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Chapter Two

Lessons learned from the armed Jihad ordeal in Syria

A- Basics:

As we begin to analyze the history and the experiment of the jihad ordeal in the past period, we should point out --as we see it from our own perspective-- important and essential points that form the basis of our analysis, the methodology we used and the objectives we seek:

1st: As far as the “Moslem Brotherhood” is concerned, in terms of their practices and participation in this stage, we must state that with the exception of some leaders who contributed negatively to the course of events --Their negative contribution ranged from treason and criminal behavior against jihad and the mujahideen to failure, from jockeying for leadership positions to setting bad example-- and with the exception of some mid level -mean spirited- leaders and maybe some base members --who pursued personal interest and got engaged in partisanship--, one could say that most of the base members and almost all of the mid level leaders and even few high level leaders can not be considered as direct participants in this negative role that the “Moslem Brotherhood” played as an organization at that stage of the jihad. The responsibility falls squarely on a handful of leaders, even the indirect mistakes that the mid level leaders, base members, and youth cadres got involved in could be attributed to their trust in their leaders, those leaders stressed the need for unity and solidarity to cover their excesses and justify their repetitive mistakes, and by virtue of their upbringing the base members believed that, and they agreed to go about reform through proper organizational channel. Most of the base members and midlevel leaders knew nothing of what was going on at the leadership level or what was being planned; they were ignorant of many matters and the last to know till the city of Hama imploded, this tragedy exposed every body. We have to point out though that most of the base members, some of the mid level leaders, and maybe few high level leaders are innocent and decent people especially in the Jordan and Iraq sector, it is also worth mentioning that the base members, mid level people and youths produced field commander and trained cadres that participated effectively in the jihad and left us a legacy and a wealth of information on preparation, military operations and programs equally important as those provided by the “Attalieaa” -The Vanguard- members. Those faithful were driven to the Jihad with true resolve, they willed their leaders to act, unfortunately all their efforts went in vain in spite of the abundance of possibilities, and they set an example for “Jihad Quality” by working diligently, persistently and silently, by avoiding in-house and partisan bickering. At some point silence may have been justified by not knowing, but know that every thing is exposed and in the open, every one is accountable and ignorance is no longer an excuse. “God knows best”

2nd. as to our brethren in “Attalieaa” -The Vanguard- both in leadership and membership --In our opinion and based on 1st. hand experience-- they gave all they could and could not contribute more that they did. They were a civilian organization

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formed of students, workers and non military cadres, they found themselves amidst a turmoil, the fast pace of events lead them to develop their activities [military, political

& media] on the fly, they made some sound decisions and committed some mistakes in management, planning, military training and political work. They were saved by “Allah” from deviant thoughts and deterioration, they did not get sucked into behavior that could embellish their honor and honesty, their negative role was limited to mismanagement and practice due to lack of experience and difficult conditions on the ground, they were fending off both friend and foe at the same difficult time. “Attalieaa” –The Vanguard- raised the bar when it came to perseverance & persistence in spit of need and wanton, and set a great example in sacrifice and martyrdom. “God is thankful for their efforts”. Had it not been for the mistakes of those who preceded us we would not be in a position to analyze and benefit from their experiences; May “Allah” appreciate their efforts, forgive them and forgive us so that we may be able to get back on the right track and continue the journey of Jihad with persistence and perseverance.

3rd. The intent of our objective analysis is not to exonerate or accuse certain people --Allah has an accurate accounting of every ones position-- but rather to benefit from the means and tools that were effective and to avoid falling into the same pitfalls. May “Allah” have mercy on the souls of our martyrs, may he release our imprisoned brethren, and may he forgive and give each one his due.

Historical briefing of the previous period:

It may be beneficial to restate the chronology of events as headlines; this will help us in analyzing the ordeal and reminds us of its virtues.

-The “Alawites”-- a minority Moslem sect in Syria-- took control of the government via a coup d’etat under the leadership of Hafez Al Assad in 1970.

-Marwan Hadeed --who had a jihad experience in1965-- started his initiative to bridge the gap and bring about reconciliation between two factions of the “Moslem Brotherhood”, the Aleppo – Hamah wing some times referred to as the “International organization” and the Damascus wing lead by Issam Attar.

-After failing to accomplish his mission and after failing to convince the religious leadership of the “International organization” to adopt a comprehensive plan for preparation and training for jihad; he set out in the early 1970s to start his own independent organization “Attalieaa”-- The Vanguard-- the 1st. cells were established in the cities of Damascus, Aleppo and Hamah.

- Marwan Hadeed was arrested and tortured in 1975; he was assassinated –martyred-- in jail in 1976. May “Allah” have mercy on his soul.

-After Marwan Hadeed’s assassination his organization went under cover, they resorted to secrecy and did not publicize the work even when they were assassinating “Alawites” in the leadership of the Syrian regime, they operated in that manner between 1976-1979.

-The Syrian government exposed “Attalieaa”- Vanguard- in 1978, many of its members were members of the “Moslem Brotherhood” organization as well.

-With the help of the Jordanian security service, the Syrian government was able to expose the small military branch of the “Moslem Brotherhood” in 1978.

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- In the spring of 1979 “Attalieaa”-Vanguard- abandoned secrecy and declared open war on the Syrian regime; they attacked the artillery school of the Syrian army in June 1979, and escalated their military operations and their frequency in the aftermath

of that attack.

-The frequency of military operations by “Attalieaa”-Vanguards- continued unabated but lacked any strategic planning- from the middle of 1979 to the end of 1980 at which point the military operations retracted in frequency and eventually were terminated for two reasons:

1-The “Moslem Brotherhood” suspended their financing of the mujahideen in Syria, they could not accommodate the field commanders, and they withdrew as many members as they could to outside Syria, this affected negatively military operations underway due to their failure to coordinate with the people on the inside.

2-The the mujahideen did not develop an operational strategy, they committed fatal organizational mistakes (e.g. expanding the circle of conflict, recruiting too many members without any vetting or control, taking actions without thinking of the consequences, they became too decentralized-fragmented- and too dependant on the outside....etc).

-At the onset of hostilities most of the leadership in the “Moslem Brotherhood” fled and reorganized in Jordan, they invested the enormous donation they received, and utilized the good deeds of the mujahideen in a media campaign, this netted them a strong organization and allowed them to acquire the mujahideen and people who fled Syria, and thus began the stage of their political glory outside Syria.

-After the secession of hostilities in Aleppo, the eastern and northwestern regions in 1981, an attempt was made by Adnan Akla –Then leader of “Attalieaa” to reconcile and negotiate with the “Moslem Brotherhood”

-The fragile reconciliation that was achieved between Adnan Akla of Attalieaa, the Issam Attar faction- The Damascus wing- and the leadership of the exiled international Moslem Brotherhood of Syria, did not last long and eventually collapsed due to many complications, but what really did it in was the unilateral entering of negotiations by the international organization of Moslem brotherhood to form an alliance with the secular and nationalistic parties under the patronage of Iraq.

-The Moslem brotherhood began working on a decisive plan in cooperation with some mujahideen on the inside (field commandships of Hamah-Damascus) and some officers in the Syria army whose plan for a coup d’etate was based on receiving support, resources and trained fighters from the outside.

-at the end of 1981 the Syrian government found out about the coup and arrested the liaison to the outside leadership Khalil Ashami, Upon finding out the level of anti government activities in the city of Hamah the army surrounded the city and cut it from the outside world, the mujahideen were forced into the fight and the tragedy happened on 2/2/1982.

-At the end of January 1982 Adnan Akla went to the city of Hamah to meet with the mujahideen and their leadership, he was shocked how dire their situation was, he agreed to help them and promised to convince the “Moslem Brotherhood” to aid them, he left the city but failed later in his negotiations with the “Moslem Brotherhood” because they demanded his advanced and unconditional allegiance. (On 2/8/1982 the Moslem Brotherhood declared “call to arms” in an attempt to aid the city of Hamah, they agreed with Iraq to prevent Adnan and his “Attalieaa” from joining the fight.

-The “Moslem Brotherhood” engaged in a big but fraudulent propaganda campaign

for two months during which they were able to collect enormous donations, and then in one shot they declared the following: an end to the “Call to arms”, the sacking of the city of Hamah and their alliance with the secular parties, at that point scandals started to pop up.

-After the fall of Hamah the rank and file members of the “Moslem Brotherhood” started bickering and drifting apart, this inner fighting led to a schism in 1989, one faction was led by Adnan Sadduddin and the other led by Abdulfatah Abi Gadah.

-In the aftermath of “Hamah” events “Attalieaa” attempted to reorganize and made contact with members inside Syria for a come back, however their organization was infiltrated by the Syrian intelligence, Adnan was arrested on the borders along with seventy members of his organization through a series of planned ambushes, some other members were lured to give up peacefully. “Attalieaa” was disbanded and destroyed with the exception of few remnants & aimless members outside of Syria.

-The youth that partook in the training, preparation and jihad were disbanded and felt helpless as a result of the successive blows; they had no hope except in “Allah”.

And thus ended the ordeal of military jihad in Syria. It started with Marwan Hadeed and ended with the sacking of Hamah city, the destruction of “Attalieaa” and the elimination of the “jihad pockets” of the “Moslem Brotherhood”.

Chapter one

Observations on the jihad ordeal in Syria:

A: General Observations on the experience as a whole:

1st: Absence of an advanced comprehensive plan and strategy:

When the original mujahideen set out to lay the path to military jihad they lacked a strategic vision that took into account the existing conditions on the ground and the expectations for the future, they did not take into consideration the conditions inside the country, its topography, demography, its ethnic and religious composition, political affiliations, the nature of the regime; they did not compare their strengths to those of the regime, they did not determine who is friend and who is foe, and how to benefit from the available resources....etc. Many factors should have been taken into account while formulating a military strategy and the needed organizational structure, instead work proceeded instinctively, and exigencies were evaluated in accordance with the status quo, eventually things got out of the control of local planners, and once the conflict erupted they were faced with a series of difficult choices and settled for the lesser of available evils. When things got out of hand for “Attalieaa” decision making was relegated to the leadership outside Syria, which in turn did not fare any better despite the availability of time, resources, favorable conditions, and support of neighboring countries. The outside leadership could not elevate the military operations to a higher notch and strategic path; they had no training and readiness plans, on the contrary they depended on the resources and strengths of mujahideen inside Syria to settle the fight –It was just a dream- .

The inside field commanders may have been the 1st. to think of a strategic plan, but their fatal mistake was their dependence on the outside for financing, resources and support; this got things out of their control and led to their destruction. (It is crucial to have a strategic plan for a jihad revolutionary gang warfare).

Thus events not planners controlled the course of the battle; and despite the military campaign valor and heroic acts of the mujahideen they failed miserably, their only

accomplishment was to prove their willingness and readiness for martyrdom.

2nd: The faithful mujahideen were spread among numerous organizations:

We came to understand this when it was too late and to a certain extent are still far from correcting the situation and setting things on the proper path. Loyalty to truth and justice is the 1st. duty to be observed if we were to establish an exemplary jihad path. The arena was saturated with organizations with intermingled principles, loyalties and affiliations, some members joined the jihad with preconceived notions, others out of need, greed or necessity, some were lured into joining, others had to, all this lead to a “complicated human structure”, the true mujahideen were spread among numerous bickering organizations, and thus lost their effectiveness in leading the faithful into one direction; it even went farther than that, friction, hatred and partisan bickering lead to conflict between the faithful youth --who had the same goals-- all because the various leaders had differing and contradictory objectives. Those conditions had negative repercussions on the religious and moral levels, and rendered those organizations ineffective and useless.

3rd. Failure to explain the mujahid revolutionary theory and clarify it’s objectives on an ideological level:

Establishment of Islamic rule and fighting the “Alawites” was the slogan for all Islamic alliances and coalitions that were connected with that conflict. Obviously the most essential element of any revolutionary organization is putting forward a series of goals and slogans that attract the masses, and presenting itself as a revolutionary pioneering organization with crystal clear objectives. The true mujahideen failed to put forward their ideology, slogans and objectives via a well crafted media campaign. The majority of people were not aware of what was going on and those who followed the news knew that some Moslems youths are fighting the regime and plan on establishing “Moslem rule”, they did not explain to the people the nature and form of this “Moslem rule”, they did not explain why people should join in the fight and why they should die for that cause. The mujahideen failed to define their identity, their intentions and motivations; such an explanation was and still is the main pillar for attracting the masses and mobilizing the base members on an intellectual and ideological level to partake in this dangerous work (i.e. Jihad).

4th. Low level of religious instruction and scarcity of revolutionary and political awareness:

With the exception of some mujahideen leaders, and some members, most of the people who waged this revolutionary war were low on religious instruction and lacked political awareness , this negative could have been overcome had it been limited to the base members, however its prevalence among the leaders in charge of waging the revolutionary war and managing it was detrimental, they did not comprehend that this war was a means to a political end, their ignorance made them incapable of developing a comprehensive strategic plan. A fair share of mid level leaders and base members needed to be aware of that and understand the implications, because in a war of this nature bright people need to step in and fill the shoes of their fallen brethren in the leadership. The level of religious instruction was very low among the base members and continued to decline due to the martyrdom of many members, the Moslem factions relied on quantitative mobilization to fill the gap left by the fallen brethren; this made it easier for them to manipulate the base whose

members were naïve and trusting of their leaderships. This ignorance opened the door for excesses and conspiracies.

In brief: the level of political awareness and religious instruction should be abundant among the mujahideen & revolutionary groups, and even though those mujahideen were loyal, driven and dedicated, they nevertheless lacked the aforementioned qualifications.

5th. Dependence on quantity after the 1st. blow did away with the quality:

From the middle of 1979 to the end of 1980 “Attalieaa” and the other mujahideen on the inside were dismantled by military blows of the Syrian army, this led the leadership to open the doors to any one who was willing to join (with no vetting), the organization grew in quantity at the expense of quality, many of the new recruits were not keen on “Islamic commitment and perseverance”; their zeal and enthusiasm diminished as the battle went on and eventually faded as they left the country.

The “Moslem Brotherhood” did not fare any better, thousands of their members, recruits and organizers were arrested at the beginning of the conflict; to fill the void they took in large numbers of volunteers with no proper religious instruction, with no ideological guidance, they were mostly uneducated and lacked political and strategic awareness. The deficiencies of the “Moslem Brotherhood” outside was not limited to military failures, they were unable to develop a successful educational program that encompasses all necessary elements needed for victory. Their educational curriculum was limited to occasional & boring lessons and/or lectures on classical” Moslem cultivation”, the few programs of theoretical and practical training were insufficient and ineffective. The influx of so many new members made the organization porous for infiltration by moles from the Syrian intelligence and other enemy organizations.

6th: Weak public relations campaign both inside and out:

We talked previously about the failure of the mujahideen on the inside to propagate their vision, goals and slogans in a clear way easy enough for the people to comprehend and support. They did not have a planned communicable public relations campaign capable of mobilizing their base, backers or supporters. They only issued few ineffective communiqués.

When the “Moslem Brotherhood” took control of the campaign in exile they abandoned all forms of media/publicity inside Syria and limited it to the outside; they waged a propaganda campaign laden with fabrications, lies and exaggerations – especially regarding the events in the city of Hamah- that failed to garner support or produce results. Their behavior was befitting of news reporters in search of high ratings rather than revolutionaries trying to win the hearts and minds of the masses both inside the country and out. This deficiency was evident to the observant people, and the worst thing about this harsh lesson is that the efforts and sacrifices of thousands of the faithful, and the blood of martyrs went in vain.

7th: Dependence of the mujahideen on outside sources for support instead of being self sufficient:

This fatal mistake destroyed “Attalieaa” inside Syria, and the concentrations of mujahideen outside Syria, it destroyed the field command and military administration of the army officers-in Damascus & Hamah- attempting a coup d’etate or what was referred to as “The Decisive Plan”. All those involved in managing the jihad activities got restricted and crippled by their dependence on shaky and unsteady outside

support, they even were relying on the support of enemy regimes (e.g. Iraq). Once fighting erupted and the revolution spread; costs and expenses grew exponentially, the financing, supplies and arms they were receiving from the outside were not adequate to sustain the fight; once this support came to a screeching halt, hopes were dashed and the end was tragic. This ordeal taught us a great lesson: jihad revolutionary movements waging gang warfare can not rely on outside sources for financing, weaponry, training and support; they have to depend on themselves and be self sufficient. They could use whatever resources they capture or acquire from the enemy, but unless they have a detailed and comprehensive plan for self sufficiency in all areas they will end up at the mercy and whim of their financiers and providers. Unfortunately this lesson was learned too late.

8th: Getting bugged down in long term gang warfare unsuitable for the country: Perhaps this was caused by the failure to plan strategically or by not planning at all. Ideas were conceptualized unrealistically without considering the availability of resources, the geographical nature of the country; it's demographic, religious, racial, ethnic and psychological composition, without studying the structure and hierarchy of the regime. Had the planners of the military conflict taken the above into account they may have chosen a different technique.

It would have been sufficient and could have been possible at some point- at the inception of hostilities- to topple the regime through the use of directed blows aimed at its main pillars and leaderships instead of going after low level leaders; some successful military operations proved that this would have been effective in spite of the difficult conditions and complications that followed the two attempts to assassinate Hafez Assad--Blowing up the council of ministers, and the attack on the school of artillery-- .On the contrary the mujahideen (poor & impoverished)got bugged down in a long term war of attrition with a strong and resourceful regime. This was another lesson in a series of painful lessons.

9th: Moving out of the country for an extended period of time, losing touch with the masses, and the decline of the religious and revolutionary level among the members: The reasons for leaving the country ranged from fleeing out of fear to necessity,--each had his reasons, we are not questioning their decisions-- The movement of the jihad cadres to Iraq, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, the gulf and Europe which was supposed to be temporary for regrouping ended up being a permanent settlement. The revolution lost contact with the masses; its main natural source of financing, personnel, morale and motivation. The waging of failed military operation from outside Syria caused the loss of numerous lives, members became needy and isolated, the revolution began to disintegrate, people lost hope of ever returning home, some gave up and started going about their daily lives as if their temporary residences are their permanent homes. The leaderships of the "Moslem Brotherhood" and "Attalieaa" instructed their people to: find jobs, continue their education, get married and settle down, instead of preparing an effective plan for their return home.

10th: Not benefiting from the Islamic and international gang warfare experiences: History is full of trials, scientific experiments, and human experiences that evolved over time, wars and revolutions are no different --that is why the Koran and the teachings of the prophet urge us to seek education and learn from previous examples-- . In the aftermath of the tragedy we were left with plenty of time to study

and learn about worthy experiences of Islamic and international revolutionary movements. Many Moslem and non Moslem nations went through situations similar to the ones we went through, books were written and researches were published on the subject, had the people in charge read about or studied those experiences they would have been able to learn from the mistakes of others and avoid falling into the same pitfalls.

This is one form of ignorance that characterizes a nation whose people neither read nor learns. Many affairs were managed impulsively and in accordance with tribal Bedouin methods. Myriad of rich experiences were readily available for those seeking knowledge yet no body bothered, we had to walk this path to find out for ourselves and I wish we learn from this experience.

11th: Dealing with the neighboring regimes as if they were permanent supporters of jihad:

Time has proven that the neighboring regimes were temporary allies with their own interests and agendas, they dealt with us and treated us accordingly; these regimes feared Islam and imprisoned its faithful members--Lest they burst gigantically--. We took one blow after another and it is time we understood that; the enemy of yesterday and today can not be the ally and friend of the future; he can not be the comrade in arms and an aiding supporter. The negative repercussions of this lesson still haunt us.

12th: Operating publicly was a grave error:

We were running the battle inside Syria as secretive and undercover organizations, but once we moved out we went public; under the observation and watchful eyes of the hosting countries. It is true the hosting regimes – who in reality are our enemy would not have accepted us without finding out; who we are and what are we all about, however we did not have to provide them with every detail about us; our numbers, names, resources, contacts, intentions, policies and plans. The “Moslem Brotherhood” went very far, not only did they divulge information, they were operating fully in the open; the most guarded secrets and plans were being discussed on regular phone lines and in plain language, we knew for certain that the hosting regimes were monitoring those lines and recording the conversations, in some instances the monitors got on the line and conversed with the callers!!!! This was pure insanity at times when nobody heeded sound advice. The cooperation and coordination of security services between Jordan, Iraq, Syria and other Moslem countries was evident, and by studying our organizations they were able to wage effective campaigns against similar Islamic organizations (or what they call: The Terrorist Moslem Fundamentalists)in the neighboring countries (e.g. Saudi Arabia).

13th: Deficiency of military operations on the outside and failure to deter the enemy and their friends:

“Attalieaa” while still in Syria had no capabilities to wage military operations on the outside, once abroad they considered the idea for a while but finally dismissed it. On the other hand the “Moslem Brotherhood” claimed to have created a special independent institution dedicated to waging military operation on the outside; it was dead on arrival; just like all their other institutions it was run by incapable elders lacking the determination and qualifications to bring this idea into fruition.

The hosting regimes infiltrated our organizations, monitored all our activities,

restricted and choked us, and in some cases arrested or killed our members and representatives. It is true the battle was in Syria; nevertheless we needed to have military deterrence capabilities on the outside; to help us fend off an enemy able to trace and monitor our movements in our new homes.

Many Arab and Moslem regimes ganged up on us by aiding and abetting the enemy, it is enough to mention that while we were suffering from death, destruction and a daunting war; Arab oil money was flowing to the "Alawite" Hafez Assad to pay for the bullets killing our Moslem youth, and for building prisons to incarcerate and torture our brethren. Most of the Arab Moslem gulf countries considered Hafez Assad and his regime as apostate blasphemers yet for political interests and for the purpose of maintaining balance of power; they flooded his "Alawite occupying" regime with billions of dollars. In short the lack of military operations on the outside prevented us from deterring the enemy and his friends and supporters.

14th: No planning for the aftermath of the regime:

The existence & survival of enemy we were warring with depended on a set of factors: international, regional and local. The regime could have fallen through our effort or the efforts of others, this could have created a situation which was not taken into account seriously, and there was no notion or plan for the aftermath; so how could people plan for the aftermath of war when they failed to plan for that war in the 1st. place. What would our position be should a surprise coup succeed? Where would our forces be located? What would our position be? Who would we ally ourselves with? Which groups would we enter into coalitions with? Would we deal with the neighboring regimes? On which level, and in what manner????.....etc.

15th: Not rallying around the religious scholars and benefiting from them:

The responsibility for the alienation that took place between the religious scholars and the jihad activists rests on the shoulders of both parties. The religious scholars went into self imposed seclusion as if the current events did not concern them -- especially in Saudi Arabia the oil cemetery of religious scholars-- they left the field to half and quarter scholars who knew nothing about religious instruction, formal religious legal opinions, Islamic law and jurisprudence, and edicts know how. The mujahideen did not pay attention to this matter either, they failed to: seek out those learned scholars for enlightenment, direction and guidance, to follow their advice and instructions; they did not give the scholars their due. This lead to disenchantment and antipathy and culminated in a painful divorce. The efforts and strengths of the trusted scholar and the jihad activist needed to be combined in order to achieve the desired goals, but this never happened. The arena had no real activist scholars to enlighten and instruct. Infractions and transgressions were committed which got the mission off track, eventually some wise people realized that this was a fatal mistake; let us hope that there is sufficient time for correction and reform.

16th: not utilizing all Islamic sectors for mobilization, especially the Bedouin tribes and the Kurds:

Even though the revolution had an Islamic character and goals that affects the lives of all Moslems, it was concentrated only in the cities and limited to certain sectors of society, it ignored important and crucial sectors sympathetic and committed to Islam; those sectors could have been brought into the battle; the Moslems in the country side, the Bedouin tribes and Kurds in the north. The mujahideen failed to mobilize

and recruit those sectors of society. The Syrian government on the other hand was able to recruit many of those sectors through enticement or threats; (especially the Kurds whose ethnic identity was always suppressed by the regime). We lost a main source of massive support because we failed to study the area and did not utilize the available resources.

17th: Inability to transform civilian Islamic missionary groups into military organizations capable of resistance and self defense:

This could be the most valuable lesson relating to the Islamic missionary groups in the Arab & Moslem countries. The battle may have erupted unexpectedly; however a large sector of the Moslems (Especially the leaders) knew that it was inevitable, those leaders did not prepare nor plan. Those missionary groups brought their peaceful missionary style and methods to the fight, the sheik failed miserably when he wore the general's hat. It is astonishing to see and hear leaders of Moslem organizations preaching jihad and claiming that dieing for "Allah" is their ultimate wish, yet they fail for tens of years to instruct religiously and train militarily for that fight, they could not produce documents for emergency (e.g. passports), or save money for tough times. They were unable to mobilize effectively and in a hurry, those organizations were ineffective and eventually collapsed.

This is a lesson to all Moslem organizations that claim jihad, and await the day of reckoning: Reconsider your structure and reevaluate your readiness for that day, otherwise give up the fight and save the lives of thousands of faithful who trust in their "Sheiks".

18th: In spite of the bitterness of these lessons we learned something well:

Events proved that mobilizing armed Moslem masses in the cause of an Islamic jihad revolution is possible; provided that the leaders prove their ability to fight oppression and set a good example in daring and sacrifice. The 18 months of military jihad -with all its shortcomings- brought hundreds of thousands of Moslems to the streets chanting: down with oppression, down with the regime, long live jihad, give us arms to fight with honor, the city of Hamah experience proved that thousands of Moslems answered the call and fought side by side with our mujahideen. Events proved how giving our people are, leaders sprouted from within and produced magnificent military cadres both in leadership and discipline. The "Colonial puppets" i.e. the regime tried their best to corrupt our people and keep arms out of their hands, but our people delivered, a review of the record proves that our heroic martyrs –May Allah have mercy on them- came through in a big way, which gives us hope for the future. A giving Moslem nation willing to sacrifice is the ultimate capital.

B: Observations on the jihad experience of "Attalieaa":

In addition to what we stated earlier as an overall experience, the following lessons relate to "Attalieaa" experience as an independent organization that practiced a certain type of armed revolutionary jihad:

1-Conducting its business with no prior strategic planning: Once fighting started they were unable to catch up and complete such a plan, and hence they fell victims to the events they created.

2- Lack of a media and political arm to complement the military arm, especially at the leadership level: They were unable to publicize & benefit from their own military successes as they should, this lead others to claim the bragging rights and credit for it.

3-Inability to conceptualize and present jihad to members and supporting masses as; an independent and clear concept, summarized by a series of goals and slogans: People were unable to comprehend what “Attalieaa” was, what motivates it and what are its objectives.

4-Due to the lack of strategic planning; decentralization became the mujahideen Achilles heel, each city managed its own battles with no strategy or coordination with the other cities, they were unable to wage coordinated and exhausting attacks on the enemy, this decentralization eventually trickled down to units and branches in the same city.

5-Inability to adjust the style and methods of fighting: The original style (Street fighting, hit and run, gang warfare, network of hideouts, a system of meeting, moving armaments and personnel,...etc) yielded great results initially, but as the regime started arresting members they figure out the system, unfortunately “Attalieaa” did not adjust or modify their style, they stuck with the same system which lead to unfortunate military setbacks.

6-Dependence on outside aid, especially from the Iraqi regime and the “Moslem Brotherhood”: When the aid was terminated at the end of 1980, it lead to the destruction of “Attalieaa” inside Syria and the manipulation of its remnants abroad.

7-Inability to replenish the trained cadres that fell in the 1st. round of fighting: There was no specific plan to deal with this eventuality, the pace of events prevented them from remedying the situation, and they adopted a policy of “open door” recruitment which caused more harm than good.

8-Waging the Damascus battle with people form Aleppo and Hamah: This strategy failed to advance the cause of the mujahideen but it helped the regime locate the foreign fighters, this also alienated the local mujahideen, and caused them a lot of trouble.

9-During the last days of “Attalieaa”; when conspiracies were hatched against it from all direction, and when it was besieged by the Iraqi regime and the “Moslem brotherhood”, it resorted to extremism. This became a label affixed to any one associated with this organization. The “Moslem brotherhood” promoted this idea and exaggerated it. The basis for this accusation was the conviction and declaration of Adnan Akla and few of his brethren that: The “Moslem Brotherhood” & the “Moslem Front”, including anyone who agrees with, or supports the alliance they entered into with the secular parties; or any one who is aware of this alliance yet remains loyal to those leaders and organizations: is a heretics, blasphemers and infidel.

The leader of a “Moslem Brotherhood” faction (Adnan Saadu dean) declared in an interview that; members of the right wing Iraqi Baath party are true Moslems and that their leadership is devout, he was convinced that Saddam Hussein and his regime members are true Moslems, he even scolded the mujahideen for accusing them of blasphemy, and asked them to refrain from such behavior and ask for forgiveness.

Statements like these and articles in the “Moslem Brotherhood” publications; prove Adnan Akla’s conviction, however his stereotyping everybody was an excess.

10-“Attalieaa” leadership set a great example and became a role model for courageous engagement, daring, sacrifice, and martyrdom, the membership adored and obeyed the leadership blindly. When “Attalieaa” escaped to the outside Adnan Akla’s persona grew to mythical proportion, he became the sole decision maker on all matters, and thus when he was captured and imprisoned the entire organization collapsed and ceased to exist.

C: Observations on the Jihad experience of “Moslem Brotherhood”

1-operating without prior strategic planning (Both inside and outside of Syria):

Inside Syria: The “Moslem brotherhood” failed to take into account the available resources and existing conditions on the ground, they did not foresee the strategic and political implications of the events that were taking place in the late seventies. This missionary peaceful organization was caught off guard when the daring vanguards of “Attalieaa” lit the fuse; they paid a dear price in the loss of their well prepared and religiously trained Moslem members; in a battle they did not plan for.

Outside Syria: When the majority of the Moslem and mujahideen youth converged on the “Moslem Brotherhood organization” outside Syria, they had hundreds of millions of dollars at their disposal, they had access to regional and international media outlets, many Moslem and non Moslem countries provided political and military aid. Unfortunately and in spite of all these tremendous opportunities and resources they were not able to come up with a comprehensive plan or strategy for war, decisions continued to be taken impulsively, instinctively, and in accordance with the old mentality that proved failing and ineffective. They did not allow the motivated and daring youth to take charge and produce results.

2-Organizational structure & hierarchy:

When the “Moslem Brotherhood” leadership fled to Jordan; -leaving their members to fend for themselves with no guidance or support- It utilized the same civilian organizational structure and hierarchy it had inside Syria to run the war from the outside. It created a huge organizational structure saturated with committees and sub committees; engaged in open ended useless meetings. The new structure was closer to a board of directors for a financial institution than a leadership council for gang warfare. The leaders and their families failed to set a good example, they were unable to lead effectively, they failed to put in action or see through plans that were occasionally drafted; [this would have been comedic if it weren't tragic]. A “War Council” was created to address the siege of Hamah two to three months prior to the all out war; this council consisted of forty members (a weird mixture of religious sheiks, civilian leaders, and youthful cadres); those incompatible members, involved in a power struggle, were unable to agree on a single point, each group was pulling in a different direction, this gave credence to the following statement by a war expert: “The General Staff with the most number of members is most probably prone to failure”

3-The style of gang warfare used failed miserably:

The Syrian experience as well as the experiences of other revolutions elsewhere proved that; gang warfare waged from the outside in, ends in failure. The “Moslem Brotherhood” stacked their youth in training camps in Baghdad and housed them in civilian bases in Amman; they subjected them to sporadic intermittent low level military training and instruction. The successive military commanders had no autonomy; they yielded to traditional civilian leaders who in some cases were against the war to begin with. Over the years many attempts were made to create insurgencies dependent on outside for planning, financing, weaponry and decision making; all those attempts ended in failure. And thus we conclude that for gang warfare to succeed it has to be managed by field commanders familiar with the roots and aware of the political and military direction of the revolution, those field commanders need to be constantly in touch with the masses and revolutionaries.

4-Favoring public relations and political action over military activities:

Any revolution that claims jihad and chooses a confrontational military path with a

despot regime like the one in Syria, yet limits its preparations to political programming printed on high gloss paper and occasional communiqués addressed to the Arab summits, Moslem, and international institutions, will lose effectiveness overtime and evolves into a group of political refugees waging useless public relations campaigns non of which reaches the concerned masses on the inside. When the jihad revolution loses its military impact it will loose its effectiveness and fail. The “Moslem Brotherhood” evolved into a political opposition after the falling of Hamah because they did not have military weight to exact a change.

5-Getting caught off guard: The missionary and peaceful organization that claimed jihad in slogans only; got caught off guard when the conflict erupted, the efforts of other organizations over the years were wasted because the “Moslem brotherhood” was not prepared, they can not claim ignorance as an excuse, their leadership new about the undercover military operations and assassinations that were conducted by “Attalieaa” yet they failed to mobilize and their membership paid a dear price (We eluded to this earlier in section 17 of General observations).

6-Failure to instruct & prepare: It is hard to believe that the “Moslem Brotherhood” really intended to wage gang warfare against the regime yet for two years failed to instruct and prepare its members for that style of battle. The plans that were developed by faithful people for that purpose never got implemented or put in place by the leadership. All the hard work and efforts by the faithful was wasted.

7- Incompatibility of members: The membership of the “Moslem Brotherhood” was a Hodgepodge mixture of incompatible beliefs and motivations; some were revolutionary youth believing in violence and armed jihad, others joined with enthusiasm yet once outside Syria lost their zeal and reverted to their old ways, some mid level leadership wanted a moderate stance and a political approach, others in exile feeling home sick and “getting high” on news of jihad on the inside. The leadership failed to mold the membership into a coherent unit aiming for the same goal, believing in the same path; instead rumors and innuendos, scandals, conflicts and opposing loyalties were the flavors of the day, this situation made the arena a fertile ground for moles and spies.

8-Consentrating power in the hands of few: Axis of power were formed not based on political philosophy or ideology but rather on the persona of leadership, power and responsibilities were concentrated in the hands on few traditional personalities. Loyalty and access to those few leaders played a big role in assigning mid level positions. Tasks that required a dedicated system of many specialists were often assigned to a single individual not because of his qualifications but because of his loyalty, or connections to the traditional leadership, (This lead to an excessive situation of cronyism and nepotism I’d rather not get into), those practices may be accepted in an authoritarian structure but not in an Islamic revolutionary organization that claims jihad. Such behavior was conducive to the schism that took place in 1986.

9-Schism: The “Moslem Brotherhood” was split into two factions diametrically opposed to each other:

One dedicated to jihad –placed either in the military camps in Iraq or the civilian camps in Jordan-- getting prepared and waiting for the leadership orders to partake in jihad, they put on hold their personal interests, ambitions and futures to answer the call of “Allah”, most of those people were associated with “Attalieaa” in one form or another.

The other faction --mostly old members-- sought to purse their personal interests in the

countries they settled in (Saudi Arabia, gulf countries, Europe...etc), they went back to school, found jobs, got married & started families, their affiliation with a revolutionary jihad organization did not cost them anything. This faction eventually took control of the organization and the other faction gave up and took off.

10-Failure of reform: All attempts of reform from within the organization --be it political or military-- ended up in failure. The nature and structure of this organization contributed largely to this failure; the leadership consisted of religious members with seniority, or traditional leaders with local and regional backing, they were able to maintain their grip on power through tribal as well as electoral means. The members living in USA, Europe or the gulf countries were not privy to the complexity of the situation, some had personal as well as financial ties to the leaders and did not see a reason to vote for someone else, the outcome of the elections did not affect their safe and luxurious lives abroad; many members did not have tenure and could not vote to begin with. The structure of the organization, the discriminating electoral procedures coupled with intimidation tactics and corruption kept on producing the same winners who lead us to this miserable situation in the 1st. place. I do not know why and on what religious ground should reform be achieved through the democratic process. The people trying to initiate true reform realized that they can not succeed in such an atmosphere and that their only hope is to choose a different path.

11-The leadership and family members of “Moslem Brotherhood” set a bad example on all levels; they lacked the qualifications of a true mujahid i.e. daring, commitment and sacrifice, they were side tracked by marginal conflicts, spent a lot of time and effort jockeying for positions, instead of concentrating all their resources & efforts on wining the battle, a positive outcome of the battle would have served Islam and Moslems.

12- The leadership got embroiled and implicated other Moslem organizations in a political alliance with right wing, secular apostate parties, especially the Iraqi baath, the Arab nationalists and the remnants of the Nasserite movement; and promised them a power sharing arrangement once the Assad regime is toppled. Those renegade parties had no influence or effect on the battle field, the alliance with them was catastrophic on the political level as well as the “religious legitimacy” levels:

- On the “religious legitimacy” level: the alliance was imposed by few individuals* on both members and Scholars and up till now (five years after the fact) they failed to submit their proof that this alliance was “religiously legitimate”, whereas the opposition to such an alliance is overwhelmingly supported by numerous famous edicts and documented ”religious legitimacy” research.

- On the political level: This alliance was not in the interest of the “Moslem brotherhood” many of their faithful members abandoned the cause because they were unwilling to serve under the banner of non believers, those members were reared on the religious thought of “Said Mawdoody” they resented those blasphemers, secular infidels and wanted nothing to do with them.

Studying this alliance requires lengthy analysis, we are not about to do it here, we are merely pointing out the gravity of this error and the catastrophic implications it resulted in, most members felt that this alliance did not pass the “Religious legitimacy” test nor was it in the political interest of the organization, all it did is made them solely dependant on Sadam Hussein and his Baath party.

13- Inability to benefit from the “Moslem Brotherhood” cadres abroad, many were

willing to join the fight along the side of their Syrian brethren.

14- One should point out that the “Moslem Brotherhood” played a very big & positive role in aiding members & their families, they provided documentation and financial support outside Syria, and they helped the injured and the needy, in some cases they supported inflicted families inside Syria. The leadership had abundant availability of funds at their disposal; this was one of the very few positive roles that the “Moslem Brotherhood” organization played during that ordeal.

*: Those few included: Adnan Saadudin, Abu Ins-Ali Bianoni, Abdullah Tantawi, Said Hawa

D: Observations on the jihad experiences of the field commanders and Army officers on the inside:

We do not have sufficient data on the experiences of these brethren since few of them survived. What the survivors stated and wrote down enabled us to learn the following lessons:

1-Failure of a dual leaderships; one political on the outside in charge of planning, media, public relations and having the final say, the other military on the field but totally dependent on the outside.

2-Failure of open confrontation with the regime’s army which was superior in all aspects of the battle, we understand that they were forced into this confrontation and paid a heavy price; nevertheless we have to learn this lesson well.

3-Even though an overwhelming majority of the Syrian army were Moslems, the hope and expectation that large numbers of it will split and join the fight on the mujahideen’ side never materialized, it was an ill-fated gamble, most of the high level and mid level officers were of the “alawite” minority faith. The preponderance of ignorance and lack of awareness among the majority of the army members led them to follow the orders of the “Alawite infidels” to kill their Moslem brethren and destroy their property.

4-Dependence on outside support proved fatal, it was not available when mostly needed, and they depended on some one they did not know nor were able to control.

5-Dependence on the neighboring Iraqi regime which let them down, just as it reneged on all promises and commitments it made to Adnan Akla.

6- The events of Hamah proved the possibility of arming and mobilizing the citizenry, they answered the call to Jihad admirably and paid a dear price: Thirty five thousand dead, thousands of arrested, tens of thousands of widows and orphans, plus destruction of half the city. This lesson requires a lot of research and analysis.

7- The regime was overwhelmed the 1st. few days of the battle, they moved all their forces from important cities like Aleppo and Hums to suppress the uprising in Hamah, had there been a reasonable number of trained mujahideen in those cities they would have been able to control vital institutions and positions. The regime may have crumbled had the uprising been spread around the country instead of its concentration in one place. This is a very important strategic lesson.

8-When the attempted coup was foiled “The decisive Plan” the regime wiped out all cadres of Moslem activists in the army. It took almost twenty years to set up those effective cadres in the army. This was one of our last military defeats. And thus the possibility of an Islamic coup by army officers became extremely difficult and remote.

9-The silence that accompanied the tragic events in the city of Hamah proved that the Arab and international public media is an enemy to our cause, another important lesson to take into consideration.

The lessons learned from the Syrian experience should be studied and analyzed by us and by others who choose to follow this path; it is of tremendous value to our brethren in other countries who choose to hoist the jihad banner. The Moslem arena is similar in all countries, the enemy is the same, the battle is the same, the circumstances of war may or may not be the same, "Allah knows best, Allah guides our path and grants us success"

Chapter Two

Lessons learned from the obstacles facing military jihad:

Looking pragmatically at our current situation, and evaluating the past, present and future aspirations of our jihad cause; and observing the oppressors and their masters preparing themselves (Money, weaponry, ammunitions, personnel...etc) to destroy us and our holy war by their incontrollable brutal style, a pragmatic and objective look shows us clearly that the battle between the promoters of the cause and the oppressors is inevitable --The oppressors are better off recalculating their positions and be pious-- . As long as the promoters of the cause continue to peruse their goal of an Islamic rule; the battle will take place sooner or later, some believers were forced into having their battle sooner, but the others should be patient and not rush into it. Every one should understand the following certainty: There is no escaping this battle, and if people do not want to end up along with their Moslem faith as victims of their oppressors; they better research, plan, and prepare for the battle, they better go into the fight as ready as humanly possible. They will be under the watchful eyes of "Allah" who ordered them to do so.

The struggle for the sake and path of "Allah" is not called:"Jihad" for nothing, the term "Jihad" literally means: "exerting a tiring effort to set up". The enemy is strong and powerful, we are weak and poor, the war duration is going to be long and the best way to fight it is in a revolutionary jihad way for the sake of "Allah". The preparations better be deliberate, comprehensive, and properly planed, taking into account past experiences and lessons.

We better think well about this style of warfare because it presents the mujahideen with its own set of problems; and for the sake of simplification we will group these problems into three categories:

- Problems relating to the mujahideen military matters.
- Problems relating to political and publicity matters.
- Problems relating to the internal organizational matters.

We do not claim to, nor can we cover every aspect of these problems; because once we decide on the jihad path problems will rise and continue to come up for the duration of the battle, we merely intend to present in a brief and concise manner the problems we faced for those who want to learn. "Allah willing" it will serve the purpose.

The revolutionary war is a difficult type of war, it has its own, rules, circumstances, methods, and exigencies. It is a distinct type of war that proved effective in nearly all cases because it is primarily dependent on the human element; its success is directly proportional to the mental, psychological, spiritual and physical capacities and capabilities of those waging it. Those who think they could wage such a war without proper planning and management, or without a high level of determination, persistence, perseverance, expanded comfort zone, patience and willingness to die; are better off seeking a different path like oratory public speaking, art or literary work, because when they attempt such a task without the necessary qualifications not only will they fail, but they will also prevent a qualified person from doing the job.

In essence this conflict is politically ideological; the nature of its military style requires a special type of organized activity. We ask “Allah” to transform the past experiences into capital that would be expended by us and all those mujahideen who took up arms and are determined to continue the journey. “Allah will provide success”.

1st. Problems relating to the jihad military matters:

1- Decentralization in the management of the military operations:

To yield high dividends; the military high command managing this type of battles must have centralized planning and strategy, they could heat up an area or cool another to affect the flow of the war, they should be able to maintain harmony among the forces and ranks, distribute and move weaponry, supplies, personnel to different locations according to need. From this perspective centralization is essential; on the other hand the nature of this type of war requires that the regional and field commanders be awarded a high level of autonomy in planning and managing their own affairs. The experiences of gang warfare around the world --whether ancient or contemporary-- has proven that this style is necessary and very effectiveness.

Due to bad planning or out of circumstantial necessities, field commanders sometimes find themselves isolated and having to plan, strategize and operate independently. This is exactly what happened in Syria when the mujahideen were lured into the battle, they were cut off from the leadership, and the Syrian army controlled the streets making it impossible for movement, transportation or communication. Each group had to plan and act according to its situation, the Syria army took the initiative and wiped them all out. That is why central planning and strategy is crucial, if contact is cut off it should be reestablished at all costs, the planning and general flow of the war should remain under the control of the central command.

2nd. Recruitment, mobilization and indoctrination

The revolutionary uprising starts always with a small group of people who happen to be intent, determined, faithful and willing to sacrifice for the sake of the cause, if those revolutionary vanguards are able to present, and communicate their vision, demands and ambitions in a clear and concise manner; and if they prove that they are deserving of leadership and command through sacrifice and good management, then people will begin to rally around them. In the process of growth and expansion the organization will acquire both positive and negative elements.

No matter how big or capable the vanguard organization is; the war it wages is waged on behalf of the masses, those masses are its source of information, supplies, personnel and refuge. A gang warfare theorist once said (The masses are the sea in which the vanguard organization should swim like a fish). All revolutionary wars that were able to mobilize the masses on their behalf were successful; such as Algiers, China and Vietnam., however the revolutionary wars that failed to achieve that and were isolated from their masses ended up in defeat, like Malaysia, Philippines and Greece. {Refer to the translated book: The war of those deemed weak}.

(1) The people whose ages range between 30 and 51 are usually enthusiastic, eager to work and wanting to participate in the battle, it is the job of the vanguard organization to step in; benefit from the recruitment, and reduce the dangers of possibly enlisting unqualified individuals on all levels, the regime will be sending moles to infiltrate. Fast uncontrollable growth leads to chaos and losses the organization could do well without. During the conflict inside Syria, and after the initial stunning successes and the

overwhelming support it received from the masses; “Attalieaa” --the only Islamic organization to mobilize the masses--, announced via a taped message recorded by its leader Adnan Akla and distributed in Aleppo and the surrounding areas that: they are willing to recruit and arm all the faithful if they so choose. Within few months hundreds of youth joined in, the organization expanded beyond its financial capabilities, they were unable to train properly or arm sufficiently, things got out of control, the influx created a fishing ground for moles and spies, and even though they were few --caught and executed in accordance with Islamic rules of the organization-- they caused a lot of harm. A series of confessions and arrests lead to exposing the entire hierarchy of “Attalieaa” and its eventual destruction.

(2) The policy of open door recruitment caused a lot of harm but it also produced tremendous revolutionary cadres that learned to fight on the battle field, it also created a good source of intelligence for the mujahideen prior to the eruption of the major battle.

Our past experiences benefited us in establishing the following points:

- No member should be recruited if he is not fully qualified in terms of doctrine, discipline, and Islamic behavior, as to mental capacity, psychological make up and physical fitness, those should be of high standard, and it is best if recruiting takes place from within the ranks of the Moslem movements.

- The number of members should not exceed the needed quantity at each stage of the fight, unless the new recruit is a good catch and of high value, e.g. security or army officer, influential member of the regime, or valuable in other areas such as journalism, media, science.

- The training program in the very least should concentrate on doctrine and mobilization.

- The highest level of vetting and caution should apply to the nomination of each new member; he should be subjected to a trial and observation period.

- If the nominee did not meet all requirements and if needed he could be kept among the supporters and benefited from in that fashion.

- The rule of thumb “Quality before quantity” should be observed at all times, a group of organized and trained mujahideen (between 10 to 20) could cover a large section of the city and keep the regime busy as if they were thousands of fighters, whereas organized groups in the hundred could be exposed and expensive to run. Few mujahideen could terrorize the regime and lift the morale of the masses sky high. The mission of organizing is the most delicate and dangerous task for the leadership of a vanguard mujahideen movement.

(3)The financing problem was --during the Syrian experience-- and still is the main predicament, as we stated earlier it lead to chocking “Attalieaa” and contributed to its downfall, it tied the field commanders and their decisions to those providing the funds form the outside. Experiences teach us that a mujahid revolutionary movement that utilizes a gang warfare will be very expensive, costing millions per day ranging from weaponry, armaments and munitions, supporting the mujahideen, providing them with shelter and aiding their families, providing documentation, and paying for the battle expenses. Now we understand why the holy Koran and the speeches of the prophet tied the physical jihad to financial jihad. Money plays an influential role in this war; it can not be planed for, nor initiated prior to finding a solution to this conundrum. Our experiences as well as the experiences of other nations where gang

warfare took place teach us that for the revolutionary leadership to be in control of its decisions, capabilities and destiny, and for this war to succeed it should be self sufficient and financed from within. However the primary source of financing for this war should be obtained through raiding resources of the enemy (Its budget, weapons, resources and money), otherwise the leadership of the jihad movement will be subject to the control, demands and interests of the financiers.

(4) The problem of acquiring weapons and munitions: The enemies of Islam and the agents of colonialism that compose the oppressor regimes in the Moslem world, knew the negative impact the availability of arms will have on their regimes; so they resorted to fully disarm the masses; it became normal for no one to have arms unless they were part of the regime, this transformed the masses to peaceful sheep. How can we get arms?? Our experiences as well as the experiences of other revolutionary wars teach us that in the beginning of a revolutionary war a limited quantity and quality of armament is sufficient, this could be achieved by purchasing (light and mid duty arms) from arms dealers that are all over the place, however one should pay attention that this war will eventually evolve to a point where arming it through these means becomes impossible. A neighboring regime or a regime antagonistic to the one we are fighting may step in and offer arms and financing unconditionally. We should never be dependent on such sources because their own hidden agenda will be aimed at controlling the revolution and using it to serve their own interest.

The enemy will have to move its forces to confront us; this creates a great opportunity for raids and provides the best source of arms and munitions. If the Mujahideen plan well and act properly “with Allah permission” they will have found their primary source for arms.

The “Golden Period” of our Syrian experience --which lasted nearly three years on a small scale in secrete, and nearly two years in the open on a large scale-- taught us that the small quantities of weapons that were purchases with Moslem money from arms dealers, and the armaments that were acquired latter from the regime served the purpose. Whereas the tons of weapons that the Iraqi regime provided latter in the war, did not contribute to anything other than controlling the Mujahideen leadership and abandoning them to their tragic destiny in Hamah. The stock piles of weapons outside Syria were of no use either.

To put it in a nut shell: Weapons are the tool of war, the leadership of the mujahideen has to prepare a comprehensive plan in advance that takes into account this crucial problem, and find an appropriate solution based on the circumstances and conditions of each separate country.

(5)The communication problem:

These days communication is the nerve of all modern armies in the world, and revolutionary gang warfare organizations are no exception, it may not be as vital to them as it is to conventional armies but it is still very important nevertheless.

Communications could be the weak link and expose the mujahideen to the enemy. In our Syrian experience communications at all levels were carried out via courier, or through pre arranged meetings, wireless communication was not utilized till later in the battle, coordination with the leaderships and supporters out side Syria was conducted via courier too, Towards the end of the war the “Moslem Brotherhood” resorted to airing coded messages to the inside on their radio station in Iraq. On the

outside the “Moslem Brotherhood” leadership communicated amongst itself and with its branches in different countries via normal insecure phone lines; they discussed things openly and they rarely used couriers for the purpose of communications. The negatives of this experience helped us in establish the following points:

- The use of couriers to transport plain language messages (not in code) between locations on the inside as well as to the outside created a dangerous situation; these couriers were the object of targeted ambushes by the regime, the capture of those couriers caused a lot of harm.

- “Attalieaa’s” use of personal meetings in the cities proved detrimental, the security forces of the enemy would ambush and arrest the mujahideen. This system should be replaced or have its use limited.

- When military operations were conducted on a small scale (like ambushes and assassinations) communication was not a problem, but not using wireless communications properly at the critical time hindered the mujahideen work and made it look primitive, especially when they were conducting military operations without any connection or direction from the leadership. The field command in Hamah was able at the later stages of the battle to utilize wireless communications and eavesdrop on the enemy.

- The use of regular phone lines for communications is very dangerous be it inside the country or on the outside, it gave the enemy and the neighboring regimes a treasure trove of intelligence that he used against us, its use is tantamount to actual suicide, the use of regular phones should done on a very small scale and by few people the regime does not suspect.

Communication on all levels is a vital role of this fight, it should be researched and studied, and solutions should be found. The advances in wireless communication technology and the availability of these instruments; makes it incumbent upon us to purchase the equipment and train our people to properly use it. Wireless communications is a sword with two edges, it helps the leadership manage the war better, it keeps it informed and on top of things, it enables it to monitor and eavesdrop on the enemy, however it gives the same advantages to the enemy and helps him expose us.

(6) Shelters, hide outs and weapons warehousing:

The desert nature of the Syrian terrain makes it ill suited for long and protracted gang warfare; it lacks Hills, valleys, rivers, thick forested woods, and a network of transportation and is relatively small, with the exception of a small portion in the North West part of the country and the area surrounding Damascus. The mountainous range on the western coast line which could be used for such activities is enemy territory and inhabited mostly by “Alawites” and thus could not be used as shelters.

All this lead the mujahideen to adopt the style of urban gang warfare, they developed a system for storing their weapons and munitions in regular houses using the family as a cover, the underground members went about their normal life and jihad activities unabated, this system allowed them to provide shelter for hundreds of mujahideen and their weapons. This system proved effect for almost a year and a half (1979-1981). Unfortunately the arrests allowed the regime to figure out this tactic and dealt with it.

One of the issues that need to be addressed by the leadership relates to movement of

personnel and weapons, safe houses and warehouses, how to benefit from the nature of the country and use it to their advantage (Mountains, forests, brush, rivers, lakes, large and industrial cities, urban conditions,.....etc). These elements are going to be looked into by the enemy fighting us, the mujahideen are going to find themselves facing tough conditions, but if they plan properly and strategically, if they study and benefit from the experiences of other revolutions and other nations they will be able to adapt and produce a good plan.

The mujahideen bases (cells) need to be safe, fortified enough to defend but easy to withdraw from, comfortable enough to accommodate a number of fighters. The places for storing weapons, munitions and documents should be staffed depending on the materials warehoused in it. This is an independent military science that needs to be learned and perfected by those concerned, even though knowledge of this science is necessary it is not sufficient, living in and adapting to the situations on the ground, and learning from previous mistakes of gang warfare is the ultimate teacher.

(7) Military training (inside the country and abroad):

As previously stated gang warfare depends more than anything else on the human element, his abilities and psychological make up; (especially the leadership), mujahideen should have a very high level of physical fitness, they should be able to survive in tough conditions, have the ability to endure: exhaustion, staying awake for extended periods of time, suffering, hunger, and ill health. Their character and general knowledge should be of the highest caliber possible. Those with the higher level of education will be the most suited to depend instinctively on their intuition in coming up with answers and solutions to critical situations. All mujahideen need to perfect the use of all light and mid duty weaponry but each should specialize in a certain type.

Courageous and daring attitude is very important; our experience proved that some people are predisposed to being great gang warfare fighters even though they had no prior military training, while others have physical or psychological handicap that hinders or prevents them from succeeding at gang warfare. Both of those groups represent a small minority, the majority of people however could --through intensive training-- be transformed into good gang warfare fighters. Training and participation in the fight allows the individual to discover abilities he never thought he possessed, or it may prove to him that he is unsuitable for this type of combat. Our Syrian experience produced top notch youthful revolutionary cadres. War is an experimental science learned through practice, and it produces real men worthy of making history. It is common knowledge that gang warfare in most cases starts with a few faithful, determined and principled youthful students and civilians, their ranks rarely include people with military experience. The lack of military experience and the difficulty of organized training should not dissuade the mujahideen from participating in the fight, their creative thinking will help them find ways and methods of training that suit their circumstances, many times marginal participation in the fight is the best way to train members, it builds their confidence and soon enough they become real experts.

“Attalieaa” experience inside Syria gave us a good example of practical training in the field, whereas the experience of “Moslem Brotherhood” gave us an overview of organized training abroad. The faithful who initiated the battle had very little military training if any, the few who had experience were the original members of Marwan

Hadeed organization and trained at the Palestinian camps of the Fattah movement in 1969 in Jordan.

“Attalieaa” created its own system for training; the physical fitness part of training was encouraged by the leadership but depended largely on the individuals’ effort. The members were trained to disassemble then reassemble weapons in safe houses, then they would be taken along on a military operation (e.g. assassination attempt) as an observer, this breaks the psychological brier. The second time, the trainee will be armed but this time he has a mission: to protect those people carrying out the military operation, then he will be asked by the seniors of his group to carry out the assassination himself. Many times the 1st. shots fired by the mujahideen hit the heads of the infidels, very quickly trainees will learn. Many military operations were carried out using trainees, the most successful were lead by the martyr captain Ibrahim Yusuf (May Allah have mercy on his soul), he was able to establish and supervise a limited organized training program in the small mountains near Aleppo. Unfortunately the lack of forests and mountains prevented “Attalieaa” from establishing its own camps on the inside. Later “Attalieaa” members were sent to Iraq for professional military training, they trained on different types of weapons especially the effective use of the rocket propelled grenades (R.P.G.), they attended military lecture on the tactics of war, some of them got trained on tank warfare, some returned and participated in the fight, others stayed abroad settled down and went about their daily lives and thus lost all they have learned.

In the cases where establishing a training camp in the mountains or woods is not possible, members should follow a regimented physical work out plan on their own but with the supervision of the leadership, then they should sit in on a series of lectures dealing with military sciences, theoretical studies on gang warfare tactics, weapons, explosives, 1st. aid and ambulatory work, members should be given assigned readings on these subjects, upon completion of this program members could be tested to evaluate their knowledge. Using the above approach and following a well planned program; could provide members with all necessary tools except for actual use of weapons and explosives, which should be done at a latter point, of course the best way of doing that is in the course of war, especially in countries that are experiencing Islamic battles; as in the case of Afghanistan.

In brief, the leadership should develop an effective training program that is suitable to the area of conflict; it should cover all necessary aspects including technology, weaponry, communication, surveillance, electronics, and remote explosives. The best time for finding good solutions to rising problems is before the beginning of war.

(8)The problem of informers:

Informers and spies are a major problem that any one planning for jihad should address and find solutions for. The mujahideen of Syria ran into a buzz saw of informers numbered in the tens of thousands, those misguided Moslem turncoats favored the oppressor and sided with his regime against the faithful. The information they passed on to the enemy caused raids on safe houses and hide outs, the resulting loss of life was catastrophic, and arrests were carried out on a large scale. The informers cut across the entire social structure from high level officials all the way down to the janitors and street beggars; however the worst of those informers were the low life scholars and mosque sheiks whom Moslem trusted and felt safe around,

those religious people were highly though off , and were the least expected to end up as regime informers, some of those scholars sided with the apostate regime, they glorified it and described it as an Islamic regime, there shameful misdeeds misguided simple minded Moslem. The list included the Mufti of the country, the minister of endowment and his directors; they went as far as declaring the mujahideen as apostate infidels. The Mujahideen retaliated and inflicted heavy losses on the informers; this reduced their numbers and caused panic in their ranks. Any lull in the mujahideen activities would cause the coward informers to resurface. The killing of some of the informer Moslem sheiks and scholars (like Sheik Mohammad Shami, sheik Tawoos and others) created a public relations nightmare due to their status as scholars among the simple minded Moslems. The killing of informer sheiks should be dealt with as part of a carefully orchestrated public relations campaign that puts people on notice yet controls the damage and negative fallout. When Sheik Mohammad Shami was killed the mujahideen did not publicize the operation or take credit for it, so the masses did not know if he was killed by us or by the regime, the regime killed few decent sheiks and scholars as well. One of the well known scholars killed was Saeed Ramadan Albooty, he used to praise Hafez Assad in his lecture and during Friday prayers, and he even described him as faithful Moslem who wants to strengthen Islam, Islamic life and fundamentalism in Syria, he attacked the mujahideen and labeled them turncoats. This rubbish was published in his book (Their Problems) on page 21 as well as in an interview he gave to the Moroccan "Anssar" newspaper.

(9) The problem of travel documents (Personal ID.s, driver's licenses & passports): Any mujahid fighting the regime, or any opposition member who took arms to fight tyranny, will be on the run most of the time especially those who choose urban gang warfare; as was the case for "Attalieaa". Those people are on the move most of the time, their travel inside and outside the country require proper documents; they will be stopped by the police and security services and asked for proper identification, if they need to flee the country they need passports. Any one planning for jihad should find ways and means to address this issue prior to the begging of hostilities, our experience in the past may be of value in this regard.

When the conflict erupted unexpectedly --None of the Moslem organizations had prepared for this eventuality-- hoping to avoid capture; hundreds of people tried to escape or hide for few days, the authorities had lists of names and were able to arrest numerous individuals at their check points. The known members of "Attalieaa" were being sought so they went under cover and resorted to urban gang ware fare, they attacked the private affairs administration building and were able to acquire private identification cards, documents and stamps which helped alleviate the problem temporarily. When the "Moslem Brotherhood" left Syria to Jordan and Iraq, they established a sophisticated system for providing the members and refugees with necessary documents ranging from education degrees to passports, the system improved so well they were able to ship documents back to Syria to help solve problems for those who stayed behind. "Attalieaa" depended initially on the documents provided by the "Moslem Brother" they could not develop their own system till later -due to lack of funds - but then it was too late, "Attalieaa" was destroyed and thus unable to benefit from that system.

Any mujahid working on solutions to the documents problem should expect to face

similar circumstances, this problem is easy to solve, dependence on stolen government identification cards is not the solution, those cards are known to the authorities, they have all their numbers, they could trace or change them at any time (as was the case in Syria where all personal identification cards were changed). The best way is to establish an independent system to produce necessary documents; equipment and supplies needed for this purpose could be easily purchased on the open market on the outside, the black market or even from print shops. This problem is easy to solve if it is dealt with before the crisis hits.

(10) The wounded and their rescue:

This was one of the biggest problems for the mujahideen; the wounded brother creates a predicament, leaving him on the battle field exposes and compromises the organization, and taking him back to the safe house or base where there is no proper health care is cumbersome. Urban gang warfare is different from gang warfare waged in the countryside, mountains and forests where creating a field hospital is possible. "Attalieaa" had tragic experiences where wounded mujahideen who were able to retreat to the safe houses died of serious wounds or bled to death for lack of medical treatment, in some cases the mujahideen kidnapped doctors and stole medical equipments. This proved effective in treating simple injuries. Studying the experiences of other gang wars gives us a good example how to build small field hospitals or infirmaries in the mountains, forests, country side even in some urban settings. Each mujahid should be knowledgeable of 1st. aid techniques, treatment of minor wounds, dispensing of medicine, and even performing minor surgeries. Each unit or safe house should be provided with basic portable light weight medical kits. This problem will always be a critical one, the people facing it on the field are the ones who have to find the appropriate solution that suits them best.

(11) Intelligence:

In the process of drawing our military plans for attacks or even for defense we need to know all we could about the enemy's plans and secrets. Revolutionaries waging gang warfare should have their own intelligence system for monitoring and collecting information on the enemy regime, who are the leaders and influential individuals, what style of life do they lead, where do they live, how do they move around, what are they planning, the times of their police patrols, how fortified and armed are their institutions, where do they store their arms and weapons.....etc. In the case of dictatorships especially those where one party or one family --along with their cronies-- form the entire government, attention should be given to monitoring and observing their security systems and their armed forces, moles should infiltrate the ranks of these institutions as well as the ranks of other political institutions. The Moslem public is a complementary source of intelligence that has to be utilized but should not be depended on primarily. In very few cases in Syria we received early warnings which helped us avert disaster and enabled us to inflict heavy losses on the enemy. As long as we are waging a military battle intelligence should rank at the top of our priorities, we can not deny that the nature and success of our intelligence system will be dependant on the circumstances and type of regime we are fighting, however the use of the Moslem public as a complementary source and following a carefully crafted plan will be highly beneficial.

Security concerns for a pyramid hierarchy:

The most popular form of secretive organizations is the pyramid hierarchy structure, where information and command goes up or down effectively and in a speedy manner, each person knows who to report to, this structure is effective and easy to manage yet very dangerous. When small problems are not averted they evolve into major catastrophes. All the Moslem organizations that operated in Syria used that structure, upon capture and torture of the members the regime was able to know all they knew, many of those Moslem organizations were compromised and destroyed partially or fully.

Another way of structuring an organization is through the use of the “thread connection” structure; A leadership member “Tip of the thread” is connected to a series of clusters, those clusters are not connected to each other and are usually composed of one or two individuals, this burdens the “tip of the thread” with a lot of responsibilities and requires dedicated effort on his part. If a member is arrested he does not cause a major threat to the entire organization because he does not know much. This system though secure, is weak, because if the “tip of the thread” is captured, all the clusters are compromised or if he is killed or is indisposed, the clusters do not know where to go for instructions and guidance and thus could not be brought back to the fold. To solve this problem another person is needed; he will be the “informed deputy” and his job is to reconnect the clusters back to the network, he will open a sealed envelope containing the secret information, and communicates with the clusters via a predetermined pass word letting them know that he is the point man now.

Some times a combination of both structures (the pyramid hierarchy and the thread connection) yields great results because it provides the leadership with the ability to maneuver, this of course depends on the situation. Many European gang organizations were able through experience to develop very accurate and durable methods that helped it withstand the onslaught of very advanced and powerful security organizations; (e.g. the red brigades of Italy, Badder Meinhoff of Germany and the Spanish separatist organization ETA). Our experience taught us that security and strength of an organization could be contradictory to its growth or ease of management.

Structuring an organization requires a lot of thought and foresight, it should take into account the nature and strengths of the enemy, the type and strengths of its security system, the geographical nature of the country, what has worked and what has failed in similar situations.....etc. the particular conditions on the ground should determine the best structure for the organization.

The toughest lessons we learned from the Syrian experience relate to the capture of our mujahideen and the resulting ramifications, this is an area that needs intensive research and preparation.

(13)Retaining the initiative and the ability to deter:

The mujahideen should never give the regime and its oppressive security systems any respite, the regime should never have time to regroup and think, the mujahideen should utilize successive and strategic military operations that exhaust the regime and its institutions, they should play “The dog and the flees game”*. This could only be achieved if the mujahideen control the initiative for as long as possible and for the duration of the war. This process has to be part of an overall strategic plan that

encompasses all elements (political, Military and media/ public relations). Of course the enemy is going to sense this and try to recapture the initiative by luring the mujahideen into counter attacks, so they could be exposed, surrounded and eventually terminated. The Mujahideen should not fall into the enemy's trap, and if they lose the initiative then they should wage a series of attacks on selective but sensitive targets, this will temporarily confuse and occupy the regime, this swift deterrence will enable the mujahideen to recapture the initiative.

Due to its small size and secrecy "Attalieaa" was able to retain the initiative till the end of 1980; however the regime was able to lure them into counter attacks and eventually destroyed the organization by the end of 1981. The mujahideen were able to mobilize large numbers of fighters in Hamah they controlled the city openly, but the regime was able to besiege the city and force them into a military confrontation that led to their demise. And so we learn that the mujahideen should always have the initiative, and if they lose it they should do all they can to recapture it. This should be taken into consideration from the beginning and have plans ready for it.

*: One gang warfare analyst gave this phenomenon that name, because gangs attack by using small and weak forces relative to the government, in the same manner flees attack the dog, and even though the dog is stronger the flees eventually overcome the dog. (Abridged from the book "War of the weakened" by an American Author).

(14) Complementary operations abroad:

The true place for the revolution leadership and the true battle field of jihad is inside the country, this should be one of the lessons we take to heart, and any revolution that settles outside the country will disintegrate and crumble. The revolution however should have a small military presence abroad for limited strategic attacks when needed: like assassinating senior members of the regime or its military personnel, when those people travel abroad they are not awarded the same security protection they receive at home. The presence of a military branch abroad is also needed to threaten attack and deter other parties that are antagonistic to the revolution; this presence gives the revolution a far reaching arm. Outside presence should not be limited to the military branch it should have a political and public relations arm as well, the media/ public relation campaigns waged on the outside should be congruent to those on the inside. The outside group should be under the direct supervision of the leadership back home, and receive orders and instructions from it, and even though they have to be well staffed, financed and equipped, they can not be independent from the leadership inside the country. The abroad presence should not be misconstrued as an opportunity to have a vacation, or a chance to live in luxury. The members abroad should provide assistance and support to the mujahideen who have a legitimate reason for being abroad, those who do not have such a reason or those who did not suffer for the sake of the revolution are not mujahideen. The outside work in the case of the Syrian revolution was a dismal failure, when the entire leadership along with most of the cadres moved abroad the revolution collapsed and perished.

(15) Coordination between the three branches (Known, unknown, and abroad):

Most revolutions --our Syrian revolution included-- start with a group of youths that light the fuse; they go on the run and operate out of secret bases in the mountains, forests, country side, and inner cities. They constitute the "Known" branch because the regime knows who they are and is after them. Many faithful who have the same beliefs join in; but because the government does not know about them they do their revolutionary work as part of every day life, those people constitute the "Unknown"

branch. Soon after few people move outside the country, to obtain financing & support, initiate public relation campaigns, or conduct targeted small scale military operation; this group will constitute the “Abroad” branch. In most cases the leadership of the revolution falls under the “Known” branch, however it would be ideal if some members were “Unknown”. An essential part of the overall plan of the revolution is how does the leadership divide responsibilities and establish coordination between the three branches, responsibilities and duties often intersect between two or the three branches, how can the leadership maintain control. The following guidelines could be helpful:

A: Military branch “Known”:

This group consists of military formations operating out of hideouts or safe houses, either in the mountains, forests, or in urban settings (dwellings, factories....) as was the case in our Syrian experience. The leadership of the revolution usually operates out of those safe houses; the responsibilities of the leadership include: building the three necessary structures of the organization: military, political and media/public relations, insuring the availability of necessary supplies military or otherwise, planning and managing ambushes, raids, building explosive devises, creating a practical yet effective military training program...etc. This branch is the heart and soul of the revolution and it should be responsible for coordinating the activities of the other two branches.

B: Civilian branch “Unknown”:

This branch is usually a mixture of “pyramid hierarchy” and “Thread connection” structures, its civilian membership (students, white and blue color workers, small business people....) is more numerous than the “known” but less experienced in revolutionary activities. They are usually responsible for: intelligence and monitoring, transport of weapons, arms, munitions and supplies to the military branch, their military participation is limited to small scale operations like simple assassinations, planting of explosives and booby traps, in some cases experienced members of this branch could partake in large scale military operations conducted by the military branch. They are responsible for mobilizing the masses as well as public relations inside the country, distributing brochures, flyers, and news letters, spreading rumors that favor the revolution and dispelling rumors that harm the revolution, and keeping the “abroad” branch advised of the happenings. This branch should be operating under the directions and instructions of the leadership, but is best served if it runs its affairs in a decentralized and unconnected way.

C: The “Abroad branch:

The people doing the revolutionary work abroad should be highly loyal, dependable, qualified, and should be the type that shuns living in luxury. They should have the ability to communicate with the leadership back home rapidly and at all times, they should follow their instructions and orders to the letter. Their main job is to collect donations, acquire weapons, arms, munitions, technologies, and smuggle them back home. They should engage in media/public relation campaigns that promote and favor the revolution, create contacts abroad that could be beneficial, monitor the movements of regime members abroad, and when necessary carry out targeted attacks, provide aid and support to injured and needy mujahideen abroad, Those three branches if working harmoniously under a centralized leadership could

produce tremendous results, each should be able to operate in a decentralized fashion but in precise coordination with the leadership and according to the master plan it creates.

(16) Technical problems:

We are living at the end of the twentieth century, we better run our war in a manner fitting of the times (Within reason of course) , we can not wage our war these days the way Arabian Bedouins carried out their raids. We were right when we said that the human element is the most important factor in the revolutionary war, this however does not mean that we should ignore technological advances in communications and weaponry that could be utilized in our war, to limit our human and financial losses. These products are readily available on the international market; it could be easily purchased and transported to the battle field. The mujahideen leadership should create a nucleus division whose job is to provide technical support to the war effort.

“Attalieaa” had limited success on the technical front; they were able to open a workshop for modifying and repairing arms, and able to transform regular hand guns into machine guns, and produce home made hand grenades, they achieved this with very little money, and limited technical know how. Their efforts are greatly appreciated. As to the “Moslem Brotherhood” they created a special technical division headed by leadership member Abu Anes Bianouni, they took hundreds of European trips and spent millions of dollars for that purpose, yet have nothing to show for it. They could not provide any technical support when the battle ensued, their abroad military branch under the same leader failed to carry out any military deterrent operations on the outside. Revolutionary leaderships should learn from this lesson and pay a lot of attention to technical advances and the best ways to apply them to our battle.

(17) Punishment and torture (especially the families of mujahideen):

This was a major predicament, during “Attalieaa’s” engagement in military operations, when the regime was unable to capture the mujahideen or slow the pace of their operations, it resorted to capturing, severely punishing, torturing and killing civilians especially family members of the mujahideen, when ever the mujahideen carried out an attack the regime followed it with a civilians massacre, they would gather family members and execute them. The resulting massive uproar forced the leadership of the mujahideen to halt their attacks. We have to be clear and cognizant of the fact that our jihad approach comes with burdens and a hefty price, any one who joins the jihad journey, has to be aware that he is sacrificing himself, his family and his people for the sake of “Allah”, we have to pay this price to regain freedom, justice and Islamic rule. Instead of the negative thinking that lead some of our people and brothers to halt the attacks -- in order to save civilian and family members’ lives-- we better resort to vicious deterrent retaliatory attacks that raises the morale of the civilians and forces the enemy to stop and rethink its policy of harming them. This should be coupled with a media/ public relations campaign that spells clearly to the mujahideen and to the people that they have a choice to make; either stay the course and pay the price or submit to the regime that has been oppressing and humiliating you.

An American gang war analyst stated that :the brutality a regime uses against the civilians in retaliation to acts committed by the revolution is the best gift a revolution

can receive, even neutral people will end up joining their ranks, the regime will be seen as the oppressor and the revolution will be seen as the just and fair side.

(Abridged from the book “The War of those deemed weak”. The public relations campaign should portray the tyrant regime as willing to shed innocent and civilian blood, because it can not cope with the blows of the mujahideen. The sectarian “Alawite” Assad regime is a good case in point.

(18) The problem of Siege and pursue:

The armed and security forces of the tyrant regime will always try to besiege and flush out the mujahideen and engage them in locations of its choice and on terms favorable to it (e.g. superiority in numbers and weapons, availability of uninterrupted supplies, etc). Being under siege with limited supplies and personnel the mujahideen are forced to suspend their hit and run methods and resort to open confrontation, which enables the regime to inflict heavy loses on them and capture many of their members. The presence of mountains, forests, overcrowded neighborhoods, and industrial cities creates favorable conditions to the mujahideen, small cities and towns create obstacles and impediments. The mujahideen in Syria were subjected to a series of sieges and pursuits in limited sectors of particular cities, and in some cases it covered the entire city (As was the case in Aleppo, Idleb, Jiser and Hamah). In those cases the regime mobilized tens of thousands of soldiers, surrounded and shut down the entire city one after the other. The security forces and the “Alawite” ethnic officers searched one house after the other for many days; people were starved, humiliated and terrified. The mujahideen were able to wither the storm in all those cases, the regime was not able to neither arrest any members nor capture armaments except in few minor incidents. Unfortunately the mujahideen failed to capitalize on this opportunity (because of their weakness and absence of comprehensive strategic centralized planning and leadership). They should have attacked the army in its weak spots and at night in a way that causes panic among its ranks, instead they laid low and disappeared entirely from the seen. (This is still better than going for the open confrontation that the regime was hoping for). The gamble on the army splitting to join the side of the mujahideen was a losing proposition; it did not materialize because of the failure to initiate a public relations campaign on a large scale targeting the army and its officers. In spite of the presence of army units on the major intersections and outskirts of those cities, no major harm was done to the mujahideen, once the troops pulled out the jihad activities returned stronger than ever. This was a wonderful experience worthy of study and analysis.

(19) The problem of open confrontation:

The battle of Hamah proved beyond a shadow of a doubt, the conventional wisdom that; any revolution that goes into an open all out confrontation in a defined geographical location that needs to be defended, without any intervention by outside forces to aid it, and without starting marginal confrontations in other areas to force the army to relocate some of its forces, and on timing not its own; is doomed to utter failure and destruction. Even though the mujahideen were forced into the battle through a well orchestrated plan by the regime, this does not change the fact that it lead to total failure. A lesson we should take to heart.

The leader of the mujahideen in Hamah Abu Baker-Omar Jawad (May Allah have mercy on his soul) distributed eight thousand Russian machine guns the morning of

the day the battle broke out, there were one thousand mujahideen and many thousands of armed civilians trying to defend the city, there was plenty of arms and munitions, they had medium duty weapons, like R.P.G.s and heavy machine guns, but the city could not withstand the onslaught, they had no supply or reinforcement routes, they ran out of anti armor weapons after four days only. The organization that lead the fight was a strong one with ten years of experience, they had spent three years preparing for the battle, they could not hold out, the city was sacked, most of the mujahideen got martyred, many civilians threw down their arms and surrendered, half the city was totally destroyed, and it was a real disaster. And even though the enemy suffered heavy losses there is no comparison between their losses and ours.

The mujahideen should be aware that their war is a protracted one, aimed more at annoying and exhausting the enemy than defeating it militarily. The leadership should understand this clearly, learn from other experiences and plan accordingly; this will help avoid repeating similar deadly mistakes.

2nd. Political & public relations problems:

The Jihad revolutionary war just like any other war is political at heart; it is politically and ideologically motivated, the military activity is merely the tool or means to achieve that objective. (Without military activity the revolution will loose its impact and have no chance of success). The military operations could be extremely successful yet if that capital is not expended in accordance with a clear political vision and strategy, and a well crafted public relations campaign we will only gain titles for our martyrs and tears for their blood. We have to stress (and make sure we do not forget) that the battle is political at the core; the political effort should receive the same attention and be treated as importantly as the military effort is. The mujahideen leadership should make its own political decisions, and develop its own media/publicity plan. If we look at our own experience we see that we scored well on the military level, but failed to complement that politically; especially in the case of the true mujahideen “Attalieaa”. We will compare and contrast the political efforts of “Attalieaa” and the activities of the “Moslem Brotherhood” abroad.

Attalieaa’s political efforts: (Or lack thereof).

Attalieaa’s work was limited to the military branch it did not engage in political work per say, all the military successes on the ground were wasted because there was no political work to complement and benefit from it. “Attalieaa” failed to achieve its objectives for many reasons some were discussed earlier, others are as follows:

1- The leadership lacked a clear political vision, they did not have a clear program with objectives and slogans that could be presented to the people in a convincing manner that results in their adoption of those same goals and slogans, and leads them to rally around it. They did not interact in a beneficial way with the parties, groups, coalitions, neighboring countries that have a stake in what goes on in Syria. They did not take into consideration the Arab, regional and international implications of what they were doing on the ground.

2- Media & publicity (An important aspect of the political effort) was dismal inside the country and non existent abroad. Their information and publicity work was limited to few occasional communiqués; some times asking people to strike, other times to confirm or deny their responsibility for a certain incident. They issued and distributed few instructional cassette tapes, but did not publish a newspaper or

a magazine till very late. The military successes were not capitalized on politically. In spite of their failure on the media-publicity level; their zeal and valiant efforts won them the hearts and support of many civilians.

3- Attalieaa's involvement with neighboring regimes started by accepting aid (little quantities of arms) from Iraq; and grew in dependence when many of its cadres moved over there. Attalieaa suffered from failing to realize those regimes could never be considered allies, the "Moslem Brotherhood" contributed to isolating Attalieaa and preventing it from getting much needed supplies, especially during the battle of Hamah. Their diplomatic efforts fell short on all fronts.

4- "Attalieaa" was the main causality of the reconciliation efforts, their leader Adnan Akla fell in the trap that was set for him; the international Moslem Brotherhood pulled the rug from under his feet and were able to chock and isolate his organization, this is a great example of their failed diplomacy, their naiveté was exploited by a Machiavellian group of the "Moslem Brotherhood" lead by Adnan Saadudin who pressed the Iraqi regime to suspend the supply of arms and munitions to them. Adnan Akla's good heart was the main culprit in this diplomatic debacle, his statement afterwards affirmed his belief that he was deceived by people he thought were good Moslem believers.

5- When the majority of "Attalieaa" forces were defeated and after Adnan Akla was arrested; few members of the leadership decided on their own without the approval of the Consultation Council; to pursue a peace treaty with the Syrian regime, this caused a lot of division and friction among the remaining members (who were still shocked and have not gotten over the arrest of their leader). While those members were negotiating peace in Germany, the regime was able to lure a large portion of the remaining fighters out of their bases and safe house, so the negotiators whose position was weak to begin with lost any leverage they may have had; and the peace attempt (Between a victor and a defeated) turned into total unconditional surrender with the promise of amnesty granted on an individual bases. The failure of those negotiators gives a clear picture how primitive and lacking the political awareness and skills were at the leadership of "Attalieaa".

2nd: The "Moslem Brotherhood political efforts:

This organization had no significant military achievements in the course of the fight, (unless we consider the pledge of allegiance they received from the remnants of the mujahideen like the field commanders of Hamah, Damascus and the army officers of the failed coup). The very little military operations they initiated ended up in dismal failure; their attempts to attack from outside the country met the same fate. Their contribution to this war was strictly political and on the outside, it was primitive and lacked any vision, agenda or plan, what made its political efforts ineffective was a lack of a strong military branch on the ground. A quick review of the events makes us point the following:

1-Many revolutions fail because their leaders reside and make their decisions in a secure environment out side the country, while trying to manage the war and direct its military command from afar. The political leadership failed to embody the goals and aspirations of the mujahideen and thus failed in its efforts.

2-The "Moslem Brotherhood" like "Attalieaa" lacked a successful political leadership capable of understanding the basics of this dangerous game, the sheiks treated all political

work of tactical nature with indifference, their political maneuvers were never strategic except when it came to isolating “Attalieaa”.

3-Going too far with their openness in dealing with the neighboring regimes made them a pawn in their hands, those regimes were benefiting from the revolution instead of the other way, as was the case with Iraq and Jordan, they were able through money or threats to control many leadership members of the “Moslem Brotherhood”, curtail the revolution and impose their will on the organization.

4-Getting involved in a failing and losing national coalition with secular parties, In spite of our position that this coalition did not meet the requirements of religious legitimacy, it still failed politically because the personalities and parties with very little weight on the ground, took the forefront as leaders of the opposition (Especially the Iraqi right wing Baath party) relegating the “Moslem Brotherhood” to the rear instead of being the main block moving and directing the coalition; and all they got for that was shelter and some crummy weaponry, with this alliance they lost two strategic elements:

a- The Moslem banner and identity of the revolution: The slogans and objectives of the revolution became secular; loaded with nationalist, pan Arab, and political freedom content. All the flyers and brochures published by the alliance could have been easily mistaken for those of the Iraqi Baath party, except of course their mention that Islam is the religion of the state, which is stated in the constitutions of all those apostate regimes that abandoned Islam.

b- Many faithful Moslem members abandoned the arena due to their disgust with this alliance. The “Moslem Brotherhood” traded a good son for someone pretending to be friendly. This disaster was imposed on everybody by very few leadership members with dictatorial tendencies and no political insight.

5-Unlike “Attalieaa” the “Moslem Brotherhood” had very little participation or influence on the publicity efforts inside Syria. Their magazine (Annathier) did not reach the inside of Syria with the exception of the 1st. few issued which were distributed by “Attalieaa”, Their only media effort was the radio station out of Iraq, which had no Moslem flavor or identity.

As to their media work outside Syria; they were able to expose the presence of an Islamic revolution in Syria to the outside world, their international reach helped in the publication of many articles in Islamic magazines, their leaders conducted many interviews with international publications, radio and television stations, and reached out to many political and human rights organizations. We could say that they did not do such a bad job in this area, however their failure to have any effective military arm on the inside; made it difficult to reap any benefits from this effort, except for collecting millions of dollars in donations. The tragic end and the disaster at Hamah, their involvement in lies, deceit, and exaggerations, put a black mark on their record and made them the subject of accusations and ridicule.

-The publicity work inside the country should have two parallel but complementary arms: Political Publicity and military publicity. The political publicity arm (radio station, circular publications, cassettes, videos, communiqués) should have an instructional direction to propagate the doctrine in the minds of the masses and motivate them to rally around its goals, objectives and slogans; this of course is in addition to its job of disseminating the news and what ever else is needed.

The military publicity should feed off the political publicity and vice versa; it should be

conducted as a series of military operations that aim to drive home a certain point and make a large impact; like forcefully demonstrating and delivering public speeches with arms fully exposed if possible, assassinating criminals and spies in a very demonstrative way, attacking military patrols in areas populated by people we have an interest in. All this aims to make it clear that the revolution has a far reaching arm and is willing to hurt the regime and its agents. This is how both arms of publicity merge together to produce good results among the masses, (if Allah permits).

-The publicity work abroad should be conducted according to a carefully crafted plan compatible with, and complementary to; publicity works on the inside. Even though the inside arena is more important and more deserving of good efforts, the publicity abroad if conducted properly could be a great tributary to the success of the revolution. Reaching out to other Moslem countries has far reaching implications in terms of financing our revolution, recruiting new members, and spreading the seeds of Islamic jihad among the Moslem masses; here we have to concentrate on Moslem organizations and coalitions and benefit from their own publicity and media outlets to garner help, support and to condemn the regime. On the international level we could contact news papers, news agencies, and conduct interviews to expose the regime and garner empathy for the revolution. This is how we can gain the support of the international public opinion, (We have to be careful here and deal with each side according to its own mentality). We can not forget the benefits we may reap from contacting the human rights organizations in terms of embarrassing, condemning and isolating the regime.

-Confronting the enemy propaganda and its psychological warfare: The enemy regime will not sit idle while we wage our political and military campaigns, they will initiate their own propaganda blitz and psychological warfare trying to portray us as a bunch of thugs, criminals and terrorists with no connection to the nation, and they will flood the media with rumors. The reputation of the regime should work in our favor, we should affix the label of "lies and liars" to them. The mujahideen however still have to have their own plan to counter the regimes' based on their circumstances and depending on the situation and conditions on the ground.

-Taking credit for our operations and stealing our efforts: The "Moslem Brotherhood" through the use of its media outlets resorted to taking credit for the military activities of the mujahideen, claiming it as its own, bragging and exaggerating, they used the blood of our martyrs to claim fictitious glory, and collect donations in their name, the secular parties did the same through the use of their radio station in Iraq, they called the mujahideen the national opposition, claiming that their members are participating in the fight under the banner of the "Syria Liberation Army". This problem may look simple but is of extreme importance, if we do not counter it with a media campaign, especially abroad, we will pay a dear price, we should warn, threaten, deter and do what ever is necessary and what ever is humanly possible depending on the circumstances. We should apply the same methods on the inside as well, we should adopt a clear pattern of claiming responsibility for operations, the worst thing we could do is stay silent, sit idle while others claim the credit; or wait for the regime to put the blame, we should not exaggerate the enemy loses, nor reduce our own, we should be true otherwise we are no different from the deceitful regime. Media work is just like political and military work; it needs a well thought plan that falls within the overall strategy of the revolution; it should complement and promote it. It should classify the sectors of society and address each

intended target with an approach they can relate to; As the Prophet once said “I was ordered to address people according to their mental abilities”

-Political work: We should point out that in the 1st. place we are a Moslem fundamentalist group, our work is rooted in “Allah’s” true law, we aim to please him and establish his rein on earth. The slightest aspect of our work should have this imprint, and be based on a religiously legitimate political path; it should be in line with the opinions, edicts and interpretations of the scholars. We should raise many questions and find answers in the religious jurisprudence law -- to the contemporary problems that face the jihad doctrine-- This will calm the hearts of the masses and the mujahideen and make them feel well about participating in the fight.

The military steps should fall in line with the strategic political plan and vice versa; this helps us avoid many pit falls. (Like what happened to “Attalieaa” when the military escalation provided large numbers of enthusiasts which could not be controlled or benefited from).

We also have to pay attention to the secular parties and semi Moslem organizations that claim to be fighting the regime, we have to expose them and cut their wings, some may see this as a waste in effort, and think of it as opening side fronts, but we should, even if the price is high, because not doing so could confuse the masses and make some believe in the message of those parties. The ideas and outlines should be presented only by the true mujahideen; their presentation will expose the falsities of the other parties and prove the truthfulness of our cause.

In Brief: The Jihad revolutionary leadership should be Judicious, prudent and shrewd in evaluating conditions, it should rely on Allah (First and last), should be honest, truthful, and work diligently. This will ensure its success “Allah willing”.

3rd: The problem of maintaining solidarity among the ranks:

The troubles and hardships of such a task --no matter how tedious-- could be overcome if solidarity among the ranks is strong, the unity should be of the highest caliber befitting of a Moslem jihad organization, the ranks (Leaders and members) represent the real capital of the revolution, the success and failure of the revolution is directly proportional to the strength or weakness of its solidarity.

Being committed to the revolution and a devout Moslem does not qualify one for becoming a mujahid, it requires special characteristics, and the psychological make of the individual is what determines whether he will be effective as a mujahid. Commitment and true knowledge of Islam is necessary and plays a big role in one’s decision to join but that is not sufficient. To walk the path of jihad; a path laden with hardships, suffering and sacrifice one should have special personality traits, and a yearning to give his blood for the sake of Allah. That is why choosing the real mujahideen is a very delicate and complicated matter. Many books discussed the psychological characteristics of a revolutionary; our experience has shown that a lot of those characteristics are present in the Moslem revolutionary; however what directs his revolutionary spirit in the proper direction is the total commitment to Moslem law, jurisprudence and morality. The personality of a revolutionary has many negative aspects; those negatives should be refined and controlled by the leadership through instruction, psychological preparation and behavioral guidelines. In general the revolutionary is: idealistic, stubborn and opinionated, impatient and prone to extremism, favors radical solutions that employ violence, impulsive, emotional, easily affected and willing to sacrifice for his cause.

Nothing works better than Islam at containing the negatives and transforming them into positives.

Our previous experiences presented us with many issues in the areas of solidarity and unity of the ranks; we should pay attention, learn our lesson and benefit.

1- The consultation council problem:

One of the biggest problems -of the armed jihadist revolutionary movement in Syria was the leadership; it caused many problems and led to numerous failures. The best members of the leadership were the original mujahideen who died in the fight. If we look at the experience of "Attalieaa" we see that it produced a cadre of youthful field commanders which set a great example in loyalty, sacrifice and daring, they led by example and worked their magic on the young mujahideen, they were true role models. It was put best by the martyr captain Ibrahiem Yusuf (may Allah have mercy on his soul) when he said "If you are upfront be in front"; this statement summarizes the spirit of the jihad activities of that time, unfortunately the course of events did not allow those field commanders to mold the entire organization in their shape; destiny called they were martyred and the organization was not able to benefit from their, wisdom, wit, and talents. "Allah allowed it to happen, he does what he wants".

When we look at the jihad activity abroad (After leaving Syria) we find two types of leaderships, the leadership of "Attalieaa" in the person of Adnan Akla (May Allah arrange his release from prison) and the leadership of the "Moslem Brotherhood". Adnan Akla was a role model for a leader; he was daring, sacrificing, fundamentalist, revolutionary, and persistent in his principles and path, steadfast in his resolve, his virtues were attested to by his enemies before his friends, he had a history of exemplary jihad, seniority in preaching the doctrine, and numerous qualities and traits. Unfortunately he lacked the wisdom, Judiciousness, and political savvy needed in a leader. One of the few fair members of the "Moslem brotherhood" leadership described him as follows: "I do not doubt Adnan Akla's loyalty & integrity as a leader, nor do I doubt his courage, I also have not doubt that he lacks the wisdom to benefit from those two characteristics".

We may be able to excuse him; after all he was the only leader left after the battle took the lives of most youthful cadres, he was left with very few loyal and daring people around him, the revolutionary youth that gathered abroad lacked maturity and became a burden and liability at some times, instead of being an asset. He was forced to form a leadership and a consultation council, many of the new leaders would barely qualify as regular members in this jihad organization, yet given leadership positions. Necessity and circumstances overloaded him with responsibilities, he was forced to be the sole decision maker on all matters from the least to the most important, he became the only one in charge, this situation produced a lot of negatives, Adnan did not have the judiciousness of a leader, he was burdened with a lot: Problems with the "Moslem Brothers" and the neighboring regimes, problems within his own organization, concerns of being in exile, the conditions on the inside, he was truly exhausted. His style of management could be described best with; extremism, excessive emotionalism, inflexibility even on the slightest of matters, he could not be diplomatic; he could not overcome the isolation imposed on him by the "Moslem Brotherhood" and the neighboring regimes. Problems piled up on him, he wanted dearly to go back home and thus fell in the trap that was laid for him and was

captured as he was attempting to cross the border. This experience proved his failure in politics, diplomacy and management, yet try to contrast that with his daring, persistence, valor, and military success in the course of jihad. "Attalieaa" revolved around the persona of Adnan Akla which led to its fragmentation and demise. Those were the negative results of the one man rule (We should admit though that he was forced into doing it).

The "Moslem Brotherhood" on the other hand carried with them abroad (After they ran away) the same structure of leadership, organizational hierarchy and values. They attempted to jumpstart their organization with the same old fashioned mentality of preaching the doctrine, where all you needed to qualify for a leadership position is to be a good looking articulate orator. The regrouped leadership failed on all levels, political, organizational and public relation-media; they could not produce a wise leadership cadre capable of holding the reigns in such difficult circumstances.

On the military front the "Moslem Brotherhood" leadership failed miserably, they were not able to set a good example in daring, sacrifice and perseverance, and neither did their family members, those family members were placed farthest from the front lines and encouraged to get on with their personal lives, continue their education, and get married. They were enjoying the easy life while their parents in the leadership were planning to send hundreds of other people's kids to war; they kept those poor youths imprisoned in Iraqi and Jordanian camps and bases, the youth did not like this arrangement and expressed their condemnation. The leadership was afraid to wage war yet had control over all those enthusiastic and eager youths, they did not allow those youths to conduct jihad military operations, either because they did not trust their youths or because they did not believe in this battle in the 1st. place. They failed to set a good example and prevented the rise of capable individuals to leadership positions, those capable individuals who participated in the jihad inside Syria, had their hands tied and were not able to make a difference because they were bound by obedience, loyalty, and trust in the leadership.

During these tough times two styles of leadership evolved, one represented by a pious sheik attracting the youth because of his knowledge and missionary experience in teaching the doctrine, the other a politician skilled at maneuvering and making deals with the neighboring regimes, a tug of war ensued between the two factions, and the skilled politician won – At that point in time--. A political maverick by the name of Adnan Saadudeen took control, made all the decisions and was directly responsible for what ensued, beginning with the attempt at reconciliation, the alliance with secular parties, the tragedy of Hamah, and the eventual schism of the organization in 1989. The title of leader was given to the weak Hassan Hooweidy, yet Adnan Saadudeen was able to run things his own way, using the support of the traditional leaders and the blessings of the neighboring regimes. In summary we had three types of leaders: A daring military man with no political skills or leadership judiciousness; a decent sheik unable to adapt to the war and get fired up, and a maverick politician who used the previous two to serve his own interests. And thus many opportunities and resources were wasted. This proves the need for a courageous, wise, judicious, far sighted leader who uses planning, strategy and common sense, organizes properly and leads by example. This is the only hope for our movement to succeed in the future, unless of course Allah wishes and grants a miracle.

The consultation council should be on stand by mode to advise and assists the leader in all his responsibilities, participate in all aspects of decision making, from analyzing the situation, to making the decision and finally executing it. This council should be highly qualified and extremely responsible, its actions and members should be a role model for the youth.

In Islamic law and jurisprudence there are differing opinions among scholars in regards to the consultation council issue, we will try to present the most common:

1- It is not mandatory for the “Emir” to have a consultation council but it is favored if he did, he is not bound by its advice and does not need its approval. Most Moslem precedence scholars are of this belief (e.g. Ibn Taymieah), however they point out that the prophet used the consultation council so did his entourage, and the good Caliphs and the Moslem rulers thereafter.

2- It is mandatory for the “Emir” to have the consultation council; but he is not bound by it. He has to consult with them but the final decisions rest with him even if it contradicts their majority or consensus opinion. Some scholars (e.g. Ibn Attieah) went as far as saying the “Emir” who does not consult at all should be impeached.

3- Some recent Moslem intellectuals floated the idea that it is mandatory and binding; they chose few proofs that suit their purpose to justify their claim. This opinion even though is currently prevalent in Moslem movements is a contagious ideology that infected Moslem thought at the beginning of the twentieth century, due to the influences of democracy and teachings of western scholars studying the orient. Most of the Moslem organizations these days depend on voting and the opinions of the majority (principles of democracy) when our religious law and jurisprudence points to the opposite.

In the case of “Attalieaa” its leader Adnan Akla in spite of his consultations with the council decided and ruled independently, and thus rendered that council obsolete.

In the case of the “Moslem Brotherhood” the “Emir” became a vote counter with no opinion, influence or authority, the division and friction among the leadership and council members neutralized the process of consultation, the “General Observer” became occupied with counting the raised hands to find out what is the decision on each particular issue, those people though they are implementing the concept of obligatory consultation, instead they were playing with blood of Moslems and the destiny of their religion.

The principle of consultation got diluted and became ineffective and useless, and thus a dynamic element of the Moslem faith was lost and could not be benefited from.

2- The problem of boundaries and overlapping responsibilities:

This was a malaise that infected all Moslem groups (Including the “Moslem Brotherhood” which had an extensive organization structure) through out the different stages of war, the concept of deference evolved into a chronic disease; people overreached and crossed their boundaries interfering in others responsibilities, this went on from the smallest of matters to the real serious issues, the members in the base did not know who to turn to or who to side with. It was not unusual to see a high ranking official interfere in dispersing aid to a needy family or in the process of blanket distribution, or an official in Aleppo deciding the matters of a Moslem brother in the city of Idleb. This reoccurring phenomenon created a difficult problem, many meetings were held in an

attempt to find a final solution, yet the remedy was partial at best. The organization became like a banking institution, few people controlled all the power and responsibilities and occasionally stepped on each others' feet. The people abroad lived a peaceful civilian and secure life while claiming they are at war, our jihad experience inside Syria did not have many of those complications that became incurable diseases abroad. This is due to the "no war no peace" mentality that ruled the "Moslem Brotherhood".

3-The problem of old ideologies, and partisanship precipitation among the mujahideen of different backgrounds:

During the course of a revolution and armed struggle many faithful join the fight from different backgrounds and various party affiliations and ideologies. The dangers and hardships of war unite this mixture of backgrounds into brothers in arms seeking the same goal. Any lull in the war puts the revolution at a dangerous cross road; the various ideological differences and allegiances would resurface, people will revert to their old ways and mentalities in addressing issues of the day, and since all are stubborn and armed revolutionaries; frictions and divisions --no matter how trivial-- could escalate to an extremely dangerous level. This major problem should be addressed and corrected through proper instruction and education of members, through finding ideological and strategic common grounds, in addition to a wise and judicious leadership that keeps things in check.

4-The problem of living in military bases:

Part of the leadership duties is providing shelter for the known mujahideen, in special bases and safe houses, in the mountains, country sides, or even at civilian homes in the cities, this type of living has its own challenges and problems, just like living in military training camps in Iraq or safe houses in Jordan did. There is no doubt that living in safe houses inside the country when the battle is raging-- where people are frightened and apprehensive, miss their families, yet close to god-- does not present the same problems that pop up in military training camps and secure normal houses abroad. The life of the mujahideen inside Syria in their bases and safe houses had its own psychological problems, it may have looked monotonous and boring to the others because they spent most of their time reading, learning, praying, training on weapons and explosives, planning and executing military operations. Whereas the members packed up in military camps abroad had a lot of time on their hands with nothing to do, the level of their morale started to decline, their idleness caused additional problems. That is why the leadership should be close to its members and subject them to well structured and scheduled programs of instruction, lectures, education and military training, to limit the negative impact of the psychological, moral and behavioral problems that may arise in such an environment.

5-The problem of confidentiality and internal security:

The confidentiality issue became a big problem especially abroad; decisions and arrangements meant to be secretive would spread through the ranks and trickle down to the members in the bases, most of the time leadership members were responsible for these leaks, they would tell a family member or a friend, that individual would do the same and soon enough every one knows what was supposed to be top confidential. This created a major problem for the leadership. Some of the enemy's moles and spies admitted during interrogation that this is how many secrets found their way to the security apparatus of the regime. The enemy used the same means successfully to spread

its own propaganda. This teaches us that any future jihad regardless of location; should give the issue of confidentiality and internal security ample attention, caution and care.

6-The problem of undisciplined out of control members (those whose commitment is tied to fighting, zeal and bravery):

This problem was difficult to identify during the battle, the ranks included members who joined the fight without going through the maturity process required in Moslem thought and behavior, they joined because of their bravery, zeal and sympathy to the cause, or for other marginal and unknown reasons, they did not exhibit any negative signs during the battle, they fought valiantly but when they moved abroad their personality traits and real characters started surfacing, they reverted to their old patterns of behavior and ways of life, many moral transgressions and undisciplined practices took place. This presented the leadership with a dilemma; what to do with people who fought for the cause? They can not be abandoned in fear of them being caught by the enemy or turning deviant, at the same time their transgressions and behavior would lead to harmful consequences. Many of them were counseled and treated patiently and persistently for a long period of time, they were separated from the other members to limit the damage, and many of them went deviant and had to be released. That is why new recruits should have specific traits, be picked carefully and be treated by their leadership with wisdom and firmness.

7-The problem of transforming the “civilian personality” into a military one:

The human structure of most armed revolutions is civilian in nature; it is usually made of intellectuals, workers and other segments of society. Those civilians turned armed revolutionaries are faced with physical and psychological problems in the process of adapting to their new roles as military people. This new life style varies tremendously from their previous life styles; safety, luxury, smoothness, organization and routine becomes toughness, difficulty, hardships, need, unpredictability and danger. This makes it very important to motivate and psychologically charge those people to help in this transformation. This path was described in the holy Koran as paved with difficulty and misery. Few people choose this path willingly, with conviction, and awareness of the costs, (May Allah bless their hearts), and the majority of people need constant motivation, psychological charging, guidance and religious indoctrination to transform the burden of change into personal pleasure.

8-The problem of control and management in spread out organizations:

“Attalieaa” faced a major problem when it opened the doors of recruitment to any Moslem who wanted to join, the leadership had no means to instruct, charge, educate, evaluate and vet the new recruits, they were unable to identify their strengths and qualifications, they could not train or arm them and thus were unable to use them on the battle field in a beneficiary manner. Most of those courageous youths ended up being arrested by the regime. “Attalieaa” could not protect them nor benefit from their expertise. This should teach us that growth of any jihad organization should be done in a controlled and properly managed manner.

9-The issue of instruction and moral guidance, preparation and curriculum:

If the human element is the capital of any organization, and if the strength of that organization is measured by the solidarity of its ranks, then the issue of instruction and moral guidance tops the list of basic requirements for reaching such a level of unity. The financial, psychological, moral and training aspects of instruction should be thoroughly considered while drafting a curriculum for members to study and follow. The leadership

should use this curriculum to build a strong base, this base will eventually be able to produce a leadership cadre cognizant of its revolutionary jihadist path, and aware of the principles and obstacles associated with its mission, this leadership cadre will be able to mobilize the masses and guide them in the direction of serving the idea and objectives of the revolution

The original jihadists (Students of Marwan Hadeed may Allah have mercy on his soul) were aware of the ramifications of their jihad both on an intellectual and practical levels, their choice of using a small organization contributed largely to the unity and effectiveness of “Attalieaa” in the initial stages of the fight, but the course of events and the influx of new members --after the original members were martyred in battle—filled the ranks with motivated, faithful and daring youthful cadres; however the leadership did not have the resources nor the ability to organize and structure those cadres properly. At the end of the battles most of the survivors moved abroad, but the leaderships there failed to mold, train, educate, and instruct those cadres even though they had the necessary resources and time to accomplish this vital mission. The base members were loyal, obedient, waiting for the right leadership to mold them, yet nothing happened, no curriculum for instruction and moral guidance was put in place, indifference, ignorance and opposing opinions became prevalent, the base membership became a group of enthusiastic youth who lacked ideological strength and with the passing of every day their enthusiasm cooled down, and many of them lost their connection to the cause.

10- The trust crisis:

This crisis was a byproduct of all the problems that piled overtime on all levels, the lack of trust in the initial stages was limited to organizations and groups distrusting each other, but the course of events that culminated in the tragedy of Hamah and the dramatic collapse of “Attalieaa” exposed the leaders (especially the Moslem brotherhood), people stopped trusting each other even among members of the same organization, the bond of trust between the leaderships and bases was broken and lost. The price the enthusiastic youth had to pay for trusting in their leadership was exorbitant; the resulting damage was so severe it made any attempts for rebuilding and reform next to impossible.

At the end of this chapter we would like to state:

This rich experience of the revolutionary armed jihad that Syria and the Moslem organizations in it went through for more than fifteen years, is bigger and greater than solving its problems and learning its lessons in these few pages, it would not be of great benefit to elaborate farther and detail more thoroughly. This book deals with other topics but we decided to put things in this order. There is no doubt in my mind that some sections and paragraphs of this book need to be scrutinized and looked attentively into by those who plan to choose the same path, those experiences were paid for by the dear blood of the mujahideen. What we laid out in this book beginning with the historical briefing of the previous stage including the chronological introduction, then observing those experiences and extracting beneficial examples and lessons from our own perspective is a theory that some people may agree with and others may not, this is normal. We aim in this book to bring forth and prove our convictions that were shaped by living that experience through all its stages and having access to its influential personalities on all levels. And “Allah” provides prosperity.