

THE MUSLIM STANDARD

Number 24

October 1977 / Zul Qada 1397

25 cents Monthly

TOWARDS PEACE AND HARMONY

On Sunday 25th September, Dr. Ahmad Sakr delivered a lecture entitled "The relevance of Islam to us as Human Beings" at the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine.

In dealing with the topic he explained the meaning of Islam and some of its basic concepts. Also how Islam is applied in some practical areas such as eating and drinking. He drew our attention to the fact that a violation of Islamic instructions, for example, eating pork and drinking alcohol, causes numerous hardships and disrupts our peace and harmony.

In this article we highlight some of the important points discussed in his lecture.

To see how Islam is relevant to us as human beings, let us consider the meaning of Islam. The word Islam comes from the root of the Arabic words Silm and Salaam. Silm means peace and Salaam means peace.



Dr Ahmad Sakr is the Director of The World Muslim League Office to the United Nations and North America. He is also a Professor and Chairman of the department of Chemistry and Nutrition, National College of Chiropractic, Lombard, Illinois, U.S.A.

Islam is a way of life and it is not a religion in the Western concept as defined in the Webster dictionary. It helps you to live in peace and harmony within yourself as a human being and within your family.

It is a way of life for those who would like to live in a society whether it is a Christian, Jew, Muslim, Hindu, Bahai, or an Atheistic society. If you would like to live in peace and harmony with the Creator who created you, the way of life that you have to select in order to achieve that concept of peace is called Islam.

If you are going to fish around and paddle all over the world trying to find a way of life or to find an ideology based on Capitalism, Marxism, Leninism, Maoism or Buddhism, you will end up nowhere but still be looking around to find that concept of peace within yourself, within your family, within your society and with the Creator.

To live in peace and harmony with the finite and the infinite life, the seen and the unseen, the only way of life that you can achieve this at one time is through the concept of Islam, because that is Silm and Salaam. For this reason Muslims, whenever they meet, they say 'Assalaamu Alaikum', which means 'peace be upon you'.

The founder of Islam is the Creator. Islam was fully established by prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him. Muslims follow Muhammad but do not worship him, hence they are not called Muhammadans but Muslims. They worship the very same God who created the black and white, the Jews, Muslims, Christians and even the Atheists. It is the very same God who created animals, plants, and the Universe. It is Allah indeed. His is the peace which means that if you are looking for peace, in your heart, in your mind, in your body, in your spirit, you cannot go anywhere in the world to look for it. You have to look for that concept of peace from the Source of peace, and the Source of peace is God Himself.

Conceptually Muslims believe that Islam has a big relevance to human beings in the world, so that they can live in peace and harmony. There are many places in the world where there is no

Continued on page 2.

HIGHLIGHTS

**RABITA CONFERENCE -
FORGING AHEAD** page 4

**REVIEW OF THE
JUNIOR SECONDARY
SCHOOLS** page 5

**ISLAMIC CENTRE
OPENS IN BARBADOS** page 6

**A PATH TO MORALITY
AND PROGRESS** page 7

**MESSAGE OF
PROPHET JESUS** page 9

peace and harmony. Take the U.S.A., in every state you will find more than 18 to 20 to 25 mental hospitals. In every hospital you will find 5 to 10,000 patients inside and 10 to 20,000 still outside who go in and out for tranquilisers in trying to achieve peace within themselves.

An example of the relevance of Islam is found in the concept of human-kind. Islam looks at all people as human beings irrespective of their race, colour, nationality, wealth, political or linguistic position, or even religious affiliations. Islam looks at all human beings as one and the best among them and the most beloved to God is the one who goes out of his way to serve mankind and the creatures of God. This means that if you want to go and help people, help them for the pleasure of God. If you help them for the sake of conversion or exploitation, your services will be considered null and void.

Therefore the caste system does not exist in Islam, it is not in the minds of Muslims and does not exist in the dictionary of God. All of us belong to one caste system, to one race system and to one human kind.

There is no difference or superiority of a white over a black and vice versa except through righteousness and God-Consciousness. If you believe in this you would not hear of black power or of white power. Therefore Islam is capable of bringing peace and harmony between the black and the white, the green and the yellow and to all people of the world.

The concept of Oneness of God will help us to solve our problems. The concept of Oneness of man will make us live together peacefully. The concept of Oneness of religion and of prophets will make us live harmoniously. All the prophets came with the same message from God. All the prophets including Moses, Jesus, David, Jacob, Isaac, Abraham and Muhammad, said 'Obey God and follow God'. They didn't say 'Become a Christian, Hindu, or Jew'.

And now I come to the other meaning of Islam. Anyone who says, 'My word is to God and I will not make a system of my own but I will live by the system of God. I will not go to China, Russia or the U.S.A. looking for another system other than the one created by God,' and continues to say, 'My loyalty is to God and I want to follow His laws'

means that you accept the idea that you are a creature of God and you are to follow the laws of God. This means that you are a Muslim. A Muslim is not one who belongs to a sect or denomination but is one who submits to his Creator.

This implies that you have already submitted your loyalty to God and you are not going to follow any economical, political or educational system other than one based on the principles created by God in order to live in peace and harmony.

Now, let us see how, by living Islam, this peace and harmony is attained in some practical areas.

Concerning the eating of pork, Dr Ahmad Sakr said - Pork should not be eaten by any human kind. The Jews prohibit its eating. The Christians, in the contemporary Bible prohibit its eating and Muslims also prohibit its eating.

It has been found that the pork you eat will never be digested properly in your stomach. This means that when it is absorbed it will be emulsified, that is, chopped into small pieces and then absorbed without being hydrolysed. This meat is deposited in your bellies as pork fat.

The swine is of the type of animal which will eat its own kind, its own progeny or any other carnivorous animal. Islam prohibits eating all carnivorous animals including the swine. If you eat carnivorous animals it will affect your personality character. It means that you will become a person who loves to kill people, who loves to suffocate them and to see the blood of other people.

We have seen societies involved in wars where people try to kill one another for no other reason but because the food they ate have affected them.

The special microbe which is found in pork is not different from that of the cattle. In the cattle it stays in the intestines and can be removed by medication. When the tapeworm from the swine gets into your bloodstream it makes a cyst. A cyst is a small stone and the worm is inside of it. It goes and imbeds itself in your heart, brain, muscle and in any soft tissue. If it ends up in the brain you may end up a schizophrenic and a mentally disturbed person totally unaware of life and living. You will say to yourself, 'Am I a human being? Why am I behaving wrongly? Do I have a tumour in my brain?' It is possible for the cyst to

cause blockage of the heart valves, leading to heart attacks. Americans are the world's biggest pork eaters and they have the most heart diseases.

Concerning the consumption of alcohol, Dr Ahmad Sakr said "Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, said, 'Alcohol is the mother of every evil in the society.' The prophet narrated a story to explain this. 'An innocent believer, very simple and naïve was trapped by a lady in her bedroom. She said 'Look here, you have one of three choices. Either you commit adultery with me, kill this baby or take this sip of alcohol'. The believer replied, 'What, commit adultery! I will never do it. I fear going in hell. Also I will never kill this baby. If I do so I will be thrown in hell'. The lady threatened to blaspheme him if he did not take the sip of alcohol. He didn't want to be blasphemed, so he took the sip of alcohol and lost his conscience. He committed adultery with the lady and he killed the innocent baby.

The moment you drink alcohol you lose your conscience. You become insane and you cannot think properly. Alcohol is dangerous to the central nervous system, the heart, liver, brain, pancreas, stomach, small intestines and finally you end up with nutritional deficiency diseases and some people have nervous breakdowns.

When Islam came it solved the problem of alcohol in three stages. First it stated that there were some benefits and bad things in it. Secondly, the people were told not to drink it when they went to pray. Thirdly, it was prohibited completely. Immediately all the Muslims took all the jugs of alcohol and dumped them in the streets saying, 'O Allah, forgive us, we will never drink alcohol in our lives again.'

Today alcohol is responsible for many broken homes. The husband has divorced his wife and he has kicked out his children because of it. Many children have killed their mothers and fathers because of it. Many brothers have killed their sisters and vice versa because of it. Islam has come to help us to avoid these evil acts by instructing us to refrain from consuming alcohol.

Many are the practical areas that Islam can play a redeeming role and further studies of Islam can serve to illustrate this.

A CHANGE FROM WITHIN

Recent developments within 'Bilalian Muslims' community or 'Black Muslims' in western nomenclature are being noted with interest and anxiety in various Muslim circles. Excerpted below is the speech by the community's leader Wallace or Waris Muhammad which was made to the conference of Islamic organisations in North America held in Newark last April.

I would like to first speak on some pluses for us in America. There have been many minuses, but we have realized over the last two years so many pluses that I don't think we should worry about minuses anymore. Two years ago, through the Honourable Elijah Muhammad, the late leader of the Nation of Islam in America, Allah blessed this community and through this man wanted to make a change and he made the change. He said to his people on his sick bed while death was on him that Islam is not a race. Islam is a nation. And he said to his officers, 'I am with my son Wallace D. Muhammad, I am with him that he can go and preach the religion of Islam everywhere in our community.' That was a big change. The same father that had prevented his son from expressing purer Islamic teachings to his followers made the change and said that the son can go and preach freely in our community.

From that day on, we have been making progress and I can tell you today that there is no preaching of any foreign or contrary ideas in our community called the World Community of Islam in the West. We were taught at one time that the black man is the God, you know, and we were given black supremacy so that it would give us a sense of superiority and dignity in a world that had held us down under white supremacy and we were taught that the devil is the creation of God. When I assumed leadership I told our community that the devil is not the creation of God. God created the Jinn and he did not create the Jinn to be a devil.

He said, 'I have not created man nor Jinn except that they should worship Me.' So we gave this kind of explanation, this kind of teaching to our community and the conflict and war within the members began to die down and we now begin

to see the pure, strong and healthy growth of Islam in our community. And now a religious community that was far away in principle and also in religious behaviour, far away from Islam, is now on the path - the straight path, the clear path the Sunni path, the path of our Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). The whole community now says in one voice 'La ilaha illallah, Wahdahu la sharikalah' - that there is nothing worthy of worship except Allah Ta'ala and there is no image, no likeness for him - 'wa ashhadu anna Muhammad-ur-rasoolallah' - and we bear witness that Muhammad - to whom the Qur'an was revealed is His slave and servant and His Messenger for all mankind.

So that has happened in America and has been accepted by better than 50,000 active Muslims. That number had grown since those two years. That number has grown to better than 70,000 active Muslims now. And a great number of inactive Muslims are lazy Muslims, I would say that there are about a million Muslims who identify with our community, and then there are perhaps another two or three million strong sympathizers who don't yet profess to be Muslims but who say 'I prefer that religion to any other'. So we have a lot of pluses. We have strong pluses and I don't care to talk about minuses at this time.

We plan for the first time to lead a delegation of 300 Muslims (to Mecca). I hope we have people who have committed themselves and we hope to have 300 Muslims making Hajj this year Insha Allah That will be a big thing to see 300 Bilalian Americans, 300-Afro-American Muslims going together, with all the Muslims of the world in the spirit of true brotherhood to make Hajj. So we hope for this and pray for us and pray for our success.

And lastly, I want to say that I am not a new convert to the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad. It was in 1967 that I made Hajj and when I made that Hajj I made a pledge to myself and Allah. I said that from this day on I will not tolerate any deviations, I will not support any religious deviations from others especially from my family. From that day on I have been fighting them openly, and I thank Allah for blessing me to live and encouraging me and giving me the

blessing of many good brothers to support me from outside of America and inside of America, blessing me with strong support from the World Community of Islam.

Excerpted from the Journal, Muslim World League, Mecca, July 1977.

NEW MUSLIM SCHOOL

This year marked the 30th anniversary since the incorporation of the Trinidad Muslim League. On Sunday October 2nd, a celebration was held at which a cross-section of the Muslim Community was present.

The president general Br. M. Ibrahim highlighted the achievements of the league since its formation and reaffirmed the conviction of its members to its original objectives. He emphasised that the league will :

- 1.. Continue to represent persons who do not adhere strictly to the four Sunni Imams.
2. Stimulate freedom of thought and enquiry, and
3. Build and establish Mosques, Schools, Libraries and Islamic Cultural Centres.

Representatives of the Ministry of Education were present and an announcement was made that Government has given permission to construct a new primary school at St. Joseph. The Government of Trinidad and Tobago would be giving \$265,000 for the two-storey building complex and the League has to contribute the remaining \$135,000 to ensure completion. The sod-turning ceremony was performed and the school should be ready in 1978.

Brief reports on the achievements and limitations of the three Primary Schools run by the League were also presented by the Principals. On a different note, it was expected that officials would have attempted to bring into focus to those directly responsible, at least one major problem i.e. the San Fernando Trinidad Muslim League School. This school continues to exist on a very small plot of land where there is no room for re-creation. The building itself is

Continued on page 4

FORGING AHEAD

THE ISLAMIC CONFERENCE of South America and the Caribbean sponsored by Rabetat Al-Alam Al-Islami (Muslim World League) was held in Trinidad on September 24th 26th, 1977. Participating were approximately sixty (60) representatives from twenty countries in the region.

The Conference commenced with an inaugural session opened to the public and continued each day with closed sessions for the delegates. The seminars were presided over by Rabita's distinguished Secretary General, Shaikh Muhammad Ali Al-Harakan. Other distinguished persons at the Conference were Dr. Ahmad Sakr, Director, Muslim World League office to the United Nations and North America and Dr. Mujahid Al-Sawwaf from King Abdul Aziz University, Mecca.

The conference succeeded in bringing together representatives from most of the organisations in the region. It is worthy of mention

quite unwholesome and is in need of repairs. The owners of the property are also very keen on getting them out.

It is gratifying to observe through various activities the coming together of the major Muslim Organisations in what we hope would be lasting relationships working towards a vibrant Muslim Community. One can easily notice the overtures being made by individuals and groups to show the Trinidad Muslim League that since its parting of ways with the Ahmadis, it is now an accepted Muslim Organisation.

However, the League today seems to be centered around the St. Joseph Jamaat alone. This situation must be remedied by the officers of the League by becoming more involved in the other Jama'ats in the island with whom they had long standing association. The League must not sit back and allow non-Muslims to take control of these other districts. They need to show interest and determination in encouraging their members - by educating them and allowing them full participation in their activities.

that the delegates from Guyana, representing eight organisations, agreed to work out plans to present a united effort in the cause of Islam.

Various committees were formed to submit recommendations 'to co-ordinate activities and to plan for the future.' The committees formed were for organisation, coordination, Da'wah (propagation) Culture, Media, Jurisprudence, Mosque, Youth and Women.

The committee on organisation submitted these recommendations and they were accepted by the General Assembly.

1. This Conference shall be the founding body and the first General Assembly of the Islamic Conference of South America and the Caribbean. The member societies present at this conference shall represent the founding members of this conference.

2. This conference shall establish a central organisation for forging co-operation and co-ordination among Islamic organisations and workers in the region connected to the General Secretariat of Rabita.

3. The organisation shall be called "THE ISLAMIC COUNCIL OF SOUTH AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN (ICSAC).

4. The ICSAC shall comprise:-

- (a) the General Assembly, and
- (b) the Secretariat.

5. The ICSAC shall have its headquarters in Trinidad.

6. The ICSAC shall have a secretariat at its headquarters to execute the recommendations and resolutions of the General Assembly.

7. The ICSAC shall have representation from each country in the region having a sizeable Muslim population. It shall also have representation from the Rabita and may also co-opt prom-

inent Muslim scholars and Islamic workers from the region.

8. The Secretariat shall be headed by a Secretary General, who shall be the Chief Executive Officer

9. The Secretariat shall comprise the Secretary General, three Assistant Secretary Generals, and a Treasurer to be elected by the General Assembly.

10. A permanent staff shall be employed at the headquarters to perform the daily clerical and technical services for the Secretariat

11. The Conference shall meet once every three years.

12. The next Islamic Conference of the South America and the Caribbean shall be held in San-Paulo, Brazil.

13. For emergency sessions, one third of the members of the General Assembly shall have the right to ask for a meeting of the Conference.

14. The ICSAC shall establish local councils in countries where there are four or more Islamic organisations to help co-ordinate their activities locally. Such local councils may be established in Argentina, Brazil, Guyana, Surinam and Trinidad or any other country having four or more Islamic organisations.

Regarding recommendation no. nine (9) the following were chosen:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------|
| Secretary General | |
| Sheikh Mohammed | Shafik |
| Rahaman (Trinidad). | |
| Assistant Secretary General | |
| Mohammed Abou Fares | (Brazil) |
| Assistant Secretary General | |
| Yusuff Taha. | (Argentina) |
| Assistant Secretary General | |
| Sultan Hafiz. | (Guyana). |
| Treasurer | |
| Kamal Hosein. | (Trinidad) |

It is hoped that the recommendations of the other committees will be made available for publication, in Sha Allah.

Our new Educational System has recently spurned out its first batch of Junior Secondary Graduates. In the past these students faced severe criticism and were even labelled as 'rebels' and 'mis-fits' of the society. In all fairness to these students, it would be worthwhile to examine the system carefully.

The Junior Secondary School Programme was introduced as part of the Draft Plan for Educational Development in Trinidad and Tobago (1967-1983). The general aim of the plan was 'to improve and extend the educational system at reasonable cost.' Some of the major decisions taken, after presentation to Cabinet in March 1967, were :

1. To provide education for all children up to age 14 in two stages - Primary followed by Junior Secondary.
2. To provide specialised education and training for a selected entry at age 15 into academic and/or technical courses.
3. To expand facilities for middle and higher level technical training.
4. To achieve a fully trained teaching staff by the year 1975 or as early as possible within available resources.

The Draft Plan may therefore be considered as quite an improvement when compared with the previous system since it catered for mass education instead of a selected minority. It also made provisions for the technically oriented instead of the purely academically inclined. The term 'Technical Education' here includes four basic fields :

1. Agriculture
2. Commerce and Business Studies
3. Home Economics and Industrial Management
4. Technology in relation to Construction and Engineering Metals

Thus the Curriculum in the Junior Secondary Schools was designed to expose the student to a wide range of subjects. The academic training was supposed to equip the student with sufficient material so that on leaving the school at 14, the student would be able to complete the G C E 'O' level course in two years of full-time study.

In order to accommodate such a large number of students at a minimum cost, the schools operated on a double shift system; Morning shift :- 7.30 - 12.15; Evening shift :- 12.30 - 5.15. The schools were given one principal, two vice-principals (one per shift) and two sets of teaching staff.

In 1972 when the first set of Junior Secondary Schools was opened, many difficulties arose, the major ones being:

1. The shift system played havoc among the students allowing them too much

A REVIEW OF THE JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS

free time to indulge in frivolous activities.

2. The transport system could not cope with the large influx and students were often stranded at untimely hours in the streets.

3. Since a greater percentage of the population was educated, it would be expected that a notable amount came from unstable socio-economic backgrounds. Thus the need for experienced counsellors arose, since the ordinary teachers found themselves faced with many situations which they were unable to handle.

The end result was that there was a general breakdown in discipline in these schools which contributed to the degeneration of morality in the society.

In addition to these setbacks, further difficulties were experienced when they entered the secondary schools after the 14 plus examination. Since there were no available technical schools, the entire Junior Secondary population was placed in the existing secondary schools. Since there were only two Senior Comprehensive Schools, the Government and assisted secondary schools accommodated the majority of these students. (A small percentage was given places in the existing technical institutes).

On entering the secondary schools, it was discovered that their Forms 1, 2, and 3 background was insufficient to take them up to G.C.E. 'O' level standard in two years. This was both in the technical and academic fields.

On conducting a survey of the G C E results of some two thousand Junior Secondary Graduates in different schools, the following was revealed :-

Number of subjects passed	0	1	2	3
Percentage Passes	53.6	13.6	10.7	5.5
Number of subjects passed	4	5	6	7
Percentage Passes	4.2	1.5	0.6	0.1

The grades A, B, and C were considered as passes.

On a further subject analysis the following was obtained.

ACADEMIC SUBJECTS

SUBJECTS	Percentage passes
English Language	30
Physics	24.5
History	20
Geography	15
Chemistry	11.5
Biology	9
English Literature	7
Mathematics	4.2
Spanish	3

TECHNICAL SUBJECTS

SUBJECTS	Percentage passes
Principles of Accounts	30
Commerce	26.3
Agricultural Science	25.3
Needle Work	18
Cookery	16.3
Woodwork	8
Mechanical/Geometrical Building Drawing	8
Engineering Science	6
Metalwork	5.6
Electricity and Electronics	2

Although the individual school breakdown is not given here, it may be worthwhile to mention that the results in the Senior Comprehensive and Government Secondary Schools were better than the results in the Denominational Schools. There could be two reasons for this. First the former schools received the better students. Secondly the atmosphere in the former schools was more conducive to study. Perhaps in the prestige schools, the new students found more difficulty in adjusting since they were unaccustomed to rigid discipline and restrictions.

If we were to measure the system by these results, then failure would be a foregone conclusion. The system fell short as a result of bad implementation and the students can only be regarded as victims of change.

Currently for those students who failed to gain passes in their exam, free tuition is provided in preparation for the G.C.E. (London) examination. This late step is also doomed to failure due to the

Continued on page 10.

Islamic Centre Opens In Barbados



Mr. DeLisle Bradshaw, acting Minister of Labour and Community Services, (right) is seen as he browses through one of the many books in the library of the new Islamic Centre at Barbarees Hill, St. Michael, while director of the Centre, Mr. Daud Abdul, has a chat with Mrs. Betty Carillo, acting librarian of the Barbados Public Library.

Last month, on the day of Eid-ul-Fitr, the people of Barbados witnessed the opening of an Islamic Centre. The new Islamic Centre, situated at Barbaree Hill, St Michael was officially opened by Mr. De Lisle Bradshaw, Acting Minister of Labour and Community Services.

In his address, the Ag. Minister saw the centre as playing an important role in the community by organising classes and developing skills among the youths in preparing them for employment in the labour market.

He said that the good instructions the Muslim members received under its direction should not be confined to them only, but to the non-Muslims also. He further told the Muslim members that they should be prepared to share their knowledge with others and the centre should be a place where skills and craft are taught

He pointed out that it is heartening to see the youths taking an active part in the development of the society. Mr. Bradshaw said that he was happy to note that the centre's modern library will be shared by the public.

"This generous action is in keeping with your religion which reminds you of your duty to your fellowman," he said.

He also told the members that by allowing the public to use their centre

for cultural and sporting activities, the community will gain a better understanding of their faith and their ideals, and foster good relationships.

He also appealed to other community minded people to follow the example of the Muslim youths and do their part. He said that he would like to see plantation owners, firms and business houses adopt a similar programme.

Mr. Bradshaw further stated that Government is prepared to give any assistance required by the Muslims.

Daud Abdul Haqq, director of the centre, in his address stated that there must be co-operation between the Muslims and the non-Muslims in the society for both elements comprise the community. He said that unless something is done to stop the restlessness and unemployment situation in the society, the community will continue to deteriorate.

Brother Daud outlined the programmes which will be taught at the Centre. They are aimed at upgrading the society's moral fabric and giving direction to the youths. The programmes will also include activities for women and already a Women's League has been established to look after the affairs of women. Arabic classes are also planned and community services will be extended.

Brother Da'ud Abdul Haqq recently returned from his homeland after spending approximately five years studying Islam and Arabic at The Medina University, Saudi Arabia. He is now involved in improving the conditions of the people and here he makes an assessment of the situation in Barbados.

Q. Br. Daud, recently you returned from Saudi Arabia where you had been studying, how long did you spend at the Medina University and have you completed your studies?

A. I spent five years at the University and I should have returned to complete my studies for approximately another four years.

Q. Why did you decide to remain at home?

A. When I returned and saw the pathetic state of the society, which was mirrored within the Muslim community as well, I felt compelled to initiate steps to check the deteriorating state of affairs.

Q. It is approximately five months since your return to Barbados and within that period you have managed to open an Islamic Centre; Perhaps you can highlight some of the major problems in the society.

A. The major problem is the decayed moral fabric of the society. It has reached the point where the majority of respectable people of the country is crying out at this immoral state. They are unable to come to grips in dealing with this problem. It is in this area that I see the Islamic Centre playing a vital role in relation to the island at large. As a result one of the main objectives of the Centre is to try and check this increase in immorality that is engulfing the society and to set the society back on a straight path of progress by repairing its social fabric.

In relation to the Muslims it will be a Centre where we can have national and international representation. Also it will be an organised body representing Islam; propagating Islam in its pristine purity and establishing the necessary programmes and facilities for the Islamisation of the community at large.

Q. Were there any attempts before to establish such a Centre where such activities could be carried out?

A PATH TO MORALITY & PROGRESS

A. The need was felt for a very long time to set up a Centre as a focal point where the Muslims can rally and develop themselves along Islamic lines. The older section of the community never supported this-as a matter of fact - they always kicked against any such activities and criticised any such ideas.

Therefore as a result of the community not having geared itself to the need of the youths, they have begun to drift and adopt Western and Christian habits and customs. Many marry non - Muslims and eventually their children, in many cases, become Christians.

About two years ago an attempt was made to set up a Centre by a few of the brothers here. But, lack of true understanding and commitment caused a collapse after a few months. Last year another attempt was made which also lasted a few months. When I returned the situation was such that I was forced to venture into this area.

Q. What was the reason that made you decide to go to the Medina University after becoming a Muslim five years ago? Did the state of the community influence your decision?

A. My main objective in accepting the scholarship to the University was my zeal to know and understand Islam in order to apply it without distortion. For this it is necessary to tap the original sources which happen to be in the Arabic Language.

When I first began to work within the community I was always faced with the problem where I reached a point that I could not implement Islam any further due to lack of knowledge and insight into Islam. My intention had always been to come back and propagate Islam to the society at large.

Q. The acting Minister at the official opening, saw the Centre as playing a vital role in providing guidance to the youths; Could you highlight the problems confronting the youths and what sort of programmes do you intend to activate?

A. The major problem confronting the youths is one of unemployment. There are many educated school leavers who are unable to find work. This causes them to laze around and become inactive. You can very well understand the effects of youths being inactive - youths not having

anything to generate and channel their energies. You can very well understand the problems and the results of youths running wild like that. Some of the offshoots of which are an alarming increase in illegitimacy, common-law unions and general deterioration in family life.

I intend to start programmes in the field of vocational studies, arts and crafts, etc. and present them as models to the public. These programmes will be used to train and inject a sense of morality and a degree of consciousness within the youths and at the same time make them aware of their purpose and direction in life. These programmes will also keep the youths occupied and off the streets.

Q. What programmes have you started already for the brothers and sisters who are accepting and returning to Islam as frequently as one per day?

A. At the moment, we have programmes which are not fully implemented because of my visit to Trinidad to attend the Islamic Conference. These programmes are geared to educate us to be firm and dedicated Muslims, as witnesses to mankind, fulfilling our responsibility to the society as enjoined upon us.

A programme of studying set text books, supplemented by short lectures and 'rap' sessions is being followed to impregnate into the minds a clear understanding of certain basic and fundamental concepts and aspects of the Islamic way of Life. Special programmes for women and children are being developed that they may be prepared for their major role in an Islamic society. A course in the study of Arabic has also been started.

Q. Do you foresee any immediate problems in the operating of the Centre?

A. Our foremost problem being faced is the problem of financing our Centre. Our immediate needs are for running the Centre (rent, rates, paying wages for at least two brothers to implement programmes, operating library, etc.) and establishing a bookshop, some simple machinery for printing, publishing and generally providing literature on a mass scale.

There is also a pressing need to establish a permanent Centre to provide needs for new brothers and sisters many

of whom are facing problems not experienced by an average person coming from a Muslim family. To name a few, many are thrown out of their parents' homes, others lose their jobs and it is difficult to obtain halal food. There is need to create different projects and outlets hoping that they would provide guidance and employment to fulfil these basic human needs.

I would like to make an appeal to all concerned Muslims, to support and if possible contribute to these efforts, fi sabilillah, (in the path of Allah), whether morally or financially, in the form of literature, personnel, funds, etc.

Q. Your visit to Trinidad, was primarily to attend the Islamic Conference organised by the World Muslim League; of what importance did you view the conference and how successful did you find it?

A. As I see it, the main success of the Conference was due to the fact that we, as Muslims of the region were, for the first time brought together and were able to learn about the situation existing among us. In relation to tackling the problems of the region, which was supposed to be one of the main objects of the Conference, I found that this had not been done.

I found that the voice of the islands in the Caribbean composed of brothers like myself returning to Islam and destined to be a minority, was not heard or highlighted. It is in this vital section of the region that many immediate problems are being faced, such as problems of oppression, unemployment, lack of halal food, and absence of Mosques and other basic facilities. I had hoped that these immediate problems would have been tackled at the earliest possible time.

Instead, the Conference centered around a few groups of Muslims in the region, mainly from Guyana, Trinidad and those of Arab origin in South America. For instance, Peru was represented but the indigenous Muslims were not invited. These indigenous Muslims find difficulty in practising their religion. They don't have a place to pray, or literature or anyone to teach them.

I still believe that the main success of the Conference was that we were able to unite - to bring together Muslims from around the region and various parts of the world in the true spirit of universal Islamic Brotherhood.

FAITH AND BROTHERHOOD IN ISLAM

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ
حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُمْ

مُسْلِمُونَ

وَاعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا
تَفَرَّقُوا وَاذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ
إِذْ كُنْتُمْ أَعْدَاءً فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِكُمْ
فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهِ إِخْوَانًا وَكُنْتُمْ
عَلَى شَفَا حُفْرَةٍ مِنَ النَّارِ فَأَنْقَذَكُمْ
مِنْهَا كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ
آيَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ

"O ye who believe! Fear Allah as He should be feared. And die not except as Muslims. And hold fast, all together to the covenant of Allah, and never be separated. And remember (with gratitude) the grace of Allah upon you. For you were enemies but He has joined your hearts (in love for His sake) so that because of His bounties, you have become brethren. You were on the brink of a pit fire (of hatred and enmity) and He has saved you from it. Thus Allah does show His signs clearly that you may be rightly guided." (Al Quran)

In these verses Allah calls the Muslim Community to Him and presents to them the two fundamental bases on which they must build their lives and set out their social system. These are indispensable in order to carry out the great task He has set and assigned to them. The bases are Imaan and Brotherhood; Imaan that is shown by obedience to Allah and a conscious fear of Allah at every single moment of this life, and brotherhood in His name which turns these qualities into an impregnable power perfectly capable of carrying out its role in human life and in the history of man. This role is the role of enjoining what is right and founding their lives on it, and forbidding the wrong and purifying their lives by shunning all wrong.

These are the bases on which the Muslim community is raised and by which it plays its role in this world. If any of these collapses the whole community becomes paralysed, and meaningful role in this life will be totally impossible.

'O you who believe! Fear Allah as He should be feared.' This verse, without giving any specific limits to the fear of Allah, leaves the mind eagerly trying, as far as it is able, to picture and conceive it. As thought multiplies along new scopes are opened up and new emotions aroused. Every time one draws nearer to Allah, one is induced to proceed unto a loftier stage, impatient to reach the stage at which one's mind and heart remain faithfully conscious of Allah forever.

'And die not except as Muslims.' No human being knows the moment of his death. Whoever chooses to die as Muslim, therefore, must begin, at the very moment to become one, and continue to be so at every moment. In bringing up adherence to Islam after dealing with piety there is an indication of the wide meaning of Islam, that is complete submission to Allah in the form of obedience, conscious surrender to and implementation of the directions in His Book and Shari'ah. This is the first basis on which the Muslim Community must rest, to prove its existence and perform its role in human life. For without it, every social system is contradictory to the path prescribed by Allah (i.e. Jahiliyah). Then the path under which the Ummah gathers will not be a path prescribed by Allah but a path devoid of any connection with Him. There will not be rightly-guided leadership for mankind but Jahili leadership.

The second basis is brotherhood for the sake of Allah's pleasure, and conformity with His path which is implemented in actual life as commanded in: 'And hold fast, all together, to the covenant of Allah, and never be separated. And remember (with gratitude) the grace of Allah upon you. For you were enemies but He has joined your hearts (in love for His sake) so that, because of His bounties, you have become brethren. You were on the brink of a pit of fire (of hatred and enmity) and He has saved you from it. Thus doth Allah show His signs clearly that you may be rightly-guided.'

This brotherhood which springs from piety and Islam, that is, submission to Allah, forms the chief basis. It is reared by holding firmly to Allah's covenant, His prescribed path and religion and not by aimless following of any other

concepts for whatever purpose resulting from the various Jahili connections.

'And hold fast, all together, to the covenant of Allah, and never be separated.'

The fraternity which is founded on Allah's covenant is a favour for which, as He impresses upon them, the Muslims should thank Him. (It is a grace that He bestows upon those whom He loves.) He reminds the Muslims of their enmity during their pre-Islamic life. Medina never saw a more savage hatred than that between its two Arab tribes, Aus and Khazraj, which their Jewish neighbours used to ignite; for, they cherished to ruin the relationship between the tribes altogether so that the field would be open for them to exploit. (They never flourish, unless hatred and enmity prevail.) But Allah joined the hearts of the people of these two Arab tribes through Islam. Only Islam indeed was able to join those hearts and turn the people into brothers by the Grace of Allah.

It is brotherhood in Allah alone that can genuinely unite the hearts of man, stimulate, and elevate them high above their historical jealousies, tribal animosities, personal predilections and various racial distinctions, and collect them under the banner of Allah, Almighty.

He also reminds them of His mercy that saved them from the fire (of enmity and hatred) into which they were about to fall. He saved them by guiding them to hold fast to His covenant and by uniting their hearts in His name until they became brethren. 'You were on the brink of a pit of fire (of hatred and enmity) and He saved you from it.' This verse aims at the very centre of relations and emotions - the heart. It does not say, 'joined you', but goes deep into the actual affection and says, 'He joined your hearts.' And, hence, it presents the Muslims as a group of several separate pieces which are integrated into one and the same body under the covenant of Allah by His own wish. It also gives an extremely descriptive picture of their situation hitherto or rather a live and moving scene with which the audience's hearts move: "You were on the brink of a pit of fire." As the event of their falling into the fire-pit is expected any minute, the spectator can see the 'hand' of Allah moving towards their aid and salvation. One can picture the act of their being in danger and fearful anticipation in this live scene which the audience's hearts are carried at a restless and fast-beating pace and which their eyes could, through the

S U P P L E M E N T

The MUSLIM STANDARD

(November 1975)

FULL TEXT OF SPEECH BY MR. KAMALUDDIN MOHAMMED AT
A BHAGAWAT FUNCTION AT THE HOME OF MR. RAMDHANIE,
COR. EL SOCORRO ROAD AND FAZAL AVENUE, SAN JUAN
ON 13TH. OCTOBER 1975.

Punditji, Mr. Ramdhanie and Family,
Sisters & Brothers,

I am very happy tonight to have been invited by our very good friend Mr. Ramdhanie and his family to come and join in this nine-day Ramine-Yag which he has organised to celebrate his entry into the community of El Socorro and San Juan, and the completion of this very beautiful building which he has decided to make for his home and his family. I would like to take this opportunity to extend a very warm welcome to Mr. Ramdhanie and his family for coming to join us in this El Socorro community and I hope that the blessings which he will derive from this nine-day Ramine Yag, on himself and his family, will help to fortify him and make him a respectable and dedicated member of this community. I would also like to extend a very warm welcome to my very good friend, Pundit Hardat who I have not seen for a long time in his role as a pundit. Both his father, himself, as well as his brother, most of you know them, are very high and respected people in the community of Trinidad and Tobago and it is not often one would find that the Almighty has blessed in a house two brothers who have become pundits, not only respectable pundits, but pundits whose Bhagwat and whose Ramine and whose lectures, Hindus and non-Hindus as well from all parts

of the country go to listen to their words of wisdom.

I thought that I would come around nine o'clock and just give a message of congratulation to my friend, Mr. Ramdhanie and his family, but I was very fortunate to come a little earlier and to hear Punditji speaking to you in connection with the virtues of prayers of making puja, of giving thanks and paying obeisance to the Almighty, the Creator. Now we live in a world in Trinidad and Tobago now and in the West Indies, very far away from where our forefathers came. As you all know, our forefathers came from India in the year 1845. So 1945 gone in this century was 100 years and between '45 and '75, its another 30 years, so it is 130 years since your great grandfather and my grandfather and the others came to these parts by little boats brought by the British Masters so that they can plant the cane in the estate of this country.

Everyone of us here whose forefathers came, came from India, either from Lucknow, or Punjab or Calcutta or Madras or some part of India and they came here as indentured immigrants. **The Hindus and the Muslims came together as one people. There was no difference between them as to who was a Hindu and as to who was a Muslim in terms of their personal relationship..** Those

For a comment on this speech
see article in *The Muslim Standard*
(Number 2, November 1975)

entitled

**ISLAM NO INDIAN RELIGION
But Kamal appeals to Indian
sentiment and propagates
Hinduism**

of you who will remember the only way they called each other was 'Jahaji.' I think all of you know that meaning "shipmate". The only distinction was who came by this ship and who came by the other ship but they called everybody 'Jahaji.' The brothers called each other, 'Bhai' and they called each other, 'Dost' and that relationship built up in this country from that time until now.

But now we are living in a new society. Those older people who came and they brought their harmoniums, and their tablaas, their dhantals and their majeeras. The Hindus brought a few copies of the Holy Ramine, they brought the Bhagwat Gita. Some of the Muslims brought their Holy Qur'an and they brought their

'Moulood Dil Pazeer' and their 'Moulood Akbar'. And they came here in their dhoti and their pyjamas, in their pagree and in their topees and they slaved for the British Masters, cutting the canes, filling the slates and planting the estate for those people. And only about ten or fifteen years ago it was possible to eradicate those houses where our forefathers went and remained and slaved for the Sugar Company. All over the Sugar estate, those who know the sugar estate, will find that our forefathers, they were keeping watch and guard for their Company by living together with the mules and the donkeys and the buffaloes in those barracks. That was the state of colonialism which they had to live with.

Today we have moved away from that. Today no mother and no father, no matter how poor he is in this country, Hindu or Muslim, wants to see his son or daughter walk barefoot to go to the school. Today our children not only they don't want to see them barefoot as we walked in our days with flourbags pants and flourbag shirts and walking barefoot from El Socorro to Akal School, from here to get a little education. But today our parents want to see that the children have a good pair of shoe, not ordinary 'washeekong' as we used to wear when we did dress with 'washeekong'. They want to see us have that good shoes. Today everybody wants to see crimplene and the most modern suit. Today lipstick is on the sale and Dharam is gone.

That is why I am glad to hear Punditji talk so much about prayers. For the Hindu and the Muslim, prayers is the most essential ingredient in our whole life. If a man or woman is a Hindu or a Muslim and he does not pray, then he is no different from an animal, because the animal has no sense. Out of 144 creatures that God created in this world, he made the human being the most intelligent of those creatures. But what do we find? Although we have a healthy tradition that our forefathers made from the time we were children and they made every sacrifice for us to maintain our lives in this cosmopolitan country, the younger generation of today, our young boys and girls are leaving the path of

Dharam or Religion, and they are going on the Western Path.

This is why it is so good to see that our friend, Mr Ramdhanie has decided to keep the Bhagwat, this Ramine here today in order to celebrate this new house, or our children pass an examination or some success is attained, we go and we have a lot of drinking. We invite our friends, our families and we play soul music and there is all form of foreign interference and entertainment in our home. Today our sisters and daughters are leaving the Dharam and are following every western principle in terms of the type of dress they wear, leaving away the covering of our heads and following all the Western tradition which are alien to our own custom and our own tradition. The day is going when you would see in a function many people trying to maintain the tradition of the 'orhni', which not only look so beautiful, add so much grace to our people and their tradition.

Today we spend money, large sums of money to educate our children to become versed in English, to get G.C.E. passes, to get University degrees and yet they are unable to appreciate the need for learning even the elements of the Hindi Alphabet, from Ka to wa, from Alif to Bareeyay in the Arabic or the Urdu or the Hindi, but they were asked to get all the degrees. Like if the degrees will make them recognise their God.

I say to you ladies and gentleman, that if the meaning of this Ramine here has to have any meaning or if you are serious about coming to listen to Punditji in that very simple few words that I heard him mentioned to you about, if you are serious about attending this function, then you must go home with one simple lesson — there is a prayer for every occasion for the Hindu and for the Muslim. Remember that these religions are very closely linked with each other. The whole life of a Hindu is wrapped up in Dharam. There are very heavy principles in it.

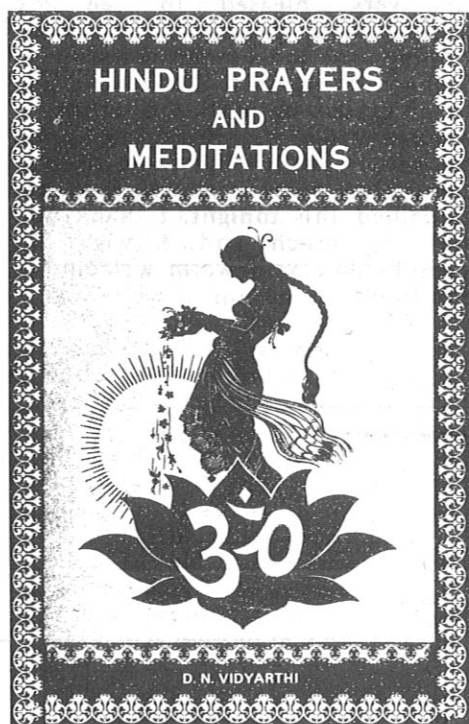
This afternoon when I was coming, I looked at a little book which I would like to recommend to you. I don't know whether some of you have seen it, but as Hindus I think that you should pay some attention to it. It is entitled, Hindu Prayers and Meditation. And I was very pleasantly surprised that the

book came to my hand at a time when I was coming here and I thought when I heard Punditji mention those few words that I would remind you of it and recommend this book to you. The book, the introduction to the book carries the following statement, "Every Hindu must pray daily. Morning at sunrise and evening at Sunset one must have divine communication with God, and ask Him for Light and Guidance in all his undertakings. Hindu prayers and rituals are of different types and of complex nature. But in our daily lives we are not so much to be concerned with these complexities. A few simple prayers will serve our needs. The one thing, however, we have to constantly keep in mind, is purity of heart and sincerity of purpose. Daily we must surrender ourselves to the Divine Will and dedicate our day, our lives, our actions in fact everything we do, as an offering to God. We must not merely utter words as a matter of fact, but we must say our prayers with sincerity, with feeling and with devotion. We must not ask God for anything that we can achieve by our own efforts. Ask him only for those things that are good for you and that will help you in living a richer and more dedicated and fruitful life. Don't approach God as a beggar. Talk to Him as a son talks to a father. After all, God is our divine Father. He is also our Cosmic Mother, full of love and compassion. ever ready to bestow blessings upon us only if we pray faithfully and deserve it fully.

This little book offers a bunch of simple and dynamic prayers. They can fulfill the individual needs of every Hindu. They are divinely inspired and seek the bestowal of worldly prosperity as well as spiritual enlightenment. If our hearts go with them, our miseries will disappear and the heavenly light will appear.

Hindus must make their lives prayerful. This book it is hoped will guide you in your quest. Without prayer, a Hindu cannot be a good Hindu. Prayer is the topmost requisite of a Hindu Life. It is his very existence. Nobody can pray for you. Nobody can taste the sweetness for you. You have to do it for yourself and experience the ecstasy of bliss for yourself. So pray, pray and pray, O Ye Hindus. Prayer will animate you, sublimate you and invigorate you. It will make you

energetic, dynamic and successful and the book, sisters and brothers, carries very many items which every Hindu home should have and it is in English with the Hindi itself, the Mantras in Hindi, the transliteration for those who cannot read Hindi, as well as the translation, the meaning of those verses from the Ramane and the Bhagwat Gita, the glory of prayer, the guide how to pronounce it, the morning prayer, the prayer when you are taking a bath, the prayer when the sun comes out, the meal time prayer, what invocations you must make the prayer for happiness, the prayer for when one is troubled; prayer for health and strength; prayer for giving you character, prayer for enjoying a long life, for enlightenment, for salutations to the Almighty, for the endowment of good, for the removal of evil, for Divine Guidance, for the bestowal and of keeping away from trouble, for light, knowledge and supreme bliss. Special prayers for the various devotees. And the book is in very simple language which I strongly recommend to all of you who are here. There is also a complete statement of the alphabet, the way to pronounce the various words of the Hindi alphabet. The



Kamal: "Divinely Inspired" book

Mantras are very, very simple. Even somebody who cannot read Hindi can read it because the translation is there for you in very simple language. Remember the name is Hindu Prayers and Meditation; and you can find out where it is obtainable. I recommend a copy of this in every Hindu home; and it is necessary because we must remember that we live in a very awkward world and the only thing that Punditji was saying just now, to save us from the various problems we have, it is that we must try and get away from the worldly and material life and live towards the achievement of a proper spiritual life.

I appeal especially to the younger people in this audience, especially to the mothers in the home. Your responsibility towards your children is even more great than the fathers who have to seek a daily livelihood, and it is very necessary that we try, with all the evil wind that is blowing among us to seek to protect ourselves from all the dangerous influences which we have in our midst. The whole basis of religion is the secret of survival, and what is religion? What is religion for a Christian? Religion for a Christian is the belief in a God and a life of piety in his world. What is the life of a Hindu? The religion of a Hindu is based on the axis, on the belief of those great pioneers who brought the religion the life of prayer and devotion and everything is in the form of dedication. If you look at the people, these devotees who sit here, they sit there with heads, dressed in very humble circumstances. The Punditji reads his Katha from here and he explains it so that you will who cannot read, will at least understand because today it is not like long ago -- when the Pundits of today read in no matter what language they used to read, they tried to explain it in English so that our younger generation can understand it. I am a little concerned as I spoke in a Bhagwat just two weeks ago in Don Miguel Road and I had to make the point to the leaders of the Hindu Community, that there are two areas in which I am very concerned as to what will be the future of our younger Hindu generation in terms of the continuation of the Pundit's work and in terms of the maintenance of schools for the teaching of Hindi and for the Hindu

Dharma. In this country there are fifty Maha Sabha schools and about seven Arya Sama Schools established under the permission of the Government of the country. These schools, all the salaries of the teachers, the furniture, and two-thirds of the cost is paid by the Government. Last week when I was speaking on the occasion of giving an Eid Message to the Muslim community. I asked the question as to whether our Hindus and our Muslims are taking advantage of the opportunity which has been given to them by the Government in order to try and propagate the religion. The answer is that I am not satisfied that in our schools of today, even our teachers in the schools are equipped and are doing sufficient in order to propagate the Religion.

In the days when I was a boy, I attended Akal School-San Juan C.M. School. It was a Presbyterian School, but still the Bhajans, all the Bhajans that we learnt, was taught in that Christian Community School, and they taught us to read Hindi. And then when we came home in the evening, we went to the Maktab in the Masjid, and those of us who wanted to learn Hindi- I love Kawali and singing, I used to go Hindi school here in Maraj Street to learn from Pundit Debidial Sharma and the late Bal Maraj Saheb. Now today we don't have that. Our children must go to the college and they take G.C.E, wear nice clothes, pretty clothes good hair-do, go to the hairdresser every week and that is the end of our ambition as citizens of this country. It is my view that each person should now seek to revive this religion and to revive the religious practices so that we will protect ourselves from all the evil winds that are blowing to us, so it is important, what do we know, that when men like Pundit Hardat, Pundit Krishen, well some of them have gone already. The other day we had our good friend Kashi Pundit from Tunapuna passed away. How many of our children would be qualified to become pundits in the not too distant future? So I am appealing to you my friends that we have very little time left for us to prepare and to take advantage of their foundation that we have laid in this country. The time, those who don't take it now, will not get it again. All the Maslah, all the songs, all the ghazals and all the Thumrees and

the Dhurpats we have been hearing since we are little children, preach one thing — to take the opportunity now. I remember again when we were children in the school, I don't know, I think I heard Punditji many years ago, he might remember this, when we were going to school we had many lovely Bhajan that were sung in those days that were taught to us and that gave a lot of meaning to what we are saying, and I would like to leave you a message with one, the meaning of which is very, very soothing and it is an inspiration for all of us to remember that this is a Maslah just like a Maslah that we must wake up and get what we have now. I am very, very delighted as I said again, to be here tonight and to join in this little celebration and to give a very warm welcome to our brother, Mr. Ramdhanie and his family to El Socorro and to invoke the blessing of the Almighty that they will mingle and mix in this community and to live as happy neighbours and as constructive members of our community.

I am sure you would like to join with me with the Pundit's permission in singing this Bhajan which I learned in my school days, and as I was born in Fazal Avenue right here and I grew up here, I felt it was appropriate that you should join with me in this lovely Bhajan which I never forgot — (proceeds to sing and translate Bhajan).

I will give you one Maslah and then I will end. Not very long ago I had to attend a certain ceremony and in that house there were five children. This is a true revelation of

what I am telling you that happened less than two months ago. In that house there were five children. There was a dead in that house. These five children are highly educated children. One is a University Graduate and the father of that person died and when I went there, it was a Muslim home, I said to that young man, 'Could you make a little place so that the Moulvi and the Imam will come and read a little of the Holy Quran and explain. And he said to me, 'I am sorry. I don't think we have place for that here'. He said, 'We do have place for that here. This is a Muslim house. So some people started to play cards in the yard and I said, 'very well, but one of his uncles heard him use the remark and he said, "No, come to me, I will make some place if the son does not want to have some reading for his father. It is my brother and I will make a place to have some reading. So the reading took place and the funeral was the following day. But at about half past three when the body was ready to go to the cemetery, I saw the fellow crying. I didn't say anything to him but I think Punditji will remember this old K.C. Day song, (sings...) the man who gets a cut it is only he alone can tell you how he feel with that cut. The man who could only imagine how he feel, but the man who has the cut, knows the feeling of that cut. So at half-past three when the body was about to leave, he remembered the fellow was his father, he remembered how he was born, and I was a kind of chairman, so he came to me and he

said "You know, could I get a chance to say a little dua?" A Dua means a prayer, so I was very surprised, because I knew he was an atheist. He don't believe in Qur'an or Hadith or Mouloud, or Ramine or nothing. He believe that his education and his money was his God. So he made this prayer and I was amazed. So it took the death of his father to get him to change from his bad ways of drinking.

I appeal to young and old to make a change for the right path, The path of Dharam the path of Religion for the future of our generation, the future of this whole community in Trinidad and Tobago. For the Christians follow the religion for the Muslims follow their Quran. For the Hindus, follow the holy teachings of the Bhagwat Gita and the Ramine. Follow the great saints like Tulsi Dass and follow the life of Sri Krishna, and follow all of them and you will find in them virtues that will make you good citizens.

I hope that the blessings of the Almighty will be showered on my friend Mr Jeelal Ramdhanie and his family for what they have done here tonight. I admire it very much and I am very pleased to see my distinguished friend, Pundit Hardat coming way down from the bushes of Cumuto to come to El Socorro and to enlighten us with the words of wisdom from the Holy Book, and the simple and effective and the very competent manner in which he has explained this tonight. I thank you all very much and I wish Mr. Ramdhanie a very warm welcome in San Juan.

MESSAGE OF PROPHET JESUS

The following is an extract from the book 'The Shepherd' written by Hermas in the first century after the disappearance of Jesus. Hermas was regarded as a prophet and 'The Shepherd' as a revealed book by some of the earliest followers of Jesus. The extract reaffirms the principle of pure monotheism as preached and demonstrated by all the Prophets of God. This extract has been taken from the recent publication 'Jesus Prophet of Islam' by Muhammad 'Ata ur-Rahim and may be consulted at the Islamic Trust Reference Library.

FAITH AND BROTHERHOOD IN ISLAM

long generations, candidly visualise.

Muhammad bin Ishak and others, wrote in the biography of Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, that this verse was revealed in connection with the 'Aus and Khazraj.' A Jew passed a gathering of them one day and was infuriated to see them in agreement and mutual brotherhood. He sent someone to join them and surreptitiously reminded them of their old war. Several times the Jews did that until they became excited and angry with each other. They remembered their old quarrels, became disunited called for their weapons and agreed to meet at Al-Harra and fight. When this news reached the Prophet, peace be upon him, he went to them and tried to bring them back to their senses exclaiming: 'You do things of Jahiliyah while I am among you?' And he recited the above verses to them which filled them with shame and they repented. Thus Allah taught them and they won guidance as is remarked in the verse: "Thus doth Allah make His signs clear to you so that you may be rightly-guided."

NOW AVAILABLE

"LIFE OF MUHAMMAD"
by Abdul Hameed Siddique

*A clear, positive and
authoritative account*

Price \$12.50

ISLAMIC TRUST BOOKSHOP

1 First of all believe that God is One and that He created all things and organised them, and out of what did not exist made all things to be, and He contains all things but Alone is Himself uncontained. Trust Him therefore and fear Him, and, fearing Him, be self-controlled. Keep this command and you will cast away from yourself all wickedness, put on every virtue of uprightness, and you will live to God if you keep this commandment.

2. Be sincere and simple-minded. Speak evil of nobody and do not enjoy hearing anyone do so. Do right, and give generously.

3. Love truth.

4. Observe purity. Be pure not only in action but in thinking.

5. Be patient and understanding. The Lord dwells in patience, but the devil in ill-temper.

6. Trust what is right, and do not trust what is wrong. Uprightness has a straight and level way, but wrong-doing a crooked one. There are two angels with men, one for recording uprightness, and the other for wickedness.

7. Fear the Lord and keep God's commands.

8. Be self-controlled about what is wrong and do no wrong. But do not be self-controlled about what is right, but do what is right. Restrain yourself from all evil and follow the right path.

9. Cast off doubt from yourself. Ask the Lord without doubting, and you will receive everything. God is not like men who hold grudges, but He is forgiving and feels pity for what He had made. So cleanse your heart of all vanities of this world.

10. Put sadness away from you, for it is the sister of doubt and bad temper.

11. A man who consults a false prophet is an idolater and void of the truth.

Hermas asked the angel how to distinguish a true prophet from a false one. The angel replied that in the first place the man who has the spirit that is from above is gentle, quiet, and humble. He abstains from all wickedness and the futile desires of the world..... (He) does not speak but all power belongs to the Lord.

A false prophet exalts himself and wants to have a front seat. He is bold, shameless, and talkative, lives in great luxury and accepts pay for his prophesying. Can a divine spirit accept pay for prophesying? The false prophet avoids the upright men and attaches himself to those who are doubtful and vain; and he says everything to them falsely in line with their desires. An empty vessel put among empty ones does not break, but they harmonise with one another. Take a stone and throw it up to heaven; see if you can reach it. The earthly things are impotent and weak. On the other hand, take the power that comes from above. Hail is a very small grain, yet when it falls on a man's head what pain it causes! Or again, take a drop of water which falls on the ground from the roof and makes a hole in the stone. So the Divine Power that comes from above is mighty.

12. Cast off from yourself every evil desire and clothe yourself in good and holy desires. God created the world for man's sake and made his whole creation subject to man, and gave him complete authority to have dominion over all things under heaven. A man who has the Lord in his heart is able to master all things.

Behave as a slave of God. The devil cannot get control of the slaves of God. The devil can wrestle, but cannot throw them.

WITH CHILDREN IN MIND

Story of Adam and Hawwa

Long ago, there was no beautiful earth, no bright sun or moon. There were no stars. There was only Allah.

Long ago, there were no cats, or dogs, or horses and cows, no birds in the sky, and no fish in the sea. There was only Allah.

Long ago, there were no people, no fathers, no mothers, no brothers, and no sisters. There was only Allah.

Then, in the beginning, Allah made the heavens and the earth. He created angels. The angels used to pray to Him all the time.

One day, Allah said to the angels, "I shall make a man to be my khalifa on the earth." The angels were worried. They feared that man might make mischief on the earth. Allah said, "I know what you don't know."

Then Allah made a man from clay and called him "Adam". Then He created Hawwa, the wife of Adam. Allah gave him understanding and feelings, such as love, which the angels did not have.

Allah then showed this man to the angels and asked them, "Do you have understanding and feelings like Adam?" And the angels replied, "No — Oh Allah, you were right".

Then Allah called all the angels and ordered them to bow down before Adam. They obeyed, and bowed down, except one, whose name was "Iblis". He was too proud, and he said, "I am better than Adam because I am made from fire, but Adam is made from clay." Allah was very angry with Iblis, and punished him for his disobedience, and turned him out of Heaven. Allah then told him, "You shall always be cursed."

Allah told Adam to live in the garden with his wife, and told them, "In the garden you have everything. Eat whatever fruit you wish. But do not go near one tree or you will be harmed."

Now Iblis decided to lead Adam and Hawwa into temptation. He went to Adam and Hawwa and spoke to them gently. He said "Why do you not eat of the fruit of this tree?" "God has forbidden us to do so", said Adam and Hawwa. Iblis, however, made Adam and Hawwa forget what Allah had told them. So they ate the fruit of the forbidden tree.

Allah said to them, "Have I not forbidden you to eat from that tree? You have been misled by Satan, your enemy, who is out to harm you. You have disobeyed me and followed him."

Adam and Hawwa said, "Forgive us, O Lord, and pardon us. We have made a big mistake and brought harm upon ourselves."

Allah said to Adam and Hawwa, "True, you have committed a big mistake. Therefore, leave this garden for it is no place for you. Go down to the earth where you shall live, you and your children and Satan too."

Then Adam and Hawwa went down to earth and there Adam lived with Hawwa. They had children, boys and girls.

When their children grew up they married and had their own children, boys and girls, too, and thus the children of Adam went on marrying and having children. We are children of the children of Adam and Hawwa. All people on this earth whether in Africa, America, Asia, Australia or Europe have the same great, great, grandparents: Adam and Hawwa.

[The above story is from a book under preparation "Quran Stories" for children.]

A REVIEW OF THE JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS

limited time factor as well as the difference in the syllabus content as compared with the Cambridge Examination

Referring once more to the Draft Plan, it states :- 'The academic level of the reasonably successful graduate should be such as to enable him to complete the G. C. E. 'O' Level Course in at least five subjects in two years of full-time study; this is merely set down as a desirable goal, not as the criterion for success or failure because the Junior Secondary Course has vastly broader objectives than the furnishing of a foundation for G.C.E. successes.' One may ask, How do we

judge success or failure?

On a broader note the Draft Plan states, "What are we educating for? We are supposed to produce citizens who are intellectually, morally and emotionally fitted to respond adequately and productively to the varied challenges of life in a multi-racial developing country....." It is in this vital area that failure is quite eminent. Many are the reports of indiscipline, immorality and general lack of purpose and direction in life that have been seeping out of the schools and mirrored in many sectors of the society.

First we must realise that proper education and proper planning 'require some guiding philosophy that provides a consistent basis for all plans and execu-

tions. For in education, consistency and continuity are overridingly important factors. They can determine the difference between order and chaos, a state of continuous flux and total paralysis leading to a breakdown of the social system or to a more disciplined approach to change and the creation of an environment in which decision making is easier.'

And finally, what are to become of these students and those to follow? Are they to be graduates for 'Special Works Projects' or would education be brought in conformity with the philosophy of the Creator of Man, who is the only One capable of developing a balanced individual and forging a society which is truly guided, liberated and creative?

BOOK REVIEW

A BIRD'S EYE VIEW

ISLAM: Faith and Practice by Manazir Ahsan, Published by The Islamic Foundation. (11 chapters, pp 48).

The nature of Islam and its message reflect simplicity of belief, clarity in thought and reasoning, and preciseness of action. The book "Islam: faith and practice" can lay claim to upholding this outlook of Islam. The writer is also able to capture the prophetic spirit of communication by his explanation of terms in a clear, simple, precise and positive manner, thereby leaving no room for ambiguity or further need of explanation or commentary.

The book presents a bird's eye view of various aspects of the Islamic Message and its Culture and indicates an awareness of the needs of English speaking people. Presented in a language that can be easily understood by the modern man, it keeps the reader enthralled while it educates and convinces.

Another positive feature of the book is the fact that the writer is able to support his arguments with references from the Qur'an, Hadith and other scholarly works. Direct references are as far as possible, provided for further study of basic issues. Also, one must comment on the general arrangement and presentation of the book. The chapters follow one another in a methodical manner and are all intertwined to give a continuous flow of thought. The use of pictures and illustrations also add to make the presentation of the material effective and illuminating.

Finally, the appendix on Muslim Population of the world included at the end of the book, reveals a picture of the universality of Islam and the present position and status of the Muslims. Two points need to be mentioned in this respect:-

1. The statistics show the percentage of Muslims in areas under non-Muslim control and various degrees of oppression experienced by the Muslims. Areas were also shown where the Muslims, although being in a clear majority, are yet under the dominion of a foreign minority.

2. The long list of countries under

Muslim control appears significant but somewhat disheartening when one considers the 'hotch-potch' and a mixture of various ideologies and 'isms' being propagated and practised under the labels of Islam and Muslims in many countries.

These two points indicate the need for Islam — the system of life ordained by the Creator — to be implemented both in the East and in the West

Indeed, the book "Islam: faith and practice" is one of the many steps in this direction and is ideally suited for young Muslim students or non-Muslims interested in Islam. Alysa' Abdullah.

Sowing New Seeds

During the recent National Agricultural Exhibition, these questions were asked: Will the exhibition in any way highlight or alleviate the many problems facing our agricultural sector? Will all the efforts and money utilised on recruiting personnel, building sheds, buying prizes, etc, be commensurate with the benefits achieved?

Providing answers will be difficult, but anyone who visited the exhibition may have observed that the major attraction, to judge by the interest of the large crowds, was the evening entertainment: musical bands, tassa drummers, dance troupes, etc.

This mentality and attitude displayed were further exemplified by the attempt of one band to play the tuneWelcome to the Hotel California.... such a lovely place....'This gives us a clue to one of the sources of our problems in the agricultural sector, i.e. the idea that foreign products are always better than local ones.

Thus many people reject locally produced goods in preference for the imported packaged goods. Since the demand for our goods is low, prices are low (unless affected by adverse weather conditions), and hence incomes are low, deterring many from venturing into the agricultural field.

Also, on the social scale, agricultural workers continue to occupy a low rating. Every individual in this country consumes food, but the slave mentality still persists and Trinidadians venture

only into agriculture if faced with no alternative.

For a long time it has been felt that Government can do a great deal more in tackling these problems by providing subsidies, guaranteed markets, minimum prices, interest free loans, lease land, etc. Also the provision of more and better 'Extension Services' can help a lot to bridge the wide gap between the highly paid research workers and the labourers, the latter receiving next to nothing.

Farmers can also be encouraged to replace their inefficient and traditional techniques of production with more advanced ones. Based on years of research, the Extension Services give advice in this area.

We need to strive to develop a balanced economy between industrial development and agricultural self sufficiency.

But if we carefully analyse the problem, the amount the Government can do is limited and much depends on the actual participation of the people. There is a need for a basic re-orientation of values on the part of our population. We need to become more responsible individuals and realise that producing food for ourselves and others is a part of Man's purpose on earth.

Perhaps this instruction of Prophet Muhammad, Peace be upon him, may motivate us along this path - "If a person plants a tree or sows seeds whatever a bird, a person or an animal eats of the product is regarded as a charitable gift for which he will be rewarded."

A Change In Minds

Last week was violence week. Young and old were the victims of brutal slayings. One morning we read about a victim with a bashed-in skull; next was the murder of a 7 year old schoolboy and a teenager; then a couple in a motor-car; a shopkeeper murdered in his own shop and finally a 60 year old woman. These murders were all committed on consecutive days in one week.

Most brutal of all was the one in which a young man ran amok stabbing

Continued on page 12

MISPLACED VALUES

'The first black woman to win the Miss Universe title', so stated Gertrude Kirton, Mayor of San Fernando, when she proudly congratulated 'Penny' Commissioning.

Much praise has been lavished on the 'achievement' of this young Trinidadian. The Trinity Cross, the country's highest award was presented to her. A

A CHANGE OF MINDS

Continued from page 11

four persons, ages ranging from 7 - 60, out of which 2 died immediately and another a few days later. The schoolboy was stabbed and carved over twenty times amidst his classmates in front of his teacher.

What was the motive for this gruesome murder? It was reported that the murderer was a weed-pusher and he was fired from his job. Was he under the influence of marijuana? Was he insane? (he was an out-patient of the mental hospital) or was he in his right mind?

Whichever one it was, the fact remains that more drugs are being made available to the public and its consumption is rapidly on the increase. If steps are not taken to eradicate its use it will not be safe to walk the streets.

Some people suggest building more mental hospitals for the mentally deranged or a police campaign to rid the society of drug pushers. These may solve the problems partially. However it is important to recognise the real problem as one of a rapid increase in immorality. Therefore, together with improving the conditions of the people, it is necessary to begin a campaign to improve the minds of the people.

Those in authority - teachers, priests, imams, etc. should inform people particularly the youths, about what is right and what is wrong, including the evils of intoxicants - alcohol and drugs. This may be done in lectures, films, etc. but most important, by example.

Unless we make ourselves God-conscious and God-fearing; unless we seek and find Divine Guidance and follow it, no amount of mental hospitals or police campaigns will be sufficient to protect us from those who indulge in immorality.

state drive in the southern borough was arranged for her where thousands, old and young from all parts of the Southland, came to give her a royal welcome. The San Fernando Borough Council has gone even so far as to name a street in her honour.

For some, this 'achievement' is regarded and acknowledged as one of honour and fame, while to others it reflects exploitation of the chastity and the dignity of womanhood. It is quite clear that the organisers of such contests are from the business circles and these contests provide economic strategy for material gains.

On winning the contest, Miss Universe is simply used by business advertisers to display her physical features to the world for their own benefits. They offer handsome financial rewards to her and she willingly destroys her self-respect for a brief moment of false and worthless glory.

Incidentally, this month the Government has organised a meeting to discuss the establishment of machinery for promoting greater equality for women in this country. The machinery suggested, includes a National Commission on the status of women, non-permanent national committees, councils of equality, women's bureau, and non-governmental national women's organisations. The priority areas to be covered by this machinery are employment, health, social welfare, education and training, legislation, women's participation in politics and decision making, and their involvement in the planning and implementation of programmes for national development.

The intention to grant women their rights is a commendable one. However it should be realised that this does not mean that they should be expected to perform the same functions as men. Although both men and women are created equal and held in the same esteem by our Creator, they supplement one another. As a result, they differ in some of their functions.

While considering their rights it is also necessary to consider their obligations. In Islam peoples' obligations are considered before their rights. Actually other people's rights become their obligations. Granting people their rights does not mean that they will be

comment

free from all obligations, as is the trend today.

Actually what is most important is that we do not have misplaced values. To give an example of this, we refer to the Commissioning affair again. In the Minister of Education speech during the recent Republic Day and Independence celebration, our innocent children were encouraged to pattern themselves after the two recent Trinity recipients - Crawford (he deserves his award) and Miss Commissioning. Imagine all our children imitating her - in semi-nude!

The task of the women commission is a very important one and its decisions will affect the future of our women. However the job is made simpler when we consider that our Creator has already determined the rights and obligations of women. Thus it is recommended that an effort be made to find out about the real status of women.

In our search let us consider this verse of the Qur'an - Lo! men who surrender to Allah, and women who surrender, and men who believe and women who believe, and men who obey and women who obey, and men who speak the truth and women who speak the truth, and men who persevere (in righteousness) and women who persevere, and men who are humble and women who are humble, and men who give alms and women who give alms, and men who fast and women who fast, and men who guard (their modesty) and women who guard (their modesty) and men who remember Allah much and women who remember - Allah has prepared for them forgiveness and a vast reward.

Qur'an : 33 - 35

Annual Subscription

Inland	TT\$3.00 (Postage Free)
Caribbean	\$6.00
Americas	\$7.00
Europe, Africa, Asia	\$9.00

SUBSCRIBE NOW