

Introduction

In the name of the Almighty the Beneficent, the Most Merciful. Praise be to God, the Lord of the Worlds.

The Muslims were never at any time more in need of mutual understanding and unity than they are today. The conspiracies against Islam never were more serious than they are at the present time.

Unfortunately, many Muslim governments have taken a very unholy direction, spreading hatred among Muslims. Unsound and erroneous books and pamphlets were, and still are, distributed among the Muslims, telling lies and hurling numerous accusations against the Shi'ite Muslims while the latter were seemingly unaware of those accusations.

During the centuries following the birth of Islam, many accusations were made to disgrace the followers of the members of the House of the Prophet. However, they never took the shape of the serious and malicious campaign that has taken place during the last six years.

This false and malicious campaign started after the birth of the Islamic Republic in Iran. It seems that some of the Arab governments found the birth of this Republic a threatening danger. This Republic reminds Muslims of the period of the righteous caliphate and makes a clear distinction between the words and the deeds of the Arab governments who claim to be committed to Islam, yet spend the public wealth to satisfy the low desires of the rulers.

These governments tried to extinguish the light of the Islamic Republic by war, but they did not succeed. Therefore, they are trying to deceive the Muslim population and turn them against the Iranian Muslims by fabricating accusations in a sectarian campaign, aiming to convince the innocent Muslims that the Shi'ites have deviated from the path of Islam. Should such a campaign succeed, unsuspecting and unsophisticated Muslims may find it religiously legal to combat the Shi'ites and shed the blood of the Iranians, who have sacrificed for Islam more than any other people.

The Shi'ites have tried for many years to meet this campaign with silence, closing their eyes and hoping that it would come to an end, and that there would be no need to refute the malicious accusations.

It was also hoped that some of the Sunni scholars would try to refute these accusations. There is no

doubt that many Sunni scholars are aware of the Islamic doctrines to which the Shi'ites subscribe. Should they be unaware of the Shi'ite doctrines, it would be very easy to become acquainted with them. There are numerous books written by Shi'ite scholars about those doctrines, and those books are available.

It is possible for the Sunni scholars to call for an Islamic conference in which religious differences may be discussed and an appreciation for each other's viewpoint developed. This is what the Qur'an calls for:

"O you who believe, if a transgressor brings to you news, verify it, lest you inflict damage on people unwittingly; you may consequently regret your hasty action." (49:6)

It is regrettable that the Sunni scholars did not move in this direction and did not try, as far as is known, to refute the untrue accusations which were publicized by the hypocrite campaigners.

Our silence did not stop this campaign. It made it more vehement. Many people thought that our silence is evidence of the truthfulness of the accusations, and that we are unable to answer them.

Thus, it has become necessary to clarify the truth and inform all the Muslims who like to know the truth. In this effort, we shall not accuse the Sunni brothers of disbelief, deviation, or transgression, as some of them have accused the Shi'ites. We shall not place ourselves in such a position, which is improper for any Muslim to take. We obey the Almighty in His prohibition:

"O you who believe, let not a folk ridicule another folk who may be better than they are; nor should women ridicule other women who may be better than them. Neither defame one another nor insult one another by calling names. That is the name of lewdness after faith and whoso turns not in repentance, such are evildoers." (49:11)

It should be pointed out to the reader that those who make these prohibited accusations use a very strange method to indict millions of Muslims whom they do not know, did not see, and with whom they did not speak. They tried and convicted millions of Muslims who lived centuries ago, along with the numerous future Shi'ite generations yet to be born. They have also convicted millions of contemporary Muslims without questioning them and without searching for the truth, which is within easy access to any interested person.

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