) Giving the people the opportunity to choose the type of government they want with the understanding that Hizbollah is committed to the creation of an Islamic state.

This final point reads in the manifesto:

> Our sons are now in a state of ever-escalating confrontation against these enemies until the following objectives are achieved: . . . Giving all our people the opportunity to determine their fate and to choose with full freedom the system of government they want, keeping in mind that we do not hide our commitment to the rule of Islam and that we urge to choose the Islamic system that alone guarantees justice and dignity for all and prevents any new imperialist attempt to infiltrate our country.[73]

Although the manifesto's stated intent of "giving all our people the opportunity to determine their fate and to choose with full freedom the system of government they want" seems to imply almost a democratic concept to establishing a government, this liberty does not appear to be Hizbollah's ultimate goal. On the contrary, until 1992, Hizbollah's vision of an Islamic Republic in the 1980s focused on its vehement rejection of the Lebanese confessional political system and the establishment of an Islamic Republic in its place.[74] The Party of God wanted no part in a system that recognized and tolerated other religious sects and view points. Also Iran, Hizbollah's professed model of an ideal Islamic Republic, created a political system completely dominated by Shi'a clergy. These clergy were intolerant to secular and non-Shi'a Islamic view points.

Hizbollah's ideology from 1982-1991 can therefore be summarized by concluding that the movement drew its ideas and guidance from Ayatollah Khomeini and professed an extremely anti-western commitment, particularly against the United States, France, and Israel. The Party of God's dogma necessitated confrontation with these imperialist powers to eliminate their influence and control in the region. Hizbollah's ultimate goal was the creation of an Islamic Republic in Lebanon. In the early 1990s, this uncompromising ideology began to waver and eventually evolved into a more pragmatic approach to making changes in the political landscape in Lebanon.

Several factors, some pushing and some pulling, led Hizbollah to undergo a change in its ideological stance in the 1990s. Undoubtedly, a push factor was caused by Ayatollah Khomeini's death in 1989 and Iran's subsequent shift to a more pragmatic tact in its foreign relations which then impacted Hizbollah. This can clearly be seen by Iran supporting more moderate Shi'a clerics in the Party of God who sought to become involved in the 1992 Lebanese parliamentary elections. Some of the "pull factors" came from Hizbollah's realization that popular support for the group was based on its resistance to Israeli occupation, not on its rejection of the existence of the state of Israel and/or its desire to establish an Islamic Republic. In 1996, Giles Trendle wrote:

> Since its emergence on the Lebanese scene in the early 1980s, Hizbollah's political rhetoric has centered on its calls for the destruction of the state of Israel and for an Islamic revolution in Lebanon. Yet, beyond such maximalist slogans the leaders of Hizbollah, aware of the checks and balances operating in both Lebanon and the region, have today come to a pragmatic, albeit begrudging, recognition that neither of its two goals are to be immediately realized. For the time being, they have opted for securing a stronger footing within the Lebanese political system.[75]

Even though the Party of God has taken on a newly developed position towards political participation in Lebanon, the movement's leadership continues to deal ambiguously with the topic of Israel's existence.

For example, Hassan Nasrallah, the Secretary General of Hizbollah, distinguishes between the liberation of south Lebanon and the liberation of the Occupied Territories. Nasrallah clearly endorses and sees armed struggle as a legitimate way to achieve the liberation of Lebanon. However, in regards to the liberation of the Occupied Territories, Nasrallah is coy when it comes to how Hizbollah would work to achieve this objective if the first liberation occurred.[76] Even though Nasrallah attempts to create a cloud of uncertainty around Hizbollah's intentions towards Israel, other hard-line Hizbollah leaders make it clear they intend to continue armed resistance towards Israel even after they have

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pulled out of south Lebanon.[77] Author Shmuel Gordon published an article in July 1988

indicating "Hizbollah's strategic goal with regard to Israel is to create an Islamic nation on

the ashes of the state of Israel" and that Hizbollah seeks to conquer Israel step by step.[78]

Gordon, however, concedes that such statements and hard-line stances by some members

within Hizbollah may simply be rhetoric aimed at gaining popular support from a portion

of the more radical Shi'a Muslim Lebanese population.[79] At this juncture, it seems very

difficult to predict accurately what steps Hizbollah would take towards Israel when and if

that country withdraws from south Lebanon. This uncertainty is a result of the Party of

God's tempered stance towards the existence of the state of Israel which has evolved since

1992.

Another author, Husain Agha, stressed that Hizbollah has become more pragmatic

because it realizes a peace deal between Israel, Syria and Lebanon could come at some

point in the future which would then significantly impact the Party of God. Agha wrote:

> The major trend within Hizbollah, with the knowledge and understanding
> of Iran, is aware of the need to conform to the realities of a possible
> settlement between Israel and both Syria and Lebanon. Also as a result
> of Hizbollah's readiness to participate in the Lebanese political system
> through parliamentary elections it is clear that the movement is less interested
> in establishing an Islamic government in Lebanon and more in its right to assert
> Islamic values from within the system itself.[80]

Since 1991, Hizbollah has taken several pragmatic steps which run contrary to the group's

initial ideology. Ironically, this apparent shifting in beliefs has not weakened the

movement. On the contrary, by taking these steps the Party of God has increased its

visibility and the influence it has in Lebanon.

Hizbollah's initial ideological foundation has changed significantly since the

publication of the movement's 1985 manifesto. The Party of God's once hard-line and

uncompromising view towards the Lebanese state as well as the existence of Israel has

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now given way to a more tolerant, somewhat more accommodating approach to these issues. This tempering of the group's ideology has not weakened the movement, rather it has potentially in the long run ensured Hizbollah's ability to remain a player in Lebanese political matters for many years to come.

Hizbollah's Structure

It can be quite problematic attempting to explain and describe the structure of a clandestine organization such as Hizbollah that has for many years sought to conceal its internal workings so as to increase the security of the movement. Additionally, leading Lebanese Shi'a clerics like Sayyid Mohammed Fadlallah have publicly identified Hizbollah as not only an organization, but in a broad sense an idea that encompasses Muslims as a whole.[81] Cryptic statements such as this have been further complicated by statements by Party of God leaders indicating that Muslims everywhere can be Hizbollah.[82] In the late 1980s, Hizbollah spokesman Sheikh Ibrahim al-Amin stated that the Party of God was not an organized party, but a group of true believers following their *marja* or the just jurist[83] (the concept of the just jurist, a key concept espoused by Ayatollah Khomeini, will be discussed thoroughly in the section titled Hizbollah's Participation in Lebanese Politics).

As a result of these seemingly all-encompassing ideas concerning Hizbollah, it can be difficult, if not impossible, to describe accurately Hizbollah's structure. One can potentially arrive at a point where it is possible to draw a flow chart and show who works for who and what committees direct which operations. But in the case of Hizbollah, such a schematic might not completely describe this organization's structure. Be that as it may, the available literature on the Party of God does a much better job describing this traditional concept of an organization and how Hizbollah fits into this structure than it does describing the broader sense of Hizbollah as defined by Fadlallah and other members of the movement. The following paragraphs attempt to define Hizbollah's traditional structure, but admittedly it falls short of completely grasping or fully describing this larger sense of the Party of God.

Hizbollah's organizational structure like its ideology has gone through two distinct phases. The first phase was from 1982-1987 and the second phase was from 1988 to the

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present. After the group's inception in Baalbek in 1982, the shadowy organization seemed to be a loosely organized band of militias led by Shi'a clerics.[84] Initially, the group only had a presence in the eastern Bekaa Valley, but by 1983 it began to show a presence in Beirut's southern suburbs.[85] Ali al-Kurani, a Lebanese al-Dawa member who joined Hizbollah, described Hizbollah's structure in his 1986 book *Tariqat Hizb Allah fi-l-AMAL al-Islami* (Hizbollah in Islamic Deed) by stating:

> There are those who ask whether Hizbollah is actually an organization. And if their reply is that Hizbollah is not an organization, they no longer bother with it, since in their view it is political organization which bears the greatest importance for Islamic activity. If the reply is that Hizbollah is indeed an organization, they regard it as just one more form of organization along with the other parties and organizations already extant. Their next step is to begin comparing it with organizational forms they are familiar with, and to seek out its qualities and its faults. The path of Hizbollah is not that of an organization or party in the usual and conventional sense, and it does not resemble organizations in the countries of the West or the Islamic states. [At the same time] Hizbollah is an organization and an apparatus adapted to what is required for Islamic deed and for the masses of its members.[86]

The Party of God, at least in the early and mid 1980s, appeared to lack any semblance of a typical organization or movement. It did not seem to be directed by one person, nor was there a formal mechanism that brought new recruits into the movement. One author stated Hizbollah was actually a coalition of groups, rather than a single identifiable entity.[87] Another author, Robin Wright, described the Party of God in the mid 1980s as an umbrella organization that included many cells which acted independently and were often times influenced by local Shi'a religious leaders.[88] Clearly, the lack of information available about the group's structure as well as the shroud of secrecy which seemed to veil the movement complicated the question of who and what was Hizbollah during this time period.

This paucity of information about the Party of God's structure changed significantly in the late 1980s. By this time, Hizbollah's popularity and strength expanded to not only the Bekaa Valley and the suburbs of Beirut, but to south Lebanon as well.[89] Then, in 1988, Tehran allegedly directed Hizbollah to establish a structure that brought all the "cells" under one central authority who could coordinate and direct future activities.[90] Hizbollah created a Supreme Consultative Council (majlis al-shura) which, depending on the source, ranged from eight[91] to 17 members.[92] This council serves as the "group's main decision making organ." The members serve two year terms and are elected from the rank and file of Hizbollah members. This council also chooses its highest party official, the Secretary General.[93] The majority of the members of the council are religious figures and/or militiamen. Additionally, a representative from Iran serves as an advisor to the council.[94]

The Supreme Consultative Council directs seven committees which are replicated in Hizbollah's three main geographical areas (Bekaa Valley, Beirut suburbs, and south Lebanon). These committees, which appear to have begun functioning in 1988, include ideology, finance, politics, information , military affairs, social affairs, and judicial affairs. When the council fails to come to a consensus on an issue, it defers to Iran's leadership to resolve the matter.[95] In addition to these seven committees, there seems to be a "combat organ" or military wing which always was a part of the group but evolved into a separate entity in 1992 as a result of Hizbollah's efforts to get involved in Lebanese parliamentary elections.[96] This combat organ consists of the "Islamic Resistance" and "Islamic Jihad".[97] The military wing, although it falls outside the normal committee structure, still reports directly to the Supreme Consultative Council. The council allegedly maintains a tight reign over the "combat organ's'" operations.[98]

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Iranian presence and influence in the Supreme Consultative Council is unquestionable. This influence was clearly evidenced in 1992, when Israeli helicopter gunships killed Abbas Musawi, at the time the Secretary General of Hizbollah. Immediately after Abbas Musawi's assassination, Iran pushed for Hassan Nasrallah, a Hizbollah member who did not have a "fighter's reputation," to be elected as the Secretary General. Iranian pressure assured Nasrallah the new position.[99] Despite this fact, however, many authors argue against the idea that Iran is in complete control of Hizbollah or that Iran has the ability to unilaterally direct the group's operations. It would be erroneous to conclude that Hizbollah is simply an extension of Iran. Author James Piscatori stated, ". . . Yet it would be wrong to assume, as a consequence, that Iran controls Hizbollah. The leadership, while certainly sympathetic to the Iranians, consists of strong-minded individuals who are responsive above all to the particular conditions of Lebanon."[100]

Probably the most impressive aspect of Hizbollah's structure that has benefited not only the Shi'a Muslim population, but other religious sects of Lebanon as well, has been the social services it has created and maintained through its various committees. One author aptly stated, "The growth of Hizbollah as a potent military force was matched by its emergence as an effective and energetic patron of an extensive network of social, educational, health and welfare services unavailable from other sources."[101] A portion of Iran's monthly stipend to the Party of God has continually been used to better the Shi'a communities in Lebanon. Hizbollah, after receiving money from Iran:

> . . . invested tens of millions of dollars annually in building religious and vocational schools, hospitals, clinics, pharmacies, bakeries, and agricultural settlements in aid of the Shi'a population in Lebanon while providing scholarships for around 40,000 Shi'a students in Lebanon and in other countries.[102]

As was mentioned previously in this paper, the Lebanese state historically neglected the Shi'a population. Consequently, all of these social services and efforts to better the community were not only desperately needed, but as one might imagine, greatly received by the Shi'a Muslims.

Some of the more significant social services include *Jihad al-Bina'* or the Holy Reconstruction Organ. *Jihad al-Bina'* oversees seven committees which include the agricultural committee, power resources committee, water resources committee, Islamic health committee, financial aid committee, reconstruction committee and environmental committee. The huge impact of Hizbollah's efforts can clearly be seen by reviewing the efforts of a few of these agencies. The Islamic Health committee has significantly increased the amount of medical care available to Lebanese civilians. By 1993, Hizbollah ran two hospitals, 17 infirmaries (including one mobile unit), two dental clinics, and three pharmacies.[103] The Party of God offers free health care in all of these facilities.[104] The Reconstruction committee seeks to rebuild structures that have been damaged as a result of Israeli bombardment or attacks. This committee rebuilds personal homes, schools, husainiyahs (places where Shi'a Muslims gather for social activities), shelters, and medical facilities. Additionally, it has built stores which sell goods at heavily subsidized prices and constructed water systems. Another committee, the Committee of the Imam, provides loans for marriages, schools, and small business ventures.[105]

Hizbollah's wide array of social services has increased the group's popularity[106] as well as allowed it to weave itself into the fabric of Shi'a Muslim society in Lebanon. The amount of money, time, and effort Hizbollah has dedicated towards these programs demonstrates that the Party of God is just as committed to raising the socioeconomic status of Shi'a Muslims as it is to aggressively fighting against Israeli occupation in south Lebanon. Surprisingly, the Party of God has not limited its multifaceted services to the

Shi'a community. Rather, Hizbollah has made these programs available to everyone, regardless of religious sect. The Party of God's rival competitor AMAL, as well as the Lebanese government, have never been able to provide the same level of services to any part of the Lebanese Shi'a community.[107] Ultimately, Hizbollah's initiatives have established the movement as much more than a group of armed guerrillas attacking the Israeli security zone.

Hizbollah's Penchant For Violence Against The West

Without a doubt, the Party of God's trademark in the western media has been its ability to carry out violent attacks against western targets in Lebanon and abroad. Because of such operations, almost all western governments and intelligence services, to include the United States, have described Hizbollah as a terrorist organization until very recently. The purpose of reviewing a sampling of these attacks is neither to try to cast the Party of God as a terrorist organization nor to release it from culpability by justifying these bombings as acts of a resistance movement. Strong arguments can be made for and against both of these positions. Rather, this section attempts to closely review several of the more spectacular operations with the intention of understanding how the operations were carried out and gaining insight into Hizbollah's tactics and capabilities. Additionally, after reviewing the attacks, several lessons learned will be addressed.

Hizbollah successfully carried out countless non-conventional military operations against western targets in Lebanon throughout the 1980s. Four of the most spectacular include the 1983 car bombing of the U.S. Embassy in Beirut, the 1984 car bombing of the U.S. Embassy (again) in Beirut, the car bombing of the Multinational Force in Beirut in 1983 and the taking of western hostages in Lebanon throughout the 1980s. Before delving into each specific act, it should be remembered that in the early to mid 1980s, Hizbollah loomed as a shadowy, ill defined organization with little formal structure. This aspect, coupled with the alleged aid it received from foreign countries, often made it difficult to specifically pin down exactly who was directing and carrying out some of these attacks. Often, sources identified several countries and various groups, to include Hizbollah, as playing a role in carrying out an operation. An example of grouping together actors who carried out attacks can be seen in a quote from Marvin Zonis and Daniel Brumberg who wrote:

> In the bombings of the U.S. Embassy in April 1983, the Marine
> headquarters in Beirut in October of 1983, as well as in the bombings
> in Kuwait in December of that year, Syrian agents appear to have
> cooperated with Iranian terrorists, with members of al-Dawa, and with
> members of Hizbollah . . . .[108]

As this quote illustrates, Hizbollah, as well as many other "players," potentially had their hands in several of the bombings to be discussed.

On April 18, 1983, less than a year after Hizbollah's creation in Baalbek, a suicide bomber drove a delivery van into the wall of the U.S. Embassy in Beirut. The huge explosion rocked the embassy, causing part of the building to collapse which resulted in many of the victims being crushed to death. In the end, the bombing killed 63 people and injured another 100. Either by good fortune or through extremely effective intelligence gathering, Hizbollah managed to carry out the attack on a day when the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) was holding a meeting of its top Middle East officers in the American Embassy in Beirut. Kenneth Haas, the CIA station chief, Robert Ames, regarded as the CIA's best Middle East analyst,[109] and seven other CIA operatives died during the attack, thus greatly decreasing U.S. intelligence gathering capabilities in Lebanon for many months following the bombing. Anonymous callers claimed Islamic Jihad, a hitherto unknown organization, carried out the suicide bombing.[110] Islamic Jihad, as discussed earlier, is believed to be an extension of Hizbollah which is often used to attack western targets.[111] In addition to Islamic Jihad's claim of responsibility, information has come to light which indicates several other actors played a role in this operation.

At the time of this bombing the Soviet Union possessed an extremely sophisticated eavesdropping capability from its embassy in Beirut which enabled it to monitor other embassies' activities and operations in the area. One source indicated the Soviet Union, at the time the regional backer of Syria, passed information to the Syrians about top level CIA meetings at the U.S. Embassy in Beirut. The Syrians then passed this information to

the Iranians who shared it with Hizbollah.[112] It is unclear if this flow of information took

place prior to the CIA's meeting of its top officers on 18 April, 1983. Even though this

ambiguity hangs over the attack, the potential of such operations being carried out by

foreign countries or elements hostile towards the U. S. brings to light the importance of

implementing stringent operations security measures. The need for such measures is a key

lesson which can be learned from this bombing.

Operations security is often times overlooked because of its simplicity. Such

things as inadvertent disclosures of information to people without a need to know

sensitive information (such as the time and date of a meeting of top level intelligence

agents), failure to use secure communications (i.e. discussing operations or activities over

an open or non-secure telephone line), or failure to properly destroy documents identifying

the time and date of operations are just a few examples of lax operations security which

can lead to catastrophic consequences. The need for operations security especially holds

true in an environment where U.S. government personnel are being targeted for hostile

actions, which was certainly the case in Beirut at the time of the bombing. With the

information available it is difficult to say with certainty that a breakdown in operations

security led to this bombing. However, it is accurate to state that observing stringent

operations security guidelines makes an attack such as this one more difficult to

successfully accomplish.

After the bombing of the U.S. Embassy in Beirut in 1983, the U.S. State

Department decided to move its diplomatic facility from West Beirut (the predominantly

Muslim sector of the Lebanese capital) to East Beirut (the predominantly Christian sector)

in hopes of increasing the building's security. As this transfer was taking place, another

calamity struck the U.S. presence in Lebanon on 20 September, 1984.[113] On the 20th, a

suicide bomber drove a van with diplomatic plates containing 3,000 lbs. of explosives into

the embassy, killing 14 people, two of whom were American. As with the first bombing, Islamic Jihad claimed responsibility for this attack and went on to say, "'The operation comes to prove that we will carry out our previous promise not to allow a single American to remain on Lebanese soil'."[114] Once again, this ultra clandestine group had successfully struck at one of the most symbolic representatives of the United States, an America Embassy abroad.

Some academics have speculated that the attack came as a result of the United States' 8 September, 1984, veto of a United Nation's Resolution which condemned Israel's continued occupation of south Lebanon. Two days after the veto, Islamic Jihad stated it would strike at a U.S. target in the Middle East because of the U.S.'s apparent acquiescence to Israeli occupation of Lebanon.[115] Allegedly, "Within twenty-four hours of the blast, the CIA produced conclusive evidence of where the bombing had been planned and who had planned it." This evidence centered on reconnaissance photos of the Sheikh Abdullah Barracks in Baalbek, at the time occupied by Hizbollah. The photos showed that individuals at the barracks had created a mock up of the concrete obstacles around the new U.S. facility. Additionally, the pictures revealed tire marks running around the barriers, indicating someone had been maneuvering around the structures in an effort to practice. Despite this apparent "smoking gun," the U.S. decided against retaliatory strikes for a number of reasons which included fear of further attacks from Hizbollah, fear of U.S. hostages being taken, fear of causing damage to cultural sites around Baalbek, and an uncertainly as to being able to strike at the actual Party of God members who planned the attack.[116]

Hizbollah's mock up of the physical security barriers around the U.S. Embassy in East Beirut illustrates that it is a highly sophisticated group that possesses the ability to plan complicated operations. The Party of God obviously had the new facility under

surveillance which then allowed it to gather information on the building's security. This information was then used to reconstruct the defenses of the embassy which enabled the Party of God to plan a successful attack. Hizbollah's elaborate efforts required a significant investment in time, man power, planning, and coordination in order to complete this operation. With the realization of this, a lesson can be learned about Hizbollah which is that the group is highly trained, motivated, and capable of sophisticated attacks. From a U.S. Military perspective, it is clear this group has the potential of being a lethal formidable foe. Therefore, Hizbollah cannot be taken lightly nor casually passed off as merely a rag tag group of resistance fighters.

In addition to these two attacks on American diplomatic missions, Hizbollah carried out arguably its most successful and spectacular suicide bombings in Beirut against U.S. and French Multinational Force (MNF) units in late October, 1983. In August 1982, over a year before these particular operations, the MNF composed of U.S., Italian and French troops entered Lebanon to oversee the evacuation of the PLO from this country. After the PLO's evacuation, American troops subsequently left Lebanon only to be quickly sent back into Beirut. U.S. soldiers returned to Lebanese soil to try to restore calm after the assassination of Lebanese president-elect Bashir Gemayel[117] and the massacre of thousands of Palestinian refugees at Sabra and Chatila at the hands of the Phalange Militia. Both of these events brought Lebanon to the brink of civil war again.[118] Once in Beirut, the U.S. military attempted to bring stability to the tenuous situation in Lebanon. In an effort to carry out this mission, U.S. Marines began training Lebanese Army Forces (LAF) for small unit operations in November 1982. In December 1982, the Marines began training a rapid reaction force and by June of 1983, U.S. Marines, along with other MNF units, began conducting joint patrols with LAF.[119]

The U.S. Marine's training and joint operations with the LAF is an important aspect of U.S. involvement in Lebanon at this time. Although the U.S. government sought to maintain a neutral position in regards to its support to any one specific Lebanese sect, such actions as supporting the LAF clearly placed the U.S. government on the side of the Christian dominated government. The U.S.'s desire to create the impression that it was neutral was further eroded when it overtly sided with the Lebanese Army against Muslim militias in September, 1983.

In September 1983, the LAF requested the United States support their troops with artillery strikes against Druze Muslim militia forces in the Chouf Mountains, outside Beirut. (The Druze are not orthodox Muslims; however, this group describes itself as Muslim and in the state of Lebanon the movement is more closely associated with the Sunni and Shi'a Muslim sects than with Christian sects.) Up to this point, the United States had not committed such a large scale act of aggression against any Muslim sects. As the LAF's request for U.S. firepower made its way through official channels, U.S. Marine Colonel Geraghty, commander of the U.S. Marine forces on the ground in Beirut, argued with his superiors that such a military strike in support of the Lebanese Army violated U.S. efforts to stay neutral and blatantly placed America on the side of the Lebanese Christian government. Ironically, Col Geraghty perceived the U.S. to be neutral despite the fact that US. Marines had already been training and patrolling with the LAF. It is probably reasonable to assume that Col Geraghty's perception that the U.S. still maintained a semblance of neutrality was probably not held by the majority of Muslim groups operating in and around Beirut. Whatever the case though, Geraghty argued that artillery strikes to defend Marines was one thing, but taking sides in the internecine militia warfare was unwise. Geraghty told his superiors if they carried out these artillery strikes, the Marines on the ground in Beirut would be "'totally vulnerable. We're sitting

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ducks.'"[120] Despite Colonel Geraghty's on-scene advice, the U.S. carried out artillery strikes against the Druze. On 19 September, 1983, U.S. warships fired 300 shells on Druze positions in support of the LAF.[121] The Marines attached to the MNF in Beirut acted as spotters for these artillery strikes, calling in coordinates to the U.S. ships who launched the barrage.[122] Thirty four days later, Hizbollah drove truck bombs into the Marine and French MNF compounds.

The analysis that U.S. artillery strikes against Druze positions caused Hizbollah to retaliate against the MNF[123] seems problematic at best. Several points seem to contradict this analysis. First, as discussed earlier, the perception of U.S. neutrality before the artillery strikes was most likely only wishful thinking on the part of the U.S. It is not difficult to imagine that U.S. Marine training and joint operations with the LAF compromised the idea of U.S. evenhandedness in the minds of most Muslims months before the U.S. Navy carried out the artillery strikes. Secondly, Druze and Shi'a Muslims hold different beliefs, and have often been engaged in intersectarian strife in Lebanon. To conclude that an attack against the Druze is an attack against the Shi'a is a large stretch and is contradicted by the fact that the two are very separate and distinct entities. Thirdly, U.S. Admiral Robert L. J. Long (Ret), who led the U.S. commission which investigated the bombing, ultimately concluded that his investigative team could not determine if there was a direct link between the U.S. shelling of Druze positions in the Chouf Mountains and the bombing of the MNF facilities. They came to this conclusion because many experts and people on the ground in Lebanon disagreed with this cause and effect theory.[124]

The exact reason behind the bombings may never be known. However, based on available information, it is plausible to conclude that Hizbollah had the MNF under surveillance for the purpose of carrying out an attack before the shelling of the Druze positions in the Chouf mountains. If this analysis is correct, then it would appear the Party

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of God was probably just waiting for the right time to carry out an operation. The U.S. artillery strikes against the Druzes offered the movement an opportunity to launch an attack which would then appear justified in the eyes of many Lebanese Muslims. It seems highly unlikely that Hizbollah began surveilling the MNF as a result of the U.S. Naval shelling of Druzes and then managed to carry out a successful attack 34 days later.

On 23 October, 1983, the Party of God executed its attack against the MNF in Beirut. On that date, a suicide bomber rammed his truck into the U.S. Marine headquarters, killing 241 Marine and Naval personnel. Sources indicate the truck carried between 12,000[125] and 18,000 pounds of explosives and created the largest non-nuclear explosion since WWII.[126] Twenty seconds after this attack and four miles away, another suicide bomber drove his truck into a building housing French MNF personnel, killing 58 paratroopers.[127] An in-depth review of the attack against the U.S. military contingent shows the sophistication of Hizbollah's operations.

When the U.S. Marines entered Beirut before the suicide bombing, they established their headquarters in "a massive four story building on the edge of Beirut International Airport, a reinforced concrete structure" that had sustained numerous artillery strikes from Israeli batteries during their 1982 invasion.[128] This new large concentration of U.S. troops in Beirut offered a convenient target for Hizbollah. Intelligence sources believed the Party of God had the Marine headquarters under surveillance for months prior to the attack. Several aspects of the bombing lend credence to this belief. First, a review of the suicide driver's route through the Marine compound which took him directly to the Marine headquarters building clearly indicates the attackers were very familiar with the layout and fortifications of this particular building as well as the entire Marine encampment. The suicide driver, who was driving a yellow Mercedes truck, penetrated a barb wire fence surrounding the compound at a high rate of speed and then drove through an open gate.

He covered the next 100 yards inside the compound quickly, maneuvering around three different pipe structures, running over a small sand bag reinforced entry control point, and then stopping his vehicle in the middle of the headquarters' lobby. A couple of seconds later the truck detonated.[129] The driver's direct route to the headquarters and the placement of the truck in the lobby of the headquarters' building would not have been possible without a significant amount of surveillance and intelligence information on the Marine compound. This type of data takes time to develop and can be dangerous to obtain because of the potential for detection and apprehension of the individuals engaging in this activity.

Several other facets of the attack indicated Hizbollah possessed a great deal of information about the Marine's daily activities. For example, the Party of God knew that the Marines slept late on Sundays. As a result of this, Hizbollah carried out the attack at 6:20 a.m. on a Sunday morning, increasing the potential of killing more U.S. servicemen while they slept.[130] Additionally, surveillance revealed that local vegetable and provision trucks entered the Marine compound to deliver supplies on a regular basis.[131] This, coupled with the fact that Beirut International Airport's cargo area was adjacent to the U.S. compound,[132] meant that trucks outside the compound did not necessarily draw undue attention because such vehicles were frequently in the vicinity of these facilities. In the aftermath of the explosion, intelligence officials believed professionals had to have carried out the attack because of its sophistication. Lieutenant Colonel Hisham Jaber, the Lebanese Army liaison officer assigned to work with the Marines stated, "'To prepare an action like this required a lot of information . . . You needed to know how the building was built, where it was structurally weak, and what the behavior of the guards was.'" Also, Hizbollah probably used surveillance to figure out how to get through Lebanese Army roadblocks, a potential impediment to carrying out a successful attack.[133]

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Islamic Jihad, as with the attacks against the U.S. Embassy in Beirut, claimed responsibility for the bombing of the Marine headquarters.[134] In addition to this group, other actors appeared to have played a role in this operation as well. Allegedly, at the time of the April 1983 attack against the U.S. Embassy in Beirut, the United States National Security Agency (NSA) had already intercepted cables between the Iranian Foreign Ministry and its embassy in Damascus "indicating a major attack on the multinational force in Beirut was being planned." The time, date, and type of attack was not specified; however, Tehran supposedly gave permission for the attack and transferred $25,000 to the Iranian Embassy in Damascus for the specific purpose of paying for this operation.[135] Other sources indicated Iran did not appear to order the attack and that it (the bombing) was not directed by a central command.[136] Additionally, the suicide car bombers for this attack, as well as the two attacks against the U.S. Embassy in Beirut, were believed to be Lebanese Shi'a Muslims and not Iranian.[137] Despite this later information, the sheer magnitude and sophistication of this operation lends credence to the idea that Iran was involved in facilitating this action in some manner.

The fallout from the bombing of the Marine headquarters was enormous. The U.S. Congress reviewed the attack and made several findings. They found that the Marine guards protecting the entrance to the facility had their weapons unloaded at the time of the attack and therefore could not and did not fire on the oncoming suicide bomber. The gate the truck went through was normally left open and on the day of the attack was probably open as well. Because of these lapses in security measures, the Congressional committee charged with reviewing the bombing found Colonel Geraghty, the Marine commander, ultimately responsible for the facility's lack of security.

The committee wrote:

> While the subcommittee fully recognizes it is easy to be wise after the fact,
> it finds that the commander of the Marine Amphibious Unit (MAU) made
> serious errors in judgment in failing to provide better protection for his
> troops within the command authority available to him. As the commander,
> he bears the principal responsibility for the inadequacy of the security
> posture of the BLT Headquarters.[138]

It seems ironic that Colonel Geraghty, who vehemently objected to the U.S. shelling of

Druze positions because of his troops' vulnerability on the ground, did not have his men in

a higher state of alert at the time of this attack. A possible explanation for this had to do

with the enormous volume of intelligence information received by the Marines on a daily

basis on the ground in Beirut.

Between May and November 1983, the U.S. Marine MNF contingent received

over 100 intelligence reports warning of terrorist car bomb attacks. None of these reports

contained specific information regarding the time, date, or location of the attack, they

were all simply general threat information reports. The Marines were essentially flooded

with information that was difficult to verify[139] which could have desensitized them to the

potential threat that loomed outside the barbed wire of their compound. Additionally,

even though a huge number of threat reports made their way to the Marine unit, the U.S.

forces in Beirut lacked adequate intelligence support personnel to analyze the incoming

information.[140] The Marines did not possess a one source fusion point where all the

available information on threats facing them could be reviewed and analyzed.[141] Colonel

Geraghty's failure to create such a fusion cell is a reasonable criticism of his command

posture in Beirut, but along with that it must be understood that Admiral Long's report to

the U.S. Congress indicated Geraghty lacked adequate intelligence gathering capabilities

which ultimately limited the Marines understanding of what was happening outside their perimeter fence-line. Admiral Long's report to the U.S. Congress stated:

> The USMNF commander did not have effective U.S. Human Intelligence (HUMINT) support. The paucity of U.S. controlled HUMINT is partly due to the U.S. policy decisions to reduce HUMINT collection world wide. The U.S. has a HUMINT capability commensurate with the resources and time that has been spent to acquire it. The lesson of Beirut is that we must have better HUMINT to support military planning and operations.[142]

This lack of sufficient HUMINT was not a novel idea to the Marine contingent. On the contrary, U.S. Marine Lieutenant Colonel Donald Anderson, who was the commander of the Marine Battalion Landing Team when the U.S. Embassy was bombed for the first time in April of 1983, stated "We have no foggy idea of what's going on right outside our gate . . . we have no capability of tapping that and understanding how those people out there are feeling about us, if there's anything going on. That's one of our biggest problems."[143] The lack of credible HUMINT exacerbated the dilemma for the Marine's in Beirut which ultimately contributed to the U.S. MNF component's inability to properly assess the threat they faced and prepare for the full spectrum of potential attack scenarios.

One final complaint that was leveled against Colonel Geraghty was that he violated the "fundamental military principle of dispersion" by massing a large portion of his forces in one location. At first glance this seems like a flagrant error, but in reality Colonel Geraghty concentrated his forces in the re-reinforced concrete structure so as to protect them from the continuous sniper and mortar attacks they endured on a regular basis.[144] By billeting over one quarter of his forces in the headquarters building, Geraghty protected them from this small arms fire. Admiral Long's report stated the following in regards to the concentration of Marines at the headquarters building: "The Commission further found that while it may have appeared to be an appropriate response to the indirect fire being received, the decision to billet approximately one-quarter of the BLT [Battalion

Landing Team] in a single structure contributed to the catastrophic loss of life."[145]

Colonel Geraghty was caught in a dilemma where he had to make the best choice between two poor options. He could disperse his troops, as dictated by traditional military doctrine, but run the risk of exposing U.S. Marines and Sailors to hostile small arms fire. Or, Colonel Geraghty could billet a large portion of his men in a reinforced concrete structure in an effort to provide better protection against mortar and sniper attacks. In hindsight, Colonel Geraghty's decision for the latter choice proved to be a catastrophic decision.

It seems clear that several factors played a role in making this particular suicide bombing a complete travesty for the United States and a complete success for Hizbollah. The Party of God once again demonstrated its ability to carry out sophisticated, well planned and coordinated bombings against fixed targets. The U.S. Marines, for their part, made several critical mistakes as well as suffered from a dearth of HUMINT which undoubtedly assisted Hizbollah in successfully bombing the Marine headquarters. Hizbollah's devastating attack, coupled with the near collapse of the LAF four months later, led the U.S. government to pull its MNF units out of Beirut in February of 1984.[146] Hizbollah's violent operations seemed to be achieving the movement's goal of eliminating the U.S.'s presence from Lebanon.

Several lessons can be learned from the bombing of the Marine Headquarters. First, the importance of realizing there are surveillance operations being conducted and then taking appropriate steps to counter this activity is essential to survival in a high threat environment. The primary purpose for conducting surveillance is to gather intelligence on a particular target in order to assess its security awareness and vulnerabilities. If the target has an established routine and lacks proper security procedures, then an operation can be planned against the target based on its routineness or lack of security preparations. In this

particular bombing, it would have been impossible to eliminate the surveillance, but the Marines could have taken several steps to limit the benefits of this type of activity. For example, varying their routines on a random basis such as changing their work hours so that it would have been impossible for anyone to predict when the majority of Marines would be asleep in their beds. Another example could be changing the times and dates of local supply truck deliveries and turning them away at times to create the idea of uncertainty as to when trucks were allowed to approach the compound and when they were immediately stopped and forced to turn around. By creating such randomness in their routine, it would have been difficult for a group conducting surveillance to plan an attack simply because they would be unsure as to what to expect. This lesson, which is the need to be completely unpredictable and is achieved by not creating established routines, is probably the most significant insight that can be taken from the incident.

A second lesson that can be learned is that when a potential threat exists, especially if it appears to be a capable threat, security awareness must be heightened and sustained. In such an environment this means that all personnel, whether they are the guard at the front gate or the cook in the mess hall, have to be made aware of the threat and told of the importance of reporting anything unusual they might see or overhear concerning surveillance an/or security of the unit. Despite the fact Hizbollah carried out an extremely successful bombing six months earlier against the U.S. Embassy in Beirut and Colonel Geraghty's concerns about his units vulnerability on the ground, the Marine unit did not seem to be fully alert or prepared when the bombing took place. This was illustrated by the Marine guards not having their weapons loaded (the U.S. servicemen were under standing orders to keep their weapons unloaded) and the entrance to the compound being left open. These are two actions that should have never happened in a high threat environment.

A possible reason for this lack of preparedness was a result of poor communication and sharing of intelligence between the U.S. Embassy and the Marine commander. For example, the Marine Amphibious Unit (MAU) commander (Col Geraghty) never received a detailed briefing about the 18 April, 1983, bombing of the U.S. Embassy in Beirut and as a consequence Admiral Long's report indicated the Marine commander did not understand the severity and strength of such a potential attack on his unit. Long's report stated, "He was not appraised of the detailed information derived by the analysis of the embassy bombing as to the destructive potential of gas-enhanced explosive devices."[147] Another example of the breakdown in the coordination of intelligence information had to do with how the Office of Military Cooperation (OMC) unit of the U.S. Embassy and the MAU commander decided to billet their people. The OMC dispersed their soldiers so as to not concentrate them in one area and create a lucrative target. The Marines, as stated earlier, concentrated a large portion of their people in one location.[148] This dissimilar approach to security by the OMC and the Marines illustrated the breakdown in intelligence sharing between U.S. government agencies in Lebanon. Thus, good intelligence information sharing, especially in a high threat environment, should lead to an increased state of security awareness. This is another lesson that can be learned from the MNF bombing. In the final analysis of this bombing, the Long Commission stated, "In its inquiry into terrorism, the commission concluded that the most effective defense is an aggressive anti-terrorism program supported by good intelligence, strong information awareness programs and good defensive measures."[149]

Hizbollah's efforts to rid Lebanon of Americans did not stop with suicide bombings. After the U.S. Marines left Beirut and the U.S. Embassy attempted to create an impregnable wall of protection around itself, Hizbollah seemed to switch tactics from bombings to kidnappings and assassinations of westerners.[150] The reason for this change

in tactics can probably be attributed to two reasons. First, the reduced number of American targets as well as the tightening of security at existing facilities made it more difficult to plan successful bombings. Second, many of the kidnappings appeared to be linked to a Hizbollah and al-Dawa bombing campaign which took place in Kuwait in December of 1983. The Kuwaiti government captured 25 of the bombers responsible for the operation and placed them in prison. Hizbollah felt that by seizing Americans in Beirut they could put pressure on the U.S. government to influence the Kuwaitis to release their comrades in arms. One author wrote, "Over time, it would become clear that the kidnapping of Americans in Lebanon had been triggered by a ninety-minute bombing spree in Kuwait on December 12, 1983."[151] The Hizbollah operations in Kuwait will be discussed more in-depth later in this paper. It is important to point out at this point that many sources linked the bombings in Kuwait with hostage taking in Lebanon.

Hizbollah, or Shi'a groups closely related to it, assassinated and or kidnapped many U.S. and other Westerners in Lebanon during the 1980s. Some of the victims included Malcolm Kerr, Frank Regier, U.S. Marine Colonel Dale Dorman, Terry Anderson, Benjamin Weir, Terry Waite, John McCarthy, U.S. Marine LtCol William Higgins (his kidnapping, as discussed earlier, sparked massive battles between Hizbollah and AMAL) and William Buckley to name just a few. Some were killed on the spot, some were held captive for over seven years and then released, and others died in captivity. Hizbollah attempted to deny culpability in the kidnappings, but most authors attribute this activity to them. Augustus Norton wrote, "Although Hizbollah spokesmen have been keen to dissociate the party from the kidnappings of Westerners, it is widely believed that the Islamic Jihad organization, which has claimed responsibility for some of the kidnappings, is merely a label of convenience masking Hizbollah involvement."[152]

The Party of God's kidnapping of Presbyterian Minister Benjamin Weir and CIA Officer William Buckley are interesting to discuss because of the totally different backgrounds of the two men. Weir, who had lived in Lebanon since 1958, was well known for working closely with Muslim-oriented charity groups.[153] He, in essence, was a friend to the Muslim community and was well established and connected in Beirut. Despite this fact, Hizbollah kidnapped him and chose to hold him hostage. This kidnapping seemed to indicate that the Party of God did not attempt to evaluate how various Americans impacted Lebanese society. Rather, Hizbollah saw all Americans as threats and wanted all of them, no matter what their occupation or perspective on helping the Lebanese, out of their country. Buckley, on the other hand, was an obvious adversary to Hizbollah because of his position as a CIA officer. Hizbollah kidnapped Buckley in front of his apartment at gun point. He died in captivity, allegedly as a result of a lack of medical attention after being tortured for information. Buckley's kidnapping was later tied to Iran. Supposedly, when the Iranians took over the American Embassy in Tehran in 1979, they were able to peace together information on some CIA agents in the field. They presumably passed information to Hizbollah identifying Buckley as a CIA officer.[154] These two kidnappings showed that no matter what an American's status was in Lebanon, Hizbollah viewed the person as the enemy. It also showed Iran's involvement with some of the kidnappings, further linking them with Hizbollah in operations against the U.S.

The lesson to be learned from Hizbollah's hostage taking is that in order to stay alive and out of captivity, one must make every effort to maintain a complete random daily lifestyle, especially in a high threat environment such as Beirut in the 1980s. This idea of not creating routines has been discussed earlier, but it cannot be overemphasized enough. By varying times to and from work, taking different streets every day, eating at different restaurants, and essentially not establishing any routine behaviors, the chances of being

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kidnapped or assassinated are greatly reduced. However, activities such as leaving your residence at the same time, taking the same street, and/or eating at the same restaurant on a particular day of the week, affords the people surveilling their potential victim the opportunity to plan an operation around the victim's routines. If Hizbollah, or any other group hostile towards Americans, knows a person will step out his front door at 7:15 a.m. every morning on his way to work, this person has succeeded in making himself a prime target and made the hostile group's job much easier.

Hizbollah's Non-Conventional Tactics and Capabilities

This section reviews the Party of God's tactics and capabilities used in carrying out non-conventional operations against western and Israeli targets. It does not seek to analyze Hizbollah's larger weapons systems (such as Katyusha rockets) or the conventional tactics it employs against the Israeli army in the south Lebanon security zone.

Arguably the most devastating tactic employed by Hizbollah has been its use of car bombs. The Party of God uses its advanced knowledge and expertise with explosives, coupled with its members willingness to martyr themselves, to make this a devastatingly effective instrument to strike at its enemies. One senior Israeli official stated, ". . . the Hizbollah's expertise in using explosive charges is extremely advanced."[155] The Terrorism Research Center stated the following, "The group's military wing, Islamic Resistance Movement . . . has received a steady supply of advanced explosives and detonating devices which has enabled Hizbollah to create what has become its trademark: the car bomb."[156] Iran provides the training and material necessary to construct and utilize car bombs.[157] Hizbollah has proven the effectiveness of car bombs over and over again in the many operations they have carried out which have resulted in massive casualties for their adversaries. Indeed, one author succinctly described the perception of the suicide bomber when he stated, "As a result of suicide missions, the Shi'a terrorist has acquired the image of a heroic warrior, utterly fearless, able to inflict punishment against which there is no defense."[158]

Interestingly enough, it appears as though Hizbollah has utilized the Shi'a mosque network in Lebanon to facilitate carrying out attacks such as suicide bombings. This tactic has been encouraged by Iran. In the mid 1980s Ayatollah Ali Montazeri, one of the leading Iranian figures pushing for the export of the Islamic Revolution, said that mosques should be used not only for prayer, but also as a place of cultural, political and military

activities.[159] In Robert Fisk's book *Pity the Nation: Lebanon at War*, Fisk stated the following:

> The Village Imams . . . were asked to mention certain words in their sermons. The requests came from Beirut, often from the Hizbollah; sometimes, not always the code words were devised by Iranians. These words . . . would mean nothing to the village sheikhs . . . But a few, perhaps only one man, in the mosque would understand their import. They would be a message. That is how the suicide bombers of Lebanon used to receive their orders.[160]

This clandestine approach to passing messages makes it extremely difficult to detect if and when an operation is underway. Additionally, the simple fact of using the mosque as a vehicle to communicate between Hizbollah members affords a certain level of security to its operations. This enhanced security stems from the fact that it is very difficult for intelligence services to infiltrate informants into mosques if they (the informants) do not already have an established reputation in a particular place of worship. Author Paul Jureidini wrote, "Penetration of the mosque is almost impossible; only a Shi'a, known to his community and preferably a resident, is likely to be accepted and approached."[161] Thus, Hizbollah's willingness to use the mosque network to pass messages concerning operations is an effective tactic that enhances the group's security and ultimately increases the Party of God's capabilities for carrying out attacks.

Hizbollah has recently employed another extremely sophisticated non-conventional tactic in its war against its enemies. In 1997, the Party of God recruited a German citizen who had converted to Islam to carry out a bombing operation in Israel. After recruiting the individual, Hizbollah trained him and then attempted to infiltrate him into Israel for the purpose of carrying out an operation.[162] Recruiting an individual, especially someone of a completely different culture and nationality, to carry out such an operation requires a significant amount of time to cultivate, train, vet (to evaluate or appraise), and ultimately task the person for a specific attack. By demonstrating this capability, Hizbollah clearly

shows its sophisticated approach to carrying out operations. This sophistication should show western intelligence services that Hizbollah can work outside the old paradigm which associates this group with bearded fundamentalist carrying out suicide car bombings.

The Party of God has also demonstrated an advanced intelligence gathering capability as well as an effective counterintelligence program aimed at precluding western intelligence services from gathering information about its operations. Hizbollah collects intelligence information through field operations posts, communications intelligence (COMINT), and by tasking many informers and observers to provide information on the movement's enemies. The Party of God's security apparatus which handles counterintelligence has identified how western countries gather information on the movement (particularly Israel) and then developed ways to prevent these collection efforts.[163] Hizbollah's intelligence gathering capabilities and the adeptness with which they approach their counterintelligence program demonstrates that the Party of God is a well organized and highly trained adversary.

Hizbollah's non-conventional tactics and capabilities set this movement apart from other resistance movements around the world. The Party of God's expertise in bomb making, ability to recruit "outsiders," and excellent intelligence and counterintelligence programs effectively put them on par with some state level intelligence services. These tactics and capabilities, which the movement gained as a result of Iranian tutelage, make Hizbollah a potentially lethal organization.

Hizbollah's International Operations

One very interesting yet difficult to explain facet of the Party of God centers on the group's ability to carry out acts of violence internationally. Western intelligence services believe Hizbollah has conducted operations outside of Lebanon on numerous occasions. It is difficult to provide convincing information on these operations because many of them have been shrouded by secrecy. Additionally, these operations are not easily categorized because often times Hizbollah in these operations is not fully defined by articles or news accounts of the events. In other words, it is difficult at times to determine if the Hizbollah being discussed as the culprit of a particular operation represents Lebanese Hizbollah members or members of an indigenous Shi'a Muslim group calling themselves Hizbollah as well. Indeed, this movement's name leads credence to the idea that Hizbollah is not limited to Lebanon and potentially exists in other countries. Author John Esposito wrote, "Hizbollah's name, the Party of God, indicates its transnational identity as a movement of all Muslims that extends beyond Lebanon."[164] Therefore, based on this statement it would appear that Hizbollah may not be limited to just Lebanese Hizbollah, but may include other nationalities of Shi'a Muslims claiming similar ideological beliefs.

With this ambiguity in mind, the next section endeavors to examine a few of what are believed to be Lebanese Hizbollah's international operations. Western intelligence sources believe the Party of God carried out successful car bombings against western interests in Kuwait and Argentina in the 1980s and 1990s. It appears as though Hizbollah cells have been able to operate in these various places because of support from Iranian diplomatic establishments.

Edgar O'Ballance wrote:

> The 'Iranian Connection' is a network of embassies and diplomatic missions spread across the world, staffed with intelligence personnel who shelter terrorists, store their weaponry and monitor their prey, while diplomatic couriers carry explosives, arms and ammunition with impunity through national customs barriers. The Tehran government flatly denies all such allegations, but Western intelligence agencies insist they are true and Western governments continue to expel Iranian diplomats for subversive activites.[165]

Another author wrote, "Shi'a terrorist activity has spilled over in other parts of the world . . . The Iranians have used their diplomatic and cultural resources as a cover for such activity . . . ."[166] Hizbollah capitalized on Iran's willingness to use its diplomatic missions to facilitate acts of violence against mutually perceived enemies. Without Iran's diplomatic assistance, it is highly unlikely that the Lebanese Party of God could effectively operate outside the borders of Lebanon.

Hizbollah, in collaboration with the al-Dawa movement, carried out its first international operations in Kuwait in December, 1983. These bombings took place in an environment where the country was feeling the effects of the Iranian Islamic Revolution which occurred just across its border. After Ayatollah Khomeini came to power in 1979, Iran quickly began to export overtly its revolution to Kuwait because of the large Shi'a Muslim population in that country. Iran saw Kuwait as fertile ground for "subversive revolutionary activity" because of its sizable Shi'a community.[167] In 1979, Abbas Muhri, Ayatollah Khomeini's brother-in-law and designated spokesman in Kuwait, preached frequently to the Kuwaiti Shi'a community calling on it to bring about an Islamic State in the country, similar to Iran. The Kuwaiti government expelled the entire Muhri family in 1979 because the aforementioned dissident activities clearly threatened the existence of the incumbent government.[168] This instigation, coupled with the Kuwaiti Shi'a Muslim's limited access to political power in their own country, caused some Shi'as in Kuwait to

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carry out demonstrations and on occasion subversive activities. The Kuwaiti government severely cracked down on the individuals associated with these events and expelled most of them from the country. For example, in 1982, the government expelled over 20,000 Iranians and Kuwaitis of Persian origin and as a result greatly decreased the amount of dissident activity.[169] These expulsions seemed to calm temporarily the situation in Kuwait.

However, Iran's initial failure to instigate an Islamic Revolution in Kuwait did not terminate the Islamic Republic's efforts to export its revolution to its neighbor. Authors Marvin Zonis and Daniel Brumberg described how Iran changed tactics by stating:

> In the face of the limited popular response to Khomeini's Shi'a vision, the clerics in Tehran adopted a new tactic. Instead of trying to promote popular Shi'a demonstrations, they turned to violence and force, not only in Kuwait but throughout the Arab Shi'a world.[170]

This transformation began to take place roughly in 1982. By 1983, Iran had already assisted in the creation of the Lebanese Shi'a movement Hizbollah and in this year managed to help this same group carry out a series of bombings in Kuwait. Clearly, Iran covertly supported Hizbollah's operations with the intention that these activities would aid in spreading its version of the Islamic Revolution to Kuwait. In addition to this, it must be remembered that at this time (1983) Iran and Iraq were engaged in a bloody, conventional war. Because the Kuwaiti government provided assistance to Iraq during this conflict, some sources saw Iran's support to Hizbollah's furtive operations as an attempt to punish and possibly disrupt the aid flowing from Kuwait City to Baghdad.[171] With these strategic and tactical goals aligned, the Party of God went into action.

On December 12, 1983, less than two months after the devastating attack against the MNF in Beirut, members of Hizbollah and al-Dawa bombed several strategic sites in Kuwait, including the American and French Embassies. All of the attacks took place in the span of less than two hours. The non-diplomatic targets included the Shuaiba Petro-

chemical Plant, the control tower at Kuwait International Airport, the electricity control center and the living quarters for American employees of Raytheon Corporation. Of these strategic targets, the truck bombing of the Shuaiba Plant, which at the time was the home of Kuwait's largest oil refinery as well as the country's main desalination facility, was the most significant. In this particular operation, the truck carried a massive amount of explosives but detonated 150 yards in front of the main refinery. Had it exploded next to the target, experts believed the blast would have crippled Kuwait's oil production as well as drastically reduced the country's water purification capabilities. The bombing injured ten people at the site.[172]

As Hizbollah and al-Dawa bombed the strategic sites, they also attacked the American and French Embassies. A truck carrying another large amount of explosives rammed into the U.S. Embassy's administration annex, narrowly missing the densely populated chancellery building. Only one fourth of the explosives detonated, thus greatly degrading the bombs intended capacity. Again, experts postulated that had the entire amount of explosives detonated, the resulting blast would have leveled the entire building. Even with the weakened explosion, five people died as a result of the suicide bombing. One hour later, another bomb exploded at the French Embassy, wounding five people.[173]

The Kuwaiti government managed to capture 25 saboteurs after the explosions. The nationalities of these men included 17 Iraqis, three Lebanese, three Kuwaitis, and two stateless persons.[174] The Kuwaitis identified 14 of the men as members of al-Dawa and three others as "Lebanese followers of Sheikh Fadlallah and Hizbollah."[175] Islamic Jihad claimed responsibility for the attacks (the same group that claimed responsibility for the bombings of the MNF as well as the two U.S. Embassy bombings in Beirut), but many sources believed al-Dawa was actually the orchestrater of the operation. "Al-Dawa's responsibility for these attacks became evident when its leaders in Iran demanded the

release of those arrested in Kuwait and warned that al-Dawa would take action if the detainees were maltreated."[176] From the information available, it appears as though al-Dawa (which, as discussed earlier, became a part of the Party of God), Hizbollah, and Iran all played a role in these acts of violence. After arresting the 25 saboteurs, Kuwait then expelled another 6,000 Iranian and Lebanese workers in an effort to preclude any further subversive activities.[177]

Hizbollah and al-Dawa continued to be able to carry out attacks in Kuwait despite the government's crack down on Shi'a Muslims. In December 1984, Shi'a fundamentalist hijacked a Kuwaiti airliner with the intention of pressuring the Kuwaiti government into releasing the prisoners from the December 1983 bombings. This pressure tactic did not work. In May 1985, a suicide bomber drove his vehicle into the motorcade of the Amir of Kuwait, Sheikh Jaber al-Ahmad al-Sabah. The attack caused only minor injuries to Al-Sabah, but the explosion killed two of his bodyguards as well as injured 12 other people. Again, sources believed this incident was related to Kuwait's holding of the al-Dawa and Hizbollah members from the December 1983 bombings.[178] Additionally, as mentioned earlier in this paper, some sources strongly linked the kidnapping of westerners (particularly Americans) in Lebanon to the December 1983 bombing campaign in Kuwait. Presumably, Hizbollah took hostages in Beirut believing that they could use these human assets to pressure the U.S. to influence Kuwait to release the Party of God and al-Dawa members from prison.[179]

Hizbollah's ability to strike at targets has not been limited to the Middle East. Indeed, the Party of God has demonstrated a remarkable ability to carry out significant acts of violence in Argentina. On 17 March, 1992, available information indicates Hizbollah carried out a car bombing of the Israeli Embassy in Buenos Aires, Argentina,

which killed 29 people and injured 242 others.[180] Argentine officials believed Iranian

diplomats assisted Hizbollah in planning, coordinating and carrying out this operation.[181]

On 18 July, 1994, a suicide bomber detonated his vehicle in front of the Argentine-

Israeli Mutual Association (AIMA) in Buenos Aires, killing almost 100 people.

Investigators confirmed that this bombing was similar in its operational characteristics to

the 1992 bombing of the Israeli Embassy.[182] The U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation

(FBI) assisted the Argentine government in its inquiry into this act of violence. The FBI

concluded that Hizbollah, with assistance from Iranian Agents, carried out the bombing

against the AIMA building.[183] A group calling itself Ansarollah, or the Supporters of

God, made a statement out of Lebanon claiming responsibility for these attacks. The

Lebanese government, ". . . provided information that confirmed not only the existence of

the group, but additionally linked Supporters of God to Hizbollah."[184]

Additional information from Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS)

reports appear to establish circumstantial evidence linking Hizbollah to the bombings in

Argentina. On 31 July, 1995, Argentina extradited seven Lebanese from Paraguay for

questioning concerning the bombings of the Israeli Embassy (1992) and the AIMA (1994).

Several of these men admitted that they were members of Hizbollah to the Argentine

judge investigating the bombing. However, all of the Lebanese denied involvement in the

bombings.[185] On 3 October, 1995, the Paraguayan National Police Commander, General

Mario Agustin Sapriza Nunes, acknowledged that Hizbollah members live in the city of

Ciudad del Este, a town close to the tri-border area of Paraguay, Brazil and Argentina.

Ciudad del Este is the center of the Arab community in Paraguay. Nunes, "explained that

Hizbollah members living in our country 'are not currently active'."[186] A final FBIS report

on 16 November, 1995, indicated the Argentine police were on the lookout for Ali Husain

Hamsa, a member of Hizbollah who had supposedly entered Argentina. Sources leaked

information to the press indicating Hamsa could be linked to the bombing of the AIMA building in 1994.[187]

It seems plausible that based on the existing information, Hizbollah, with assistance from Iran, carried out these bombings in Buenos Aires. Such spectacular attacks in distant countries such as Argentina bring to light two important lessons. First, the hardening of targets (this can consist of increasing a building's physical security measures, training of personnel in anti-terrorism techniques, and establishing an effective terrorist awareness program to just cite a few examples of hardening) in a high threat location often encourages the group posing the threat to seek softer targets. This ultimately means that the movement, like Hizbollah, will bypass the harder target in order to carry out an operation against a target where the probability of success is much higher. Thus, when a group has the ability to conduct surveillance and attacks on an international scale, this capability greatly increases the threat the group poses because it is difficult, if not impossible, for a country to completely harden all of its facilities worldwide. The bombings of the Israeli facilities in Argentina most likely reflect this concept that Hizbollah chose to strike at softer targets which increased the movement's chances for success.

A second lesson to be learned from this attack is that security measures must reflect an analysis of the global situation combined with an understanding of the threat posed by a group, especially if it has a demonstrated international capability. The 1992 bombing of the Israeli Embassy is a good example of this. Almost one month exactly before this bombing, Israeli helicopter gunships killed Hizbollah's Secretary General, Sheikh Abbas Musawi, in Lebanon. This significant blow to the Party of God should have triggered increased security at Israeli facilities worldwide to counter a potential revenge attack. It is unknown if this increased security existed, but in hindsight both Argentine and U.S. officials believed the bombing was "a revenge attack by Hizbollah for the death

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of Sheikh Abbas Musawi, Hizbollah's Secretary General, who had been assassinated by Israel on 16 Feb 92 . . . ."[188] Interestingly enough, Hizbollah released a video tape they took surveilling the Israeli Embassy so that they could authenticate their claim of responsibility in the attack.[189] As has been stated earlier, increased security measures cannot completely preclude surveillance; however, such measures can greatly diminish this tactic's effectiveness. An awareness and analysis of international events clearly must be an intricate part of an overall counterintelligence program which then enables intelligence personnel to establish an effective security posture to counter potential threats.

Hizbollah's bombing attacks in Kuwait and Argentina demonstrated the group's devastating international capabilities. This ability, however, potentially only exists as long as Iran helps to facilitate these operations. It would be difficult for the Lebanese Party of God to efficiently move weapons and explosives across international borders without Iranian support. Additionally, obtaining legitimate travel documentation and securing logistical support for such large operations would be very difficult without assistance from a state power. It appears that as long as Iran is willing to sponsor Hizbollah, the group will not only possess a regional strike capability, but one that extends far beyond its borders to such geographically separated locations as South America.

Hizbollah's Participation In Lebanese Politics

Throughout the 1980s, Hizbollah strongly advocated Ayatollah Khomeini's concept of the *vilayat-i-faqih*, or rule of the leading cleric, as the proper structure of government in an Islamic Republic[190] and vehemently rejected the Lebanese confessional system. Indeed, one of Hizbollah's primary goals was to implement this type of government in Lebanon. Ayatollah Khomeini wrote and taught extensively on *vilayat-i-faqih*. He stated, "Since Islamic government is a government of law, those acquainted with the law, or more precisely, with religion - i.e. the *fuqaha* - must supervise its functioning. It is they who supervise all executive and administrative affairs of the country, together with all planning."[191] Ayatollah Khomeini defined the *fuqaha* (plural of *faqih*) as a person ". . . learned in matters pertaining to . . . not only in the laws and judicial procedure of Islam, but also in the doctrines, institutions, and ethics of the faith - the *fiqh* is, in short, a religious expert in the full sense of the word."[192] Ayatollah Khomeini's thoughts on Islamic government led him to believe "all spiritual and temporal authority be vested in a supreme jurisprudent (*faqih*) or, in the absence of consensus on one person, in a group of supreme jurisprudents (*fuqaha*)."[193] Hence, Ayatollah Khomeini believed the leading Shi'a Muslim cleric or clerics should govern the state in an Islamic Republic.

This idea of the "Just Jurist" leading an Islamic society was one of the primary tenets of Hizbollah's ideology.[194] A.N. Hamzeh, a professor of political science at the American University in Beirut, stated that from its beginning, Hizbollah rejected the idea of Lebanon as an independent state and called:

... instead for the integration of Lebanon in a greater Islamic state ...
Hizbollah subscribes to the theory of the Governance of the Religious
Jurist (*Vilayat-i-fiqih*) ... Its fundamental assumptions were Shi'a in that
it emphasized the passage of authority to the Just Jurisconsultant (*Vali-i-fiqih*)
in the absence of the Twelfth Imam.[195]

Hizbollah's adherence to this belief in the *vilayat-i-faqih* acted as a catalyst in polarizing

the other confessional groups in Lebanese society. Augustus Norton wrote, "Thus, while

often at odds with one another, the Maronites, Druze, and Sunnis have been objectively

aligned in their commitment to forestall the realization of dreams underwritten by

Tehran."[196] Essentially, other Lebanese sects did not agree on how to distribute power in

their country; however, they were united in their belief that they did not support the

establishment of an Islamic State where a "Just Jurist" would rule the nation.

The Party of God's rigid adherence to the relatively unpopular goal of establishing

an Islamic government slowly gave way and eventually was overcome by the movement's

desire to participate in the Lebanese confessional system. As the movement moved

towards this accommodating stance, "The theory of the Islamic State would remain within

the party rank and file; however, it would not be publicly emphasized as an immediate

goal, because it was viewed with suspicion by Sunnis and not acceptable at all to the

Druzes and Christians."[197] Thus, the Party of God did not publicly disavow nor abandon

its stated belief that an Islamic government was the proper form of rule. However, by the

time of the 1992 elections, Hizbollah did not mention this stance as a tenet of its political

platform.

When the 1980s ended, several factors converged on the Party of God which

eventually led the group to participate in the 1992 Lebanese elections. Khomeini's death

in 1989 resulted in a new regime in Iran. The new Iranian government, led by president

Hashimi Rafsanjani at the time, decided to take a slightly more pragmatic approach to

foreign relations and the spreading of the Islamic Revolution.[198] As a result of Iran's

reformed approach to foreign relations, Iran, the self acknowledged sole power to create an Islamic state, put subtle pressure on Hizbollah to temper its radical stance against the Lebanese government and join in the political process. Iran managed to apply this pressure through its support of Hassan Nasrallah, the 1992 newly elected Hizbollah Secretary General as the result of the death of Abbas Musawi (as described earlier). In addition to this, the 1989 Ta'if Accords resulted in a redistribution of political power in Lebanon which further encouraged the Party of God to join in the political game.[199]

The Ta'if Accords came about as a result of the crisis in 1988 when Syria tried to impose its choice for the president of Lebanon on the Lebanese Parliament. Significant strife and mayhem ensued as various groups struggled against this influence. During this conflict the Arab League intervened, brokering an agreement where 62 members of the Lebanese Parliament met in al-Ta'if, Saudi Arabia, to come up with a solution to the crisis.[200] The meeting resulted in the creation of the Document of National Understanding, which implicitly reaffirmed a confessional political system as an interim form of government with the end goal being "deconfessionalization" at some later date.[201]

The Lebanese Parliamentary members changed several aspects of the Lebanese confessional system during the meeting at al-Ta'if. The new agreement shifted autonomous power of the president to the cabinet and it realigned responsibilities so that the most important position in the new government became that of the prime minister, which was a position to be filled by the Sunni Muslims.[202] Also, the Ta'if Accords created nine new Parliamentary seats which brought parity between Muslims and Christians by granting each group 54 seats in parliament. The new political landscape was a dramatic change from the 1972 parliament, where Christians held 54 seats and Muslims only 45.[203] This change in the balance of power in the Lebanese government appeared to be another one of the factors that encouraged Hizbollah to participate in the confessional system.

In 1992, the Lebanese government held its first elections in Lebanon following the Ta'if Accords. Hizbollah managed to win eight parliamentary seats and for the first time became a player in the Lebanese political scene.[204] During these elections, the Party of God engaged in a sophisticated political campaign which established the group as a legitimate contender in Lebanese politics. Hizbollah pursued a number of avenues which increased the possibilities of having its candidates elected. First, the group sought deals with non-Shi'as so as to ensure Hizbollah candidates had the best possibility of election in their various regions.[205] Second, the Party of God formed an election machine, which clearly showed the group's desire to enter into the Lebanese political environment. Hizbollah's election machine formed a party headquarters which planned, organized, and ran the political campaign. A.N. Hamzeh described this political machine mobilized in 1992 as the most effective of any group ever in Lebanon.[206] (Despite this effectiveness, there were some reports indicating Hizbollah used the threat of force to influence a small portion of Shi'as to vote for the Party of God as well as purchased some of the votes they received.[207]) Thirdly, the leading cleric on Hizbollah's Supreme Shura Council issued a *fatwa* relating to the necessity of voting for the Party of God's candidates. This *fatwa* read, "Every man will be asked about his vote on judgment day - any adherent to the supreme Islamic interest should hold the list [Hizbollah's candidates] high and drop it as is in the voting box - and it is illicit to elect anybody else who is not on the list."[208]

Somewhat surprisingly, Hizbollah managed to mount an extremely effective political campaign which resulted in eight party members being elected to positions in the Lebanese parliament. This success set a new course for Hizbollah for it established the group as a political entity to go along with the already well known and largely feared resistance movement. The Party of God was now a player in Lebanese politics.

Between 1992-1996, the Party of God "presented itself as a champion of the oppressed and has attacked government corruption . . . Politicians and analysts in Lebanon are generally impressed by Hizbollah's performance as a political party." They became known for their "morally upright" dealings with people in the Lebanese parliament.[209] Primarily, Hizbollah deputies have focused their attention on rooting out corruption which they claim pervades all levels of state administration. They have not pushed nor pursued an "Islamic" agenda in the least.[210] Despite this fact and the broad sentimental support Hizbollah enjoys from most Lebanese because of the group's continued resistance to Israeli occupation, the Party of God has failed to gain an electoral base outside the Shi'a community.[211] Hizbollah's efforts to combat corruption and its active resistance to Israeli occupation, as well as the wide range of social services such as hospital care, schooling, housing, reconstruction initiatives, and cooperative supermarkets[212] have earned the movement a great deal of respect from various sectors inside Lebanon. Yet this respect has not translated into broader political support for Hizbollah's political candidates. This fact was clearly illustrated in 1996 when Hizbollah lost one of its seats in parliament, leaving it with just seven representatives.[213]

By choosing to participate in the Lebanese political process, the Party of God effectively changed another primary tenet of its ideology which was stringent resistance to participation in the Lebanese confessional system. One author wrote:

> By virtue of joining the Ta'if process, Hizbollah made its choice very clear: henceforth, 'Lebanization' became a key-word to designate the party's will, first, to be recognized as a fully Lebanese party, and, second, to take part in the competitive power-sharing game among and within each Lebanese major community. This meant that, from now on, the party would work from inside the Lebanese system and never against it.[214]

Hizbollah's change in its political tack definitely highlighted the fact that the movement, viewed often times as a fanatical uncompromising group, has shown the ability to act in a

practical fashion. They now work within the Lebanese confessional system, calling for cooperation between the various religious sects to improve conditions in the country.[215] Giles Trendle stated:

> Hizbollah politicians today talk of the Iranian Revolution as an inspiration rather than a precise model for replication, and they regard the Khomeini-inspired concept of vilayat-i-faqih as an intellectual ideal and not a political option. And both clerics and politicians within the party and its milieu recognize that Lebanon's multiconfessional society is not ready for an Islamic state, though they refrain from categorically ruling out the possibility.[216]

Even though Iran supported the Party of God's new tack towards governmental participation, a portion of Hizbollah members vehemently opposed such activities. Allegedly, this decision resulted in a split within the Party of God. One faction wanted to participate in the Lebanese elections while the other, more militant wing, clung to its ideological rejection of the Lebanese political system and vision of creating an Islamic Republic.[217]

It is difficult to assess the relationship between Hizbollah's political body and the Islamic Resistance, the movement's military wing. On the one hand, Hizbollah's military resistance to Israeli occupation has gained wide spread approval from the Lebanese population as well as support for the Party of God's political movement from the Shi'a Muslim community. One author stated, "Hizbollah is not a two-faced movement, one dark and fanatical, the other pragmatic and reassuring. Its resistance in the south has become an essential part of its domestic strategy in its acute competition with AMAL for control over the Shi'a community."[218] Thus, military actions by the Islamic Resistance led to greater Shi'a Muslim political support for Hizbollah in the Lebanese political arena. This increased support seems ironic considering the fact that the Islamic Resistance

initially formed as a result of radical members opposing Hizbollah's entrance into Lebanese politics because the radicals still sought the establishment of an Islamic Republic.

Hizbollah's primary competition for Shi'a Muslim political support in Lebanon comes from AMAL. In the 1996 Lebanese parliamentary elections, AMAL won ten seats while Hizbollah won seven.[219] In the 1998 municipal and mayoral elections, Hizbollah and AMAL were engaged in a heated political battle to gain control of the Shi'a community. The Egyptian paper Al-Ahram stated:

> The rivalry between the AMAL party and the Hizbollah movement over the leadership of the Muslim Shi'a community in Lebanon has been rumbling on for many years, but it returned to the fore during the delay of a prisoner swap between Lebanon and Israel.[220]

Ironically, the Shi'a community in Baalbek, historically a Hizbollah stronghold, elected AMAL members in these 1998 elections. In fact, as recent as 1996, Giles Trendle stated Hizbollah was "unbeatable" in Baalbek.[221] Evidently the political landscape had changed in Baalbek between 1996 and 1998. The rivalry between the two Shi'a groups "is expected to intensify during the two years before the next scheduled parliamentary elections."[222]

At this point, it is important to mention that not all Lebanese Shi'a Muslims fall in the AMAL or Hizbollah camps. The Shi'a community, like the Druze, Sunni, and Christian groups, has many dividing lines within its own sect.[223] In 1996, Judith Harik conducted a study of Lebanese Shi'a political groups and found that 31% of Shi'a Muslims preferred AMAL while 41% preferred Hizbollah.[224] These figures indicate that 28% of Lebanese Shi'a Muslim support parties other than the two largest. These numbers also show that the majority of Shi'a Muslims, although they may respect Hizbollah and benefit from some of the groups social programs, do not stand behind the Party of God in political elections.

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Hizbollah's 1992 entrance into the Lebanese parliamentary elections marked a clear change in the direction and ideology of the Party of God. By effectively forging into this hitherto unknown realm, the movement has shown its ability to compromise and work within the given constraints of a multiconfessional system. The new ideological stance towards participation in Lebanese politics seemingly has not jeopardized the strength of the group, but at the same time, it has not increased the movement's popularity at the ballot box either. In essence, political participation has not changed Hizbollah's appeal in the Lebanese Shi'a community. However, political participation by the Party of God has required the movement to open itself up to closer scrutinization which has enabled researchers to gather more information on how this once very covert group now operates.

Major Israeli Military Efforts to Punish and/or Eliminate Hizbollah

The Party of God has developed into a formidable foe fighting against the state of Israel. Sources estimate that Hizbollah has approximately 5,000 resistance fighters under arms at any one time who carry out mostly conventional military operations against Israeli soldiers and the South Lebanese Army (SLA) in the south Lebanon "security zone" and northern Israel.[225] Hizbollah's efforts have earned it a reputation for being even more lethal than the PLO, a true sign that the Party of God has developed into an extremely dangerous organization for those countries the movement views as its enemies.[226] Laura Eisenburg stated, "By 1985, however, Israel had a new enemy in south Lebanon, fiercer and more effective than the PLO had ever been and, ironically, in part the unwitting creation of Israel itself."[227] Because of Hizbollah's successful fighting posture, Israel has on two separate occasions mounted large scale military operations against the Party of God all of which were aimed at punishing and curbing the movement's military operations.

Israel's "Operation Accountability" in July 1993, and "Grapes of Wrath" in April 1996, sought to eliminate or greatly reduce Hizbollah's activities in Lebanon. "Both operations unleashed massive destruction in south Lebanon in order to pressure the Syria-backed Lebanese government to halt Hizbollah's attacks on northern Galilee."[228] These campaigns destroyed numerous Hizbollah camps, supply lines, arm depots, and fighters, but ultimately failed in its objective of decreasing the movement's strength and overall effectiveness. Additionally, the operations dislocated many thousands of south Lebanon residents who fled north to Beirut to escape the onslaught.[229] In fact, the "Grapes of Wrath" campaign displaced over 400,000 residents.[230]

Each of these operations was in response to sustained Hizbollah rocket attacks on northern Israel. "Operation Accountability" began on 25 July, 1993, and ended on 6 August, 1993, after Syria helped broker a cease-fire between Israel and the Party of God.

At this time, Hizbollah and Israel agreed to not deliberately target each other's civilian populations.[231] On 8 April, 1996, Hizbollah fired Katyusha rockets into northern Israel in violation of the cease-fire. The Party of God carried out this attack because it believed Israel had violated the cease-fire earlier when a blast killed a teenager and wounded three others in a region outside the agreed upon combat zone. This chain of events led to operation "Grapes of Wrath" which began on 11 April, 1996, and lasted until 26 April, 1996. Although Hizbollah had fired rockets into northern Israel which allegedly prompted Israel's quick and destructive response, many outside observers felt Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres had ulterior motives for taking the fight to the Party of God. Some sources felt Peres, who was going to be running in an election campaign in June 1996, wanted to improve his image as being tough on Israeli security issues. In February 1996, only two months before Hizbollah's rocket attacks, HAMAS carried out two suicide bombings in Israel which killed over 64 Israeli civilians. Since that time, many conservative Israelis had raised questions about the sitting Prime Minister's ability to protect Israel. The mood created by this questioning undoubtedly played some role in the Israeli leaders decision to aggressively go after Hizbollah fighters.[232] On 24 April, 1996, Israel and Hizbollah agreed to another cease-fire. Again, the cease-fire called on both parties to avoid attacks on civilian targets, but did not preclude fighting in the security zone. In fact, Hizbollah resumed military operations in the south Lebanon security zone three days after the cease-fire.[233]

Israel's military campaigns into Israel failed to bring about the desired results of increased security to northern Israel as well as decreased Hizbollah operations. The Party of God's mobile units managed to avoid destruction and maintained its capability of launching rockets into Israel if it so desired.[234] One author astutely stated, "Hizbollah emerged from the battles bloodied but unbowed, with its prestige heightened."[235]

Ironically, Israel's intense bombardments, which sought to weaken its enemy on the northern border, actually served to increase the group's popularity among the Lebanese as well as brought international recognition to the movement's cause.[236] As the international community watched the events unfold in Lebanon, particularly the "Grapes of Wrath" operation, it began to empathize with Hizbollah and have sympathy for Lebanese civilians in south Lebanon. Ultimately, the international community condemned Israel's aggression and began to recognize Hizbollah as a resistance organization instead of a terrorist group.[237] Thus, Hizbollah's acceptance and strength in Lebanon as well as on the world stage increased as a result of Israel's attempts to eliminate the movement.

Conclusion

The primary goal of this paper was to provide a historical understanding of Hizbollah by examining its creation and development since its inception in 1982. A glimpse at the major themes of this presentation provides an overall picture of the group. The Party of God came about as a result of a number of factors to include the plight of the Shi'a Muslims in Lebanon, the Israeli invasion of that country in 1982, the secularization of the Shi'a militia AMAL, and Iran's efforts to spread its Islamic Revolution to Lebanon. These factors coalesced in Baalbek in the summer of 1982 which then resulted in the creation of a new and highly secretive movement led by Shi'a Muslim clerics.

The Party of God initially appeared to be a conglomeration of several splinter radical Shi'a Muslim movements. Over time though, it appeared as though all of these groups were in fact components of Hizbollah and not mutually exclusive entities. Names such as Islamic Jihad, the Husain Death Squad, and Jund Allah turned up in the media, seemingly indicating the existence of different groups. Yet in reality all of them were names synonymous with the Party of God. There were two groups, Islamic AMAL and Lebanese al-Dawa, that initially developed on their own, but eventually were assimilated into Hizbollah. It appears as though the Party of God absorbed these two pre-existing movements sometime in late 1982 and 1983.

The Ayatollah Khomeini and the Islamic Revolution in Iran had an enormous impact on Hizbollah's ideology. This influence became apparent in 1985, when the Party of God published its manifesto which announced its allegiance to Ayatollah Khomeini and essentially tailored its ideology along the lines espoused by the Iranian cleric. One of the major components of the movement's ideology managed to set it clearly apart from the mainstream Shi'a Muslim militia in Lebanon, AMAL. AMAL sought to better Shi'a Muslim conditions in Lebanon through participation in the government and working

within the framework of the Lebanese confessional political system. This secular movement sought a reformist political platform. Hizbollah, in stark contrast, called for the destruction of the Lebanese state and the establishment of an Islamic Republic modeled after Iran in its place. The Party of God wanted a revolution in Lebanon, not reform. Hizbollah's radical stance towards the creation of an Islamic state has waned over time and since 1992 the group has participated in the Lebanese political system. The Party of God continues to call for the liberation of Palestine, but the majority of the leaders of the movement appear to draw a distinction between liberation of south Lebanon and liberating the Occupied Territories. Whereas Hizbollah once called for the total destruction of Israel, the group now puts out cryptic comments about whether or not they would continue to fight Israel when and if this country withdraws from south Lebanon. Thus, it is hard to conclude what military steps (if any) the Party of God would take against Israel in the event this withdrawal would come to pass.

Hizbollah's organizational structure can be difficult to understand when it is only contemplated from a conventional point of view. Many leaders of Hizbollah have commented on how this movement incorporates all Muslims who want to live under the laws of an Islamic Republic and who seek to fight Israel. Thus, this group, at least in the eyes of its leaders, is larger than the indigenous Hizbollah membership and potentially stretches across international boundaries. This "larger" sense of Hizbollah is not easy to define nor is there much available information on this topic. Although this limitation exists, there is ample data on the group's traditional structure which seemed to come into being in the late 1980s at the behest of Iran. Under this traditional structure, Hizbollah has a Secretary General, a Supreme Consultative Counsel, a military wing, and several committees that provide a wide array of services for Shi'a Muslim communities as well as Lebanese citizens in general. One of the most impressive aspects of this structure is the

group's social service programs. Hizbollah has built and developed such things as hospitals, schools, construction firms, and grocery stores in an effort to improve the conditions of Shi'a Muslims in Lebanon.

In addition to putting a huge amount of effort into bettering the Shi'a Muslim communities, the Party of God has also put considerable resources towards punishing the west for its presence in Lebanon as well as its support of Israel. Hizbollah is probably best known in the media for its incredible suicide bombings against such targets as the U.S. Embassy, the MNF, and kidnappings in Lebanon. Such attacks made the headlines in newspapers around the world time and time again, thus creating and perpetuating the idea that Hizbollah was a deadly terrorist organization, bent on destroying the west. In addition to the attacks against western interests in Lebanon, Hizbollah managed to execute major operations in other countries of the world to include Kuwait and Argentina. These bombings drew a strong link between the Party of God and Iranian diplomatic missions. This alleged association has enabled the group to carry out operations in locations geographically separated from Lebanon. Such attacks showed Hizbollah could strike globally, thus increasing the lethality of the group.

The information available on these operations brings to light several lessons learned which could benefit any American citizen living outside the U.S., especially in a high threat environment. The first lesson is that Hizbollah possesses a highly sophisticated capability of conducting well thought out and complex attacks. Time and time again the movement has proven it can plan and execute complicated operations. As a result, the first lesson to be learned is that Hizbollah cannot be underestimated nor its activities dismissed as inconsequential. Secondly, Hizbollah's proven capabilities of surveillance and communications intercept (through indigenous sources as well as the group's connection with state level intelligence services in Iran and Syria) necessitate two imperatives. These

are "operations security" and "surveillance detection and neutralization." Surveillance neutralization, which is accomplished by maintaining a completely random routine, precludes the surveiller from gaining enough information to plan an attack. This tactic is probably the most effective technique employed in a high threat environment. A third lesson to be learned from Hizbollah's non-conventional attacks is a realization that hardening a specific facility's defenses against an attack does not diminish the overall transnational threat posed by the Party of God. On the contrary, increased security at one facility will potentially encourage a movement such as Hizbollah, who has proven it can strike outside its normal area of operations, to seek and carry out an attack against a softer target at another location. This international capability is precisely why Hizbollah poses such a potential threat to U.S. and western assets world wide.

The non-conventional tactics employed by Hizbollah as well as the group's demonstrated capabilities have made it extremely effective in attacking its enemies. One of the most significant of these capabilities is that some members within the movement possess highly advanced bomb making skills. The Party of God has effectively combined this ability with the concept of martyrdom to wreck tremendous damage on numerous targets. Additionally, Hizbollah has recently been successful in recruiting at least one European convert to Islam with the intention of having this person slip into Israel to carry out a bombing campaign. The Party of God has also proven extremely adept at intelligence gathering and establishing an effective counterintelligence system that has precluded Israeli and other western intelligence services from gathering information on Hizbollah's military operations. All of these capabilities again point to the fact that this organization is extremely sophisticated, well trained, and astute in planning and coordinating complicated non-conventional operations.

The Party of God's political ideology has shifted significantly since its inception. Initially, the group totally rejected any type of participation in the Lebanese political system and called instead for the establishment of an Islamic state modeled after Ayatollah Khomeini's concept of the *vilayat-i-faqih*. However, this idea has changed and now the movement advocates participation in the Lebanese political system. Hizbollah currently has seven representatives in the Lebanese parliament. These members have developed a reputation for honesty and an intense desire to fight corruption at all levels in the government. However, despite this positive reputation and the popular Lebanese support given to Hizbollah as a result of their resistance efforts, the movement's overall base of political support has not increased. The group still competes with AMAL for influence and votes in the Shi'a Muslim community.

Israel has attempted on two separate occasions to eliminate Hizbollah by aggressively mounting large scale attacks against their positions in Lebanon. These operations, code named "Operation Accountability" (July 1993) and "Grapes of Wrath" (April 1996), did not achieve their objective. Ironically, Israel's efforts actually served to strengthen the group's reputation in Lebanon and obtained previously unheard of international sympathy for Hizbollah's struggle against Israeli occupation and attacks against their guerrilla fighters. Additionally, these operations eventually led many commentators to classify the Party of God as a resistance movement rather than a terrorist group. Thus, Israel's actions truly backfired because they resulted in legitimizing the military operations of Hizbollah instead of weakening this group's ability to attack Israel.

In addition to providing an overall historical look at the Party of God, this paper endeavored to answer two questions through the process of compiling this information. These two questions are the following: 1) Determine whether or not the group can and

will exist if Israel withdraws from Lebanon and 2) Does Hizbollah still have the capability to strike at western targets in the international arena.

The prognosis for the Party of God's ability to maintain itself as an identifiable entity even after an Israeli withdrawal appears to be fairly good. This primarily stems from its willingness to engage in the Lebanese political arena as well as its apparent abandonment of its goal of establishing an Islamic Republic. Hizbollah now has members of its party elected to the Lebanese parliament who are known not for their calls for the creation of an Islamic state, but rather their honesty and aggressive attacks against governmental corruption. Unquestionably, the Party of God enjoys a broad base of sympathy and support from the general Lebanese population because of its resistance to Israeli occupation as well as the social services it provides to people in need. However, this popularity has not translated into more political votes for the group. Thus, even if resistance to Israel's presence in Lebanon comes to an end as a result of a withdrawal (and hence result in a lesser degree of general Lebanese support for the group's existence), the voting base for Hizbollah will probably not change.

Hizbollah's political support comes almost exclusively from the Shi'a community and this most likely will not erode as a result of an Israeli withdrawal because the group has interwoven itself into the social fabric of Lebanese Shi'a Muslim society. This analysis holds true even if Syria decided to reign in Hizbollah and attempt to disarm the movement. It is my opinion that the group has performed long enough in the political arena to exist even if its military operations cease or are greatly decreased. Essentially, the Party of God has legitimized itself through political participation and potentially ensured its survival no matter what the outcome of Israel's occupation of the south Lebanon security zone.

One factor that is a potential problem in this analysis is Iran's support to Hizbollah. If Iran cut off its military aid to the Party of God, I believe the group would continue to

survive because as I have stressed above, its military operations do not ensure the group's existence. In fact, as recent as March, 1998, Iran's Culture and Islamic Guidance Minister stated, ". . . if Israel withdraws from Lebanon under provisions of secure and final borders there would be no further need for the military activities of the Resistance [a reference to Hizbollah]."[238] It appears as though Iran does not feel Hizbollah's existence centers only on its struggle against Israel and thus would be willing to cease weapons shipments to the movement if Israel withdrew from Lebanese territory.

Iranian financial aid to the Party of God poses a more significant problem, however. Even though this aid has declined during the 1990s,[239] this support still enables the group to maintain its wide array of social services. If Iran terminated its financial aid to the Party of God, this could adversely impact Hizbollah. Such a cessation would significantly decrease the movement's ability to provide assistance to the Shi'a community which is one area that leads many Shi'a Muslims to vote for Hizbollah political figures. It is reasonable to ascertain that if some of these social services decline or end, there could potentially be Hizbollah political supporters who would move to other Shi'a Muslim groups. Even though the Party of God's political support would decrease, I believe the movement could still maintain itself, albeit at a smaller level, without this assistance. Thus, based on the information reviewed in this paper, I postulate Hizbollah will continue to exist in Lebanon regardless of external factors which include a possible future Israeli withdrawal or termination of aid from foreign powers.

The second question this paper sought to answer was whether or not Hizbollah still maintains the ability to strike at international targets. This capability is without a doubt tied directly to the group's relationship with Iran. If Iran were to cease support for transnational operations which would mean a curtailing of the use of its diplomatic facilities for such activities, Hizbollah would have a difficult time carrying out a large

scale, logistically demanding operation against a western target. Thus, Iran is the key element in this facet of the Party of God's arsenal. Iran's new government, headed by President Khatami, has recently taken several steps towards moderation in an effort to improve relations with some western countries. This would seemingly indicate that Iran might very well begin to reduce or terminate support of groups like Hizbollah in carrying out international attacks against mutually perceived enemies. However, although Iran has pursued a more moderate course of international relations as of late, this does not appear to include a reduction in their support for "terrorist" type operations. U.S. Marine General Anthony Zinni, Commander of U.S. Central Command (this command oversees U.S. military operations in the Middle East), stated in June 1998 that, ". . . we haven't seen any reduction in the support for terrorism. I feel the hard-liners are still in charge of the intelligence service and the military [in Iran]."[240] As a result of Iran's continued support to radical Shi'a Muslim groups, I postulate that Hizbollah still maintains the capability of carrying out international operations.

Capability, however, does not always translate into action. The Party of God is in a much different position than it was in the 1980s or even the early 1990s. The group is now a legitimate part of the Lebanese political system and has a vested interest in maintaining a certain level of credibility and respect in order to operate in this arena. If the group were to carry out attacks on the international scene, this could adversely impact their political standing in Lebanon. Additionally, by becoming a part of the political system, the group lost its veil of secrecy when it developed a structure that identifies the movement and its leaders. Consequently, Hizbollah is much more vulnerable to retaliatory strikes than they were when they maintained their clandestine status. The new position of the Party of God begs the question of why would they carry out an international operation

(outside of Lebanon and Israel) because the consequences would appear to be too significant.

In summary, although Hizbollah has the capability to strike internationally, it seems logical to conclude that such an operation would not be in the best interest of the movement without some type of justification. Justification is key part of this analysis because I believe Hizbollah might very well carry out a retaliatory attack against a target in the international arena if the group suffered a significant loss or set back in Lebanon. However, without this justification, I feel Hizbollah would be unwilling to risk the potential repercussions of an indiscriminate international attack.

Appendix A

This section seeks to provide background information on many of the leaders and prominent figures of Hizbollah. While this list is not exhaustive, a general review of it enables the reader to have a greater understanding of which figures have had the most significant impact on the formation and operations of the Party of God. The most prominent name associated with Hizbollah is without a doubt Mohammed Fadlallah. This review begins with a look at Fadlallah's influence and involvement with the Party of God.

SAYYID MOHAMMED HUSAIN FADLALLAH

Fadlallah, who is Lebanese, was born in 1935 in the Najaf, Iraq. He studied in Najaf under his father, who was an Ayatollah,[241] and under Ayatollah Muhsin al-Hakim. Al-Hakim's sons would later go on to form Iraq's dissident movement Hizb al-Dawa al-Islamiya, a movement that Fadlallah would long be associated with.[242] In fact, some sources stated that Fadlallah was a key player in forming al-Dawa.[243] Fadlallah had contact with Ayatollah Khomeini in Najaf for a short period. In 1966, Fadlallah moved to Lebanon and settled in East Beirut. Between 1966 and the late 1970s, he established many social welfare organizations to help Shi'a Muslims. These included cultural groups, clubs, clinics, preparatory schools, orphanages, and mosques. Fadlallah acted independently of Musa al-Sadr and some scholars have speculated there may have been a rivalry between them. Whatever their relationship, a clear distinction between the two stemmed from Fadlallah's shunning of open political controversy until the late 1970s.[244]

In 1976, the Phalangist militia besieged Fadlallah's neighborhood in Beirut which eventually caused the Shi'a cleric to flee. This incident, along with the successful Iranian Revolution, profoundly impacted Fadlallah and transformed his advocating political

quietism to one of strongly supporting political activism.[245] After being forced to flee from his home, Fadlallah wrote extensively on the logic and use of force. In his writings, he describes situations where the use of force is justified. His first point is that force, right or wrong, is an effective tool. Second, paradise is not gained through just prayer and that action must be taken at times. Thirdly, he states Muslims must engage their adversaries in dialogue, exhausting such things as demonstrations and strikes without retreating to taqiyah, even if the individual's survival is in doubt. If these avenues do not succeed, force must be used as a last resort and must be accompanied by a clear sense of mission, commitment, and self defense.[246] One of the verses in the Koran that Fadlallah likes to use comes from Sura 61:4, which reads "Verily God loveth those who, as though they were a solid wall, do battle for his cause in serried lines!"[247] By the late 1970s, both Fadlallah's eviction from his home as well as the Iranian Revolution pushed him to take a leading role in defending the Shi'a of Lebanon.

After the Iranian Revolution, Fadlallah traveled frequently between Iran and Lebanon. As his interaction with the new Iranian regime increased, his sermons in Lebanon began to deal more and more with resistance to imperialism. After Israel invaded Lebanon in 1982, he preached against Israeli occupation, the Multinational Force presence in Beirut, and the Lebanese government.[248] After Hizbollah was formed in the summer of 1982, Fadlallah's name began to be identified with the group as its "spiritual leader."[249] This association was further solidified in 1983 when various intelligence sources linked Fadlallah to the suicide attacks against the U.S. and French MNF in Beirut. Some intelligence sources believed Fadlallah actually chose the suicide drivers, while others believed he simply blessed the two operations.[250] In the face of these allegations, Fadlallah denied he played any role in the selecting or sanctioning of these suicide attacks. He also denied he was a member of Hizbollah.[251] Even though Fadlallah denied involvement in

these bombings, he did state the attacks were heroic and acknowledged that his teachings have inspired some of Hizbollah's activities.[252] Additionally, his ". . . lucid sermons and writings and public statements have proved to be an important recruitment impetus for the party."[253]

Some authors believe Fadlallah's role in Hizbollah is quite clear. Marius Deeb writes, "There is no doubt that Fadlallah is the foremost ideologue as well as the organizer of the Hizbollah." Deeb goes on to state, "By 1983 Fadlallah had become the leading political and religious figure among the Shi'a militants. He utilized underground organizations such as that of the Islamic Jihad (al-Jihad al-Islami) which was the code name for Hizbollah when it was engaged in select terrorist operations."[254]

Despite Deeb's assurances, Fadlallah's role in Hizbollah becomes a little convoluted when his relationship with Iran is scrutinized. Interestingly enough, Fadlallah's message "combines a call for the adherence of Muslims to Islamic law with a plea for intercommunal toleration."[255] In the 1980s, when Hizbollah and Iran stringently advocated the establishment of an Islamic state, Fadlallah openly stated he felt Iran did not understand the complex social conditions in Lebanon.[256] In an interview with the magazine *Middle East Insight* in 1985, Fadlallah stated, "We told them [Iranian Officials] that Lebanon was different, that we do not have sufficient and necessary conditions for an Islamic Republic."[257] Today, Fadlallah still calls for cooperation and solidarity among the various Lebanese sects in order to improve the conditions of all Lebanese.[258] Fadlallah's pragmatic analysis of the Lebanese social landscape, coupled with his apparent willingness to exist and work with other religious sects, certainly did not conform to Hizbollah's ideology and acerbic attacks on other Lebanese groups in the 1980s.[259] These inconsistencies do not prove Fadlallah is not associated with Hizbollah. On the contrary,

he definitely plays a role in the Party of God. However, what type of role and where he fits into the puzzle of Hizbollah is difficult to accurately assess.

Some concluding remarks are warranted about Fadlallah before moving on to the next member of Hizbollah. In 1985, Fadlallah was made an Ayatollah.[260] He is enormously respected and popular not only among Shi'a Muslims in Lebanon, but Shi'a Muslims in Kuwait and Bahrain as well.[261] Several groups have attempted to assassinate Fadlallah at various times. In 1980, the Iraqi Ba'th party tried to eliminate him because of his association with the Iraqi al-Dawa party. The attempt failed; however, Fadlallah was hurt in the episode.[262] In 1985, Maronite enemies of the cleric planted a car bomb outside his residence. The car bomb failed to kill Fadlallah, but eighty other people died in the explosion.[263] Allegedly, the CIA trained the individuals who carried out the assassination attempt.[264]

HUSAIN MUSAWI

Husain Musawi, who was born in 1945,[265] varies markedly in one aspect of his upbringing from many of the other leaders of Hizbollah which is that he received a secular versus religious education. At the completion of his schooling, he worked as a teacher in Baalbek. He began participating in the AMAL movement in the late 1970s. After the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran, he served as AMAL's liaison with Iran and traveled frequently between that country and Lebanon.[266] Husain Musawi rose to prominence in the AMAL movement where he became one of Nabih Berri's chief lieutenants in the early 1980s. However, in 1982, Berri agreed to participate in U.S. efforts to mediate the crisis in Lebanon (through the National Salvation Committee), which made him appear hesitant to attack Israel. Based on this, Husain Musawi broke from AMAL. He took a small group of his followers to Baalbek and established Islamic AMAL. One author described

the split between Berri and Husain Musawi as a generational split between two groups of people within the Shi'a community. Berri represented the older generation which was used to co-existence with Christians and Sunnis. This group essentially saw itself as Lebanese first and Shi'a Muslim second. Husain Musawi and his followers, on the other hand, wanted justice for the transgressions committed by Israel.[267] When Islamic AMAL formed in Baalbek, the group came under the influence of Hizbollah and was eventually incorporated into the Party of God.

Husain Musawi's definition of Hizbollah, which was discussed in several articles, created a broad image of the group and probably increased the mystique as well as the western intelligence services' uncertainty as to the organizational structure of the Party of God. Husain Musawi stated that anyone who subscribed to the concept of the *vilayat-i-fiqih*[268] and fought against Israel was Hizbollah.[269] Husain Musawi's definition, although simple, surely complicated efforts to figure out how many of the attacks in Lebanon were related and directed by a central group.

Some authors indicated Husain Musawi's group Islamic AMAL was just another name for Islamic Jihad and that this group was responsible for carrying out military operations for Hizbollah in the early to mid 1980s.[270] Husain Musawi was believed to be personally involved in the bombings of the U.S. Embassy and the U.S. and French MNF in Beirut in 1983.[271] He denied any involvement in these attacks, but he praised those who had performed these acts of violence. Rumors linking him to these and other bombings led many westerners and Arab moderates to refer to him as the Shi'a "Carlos," referring to the notorious international terrorist "Carlos."[272]

SHEIKH ABBAS MUSAWI

Abbas Musawi was widely believed to be a cousin of Husain Musawi. Allegedly, when Hizbollah first formed, Abbas Musawi became a major military commander as well as the first internal security chief.[273] He also served for a time as the director of a religious school in Baalbek.[274] In the mid 1980s, Hizbollah leaders reassigned Abbas Musawi to the Lebanese city of Tyre where he and an Iranian Pasdaran Officer set up a chain of safe houses and tunnels to clandestinely keep and move western hostages from place to place.[275] Abbas Musawi spent eight years (in the 1960s or 1970s) studying in Najaf, Iraq, where he had contact with and studied under Ayatollah Khomeini.[276] In February, 1992, Israel killed Abbas Musawi, who at the time was Hizbollah's Secretary General, in a helicopter gunship raid.

ABU HAIDAR MUSAWI

Intelligence sources believe Haidar Musawi was a relative to Husain Musawi; however, it should be acknowledged that the Musawi name is very common in Lebanon. Haidar Musawi was believed to be the prominent leader of the Husain Suicide Squad, a group falling under the direction and guidance of Hizbollah. Some sources believed that Haidar Musawi had some role in the bombings of the MNF units in October 1983. Evidently, he either rented or purchased trucks similar in style and color to vegetable trucks that frequently made deliveries to the U.S. Marine and French compounds in Beirut. The sources speculated that these trucks were then able to approach the compounds without drawing attention to themselves prior to penetrating the defensive perimeters of the U.S. Marine and French facilities.[277]

SHEIKH RAGHIB HARB

Sheikh Raghib Harb was born in 1952. Like many of the other leaders of Hizbollah, he studied in Najaf under Ayatollah Khomeini and as a result had close contact with Iran.[278] He pursued his religious studies in Najaf until Iraqi security forces expelled him from their country. He then returned to Beirut and studied under Fadlallah.[279] Harb, who's name means war, became the Shi'a cleric of Jibsheet, a town in southern Lebanon. Many Shi'a Muslims remember Harb as being one of the first resistance leaders in the south. He preached vehemently against Israeli occupation and his efforts to organize and lead Shi'a Muslims against the Israelis eventually transformed Jibsheet into one of the "fiercest Resistance strongholds" in the south. Harb knew that he was a target for assassination based on threats he received as well as being warned and eventually arrested by Israeli forces on 18 March, 1983.[280]

After being released from jail, he continued his efforts in mounting support against Israeli occupation. On 12 February, 1984, an assassin shot Harb in the head three times as the Sheikh walked home from a friend's home.[281] Harb's popularity is clearly evident by the mass following that remembers the anniversary of his death every year. In fact, in February 1992, Israel helicopter gunships attacked and killed Abbas Musawi as he returned home in his motorcade from attending this event in Jibsheet.[282] Harb is still remembered today as one of the first "martyrs" against Israeli occupation.

SHEIKH IBRAHIM AL-AMIN

Ibrahim al-Amin was born in 1953.[283] He studied and graduated from a religious school in Najaf where he was taught by Ayatollah Khomeini. He joined AMAL in the late 1970s and after the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Tehran, he served as one of AMAL's representatives to Tehran. However, like Husain Musawi, he left AMAL when it's leader,

Nabih Berri, joined the National Salvation Committee. After departing from AMAL, al-Amin allegedly played a key role in forming Hizbollah. After the formation of the Party of God, al-Amin re-organized al-Dawa under Hizbollah leadership.[284] Al-Amin has served as the spokesman for the Party of God[285] and allegedly was positioned to serve as an Ambassador for the new Islamic Republic of Lebanon which never materialized.[286]

SHEIKH SUBHI TUFALI

Tufali was born in 1948 and studied in Najaf as well as Qum, Iran. He too came in close contact with Ayatollah Khomeini.[287] Tufali supposedly played a role in the initial formation of Hizbollah. One source described him as an "outspoken radical" who believed strongly in the establishment of an Islamic Republic in Lebanon.[288] Tufali's role and leadership in mainstream Hizbollah began to decrease after the Party of God entered Lebanese politics in 1992. In 1993, Tufali's position in Hizbollah declined to the point that he was no longer at the decision making level. Despite this fact, sources believed he led the Islamic Resistance (Hizbollah's established military arm after it entered politics in 1992) until 1997. Tufali's relationship with the Party of God's official leadership seemed strained in 1997 and utterly fell apart by early 1998. In September 1997, Tufali stated he was "upset the brotherhood of 'fearless martyrs' had begun to participate in the Lebanese parliament, cooperate with the government, and waffle on its revolutionary rhetoric - even . . . on its commitment to destroy Israel."[289] Ironically, between 1992 and 1997 as the Party of God's ideological foundation seemed to wither, Tufali remained active in leading the Islamic Resistance.

In January 1988, Tufali openly challenged Hizbollah's Secretary General, Hassan Nasrallah. Shortly after this, Tufali and a group of his followers clashed with Hizbollah and Lebanese forces when they attacked a religious school in Baalbek built by Iran. As a

result of his actions, Hizbollah banished him from the party. Additionally, Lebanese Army units began hunting for Tufali in his home of Brital in the Bekaa Valley by late January 1988. After Hizbollah expelled Tufali from their ranks, Iran issued a statement fully backing the Party of God's decision which effectively left Tufali, once their ardent follower, without support. Sources indicate that Sheikh Tufali may still maintain some level of Syrian protection which would give him some leverage and the opportunity to continue to operate in Lebanon.[290]

IMAD MUGNIYAH

Mugniyah may be one of the most uncompromising and elusive of the Hizbollah leaders described in this paper. Evidently he was not a devout Muslim during his early years, but the Islamic Revolution as well as the Israeli invasion of Lebanon served to radicalize him. Allegedly he joined AMAL after it formed but then shifted allegiance to Hizbollah after its inception.[291] Mugniyah's military background and the operations he carried out made him a popular man with the leaders of Hizbollah and Iran, but a wanted man by the West. At one point he served as a member of the PLO's elite Force 17 and became an expert in explosives. He also worked as the head of Fadlallah's bodyguards for a period of time. Some sources believed Mugniyah was tasked to find targets to attack in Beirut and he delivered with a recommendation to bomb the U.S. Marine Barracks. Also, he allegedly led the Hizbollah cell that captured William Buckley, the CIA's Station Chief in Beirut, in March 1984.[292]

Mugniyah was not the only member of his family actively supporting Hizbollah. Kuwait captured and imprisoned Mugniyah's brother-in-law as a result of his participation in the December 1983 bombings in Kuwait. After this, Mugniyah orchestrated many of the kidnappings of western hostages in Lebanon with the hope that this would cause the

U.S. and other European countries to put pressure on Kuwait to release his brother-in-law and the other bombers. One author described Mugniyah by stating, "If Sheikh Fadlallah was the spiritual leader of Hizbollah, Mugniyah was the enforcer."[293] Sources believed Magniyah "managed" the hostage system for Hizbollah in the late 1980s.[294] In 1994, Mossad attempted to assassinate Mugniyah, but failed. As more and more information surfaced about Mugniyah's specific involvement in many of Hizbollah's major operations, he sought refuge in Iran where they granted him citizenship. Allegedly he now lives in Iran. Mugniyah has never granted any interviews.[295]

SHEIKH HASSAN NASRALLAH

Hassan Nasrallah is the current Secretary General of Hizbollah. The Supreme Consultative Council elected him to that position in 1992, after the assassination of his friend and then leader of Hizbollah, Abbas Musawi. He, like many of the other members of the Party of God, defected from AMAL in 1982 and played a role in the initial development of the group in Baalbek.[296] At the age of 16, Nasrallah traveled to Najaf to pursue his theological studies where he came in contact with Ayatollah Khomeini.[297] He also studied in Qom, Iran, for a period.[298] Before becoming the Secretary General, Nasrallah established his base of support amongst Hizbollah members in the slums of Beirut's southern suburbs. During this time he also acted as the Party of God's representative to Iran.[299] This liaison position clearly gained the trust and respect of Iranian leaders based on the fact they aggressively pushed for Nasrallah's election to the position of Secretary General after the assassination of Abbas Musawi.
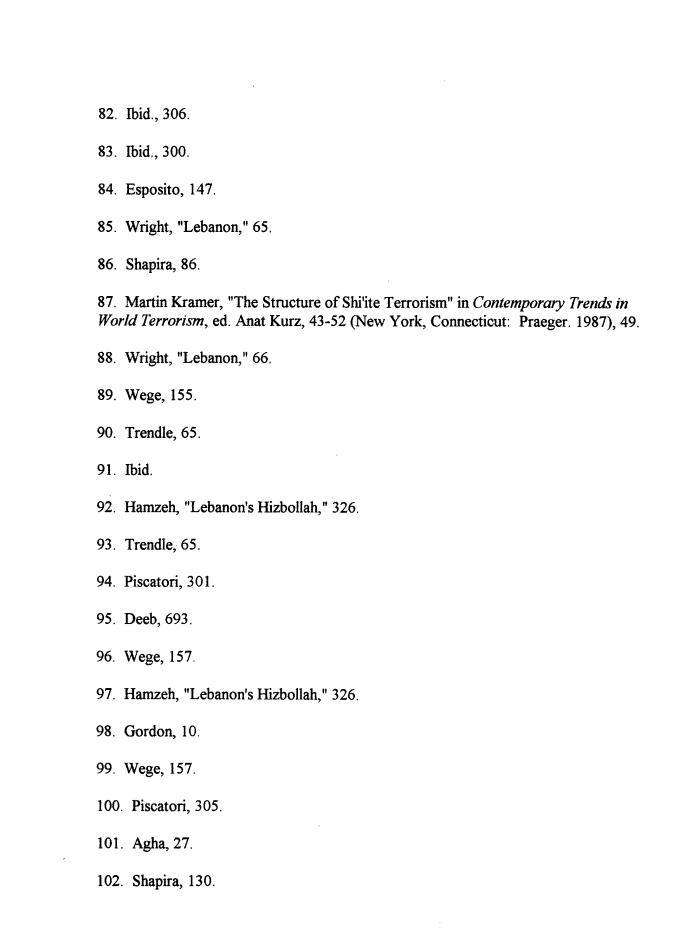
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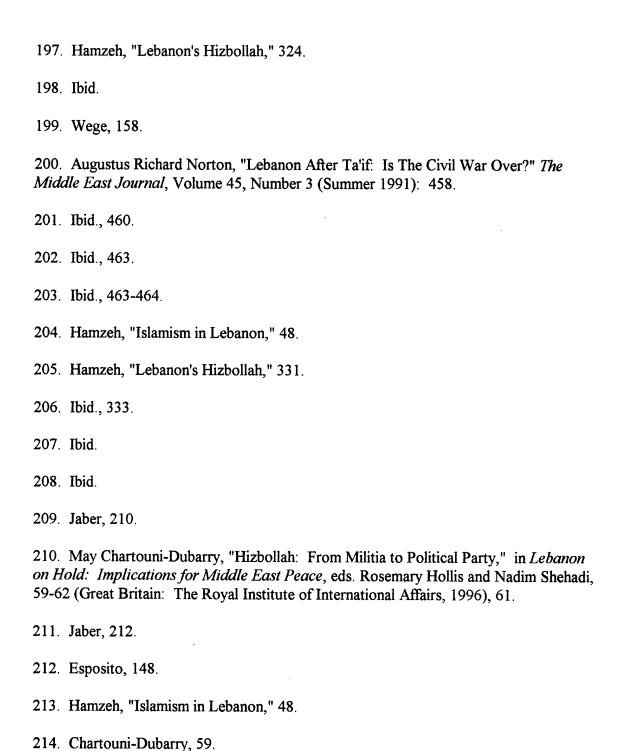
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