



## Islam and Democracy In Modern Indonesia: The Role of Al Washliyah in the 1955 Elections

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### ABSTRACT

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*This article examines the role of Al Washliyah, an Islamic organization founded in Medan during the early 20th century, in the 1955 Indonesian election. This study is library research with an historical approach, drawing data from primary sources such as organizational documents and secondary sources like expert research findings. The significance of this study lies in its novel exploration of a previously unaddressed topic by researchers. This study argues that during the Old Order era, Al Washliyah accepted the concept and implementation of elections with the aim to advocate Islam as the foundation of the state. Consequently, Al Washliyah strongly supported the Masjumi Party and secured a distinctive membership within this Islamic party. Additionally, Al Washliyah engaged in political education, actively conducting training sessions in preparation for the general elections. The organization's endeavors played a pivotal role in contributing to the Masjumi Party's substantial electoral success in North Sumatra. Notably, some of its prominent figures successfully secured positions in the Constituent Assembly and the House of Representatives in Jakarta. Their involvement facilitated national-level discussions on the foundational underpinnings of the state.*

### ABSTRAK

#### Kata Kunci:

*Al Washliyah,  
Demokrasi,  
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*Artikel ini mengkaji peran Al Washliyah, salah satu organisasi Islam yang didirikan di Medan pada awal abad ke-20, dalam pemilu Indonesia tahun 1955. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian kepustakaan dengan pendekatan historis, yang mengambil data dari sumber-sumber primer seperti dokumen-dokumen organisasi dan sumber-sumber sekunder seperti hasil-hasil penelitian para ahli. Signifikansi dari penelitian ini terletak pada eksplorasi baru terhadap topik yang sebelumnya belum pernah dibahas oleh para peneliti. Penelitian ini berargumen bahwa pada masa Orde Lama, Al Washliyah menerima konsep dan pelaksanaan pemilu dengan tujuan untuk mengadvokasi Islam sebagai dasar negara. Oleh karena itu, Al Washliyah sangat mendukung Partai Masyumi dan mendapatkan keanggotaan yang khas dalam partai Islam ini. Selain itu, Al Washliyah juga terlibat dalam pendidikan politik, secara aktif melakukan sesi pelatihan dalam persiapan pemilihan umum. Upaya organisasi ini memainkan peran penting dalam memberikan kontribusi terhadap keberhasilan pemilihan umum Partai Masjumi di Sumatera Utara. Beberapa tokohnya yang terkemuka berhasil mendapatkan posisi di Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat dan Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat di Jakarta. Keterlibatan mereka memfasilitasi diskusi di tingkat nasional tentang dasar-dasar negara.*



## INTRODUCTION

In his article "Islam and Democracy," Hugh Goddard<sup>1</sup> has expressed four opinions about the relationship between Islam and democracy. First, "democracy is anathema to Islam." This opinion can be seen in the works of Sayyid Quthb. Second, "Islam is incompatible with democracy." This opinion can be found in the works of Abu al-A'la al-Maududi. Third, "Islam and democracy are compatible." This opinion can be found in the work of 'Abbas Mahmud 'Aqqad entitled *al-Dimuqratiyya fî al-Islâm*. Fourth, "Islam demands democracy." This opinion can be found in the thoughts of Bassam Tibi and Fatima Mernissi. This finding is somewhat like Muhammad Iqbal's explanation that there are different expert opinions about Islam and democracy, (1) democracy is identical to shura, (2) democracy is contrary to shura, and (3) democracy and shura have similarities and differences.<sup>2</sup> The two expert opinions above show that there is a diversity of views about the relationship between Islam and democracy.

In the Indonesian context, various Islamic thinkers exhibit differing opinions regarding the relationship between Islam and democracy. On a global scale, Masykuri Abdillah<sup>3</sup> highlights that "Muslim intellectuals in Indonesia support democracy procedurally and organizationally, rather than philosophically, as they predominantly recognize sharia's preeminence as the normative basis for Muslim life in society and the state." Their concept of democracy diverges from liberal democracy, and democracy's implementation within Islam is permissible if it doesn't conflict with divine mandates. In a more detailed analysis, Masdar Hilmy<sup>4</sup> identifies three prevailing perspectives among Indonesian Muslim thinkers concerning Islam's connection with democracy: (1) the liberal approach, which identifies fundamental democratic elements in Islam; (2) the meliorist approach, marked by ambivalence in addressing the Islam-democracy relationship, straddling acceptance, and rejection; and (3) the utopian approach, wherein some categorically reject

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<sup>1</sup> Hugh Goddard, "Hugh Goddard," *The Political Quarterly* (2022), <https://www.academia.edu/download/56659628/1467-923x.0043520180526-12042-18fjysq.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> Muhammad Iqbal, *Fiqh Siyasah* (Jakarta: Prenada, 2014), 214.

<sup>3</sup> Masykuri Abdillah, *Islam Dan Demokrasi: Respons Intelektual Muslim Indonesia Terhadap Konsep Demokrasi 1966-1993* (Jakarta: Kencana, 2015), 300.

<sup>4</sup> Masdar Hilmy, *Teologi Perlawanan: Islamisme Dan Diskursus Demokrasi Di Indonesia Pasca Orde Baru* (Yogyakarta: Kanisius, 2009), 132-149.

democracy due to its non-Muslim origins. In other terms, Masdar Hilmy<sup>5</sup> unveils three distinct approaches in Indonesia's discourse on Islam and democracy: the Huwaydian approach, asserting compatibility between Islam and democracy; the Mawdudian approach, situated ambiguously between acceptance and rejection of democracy; and the Qutbian approach, asserting that democracy fundamentally contradicts Islam. However, as Michael Buehler asserts, the interplay between Islam and democracy in Indonesia is less intricate. He stated, "Islam and democracy are said to be in a relationship fraught with problems as the former, allegedly, does not allow secular law to be put above divine law or accept the legitimacy of worldly authorities. This relationship is less problematic in Indonesia, a democratic Muslim-majority country."<sup>6</sup> Thus, the perspectives of Indonesian Muslim thinkers regarding the nexus of Islam and democracy exhibit notable diversity.

In the context of mass organizations, Islamic organizations in Indonesia are known to have either accepted or rejected the democratic system. Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI) is an organization that explicitly rejects the democratic system,<sup>7</sup> which led to its ban in Indonesia.<sup>8</sup> Meanwhile, Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah are prime examples of mainstream Islamic organizations that actively encourage the democratization process in Indonesia.<sup>9</sup> Many researchers have focused their attention on these two largest Islamic organizations in Indonesia. However, studies on the attitudes of Islamic organizations outside of NU and Muhammadiyah towards democracy have not received as much scholarly

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<sup>5</sup> Masdar Hilmy, "Muslims' Approaches to Democracy: Islam and Democracy in Contemporary Indonesia," *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 1, no. 1 (2007): 42–74, <http://dx.doi.org/10.15642/JIIS.2007.1.1.42-74>.

<sup>6</sup> Michael Buehler, "Islam and Democracy in Indonesia," *Insight Turkey* 11, no. 2 (2009): 51–33, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26331108>.

<sup>7</sup> Masdar Hilmy, "Manufacturing the 'Pntological Enemy': Socio-Political Construction of Anti-Democracy Discourses among HTI Activists in Post-New Order Indonesia," *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 3, no. 2 (2009): 341–369, <http://dx.doi.org/10.15642/JIIS.2009.3.2.341-369>; Masdar Hilmy, "Akar-Akar Transnasionalisme Islam Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI)," *ISLAMICA: Jurnal Studi Keislaman* 2, no. 1 (2011): 1–13, <https://islamica.uinsby.ac.id/index.php/islamica/article/view/117>; Ali Maksum, "Discourses on Islam and Democracy in Indonesia: A Study on the Intellectual Debate between Liberal Islam Network (JIL) and Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI)," *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 11, no. 2 (2017): 405–422, <http://dx.doi.org/10.15642/JIIS.2017.11.2.405-422>.

<sup>8</sup> Mohammad Taufiq Rahman, "Post-Prohibition Da'wah of Hizb Ut-Tahrir Indonesia and Islamic Defenders Front," *Ilmu Dakwah* 17, no. 1 (2023): 79–100, <https://doi.org/10.15575/idajhs.v17i1.24201>; Masdar Hilmy, "The Rise and Fall of 'Transnational' Islam in Indonesia," in *Rising Islamic Conservatism in Indonesia: Islamic Groups and Identity Politics*, ed. Alexander R. Arifianto Leonard C. Sebastian, Syafiq Hasyim (London and New York: Routledge, 2021), 133–145.

<sup>9</sup> Gustav Brown, "Civic Islam: Muhammadiyah, NU and the Organisational Logic of Consensus-Making in Indonesia," *Asian Studies Review* 43, no. 3 (2019), <https://doi.org/10.1080/10357823.2019.1626802>; Suaidi Asyari, *Nalar Politik NU & Muhammadiyah: Over Crossing Java Sentris* (Yogyakarta: LKiS, 2009).

attention. Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah, an Islamic organization founded by several students in Medan in the early 20th century, stands as one of the Islamic organizations that continues to be overlooked by researchers. This organization has not been thoroughly studied despite its significant following in North Sumatra. Exploring Al Washliyah's role in upholding democracy proves to be intriguing. This study could shed light on Al Washliyah's position in the discourse surrounding Islam and democracy.

## METHOD

This study is library research with a historical approach. This study is library research because the data is obtained from literature in the form of archives, books, articles, dictionaries, encyclopedias, and photographs. Mestika Zed's<sup>10</sup> library research method will be applied in this study. Then, the historical approach is used considering this research topic is a political event in the past. This study examines the role of Al Washliyah in the 1955 general election. Kuntowijoyo's<sup>11</sup> historical research model will be consistently utilized in the historiography process. The main data sources of this research are the documents of the Al Washliyah organization. Secondary data sources in this research are books and journal articles written by experts on the research topic. The research data is analyzed using the content analysis method. This study argues that Al Washliyah trived for Islam as the basis of the state during the Old Order era, where the organization later became a privileged member of the Masjumi Party until the party was dissolved. They were very active in national and practical politics before and after the 1955 elections, and some even became members of the Constituent Assembly and the House of Representatives. This also shows that Al Washliyah accepts the electoral system and is not at all anti the electoral pattern that applies in a democratic country. However, Al Washliyah still recognizes the supremacy of Islamic law over democracy, and this organization fights for Islam through the electoral system, although in the next era, Al Washliyah finally accepted Pancasila as the basis of the state, and did not conflict between Islam and Pancasila, that Pancasila did not conflict with Islam.

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<sup>10</sup> Mestika Zed, *Metode Penelitian Kepustakaan* (Jakarta: Yayasan Pustaka Obor Indonesia, 2018).

<sup>11</sup> Kuntowijoyo, *Pengantar Ilmu Sejarah* (Medan: Tiara Wacana, 2013).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### A Brief History of Al Washliyah

Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah (or Al Washliyah) is a mainstream Islamic organization in Indonesia, hence it is a moderate Islamic organization.<sup>12</sup> The organization was established in Medan on 9 Rajab 1349/30 November 1930<sup>13</sup> by religious students from Mandailing ethnicity.<sup>14</sup> Among them were Ismail Banda, Abdurrahman Sjihab, M. Arsjad Th. Lubis, Yusuf Ahmad Lubis,<sup>15</sup> and Adnan Nur Lubis.<sup>16</sup> All these students, except M. Arsjad Th. Lubis,<sup>17</sup> had studied formally at the Maktab Islamiyah Tapanuli (MIT) led by Shaykh Muhammad Yunus,<sup>18</sup> a student of Shaykh 'Abd al-Qadir al-Mandili in Makkah in the early 20th century.<sup>19</sup> All these religious students were also students at Madrasah al-Hasaniyah led by Shaykh Hasan Ma'sum,<sup>20</sup> a student of Shaykh Ahmad Khatib al-Minangkabawi at the Masjidilharam.<sup>21</sup> Both of their teachers were scholars who adhered to the Sunni school of thought (Ash'ariyah<sup>22</sup> and Shafi'iyah<sup>23</sup>). Thus, Al Washliyah connected with the religious views that developed in Haramain in the early 20th century.

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<sup>12</sup> Mhd Syahnan and Ja'far Ja'far, "Examining Religious Moderation Of The Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah Fatwa Council," *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 15, no. 1 (2021); Mhd. Syahnan, Ja'far Ja'far, and Muhammad Iqbal, "Ulama and Radicalism in Contemporary Indonesia: Response of Al Washliyah's Ulama on Radicalism," *Ahkam: Jurnal Ilmu Syariah* 21, no. 1 (2021).

<sup>13</sup> Pengeroes Besar Al Djamijatoel Washlijah, "Keringkasan Riwayat Hasil Dan Oesaha Pekerjiaan Al Djamijatoel Washlijah Selama 5 Taheen Moelai Tanggal 30 November 1930- 30-11-1935," *Medan Islam*, 1936.

<sup>14</sup> Ja'far Ja'far et al., "Discovering the Legacy of Mandailing Ulama: Education, Intellectuals, and Politics in North Sumatra in the Early 20th Century," *Ulumuna: Journal of Islamic Studies* 26, no. 2 (2022): 296-336.

<sup>15</sup> Ja'far Ja'far, *Jejak Sang Bintang: Sketsa Biografis Syekh Hasan Ma'sum H. Ismail Banda, H. Abdurrahman Sjihab H.M. Arsjad Th. Lubis & H. Yusuf Ahmad Lubis*, ed. Ismed Batubara (Medan: Centre For Al Washliyah Studies (Pusat Kajian Al Washliyah), 2022).

<sup>16</sup> Ja'far Ja'far, *Citra Al Washliyah: Histori, Moderasi Dan Jihad Untuk NKRI* (Medan: Centre For Al Washliyah Studies (Pusat Kajian Al Washliyah), 2022).

<sup>17</sup> Ja'far Ja'far, "Peran M. Arsjad Th. Lubis Dalam Pengembangan Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman," *Dialogia: Jurnal Studi Islam dan Sosial* 18, no. 2 (2020).

<sup>18</sup> Hasan Asari and Muaz Tanjung, "History of Maktab Al-Islamiyah Tapanuli," *Heritage of Nusantara: International Journal of Religious Literature and Heritage* 8, no. 2 (2019); Muaz Tanjung, *Maktab Islamiyah Tapanuli 1918-1942: Menelusuri Sejarah Pendidikan Islam Awal Abad Ke20 Di Medan* (Medan: IAIN Press, 2012).

<sup>19</sup> Mhd. Syahnan, Asrul Asrul, and Ja'far Ja'far, "Intellectual Network of Mandailing and Haramayn Muslim Scholars in the Mid-19th and Early 20th Century," *TEOSOFI: Jurnal Tasawuf dan Pemikiran Islam* 9, no. 2 (December 1, 2019): 257-281.

<sup>20</sup> Matu Mona, *Riwayat Penghidoepan Al-Fadhil Toe'an Sjech Hasan Ma'soem: Biografie Sedjak Ketjil Sampai Wafatnya* (Medan: Syarikat Tapanoeli, n.d.).

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Ja'far Ja'far, "Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah Dan Pelestarian Akidah Ahl Sunnah Wa Al-Jama'ah Di Indonesia," *ISLAMICA: Jurnal Studi Keislaman* 14, no. 1 (2019).

<sup>23</sup> Ja'far Ja'far, "Peran Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah Dalam Merevitalisasi Madhhab Shafi'i Di Era Kontemporer," *Justicia Islamica: Jurnal Kajian Hukum dan Sosial* 13, no. 1 (2016).

The first objectives of Al Washliyah were promoted, prioritize, and increase the spread of Islam.<sup>24</sup> When it was first established, the founders of this organization wanted to hold a library, open educational institutions, conduct Islamic preaching activities, publish magazines, and answer religious problems, in addition to connecting fellow Muslims. Al Washliyah later became a large organization. Starting from Medan City, this organization then developed outside Medan, even outside North Sumatra Province, especially Aceh and Riau. Until 1955, the activities of this organization included the fields of education, social, preaching and broadcasting Islam, publishing (books and magazines), and Islamic studies, even politics.<sup>25</sup> This organization also received support from various groups, and later built organizations for adult women, young women, and young men. The number of Al Washliyah educational institutions in 1956 was 667 units consisting of madrasas and schools and had 700 teachers and 70 thousand students.<sup>26</sup> Al Washliyah then became an influential organization in East Sumatra.

Al Washliyah, thus, is an organization founded by ulamas.<sup>27</sup> The ulamas who founded Al Washliyah have contributed to various aspects of people's lives, ranging from religious,<sup>28</sup> intellectual,<sup>29</sup> seducational,<sup>30</sup> da'wah (Islamic preaching), social, and even political. Al Washliyah is not a political organization, but its ulamas pay attention to political issues. They not only have political views, but also even involve themselves in practical political activities. They once supported the Masjumi Party, and later the Indonesian Muslimin

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<sup>24</sup> Udin Sjamsuddin, *Chutbah Pengurus Besar Memperingati Ulang Tahun Al Djamijatul Washlijah Seperempat Abad 30 November 1930-30 November 1955* (Medan: Pengurus Besar Al Djamijatul Washlijah, 1955).

<sup>25</sup> Chalidjah Hasanuddin, *Al-Jamiyatul Washliyah 1930-1942 : Api Dalam Sekam Di Sumatera Timur* (Bandung: Pustaka, 1988).

<sup>26</sup> Pengurus Besar Al Djamijatul Washlijah, "Madjlis Pendidikan, Pengadjaran Dan Kebudajaan," in *Peringatan Al Djamijatul Washlijah ¼ Abad 30 Nopember 1930-30 Nopember 1955*, ed. Nukman Sulaiman (Medan: Pengurus Besar Al Djamijatul Washlijah, 1956).

<sup>27</sup> Ja'far Ja'far, *Tradisi Intelektual Al Washliyah: Biografi Ulama Kharismatik Dan Tradisi Keulamaan* (Medan: Perdana Publishing and CAS, 2015); Ja'far Ja'far, "Al Washliyah Benteng Tradisi Sunni Sumut," *Waspada*, December 1, 2012.

<sup>28</sup> Dewan Fatwa Al Washliyah, *Keputusan-Keputusan Dewan Fatwa Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah 1930-2020*, ed. Ja'far Ja'far, Imam Yazid, and Irwansyah Irwansyah (Medan: Perdana Publishing and Dewan Fatwa Al Washliyah, 2020); Ja'far Ja'far, *Dewan Fatwa Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah*, ed. Imam Yazid and Irwansyah Irwansyah (Medan: Perdana Publishing and Dewan Fatwa Al Washliyah, 2020).

<sup>29</sup> Ja'far Ja'far, "Ulama, Al Washliyah and Knowledge in Modern Indonesia (1930-1980)," *MIQOT: Jurnal Ilmu-ilmu Keislaman* 46, no. 2 (2022): 235-256; Ja'far Ja'far, "Peran Ulama Al Washliyah Dalam Pengembangan Ilmu Agama," *Islamijah: Journal of Islamic Social Sciences* 2, no. 1 (February 24, 2021): 16, <http://jurnal.uinsu.ac.id/index.php/islamijah/article/view/11291>.

<sup>30</sup> Dja'far Siddik and Rosnita Rosnita, "Gerakan Pendidikan Al-Washliyah Di Sumatera Utara," *Ulumuna: Journal of Islamic Studies* 18, no. 1 (2014): 59-80.

Party (Parmusi).<sup>31</sup> Before the Masjumi Party was formalized, some of them, especially Abdurrahman Sjihab, supported and developed the Partai Majelis Islam Tinggi in East Sumatra. All of this they did was to strengthen the Shafi'iyah and Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah traditions in Indonesia, where they indirectly promoted and wanted to implement moderate Islam in Indonesia.

Experts have given mixed comments about Al Washliyah. Not a few experts assess this organization as a traditional Islamic organization in Indonesia. Deliar Noer stated Al Washliyah as a traditional Muslim organization.<sup>32</sup> Similarly, Anthony Reid stated that “*despite its traditional beginnings and predominantly rural support the very success of Jamiatul Washliyah as an organization of national type gave it common interests with Muhammadiyah.*”<sup>33</sup> It is possible that this organization is a sectarian Islamic organization, as B.J. Bolland<sup>34</sup> stated that Al Washliyah is a very orthodox Shafi'i association. In contrast, according to R. William Liddle,<sup>35</sup> Al Washliyah is a modernist Islamic organization dedicated to social affairs and the largest Muslim education in East Sumatra, and helped seize and defend Indonesian independence, as Kevin W. Fogg<sup>36</sup> stated “In North Sumatra, the Jamiyatul Washliyah organization also went above and beyond in supporting the cause of the revolution, even to the point where one decree proclaimed that “Anyone who is a traitor to their homeland, their blood is halal”. It's clearly, by the beginning of Indonesian independence, Al Washliyah had become an influential Islamic organization in North Sumatra with a significant and fanatical following. Al Washliyah later decided to become a privileged member of the Masjumi Party.

### **Al Washliyah and Democracy in the Old Order Era**

Since 1941, according to Anthony Reid,<sup>37</sup> Al Washliyah has been the largest religious organization in East Sumatra with 12,500 students and 242 schools and madrasas. Al Washliyah, Reid said, “the very success of Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah as an organization of national type,” or has successfully become an

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<sup>31</sup> Ja'far Ja'far, “Pemikiran Politik Islamisme Moderat Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah,” *Al-A'raf: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam dan Filsafat* 16, no. 2 (2019).

<sup>32</sup> Deliar Noer, “Contemporary Political Dimension of Islam,” in *Islam in South-East Asia*, ed. M.B. Hooker (Leiden: Brill, 1988), 186.

<sup>33</sup> Anthony Reid, *The Blood of the People: Revolution and the End of Traditional Rule in Northern Sumatra* (Hawaii: University of Hawaii Press, 2014), 75-76.

<sup>34</sup> B.J. Bolland, *The Struggle of Islam in Modern Indonesia* (Springer Netherlands, 2013), 75.

<sup>35</sup> William R Liddle, “Ethnicity and Political Organization: Three East Sumatran Cases,” in *Culture and Politics in Indonesia*, ed. Claire Holt (Jakarta: Equinox Pub., n.d.), 163, 337.

<sup>36</sup> Kevin W. Fogg, *Indonesia's Islamic Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 58.

<sup>37</sup> Reid, *The Blood of the People: Revolution and the End of Traditional Rule in Northern Sumatra*, 75-75.

organization of national type. As an influential Islamic organization, Al Washliyah, especially its leaders, began to take a role not only in the religious field, but also in the social and political fields. For this reason, before the 1955 general election was held, Al Washliyah as an organization decided to become a special member of the Masjumi Party, even though its leaders had already been in practical politics. It is not very clear when Al Washliyah officially became a special member of the Masjumi Party. Deliar Noer stated that Al Washliyah became a special member of the Masjumi Party after Yogyakarta and Sumatra's relationship was politically restored in 1947.<sup>38</sup> The decision of the 6<sup>th</sup> Al Washliyah Congress in 1947 did not mention Al Washliyah's position in the political field at all, but the organization was still focused on maintaining Indonesian independence. Likewise, Al Washliyah's support for the Masjumi Party was not found in the decision of the 7<sup>th</sup> Al Washliyah Congress in 1950. Al Washliyah's support for the Masjumi Party appeared in the decision of the 8<sup>th</sup> Al Washliyah Congress in 1952 that "Al Washliyah remains a special member of the Masjumi Party".<sup>39</sup>

Nonetheless, other sources have informed us that since December 1945, Abdurrahman Sjihab had been in communication with various figures in West Sumatra who later founded the Majelis Islam Tinggi (MIT) Party, and its party later joined the Masjumi Party in 1946. Since then, Abdurrahman Sjihab has officially become a Masjumi Party politician.<sup>40</sup> On the other hand, according to Busyairi's,<sup>41</sup> Udin Sjamsuddin had also become the leader of Masjumi Sumatra with M. Yunan Nasution, and Mawardi Noor. Thus, it seems that Al Washliyah leaders first became Masjumi Party politicians, then perhaps they later led the Al Washliyah organization to become special members of the Masjumi Party.

Of course, there are reasons why Al Washliyah as an influential Islamic organization in East Sumatra supported and became a special member of the Masjumi Party. There were four reasons why Al Washliyah supported the Masjumi Party. First, Al Washliyah's ulama had good relations with Islamic leaders on the national stage. Second, Al Washliyah respected the decision of the Muslim Congress in Yogyakarta, November 7-8, 1945. Third, Al Washliyah and the Masjumi Party have similar ideologies and ideals. Fourth, the meaning

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<sup>38</sup> Deliar Noer, *Partai Islam Di Pentas Nasional* (Jakarta: Grafiti Press, 1987), 49.

<sup>39</sup> Pengurus Besar Al Djamijatul Washlijah, *Peringatan Al Djamijatul Washlijah ¼ Abad* (Medan: Pengurus Besar Al Djamijatul Washlijah, 1955), 427-429.

<sup>40</sup> Ja'far Ja'far, *Sang Ulama Pemimpin: Biografi Abdurrahman Sjihab* (Medan: Perdana Publishing and CAS, 2021), 129-132.

<sup>41</sup> Badruzzaman Busyairi, *Catatan Perjuangan H.M. Yunan Nasution* (Jakarta: Pustaka Panjimas, 1985), 195-196.



of Al Washliyah is a linking organization, therefore it supports the Masjumi Party which was decided as a forum for the political aspirations of Muslims in Indonesia in the Old Order era. Udin Sjamsuddin, an Al Washliyah figure in the Masjumi Party, stated that Masjumi was a forum for the struggle of Muslims in Indonesia and aimed to unite Muslims and not divide them.<sup>42</sup>

Among the logical reasons Al Washliyah supported the Masjumi Party was the similarity in ideology and ideals. In this era, Al Washliyah's goal was "to implement the demands of Islam towards the happiness of life in this world and the hereafter".<sup>43</sup> For Al Washliyah ulama like Nukman Sulaiman, Islam addressed social, economic, and even political issues. Therefore, Al Washliyah also fought for Islam in the political field. Al Washliyah, in essence, wanted Islam to be the basis of the state in Indonesia. M. Arsjad Th. Lubis<sup>44</sup> stated that the ideals of Islam include the political field and the field of development (education, universities, tabligh and recitation, publishing books and magazines, and broadcasting Islam). The victory of Muslims in Indonesia is highly dependent on the above two fields: politics and development. Adnan Lubis has also specifically written some papers on the existence and urgency of an Islamic state. This concept is also found in the Articles of Association (*Anggaran Dasar*) of the Al Washliyah Youth Movement (*Gerakan Pemuda Al Washliyah* or GPA) where it is stated that among the efforts of the GPA is "to elevate and prepare Islamic youth to fight for the achievement of a divinely blessed state".<sup>45</sup> *Tafsir Anggaran Dasar Gerakan Pemuda Al Washliyah* stated that the GPA strives so that Islam can be implemented and become a provision in the Republic of Indonesia. GPA considers that "Islamic law and the state cannot be separated".<sup>46</sup> Thus, Al Washliyah does not contradict Islam and politics or Islam and the state.

Thus, in the Old Order era, Al Washliyah aspired for Islam to become the basis of the state. Al Washliyah does not separate the affairs of Islam and politics or also Islam and the state. For this reason, Al Washliyah ulama have helped

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<sup>42</sup> Udin Sjamsuddin, *Chutbah Pengurus Besar Memperingati Ulang Tahun Al-Djam'ijatul Washlijah Seperempat Abad (30 November 1930-30 November 1955)* (Medan: Pengurus Besar Al Djamijatul Washlijah, 1955), 23.

<sup>43</sup> Washlijah, *Peringatan Al Djamijatul Washlijah ¼ Abad*, 342.

<sup>44</sup> M. Arsjad Th. Lubis, "Pendirian Al Djamijatul Washlijah," in *Peringatan Al Djamijatul Washlijah ¼ Abad* (Medan: Pengurus Besar Al Djamijatul Washlijah, 1956), 18-19.

<sup>45</sup> Gerakan Pemuda Al Washlijah, "Anggaran Dasar Gerakan Pemuda Al Washlijah," in *Peringatan Al Djamijatul Washlijah ¼ Abad* (Medan: Pengurus Besar Al Djamijatul Washlijah, 1956), 358-364.

<sup>46</sup> Gerakan Pemuda Al Washlijah, "Tafsir Azas Gerakan Pemuda Al Washlijah," in *Peringatan Al Djamijatul Washlijah ¼ Abad* (Medan: Pengurus Besar Al Djamijatul Washlijah, 1956), 364-368.

design, stipulate and fight for the decision of the All Indonesian Islamic Ulama and Muballigh Congress (*Kongres Alim Ulama dan Muballigh Islam Seluruh Indonesia*) in Medan that sovereignty and power belong to Allah Swt., the basis of the Indonesian state must be based on Islam, the basis of state law is the Qur'an and Hadith, and the head of state is a Muslim citizen. In this case, Al Washliyah's political ideals were championed through the Masjumi Party.

By the time of Indonesian independence, Al Washliyah had become an influential Islamic organization in East Sumatra alongside Al-Ittihadiyah.<sup>47</sup> In this era, Nahdlatul Ulama had not yet become an Islamic force in North Sumatra.<sup>48</sup> At that time, the Al Washliyah Executive Board consisted of influential scholars including Abdurrahman Sjihab, M. Arsjad Th. Lubis, Ismail Banda, Baharuddin Ali, Adnan Lubis, O.K.H. Abd. Aziz, and Djalaluddin Lubis.<sup>49</sup> All these ulamas also became Masjumi Party politicians.

In 1949, after Al Washliyah officially became a special member of the Masjumi Party, Abdurrahman Sjihab (d. 1955), one of the founders and Al Washliyah ulama, became a member of the Central Leadership of the Masjumi Party in Jakarta. He later held the position of Chairman of the Shuro Council of the Masjumi Party and became a member of the House of Representatives (*Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat* or DPR) from the Masjumi faction. He was sworn in as a member of the DPR on March 24, 1954. Abdurrahman Sjihab was the longest-running figure in Al Washliyah, having been its chairman from before independence until his death a few months before the 1955 elections.<sup>50</sup> Several other ulama also served on the board of the Masjumi Party in Jakarta, among them M. Arsjad Th. Lubis, Adnan Lubis, and Anas Tanjung. In North Sumatra, Udin Sjamsuddin was also a leader of the Masjumi Party.<sup>51</sup> Interestingly,

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<sup>47</sup> Hasnah Nasution and Al Rasyidin, "Respons Al-Ittihadiyah Di Sumatera Utara Terhadap Radikalisme," *Journal of Contemporary Islam and Muslim Societies* 3, no. 1 (2019): 1; Al Rasyidin, "Organisasi Islam Di Tanah Melayu: Ideologi Dan Gerakan Al-Ittihadiyah Sebelum Era Reformasi," *Journal of Contemporary Islam and Muslim Societies* 2, no. 1 (2018); Bachroem Azhar, *Peringatan Ulang Tahun 1/4 Abad Al-Ittihadiyah* (Medan: Panitia Kongres ke-X Al-Ittihadiyah, 1960); Dja'far Siddik and Ja'far Ja'far, *Al-Ittihadiyah: Delapan Dasawarsa Menerangi Nusantara* (Medan: Perdana Publishing, 2017); Soiman Soiman, "Gerakan Pembaruan Pendidikan Al-Ittihadiyah Di Sumatera Timur, 1935-1975," *Journal of Contemporary Islam and Muslim Societies* 2, no. 2 (2018).

<sup>48</sup> Abbas Pulungan, "Nahdlatul Ulama Di Luar Jawa: Perkembangan Di Tanah Mandailing," *Journal of Contemporary Islam and Muslim Societies* 2, no. 1 (2018): 91-217.

<sup>49</sup> Washlijah, *Peringatan Al Djamijatul Washlijah ¼ Abad*, 428.

<sup>50</sup> Ja'far Ja'far, "Ulama Mandailing Awal Abad Ke-20: Gerakan Religius Dan Politik Abdurrahman Sjihab (1910-1955)," *Islamijah: Journal of Islamic Social Sciences* 1, no. 1 (2020).

<sup>51</sup> Parlaungan Parlaungan, *Hasil Rakjat Memilih Tokoh-Tokoh Parlemen* (Jakarta: GITA, 1956), 28-29; Departemen Penerangan Republik Indonesia, *Kepartaian Dan Perlementaria Indonesia* (Jakarta: Departemen Penerangan Republik Indonesia, 1954), 466; Panitia Mukhtar Masjumi VII, *Mukhtar Masjumi Ke VII: 23-27 Des. 1954 Di Surabaya*, ed. Panitia Mukhtar Masjumi VII (Surabaya, 1954), 95-97.

Adnan Nur Lubis, one of the founders of Al Washliyah, became a politician of the Indonesian National Party (PNI).<sup>52</sup> However, many Al Washliyah ulama and members were the main supporters of the Masjumi Party in North Sumatra.

Al Washliyah is one of the Islamic organizations that accepted the electoral system in the Old Order era. As evidence, the 8<sup>th</sup> Al Washliyah Congress in Porsea, April 19-22, 1952, among others, decided that "urging the Government to hold elections in 1952, forming certain bodies in each district and sub-district in order to provide candidates to be elected and fight for them, and forming a special election institution at the Executive Board level which functions to provide views on elections and select candidates for legislative members." Another strategic decision was "to fight for Al Washliyah members who have the spirit of Islam to become candidates in the general election." In addition, facing the 1955 election, the Pemuda Al Washliyah and Kepanduan Al Washliyah were asked to "prepare themselves and actively face the elections". Another important decision was that "Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah remains as a special member of the Masjumi Party."<sup>53</sup> At that time, Al Washliyah was still led by Abdurrahman Sjihab and Udin Sjamsuddin.

Ahead of the 1955 elections, the ulama who founded, developed, and led Al Washliyah had involved themselves in strengthening Islamic ideals in the political field, even campaigning for the Masjumi Party. First, Al Washliyah ulama became the committee and supported the activities of the North Sumatra Alim Ulama Meeting (*Pertemuan Alim Ulama Sumatera Utara*) on January 16, 1953. Among them was Abdurrahman Sjihab who became Secretary of the Committee. The chairman of this meeting was Shaykh Musthafa Husein (d. 1955), an ulama from Tapanuli, who was initially an advisor to Al Washliyah, but he later became the founder of Nahdlatul Ulama in the Tapanuli. Among the most important decisions of this meeting was to "recommend that the Muslims of Indonesia unite in facing the elections to achieve the elevation of Allah's sentence in Indonesia."<sup>54</sup>

Secondly, Al Washliyah ulama became organizers and supporters of the All Indonesian Islamic Ulama/Muballigh Congress (*Kongres Alim Ulama/Muballigh Islam Seluruh Indonesia*) in Medan, which was held on April 11-15, 1953, where the Congress discussed the issue of political orientation of

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<sup>52</sup> Ja'far Ja'far, "Adnan Nur Lubis (1912-1968): Ustaz Nasionalis, Pendiri Al Washliyah," last modified 2021, accessed June 8, 2023, <https://washliyah.or.id/blog/2021/08/24/adnan-nur-lubis-1912-1968-ustaz-nasionalis-pendiri-al-washliyah/>.

<sup>53</sup> Udin Sjamsuddin, "Tjatementan Ringkas Dari Sedjarah Perkembangan Organisasi Al Djam. Washlijah," in *21 Tahun Al Dj. Washlijah* (Medan: Pustaka Al Washlijah, 1951), 15-16.

<sup>54</sup> Washlijah, *Peringatan Al Djamiyatul Washlijah ¼ Abad*, 186-187.

Muslims. This congress had been attended by several scholars from various regions in Indonesia, including Jakarta, Solo, Bandung, Makassar, Pare-pare, Kalimantan, Lombok, and Flores. Al Washliyah ulama who attended this congress were Abdurrahman Sjihab, M. Arsjad Th. Lubis, Adnan Lubis, Mahmud Sjihabuddin, O.K.H. Abd. Aziz, A. Rahim Sjihab, A. Madjid Siradj, Yusuf Ahmad Lubis, Udin Sjamsuddin, Rifa'i Abd. Manaf, Adnan Benawi, Bahrum Jamil, M. Hussein A. Karim, Bahrum Saleh, M. Junus Karim, and H.A. Dahlan. Among the most important decisions of this congress was the fatwa on elections as follows:

*(1.e.) Tiap-tiap warga negara Indonesia yang beragama Islam, laki-laki dan perempuan, yang mempunyai hak pilih menurut Undang-undang Pemilu Indonesia yang telah disahkan, (a) wajib menjalankan hak pilihnya dengan jalan mendaftarkan diri sebagai pemilih dan memberikan suaranya kelak pada waktu diadakan pemungutan suara. (b) wajib memilih hanya calon-calon yang mempunyai cita-cita terlaksananya ajaran dan hukum Islam dalam negara. (2.e.) Kaum Muslimin, laki-laki dan perempuan yang telah mukallaf ('aqil baligh), wajib berusaha dan memberikan segala macam bantuan dan pengorbanan untuk tercapainya kemenangan Islam dalam pemilu yang akan datang.<sup>55</sup>*

[(1.e.) Every Indonesian citizen who is a Muslim, male or female, who has the right to vote according to the Indonesian Election Law that has been passed, (a) shall exercise his/her right to vote by registering as a voter and casting his/her vote at the time of the poll. (b) must vote only for those candidates who aspire to the implementation of Islamic teachings and laws in the Indonesian state. (2. e.) Muslims, both men and women who have reached maturity, are obliged to endeavor, and provide all kinds of assistance and sacrifice for the achievement of the victory of Islam in the forthcoming elections.]

In addition, the Congress also decided on the issue of a constitution according to Islam. The congress's decisions include issues of sovereignty and power, the basis of the state, the legal basis and form of the state, the head of state, human rights. Al Washliyah ulama actively participated in formulating all these themes. The congress decided five points about the state, namely:

*(1) Kedaulatan sepenuhnya adalah kepunyaan Allah dan kekuasaan untuk mengatur negara Indonesia dilaksanakan oleh rakyat Indonesia selaku amanat Allah dengan jalan musyawarat dalam batas-batas hukum Islam untuk*

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<sup>55</sup> Panitia Muktamar Alim Ulama dan Muballigh Islam Seluruh Indonesia, *Putusan Kongres Alim Ulama/Muballigh Islam Seluruh Indonesia Di Medan Tanggal 11-15 April 1953* (Medan: Penerbit Al-Haq, 1953), 6.

*kebahagiaan umat manusia lahir dan batin. (2) Negara berdasar Islam. (3) Dasar hukum negara ialah Alquran dan al-Hadis. (4) Negara berbentuk republik (jumhuriyah). (5) a. kepala negara ialah seorang warga negara Muslim, b. kepala negara memegang pimpinan pemerintahan dan bertanggung jawab pada rakyat.*<sup>56</sup>

[1) Sovereignty belongs entirely to Allah, and the power to govern the Indonesian state is exercised by the Indonesian people who have received a mandate from Allah, carried out by the method of *syura* in accordance with the limits of Islamic law, and aims at the happiness of mankind physically and mentally. (2) The state is based on Islam. (3) The legal basis of the state is the Qur'an and al-Hadis. (4) The state is a republic (*jumhuriyah*). (5) a. the head of state is a Muslim citizen, b. the head of state holds the leadership of the government and is responsible to the people.]

This decision was strengthened by the decision of the 9th Al Washliyah Congress in Medan, November 29-December 3, 1953. At that time, Al Washliyah was led by Abdurrahman Sjihab and Udin Sjamsuddin, two Masjumi Party politicians during Old Order era. The most important decision in this congress was "Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah still remains a special member of the Masjumi political party." In addition, there were four election-related decisions, namely:

1. *Menyetujui, menguatkan dan melaksanakan putusan Mukhtar Alim Ulama dan Muballigh Islam Indonesia mengenai soal pemilu.*
  2. *Menyampaikan kepada pemerintah supaya mempercepat pelaksanaan pemilu dari waktu yang sudah ditetapkan oleh Kabinet Ali-Wongso.*
  3. *Mendesak kepada pemerintah pusat supaya memenuhi janjinya agar pada akhir tahun 1954, pemilu sudah siap dilaksanakan.*
  4. *Menyatakan rasa penyesalan dan protes kepada pemerintah pusat dengan tidak mendudukan wakil Masjumi dalam Panitia Pemilihan Indonesia.*
  5. *Pembentukan DPR Daerah haruslah dengan melalui pemilu, dan jangan ada anggota yang diangkat.*
- [1. To approve, strengthen and implement the decision of the Indonesian Council of Islamic Ulama and Muballigh on the question of elections. 2. To request the government to accelerate the holding of elections from the time set by the Ali-Wongso Cabinet. 3. To urge the central government to fulfill its promise to hold elections by the end of 1954. 4. Express regret and protest to the central government for not appointing representatives of the Masjumi Party to the Indonesian Election Committee. 5. The formation of the Regional House of Representatives

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid., 9.

should be through the electoral system, and no members should be appointed by the government.]<sup>57</sup>

Third, Al Washliyah ulama before the 1955 elections had also paid serious attention to the victory of the Masjumi Party in Indonesia, especially in the North Sumatra region which was the base of the Al Washliyah organization. Al Washliyah leaders utilized all the potential of the organization to campaign and win the Masjumi Party. After Abdurrahman Sjihab died in February 1955, the position of Chairman of Al Washliyah was temporarily replaced by the Secretary of Al Washliyah, Udin Sjamsuddin. He was appointed as Acting Chairman. In addition, he was also the first Chairman of the Masjumi Party, a member of the North Sumatra Provincial Election Committee, and a candidate for the House of Representatives. He was also very active in delivering the ulama's fatwa on elections, introducing the Masjumi Party to various parts of the region, even having to confront Communist groups. He was also persecuted by several individuals who did not like his political thoughts and movements, and this incident has become a national public concern.<sup>58</sup>

In fighting for Islamic ideals and to win the Masjumi Party, Udin Sjamsuddin (d. 1984) and Djalaluddin Lubis as leaders of Al Washliyah published "*Chittah dan Instruksi Umum Pengurus Besar Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah untuk Menghadapi Pemilu*" on July 4, 1955, two months before the election, which contained three important points. (1) the entire Al Washliyah family must actively participate and devote their attention to facing and participating in the elections, (2) not allowing Al Washliyah members (families) to vote for a sign that does not aspire to Islam, and (3) stipulating that Al Washliyah members (families) should vote for the Masjumi sign in this upcoming election.<sup>59</sup> This decree was issued in the run-up to the elections for members of the House of Representatives (DPR) on September 29, 1955.

In addition, a week before the first stage of the election was held, all Al Washliyah educational institutions were closed.<sup>60</sup> The entire potential of the organization had really been directed to face the 1955 elections and win the Masjumi Party. All Al Washliyah administrators and members, including Al Washliyah teachers, held campaign activities in various regions in North

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<sup>57</sup> Udin Sjamsuddin, *Chutbah Pengurus Besar Memperingati Ulang Tahun Al-Djam'iyatul Washlijah Seperempat Abad (30 November 1930-30 November 1955)* (Medan: Pengurus Besar Al Djamijatul Washlijah, 1955), 16.

<sup>58</sup> Washlijah, *Peringatan Al Djamijatul Washlijah ¼ Abad*, 219.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid*, 217.

<sup>60</sup> Sjamsuddin, *Chutbah Pengurus Besar Memperingati Ulang Tahun Al Djamijatul Washlijah Seperempat Abad 30 November 1930-30 November 1955*, 16.

Sumatra. The Kepanduan Al Washliyah and all Al Washliyah students held parade activities and carried the symbols of the Masjumi Party. All Al Washliyah administrators and teachers also held various training courses on elections for the entire community, not only for Al Washliyah members and Masjumi Party sympathizers. All administrators of Al Washliyah section organizations, including the Al Washliyah Student Association (*Ikatan Pelajar Al Washliyah*), were also active in holding campaign activities to win the Masjumi Party. They rode bicycles and traveled around Medan carrying the symbol of the Masjumi Party.<sup>61</sup> In this first stage of elections, Udin Sjamsuddin as the leader of Al Washliyah at that time was appointed as a member of the House of Representatives (DPR).

Thus, Al Washliyah showed special and intense attention to the 1955 election issue in the Old Order era. Udin Sjamsuddin<sup>62</sup> has explicitly stated that Al Washliyah was the only Islamic organization in North Sumatra that conducted the most and active election-related trainings. The training was provided not only for Al Washliyah members, but also for other Indonesian citizens. Al Washliyah even issued a statement "members of Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah are not allowed to stab other than the Masjumi star moon sign." Al Washliyah's efforts for the Masjumi Party to win the first stage of the election, September 29, 1955, were very maximum, although the results turned out to be unsatisfactory to a few of its ulamas, as M. Arsjad Th. Lubis has said in his article entitled "Pendirian Al Djamijatul Washlijah":<sup>63</sup>

*Hasil pemilu yang baru berlangsung menjadi bukti yang tidak dapat disangkal bahwa dalam kalangan umat yang masih mengaku beragama Islam terdapat jumlah yang bukan sedikit orang-orang yang tidak bersedia lagi memberikan pembelaannya kepada cita-cita agamanya sendiri. Kejadian yang amat menyedihkan itu dapat kita persaksikan benar-benar terjadi dalam daerah dan tempat yang pembangunan Islam dalam jiwa umatnya telah diabaikan pada waktu-waktu yang lalu. [The results of the elections that have taken place are undeniable proof that among the people who still claim to be Muslims there is a not insignificant number of people who are no longer willing to give their defense to the ideals of their own religion. We can witness this very sad incident happening in areas and places where the development of Islam in the soul of the people has been neglected in the past.]*

<sup>61</sup> Washlijah, *Peringatan Al Djamijatul Washlijah ¼ Abad*, 133-134.

<sup>62</sup> Sjamsuddin, *Chutbah Pengurus Besar Memperingati Ulang Tahun Al Djamijatul Washlijah Seperempat Abad 30 November 1930-30 November 1955*, 15-16.

<sup>63</sup> Lubis, "Pendirian Al Djamijatul Washlijah," 18-19.

Based on the results of the elections on September 29, 1955, where the Masjumi Party did not get many votes, Al Washliyah then issued a holy call to win the Masjumi Party in the election of Constituent Assembly members on December 15, 1955. The holy call was signed by two scholars, namely O.K.H. Abd. Aziz and Abd. Rahim Sjihab, and was established on October 16, 1955, two months before the second stage of the election, by the Regional Conference Committee of Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah North Sumatra in Medan. The scholars in the Al Washliyah organization agreed that Muslims should win the election to elect members of the Constituent Assembly on the grounds that the Constituent Assembly was tasked with, among other things, establishing the foundations of the Republic of Indonesia. Udin Sjamsuddin<sup>64</sup> stated that "in order to achieve the ideals of the Muslims in determining the foundations of the state of the Republic of Indonesia in the future, it is obligatory for the Muslims and Muslimat to win the greatest possible victory in the upcoming elections for members of the Constituent Assembly." This holy call consists of four points,

(1) kepada seluruh anggota/keluarga Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah dan simpatisan Masjumi, diserukan agar tetaplah memilih tanda gambar Bulan Bintang Masjumi, (2) kepada kaum Muslimin dan muslimat yang belum memasuki partai/organisasi Islam, diserukan dengan seikhlas-ikhlasnya supaya memberikan suaranya kepada salah satu tanda gambar partai Islam, (3) Kepada partai-partai dan organisasi Islam diserukan agar menciptakan kerjasama yang sebaik-baiknya dan kesatuan langkah dalam menghadapi pemilu yang akan datang ini, dan (4) marilah kita pertanggungjawabkan setiap tindak usaha kita dalam melaksanakan pemilu ini kepada Allah Swt. [(1) to all members/families of Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah and Masjumi sympathizers, it is called upon to continue to vote for the image of the Masjumi Star Moon, (2) to Muslims and Muslim women who have not yet entered Islamic parties/organizations, it is called upon sincerely to vote for one of the Islamic parties, (3) Islamic parties and organizations are called upon to create the best possible cooperation and unity of steps in the face of this coming election, and (4) let us account for every act of our efforts in carrying out this election to Allah Swt.]<sup>65</sup>

In the 1955 elections, the Masjumi Party won significant votes. On the national stage, the Masjumi Party won 20.92% of the vote. In addition, the party

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid16.

<sup>65</sup> Washlijah, *Peringatan Al Djamijatul Washlijah ¼ Abad*, 226.



won in ten of the fifteen provinces in Indonesia, including North Sumatra. Of course, the Masjumi Party's victory in North Sumatra was also due to the support of Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah. For example, Udin Sjamsuddin<sup>66</sup> stated that the Masjumi Party received support from many North Sumatra society elements. He once revealed that in the elections on September 29, 1955, the Masjumi Party obtained significant votes in North Tapanuli Regency. The Masjumi Party won as many as 14,738 votes in this area, even though most of the population was non-Muslim. Sjamsuddin said "such results were obtained by the Islamic party because of Islamic broadcasting activities there, and it was also found that people who were not Muslims also chose the symbol of the Islamic party."

After the 1955 elections, some Al Washliyah ulama held positions as members of the Constituent Assembly and members of the House of Representatives. They were representatives of the Masjumi Party. Those who became members of the Constituent Assembly were M. Arsjad Th. Lubis, Adnan Lubis, Muhammad Ali Hanafiah Lubis, and Bahrum Jamil. Meanwhile, the ulama who became members of the House of Representatives were Udin Sjamsuddin. In addition, Al Washliyah ulama still supported the decision that Al Washliyah remained a member of the Masjumi Party. Deliar Noer<sup>67</sup> stated that Al Washliyah in the latter part of the Guided Democracy era had been accommodating towards the government. Al Washliyah, Deliar Noer said, felt the need to cleanse itself of its involvement in the 1958 rebellion of the Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia (PRRI) because some of its leaders and members were suspected of being involved in the rebellion, or at least sympathizing with PRRI.

In addition, Al Washliyah also remained a privileged member of the Masjumi Party until shortly before the party dissolved in 1960. Nahdlatul Ulama left the Masjumi Party in 1952, three years before the elections were held. Al Washliyah continued to be a special member of the Masjumi Party along with several other Islamic organizations, particularly Muhammadiyah and Al-Ittihadiyah, until it reluctantly decided to stop being a special member ahead of the dissolution of the Masjumi Party in 1960. In the second half of 1959, Al Washliyah, like the Islamic Unity organization, was an Islamic organization that rejected the abolition of special membership in the Masjumi Party, although Al Washliyah accepted it if the Central Leadership of the Masjumi Party wanted

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<sup>66</sup> Sjamsuddin, *Chutbah Pengurus Besar Memperingati Ulang Tahun Al Djamiyatul Washlijah Seperempat Abad 30 November 1930-30 November 1955*, 9.

<sup>67</sup> Noer, *Partai Islam Di Pentas Nasional*, 371.

the abolition of special membership. On the other hand, Muhammadiyah, Al-Irsyad and Persatuan Umat Islam (PUI) agreed to the abolition of special membership in the Masjumi Party.<sup>68</sup> This shows Al Washliyah's loyalty to the Masjumi Party.

By the time the Masjumi Party was dissolved, Al Washliyah was led by M. Arsjad Th. Lubis (d. 1972). Before the first election was held, Abdurrahman Sjihab was the leader of Al Washliyah until he passed away in February 1955. After that, Udin Sjamsuddin as Secretary was appointed as Acting Chairman until finally M. Arsjad Th. Lubis was appointed Chairman of the Executive Board of Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah for 1956-1959. Udin Sjamsuddin had been the first Chairman of the Masjumi Party of North Sumatra, and he later replaced M. Arsjad Th. Lubis as the leader of Al Washliyah. From the colonial era until the Old Order era, Al Washliyah continued to be led by an ulama. They were scholars of Sunni Islam (Shafi'iyah and Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah/Asy'ariyah). It is interesting that Al Washliyah, despite being a privileged member of the Masjumi Party, never became a political party. Al Washliyah's political stance in the Old Order era was:

*Kendati Al Washliyah tidak menyatakan dirinya partai politik, tetapi bukanlah berarti ia tidak mengikuti pergolakan yang menyangkut dengan politik, yang dalam hal ini Al Washliyah mempunyai pandangan: politik itu adalah sebagian dari amal usaha yang akan dikerjakan. Oleh sebab itulah, tokoh-tokoh Al Washliyah yang berbakat politik, segera terjun ke dalam partai politik Islam bahkan aktif menggerakkan dan memberikan isi bagi gerakan-gerakan partai politik Islam.<sup>69</sup> [Although Al Washliyah does not declare itself a political party, it does not mean that it does not follow the discourse related to politics, in which case Al Washliyah already has a view: politics is part of the deeds to be done. For this reason, Al Washliyah figures with political talent immediately plunged into Islamic political parties and even actively mobilized and contributed to the movements of Islamic political parties.]*

Along with political developments in the Old Order era, where the Masjumi Party would be dissolved by the Soekarno regime in 1960, finally Al Washliyah officially ceased to be a special member of the Masjumi Party after the issuance of an announcement letter from the Central Leadership of the Masjumi Party dated September 8, 1959. One of the contents of the letter was "... therefore, the Leadership of the Masjumi Party has decided to terminate the

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<sup>68</sup> Syaifullah Syaifullah, *Gerak Politik Muhammadiyah Dalam Masyumi* (Jakarta: Grafiti, 1997), 218.

<sup>69</sup> Pengurus Besar Al Djamijatul Washlijah, *Memperingati Ulang Tahun Al Washlijah Ke-27* (Medan: Pengurus Besar Al Djamijatul Washlijah, 1959), 14.

special membership of Masjumi as of 5 Rabiul Awwal 1379 / September 8, 1959." In response to the letter, the Executive Board of Al Washliyah published the Remarks of the Executive Board of Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah Regarding the End of Special Membership in Masjumi), among the contents are "Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah as an Islamic organization that is almost 30 years old, automatically in this way it can refocus on the aspects of fostering and building the ummah, which will be discussed more broadly in the 11th Al Jam'iyatul Washliyah Congress on November 30, 1959 to come, located in Medan ..." <sup>70</sup> After Al Washliyah and the Masjumi Party parted ways, Al Washliyah ulama returned to devote their knowledge to the world of education, da'wah, and social affairs. They have shifted their focus, from the political field to the field of human development, especially the world of higher education, where they developed Al Washliyah University, inaugurated in Medan, May 18, 1958, <sup>71</sup> with one of its goals being to prepare future Al Washliyah scholars. In the New Order era, Al Washliyah ulama supported the rehabilitation of the Masjumi Party, but this idea failed, Al Washliyah ulama supported the establishment of the Indonesian Muslimin Party (Parmusi), proven by M. Arsjad Th. Lubis getting the mandate to establish Parmusi in North Sumatra with a few scholars and other figures.

## CONCLUSION

The findings of this study are that Al Washliyah throughout the Old Order era had accepted a few procedures and organizations in a democratic state. Al Washliyah leaders participated in the republican state system, political parties, elections, campaigns, and even held public office at local and national levels. They had become members of the legislature (the member of *Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat*), and members of the Constituent Assembly. Some of them have also become bureaucrats in two ministries: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Religious Affairs. However, they championed Islam as the basis of the state, and wanted Islamic law to be legal in Indonesia. For this reason, they became supporters of the Masjumi Party as a party that was considered capable of fighting for their political aspirations. Unlike Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI) which has explicitly rejected the democratic system, Al Washliyah has accepted the democratic system. According to Hugh Goddard's theory, it can be

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<sup>70</sup> Pengurus Besar Al Djamijatul Washlijah, *Putusan-Putusan Kongres Al Dj. Washlijah Ke-XI Tanggal 27 s/d 30 Nopember 1959 Di Medan* (Medan: Pengurus Besar Al Djamijatul Washlijah, 1959), 85-86.

<sup>71</sup> Universitas Al-Washliyah, *Lustrum VI Universitas Al Washliyah 18 Mei 1958-18 Mei 1988*, ed. Nukman Sulaiman (Medan: UNIVA Medan, 1988).

concluded that Al Washliyah seems to consider that “Islam and democracy are compatible.” According to Masykuri Abdillah’s theory, it can be concluded that Al Washliyah in the order era has supported democracy in a procedural and organizational sense, not in a philosophical sense, because they still believe in the supremacy of sharia as the standard of life for Muslims at the level of society and the state. According to Masdar Hilmy’s theory, Al Washliyah’s attitude towards democracy is identical to the *melioris* approach model, where Al Washliyah has been ambiguous in addressing the relationship between Islam and democracy, between accepting and rejecting. As such, on the one hand they follow the party system and elections as a characteristic of democracy, but at the same time they have also recognized the supremacy of sharia, even having fought for Islam as the basis of the state in the Old Order era and fighting for Islamic sharia to become a legal rule in Indonesia.

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