

# THE MUSLIM STANDARD

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## IT IS TIME YOU KNOW THIS MAN!

### MUHAMMAD THE GREATEST REVOLUTIONARY

by LAMARTINE\*

**"Never has a man accomplished such a huge and lasting revolution in the world....If greatness of purpose, smallness of means, and astounding results are the true criteria of human genius, who could dare to compare any great man in modern history with Muhammad?"**

"Never has a man set for himself, voluntarily or involuntarily, a more sublime aim, since this aim was superhuman: to subvert superstitions which had been interposed between man and his Creator, to render God unto man and man unto God; to restore the rational and sacred idea of divinity amidst the chaos of the material and disfigured gods of idolatry, then existing. Never has a man undertaken a work so far beyond human power with so feeble means, for he (Muhammad) had in the conception as well as in the execution of such a great design no other instrument than himself, and no other aid, except a handful of men living in a corner of the desert. Finally, never has a man accomplished such a huge and lasting revolution in the world, because in less than two centuries after its appearance, Islam, in faith and in arms, reigned over the whole of Arabia, and conquered, in God's name, Persia, Khorasan, Transoxania, Western India, Syria, Egypt, Abyssinia, all the known continent of Northern Africa, numerous islands of the Mediterranean, Spain and a part of Gaul."

"If greatness of purpose, smallness of means, and astounding results are the true criteria of human genius, who could dare to compare any great man in modern history with Muhammad? The most famous men created arms, laws and empires only. They founded, if anything

at all, no more than material powers which often crumbled away before their eyes. This man moved not only armies, legislations, empires, peoples and dynasties, but millions of men in one-third of the inhabited world; and more than that, he moved the altars, the gods, the religions, the ideas, the beliefs and the souls. On the basis of a book, every letter of which has become law, he created a spiritual nationality which blended together peoples of every tongue and of every race. He has left us as the indelible characteristic of this Muslim nationality the hatred of false gods and the passion for the One and Immaterial God. This avenging patriotism against the profanation of Heaven formed the virtue of the followers of Muhammad; the conquest of one-third of the earth to this dogma was his miracle; or rather it was not the miracle of a man but that of reason. The idea of the Unity of God, proclaimed amidst the exhaustion of fabulous theogonies, was in itself such a miracle that upon its utterance from his lips it destroyed all the ancient temples of idols and set on fire one-third of the world.

His life, his meditations, the heroic revilings against the superstitions of his country, and his boldness in defying the furies of idolatry, his firmness in enduring them for thirteen years at Mecca, his acceptance of the role of public scorn and

almost of being a victim of his fellow countrymen: all these and, finally, his flight, his incessant preaching, his wars against odds, his faith in his success and his superhuman security in misfortune, his forbearance in victory, his ambition, which was entirely devoted to one idea and in no manner striving for an empire; his endless prayers, his mystic conversations with God, his death and his triumph after death: all these attest not to an impostor but serve to affirm conviction which gave him the power to restore a faith. This faith was two-fold, the unity of God and the immateriality of God: the former telling what God is, and the latter telling what God is not; the one overthrowing false gods ... the other starting an idea with the words."

**SEE ALSO PAGES**

**5, 6, 7 and 8**

"Philosopher, orator, apostle, legislator, warrior, conqueror of ideas, restorer of rational dogmas, of a cult without images; the founder of twenty terrestrial empires and of one spiritual empire, that is Muhammad. As regards all standards by which human greatness may be measured, we may well ask; is there any man greater than he?"

\*LAMARTINE, *Histoire de la Turquie*, Paris 1854. Translation reprinted from *Al Muslimoon*, Geneva, 1962.



\* AFRO-ARAB COOPERATION \* KOREAN MUSLIMS \* NASSER \* INTERNATIONAL SURVEY

# ABORTIVE COUP OR ASSASSINATION

General Murtala Muhammad, Nigeria's head of state since July 1975, together with his ADC and his driver, was assassinated by an army colonel on 13 February. The first news came over Radio Nigeria:

'Good morning fellow Nigerians, this is Lt. Col. B.S. Dimka of the Nigerian Army calling. I bring you good tidings: Murtala Muhammed's hypocrisy has been detected. His Government is now overthrown by the young revolutionaries...'

Lt. Col. Dimka's alleged attempt to overthrow the Government was soon foiled, Dimka himself escaped and has since been captured. The question which is now being asked is: Was it an attempted coup or simply an assassination assignment? (See 'Impact', London, Feb-Mar 1976). To answer this question, some background information may be relevant.

A few days before the assassination, the Nigerian Commissioner for External Affairs, returned from an overseas tour and stressed the need for tightening the security of the country for the reason that Nigeria's stand on Angola and other international issues had not gone unnoticed by the outside world and as a result the possibility of sabotage could not be ruled out. Col. Garba's fears were shared by others as well including a Lagos radio commentator who said that the alert was well-founded and indeed very timely. He said: 'Within six months of assuming office the new administration has taken positive steps in the pursuit of a clear and dynamic foreign policy with regard both to developed and developing countries. This brings into focus the issue of nasty reactions from without and it becomes necessary that the new Nigeria should be on her guard.'

The nasty reaction could be attributed to more than one source.

Slowly and gradually Nigeria had started to emerge as a firm and principled African nation: strong in impact and feeble in noise, compared to some other 'leaders' of Africa. Angola had been a great test for the OAU, but Nigeria's firm stand had been able to sway the views of Ghana, Libya, Chad and Niger and influence the thinking even of Saudi Arabia which regards itself as blindly anti-communist.

Recently when President Ford wrote to all African heads of state 'telling' them how America viewed the Angolan situation, only Nigeria released the full text of the letter as well as its own reply. The Nigerian reply described Ford's letter as an insult to the intelligence of the African leaders and told him that they should no longer be expected to submit to 'arms-twisting' or 'over-bearing' advice from superpowers. Coming as it did from a serious minded and no-bluff leader, it was likely to be viewed in a different light than the heroics and outpourings of other African leaders.

Nasty reactions could have also come from the now all-powerful multinationals. The firm handling of a cement scandal not only spoiled the rice pie of a whole ramification of multifarious business interests, it also raised the possibility that unlike many other oil states, Nigeria may cease to be that lucrative 'development' market - if only for the fairness and incorruptibility of one man. Within three weeks' time an official committee was due to report on the indigenisation of foreign-owned business. The government had set its aim at acquiring 49% Nigerian holdings in all foreign-owned business which had in fact created a great concern among the interests likely to be affected. Further, Nigeria's foreign exchange reserves of about 2,000 billion dollars were all held in sterling which meant that Britain too had to follow closely developments in the trends and nuances of Nigeria's policy.

The screening of about 10,000 civil servants, clamp down on corruption, anticipated pruning of the armed forces and the latest reorganisation of the States all these could provide a cause of personal grievance.

There could be yet another plausible reason: the same as in the case of the murder in 1966 of Abu Bakar Tafawa Balewa and Ahmadu Bello. That is to deprive Nigeria of its Muslim leadership.

## Seoul Mosque to Open Next Month

Muslims in South Korea will have their first central mosque and Islamic centre when the 400,000 Islamic centre built in Seoul is opened. Interest in Islam in South Korea is fairly recent as the result of contacts with Turkish soldiers during the Korean War. The community numbers around 3,500.

## ERITREA: Ethiopian Defections

Three former senior Ethiopian officials recently joined the Eritrean Liberation Front. These included Maj. Gen. Zere-Miriam Azazi, a former inspector general of police in Eritrea, member of the senate and ambassador to Ghana. They charged the Ethiopian military regime with still exerting pressure, using terror and committing the ugliest acts of murder and annihilation against the Eritrean people. General Azazi said because the Ethiopian junta wanted to retain the Eritrean territory without its people, it was preventing supplies of wheat and food inside Ethiopia from reaching Eritrea as part of the campaign to starve and suppress the Eritrean people.

## BULGARIA: Campaign against Alcohol and Tobacco.

Stating that the care of man was the essence of state policy, the Bulgarian State Council has launched a campaign against alcohol and tobacco addiction aimed at curbing and gradually doing away with these evils. All state bodies and economic and public organisations are being asked to pursue ever more energetic and consistent educational, economic, social, health care, legislative and organisational activity against the misuse of alcohol and tobacco.

## AFRO-ARAB COOPERATION

A meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the Organisation of African Unity and the Arab League is expected soon to decide on further Afro-Arab cooperation and prepare the agenda for the planned conference of the respective heads of State. The movement for closer Afro-Arab cooperation gathered momentum after the last Middle East war in October 1973 and has become one of the most significant developments of our time.

## ISLAMIC STUDIES IN BELGIUM

Islamic Studies has been officially approved for Muslim children in all schools of Belgium, the Islamic Centre of Brussels has announced. The Government of Belgium has declared Islam as an officially recognised religion of the state.

## NASSER: \$15 million Mystery

Did the former Egyptian dictator, Gamal Nasser, pocket himself the 15 million dollars given by Saudi Arabia in 1967 to help the Egyptian war effort and deposit it in his personal accounts in foreign banks? Galal ed-Din Hamamsi, editor of 'Al Akhbar' newspaper, Cairo, contests an official explanation that the funds were repaid in Egyptian currency and imports.

## 'SEERAH' CONFERENCE IN PAKISTAN

An international Conference on Seerah or the Life of Prophet Muhammad is to be held at Karachi from 13 - 15 March. Research papers and appreciations on Islamic jurisprudence and various aspects of the life of the Prophet, peace be upon him, are part of an elaborate programme drawn up. Shaffick Rahaman, President General of ASJA, is expected to attend the Conference.

## ZIONIST ARROGANCE

In April last year, on Israeli Independence Day, 12 Jewish boys attempted to hold a pray-in within the precincts of the Haram ash-Sharif—one of the three most sacred and inviolable precincts in Islam—in Jerusalem. This led to an altercation with Arab youths who asked them to quit the place because the premises of a mosque can not be used for purposes other than Islamic ones. The police had to intervene and when the boys refused to leave, they were arrested.

Four of them were acquitted earlier by juvenile court and on January 28, a Jerusalem magistrate, Judge Ruth Or, acquitted the other eight saying that the Jews have the right to pray in the 'Temple Mount'. The judge castigated the police and said that in preventing the youths, the police were themselves violating the law which guaranteed free access to holy places.

Since the occupation of Jerusalem in June 1967, the Israelis, both officially and otherwise, have started to use the name 'Temple Mount' for the Haram ash-Sharif. Excavations have been started in the Masjid al-Aqsa area and these are proving a serious threat to the Islamic character of the area. The Israelis have drawn up models of the Second Temple which was destroyed almost 2,000 years ago hoping to erect it on the site of the Dome of the Rock Mosque which is the most outstanding edifice on Jerusalem's skyline. Israeli measures in Jerusalem have been put into effect despite constant international protest and UN resolutions.

Following the 'judgement' of Ruth Or, various Israeli groups are now planning to hold regular pray-ins. This is all in keeping with the well-known Israeli policy of creating de facto situations step by step: first a pretence of resistance,

then acquiescence, followed by legalisation and finally the taking up of the cause by the Israeli government itself. This is what has already happened with regard to Al-Khalil (Hebron) where the Haram of the Prophet Ibrahim, peace be upon him, has been forcibly partitioned with Jews occupying an area of the mosque.

There has been a flurry of protests and expressions of concern from many parts of the Muslim world at the Israeli court's ruling but there seem to be no clear ideas about what should or can be done. In Israeli occupied territory, there have been protests and demonstrations by Muslims which were dispersed with force and tear gas. The protests petered out because of police repression, lack of leadership and lack of clarity about the immediate objectives.



## An ambitious cultural programme

The much awaited 'World of Islam Festival' will be inaugurated on April 8 when Queen Elizabeth II open an exhibition of Arts of Islam at the Hayward Gallery in London. The festival which is seen as laying the foundation of a permanent cultural programme would cover a wide range of activities including a number of exhibitions, colloquia, publications, academic seminars, and several parallel or auxiliary events organised by other academic and cultural bodies in Britain. The principal exhibitions are Arts of Islam; The Qur'an, its calligraphy and illumination; Arts of the Hausa from West Africa; Qashqai of Iran; Carpets from Central Persia; Paintings from the Muslim courts of India; Nomad and City; Islamic Metalwork; and Science and Technology.

A major programme of the festival is the publication of a series of books by contemporary Muslim scholars including

the Sheikh of Azhar, Abul A'la Mawdudi, Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Hussain Mones and Frithjof Zehner.

The academic programme would include:

A series of lectures on Islamic Civilization by scholars from Al Azhar University;

Twenty four lectures at the Science Museum, London, on the arts and sciences of Islam;

Eight lectures on Islamic themes in European Art, at Oxford;

Six lectures on Islamic Art & History at the University of Warwick;

Symposiums on The Islamic City, at Cambridge; Islamic & the Medieval West, at the School of Oriental & African Studies, University of London; Islam and the Balkans, at Edinburgh; Arabic Studies, in London; Carpets of Central Persia, Sheffield and others.

The programmes are scheduled to run until July. From August 1976 to October 1977 the exhibition will travel to Durham, Bristol, Brighton, the Horniman Museum London, Sheffield and Edinburgh.

Parallel to the Festival would be an International Islamic Conference which is being organised by the Islamic Council of Europe. The Conference will be opened by Muhammad al-Faysal. Among the persons expected to be present are: Dr. Ahmadu Karim Gaye, secretary general of the Islamic Conference, Dr. Abdul Halim Mahmoud, the rector of Azhar Univer-

sity, Dr. Muhammad Natsir, former prime minister of Indonesia, Mr. Maulud Qasim, minister of awqaf and original education in Algeria; Shaykh Abu Bakr Gummi, Grand Qadi, Nigeria; Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi, rector, Nadwatul ulama, India; Prof. Abdul Karim Saito, head of the Islamic Association of Japan; Prof. Muhammad Asad and Abul A'la Mawdudi to address the inaugural session.

There will be ten sessions devoted to such themes as: The message of Islam, Moral and social teachings of Islam, the Qur'an, the Prophet, Islamic law and state, Women and Islam, Economic system of Islam, Islam and modern civilization, Contemporary Islamic movements, Islam and the future of humanity and Islam and the challenge of the modern age.

The various scholars participating in these sessions include Shaykh Mahmud Suubhi of Libya, Shaykh Saleh Qazzaz, secretary general of Rabita, Dr. Said Ramadan, Dr. Ahmad Najjar, Tunku Abdur Rahman, Prof. Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Prof. Hamid Algar, Prof. Umar Zubeir, Prof. Ismail Faruqi, Prof. Ishtiaq Hussain Qureshi, Mrs. Aisha Lemu, Mrs. Fatima Heeren-Sarka, Dr. Tawfiq Shawi and several others.

Mr. Salem Azzam, secretary general, Islamic Council of Europe, who is the main organiser of the Conference says that what they were aiming at was an understanding based on knowledge because it was really ignorance which was at the root of all prejudice.

## | | Aiding Imperialism | |

by Khalid M Ishaque

A realization which is slowly dawning in the Third World is about that phenomenon called new imperialism. This imperialism, whether of the traditional western type or its modern socialist mutant, is seen as keeping the whole mass of the Third World nations under an unending control by adopting new techniques and newer garbs. Imperialism is no more a physical occupation and direct administration of nations and territories. Instead, the former colonies are now 'aided' to live in permanent dependence. With the rulers having come to rely on foreign aid to bail them out of tight political corners, this benign policy has stifled a natural democratic evolution. Progressively, all self-reliance and even self-respect is killed or smothered. Once hooked, the recipients live from doze to doze.

The foreign 'experts'—an inseparable part of the package—exercise powerful influence in fixing priorities and in drawing up schemes which involve even imposing new value patterns. The experts also insist that all egalitarian or development schemes must be implemented, and administered by the governments.

The prospects of absolute power which such ideas promise to the leadership of the newly emerging states is irresistible. The 'undeveloped' leaders start with dreams of transforming their countries overnight into earthly paradise, but only slowly to wake up to the bitter reality, that while expectations have been raised, little dent has been made in the pervading poverty in equity and underdevelopment. The experts nevertheless keep saying that the masses in the underdeveloped world, being unlettered and ignorant, they are pliable and the leadership has only to persist in enforcing its policies. Countless times experience has proved these assumptions to be false. Those who do not know history tend to repeat it.

There are some contributory factors also. The rejection of the official line is rarely loud or vocal. It cannot be otherwise, because all media are officially controlled. Politicians in power within developing countries have generally no patience with the opposition. Total

official control over all sources of knowing the actuality in national and international affairs leaves those outside the governing elite totally ignorant about facts and, therefore, their criticism often consists of little but emotional tirades. Piqued by constant criticism and embarrassed by its own poor performance, the leadership impatiently seeks to drive the community towards what they consider its salvation. The sullen masses and unconvinced elites drag their feet. The bright ones amongst them often seek escape by emigration. Additionally the intellectual elite is drawn towards the western society by brighter prospects, better emoluments, greater freedom, and in many ways, better quality of life.

With the brainy ones bolting away or being excluded, the nation's affairs fall into inefficient and corrupt hands. Propaganda takes the place of actual performance. Desperately the govern-

ments seek to control every activity. When the bureaucratic inflation so produced is sought to be controlled, it very often ends up with impairing the process of decision-making. In effect there is a bigger but impotent bureaucracy which is inefficient in implementing official policies but effective in choking private enterprise, inventiveness and competitiveness.

It is not surprising on this analysis to appreciate why, even the capitalist powers prefer and promote a 'socialist' order of things for the Third World. Socialist bureaucratism, they seem to feel convinced, will so slow down growth that these nations will not ever be able to catch up with them. Even the 'authentic' socialist power, the USSR, fifty odd years after the 'revolution' has not yet succeeded in matching its economic performance with the capitalist powers. An illiterate commitment to socialism will, as it already has, more assuredly seed totalitarianism, produce internal conflict and thwart human inventiveness, enterprise, and self-confidence so necessary to break the vicious circle of apathy and poverty.

For long the Muslim world has been concerned about the state of under-representation and misrepresentation of the Muslim viewpoint in the international media. *Impact* is an independent Muslim news magazine which is a step in filling the long-felt vacuum.

Since 1971, when it was founded, *Impact* has come to be appreciated internationally for its wide news coverage—spanning the continents—and objective analyses away from the familiar style of exhortation and agitation.

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## THE ETERNAL MESSAGE OF MUHAMMAD

### DETERMINING YOUR ATTITUDE TO THE PROPHET

by Sadik Ramzan Ali

*In the ninth year of the Hijrah, at the head of an army of 30,000 gathered to meet impending aggression from the Byzantine Empire, Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be peace) delivered at Tabuk on the borders of Syria, the following pithy, profound and soul-shaking address. His concern was not for power and conquest, but to stir men's hearts to the great truths which he had come to preach.*

### The Historic Speech at Tabuk

He praised God and thanked Him and said:

Verily, the most veracious discourse is the Book of God (the Qur'an). The most trustworthy handhold is the word of piety. The best of the religions is the religion of Ibrahim. The best of the precedents is the precedent of Muhammad. The noblest speech is the invocation of God. The finest of the narratives is this Qur'an. The best of the affairs is that which has been firmly resolved upon. The worst in religion are those things which are created without sanction. The best of the ways is the one trodden by the Prophets. The noblest death is the death of a martyr. The most miserable blindness is waywardness after guidance. The best of the actions is that which is beneficent. The best guidance is that which is put into practice. The worst blindness is the blindness of the heart.

The upper hand is better than the lower hand (i.e. it is better to give than to receive). The little that suffices is better than what is abundant and alluring. The worst apology is that which is tendered when death stares one in the face. The worst remorse is that which is felt on the day of Resurrection.

Some men do not come to Friday prayer, but with hesitance and delay. And some of them do not remember God but with reluctance. The tongue which is addicted to false expression is a bubbling spring of sins.

The most valueable possession is the contentment of the heart. The best provision is that of piety. The highest

wisdom is fear of God, the Mighty and the Great. The best thing to be cherished in the hearts is faith and conviction; doubt is infidelity.

Impatient wailing and fulsome laudation of the dead is an act of ignorance. Betrayal leads one to the fire of Hell. Drinking amounts to burning. Obscene poetry is the work of the devil. Wine is the mother of all evil. The worst thing eaten is one which belongs to the orphan. Blessed is he who receives admonition from others.

Each one of you must resort to a place of four cubits (the grave). Your affairs would be decided ultimately in the next life. The worst dream is false dream. Whatever is in store is near.

To abuse a believer is transgression; raising arms against him is infidelity. To backbite him is a disobedience to God. Inviolability and sacredness of his property is like that of his blood.

He who swears by God (falsely), in fact falsifies Him. He who pardon others is himself granted pardon. He who forgives others, is forgiven by God for his sins.

He who represses anger, God rewards him. He who faces misfortunes with perseverance, God compensates him. He who acts only for fame and reputation, God disgraces him. He shows patience and forbearance, God gives him a double reward. He who disobeys God, God chastises him.

I seek the forgiveness of God.  
I seek the forgiveness of God.  
I seek the forgiveness of God.

God, the Almighty, created the Universe and everything in it. He created Man and provides his sustenance. He is the All-Powerful to Whom everything in the heavens and the earth belongs.

God created man and has provided him with all that he needs in his everyday life. Among our needs is guidance so that we might discover the purpose of our very existence and strive towards that goal.

Man was not created and then left to himself to grope about in the darkness, devising ways and means of governing his life and the lives of others. Instead, God the All Merciful and All Compassionate sent man to this earth and with man came the Apostles and Messengers of God with the message of Divine guidance on which man should base his conduct and life.

God's message has been the same throughout the ages, coming from the One Supreme Being and the mission of all the Prophets was the same—calling man to the worship of the one true God and following the ways which the Prophets had established.

The Prophets all established one way, the way of total submission and obedience to the will and commands of God. This submission in Arabic is called "Islam"; Islam is the religion that was brought by all the Prophets and it is preserved in the final Book of God—the Qur'an—and the recorded sayings and practices of His final Messenger—Muhammad, upon whom be peace. The Qur'an and the example (Arabic: Sunnah) of Muhammad is the guidance which we are to follow if we are to be among those who have submitted and surrendered to the will of God.

Now, who was this man Muhammad, what was the message which he brought and what were his achievements in this life?

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Muhammad, upon whom be peace, was only a human being who was chosen and ordained by God to be a teacher of truth to mankind and a complete model and pattern for their actions. He was nothing more or less than a human being. But he was a man with a noble and exalted mission and his unique mission was to unite humanity on the worship of the One and Only God and to teach them the way to honest and upright living in

## IN THE MESSENGER OF GOD YOU HAVE A NOBLE EXAMPLE

accordance with the laws and commands of God. He always described himself as a Messenger and servant of God and so indeed every single action and movement of his proclaimed him to be.

Muhammad, upon whom be peace, brought the message of Islam, explained its fullest meanings and implications and established a community which lived the religion of Islam in its totality. He, as the recipient of the Divine Commands, gave to mankind therefore the religion of Islam in its perfect and complete form. God says in the Qur'an:

"This day have I perfected your religion for you, completed My favour upon you and have chosen for you Islam as your religion."

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Muhammad, upon whom be peace, lived Islam and conveyed its full meanings and dimensions. Islam he taught means liberation from all sorts of slavery such as may inhibit the progress of humanity or may not allow it to follow the path of virtue and goodness. It means man's freedom from dictators who enslave him by force or fear, make him do what is wrong and deprive him of his dignity, honour, property or even life.

Muhammad, upon whom be peace, came to liberate man from such tyranny by telling him that all authority is vested in God and God alone Who is the real Sovereign. All men are His born subjects and as such God alone controls their destinies, none of them having the power to benefit aught or even avert any distress from his own self contrary to or independent of His Divine Will.

Muhammad, upon whom be peace, taught that all men shall be presented before God on the Day of Judgment to account for their performance in this life. He also taught that Islam brings to man freedom from fear or oppression inflicted on him by men like himself who are in reality as helpless as he and who are no less subject to the dominant will of God Almighty than he himself is.

Muhammad, upon whom be peace, emphasized that Islam also means freedom from lust as well, including even the lust for life as it is this very weakness of man which is exploited by tyrants and dictators intentionally or otherwise in enslaving their fellowmen. But for it no man would silently accept slavery to men like himself or sit idly by and watch tyranny strut abroad and dare not challenge it. It is indeed a great blessing

of Islam that it taught man to fight tyranny and oppression bravely rather than cringe before them in abject servitude.

God says in the Qur'an:

"Say: if it be that your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your mates or your kindred, the wealth that you have gained, the commerce in which you fear a decline, or the dwellings in which you delight, are dearer to you than God, or His Apostle or the striving in His cause, then wait until God brings about His decision! God does not guide the rebellious." (9 : 24).

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Fourteen hundred years ago Muhammad, upon whom be peace, delivered his message to mankind:

"Cease to worship the idols which you worship. No mortal being, no star, no tree, no stone, no spirit is worthy of human worship. Therefore, bow not your heads in worship before them. The entire universe with everything that it contains belongs to God Almighty alone. He alone is the Creator, the Nourisher, the Sustainer, and consequently the real Sovereign before Whom all should bow down and to Whom all should pray and render obedience. Thus worship Him alone and obey His Commands only. Loot and plunder, murder and rapine, injustice and cruelty—all the vices in which you indulge are crimes in the eyes of God. Speak the truth. Be just. Do not kill anyone. Do not rob anyone. Take your lawful share. Give what is due to others in a just manner. You are all human beings and all human beings are equal in the eyes of God. None is born with the slur of shame on his face, nor anyone has come into the world with

the mantle of honour hung around his neck. He alone is high and honoured who is God-fearing and pious, true in words and deeds. Distinction of birth and glory of race are no criteria of greatness and honour. One who fears God and does good deeds is the noblest of human beings. One who is shorn of the love of God and is steeped in bad manners is doomed. There is an appointed day after death when you shall have to appear before your Lord. You shall be called to account for all your deeds—good or bad, and you shall not be able then to hide anything. The whole record of your life shall be an open book to Him. Your fate shall be determined by your good or bad actions. In the court of the True Judge—the Omniscient God—the question of unfair recommendation and favouritism

**SMILING  
IS  
CHARITY**

does not arise. You shall not be able to bribe Him. No consideration will be given to your pedigree or parentage. True faith and good deeds alone will stand you in good stead at that time. He who will be fully equipped with them shall take his abode in heaven of eternal happiness, while he who will be devoid of them shall be cast in the fire of Hell."

This is the message, the eternal message of Muhammad, upon whom be peace. What then should be our relationship with him and the Message which he brought? The following verses from the Qur'an will enlighten us on this question:

"O you who believe obey God and obey the Apostle. And those charged with authority from among you. And if you differ in anything among yourselves refer it to God and His Apostle, if you do believe in God and the Last Day, that is best and most suitable for final determination." (4 : 59).

"But no, by thy Lord, they can have no Faith until they make you (Muhammad) judge in all disputes between them, and find in their souls no resistance against thy decisions but accept them with the fullest conviction." (4 : 65)

So our attitude to the Prophet and the message which he brought should be to say with the deepest conviction:

"I am satisfied with Allah as Lord, and with Islam as religion, and with Muhammad (may the peace and blessings of God be upon him) as Prophet and Messenger."

Sources:

1. Towards Understanding Islam by Abdul A'la Maududi.
2. Islam the Misunderstood Religion, by Muhammad Qutb.



## LET YOUR LIVES MIRROR THE TEACHINGS OF THE NOBLE PROPHET

Prophet Muhammad, may the peace and blessings of God be upon him, is reported to have said:

"There is no person who does not have the obligation of (doing) charity every day that the sun rises."

Whereupon he was asked:

"O messenger of God, wherefrom would we get something to give in charity (so often)?"

To which he replied:

"Indeed the gates to goodness are many: glorifying God, praising Him, magnifying Him, saying 'There is no god but Allah', enjoining the good and forbidding the wrong, removing (any source of harm from the road, listening to the aggrieved, guiding the blind, showing the seeker his need, striving as far as your two legs could carry you and with deep concern to give succour to him who asks, carrying with the strength of your arms (the burdens of the weak. All these are (acts of) charity which are an obligation on you."

And he added:

"And your smiling in the face of your brother is charity, your removing of stones and thorns from people's paths is charity, and your guiding a man gone astray in the world is charity for you."

Any person who comes across this beautiful saying must pause for some moments to consider some of its meanings and implications. The saying (Arabic: hadith) has two main concerns: (1) awakening the springs of goodness in the human heart and (2) strengthening the society with the bond of love, affection and brotherhood.

Charity, as it is traditionally understood, consists of money or various objects given by the rich to help the poor or by the strong to help the weak. Charity, according to this understanding, is extremely narrow and its effects on the life of society is limited. The saying of the Prophet, however, takes charity out of this narrow, physical meaning and on to a spiritual plane that opens up a vast and limitless world by emphasizing that Every good is charity. And on every person is the obligation of charity.

This is a unique concept of charity. What is charity? Isn't it 'giving'? Indeed, so it is. Then let every act of giving be charity—even a smile in the face of your brother. Charity has a physical and a spiritual dimension which are thus fused into one so that a person can say in giving charity:

Take this penny, or take this help-

ing hand or take this feeling!

It is all one practical method proceeding from the depths of the soul but we do not always realise the essence of it. The noble Prophet makes us realise the single spiritual essence which lies behind every act of goodness. But the Prophet, peace be upon him, does not want us merely to know. Knowledge is not an end in itself. He wants to make us return to goodness, goodness which is the very word of God, and the word of God is supreme.

He wants that each of us should move and stir ourselves from within into goodness so that giving would become a habit of life, and that this habit would pass from person to person and prove infectious throughout society. The wisdom of the Prophet lies in expanding the scope of goodness so that it becomes within the scope of each individual. If charity or goodness were to remain restricted to tangible things or to money, many persons would be prevented from doing humanitarian deeds and much wealth would remain locked up within individuals with no one benefitting and no one discovering its rich and abundant meaning.

The noble Prophet himself acted in a kind and concerned manner in all his human relationships just as a kind and concerned father would behave towards his son. He showed the way to people—step by step—and identified himself with their problems tirelessly and whatever the obstacles were. He showed in so doing the best way to train people and to win their hearts. That is why he made actions which seem to be quite insignificant part of charity. That is why he was able to say

"Smiling in the face of your brother is charity and pouring out from your bucket into your brother's bucket is charity."

There are some people who do not ever smile and they do not ever open up their facial features when they meet others. There are people who are even stingy with a drop of water, a drop of God-given water! They may be malicious or within them there is a disease which has blocked the springs of goodness in their souls. The problem is not merely a smile or a drop of water. It concerns the act of giving. Giving is movement from within which opens up the locked doors of the self, stirring the spiritual hand and making it open freely and widely. Giving is a positive movement and the soul that is conditioned by positive impulses is a living, stirring, active soul which stands in marked contrast to the negative, cramped

and feeble soul.

Charity in its tangible, narrow sense divides people into the receivers on the one hand and the givers on the other. This division inspires among the receivers feelings of weakness and even of error, and among those who give feelings of pride and conceit. Such a division, for society, is extremely evil.

But the comprehensive Islamic concept of charity which includes all good actions however small they may be, allow every person whether rich or poor, to become givers and receivers on an equal basis. This points to another basic principle of Islamic thought and behaviour—that the standard on which life is judged is not the materialistic or the economic standard alone but one based on faith, feeling and sensitivity which form the core of human relations.

Mankind has always been absorbed with and infatuated by amassing wealth and possessions, and often consider such materialism to be the very mainstay of life. But a society based on economic and materialistic considerations alone is often dry and hard and callous and is eaten up by hatred and envy.

Of course, Islam does not neglect the material world and the needs of life. Indeed it gives it due attention. But it does not merely stop there, because life in actuality does not stop there. Instead it carries it on to wider and vaster horizons, to greater and higher levels. For Islam is the religion of life complete. And from it comes the ties of faith, affection and love to bind hearts and the society together. God says in the Qur'an:

"And (as for the believers) God has brought their hearts together. And if you had spent all that is in the earth you could not have brought their hearts together." (8 : 63).

The Prophet, peace be upon him, has said:

"No one of you believes until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself."

This is the essence of charity. So begin by meeting your brother with a smile. This would open up locked souls, penetrate to the depths of the heart and exert a magnetic bond on society. Read the hadith again and see how it reaches into the depths of the soul, the essence of existence and creates hearts that are tender, pure, radiant and beautiful.

Adapted from "Qubusat mina-r-rasul" by Muhammad Qutb.

## || HONEY - 'Healing for Mankind' ||

Honey has many wonderful and varied uses. There are many sayings of the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, on the healing powers of honey. The Qur'an itself mentions this fact about honey and in fact a whole chapter (surah) is named after the Bee—Chapter 16. Verses 68 and 69 of this surah read as follows:

"And thy Lord inspired the bee, saying: Choose thou habitation in the hills and in the trees and in that which they thatch; then eat of all fruits, and follow the ways of thy Lord, made smooth (for thee). There comes forth from their bellies a drink diverse of hues, wherein is healing for mankind. Lo! here-in is indeed a sign for people who reflect."

A commentary on these verses read thus:

"The bee works by the inspiration of its nature which is given by God. It is a kind of revelation that it works accordingly. The bee works in a minutely curious way which even a thoughtful man cannot do, either in constructing its cells, in dividing the work among themselves or in the manner it sifts its fine honey. The verse which describes honey as 'healing for mankind' has been professionally explained by some specialists in medicine. However, the fact of the healing quality of honey is established as soon as it is mentioned in the Qur'an. Thus the Muslim must believe, based on the comprehensive established truth in the Qur'an as it has been transmitted from the Messenger of God." (Fi Zilal al-Qur'an, by Sayyid Qutb).

Some of the ahadith (sayings) of the Prophet, peace be upon him, on the subject of honey are:

"A man once came to the Messenger of God, peace be upon him, and said, 'My brother has a running stomach.' The Messenger said to him, 'Give him honey.' And he did so. Then he came and said, 'O messenger of God, I gave him honey but that merely increased his loose bowels.' He, (the messenger) said, 'Go and give him honey.' So he did and gave him honey. Then he came and said, 'O messenger, that merely loosened his bowels more.' The Messenger, peace be upon him, said, 'God speaks the truth and the stomach of your brother lies. Go and give him honey.' So then, he gave

him honey (in a sufficient quantity) and he was healed."

"Healing is to be found in three things: the drinking of honey, bleeding and cauterisation but I prohibit my community from practising cauterisation."

"For you two cures (are recommended): honey and the Qur'an."

\* \* \*

Before the introduction of sugar, according to an article in the London paper 'Melting Pot', honey was regarded as a luxury sweetening agent and only the rich could afford to use it. Of recent times, however, with the mass production of sugar, honey has fallen largely into disuse, a fact which from the nutritional standpoint, may be regarded as one of the cardinal mistakes in modern dietetics.

Honey has many advantages over other sweetening agents, including the facts that it is a natural and gentle laxative; it is assimilated and usable by the organism within 20 minutes; it does not irritate the linings of the alimentary tract; it makes available an enormous amount of energy without systematic shock; it has many and varied therapeutic purposes; it has a very high mineral content; it is a powerful germicide; it contains vitamins, especially C; it is one of the mildest of foods and can be assimilated by the most delicate and by the young; it acts as a sedative, and finally, there are many different flavours and varieties.

The mineral content of honey includes phosphorus, potassium, calcium, sodium, sulphur, iron, copper, silica, chlorine, aluminium, magnesium, a deficiency of which may give rise to lack of energy and listlessness.

Many experiments have been conducted to test the effect of the use of honey in this respect. At a Swiss sanatorium for children in the Canton of St. Gallen, three groups of children were chosen; one group was fed on a normal diet, the second on a normal diet plus tonics and medication, and the third on a normal diet plus honey. It was found that the children in the third group outshone the other children in all respects—weight, blood-count, general appearance, vitality and energy.

Honey is a source of vitamins A, B and C, and unlike most vegetables or fruits, it does not quickly lose the potency of its vitamins; spinach, for example, loses half its vitamin C content 24 hours after picking, and fresh fruit loses much of its vitamin content during storage.

Ordinary sugars have to be broken down in the digestive tract by enzymes and converted into simple sugars before they can be utilised by the body. Honey however, has already been broken down into simple sugars—dextrose and levulose—by the bee. This is not a very important consideration in a healthy organism which is readily capable of breaking down the more complex sugars, but where the digestion is weak it may, under certain conditions, mean the difference between life and death.

For infant feeding, when breast-milk is not available, honey is the best sweetener for cow's milk. It is easily tolerated by most infants and, of course, it contains minerals, vitamins, and protein. It has a flavour that appeals to most children, and it is mildly laxative and antiseptic. Infants who are given honey do not appear to suffer from colic. Its rapid absorption prevents fermentation, and by regulating its use in the diet infant constipation and diarrhoea can be avoided or controlled. For anyone engaging in feats entailing energy expenditure honey is excellent, because its simple sugars are carried direct to the liver and muscles by the bloodstream and stored as glycogen, ready, when needed, for the release of energy.

It is interesting to note that honey can be kept almost indefinitely—in fact, it improves during storage. A jar of honey which was found in Egypt, in a fairly liquid, edible state, and with its aroma preserved, was estimated to be over 3,300 years old.

The bee is probably the most exploited insect in the world, for it has to carry about 37,000 nectar loads to produce one pound of honey, which means travelling from 50,000 to 300,000 miles.)

Whatever its other useful properties, there is not any doubt that honey is a wonderful food and (it can be said that) no meal-table is complete without it and no day should pass without its consumption.



## ATTITUDES TO ILLEGITIMACY

**"A CRISIS FOR THE COUNTRY"**

More than half the population of Trinidad and Tobago is illegitimate, according to the figures from the Central Statistical Office which we published on the front page of our December issue.

We wanted to find out some of the attitudes of Trinidadians to this situation and our reporter, Muhammad Sayyid, went out to talk to people. Here are some of the results of his survey:

Mr. M.I. Maraj, a teacher, regards illegitimacy as a 'very great problem' and attributes it to the increasing 'American influence' which propagates 'free sex' amongst the fast-maturing youth. Babies are not the aim of this love-making, they are but an unwanted after-product. The widespread use of contraceptives unwittingly encourages people to freely go into sex, he feels. People should be made aware that contraceptives are to decrease unwanted pregnancies and not to intensify sex, he suggests.

According to Ahamad Kasim, a student of San Juan Secondary School, the present inflationary trends and the problems of unemployment, poverty and social injustice are at the root of sexual indulgence. The inability of parents to provide their offspring with a proper mode of life also lends to the creation of social delinquents who seek release from their frustration through fornication. He feels that unless these conditions are alleviated, there would be an increase in drug-taking and other social disorders. A friend of his sees the present situation as a struggle for survival of the fittest, with the illegitimate getting the rough end of the shaft.

Francis Lau, another teacher, lays the blame at religion's door. Being a believer in what he calls 'ordinary life', he feels that the rigid laws drafted by 'religion' make life hard for the ordinary man. People can't cope with them, and so they just do their own thing, resulting in over-population. He suggests that people set up small organisations in their districts where they can discuss their problems. The Government, he says, ought to take

care of the unfortunate.

Lester James, a young plumber, does not believe in the present trend. Says Mr. James: 'I find having a child here, one there, and another one someplace else, a waste. When you get married and have to maintain all those children, sometimes the income not reading right, it will be strenuous. That can't be right...Again sex is a holy thing and you should not abuse it.'

There are those who feel that marriage has nothing to do with birth and procreation. They maintain that a child is a child, it is the manner in which it is brought up that counts. Some attribute the neglect of the marriage institution to 'free sex' and a police constable believes that the imposition of stiffer penalties on offenders can only slow down the birth rate and not eradicate it altogether. One young man sees free sex as the natural trend, with boys and girls not knowing what they are searching for.

Miss Peggy Jordan sees the problem as basically one of ignorance. She votes that sex be taught in schools, thereby removing the ignorance of the children. Kathleen Mitchell thinks that men ought to have a greater sense of responsibility towards the women. She relegates the problem to the realm of feeding, sheltering and educating the children. Yvonne Boyce, an unwed mother, blames the present day disregard of women by men. Miss Angela Alvarez, another unwed mother, simply blames the "giddy-headedness" of youth. However, she predicts a crisis for the country if things remain unchecked.

And according to a taxidriver: 'The Government, the churches, the older heads must all get together and set up a new educational system. The old one has failed.'

It was apparent that the average Trinidadian views illegitimacy as a personal problem. A few regard it as a social problem of great magnitude. Some do not regard it as a problem at all—'marriage having nothing to do with

children'. There seemed to be an assumption that illegitimacy was mainly a problem caused by the youth and affecting youth.

The causes given for the problem were many, ranging from American influence, social and economic conditions, the irresponsibility of men and even the fault of the churches and religion.

Solutions to the problem, where it was recognised as a problem, ranged from the need to introduce sex education in schools, devising a new education system altogether, greater Government intervention (as if government is immune from contributing to the problem), or, on the part of women, just vaguely hoping that men would become more responsible.

Certainly it is clear that we do need a great deal more education regarding such matters as sex, morals and society and indeed the purpose of life as a whole if we are to do anything to help eradicate illegitimacy. But it would seem that one of the biggest problems in this task is for government and people as a whole to recognise that it is a problem!

Trinidad & Tobago Muslim Youth  
Organisation  
(Youth Arm of ASJA)

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on

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*A Programme of recitations, talks  
and discussions on the meaning  
and purpose of the Qur'an*

Sunday 4th April, 1976  
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Those were the simple, though not necessarily good, days of my life. A baby was on the way, father gone - a consequence which seems to be inherently part of Black womanhood. Somehow I forgot how to organize my life. I had turned Islam over in my mind, more than once. I knew there was a God. Logic told me that if I could breathe air that I could not see, touch or smell, then there was nothing abstract about believing in a God I couldn't see. There was never any question in my mind of returning to church. After all the hand-clapping, foot-stomping, rocking to that old time gospel, we all went home to spend another week in Hell. My options boiled down to the Nation of Islam and the Sunni (orthodox) Muslims. Elijah teaches that the Black man is God. After considering the deplorable state of the Black man, I realized I couldn't follow Elijah. (I've never heard God called a masochist). My decision, then, was clear; it was orthodox Islam or nothing.

I sat facing Imam K. Ahmad Tawfiq one Friday afternoon and repeated the following: *Ash-hadu an la ilaha illa Allah wa ash-hadu anna Muhammadan abduhu wa Rasuluh...* What does it mean? What it has come to mean in recent times is my own brand of revolution. Radical change—not from the outside in, but the inside out. My life has become not just another ball game, but an entirely new sport. However, the major ground rule in this sport is no cheating. Islam, in the most profound sense, is no game at all. The cheater only loses, and the winner is always right.

## RADICAL CHANGE FROM WITHIN

by Rabi'a K Jabbar

With the usual zeal, I began haunting Muslim bookstores, liberating library books, and pestering every Muslim I met with a thousand and one questions. Unfortunately, people were not very tolerant of some of my uninformed and sometimes stupid questions. I left New York in an arrogant huff and settled, or tried to, in Jersey.

Here I found the quiet, but where would I find the peace? Here I found out what prayer is. If you live in the same world as I do, then you know it to be a place where people eat children for breakfast, kill and rape women for lunch, and castrate men for dinner. If, in such a world where crackers sell their mothers and niggers kill their brothers, there is no need for God and prayer, then there never will be. To stop in the course of a day, run from the madness and noise, find that quiet place, pray — this is me. That place is quiet — the peace is prayer,

knowing what is sad and good, knowing that, ultimately, no one matters except the Creator. With this as my armour, I go to do battle with my interrogators — you.

Why you wear them clothes? What's with parties? How can you marry a man you don't know?

To cover your beauty is modesty; it is a drag to go some place where people do all the things which you are forbidden; and I haven't seen too many madly-in-love-have-known-him-for-years marriages work lately, so maybe it's time for a change. Perhaps, it is advantageous, to some degree, to marry a man you have known for some time. Be that as it may.

One of the most important elements of any marriage, which Islam emphasizes, is the maintenance of peace. When such peace is unbalanced beyond resolution, the Muslim marriage is dissolved.

And what about equality? Woman does have a 'place', if you will. But so does man! Man must follow the Imam (leader), woman follows man, and child follows woman. We are equals in much the same way as a three- and four-star general. Both are leaders with rank, both respected; however, one has a little more responsibility and final say than the other. Man, in the role designed for him, is provider and teacher of woman, and is the four-star general. The Qur'an tells me that on Judgement Day men will be questioned about their wives, and the women about their children. Such is the question of role in Islam — not what is, or which one, but how to.

(Adapted from ENCORE, USA).

## THE MESSAGE IN CALYPSO?

To most Trinidadians, Calypso is a unique form of entertainment solely indigenous to Trinidad. It consists of pulsating rhythm and lyrics which cover a wide range of topics, providing abundant fun and laughter for our frolicsome people.

This art form, however, originated among the tribes of West Africa. It was a painless means of learning the oral tradition and history of the various nations and it was by no means considered simply an 'art form'. It was a medium of education and social commentary. The Slave Trade with its wholesale exportation of human cargo, was responsible for

its introduction to the West Indies.

However, owing to the nature of life on the plantations of the West Indies, the calypso radically changed to a 'protest song' which the slaves used to give vent to their resentment at the treatment they received. These songs were able, when blended with the language of the drums, to incite the slaves to insurrection. These protest songs became the instrument of clamour for change which the slaves used in their battle for social justice. They laid bare the horrors of slavery, the unnatural conditions under which they lived and worked, the white man's ravages of their human dignity and

their longing for freedom. So it was little wonder that the slave masters tried to stop these activities by prescribing the most inhuman measures they could devise.

Even after the abolition of slavery, the calypso continued to be used as a medium of social commentary and protest. Some calypsonians such as Attila the Hun used it to make people aware of the state of world-politics and governmental policy, although calypsonians retained the stigma with which the slave masters had branded them. They were looked upon as rebels in the early

*Continued on page 11*



West Indian 'free' society, an image with which no self-respecting members of the society wished to identify. This had the effect of ostracising them and they began to sink to low levels by singing in rum shops or backyards for whomsoever was willing to buy them drinks or give them food.

\* \*

Whereas the calypsonians of old sang without compromise in order to enlighten the people, today's calypsonian sings mostly for personal aggrandisement and mere entertainment. Of course, there are some exceptions, but the effect of commercialisation and seasonal identification with Carnival has greatly robbed calypso of any positive educational value it may have. In fact, the calypso of today is mostly riddled with smut which not only reflects the level of the society's moral degeneration but helps to pave the way for the introduction of further lewdness. That people like Sparrow should be honoured and hold the pride of place among calypsonians shows the depths to which the nation has sunk. The great contrast between the calypso of today and that of yesteryear is most apparent in the accord given to the modern calypsonian who is the darling of the nation, singing for the entertainment of the people under the patronage of the leaders of the society. No longer is he a revolutionary.

Unlike its forerunner, calypso today rarely contains much intellectual worth, although the ease with which it is learned is most conducive to its dissemination of propaganda. The ancient man had the foresight to employ this medium for the all-round education of the society, a factor which it would do educators well to appreciate. The foresight and understanding of men such as Chalkdust, Stalin and Valentino in their approach to calypso is worthy of note: they are rediscovering the value of this method of communication. As demonstrated by most of the participants of this year's Dimanche Gras Calypso King Competition, the calypso is way above its false affinity with Carnival. The contributions of Chalkdust against smut, hypocrisy and double standards, of Brother Mudada against nepotism and corruption and of Duke calling for a reorientation of education away from colonial values—all seemed positively out of place at the height of the Carnival bacchanal. (Incidentally, who would have thought

## LETTERS

### GOOD COMMONWEALTH COMPANY

Congratulations on your article "India: The Democratic Myth" in the February issue of your newspaper. The views of Mr. Yacoob from California are also well worth noticing.

What is happening is that Mrs. Ghandi has opted for the legal thuggery that seems to be part and parcel of some other Commonwealth countries. For example, in passing her retroactive legislation Mrs. Ghandi was following the example set by the Eric Williams Government when in 1970 he amended the Defence Act with retroactive effect for the sole purpose of prosecuting persons whom he regarded as his political enemies. And of course he not only passed legislation during a State of Emergency but actually went on to hold national Local Government Elections during the same emergency. Again when Dr. Martin Sampath pointed to the fact that under the provision of the draft New Constitution the police were virtually being rendered immune from any legal action if they killed a citizen, little did he and other citizens realise that Eric Williams was following the pattern set by the Government of Dominica in its

that Islam, the Qur'an and one of the first Muslims—Bilal, would have been mentioned then, although to use these as Duke did for promoting a consciousness based on blackness is totally unacceptable.) In the end, Chalkie's refusal to accept the 'fool's bonnet' is hopefully an attempt to purify this medium's image and imbue it with a more useful message or content.

But even when calypso has a serious message, the question still has to be asked whether, associated as it is with the bawdy and trivial, the fun and gaiety of the Tents and Carnival, whether calypso does not act as a sort of opium for the people encouraging them to laugh at the woes and problems of society rather than doing anything about them. To say the least, it would be an achievement if calypso could be separated from its 'Carnival mentality'. And can calypsonians then softly and smoothly change the expectations and tastes of the people by dealing with topics of national importance which may hopefully awaken the sleeping minds to the serious challenge of nation-building and life-fulfilment?

ridiculous "Prohibited and Unlawful Societies Act 1974, Sections 9, 10 (1), (2) and (3) of which are as follows:

9. No proceedings, either criminal or civil, shall be brought or maintained against any person who kills or injures any member of an association or society designated unlawful, who shall be found any time of day or night inside a dwelling house.

10. (1) A member of the police force may arrest without warrant any person whom he has reasonable cause to suspect to be a member of an unlawful society.

(2) A member of the police force, may with a warrant, issued by a magistrate or Justice of the Peace so enabling him to do, with proper assistance, enter any home by force, and breaking of doors if necessary, and search the same if he has reasonable cause to suspect that a member of an unlawful society or association may be hiding therein and may search other places and premises not used as a home without warrant, where he has reasonable cause to suspect that a member of an unlawful society or association may be found.

(3) No proceedings either criminal or civil shall be brought against any member of the Police Force for any action taken in performance of his duty (ies) under this Act.

In Grenada, no sooner did Mr. Gairy hear of the Privy Council's decision upholding the terrible Newspaper Law of Antigua, he formally introduces similar legislation for the sole purpose of silencing the New Jewel Movement and its newspaper and proceeds to search for arms and ammunition and to confiscate the newspapers.

Mr. Cato in St. Vincent gave a weakish assurance that his Government will not pass a similar law but he then proceeds to resurrect the 'Prohibited Publications Act 1939' and has banned and seized all types of literature, and so Vincentians are frightened. And the prostitution of the laws continues as Mr. Cato, a barrister, whose party won 10 of the 12 seats in the present parliament and who was the Leader of the Opposition in the previous Government immediately turns around and with a straight face and legal dignity amends his Country's Constitution so that Mrs. Ivy Joshua an unfortunate and illiterate person can be made the Leader of the Opposition. Poor Mrs. Joshua now in a position to appoint to Parliament a person in opposition to the Government turns around and appoints the Chauffeur to her husband who is the Deputy Premier. And this blatant farce is performed by His Excellency the Governor.

Mrs. Gandhi seems to have good Commonwealth company.

Arthur F Lawrence,  
"Chambers",  
14 St. Vincent Street,  
Port of Spain.



## THE PROPHET'S BIRTHDAY

## WHAT OF THIS OCCASION?

"Nothing at all" was the reply of one Trinidadian on Frederick Street to a question on how much he knew of the Prophet Muhammad put by one of our reporters. And it was surprising how many people questioned at random also knew nothing or very little or had a distorted knowledge of Islam and the Prophet in this multi-racial, multi-religious society of ours.

The survey conducted so far tends to show that existing Muslim organisations which constantly assert that the community is intact and thriving have not perhaps been sufficiently concerned to make Islam more alive and widespread in the country. If this is true, it would cast a rather different light on the remark of Dr. Eric Williams, speaking recently at a Church opening in Curepe, that Muslims in Trinidad had become more 'aggressive' in the propagation of Islam. (He could of course have used a less emotive word to express what he meant.)

Certainly, da'wah or inviting to Islam is one of the major aspects of the Prophet's life which Muslims in Trinidad need to think and do something about as they celebrate the Prophet's birthday. Much of this issue of 'The Muslim Standard' is devoted on this occasion to giving an idea of the life and mission of Muhammad, so that hopefully we may be encouraged to find out more.

But what of this occasion itself?

It is perhaps fitting to recall that neither the Prophet himself nor the early Muslims were in the habit of celebrating this event. It was only much, much later, when the morale of the Muslim community became so low and when the integrity of the Muslim Ummah (nation) became fragmented that people started celebrating his birth—no doubt in the hope of rekindling some of the devotion to the Prophet and the enthusiasm to follow his example or Sunnah.

There is some profound significance for example, in the fact that the Muslim era begins not with the birth of Muhammad, may God's blessings be on him, but with his Hijrah or emigration from Mecca to Medina. This is as it should have been for Islam does not take its name from a person or a particular people. It is unique

in this respect. Islam means submission to God and is the religion taught by all the prophets sent by Him. The Hijrah was the event heralding the real consolidation of the Islamic community and the watershed marking the perpetual struggle between the forces of good and evil. The nature of this struggle and the relationship between the Prophet and Islam was something that Abu Bakr, the first Khalifah (successor) of the Prophet, realised all too well when on the death of Muhammad, upon whom be peace, he admonished the Muslims with words to this effect: Those who worship Muhammad, know that Muhammad is dead. But those who worship God, know that He is Ever-Living and will never die.

The devotion of the Sahabas (Companions) to the Prophet and his mission was, nonetheless, deep and total. It was not something set aside for a particular date; it was not something that was empty and formal or done for the sake of prestige and the acclaim of men. It was such intense devotion which led to the astonishing spread of Islam in the space of a few decades from the Arabian peninsula to the shores of the Atlantic on the one hand to the borders of China on the other.

In our own times Muslims all over the world now celebrate the birthday of Muhammad, upon whom be peace. In many cases, it has become an occasion for leaders to exploit and for the generality of the Muslim public to come out, as at the two Eids, and demonstrate their connection (often tenuous) with the Islamic faith.

If we are to celebrate this event, we should rather use it as an occasion to commit ourselves to the teaching of the noble Prophet, to pattern our lives on his conduct and to encourage others to walk in the same path so that we can help to create better individuals and a better society.

All this is not something that can be set aside for a particular day or month. It cannot be a part-time affair. It has to be part of a constant, determined effort made throughout our lives.

*May God open our hearts and guide our footsteps along His Path, the path followed by His noble Messenger, Muhammad—peace and blessings of God be upon him.*

In these times  
people must have standards

## THE BEST STANDARD

## THE MUSLIM STANDARD

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