

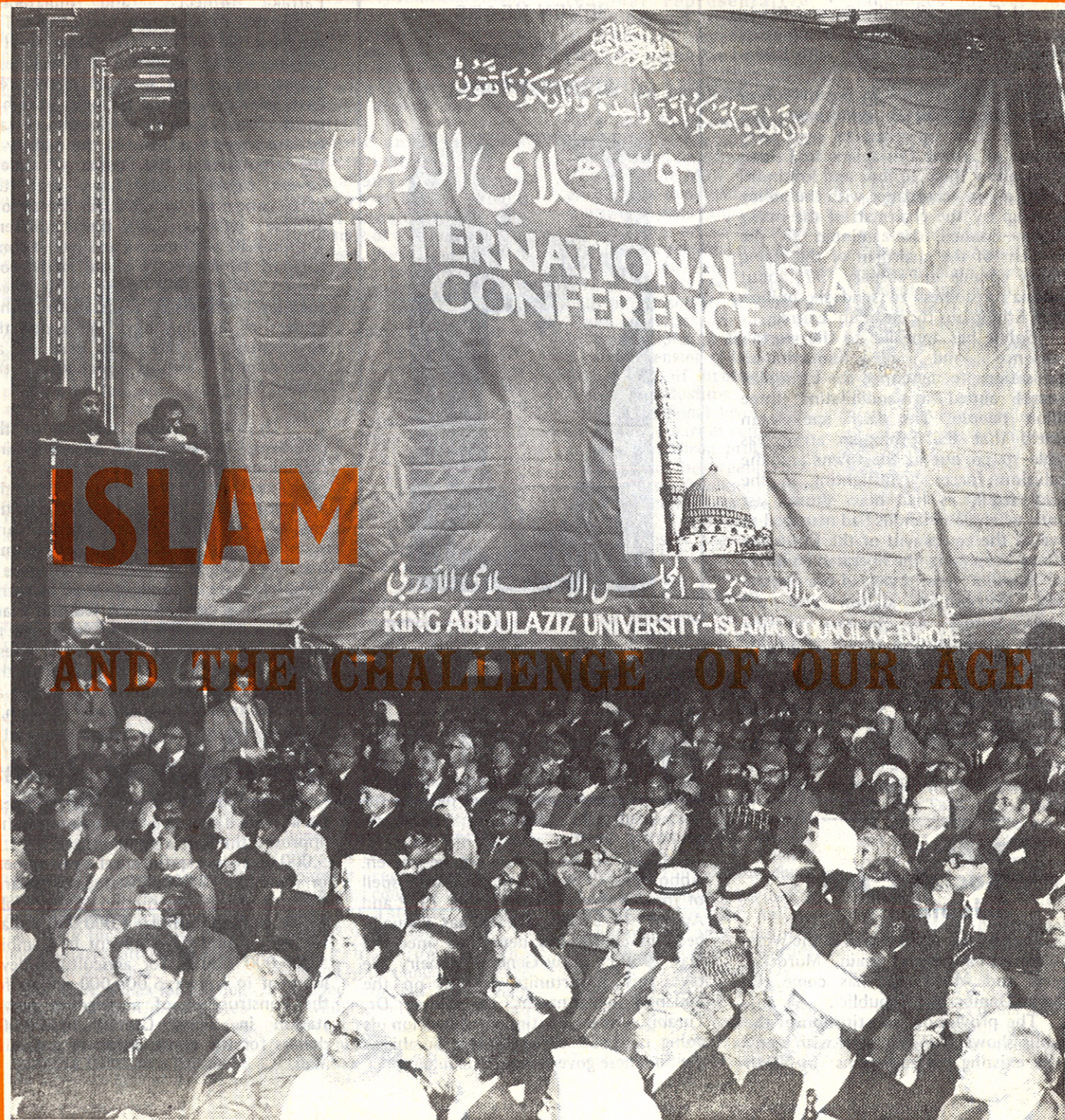
THE

MUSLIM STANDARD

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* * * SUDAN: RELEASE HASAN AL-TURABI

INTERNATIONAL SURVEY

Eritrea: 'clean up' by Ethiopia

Eritrea, that small country on the western side of the Red Sea, continues to be one of the bleeding spots in the world today (for background see 'The Muslim Standard', No. 3).

A spokesman for the Eritrean Liberation Front, Osman Saleh Sabbe, has recently accused Ethiopia, which annexed Eritrea after the Second World War, of adopting a policy of expelling Eritreans and replacing them with Ethiopians. Sabbe has alleged that, having failed to sustain its military occupation of Eritrea, the Ethiopian government has begun to draw up plans to send large numbers of armed Ethiopians to Eritrea and to allow them to loot and kill indiscriminately in accordance with the policy drawn up by the chairman of the ruling military council. He pointed to the statement of the chairman of the ruling military council in February 1975 about Ethiopia's readiness to send six million armed Ethiopians to 'clean up' Eritrea.

Sabbe has appealed to the world's conscience and all humanitarian organisations to denounce the Ethiopian schemes aimed at annihilating three million people. The ELF spokesman claimed that the Ethiopian army was unable to go out of the towns and the revolution forces were fighting in the capital itself, as had been shown last month when commandos had managed to move all the equipment of the Ethiopian military hospital to the liberated countryside. 'Bandits' have damaged the electric power distribution station and the cement factory in Massawa in the Eritrean administrative region according to official Ethiopian reports.

Four persons who had allegedly engaged in subversive activity and had collaborated with 'bandits' in attacking the Assab refinery were sentenced to death and executed; 12 others were given life or long-term imprisonment with hard labour.

Sahara: 'Socialist' and 'Islamic'

Out of the tragic feuds in the Western Sahara involving Spain, Morocco, Algeria and Mauritania has come the 'Saharan Democratic Republic'.

The provisional constitution of the republic shows that it is beset with many of the existing contradictions in North

Africa and the Middle East: the constitution defines the republic as 'socialist, Arab and democratic'. Another clause says 'Islam is the religion of the people and the state and the source of its laws. The Arabic language is the official national language. Muhammad Lamine Ould Ahmed has been declared prime minister.

SEVEN YEARS IN PRISON WITHOUT TRIAL



Dr. Hasan al-Turabi (above) leader of the Islamic Charter Front, Sudan, who is detained without trial in Khartoum central prison since December 1973, has had a severe heart attack recently. Author of several books (including 'Salaat, the Pillar of Religion' which he wrote in prison) and former dean of the law faculty in Khartoum, Dr. Turabi played a leading part in the peaceful overthrow of the military regime of Gen. Abboud in 1964. Except for a brief spell of freedom between December 1972 and August 1973, Dr. Turabi has virtually been in continuous detention since the May 1969 coup by General Numeiry. We take this opportunity to call on the Sudanese government to release Dr. Turabi whose continued detention is doing no good either to Dr. Turabi or the Sudanese government.

Bangladesh: Farakka threat

India is often referred to as the liberator of Bangladesh. One continuing test of India's real intention has been the dam it wanted to build at Farraka to divert the waters of the Ganges which are essential to the life and the economy of many parts of Bangladesh.

Now India has gone ahead with the Farraka project and unilaterally withdrawn the waters of the Ganges. The resulting fall of the river water level is causing serious problems in Bangladesh. Tanks, canals and wells in many areas have gone dry; several factories have had to be closed down or production curtailed and there was a rise in the salinity in the tributaries of the Padma. President Sayem expressed the hope that 'the party concerned will consider the serious adverse effects of the unilateral withdrawal' of the water and would come forward to find a solution. (With concerned friends like these, who needs enemies?) University teachers and other leaders of opinion have demanded the government to raise the issue at all international forums including the United Nations.

■ Dr. M.N. Huda, advisor to the president, in charge of planning and commerce, has proposed setting up a joint research institution by the economist and 'Ulama to find out the answer to the present social and economic ills in the light of Islamic teachings. Dr. Huda said that Islam is a complete code of conduct for all men and women in all ages, and asserted that Islam is not a mere religion and 'we have to project the ideals of Islam in our lives'. He urged that we find an answer to the question, why was interest bracketed as crime, while profit was allowed in Islam.

Africa: development loans

The Arab Economic Development Bank, which met in Tunis last month, has approved the following loans: 5,000,000 dollars for rural development in Rwanda; 10,000,000 dollars towards the cost of the construction of the Ndola-Kitwe road in Zambia; 4,000,000 dollars for agricultural development in Gambia; 5,000,000 dollars for agricultural development in Kenya; 5,000,000 dollars for the construction of an electric power station in Sierra Leone; 10,000,000 dollars for the construction of a dam in Mali.

THE MSA OF THE USA & CANADA

Fulfilling a noble responsibility

This is the first in a series on Islamic organisations abroad. This one on the MSA coincides with its 14th. Annual Convention being held this month (28-31 May) at the University of Indiana.

The Muslim Students' Association of the United States and Canada (The MSA) is an organization of Muslims in this continent. It was founded on January 1, 1963 at a meeting which was held at the University of Illinois, Urbana campus. The MSA is the largest Islamic organization with affiliated chapters and individual members throughout the United States and Canada. Its membership is comprised of Muslim students, alumni, non-students, staff and faculty members of various centers of higher learning.

The MSA endeavours to promote a divinely guided community that enjoins good, preaches righteousness, forbids evil and believes in Allah.

The need for unity and cooperation among Muslims in serving humanity by offering Islamic solutions to its problems is felt more strongly at the present time than ever before. This requires an organization which lives and operates in conformity with the Islamic way of life and strives hard toward making Islam better understood by all. The MSA is trying its best to fulfil this great need and it welcomes all Muslims into its fold of brotherhood.

The spirit of Islam and its brotherhood have helped the members realize its share in this noble responsibility.

The major objectives of the MSA of the United States and Canada are: to generate Islamic knowledge and attitudes; to develop Islamic personality; and to encourage commitment to Islam among its members.

The orders of priorities of the activities of the MSA are: 1 To prepare and implement training programs for its members; 2 To provide educational programs; and 3 To strive for achieving unity and solidarity among Muslims in North America.

The MSA stands for helping Muslims in the United States and Canada to carry out Islamic activities in pursuance of Islam as a complete

way of life and helps in religious, social, civic,

charitable, literary, athletic, scientific research, and other Islamic activities. It seeks to strengthen fraternal bonds and brotherly relations among Muslims as well as promote friendly relations between Muslims and non-Muslims in the U.S. and Canada. The MSA also assists Muslim students, alumni and communities to form local chapters and carry out Islamic activities.

The affairs of the Association are run by an annually elected executive committee. It consists of a president, vice president, the immediate past president, and one zonal representative for each of the four zones.

The executive committee is assisted by a general secretariat consisting of five full-time workers who implement the decisions and policies made by the executive. They are also concerned with the short and long-range evolution of the Association as it adapts itself appropriately to its constantly changing need within the framework and guidelines set by the executive committee. The secretariat has been established in order to provide permanence and continuity in the MSA's work. The secretariat comprises of the secretary general, and four directors, viz. for administration, finance and accounts, education, publication and information and training. The secretariat which is operating from the MSA Headquarters (2501 Directors Row, Suite 202 Indpls., IN 46241 Tel: (317) 244-7646) provides services to the local chapters, regions, zones and maintains contacts with International Islamic organizations of similar nature.

Organizationally, the United States and Canada are divided into four zones, each of which is in turn divided into several regions depending on the concentration of members and the geographical bound-

daries of the zone.

The zonal affairs are run by the zonal representatives assisted by a zonal Council consisting of the regional representatives of the various regions of the zone. Each regional representative supervises and organizes the activities of several local chapters within his region.

The local chapters constitute the backbone of the

MSA and much emphasis is laid on activating local chapters and founding new affiliates to the MSA. They are encouraged to extend their activities beyond the regular performance of 'Id functions and Juma'a prayers to include regular Qur'anic study circles, seminars, picnics, and other social activities. These activities are found to be very helpful in developing a comprehension of Islam and the spirit of brotherhood among the Muslims.

At the regional level, MSA takes active part in community affairs (prison programs, schools and the organization of mosques). Training camps for youth and adults are also conducted. The regions also conduct yearly regional conferences which are attended by a large number of members of the region.

The MSA has participated in a number of overseas Muslim Conferences at Riyadh, Durban, Tripoli, England, Germany and France. It is a founding member of the International Islamic Federation of Student Organizations which has gained the United Nations recognition. Members of its staff are sent to Trinidad and other places on an Islamic propagation mission. Scholar delegates from Muslim countries are frequently invited to participate in the Annual Conventions and tour the various Muslim communities in the U.S. and Canada.

The policy of the MSA is not to affiliate itself with any governmental, political or religious organizations in North America or overseas.

The Association is from the Muslims in the U.S. and Canada and is run by them. The MSA is serving through

- Islamic Books Service makes authentic Islamic literature available in various languages to everyone in North America.

- Slides and Films Project - makes slides of Muslim culture available for rent and sale and helps in locating films of interest for the local chapters.

- Taped Qur'an - makes recordings of the Qur'an available on magnetic tapes.

- Islamic Correspondence Course - teaches the principles of Islam to new Muslim students and youth.

- Islamic Fund - supports Muslims suffering from occupation or oppression.

- Muslim Cooperative Project - gives loans to needy Muslims from the deposits of those who have surplus, no service charges, no interest.

- Prison Project - teaches Islam to inmates who are in search of a religion to solve their problems.

With the help of the Women's Committee, the MSA has organized weekend Islamic Schools and youth camps and published a number of books and articles. Annual women's seminars and conferences are becoming quite useful forum for enhancing awareness toward education of women and youth.

The North American Islamic Trust was established to take care of the assets of the MSA, and undertake projects that are immediately beneficial to Islam and Muslims.

The MSA publishes *Al-Ittihad*, a quarterly magazine on current educational and religious topics.

MSA News deals with news of the association, local chapters and overseas news of interest.



**INTERNATIONAL
ISLAMIC
CONFERENCE**

London, 3-12 April, 1976

"MUSLIMS ON THE THRESHOLD OF ACTION"

'An event without any exact precedent' was how the London Times described the International Islamic Conference which was held in London, 3 - 12 April 1976. As a gathering attended by many of the leading scholars and statesmen of our times, certainly the conference was unparalleled. From Indonesia and the United States of America from Denmark to Zanzibar, from lands traditionally Muslim and from Muslim communities now being forged, they came to create a truly historic event.

The Conference was convened by the Islamic Council of Europe, a body formed in May 1973 to coordinate the activities of Muslim bodies and organisations in Europe. The Conference was a spin-off from the World of Islam Festival currently being held in London and had, according to Mr. Salem Azzam, Secretary General of the Islamic Council of Europe, two main objectives:

- (a) to give the Muslims of Europe a sense of belonging to the Muslim 'Ummah' which transcends colour, creed, language and territory and
- (b) to acquaint the Europeans with the truth about Islam as the Muslims understand it.

The reason behind the choice of objectives, Mr. Azzam explained, was that while the West had known Islam for nearly fourteen centuries, the relationship between Islam and the West left much to be desired. Islam came to Europe within the first century of its emergence and Muslims have made lasting contributions to the history and culture of Europe. Yet there was always something amiss in this relationship. The West has generally seen Islam in antagonistic terms: as hostile, violent, tyrannical and even idolatrous! This suggested as much a problem for the West as it did for the Muslim people who now form the second largest religious group in Europe. The Conference therefore also hoped to make Muslims acquire a better knowledge of their religion and culture because only then would they be able to

contribute to the ethical and spiritual life of the community as well as to promote understanding.

The theme of the Conference was "Islam and the Challenge of Our Age". Muhammad al-Faisal, the son of the late King Faysal, inaugurated the Conference with a crisp yet stirring speech which set just the right tone for the rest of the proceedings. Speaking simply 'as a Muslim—as a member of that universal community of faith', which is neither eastern nor western, he invited all to join together 'for the achievement of the common goal of enabling mankind to live in peace with God by submitting to His will'.

This opening session of the Conference was attended by almost ten thousand people who turned it into a unique, self-assured demonstration of a common Muslim spirit. According to a German lady delegate, Mrs. Fatima Heeren it was 'a proud demonstration; all—apart perhaps from a few non-Muslims—deeply touched by the beautiful recitation from the Holy Qur'an, ever so many heads covered by colourful topis, turbans, shawls, saris... Like one voice came the mighty 'Allahu Akbar' in reply to the meaningful, stirring words (of) the chief guest and the otherspeakers. In one line facing the assembly personalities of high rank and great learning, many of them clad in their national garments, were giving the meeting so much dignity.'

This opening session was addressed by the Shaykh of Azhar, Maulud Kasim, Algeria's Minister of Original Education, Ahmadu Karim Gaye, Islamic Secretariat Secretary General, Korkut Ozal, Turkish Minister of Agriculture, Abduh Yamani, Saudi Minister of Information, Mian Tufail Muhammad, president of the Pakistan Jamaat-e-Islami, Sadiq al Mahdi, former Prime Minister of the Sudan and others all of whom by their very presence and also by their contributions emphasized in various ways the universality and the relevance of Islam and the problems posed for and by the Muslim Ummah.

When the Conference moved to the Royal Commonwealth Society for its plenary sessions the crowds anticipating to gain admittance proved rather too much for the organisers. The problem was only partially solved by the use of closed circuit television and by the journeying of some of the delegates to address gatherings in other cities like Birmingham, Manchester and Dublin.

At the Royal Commonwealth Society itself the overshadowing of some of the old signs and emblems of Empire by Islamic plaques proclaiming the Oneness of God and the Messengership of Muhammad was somewhat symbolic. The Shaikh al Azhar's speech, highly philosophical, was the first in a long line of addresses dealing with Islam and the existing realities of the Muslim world in



At one of the Conference sessions. Left to right: A K Brohi (Pakistan), Nasruddin Tobar (Egypt), Khurshid Ahmad (Pakistan), Korkut Ozal (Turkey), Salem Azzam (Saudi Arabia), Naguib al-Attas (Malaysia) Aman Hobolm (Germany), Altaf Gauhar (Pakistan).



Left to right: Prof Seyyed Hossein Nasr (Iran) who spoke on 'Islam and Science'; Khalid Ishaque (Pakistan) who spoke on 'Islamic Law—its Ideals and Principles'; Muhammad Asad (Morocco) who spoke on 'The Qur'an and its Message'; Abdullah Naseef (Saudi Arabia).

particular. That together with the papers sent by Mawdudi and Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi and the long but solid concluding address by Muhammad Qutb presented what Islam stands for in a lucid and effective way. But when it came to relating the Islamic message to the challenge of our age, it was often the immense problems of mankind and the Muslim world in particular which hung heavily over the Conference. 'The challenge', as the London paper 'Impact' neatly summed up the Conference, 'did not lie in any organic inadequacy of Islam as a way of life or its inability to solve or resolve the increasingly 'involved' and complicated problems facing mankind. If there were any doubts on this, these were cleared in the range of illuminating talks and critical discussions dealing with such topics as Islam and Science (Hossein Nasr, the intellectual challenge of modern civilization (Hamid Algar) or contemporary economic challenges (Khurshid Ahmad or banking (Ahmad Najjar) or law or human rights (A K Brohi). It was the Muslim's own inadequacy and inability which lay at the root of his problems.'

Some extracts from some of the speeches would serve to emphasize this point. Muhammad Asad in his paper 'The Quran and its Message' said:

"Memories of a great past are of living import only so long as they imbue us with a sense of responsibility with regard to our present doings. All our practical achievements in the last few decades — in industry, in politics, in education — are purely imitative, derived from the experiences of the modern West, and bearing no relationship with our own, Islamic ideology.

"There are over 600 million Muslims in the world today, but among all these millions there is not a single

community which really lives in accordance with the tenets of Islam.

"While we have always pretended to believe that the Quran is a sure guidance in all concerns of our life, we have in the course of centuries grown accustomed to regard it as mere 'edifying' literature, good enough to be recited in prayers and on ceremonial occasions, but not good enough to be translated into practice."

Professor Hamid Algar of the University of California in his paper "Islam and the Challenge of Modern Civilization" pointed out the paradox that while Muslim thinkers have

been speaking of the need of a selective blending of elements drawn from Islamic civilization, modern civilization was itself in the process of losing much of its cohesiveness and confidence, 'somewhat as the Muslims and other non-Western peoples were assailed by self-doubt when confronted by the power of the West. He said:

"Islam is not to be regarded as a passive respondent to challenge, whose role in interplay of civilizations is limited to reaction. Islam is in its essence a divine revelation of the nature of truth and reality, joined with a method — also of divine origin— for anchoring consciousness of truth and reality in every sphere of human life.

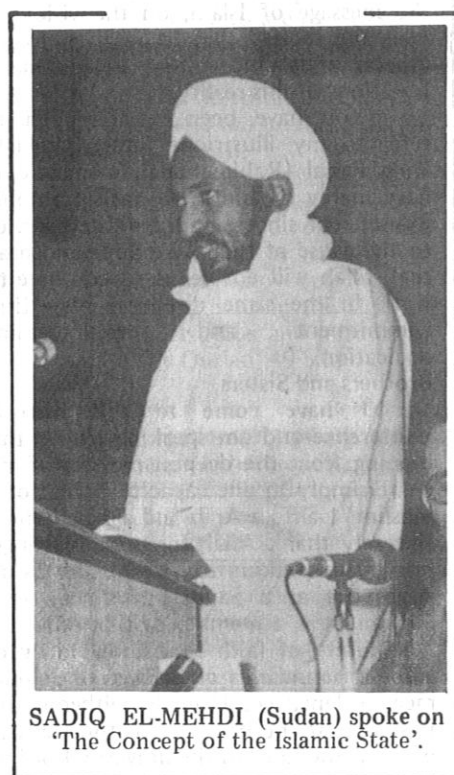
"To make the word of God uppermost" is the duty of Islam. It is also to repel falsehood. Islam in its aspect of disinterested truth is impervious to any challenge, while in its aspect of combative truth it presents a challenge itself to all systems of thought and belief."

The problem in the final analysis was to consider how Muslims could regain the initiative. There were some who felt that the creation of an Islamic state was paramount. Prof. Qureshi of Pakistan pleaded for the creation of a Muslim Commonwealth of Nations which 'will have a tremendous moral stature'. Hamid Algar however was one of those who pointed out that the 'choice of Islam as belief and direction is not dependent on any external circumstances' for it is 'open to all men in all times who wish to learn truth and orient their lives according to it.'

What did the Conference achieve and what lessons could be learnt from it?

The Conference, according to

(Continued on page 6)



SADIQ EL-MEHDI (Sudan) spoke on 'The Concept of the Islamic State'.

(Continued from page 5)

Salem Azzam gave the Muslim community in Europe 'a sense of pride and belonging'. It did show so far as intellectual talents and resourcefulness was concerned that the Muslims are well equipped to perform a redeeming role in today's world. It did show that there is still a long way to go in terms of discipline and organisation if this role is to be fulfilled. How much one would like to feel that the Muslims, all over the world, really do 'find themselves on the threshold of action'.

There was one brief session of delegates only at which the high level of discussion and interaction was very marked and it was a pity that more such sessions could not have been held, although a lot was achieved in terms of cementing personal relationships and establishing areas of mutual interests. There was realism at this brief session when it was suggested by Khurshid Ahmad, the organising secretary, that one or many conferences could not bring about the required change. Change is a process that has to be maintained and carried forward at all levels. The Conference, it was felt, could only initiate the process, not only in Europe but in other places as well. To this end, the delegates agreed to set up two Commissions to look into two major problems that confront Muslims in Europe — the Islamic education of Muslim children and youth and the problems of Muslim migrant workers in Europe. Another commission on human rights is also being formed. It was hoped that the International Conference would be made a permanent feature and held at regular intervals at different capitals of Europe. It was on such a proposal to establish an institutional framework for the unity and welfare of the Muslims that The London Times commented: "It would be an excellent thing if the Conference were to take that suggestion up. Islam after all is a far stronger bond between people of different nationalities than the pale agnostic humanism of modern Europe."

In the end the hopes of the Muslims attending the Conference were very well articulated by Mr. Salem Azzam at the concluding session of the Conference, when he said:

"The Message of Islam can be translated only in one language, and that is the language of action. The message of the Quran can be translated only in one language, and that is the language of action. The message of the Prophet can be translated only in one language, and that is the language of action..."

ISLAM: BOTH FOR EAST AND WEST

(Full text of the inaugural speech delivered by Amir Muhammad al-Faysal son of the late King Faysal of Saudi Arabia at the International Islamic Conference.)

Distinguished guests, brothers and sisters,

I deem it a great honour and a privilege to be amongst you this evening. We are meeting on an historic occasion. It is for the first time in contemporary history that the West has begun to show some real interest in the world of Islam. The Islamic Council of Europe deserves to be congratulated for the pioneering initiative it has taken in focusing the attention of the western world on the real world of Islam — for the real world of Islam consists of its message—its ideals, values and principles and not merely certain manifestations of our culture, however beautiful and charming and overpowering they may be. Islam's tremendous impact on world history is a fact beyond any shadow of doubt. That Islam has produced a glorious culture and made unique contributions in the fields of learning, education, art, science and technology are facts acknowledged by friends and foe alike. The interest that the West has now begun to show in these facets of Islamic history and culture deserves to be welcomed. But what is important at this critical juncture is that the real focus of attention should be on the message of Islam, on the vision of man and society that Islam gives, for all aspects of Islamic culture are but manifestations of this reality.

You have been kind enough to refer to my illustrious father, the late King Faisal (Rahimahullah — may God have mercy on him). He has set a noble example of sincere and dedicated service to the cause of Islam. We hope and pray that Allah will enable us to continue to work in the same direction with firm commitment and ever-increasing dedication.

Brothers and Sisters,

I have come to this historic Conference and am speaking to you this evening from the deepest recesses of my heart simply in one capacity — that of a Muslim. I am an Arab and a Saudi and I sincerely thank Allah for these blessings, but I am speaking to you neither as an Arab, nor as a Saudi but simply as a Muslim — as a member of that universal community of faith that knows no geographic boundaries or barriers of colour, race or language. Islam is neither of the East nor of the West — it is the Message of God, the Lord of the universe, Lord of

the East and Lord of the West, a message sent to the whole of mankind through all the prophets of God and finally through the Prophet Muhammad who was sent as a mercy towards the universe. Islam addresses itself to man as such — whatever be his background, his country, his colour, his race or his language, and invites him to become conscious of his real position in the world — which is neither that of an abject slave nor that of an absolute master — he is the representative, the viceregent, the deputy of God on earth: he is a custodian and a trustee of whatever lies within the bowels of the earth or over it. Everything is for him and he is in the service of Truth, for God.

Brothers and Sisters,

What is the real challenge of the modern age. Without going into details, I would like to suggest that man is faced with a bewildering situation today: on the one hand he has achieved tremendous material progress — he has harnessed the forces of nature to his service and created a technological and industrial society unparalleled in its magnitude, grandeur and technical efficiency, but on the other hand, he has failed to control his own baser passions and build human relations on the foundations of love, sacrifice, trust, piety and service. The institution of the family is disintegrating. Social relations are at a low ebb. Economic tensions are splitting human society apart. Social injustice is tearing the soul of man. Man is proud that he has made a new world; man is ashamed, for this new world has failed to make his soul happy. After reaching the heights of technological progress he finds that his very existence is threatened by the forces of his own creation. He has learned to control his environment but not himself. He has lost direction and his sense of proportion.

If this is the challenge of the modern age then the answer to it lies in rediscovering the principles of balance proportion, in rediscovering man's mission in life, in rediscovering the principles of control in human affairs; in short in rediscovering his relation with God. There is nothing wrong with material progress as such, but once material progress becomes disassociated with moral progress and spiritual discipline it loses its relationship with reality and is exposed to the danger of

becoming an instrument of destruction. Man left alone swings to extremes — crass materialism or ascetic spiritualism. Divine guidance leads to the path of balance, the straight path, symbolised in the prayer that God has taught man to pray:

Our Lord, Give us the best in this world
and the best in the hereafter.

Islam is Divine Guidance. God, in His infinite mercy, has not left man alone. He has endowed him with the guidance of the right path. This guidance was revealed through all the prophets of God, from Adam, through Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus to Muhammad (peace be upon them all). The message of Muhammad is not a new message; it is the message of all prophets of God, a message that man has again and again forgotten or changed or distorted. This message was presented by Muhammad (peace be upon him) in its original purity and in its divine perfection. This is Islam.

"Say: We believe in God and that which is revealed to us and which was revealed to Abraham, Ismail, Isaac, Jacob and the tribes and which Moses and Jesus received and which other prophets received from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them and to him we submit." (The Qur'an, 2 : 136).

The Quran invites all those people who belong to the family of the Prophet Abraham to join hands for the achievement of the common goal of enabling mankind to live in peace with God by submitting to His will.

"Say: People of the Book, let us rally to common terms to be binding on both us and you; that we shall worship none but God alone and associate nothing else with Him nor shall any of us take others as lords in place of God. And if they turn away, then say: Bear witness that to Him we submit." (Al Qur'an 3 : 64).

Islam invites man to commit himself exclusively to his Creator, to harmonise his will with the Will of God and to recreate the world with this noble commitment:

"Say: My prayer and my devotions, life and death are all for God, Lord of the Universe; no partner has He, with that I am commanded and I am the first of those who submit." (Al Qur'an 6:162-3)

Islam stands for one loyalty only — man's loyalty to his God—loyalty to truth and



MUHAMMAD AL-FAYSAL

virtue. It establishes the principle that all human beings are equal and it is unjust to discriminate between them on the basis of colour, race or territory. There is only one valid and universal principle of nobility — all those who are true to God, who fulfil their commitment to Truth, who prove trustworthy, who are pious and virtuous and heedful of God are noble and those who fail on this criterion are those who fall down.

"Mankind, We have created you male and female and set you up as nations and tribes so that you may know one another. The noblest among you in the sight of God are the most pious and heedful of you." (The Qur'an, 49 : 13).

And the mission towards which Islam invites man is to harness all material and human resources for the promotion of virtue and justice and peace. Material progress, yes — but not for the sake of material progress but for the creation of a noble and serene and just society and to seek man's salvation in this world and in the hereafter.

"You are the best community which has been raised up for mankind. You command what is proper and forbid what

is improper and you believe in God." (Al Qur'an 3 : 110)

Brothers and Sisters,

I have said what I wanted to say. You are witness to the state of affairs with which man is confronted today. Please do not judge Islam in the light of the failings of the Muslims. We may not be the best specimens of Islam. But then Islam is not the property of any one group of human beings. It is the message of God and is meant for all human beings. I urge you to try to understand Islam in the light of the original teachings of the Qur'an and Sunnah (the example of Prophet Muhammad). To this I invite all—Muslims and non-Muslims. This Conference provides you with an opportunity to examine more closely what Islam has to offer to meet the challenge of the modern age. Technology has brought us to a stage at which man, in order to survive, needs an ideology which is based on truth, which is universally applicable and which provides an effective control mechanism, a moral and spiritual discipline for man. Let us examine the message of Islam with openness and without prejudice. If Islam has nothing to offer, why worry about it; if it has something life-giving to offer, why deny it to ourselves.

This submission of mine is directed towards all human beings. If the Muslims respond to it they will become better Muslims and truer representatives of Islam, and if non-Muslims pay heed to it new horizons can be opened before them, at least of better understanding of a faith that has influenced history over the last fourteen centuries — the religion of over eight hundred million fellow human beings today.

In the end I would like to once again thank the Islamic Council of Europe for the great opportunity it has provided to all of us to meet and particularly for me to be the guest on this occasion. I look forward to the Islamic Council of Europe playing an illustrious role in promoting the Islamic cause in Europe. I would also like to especially thank the Muslim Community in the United Kingdom and our non-Muslim friends who have so enthusiastically participated in this Conference. Your love and your interest have deeply impressed me and I hope and pray God will enable us all to play our rightful role in the promotion of truth and justice and peace in this trouble-afflicted world.

"And our final prayer is... is due to Allah, Lord and Sustainer of all the Worlds.

LOVE AND TENDERNESS IN MARRIAGE

The more than one-half million divorces and annulments which occur annually in the United States along with the popular trend toward "free love" arrangements are a measure of the declining status of marriage. Disenchantment and loss of affection among married couples is becoming widespread and young people in general are losing confidence in the marriage institution. The ineffectiveness of marriage, however, is not due to the concept of marriage or its functions; the problem lies in the failure of courtship practices and the disruptive social changes our society is experiencing.

The mass media has promoted a distorted image of love and romance that encourages totally unrealistic demands and expectations in marriage and family life. Romantic love, a sort of socially approved temporary insanity, makes it extremely difficult to choose a marriage mate wisely. Provided one is a good marriage risk, there are probably thousands of people with whom the individual could establish a good marriage relationship.

But according to a tenet of the romantic cult there is one and only one individual for each of us. Presumably, destiny has decreed that eventually we will meet the perfect boy or girl. This fantasy minimizes the need for couples to adjust to each other's differences. If they must adjust, there is the dangerous implication that they were wrong for each other in the first place.

Another unhealthy aspect of the romantic cult is the belief in love at first sight, which emphasizes physical rather than character attributes. From all that is known about successful marriages, character and personality traits and similarity of cultural and social background are clearly more important to a good marriage than physical attraction alone.

The recreational nature of courtship also creates the tendency during courtship for couples to exhibit a juvenile behaviour pattern of "fun and games" without any serious communication concerning such questions as where they will live,

whether or not the prospective wife will work outside the home, and attitudes towards child rearing. When dating, couples go places and do things that are exciting, and they create exotic expectations about their lives that are difficult to match in the long run marriage. The marriage may be seen as a failure if it does not preserve all the ecstasy and thrill of courtship.

The estranged values resulting from rapid social change have lessened the ability of marriage to be psychologically supporting and socially gratifying. In an atmosphere that urges individuality rather than collective achievement within the family, one can only expect marriages to be plagued by personality conflicts, disputes over finances, conflicts over preferences in life-style, and tensions over relationships with in-laws. Without a clear definition of marital roles and mutual encouragement, marriage will naturally be less able to adequately meet the personal needs of the spouses.

THE ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE

Marriage is a universal institution that fulfills a variety of personal and social needs. It allows individual sexual gratification while regulating the social function of sexual behaviour. It legitimizes the children that are produced by a mating couple. Such legitimation is necessary for the operation of any system of rights and obligations concerning inheritance and care for the young and the aged. Marriage also establishes a socially significant relationship between the respective relatives of the spouses.

Whatever meanings people assign to marriage, the values and purposes of wedlock take on a special meaning when they are intertwined with the idea of God and conceived as religious commitments. The objectives of marriage in Islam can be classified under three broad categories; multiplication and perpetuation of the human race, preservation of morals and chastity, and development of love and

service.

Because Islam considers marriage a very serious commitment, it has prescribed certain measures to make the marital bond as permanent as humanly possible. With piety as the basis of mate selection, the parties must strive to meet the conditions of proper age, general compatibility, free consent, and honourable intentions. The relationship between husband and wife is described as that of a garment and its wearer. The Qur'an says that a wife is raiment for the husband, and the husband is raiment for the wife (2 : 188). A garment provides protection, comfort, and ornament. It is the closest thing to a person besides his or her own self. A husband and wife bound together by the "love and tenderness" (30 : 21) that Allah has put between them are surely garments for each other.

However, Islam goes much further than this by setting a course of behaviour for husbands and wives. The consummation of marriage creates new roles for the parties concerned. Each role is a set of equitable, proportionate rights and obligations.

The husband has the responsibility for the full maintenance of the wife, a duty which he must discharge cheerfully, without reproach, injury, or condescension. He is also commanded to show her kindness, respect and consideration. The wife's duty is to obey her husband (except for those things which are against Islamic law) and to guard his property and home when he is absent. She should be responsive and cooperative, and may not deny herself to her husband. Due consideration of course is given to health and decency.

Islam does not regard marriage as an indissoluble sacrament. It is a civil contract, importing mutual duties and rights. An essential feature of the contract is a settlement by the husband on the wife called dower (bride's gift) (4 : 5), so that the wife should own some property of her own over which she has complete control. Divorce is permitted in Islam, but the Prophet, upon whom be peace, has said that of all things permitted, the most disliked in the sight of God is divorce. The process of divorce

is spread over a period, during which every effort must be made at smoothing out differences and bringing reconciliation.

If differences become acute, the counsel and help of mediators, one from the wife's relations and one from the husband's should be sought (4 : 35). If divorce is finally decided upon, the husband cannot take away from the wife anything he has given her (4 : 21-22), and must make suitable provisions for her over a period of three months, which is normally required for the process to be

completed. If husband and wife are reconciled to each other during this period, the divorce proceedings are dropped.

Marriage is the only suitable framework for inter-sex relations which a sane and rational society could adopt. The Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, has said, "Marriage is part of my example, and whoever goes contrary to my example is not one of me."

(From Al-Islam, March-April 1976, U.S.A)

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IN SEARCH OF IDENTITY

People in Trinidad and Tobago and the Caribbean, seeking a destiny other than the mould in which colonialism has cast them, are caught up in a struggle for an identity which they hope could give meaning and purpose to life. This identity quest is implicit in two basic human questions: Who am I and what is my destiny?

The need to find answers to these questions has led many people to seek escape through such things as drugs, or refuge in religious philosophies (often of a mushroom type) or in instant politics. They hope thus to fill the vacuum in their lives.

Some of the results of this soul-searching and analysis can be seen in certain aspects of the development of society as a whole. For example, it has succeeded in generating a lot of creative cultural activity which finds expression in the arts and handicraft of the nation.

On the negative side, the ends of this search, which is either racially or politically inspired, have been a further stimulation of the unresolved racial and class tensions which threaten to throw the whole of the nation into conflict.

If progress is to be made, it must be on the basis of co-operation and harmony. This cannot be achieved if men are trained to look at others in terms of race, or narrow political affiliations or as a means of production.

What is needed is an ideology which will transcend the petty barriers of race, nationality and class and which looks at the humanity of man and values him on the basis of his deeds. Such an ideology can be found in Islam.

Alyasa Abdullah

LETTERS

*From Mr. Barakat Ahmad,
High Commissioner for India.*

Your article in your issue of February 1976 criticising India, the Trinidad Guardian and me on my message on our Republic Day has been brought to my notice by a mutual friend. As your paper's name indicates, it is obviously published to put the true image of the Muslim culture, the teachings of the Quran and the standard of Muslim morality in all fields of life including economics and politics. When articles are published in your esteemed journal they are written, I hope, with a view to expound the teachings of Islam in terminologies and definitions as they have been given by the great Muslim scholars, jurists and above all the Quran and the Hadith. In this article criticising me, you have used two terms, democracy and totalitarianism. I intended to respond to your article but I thought it would be presumptuous on my part, not being a scholar of Islam, replying to you without knowing exactly what 'democracy' and 'totalitarian methods' mean in Muslim terminology. Unfortunately I have not been able to find a good library containing books on Islam in Trinidad where I could go to find these definitions but obviously you are the best guide. I have read Al-Mawardi's 'Al-Ahkam al-Sultaniyya', Al-Tabari's 'Tarikh al-Umam Wa al-Muluk' among other classical works and also Maulana Abu al-A'la Al-Maududi's 'Nazariyat al-Islam al-Siya-siyya', Muhammad Asad's 'The Principles of State & Government in Islam' and Muhammad Hamidullah's 'The Muslim Concept of State' among the modern Muslim writers on the subject of Islamic State. But being a civil servant and not an authority on Islam as you are I would seek from you the proper definition of 'democracy' and 'totalitarianism' in Islam as it is understood by the Muslims so that in the light of those definitions I might attempt a reply to your criticism, which I am afraid was not based on facts or correct information. In the light of Islamic definition of democracy and totalitarianism given by you I hope I shall be able to explain the state of democracy in my country to your satisfaction.

Yours faithfully,
Barakat Ahmad,
High Commissioner for India.

* We do not at all underestimate Mr. Ahmad's knowledge of Islam and

DEMOCRACY IN INDIA

Islamic sources. Having read all the works listed above in addition to other classical and modern works, he should be in a position to provide some definition and guidance. We say this without any cynicism. But perhaps the operative statement in Mr. Ahmad's note is the admission that he is primarily 'a civil servant'. And one of the occupational hazards of being a civil servant and a diplomat especially, is that it often requires a devotion to and a defense of one's government's policies and methods irrespective of right or wrong. The alternative is either resignation or a fall from favour.

We hope that Mr. Ahmad is not putting forward Islamic justifications for the policies of Indira Gandhi to whom on her own self-admission religion anyway means little. And whatever the semantics involved in defining democracy (and we are not putting forward the term as an Islamic one), the only satisfactory explanation of the state of democracy in India that might be acceptable is an explanation which would state among other things that the unjust imprisonment, without charge or trial, of numerous educationists and social workers and the ban on their newspapers, institutions etc. have been ended. May we refer to the case of just one such 'political' prisoner news of whom came in a letter from an Indian national who wrote:

'I recently visited Hyderabad where I came to know about the situation of Syed Khalilullah Hussaini, principal of A.W. College and president, All India Majlis Tameer-e-Millat, a socio-religious organisation, who was detained without any charge or trial under MISA. I was really restless and at the same time helpless...

Syed Khalilullah Hussaini, 50, is detained since July 25, 1975 in Central Prison, Hyderabad. He is not a member of any political party nor has he taken part in any anti-government activity. The organisation of which he is the founder president, is a socio-religious organisation which teaches service about self. The All India Majlis Tameer-e-Millat, right from its inception in June 1950 has never taken part in any political or anti-government activity. This organisation does social work like helping students by giving scholarships and books, runs hospitals, reading rooms, 'Darul-

THE MUSLIM STANDARD, MAY 1976

Muballighien (where preachers are trained etc...')

The letter goes on to speak of the periods of unconsciousness and illness which Mr. Hussaini has been suffering in the jail. As far as we know, 'social justice', 'human rights' and other terms are not to be found in the classical Islamic sources but the concepts which they denote are not alien to Islam and a basic appreciation of human worth.

(Editor)

THE QUR'AN: Correct Reading

This letter is written in the hope that it might instil in the hearts of our Muslims a deep sense of care and concern as regards the correct reading of the Qur'an. It is sometimes said that since our mother tongue is not Arabic we do not have to worry too much about the correct reading of the Qur'an. This is obviously a lax and negative attitude. The extent and seriousness of the problem can be seen by the unfortunate fact that only a few of our local Imams can read the Qur'an correctly and by correct reading of the Qur'an is meant correct pronunciation of words and correct application of rules.

Incorrect reading, besides being painful to the ear changes the meanings of words. Some Muslim scholars even say that certain words wrongly pronounced in the Qur'an can make one an unbeliever.

When we attend school we try extremely hard to give of our best in order to get a distinction in whatever subject we are being tested. This sustained effort better our chances of obtaining employment or entering a higher institution of learning. Similarly why do we not as Muslims make a sustained effort and give off our best in order to learn to read the Qur'an correctly and win the pleasure of Allah?

We have no excuse, brothers and sisters, in not learning to read the Qur'an correctly because there are in this country some Muslims, including a few who know the Qur'an by heart, who are engaged in teaching it at various venues. Those of us who cannot read or cannot read correctly should make it a duty to seek out these people and remedy the deficiency.

If we call ourselves Muslims and we make no effort or we are too proud or indifferent to learn to read, understand or implement the teachings of the Qur'an, then we should question ourselves as regards our faith (Imaan). God has said in the Qur'an, "And We

have certainly made the Qur'an easy to remember. Is there any who will be warned." May the Muslims of Trinidad be among those who treat the Qur'an with due care and attention and earn the pleasure of Allah.

Ousman Ali,
San Juan.

MUSLIMS UNDER SOCIALISM

I have read the Muslim Standard with great interest and I hope that you will continue to be a voice to be heard from the Muslims in your part of the world. Also, I hope that you will be able to bring to us a picture of everyday life of of your people there, to give us an understanding what Islam means in your part of the world. I further hope that you will be willing and able to pursue an independent course; too many publications claim the line, most however end up bringing too much about Western imperialism, but not saying a word about the oppressed Muslim millions in the socialist/communist world. Nobody mentions the complete strangling of Islam in Albania, the wild anti-religious campaigns in Bulgaria, where people to partake in Education and Employment will even have to change their Islamic name and to deny their race and still will be treated very badly. Who inquires about our Muslim brothers in Red China, Turkistan and the other parts of the USSR?

I wish you, in the cause of Islam, all the best and success for the paper, insha'Allah.

Yours in Islam,
Bashir Ahmad Dultz,
Tripoli, Libya..

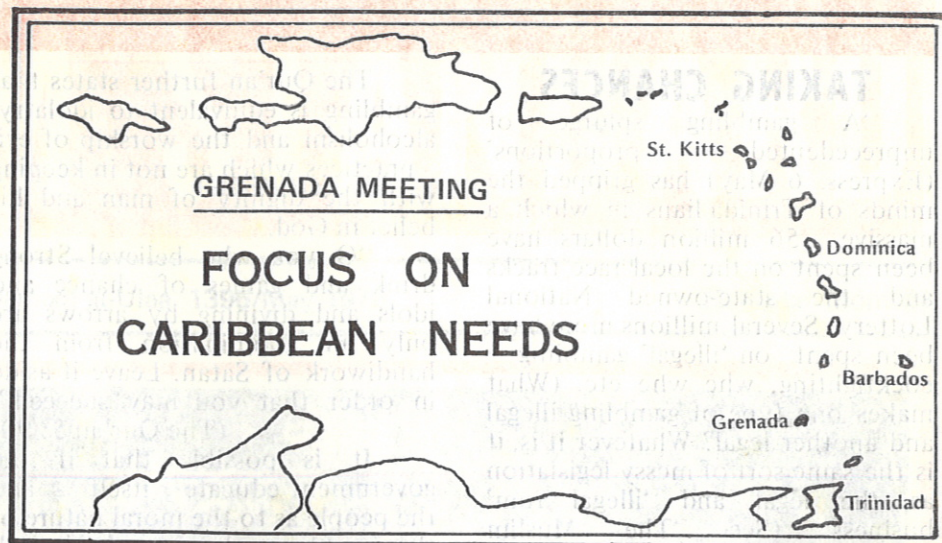
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THE NEED FOR BALANCE

I begin this letter to you with the salutation of peace.

I congratulate you on the publication of the 'Muslim Standard' which I hope will play an important role in bringing all in this hemisphere to know Islam and to accept it as their way of life. It is a great venture, most timely and profoundly stimulating.

'The Muslim Standard' should take the initiative in upholding the purity of the Islamic doctrine. It is most appropriate that a magazine such as yours should aim at crushing the parochial and narrow-minded nationalistic elements sweeping



All praise and thanks are due to Allah, the Lord and Cherisher and Sustainer of all the worlds. May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon His messenger, Muhammad, unto whom was revealed the Qur'an — a guidance to mankind.

Recently concluded in Fontenoy, St Georges, Grenada was an 'Ijtimaa' (gathering, assembly) of brothers from various Muslim communities in the Caribbean. The 'Ijtimaa' began on 18 Rabi'uth Thani at which a Hafiz of Grenada recited the khutba. It continued for the next three days. Participating were brothers from Trinidad and a brother from Dominica along with brothers from the Muslim community in Grenada. Also involved, though unable to attend were brothers from Barbados and one from St. Kitts who is the only Muslim there..

Most people are not aware of the Islamic movement in the smaller islands in the Caribbean. This lack of awareness

emphasises the urgent need for greater tolerance and appreciation among the governments and non-Muslim peoples of these islands and for a consciousness among the Muslims to make a united effort to promote Islam throughout the entire Caribbean. More of those who contribute to this united effort by at times giving much-needed assistance to the movement should take the opportunity to expand their awareness of the situation through their direct physical involvement by visiting these small striving communities who are not very often blessed with visits from Muslims of other lands much less for scholars who can promote Islamic knowledge for which they are yearning.

By themselves, the brothers lack the resources to make Islam flourish in the islands. To make more progress there must be communication with and assistance in the form of literature and personnel from the more developed Muslim communities — primarily from Trinidad where the background of the Islamic movement is very much different. Most of the Muslims in the islands have newly returned to the fold of Islam and are striving to adhere to the teachings of the Qur'an and the example of the Prophet to the extent to which they have been exposed to them by their own reading as well as by learning from any available sources of scholarship, primarily from Trinidad. They are striving against the influence of their own background of Ignorance which strongly pervades the environment as a whole. This budding Islamic consciousness is a challenge to those who want to come forward, to get to know their brethren and help promote the much-needed Islamic influence.

Glory be to Allah and all praise is due to Him.

our community and the Muslim world as a whole.

As thinking men everywhere are agreed, the world is faced with a dilemma torn as it is between rival camps based on stark materialism and fired by selfish nationalistic interests. The Islamic concept of a balanced outlook on life built on the most realistic and rational application of its principles is the only appropriate answer to it.

I earnestly hope that 'The Muslim Standard' will be guided by these high principles in the noble task of disseminating the great truth.

Ahmad As-Siddiq,
Petit Bourg.

TAKING CHANCES

A gambling splurge of unprecedented proportions' (Express, 6 May) has gripped the minds of Trinidadians in which a massive 56 million dollars have been spent on the local race tracks and the state-owned National Lottery. Several millions more have been spent on 'illegal' gambling - cockfighting, whe whe etc. (What makes one type of gambling illegal and another legal? Whatever it is, it is the same sort of messy legislation as the legal and 'illegal rum' business (See 'The Muslim Standard, February 1976).

The figures do reflect that gambling is a national pastime. The urge is fostered from childhood through the seemingly harmless games played at homes and at parties and approved by the community. Welfare organisations and the major political parties thrive on it through raffles and bingos and the gullibility of the people.

The government, in their misdirected desire to control this rising social evil by instituting legislation, licenses and taxes, has succeeded only in exploiting the situation in the name of state revenues. The government, whether unwittingly or not, has contributed to this social evil. This is because it has failed to realise both the magnitude and the psychology of the problem.

If we look at the problem from the Quranic standpoint, it is possible that we may get an insight into it and a method for its solution. The Qur'an says:

"They question you about strong drink and games of chance. Say: In both is a great sin, and (some) utility for men, but the sin of them is greater than their usefulness." (2 : 219).

The Qur'an looks at the problem from the standpoint of morality. It recognises that gambling is a tendency of (some) men in which some benefit at the expense of others but when weighed objectively, the evil of the practice is greater than its benefits.

The Qur'an further states that gambling is equivalent to idolatry, alcoholism and the worship of evil - practices which are not in keeping with the dignity of man and his belief in God.

"O you who believe! Strong drink and games of chance and idols and divining by arrows are only an atonement from the handiwork of Satan. Leave it aside in order that you may succeed."

(The Qur'an 5: 90)

It is possible that if the government educate itself and the people as to the moral nature of the problem, then surely it will signal the end of such a practice as it did in Islamic society as early as 1,400 years ago.

INCREDIBLE FAITH

The following is a quote from the manifesto of the Democratic Action Congress explaining the choice of 'The Open Book' as the symbol of the DAC:

"It is an open book. It will not be restricted to a chosen few but all who wish to share in its contents are free to do so...The Book is open for others to make a contribution to its pages...The book is the Ramayana, it is the Holy Bible - both testaments, it is the Holy Koran. It could be a work of Shakespeare, Valmiki, Moliere, Cervantes, Tolstoy, Mao, Marx or Mendel...

"Our symbol, the open book is a sign that we have faith in the people and in ourselves..."

The above statement, coming from politicians in this multi-racial, multi-religious society of ours, is by no means entirely unique. It is highly unconvincing, to say the least, coming from a party which seriously hopes to provide an alternative to the ruling party. Muslims certainly object to seeing the Qur'an being put on a par with the works of Marx or Mao, not to mention some of the others. And Marx and Mao would undoubtedly be just as furious!

We do agree that the nation needs desperately to cultivate the habits of reading and enquiry but the purpose of this is not merely to show erudition - how many books you have read but to distinguish between truth and falsehood, the genuine and the hotch-potch.

In these times
people must have standards

THE BEST STANDARD

THE MUSLIM STANDARD

WHAT WE AIM AT:

- o Establishing obedience to the authority of God and adherence to the example of His messenger, Muhammad, upon whom be peace.
- o Projecting Muslim standards of thought and conduct as the solution to problems.
- o Encouraging dialogue for the advancement of all.

YOU CAN CONTRIBUTE:

- o by reading objectively and encouraging others to read.
- o by submitting articles, comments and suggestions.
- o by using the paper as your paper.

If you have read

THE MUSLIM STANDARD

and have benefitted from it

then why not

INTRODUCE IT TO A FRIEND