

CHAPTER IV
THE OBSTACLES FOR HIZB UT-TAHRIR
IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

The success of the strategies implemented by Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain could become a benchmark that this organization was able to persuade the British public with their ideology. Not only the people of the United Kingdom only, Hizb ut-Tahrir also managed to look for masses to support the motion establishing the *Khilafah Islamiyah* state. Muslims and non-Muslims can unite for one purpose, a political '*Ummah*'. Their efforts in implementing these strategies do not always run smoothly, they also often get constraints meant. Sometimes these barriers can also dismiss the activities of Hizb ut-Tahrir.

According Suharko (2006) in his book entitled *Gerakan Sosial*, obstacles to be faced by the social movement group is divided into two aspects, micro aspects (internal) and macro aspects (external). Based on the data found by the author, the dominant aspect blocking Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain in every movement is a macro aspect. Local authorities and communities are some of the dominant actors working inhibit Hizb ut-Tahrir in the United Kingdom.

A. Governmental Level

The UK government is one of the institutions that hinder the work HTB. Inhibitions of the UK government's efforts are divided into two sections, the negative perception of Government of UK and the action of Government in UK based on their perception.

1. Negative Perception

Hizb ut-Tahrir is a political party whose ideology is Islam. HT belongs to the class of political parties determined to unite the Muslims around the world and incorporated in a system of government with *Khilafah Islamiyah*. They are unite make Islam as a basis for all of their actions, either public or the government. Qur'an and Sunnah will be references to the laws of the state. First their establishment in the UK, HT into Islamic organizations that movements or their activities is not so received more attention by the British government. Reports often submitted to the government for the actions undertaken by HT, as the report submitted by the National Union of Students (NUS) and some other groups against HT. The attitude of the British government was not so eager to prohibit their activity.

In the post WTC attack in 2001, and the US announcement to the world to fight terror, governments in Europe heavily suspect Islamic

organizations in Europe. HT that claims to be Islamic organization or political party Islam perceives it. Hizb ut-Tahrir in UK is constantly suspected by the British government as the perpetrator of terror. On behalf of the fight against terrorism, the British government represented by Tony Blair said that one of their efforts to fight terror is to prohibit religious organization (Islam) such as Hizb ut-Tahrir in UK. However, after an investigation, Hizb ut-Tahrir in UK is not proven to have committed or are involved in the action.⁵⁹

In 2013, Prime Minister David Cameron said he would enforce legal restrictions to HTB. The stance taken by the British government who aggressively suspect indirectly HTB is an effort to inhibit the activity of HT in the UK. If the government continues with stance to join the US to combat terrorism then this could be a major obstacle to the Hizb ut-Tahrir in UK. The negative perception aimed to Hizb ut-Tahrir in UK, makes the step of HTB increasingly small and limited. HTB cannot be an organization that is free to influence the British people about their party ideology. Free in the sense of HTB can move or move without having suspected or observed intensively by the British security services. HTB who claim not a radical Islamic political party that likes to used terror or violence in their actions very disadvantaged by the charge.⁶⁰

Any accusations addressed to Hizb ut-Tahrir in UK by the UK government, has never been proven. But the government's actions or

⁵⁹ *Hizb ut-Tahrir*. www.hopenothate.org.uk/hate-groups/ht/. Accessed on 6th April, 2015.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

attitudes that actively suspect Hizb ut-Tahrir give bad seal to Hizb ut-Tahrir in UK. Hizb ut-Tahrir in UK has been claimed as the 'Group Extremism'.⁶¹

2. The United Kingdom Government Action

In an article released by the official website of Hizb ut-Tahrir Indonesia, entitled "Kekalahan Intelektual Negara Demokrasi Inggris Berusaha Batasi Hizbut Tahrir", was released on July 16, 2013 says that the attempts made or prohibition established by the British Government on the activities of Hizb ut-Tahrir. In the article it is said that Prime Minister David Cameron will enforce legal restrictions to the Hizb ut-Tahrir. This policy emerged because he was worried that Hizb ut-Tahrir still makes campuses in the United Kingdom as a fertile ground for recruiting new members. The law is also designed to limit the activities of Hizb ut-Tahrir. However, because there is no evidence that they were carrying out terrorist activities, the bill dismissed.⁶²

In the article also mentions that⁶³:

“David Cameron is currently considering forming a "Class B" of the "hard-line" group, which would limit their activities and are basically short of an outright ban.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² 2013. *Kekalahan Intelektual Negara Demokrasi Inggris Berusaha Batasi Hizbut Tahrir*. Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia. <http://hizbut-tahrir.or.id/2013/07/16/kekalahan-intelektual-negara-demokrasi-inggris-berusaha-batasi-hizbut-tahrir/>, Accessed on March 16th, 2015.

⁶³ *Opcit.*

Logistics legal construct such a system will be handed over to the new anti-terrorism task force that is better known as "Extremism Task Force" or "Force Officer Extremism" which was formed after the murder of the British army, Lee Rigby in Woolwich in May last. One possible result is the prohibition of Hizb ut-Tahrir will hold meetings in public buildings such as universities, community centers and event space. Security Minister James Brokenshire told lawmakers this week that the Home Office "is committed to address the group's activities in the university campus". He said: "These groups are not free to spread hatred and incite violence as they please. The police have wide powers to take action under the criminal law to deal with those who incite hatred, and they will do it. We will strive to ensure that Hizb ut-Tahrir and groups like it cannot operate without challenge in public places in this country."

In the post 7/7 London bombings, Tony Blair also tried to ban the activities of Hizb ut-Tahrir in Britain. This is evidenced by the statement of Tony Blair in his speech one month after the bombing of the transportation system in London and has killed 56 amidst the optimism soul. On that occasion he announced eleven measures to combat terrorism in the United Kingdom, one of the steps is he going to ban Hizb ut-Tahrir and organizations that succeeded Al Muhajiroun to be and grow in the United Kingdom. On the same occasion he says he wanted to legalize its discretion by forming new legislation.⁶⁴

After the British police or security guards conducted an investigation, facts on the ground stated that the absence of a relationship

⁶⁴ Alifandi, A. (3 Agustus 2008). *Debat Soal Kebijakan Antiterorisme*. http://www.bbc.co.uk/indonesian/programmes/story/2008/08/printable/080803_britishmu_slimstwo.shtml. Accessed on March 17th, 2015.

between Hizb ut-Tahrir involvement with terrorist acts that have occurred. As a result of not finding a legal basis which can be used to prohibit the movement, Hizb ut-Tahrir party can still perform activities. Hizb ut-Tahrir is still alive well in the United Kingdom. However Hizb ut-Tahrir remains as an organization whose activities will continue to be watched closely.

Inayat Bunglawa, spokesman for the Muslim Council of Britain gives his response to the British government's efforts to ban the activities of Hizb ut-Tahrir there. He argued that Hizb ut-Tahrir is not a hard-line group that does terror to get a goal and he is very concerned if the government continues to ban against this group. He does not agree with the agenda of Hizb ut-Tahrir but once again he insists that Hizb ut-Tahrir is not an organization or group of hardline.⁶⁵

In the post 7/7 London bombing the British government has successfully banned the two groups of Muslim organizations, Al-Ghuraba and the Saved Sect. According to the British Home Secretary, the two organizations are considered to have spread hatred of the West and supporting terrorism. The prohibitions against this group are considered closely related to terrorism and supporting terrorist. Because of it the government's attitude will not tolerate acts of violence immediately or it can be said that they do not support terrorism in the United Kingdom and

⁶⁵ Magdalena. (2006). *Aktivist Muslim Inggris Kritik Larangan Terhadap Organisasi Islam*, <http://www.eramuslim.com/berita/dunia-islam/aktivis-muslim-inggris-kritik-larangan-terhadap-organisasi-islam.htm>. Era Muslim: Media Islam Rujukan. Accessed on March 25th, 2015.

in other countries. It should continue to be fought until peace can envelop the world.⁶⁶

Some Muslim activists also give their opinion about the prohibition performed by British Home Secretary's office. They assess that government policy prohibits deemed radical Islamic organizations are not effective for combating terrorism in the United Kingdom. This policy is considered as negative points which can damage the British government's adoption of democracy. Inayat Bunglawa also argued that the government's actions will only lead to and increase Islamophobia. The policy may also indicate that Britain is a country whose government was very authoritarian and not a democratic government.⁶⁷

Responding to accusations addressed to Hizb ut-Tahrir, they assume that the British government's actions are form of government defeat against this motion. Hizb ut-Tahrir claimed their methodology to establish an Islamic state is not through armed struggle but by winning public opinion.

B. Societal Level

Besides the government, Hizb ut-Tahrir in UK also get some obstacles in the social scope Islamophobia remains an issue to be able to inhibit the movement of Hizb ut-Tahrir in UK. Islamophobia is perceived

⁶⁶ *Ibid*

⁶⁷ *Ibid*

by the West to give effect to the Hizb ut-Tahrir in UK, namely discrimination in the organization so that Hizb ut-Tahrir in UK often gets restrictions on their activities.

1. Islamophobia in the United Kingdom

Islamophobia has become increasingly apparent after the WTC attack on September 11, 2001. The West declared loud and show hatred towards Islam. Islamophobia is increasing in Europe, as evidenced by the increasing discrimination by Muslim communities in Europe. This is justified by the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC) through its report entitled "Summary Report on Islamophobia in the EU after 11 September 2001".⁶⁸

In the UK, a country that upholds democracy, also talkative about affects the WTC attack. Islamophobia occurs in every circle, government and society. They are indoctrinated that Islamic terror as the cause of all that is in Europe and it becomes an obligation for them to fight. Islamophobia in the UK evidenced by the many Muslims who discredited religious rights cannot even meet. One example is the Muslim students who are prohibited from using the hijab as an obligation of a Muslim in

⁶⁸ Asy'ari D.A. (2011). *Menjawab Sikap Islamophobia*.
<http://eprints.umm.ac.id/434/1/011.pdf>. Accessed on April 8th, 2015.

religion. Islam has always been associated with violence such as terrorism and suicide bombings.⁶⁹

European countries consider Islam as a religion of violence and terror. Argument was used as the basis of their attitudes to discriminate against the rights of the community and the Muslim community there. Suspicion toward Islam automatically gives impact to the Muslim communities (organizations and political parties). Hizb ut-Tahrir as an organization that is active in UK feel the impact of Islamophobia. Not only Hizb ut-Tahrir, other organizations such as al-Muhajiroun also feel the impacts of Islamophobia. Al-Muhajiroun has been banned in UK because it is proven to have links with al-Qaeda.⁷⁰

Based on the negative perception, the UK government tried to find ways to ban on the activities of Hizb ut-Tahrir in UK. As described at the levels of government barriers. The UK Government often takes action to prohibit Hizb ut-Tahrir in UK by trying to create legal policy. Islamophobia managed to be a major obstacle to the Hizb ut-Tahrir in UK. Some of the obstacles are in the form of discrimination in the space organization and some restrictions on the majority community.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

UK against UK democratic politics in terms of the war in Iraq and said as Trojan Horse, which is regarded as a political opponent.⁷²

There are some facts that show the discrimination is exist of Islamic organizations that are in the UK, such as Hizb ut-Tahrir in UK. Hizb ut-Tahrir in UK is often linked with events or unpleasant incident that occurred in UK, such as the London bombings. Local media often presents news about the government's argument about the perpetrator (who is suspected Hizb ut-Tahrir in UK) of the event, so that people who read, hear and see as if indoctrinated with the government's argument. The commitment of this government certainly adversely affected the fairness Hizb ut-Tahrir in UK. Nevertheless, Islamic organizations like Hizb ut-Tahrir in UK who were there as well as the youth of Islam, they volunteered to take over the response to difficult problems that are common in communities like crime with sharp weapons, violence, until forbidden drugs. It is with those willing to do on the basis of their commitment to uphold a sense of nationalism as a citizen who is also recommended in Islam as a form of devotion as good citizens.⁷³

As we know, not only the Muslim community in the UK, but of course there are also communities of other faiths are equally assist the government, for example in terms of helping solve crimes that are common in society. But in this case, there is still a distinction earned by the Muslim community in the UK. Despite what is in the same lane. Surely

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ *Ibid.*

it is considered very unnatural even unfair to the Islamic community imposed by the stigma that what Muslims are doing this as a form of covert activities / underground, which can be divisive and centered on a particular stream, while other communities, in terms of this is Christian community, free from the assumption though both groups are doing the same thing.⁷⁴

Even more painful, Muslim organizations such as HTB, is regarded as a false idea that their loyalty is part of a secret movement / underground and undermine the unity and social cohesion. Increasingly clear that the government has failed to generalize the rights between the Islamic community and the community spread of Christianity. Stigmatization is a complicated part of discrimination. Discrimination is certainly very detrimental to both individuals and groups, as described previously. Loss of rights and services that should be accepted of course cannot be felt and enjoyed reasonably for a community of Muslims.⁷⁵

Behind all the differences perceived by the community or the Muslim organization, certainly will not escape and definitely go back to the main line in a central policy of the government as a barometer of government. In facts, in this case the government to follow the flow of the game from the Policy Exchange. In this case even though there are those who oppose this discrimination reality, nonetheless, in a political sphere,

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

there are those who do have the power to influence others so that those affected would be integrate with those who support this policy painful.⁷⁶

Even slanders are pinned on Hizb ut-Tahrir in UK who claimed to be a Muslim organization that can be said of there are as the forefront of defending the rights of Muslims. There is not free from pollution is getting worse than the government's influential politicians, think-tanks and even members of the media. It is unfortunate if the Islamic organization dropped its name, while on the other hand there is a group of non-Muslims but did not receive the same treatment. HTB is often regarded as an extremist, radical and fundamental.⁷⁷

So the core of the existence of discrimination received by Hizb ut-Tahrir in UK is facts in which policies are made increasingly marginalizing Muslim groups, whether it a fact of legal discrimination against UK citizens who are Muslims. Existing policies have shown the gap between non-Muslims and Muslims there. This makes the religious minority, the Muslims became increasingly cornered.

3. Rejection from the Student Movements: National Union of Students (NUS)

National Union of Students is student associations that exist in some countries, but in United Kingdom begins after the 16-th century.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

This association is an association of young students who are also representatives of the students themselves. National Union of Students are also involved in education and training. Their mission is to promote, maintain and develop the rights of students. Later, they also have a mission that is to develop and defend the strength of the student association itself.⁷⁸

Besides the government, Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain also get more attention from the National Union of Students. In 1995, NUS published a survey on request Campus Watch, a 24-hour hotline set up in conjunction with the anti-fascist organization Searchlight. The results obtained are more than 70% of complaints about Hizb ut-Tahrir in UK activism toward Jews, Hindus and homosexuals. Together with Association of University Teachers, they both requested the Department for Education and Employment and the Home Office to ban Hizb ut-Tahrir. NUS consider Hizb ut-Tahrir in UK as the greatest single threat of extremism in the UK at that time. As an association whose mission is to fight for the rights of students, the presence of Hizb ut-Tahrir in UK can threaten the rights possessed by students belonging to this association.

National Union of Students actively supervises the activities of Hizb ut-Tahrir starts from the beginning of the presence of Hizb ut-Tahrir in United Kingdom. When the Hizb ut-Tahrir was began expanding their organization to attract students of United Kingdom to join their

⁷⁸ *Articles of Governance & Rules: National Union of Students (United Kingdom)*, http://www.theyworkforstudents.co.uk/uploads/6/2/1/0/6210998/nus_constitution_08_11.pdf. Accessed on March 29th, 2015. Page 4.

organization. Businesses that they do to attract the attention of the student is to convince students through a war of ideas. War thinking secretly gives to the student by Hizb ut-Tahrir. They often hold debates and discussions on campuses in UK, systems and policies made by the West and indirectly also thought Hizb ut-Tahrir infiltrated into the discussion and debate.

Seeing this, the National Union of Students feel disturbed with the Hizb ut-Tahrir which are considered to have thought of fascist and racist. Hizb ut-Tahrir ultimately belongs to an organization that is prohibited by the National Union of Students. National Union of Students has a policy known as 'National Union of Students no-platform policy'. This policy is used as a legal basis to ban Hizb ut-Tahrir activity exists and is develop in United Kingdom campuses. This policy also makes it clear that they do not give place to the Hizb ut-Tahrir to attend and speak (to debate and discussion) at a conference conducted by the National Union of Students.⁷⁹

Omar Bakri Muhammad, the ex-leader of Hizb ut-Tahrir in UK provides feedback regarding the ban conducted by NUS. He believes that Hizb ut-Tahrir in UK must convince the public about the new way of life. New way of life offered by Hizb ut-Tahrir is to apply the teachings of Islam in all aspects of life. They struggle to change society. However HTB get a negative response when they held a debate on campus, they are said

⁷⁹ *Opcit, page 4-5.*

to be fundamentalists. It is a form of intellectual battle between Islam and the West.⁸⁰

No-platform policy is applied to individuals, members of organizations and groups that are identified by the National Union of Students having racist and fascist views. In addition to Hizb ut-Tahrir, the National Union of Students also prohibits some organizations such as Al-Muhajiroun, the British National Party, English Defense League, and the Muslim Public Affairs.⁸¹

⁸⁰ Lebor, A. (2009). *Pergulatan Muslim di Barat: Antara Identitas dan Integrasi*.

Bandung: PT. Mizan Pustaka. Page 179.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*