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BIZARRE and SHAMELESS

It is true, according to the latest issue of *Caribbean Contact*, that Eric Williams has been behaving in the most 'bizarre' political fashion in this pre-election period. But apart from the bizarre behaviour, he has been making some rather bizarre statements as well. And of all the claims made by Eric Williams and his ruling PNM party, perhaps the most brazen and shameless one is that they have improved 'the quality of life' of the people of Trinidad and Tobago!

One might agree that they improved 'the standard of living' of if not all, at least for a privileged minority in the country including themselves. But as for improving 'the quality of life' — certainly not!

Let us look at twenty years of the PNM and see how NOT to improve the quality of life.

You do not improve the quality of life of the people by:

- sponsoring a National Lottery and other official gambling agencies thus encouraging citizens to waste away hard-earned wages, have false expectations and often cause ruin to families;
- making liquor available to people on an unprecedented scale by helping to set up the National Brewing Company and then coming around with hypocritical speeches on the adverse effects of alcoholism;
- not expanding properly, and in fact running down, the hospital

services of the country. Our hospitals - no new one has been built for the last 20 years - are dirty, staff overworked and some incompetent and inhumane partly because of government policy;

- not doing anything serious about the extremely poor state of sanitation, rubbish disposal and drainage in the country. Many main areas of Trinidad positively and perpetually stinks;

- paying little attention to the environment; even the places inherited from the despised colonialists and imperialists like the Botanical Gardens, the Queen's Park Savannah and the Chaguaramas base—have been turned into 'ole mas' and become decrepit and run down;

- by providing more and more contraceptive devices under the catchy phrase of 'family planning activities' and for the purpose of keeping down the birth rate and in fact thereby assisting in sexual promiscuity already in a shocking state in Trinidad and Tobago.

You do not improve 'the quality of life' of the people by:

- running down the existing library services of the country to the point where the Central Library has been inoperational for a long

time now and the mobile services have stopped moving; as a result you cannot justly complain in a tone of intellectual arrogance of the prevailing low level of intellectual analysis, discussion and response and the inadequacy of the press etc in the country;

- reducing the Public Service to a state of frustration and resulting inefficiency to a point where people despair of going to a government department and getting anything done quickly except through some 'contact' or the other;

- encouraging jobbery and corruption to a point hitherto unknown thus eating away at the sense of justice and fair play and thus the morale of the nation;

- encouraging unbridled capitalism — a few to exploit the nation through maximum profits and low wages to a point where we have a nation of haves and have-nots, a few wallowing in luxury and many in the majority subsisting on the bread-line and living in shameful accommodation built by the Government itself; look at the eyesore that is the Beetham Estate, for example;

- owning the national broadcasting media—television and radio, TTT and NBS—and denying some

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people access to them in the name of stability and progress.....

And one can go on *ad nauseam*, to the point of disgust. In a very real and objective sense, Trinidad and Tobago can certainly be said to be in a state of mess, in veritable chaos. With the frustration, the indiscipline, the corruption, the injustice—the facts cannot be hidden to allow one to talk with any degree of conviction and honesty about stability and progress and of having improved the quality of life of the people. Quality of life and stability in society depend on the type of man it produces, not the type of clothes he wears or roads he drives on. And in any case, what type of roads have we got in the last twenty years!

It can be cogently argued that it is the twenty years of mismanagement inefficiency etc. that is directly responsible for the creation of the United Labour Front, the Democratic Action Congress, Tapia and others and the political mess in which the country finds itself. It has reached a stage where one party is predicting that if 'the message of the present' is not heeded, Trinidad and Tobago "will likely pass into the realm of permanent crisis, if not of civil war".

In many respects, it is tragic that government has become so all pervasive as to affect most aspects of our lives—from the price and type of food we eat, the size of our families, our entertainment etc. Government has

a strong hand in making or marring the quality of our lives. But whatever the shape of future government in this country, let us not be complacent and gullible enough to believe that the quality of our lives has improved and that it is sufficient to put blind faith in the claims and promises of our political leaders most of whom have been appealing to our sense of material gain or, if you like, material greed. Bread alone is not enough.

So while governments do have a major role to play, we also have the onus and the responsibility to take the initiative in improving the quality of our lives.

In fact, in the first and last analysis, it is up to us as individuals to do so.

X MARKS THE YOKE

Muhammad Sayyid

The question is: Of what function is a Government? Is it a trust for the care-taking of the citizens of the nation, or for the gratification of the grandiose fancies of egoistic, power-hungry politicians? What is actually meant by the term 'government of the people, by the people, for the people'? In other words, what are we doing when we go to the polls and make "x's" next to the name of the candidate of our choice and dip our fingers into the red ink?

With the advent of elections, we are becoming increasingly bombarded by the pleasant and plentiful speeches of prospective candidates for Parliament, all claiming to have the cure for all our national aches and pains, our sorrows and discomforts, our present predicaments. We have, by now, become so acquainted with terms like "morality in public

affairs, integrity, constitution reform, etc." that most of us will feel disappointed if a candidate does not use them in his/her speech. Everything is being unleashed upon us, even cheap clichés such as "power to the people; peace and love; indians and africans—unite; peace, bread and justice; etc." in the relentless efforts of self-appointed "representatives of the people" to influence us into giving our votes to their respective parties.

But putting aside all the fancy rhetoric and the beautiful phrases, what most politicians are saying in essence is that the root of our troubles is the present economic structure. As one party put it: "the next government must show our people good cause for being efficient, for getting up and get, for abandoning 'project' and Special Works habits. We

proclaim it loud and clear that the ECONOMIC CONDITIONS required to induce our people to make a more disciplined and productive effort are two: 1. a fair and equitable sharing of the national wealth and income; 2. the provision of gainful jobs for all." It went on to state its intention to end "gross inequalities whether by sex, race or class" with a remedy of "a wealth and incomes policy embracing progressive taxes; a much fairer spread of wages and salaries; a tighter management of prices; and a more widespread distribution of profits amongst the citizens through the localisation of large life-line industries and a proliferation of small business enterprise" amongst other financial proposals. The hoped-for end result would be a rallying of "the youth, the rehabilitation of the family and the spawning of a "new

generation of hope and love".

Such statements are characteristic of the majority of political parties, and to you and I, groaning under the yoke of inflation and underemployment, they sound like the answer to our prayers; but are they? It would seem, upon closer scrutiny, that the "project and Special Works habits" of the people along with the "gross inequalities" occasioned "by sex, race, or class", are partly the outcome of mental attitudes, our mental attitudes, and not solely of governmental policy, which, itself, however, cannot be exonerated. This fact can be illustrated by drawing attention to the same "projects and Special Works" schemes which are today synonymous with "paid limers", "rackets", and "bobol". These schemes were ostensibly implemented to provide employment for our unemployed (in some cases, unemployable) youth and to develop the national landscape by improving roads, drainage, etc. It is unthinkable that the Government intended that thousands of dollars should be wasted on unfinished walls and drains—unless of course jobbery and corruption were part and parcel of PNM rule. Who is to be blamed?

It is said that one cannot make a silk purse from a sow's ear, but it seems that our self-appointed "representatives" seem not to have heard. They spout lofty slogans of "change, revolutionary strategies" for demolishing this "28 per cent republic" in order to usher in a promised land where "those who labour" would "hold the reins". Yet, they say nothing about the nasty vices which have become synonymous with Trinagonian character. NOTHING is being said about the rampant fornication which is eating away the very fabric of family life in this nation of ours; NOTHING is said about the widespread alcoholism that is responsible for 85 - 90% of family breakdowns and over 50% of road accidents in this young republic; between January and early May this year 136 patients were admitted to the alcoholic treatment centre at St. Ann's Hospital, and 30 women were treated for alcoholism. The problem is becoming so bad that there is talk of setting up another treatment centre in San Fernando. Yet the "messiahs" are not telling the people about that. Gambling is responsible for many "working-class" people losing

whatever little property they may possess; gambling dens are innumerable in Trinago, yet the politicians say nothing about that. Let the question be asked: Give us more money and what would we do with it? And what about our famous "Carnival mentality"? They do not even dare hint about the harm of that! What sort of "change" then are these "political messiahs" actually talking about? Are they going to change the system or camouflage it—new boots but same khaki pants?

It is always said that Politics is a dirty business. It is easy to agree with this if we take into account the traditional behaviour of rival political aspirants. Our politician is a "mauvais langue" specialist and all his opponents try their best to

"As you are,
so you will have
rulers
over you."

—Prophet Muhammad.

convince the public that they are just as good or better. In fact, it is normal political strategy to slander and vilify one's opponent in the dirtiest manner; the crowd just licks it up and it is lively entertainment for an otherwise boring profession. But in the face of all this outcry about "public morality and integrity", how are we to trust a person with our very lives (that is what government is now about) if we understand from his political comrades that he is a scamp? In fact, with the image that we have of politics, why do we complain when the rulers turn out to be unscrupulous bloodsuckers? We know before hand that our politicians do not recognise God's prescriptions for human behaviour, so why is it that we grumble about their

injustices and favouritism? Who is to blame?

This brings us right back to our opening question. We expect our rulers to look after our welfare by giving us the proper direction in which to go in our quest for happiness. As such, we elect (or should elect) those citizens whom we think are best suited for that purpose. The governing body is to serve the interest of the people by proposing the best method upon which the society should be built, guarding the inhabitants from all detrimental forces and thereby, enable each and everyone to live a healthy and productive, meaningful life. It is the steering wheel of the national vehicle which transports all of us to our destination. Therefore, it is only the best amongst us, the most intelligent (not crafty), the most trustworthy, the most **RIGHTEOUS** of us, who is worthy of that great responsibility of **GUIDING** the nation.

A government "of the people, by the people, for the people" implies a voluntary, totally free and unbiased selection of a group of people by the general public, uninfluenced by the propaganda of party campaigns and freed from the constraints of party groupings. Such people, on account of their own merit, are entrusted with the responsibility of leading the nation. But what obtains at present amounts to a virtual subjection of the entire population to the wiles and machinations of professional politicians whose foremost distinctions are often unfillable promises and blatant lies.

We are thus now caught up in the unenviable task of choosing "the lesser of the evils" and hoping that we see the fulfilment of at least one of the many promises that are usually made to us.

Whatever the outcome of the elections, we remain virtually powerless to change the system until the end of the term of office. Such is the nature of western democracy. This state of affairs will continue until such time as you and I decide to return the right of ruling human lives to our Creator and accept only the system of life dictated by Him. This is far better than entertaining false expectations and enduring under the yoke of man-oriented domination and dictatorship which we are now called upon to "select" on 13 September 1976.

The charismatic United Labour Front speaker was shouting, "Not if, but when we get into power, employment will be provided for all!" "Let those who labour hold the reins!" "Long live the working class, long live U.L.F." To the enchanted audience, these words sounded better and truer than any roadmarch or sermon they had ever heard. Many of them were convinced by now that ULF alone was really sincere about uplifting the standard of living of a people much exploited and dissatisfied. What! Government by the workers, abolition of class, ridding the society of the dreaded blood suckers, the capitalists, workers' ownership of the country's natural resources. Sound attacks on the ruling PNM, styled the People's National Millstones and promises to the people were partly responsible for moving the audience. Also what had some weight was the history of certain members of the ULF who were known to have engaged in struggle against the 'oppressors and exploiters' in Trinago even ending up in prison.

Surely the ULF sounds good; indeed the militants who form the party's core know struggle. But then, do they have the capacity to motivate Trinago's people and make them liberated, constructive and truly civilized or are their ideals at best merely utopian or at worst disruptive and destructive. And what about the ideology of the ULF? And the major moot point here is whether the party is Communist or not.

ULF speakers state with apparent firmness, "We are not Communists; we are the party of the working class." The statement disowns the tag of Communism. Is this merely to escape possible backlash of a widespread aversion to socialism and Communism springing especially from recent Caribbean experience?

One person formerly closely associated with the ULF leadership has come out strongly against 'the pernicious doctrine' of the ULF stating with assurance that it is "a Communist Party". And indeed the party's rhetoric (government by the proletariat etc) and many of its programmes could be held to point

ULF AND COMMUNISM

PERNICIOUS?

unmistakeably to Communism or at least to be Communist inspired.

Whatever the truth of the matter, people need to be on their guard where Communism is concerned. It may often present a very humane face but in theory and practice it has brought a lot of conflict and suffering to untold millions. Of course, in most cases it grew out of the evils of unbridled capitalism which also had the effect of brutalizing millions.

As has been shown before (see The Muslim Standard, April 1976), the Communist philosophy is a purely atheistic and materialistic one. Karl Marx stated: "The religion of the worker lies in denying God and in attempting to revive the divinity of man...It is a religion that deifies man." And Engels has said, "Matter is the only real thing in the world." This is of course false and arrogant and has given rise to much tyranny. How can such a dependent, mortal, helpless creature like man be divine?

Another major motivating force in the Communist ideology is the idea of the class struggle—the working class against the ruling class, the victory of the former eventually leading to a classless society. This idea of class lacks precise definition, is false when examined closely and moreover has led to much conflict not only in the Soviet Union but in the People's Republic of China where Mao has been "lighting fires in the belly of the (Communist) revolution" causing much disorder and panic. We do not know enough about what obtains in China but of the Soviet Union we have enough evidence. Stalin's daughter, Svetlana Alliluyeva, who had to flee the Soviet Union once stated, "Stalin did not invent or conceive of anything original. Having inherited from Lenin a Communist totalitarian system he became its ideal

embodiment, perfectly personifying in himself a system of power without democracy based on the oppression of millions of people in which those who survived physically were reduced to the position of slaves deprived of the right to create or think."

And what about the policy of nationalisation and 'worker' ownership of the means of production—another piece of Communist jargon? In most cases although some nationalisation may be justified, sweeping nationalisation has proved to be impracticable and workers' ownership is often a substitute phrase for State capitalism which again is often more inefficient, wasteful and corrupt than private capitalism. Nationalisation is no panacea for our ills.

By comparison with Communist theory and practice abroad, there are many areas of ULF ideology and policies which must be clarified. One ULF speaker was saying for example that the institutions born in a state of crisis (meaning the ULF itself) must continue to be the main institutions in the country. Are we to understand by this that with ULF at the helm, the country would be in a state of permanent crisis? The idea of permanent crisis is not alien to Communist strategy!

The politicians in the ULF have however refuted the allegation that they are in fact Communists. If this is so, what is the ULF really pushing? Is it another form of capitalism (capitalism of the state), or is it a new theory they have whipped up? Under their system will democracy really exist? These and more questions are still to be dealt with by the brothers in the ULF. But in the long run, the people of Trinago must realise that the system of life needed cannot come from PNM, DAC, Tapia, DLP, ULF or any of the other parties. The revolutionary system worthy and capable of uplifting the dignity of Trinagonians and giving them true freedom can only be found in ISLAM. This system of life was handed down to mankind by the Creator for man to build a well-balanced and well-directed life for himself and for society at large.

ئالەم بېت ج چ خ د ر ز س ش غ ف ق ك گ
ك ل م ن و ي ا ب پ ت ج چ خ د ر ز س ش غ ف ق ك گ

ئەڭ جىڭگە ئېسىپ قويۇلغان چىرايلىق زەنجىر ۋە ئۆگمەر
اقلاردىن بېقىملىق ئاواز ئاڭلىنىپ تۇرۇدۇ.

Uighur: original Arabic-Turkic alphabet

Aa, Əə, Bb, Cc, Dd, Ee, Ff, Gg, Ғғ, Hh, Hh, Ii, Jj, Kk, Kk, Ll, Mm, Nn, Oo, Əə, Pp, Qq, Rr, Ss, Tt, Uu, Üü, Vv, Ww, Xx, Yy, Zz, Zz

Uighur alphabet (China)

Aa, Бб, Вв, Гг, Дд, Ее, Ёё, Жж, Зз, Ии, й, Кк, Лл, Мм, Нн, Оо, Пп, Рр, Сс, Тт, Уу, Фф, Хх, Цц, Чч, Шш, Щш, Ъ, Ы, Ь, Ээ, Юю, Яя, Кк, Нн, Фф, Уу.

Uighur alphabet (Russian)

COMMUNISM IN EAST TURKESTAN

You can not enchain the soul of a man but if you colonise him, you can change the script of his language. This will effectively cut him off from his cultural roots and in due course you will have not an enchaind soul but a soul-less body. Much more than what any colonialist could hope to bargain for.

The Chinese had a similar objective of securing a perpetual subjugation of a territory, its people and resources when they established their rule over Eastern Turkestan about two and a half decades ago. The first thing to do was to change the very name of the Islamic republic of Eastern Turkestan to Sinkiang, which means New Dominion. But colonialism took a more profound form when Chairman Mao directed that the languages of various nationalities, as also the Chinese language, be reformed and 'brought closer' to the people. The 'requisite reform' in respect of the Uighur and Kazakh languages of Eastern Turkestan was the substitution of its Arabic-Turkic script with Romanised alphabets based on the Chinese phonetic system.

The new alphabets were ready by 1959 and put into trial use in 1960. For a while progress was impeded because of the activities of the Liu Shao-chi group and the 'national splittists' but as the cultural revolution and the movement to criticise Lin Piao and Confucius gathered a fanatic pace, it was also used to whip up a new upsurge to 'popularise' the new script.

In March 1964 a formal seal of approval was obtained from the Third People's Congress of the Sinkiang Uighur Autonomous Region. After being ratified by the State Council in October 1964, the new script was formally

made public in January 1965 and introduced immediately in all fields and departments of life in the 'autonomous' region.

After a vigorous campaign extending over a period of 12 years, the centuries old script of the Uighur and Kazakh people was officially replaced by the new Romanized script on August 1, 1976. Newspapers and the educational system had long since been Romanized but with effect from August 1, all official party and semi-official work, correspondence and recording is being conducted in the new script. As for the old scripts, these will be 'treasured as

COMMUNISM IN SOUTH YEMEN New terror wave

Last month Aden witnessed the recurrence of yet another wave of political terror against the critics and dissidents of the regime.

One of the persons shot dead by 'unidentified' gunmen was the Qadhi of the town of Shaykh Usman. In another shameful incident, the country's most popular and reputed scholar, Shaykh Ali Muhammad Bahamish, who is also the Imam of the largest mosque Jama'a Al 'Idrus in Crater was assaulted by 'unknown' hoodlums inflicting grievous injuries on the 65-year old scholar. Shaykh Bahamish had been the principal of the Bazara'a Free School prior to its nationalisation by the regime. But his fault lay in his fearless criticism of the senseless policy of coercive secularisation and of destroying the whole social fibre of the society without being able to create anything good and constructive in its place. Earlier in June the authorities had asked

cultural legacies' and used by linguists, experts and anthropologists to give to the Turkestanis a newer version of their history, their values and their cultural past.

The Chinese claim that the new Romanized script has won enthusiastic support from the Uighur and Kazakh peoples but also admit opposition by 'a handful of class enemies who' tried to 'spread rumours during the last 12 years in an attempt to undermine the language reform'. The popularisation of the new script is also said to be 'conducive to strengthening the national unity', but the choice of a Romanised rather than

Chinese alphabet (if national unity was the aim) suggested two possible objectives. One, the raising of language barriers between the East Turkestanis and the Turkestanis under Soviet rule. The Uighur script on the Soviet side was Russianised in 1928. Second, not to let the Uighurs and Kazakhs encroach the exclusive domain of Han overlordship — a theoretical probability if the script chosen was Chinese. It would thus seem that even after having been deprived of their own language, the Turkestanis are condemned to stay as a sub-Han people.

him either to shut up or be prepared for the consequences. Although Shaykh Bahamish appeared to have considerably toned down his Friday talks, apparently the decision to incapacitate him had been taken nevertheless.

However, this was not the first attempt to neutralise or silence the voice of freedom and dissent in the country. Apart from imprisonments and eliminations, only a few years ago the regime had expelled another undaunted critic of its adventurous policies, the blind and old Shaykh al-Beihani. Shaykh Beihani later died in exile.

Contrary to expectations in some South Yemeni circles, the country's recent detente with Saudi Arabia seems to have had no effect on PDRY's internal policy of regimentation and repressions. In fact the fundamental rights' situation has worsened further. The South Yemenis who mix or even meet with foreigners do so at great peril. The constraints on movement, assembly and expression are being applied with greater rigour. The mosques which were the last bastion of independent expression stand virtually nationalised and since the imposition of a

secular family law, the efforts to de-Islamise the society have been accelerated. In contrast there is a planned proliferation of bars, casinos and various other permissive institutions.

Economic mismanagement, periodical food shortage and acute unemployment have brought about a serious drain of the young republic's manpower resources. Nearly half of the country's population has become a permanent emigre. A significant proportion of students sent abroad for training and higher education and often even government officials sent outside the country fail to return. Lack of confidence in the regime's economic policies also means that only a small proportion of Yemeni foreign workers' earnings is repatriated back home. President Rubayyi Ali has on more than one occasion appealed to South Yemeni expatriates to return home to take part in the rebuilding of the country, but to no effect. Just now PDRY's leadership seems to pin a great deal of hope in the pipeline project to link Aden with Dhahran which will make the former an oilport for the export of Saudi and even UAA oil to Southeast Asia.

THE MEN WHO PLAY GOD

"The command belongs
to God alone.
He commands you
not to worship
anyone except Him."

—The Qur'an 12 : 40.

The pleasure of posing as a god is the most enchanting and appealing activity that man has yet been able to discover. Whoever possesses power, wealth, cleverness, or any other superior faculty, usually develops a strong inclination to overstep his natural and proper limits, to extend his area of influence and thrust his godhood upon those who are comparatively weak or deficient in any manner.

Such aspirants to godhood are of two kinds and accordingly they adopt two different lines of action. There is a type of people who are comparatively bold or who possess adequate means of forcing their claim on those over whom they wield power. Consequently, they make a direct claim to godhood. For instance, there was Pharaoh who was so intoxicated with power and so proud of his empire that he proclaimed to the inhabitants of Egypt: *"I am your highest Lord."*

When Prophet Moses approached him with a demand for the liberation of his people and told him to surrender himself to the Lord of the Universe, Pharaoh replied that since he had the power to cast Moses into prison, Moses should rather acknowledge him as god.

Similarly, there was another king, Nimrod, who had an argument with Prophet Abraham. The episode is narrated in the Qur'an:

"Are you not aware of that king who had an argument with Abraham about his Lord because Allah had given him dominion? When Abraham said: My Lord is He who gives life and death, he (the king) answered: I give life and cause death. Abraham said: Allah causes the sun to rise in the East; (you) cause it then, to rise in the West. Then was the disbeliever confounded."
(2 : 258).

Why was the unbelieving king

confounded? Not because he denied the existence of God. Nor was he denying that God was the ruler of the universe and that He alone made the sun rise and set. The question at issue was not the dominion over the sun, the moon, and the planets, but that of the allegiance of the people. The question was not who controls the forces of nature, but who should have the right to claim the obedience of men. The king did not put forth the claim that he was Allah; what he actually demanded was that no objection should be made to the absoluteness of his authority over his subjects. His authority as the ruler should not be challenged.

This claim was based on the fact that the king held the reins of government and he could do whatever he liked with the property or the lives of his people. He had absolute power to punish or to spare his subjects. He, therefore, demanded that Abraham should recognise him as his master, serve him and do his bidding. But when Abraham declared that he would obey, serve and accept no one but the Lord of the Universe, the king was bewildered and shocked and did not know how to bring such a person under his control.

This claim to godhood which Pharaoh and Nimrod had put forth was by no means peculiar to them. Rulers all over the world in ages past and present have advanced such claims. Words synonymous with "god" and "lord" are still used in direct reference to rulers of many places (for example, Shahinshah—King of kings, or The Supreme President). Even where this is not customary, the attitude of the people towards their rulers is similar to what is implied by these words. It is not necessary for a man who claims godhood to openly declare himself to be a god. All persons who exercise unqualified dominion over a group of men, who

All persons who exercise unqualified dominion over a group of men...are essentially claimants to godhood.

impose their will upon others, and who control people's destinies in the same manner as Pharaoh and Nimrod, are essentially claimants to godhood. And those who serve and obey them, admit their godhood even if they do not say so by word of mouth.

In contrast to these people who directly seek recognition of their godhood there is another type of men who do not possess the necessary means or strength to get themselves accepted as "god". But they are resourceful and cunning enough to dupe the common people. In this category are those who employ the arts of soothsaying, astrology, fortune-telling, divination palm-reading and numerology. There are yet others who, while giving allegiance to God themselves, assert that no one else can gain direct access to God except through them; that all ceremonies should be performed through their mediation; and that all religious rites can be performed only at their hands.

There are still others who proclaim themselves to be the bearers of the Book of God and yet they deliberately keep the common people ignorant of its meaning and

contents. Constituting themselves into mouthpieces of God, they dictate to others what is lawful and what is unlawful. In this way their word becomes law and they force people to obey their own commands instead of those of God. Consequently, certain families, races and classes have imposed their will and authority over large masses of men and women. If you were to look at the matter from this angle, you will find that the root-cause of all evil and mischief in the world is the domination of man over man, be it direct or indirect. The experiences of thousands of years have confirmed the observation that man cannot help setting up some other man as his 'god' looking up to him for help and guidance in the complex and baffling affairs of life and obeying his commands. Historical experience has also established this fact: that if you do not believe in the true God, some artificial god will take His place in your thinking and behaviour. It is even possible that instead of one real God, a number of false gods, may impose themselves upon you.

What are the consequences of this attempt by man to play the role of divinity? The same that would follow from an incompetent person being appointed as chief of police or some narrow-minded politician being exalted to the rank of Prime Minister or President. For one thing, the effect of godhood is so intoxicating that one who has tasted this powerful drink can never keep himself under control. Even assuming that such self-control is possible, the vast knowledge, the keen insight, the unquestioned impartiality and perfect objectivity which are required for carrying out the duties of godhood, will always remain out of the reach of men.

The only remedy for this dreadful malady lies in the repudiation and renunciation of all masters and in the explicit recognition of God Almighty as the sole Master and Lord. There is no way to salvation except this; for even if a man were to become an atheist and heretic he would not be able to shake himself free of all these worldly masters.

This was the radical reformation effected from time to time by the Prophets in the life of humanity. They aimed at the demolition of man's supremacy over man. Their real mission was to deliver man from this injustice, this slavery to false gods, this tyranny of man over man, and this exploitation of the weak by the strong. Their object was to thrust back into the proper limits those who had over-stepped them and to raise to the proper level those who had been forced down from it. They endeavoured to evolve a social organisation based on human equality in which man would be neither the slave nor the master of his fellow-beings and in which all men should become the servants of one real Lord.

This is why tyranny, despotism, exploitation, and inequality reign supreme whenever the lordship and domination of some men are established over other men. The human soul is inevitably deprived of its natural freedom, and inborn potentials and aptitudes are subjected to restrictions that arrest the proper growth and development of the human personality.

BOOKS FOR REFERENCE LIBRARY

The Islamic Trust is in the process of setting up an Islamic Reference Library at Pundit Street, off El Socorro Road, San Juan. We would welcome donations of books, back issues of magazines and newspapers on

ISLAM, COMPARATIVE RELIGION, DEVELOPMENT ECONOMICS, LAW, EDUCATION, SOCIOLOGY, ETC'

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ASK YOURSELF

What are Elections for?

They are for choosing persons who would:

- serve the people as a whole;
- help provide them with the basic necessities of life—food, clothing, shelter and knowledge— to fit them for their purpose in life;
- preserve their fundamental human rights and freedoms— justice, equality of opportunities, etc.
- promote virtue, themselves setting personal examples of sacrifice and service;
- eliminate vice in all its forms;
- fulfil, in short, their duties and responsibilities as a trust— to the people in the first instance and ultimately to the Creator of all beings to Whom all accounts shall be rendered.

What are Elections not for?

- They are not to provide jobs for 36 individuals and their 'boys' or hangers-on
- they are not to promote jobbery, bribery and corruption;
- they are not to create masters over the people;
- they are not to provide opportunities for 36 individuals or even a lesser number who may form the Government to usurp people's rights and ride rough-shod over their freedom, dignity and honour;
- they are not stepping stones towards squandering human and material resources simply because 'Money is no problem'.

What sort of persons should be elected?

- People who are known to be and are of good character — otherwise they would not be able to promote virtue.
- they must be people of integrity in the widest sense of the term. Integrity doesn't merely mean declaring your financial assets! This integrity or incorruptibility to be genuine must be based on the consciousness or fear of God as the One Who sees and hears all things and to Whom all accounts shall be rendered. Integrity cannot be based on fear of men;
- such people would naturally command respect and not demand a sham obedience and loyalty;
- they must be people with some history of service and devotion to the community and must have shown a sense of responsibility in discharging trusts. They must have a concern for people's welfare, not for fame or their own pockets;
- they must be knowledgeable in the widest sense and show a willingness and a capacity to learn, to benefit from

criticism, advice and advancements in knowledge;

- they must have technical know-how in their chosen areas at least, and must be disciplined and efficient—people who can reasonably be expected to run a government department well, inspiring public servants with a sense of efficiency and hard work.

What sort of persons should not be elected?

- Those who have a record of exploiting public office for personal, family or partisan interests; those whose character and personal conduct is an example of vice. Personal conduct (contrary to western norms and expectations) cannot be separated from public duties and responsibilities. For example, a drunkard, an adulterer or fornicator cannot be fit for public office;
- no yes-men, no puppets, no blind followers of the party line, whether right or wrong;
- no encourager of indiscipline, idleness or the 'Special Works' mentality;
- no propounder of an ideology, for example—Communism, that distorts the purpose of life and is likely to create false divisions and unnecessary conflict.

What if the nominated candidates do not meet the standards expected of them?

People get the leaders they deserve. And this is even made worse by the present system of individual campaigning for office and in many respects the ludicrous party system.

- If you have about ten candidates to choose from (and this is roughly the case in every constituency) then choose whom you consider will be the least of the evils. And it may not necessarily be that the devil you know is always better than the devil you don't know.
- Whatever you do, don't choose simply on the basis of race or in the hope of gaining limited or special personal favours but on the basis of the common good.

How much difference would the results of the Elections really make at this stage?

Elections in the present set-up — even though the objective situation (campaigning, the party set-up etc) is not ideal — are very important. It is about 'trusting people with our very lives'. So the act of choosing representatives must be taken seriously. An injection of a sense of balance and proportion and a sense of humility into the new Parliament would go a long way to improve the quality of life of the people. The obvious lack of consensus in the nation as a whole could be fateful. Let us at least live in hope.

(Continued on page 11)

THE DROP-OUT SOCIETY

ABDUL AZIZ RAHMAN



Assembled under shops, on street corners, in old abandoned houses and even on the door steps of dwelling places, a vast number of young people are to be found gambling taking drugs and idling away their time without seeming to have any sense of responsibility or regard for anyone whatsoever. They are regarded by most of the 'respectable' members of the society and the police as 'nuisances', 'parasites who hate work', 'people who ought to be put in jail for their worthlessness'. Are these attitudes justified? Will sending these 'limers' to jail solve the problems?

To get to the core of the matter, we need to analyse the circumstances responsible for driving these youths to 'liming', drug abuse, alcoholism, delinquency and gambling.

Firstly, it is because of a lack of direction and guidance and Knowledge about their purpose of life that these negative alternatives are chosen. The type of Knowledge imparted to students in educational institutes about life, man and the purpose of life, has failed to provide the necessary guidance needed to go through life successfully. With life divided into 'religious and secular' compartments and with the school curriculum geared to cater mainly for the 'secular' aspect, it should not be strange when we see the condition of the youths today. We also find that many 'religious denominations' have failed to provide their flocks with meaningful guidance. The illogical and contradictory theories that these cults put forward to people about God, life and man's role in society have only helped to confuse people's minds and clog their faculties of reasoning and intelligence. As examples, we may cite the belief that God is three and one at the same time or that religion should have nothing to do with politics and other social aspects of life. Thus, on being confronted by problems, the bewildered individuals look for the easiest ways out, without weighing things properly.

Secondly the situation in the home has a lot to do with creating dope addicts and delinquents. The family is really the 'bedrock of the society'. It is here that the young people are supposed to receive most of their moulding and guidance, but when the parents or guardians become irresponsible or unable to guide the family, maybe because they themselves need guidance, we find this having various psychological effects on the minds and times of the children. In some cases the mother discharges her responsibility and the father's, because of his absence. This keeps her away from home for long periods, she leaves the children unsupervised. And she has little time for communication with them whenever she is there. In other cases where there is only a father, the situation is similar to the above one. Some unfortunate children have no parents or guardians to look after them and in such instances the elder children have to play leading roles. Then in still others the family has deteriorated because members have little love, regard or appreciation for each other. Inability to provide adequate finance to run a home and improper housing facilities along with delinquent and alcoholic parents (morally bankrupt) also contribute to broken homes which eventually may cause the children to hate home.

Home, instead of being a place of love, comfort and understanding, becomes a nightmare, a prison, a place to be avoided. Children run away from it, preferring to spend most of their time idling on the 'block'.

Lastly, unemployment is responsible for driving people to this type of purposeless existence. In a system in which there is unequal distribution of wealth (widening the gap between rich and poor), paying of criminally low wages to employees, hardships for applicants to get proper jobs although being qualified, 'grease hand' for jobs, or forced seduction of women by corrupted employers, or

foremen, many young people prefer idleness than to be trapped by any of these exploitative and diabolical schemes.

And so without a proper or regular job to cater for their financial needs, the 'block' becomes the chosen haven. Here the unemployed youth tries to make it in life by gambling, pushing and taking dope, stealing, prostitution and hustling. (Recently one young man remarked that 'the day he doesn't hustle he doesn't eat') until he or she finally goes mad, gets killed, goes to prison, obtains a 'break' in life or becomes a permanent dropout of this 'dog-eat-dog rat race'.

Seeing that the average limmer has really been driven to a meaningless existence because of circumstances partly beyond his or her control, the critics and commentators should reconsider their attitudes and bizarre solutions because they will not help the situation. If they would realise that what is happening to the youth is actually a result of this evil and tyrannical system, under which we live, and try to help change it, indeed this will be a positive step in solving the problem.

Actually what is needed is an integrated, revolutionary 'way of life'. Like ISLAM, which by making man understand himself and (who is) his Creator, (who is he (man)), what is) his purpose of life and laying down codes of guidance for all aspects of human life, will bring about positive changes in Trinidadian society. By making them aware that there is none to be worshipped, to make laws, to fear and to obey but God (not three in one or having a family) ISLAM will bring identity and freedom from falsehood to the people. It did so fourteen hundred years ago when it changed the whole of Arabia, which was in a state similar to that which we are in today, and made it a perfect, unique and truly civilised society. It can change any society which accepts and implements its system. NOW!

SWINE!

"O people, eat the lawful and good things from what is in the earth, and follow not the footsteps of Shaitan (the evil one). Surely Shaitan is an open enemy to you," is the proem of the Holy Qur'an on the subject of forbidden foods.

The flesh of the pig is one of the specifically mentioned forbidden foods in the Qur'an. It is declared by the Qur'an as "unclean" for human consumption.

"Say, I find not in that which is revealed to me aught forbidden for an eater to eat thereof, except that it be what dies of itself, or blood poured forth, or flesh of swine — for that surely is unclean."

According to the Qur'an there are animals suitable for eating. Likewise there are others which are neither suitable nor beneficial for man's eating.

The pig has been emphatically stated as unfit. This uncleanness spoken of is, not surprisingly, consistent with a modern scientific study of the pig. We are astounded even further when note that the Qur'an proclaimed this truth, not today or yesterday, but fourteen centuries ago.

THE PIG AS THE TRANSMITTER OF DISEASES

Black's Veterinary Dictionary has this to say about pigs: "Half the bacon pigs examined at an abattoir were found to have external parasites — mange mites, lice, or forage mites; and a recent survey made at the Department of Veterinary Medicine, University of Edinburgh, suggests that 20 percent of pedigree pigs and piggeries in Britain are infested with sarcoptic mange mites."

To trace the life of a pig is like treading on a path of diseases. For right from the day pigs are born, the poor animals are attacked by such ugly diseases as Septic Arthritis, Necrotic Enteritis, Canker (the blockage of ears with bacteria), Haematoma, which is the interior bleeding of the ears. There is Agelactia, Anaemia, Anthrax, Anjesky's, Brine Poisoning, Clostridial Enteritis, Encephalomyelitis of pigs, Eperythrozoon, Gastric Ulcers, Haemolytic Disease (breaking up of red blood corpuscles),

Leptospirosis, Listeriosis, Mange, Mastitis (inflammation of the mammary gland), Meningoencephalitis (protrusion of the meninges through the skull), Paerovirus, Paratyphoid, Pericarditis (inflammation of the sac round the heart), Pyelonephritis, Rhinitis, Erysipelas (an inflammatory disease, generally in the face), Swine Fever, Swine Influenza, Virus Pneumonia, and a horde of others.

A description of a few of the diseases which this animal suffers from will give us a glimpse into their true nature.

Septic Arthritis "is not a new condition. It is only recently that it has been associated with Streptococcus. The source of infection of this disease is not known for certain."

Head Shaking is a "condition which occurs when the mange or lice parasites have got deep into the pigs' ears, thus causing irritation."

Gastric Enteritis occurs when "The surface of the pig's stomach and bowels becomes congested with blood. Germs are then able to penetrate into the blood system and cause what is known as a Septicaemia. Some germs of this disease will respond to treatment and the animal will recover. At other times no cure is possible."

Jaundice of the pig is "due to a number of causes mechanical obstruction in the bile-ducts, and various infections which prevent the gall bladder or liver from working properly. Obstruction in the bile-ducts is often due to worms."

When pigs are "between 6 and 16 weeks old, they are most commonly affected with paratyphoid. They fail to grow, become scruffy, with wrinkled skins and large heads. There is generally diarrhoea, and when opened at mortem the bowel is lined with a thick layer of caseous (cheese-like) material."

Prolapse of Rectum, another ugly disease of the pig, "put out the back passage of the animal. It happens in coccidiosis, swine dysentery, and worm infection."

"Rhinitis disease is characterized by a severe inflammation of the turbinate bones. These are the paper-thin rolls of

bone which support the membranes inside the nose. There is a marked thickish discharge (sometimes with blood) from the nostrils and signs of distressed breathing. Severe symptoms of the disease are generally confined to piglets under eight weeks of age. There is no cure for this disease."

Mange is a rash which is due to "the pig mange parasite, which burrows under the skin and tends to form a lump. At first the irritation is severe but later becomes more chronic and less disturbing. The skin then appears 'scabby'."

"Erysipelas disease produces deep red colour on skin. The erysipelas germ becomes localized inside the heart and valves of the pig."

"Oedema of the bowel, or Gut Oedema as it is known, has of recent years assumed considerable importance. It is a digestive condition. But whether or not it is due to germs is not yet known. It is seen mainly in pigs recently weaned. Oedema, which means accumulation of fluid, appears in various parts of the body, particularly in the stomach wall, in the pig folds of the large intestine and in the eyelids."

Piles, known as haemorrhoids, is perhaps the ugliest of the pig's disease. "It consists of an inflamed and varicose condition of the veins of the anus and rectum. It is not common in animals. It only usually occurs in old fat dogs."

HOW PIG DISEASES DIFFER FROM THOSE OF OTHER ANIMALS

By enumerating the diseases of the unfortunate pig, it does not mean to say that other animals like goats, sheep, or cattle which the Qur'an sanctions for eating, are immune from ills akin to those of swine. Indeed, they are prone to similar bacterial and parasitic attacks. Some diseases are common to all of them. Other diseases, such as Oedema, Prolapse of Rectum, Paratyphoid, Piles or Haemorrhoids, etc., belong exclusively to pigs.

It is admitted, nevertheless, that the pig is a constant victim to various ills and diseases more than any other animal. To quote the words of Black's Veterinary Dictionary: "The pig, as seen by research workers, is the fastest-growing of the domestic animals, prone to heart troubles, parasitic ills and diseases of the arteries, greatly affected in body by mental stress."

Oppressed Press?

The newspaper industry has a key role to play in the formation of any nation. It is responsible for keeping the public informed about events local and world-wide and, by so doing, assist in the creation of an enlightened society. The press is not just a source of knowledge, but a leading factor in the moulding of public opinion and awareness.

In many respects the press in Trinidad has failed in this duty partly because of the strong business orientation and the profit motive. But it has also been restricted in the performance of its duties because of downright shabby treatment by those in 'high' places. News stories of vital interest are often withheld. Take the case of the bombing of the BWIA offices recently. This news was not published until about a week after the event. The treatment meted out to the press at the swearing in ceremony of President Ellis Clarke was ludicrous. Were it not for the protests of newsmen, an event of national import would have been obscured from public notice. Again, local newsmen were barred from covering the Independence Day Parade while foreign newsmen were unhampered. This time it was the Police Service that pulled a mild repeat of their Bloody Tuesday tactics when cameras were damaged and films of newsmen were wasted. Enough evidence for the Press Council to be replaced by an official "Oppress' Council"?

The Real Award

It is certainly in bad taste that the highest award in the land distributed to a few on our first Republic Day should be called The Trinity Cross.

According to the National Anthem,

itself objectionable in parts, Trinidad is a place where "Every creed and race finds an equal place" The choice of the Trinity Cross obviously shows a preference for Christianity over and above other religions. For Muslims, the Trinity and the Cross represent beliefs and symbols which are based on fiction, not fact and which also represent 'a lie' against God..

This is something which the leaders in the Muslim community at least should press to have changed. They should do this realizing of course that these trappings and paraphanelia of independent and republican status are ultimately of limited value anyway and that the real awards to be sought are based on seeking the pleasure of God.

No Basket Of Food

The number of persons who signed nomination papers to contest the 36 seats in the General Elections might have been one more than the 273 who actually did, if one person had had his choice—a basket of food—as his symbol.

Yasin Abu Bakr, also known as Kala Akii Bua, a prospective independent candidate for Diego Martin West was refused permission to have his chosen symbol and was offered the symbol of a bike or star instead. His basket of food was meant to emphasize the need for the people of Trinidad and Tobago to grow more food. He claims that his constitutional rights have been violated and asks: What can a hungry man do with a star?

From the evidence presented, we do not see any reason why Mr. Abu Bakr could not have been given 'the basket of food. He may justly claim, as he has done that it is a case of the squeezing of the independent and the weak by the strong, the rich and the Mighty.

But if he felt keenly and passionately that he could have made a solid contribution to the welfare of the people, was his denial of 'the basket of food' as a symbol sufficient reason for him to give up the fight?

No Easy Solution

We have always heard that one of the important benefits of fasting is that it encourages in us a greater feeling for the needs of others—particularly the less fortunate in society. How beautiful it is to see this lesson being given practical expression. In several parts of the country, we find well-to-do individuals organising meals for the needy in society in this month. It is acts like these which show that there is a lot of goodness in the Muslim society and that this society is not by any means worn out completely.

But cannot some ways be found of making these acts a more regular part of our behaviour to effect some more permanent solutions to the problems of poverty and beggary, the latter being up to now a massive and intractable problem?

It is distressing to see so many people line the pavements and the culverts around mosques on Jum'a and Eid days and to see beggars walking around the streets in droves on other days. It is certainly not a simple thing to deal with the problems they pose. Deal with it on an ad hoc basis by periodically distributing food and some clothing and you run the risk of tolerating and encouraging the problem. Deal with it by providing 'poor houses' and night hostels and shelters and you in fact institutionalise the problem.

The problem is there; the solutions are not easy to find and the attempts must be made.

(Continued from page 8)

→ But we must also be vigilant. The Elections themselves are important only up to a point. The responsibility of the electorate is not discharged on casting the vote. As individuals, each person has got responsibilities — for helping to change the environment and to direct people's responses in such a way as to create more upright human beings and a better society.

→ Self-help, voluntary community service, even so-called 'pressure-groups' for getting much needed action in neglected areas going—these are all avenues which remain to be properly explored in creating a more clean, healthy, creative, just and guided society. But to do this you have got to ask and answer the following question:

What are you working for?

Are you working for material prosperity? Are you working for a particular race, a party or class or country or region? If solely for any of these, then something is wrong. You are not realizing your real and intended purpose in life. You'd just be 'spinning top in mud'. But, to be brief, let us think about and act upon the following command often repeated in the Qur'an and we'd be taking the first correct steps on a long, long road—the road to life fulfilment:

"And strive (all together) with your wealth and your selves in the path of God."

Think about it and act upon it!

Serious Issues

With about half of Ramadan gone, people are already beginning to think of Eid. Cards are being bought and sent and so on. It is in fact not too early to think what Eid-ul-Fitr really means and who is entitled to celebrate Eid.

Eid-ul-Fitr literally means 'The Festival of the Breaking of the Fast'. Now obviously, one can only break the fast if one has fasted. Eid-ul-Fitr then is for those who have fasted, for those who have tasted the rigours and, God willing, the blessings of the month.

It is a sad fact however that many 'Muslims' without any valid excuse like sickness or travel, deliberately do not fast in the month of Ramadan and expect to be treated as Muslims nonetheless. They openly demolish this pillar of Islam.

The non-observance of the fast is just one of the symptoms of a widespread rebellion against Islam which is termed apostasy or Riddah in Arabic. This rebellion or apostasy is one of the greatest menaces eating the Muslim community from within. Other symptoms are the non-observance of Salat (the compulsory Prayer), the non-payment of Zakat (the 'purifying' tax) and the fact that you can find so-called Muslim secularists, communists, Sai Baba devotees and visitors to obeah men etc.

It needs to be emphasized that Islam is a complete and comprehensive way of life. Once a person accepts it, he cannot add to it and subtract from it at will and still be entitled to the honour and benefits of being called Muslim and being part of the Muslim community.

This question of rebellion or apostasy is a central issue facing us today and it must be faced squarely and given priority over the set of minor issues which have been given prominence by the Muslim organisations in the country.

So celebrating Eid does raise a set of serious questions for backsliding 'Muslim' individuals and for the Muslim community as a whole. By the above tokens also, it is NOT a national festival.

BEHIND THE WALLS

With the Muslim 'Chaplain' for the Prisons unable to carry out his very important duties because of ill-health and old age, the much needed service is now being denied prisoners. It is understood

that Imam Hanif has in fact submitted his resignation as 'Chaplain'.

Because this area is so crucially important, the ASJA authorities responsible for reinstating the chaplain should immediately make strenuous efforts to find a competent replacement — an energetic person with a profound knowledge of the deen, who understands people and who really has the time and inclination to devote to this job.

Prison visits really provide a golden opportunity to reform lives and to present the message of Islam in an area where it is sorely needed. As evidence, we could look towards da'wah work in the prisons of America where mosques have even been established by inmates. This work has had incredible success in reshaping individual lives and doing away with many social evils.

It is to be hoped then that the ASJA will get going and do a duty to the inmates of prison and through them to society as a whole.

Godless Guyana

The nationalisation of denominational schools in Guyana is another nail in the coffin of people's freedom in the Caribbean with the onslaught of socialism.

Guyana, styled by Burnham 'The Cooperative Republic' is in fact showing that it is not out to cooperate with the various religions in the country but is concerned with standardisation, uniformity and Socialist rectitude. Whatever pronouncements that may be made guaranteeing freedom of worship and freedom of religious belief, these pronouncements become empty if the institutions on which they depend are closed down or brought under government control.

We believe that denominational schools, underpinned as they are by a basic religious ethic, have an important part to play in the type of education needed by individuals and society and it is possible that the socialist Government of Guyana is destroying something which they are not in a position to replace by something better. They are also giving justification to the charges that 'Guyana is Godless'.

In Trinidad, the main socialist motivated party — the ULF — has been calling also for 'standardisation' in the education system. The Guyanese experiments need to be observed closely to see the type of things that could be in store for us.

**In these times
people must have standards**

**THE BEST STANDARD
THE MUSLIM STANDARD**

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