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The 'White Paper on Law Reform' deals with the issue of Law Reform under three broad heads: 1. The man in the family; 2. The man in the society; and 3. The man vis-a-vis the state.

In doing so, however, it covers many sub-areas, which would make the task of dealing with all of them, at any one time, quite cumbersome and extremely difficult.

Therefore, the scope of this article is limited to just dealing with two of the thorny issues touched in the Bill: Illegitimacy and the Unmarried Wife, while at the same time to highlight one important aspect that the Law Reform Commission failed to consider: The nature of Law itself and the responsibility of the Legislature.

The prime object of this article is simply to advise in accordance with the Divine Command.

"Therefore remind men, for of use is the Reminder."

Qur'an 87:9

It is in this respect also that prophet Muhammad, the last messenger sent by Allah to mankind has said:

"The nature of Islam is good advice".

LAW AND THE LEGISLATURE

When framing or reforming laws certain fundamental principles should be borne in mind.

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1. We should consider that there exist certain 'Laws of Nature' which govern the life of man and regulate the existence of the Universe.

In relation to this fact the Qur'an states: "He (Allah) has created everything and has given to each a measure."

Qur'an 25:2

"Lo! Your Lord is Allah Who created the Heavens and the Earth in Six Days (Periods of Time), then mounted

He the Throne (of control and authority). He covers the night with the day, which is in haste to follow it, and has made the sun and moon and stars subservient by His command. Lo! His is the (ownership of) Creation and the Law. Blessed be Allah, The Lord of all existence."

Qur'an 7:54

"Seek they other than the way of submission (and obedience) to Allah when unto Him submits everything in the Heavens and the Earth, willingly or unwillingly, and unto Him is the return of all."

Qur'an 3:83

These verses of the Book of Allah (the Qur'an) establish beyond doubt that there exist these Natural Laws which regulate the functioning of the entire universe, and in whose grip the creation cannot move an inch nor escape its influence.

2. We must also bear in mind that these Natural Laws are Divine Laws:

"Lo! His is the (ownership of) Creation and the Law". *Qur'an 7:54*.

This verse indicates that Law-making is a Divine Right and not man's prerogative. It also establishes that these Natural Laws not only govern man's physical existence but also his 'Social Life'. Therefore, to (willfully) violate these 'Divinely Ordained Limits' is to openly challenge the Sovereignty, Divinity and Authority of the Creator. It follows naturally that any society

whose Social Laws conflict with the Divine Natural Laws can only result in catastrophe for the individual, the Society and the environment in which man is part of.

3. We have already established the fact that these Natural Laws are not only operative in the physical world but also in the sphere of human relationship i.e. between man and man, and man and the state.

Reforming The Law Or The People?

However, if we are to benefit from the Laws governing the physical world, our duty is to first discover the existence of these Laws. This can be done through observation, experimentation and conclusion. Once we have ascertained the existence of a particular law then we use it to our benefit.

This is the approach we adopt in science, medicine, physics, engineering and in almost every branch of learning.

Nay, this is the very method of Life. It is the same attitude that is needed by the Legislature in framing, reforming, or abrogating Laws.

They must first discover the existence of the Natural Laws of Social Life as embodied in Divine Guidance; then enact them as Statute Laws of the country. For it is only when there exists a harmonisation between the Natural Laws of the physical world and the Social Laws of Life can there be social well-being, peace, order, progress and justice.

"And if the people of the townships had believed and kept from evil, surely We should have opened for them blessings from the sky and from the earth."

Qur'an 7:96

ILLEGITIMACY

According to the Paper on Law Reform, illegitimacy is the product of the

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experiences of colonialism in the Caribbean. The Paper proposes to 'solve' the problem of illegitimacy by first removing the term 'illegitimate' from the statute books, then to provide 'adequate provisions for the recognition and establishment of paternity'. It would be interesting to see how it proposes to establish the paternity of the child. However, one gets the distinct impression that Law in Trinidad seems to be motivated and standardized according to what is done in America, England, Australia, Canada, New Zealand etc, and that the highest evolution of the Law is the position it has reached in the 'developed' countries of the modern age.

However, the government's legislation on illegitimacy reflects two basic weaknesses.

1. Its inability to find solutions to the problems of the age. It is also a betrayal of the trust that the people have given to the ruling authority, which is, to secure their well-being and solve their problems.

2. It also reflects the government's inability to distinguish right from wrong, virtue from vice. From this standpoint it would seem as though the Law has no moral purpose, no higher objective, and that it is just simply a means of regulating human relationship in a mechanical way.

However, let it be said quite clearly, that illegitimacy is not the product of colonialism but is as a result of giving birth to a child outside of wedlock. It is not (so much) the child that is blameworthy but the act through which the child comes into being.

Legalising illegitimacy would only result in legitimising sex abuse and in a general breakdown of the moral and social fabric of the nation. But the situation is not without hope. This problem can be solved by re-establishing the moral quality of Man — by making him God-conscious, together with establishing marriage as the only legal outlet for sex and by instituting severe punishment for illicit sex and all that leads to it.

THE UNMARRIED WIFE

Here the 'White Paper' tackles another thorny issue — the case of 'Common-Law Unions'. Here, again, the government shows a lack of insight and originality. Common Law Unions are looked upon as being part of the realities of social life in the Caribbean. It, therefore, seems to indicate that any law directed against the legalising of this degrading institution would be equivalent to dissolving these 'faithful concubines' and would seem to be taking up a position contrary to the natural realities of West Indian Social Life.

The 'White Paper' not only proposes to legalise the existence of these Common-Law Unions, but also to give to them legal protection and security. The woman in this 'Union' is given the status of an 'Unmarried wife' whatever the term is — and is also given the right to inherit in her 'husbands' property. In fact, it assigns to her a position no different from a 'legally' married wife for both would enjoy the protection of the Law.

If this Bill does become Law then certain things would arise naturally:

1. A man can 'legally' have two wives, one married and the other unmarried, without being guilty of polygamy, an offence punishable by the state.

2. People will automatically begin to question the legality or necessity of marriage. The marriage bond would be looked upon as being useless, unnecessary and burdensome, subject to further violations at anytime, and the individual would still enjoy the protection of the Law.

3. There would be a further increase in the destruction of family units. Very

few men would be financially capable of maintaining two families. Eventually they would have to give up one for the other, leaving the neglected family without male support and leadership.

4. We should also bear in mind that the family is the basis of a society. If it dies then the society also dies. If it exists, and its existence is secured then the society gets a new lease on life.

Let it be said, therefore, that any attempt to legalise 'concubinage' and illegitimacy as it is done in other countries should be met with public disapproval, otherwise, this would signify the death of the moral conscience, the legal family unit and ultimately the society as a whole.

The Qur'an states:

'If only there had been among the generations before you men possessing a remnant of good sense to warn people from corruption in the earth, as did a few of those whom We saved from them.'

Qur'an 11:116

by Abu Abdullah.

Mao Is Dead But Islam Isn't

The Muslim religion is still a living force in China's Sinkiang Uighur Autonomous Region, where despite heavy propaganda blasts against "the opium of the masses," the voice of the muezzin calling the faithful to prayer, has not been silenced.

Not since the years before the cultural revolution has it been possible for foreigners — in this case a group of journalists — to hear the muezzin intone on Chinese territory "God is great, I know there is only one God," still less take part in the special Muslim Friday prayers.

Out of Sinkiang's total population of 11 million, half are listed as Muslims belonging to seven national minorities. The largest, the Uighur minority, is five million strong, followed by the Kazakhs 800,000, as against four million Han Chinese.

In a country where it is official policy to respect religious freedom but where the atheist propaganda machine is set at full throttle, it is difficult to know how many are practising Muslims.

The mosques belong to the faithful who contribute to their upkeep but the religious property system found in other Muslim countries disappeared at the time of agrarian reform.

It is official policy to respect the customs and habits of peoples who do not eat or rear pigs.

Religious festivals and the Ramadan month of fasting are respected. Muslims have three days off for Id ul Fitr, when fasting ceases at the end of Ramadan,

and the rest of the population also have a day off.

But despite this tolerance, the authorities do not deny that their aim is to eliminate religion.

THEIR AIM

One official said: "Religion is an opium which paralyses the people's spirit and our policy is to gradually weaken it. The world was created by labour and not by Allah".

Since 1949, when People's Republic was founded, the "feudal privileges" enjoyed by the Muslim clergy, including taxing land, livestock or the human population, and Muslim law courts have been abolished.

Koranic schools have been forbidden since 1950, and a practising believer has no hope of joining the Chinese Communist Party, and thus of having a position of responsibility.

In addition the State, which has the monopoly over printing, will not print religious books, particularly the Koran, while at the same time it is forbidden to import these articles of "religious superstition."

"Perhaps by the time the Korans in existence have fallen into shreds the religion will also have disappeared," Mr. Rahim said.

But another suggested that the imams could copy the religious texts out by hand.

Extracted from:

Muslim Herald, Hong Kong.

HIJRAH : A Time For Reappraisal

We have just completed the month of Muharram 1399 of the Islamic calendar. Counting of the years in this calendar begins from that most important event in the history of Islam and the world — the Hijra of Prophet Muhammad, (p.b.u.h.) and his close followers from Makkah to Medinah. Hijra has a straight forward translation into english: Emigration.

Muharram is the first Month of the Islamic calendar, so that within a year's time we would have completed 1,400 years since the Hijra.

The Hijra is one of the greatest events in the history of mankind for it marks the birth of that first society and civilization founded on the system of life that Allah has commanded Mankind to live by and revealed through, and established by His final messenger, Muhammed (p.b.u.h.)

It is important to understand that before the advent of Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.), Allah revealed His system of life for every nation or people through a Messenger or Messengers to that particular nation or people, there being differences only in details of practice. The reasons for sending separate Messengers to separate people, are that communication and travel were difficult and one Messenger would have great difficulty in spreading the messages and implementing the practices. But through carelessness, and/or deliberate tampering with the message and practices by persons bent on the acquisition or maintenance of positions of power, people had not the Right Way.

Therefore Allah sent Muhammad with a final Message for all mankind and with the responsibility to establish the Right Way of Life, which he accomplished.

The responsibility now rests on the shoulders of the Muslims (the followers of Muhammad p.b.u.h.) to carry the Message and implement this Way of Life throughout the world.

This Way of Life is the ONLY Way of Life acceptable to Allah — for Allah says in the Qur'an:

"Verily the Way-of-Life (acceptable to) Allah is Islam.

And We have not sent thee but as a bearer of good news and as a warner to all mankind but most men understand not." Qur'an 34:27

This is clearly borne out by the following verses of the Qur'an:

"Thus have We made you an Ummah justly balanced, That ye might be witnesses over the nations. And the Apostle a witness over yourselves....."

"... It is He Who has named you Muslims both before and in this (Revelation): that the Apostle may be a witness for you, and ye be witnesses for Mankind..." Qur'an 22:78

The up-coming event of the 14th centenary of the Hijra should shake Muslims out of the sleep they are in, and to examine their position and be motivated to strive to improve.

If we are to be true Muslims, then we must strive to fulfil the duties placed upon us by Allah. Each and everyone of us must examine our own conscience whether we are doing our duty. Allah is not satisfied with mere belief but requires action to back up any claim to belief.

Every Muslim must therefore strive earnestly to

1. Acquire knowledge of Islam.
2. Practise what he learns.
3. Teach what he knows to others, (Muslim and non-muslim).

This can best be done by forming a group in your locality or neighbourhood to read Qur'an, Hadith and the life of the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) and to discuss and try to understand. Also to train yourselves in the basic practices — Wudu (Ablution), Salaah (Prayer), Saum (Fasting), etc.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES TO CELEBRATE THE 14TH CENTENARY OF THE HIJRA

The end of one century of the Hijra calendar and the beginning of another is an occasion for a renewal of the Muslims profound commitment to the fundamental beliefs, principles and concepts of Islam, and commitment to strengthen the unity of the Ummah (community) and to strive for the re-emergence of a dynamic Muslim civilization in order to promote true equality, justice, universal peace and progress for all Mankind.

The Hijra Centenary is not an occasion for religious ritual; rather, it is primarily a time for critical reappraisal and cultural regeneration.

The Eight Islamic Foreign Ministers' Conference which met in Tripoli in May 1977, agreed to designate the year 1400 A.H. as the Hijra Centenary Year and also agreed upon a certain programme of activities to commemorate the Centenary.

Activities at International Level include:—

1. During Centenary Year a special session of the Islamic Conference be held at Jeddah at the Summit level.
2. Competitions, offering suitable

prizes and awards be announced, inviting Muslim artists, writers, scholars and journalists to suggest:—

- a) an emblem for the Hijra Centenary Year.
- b) the design of a set of special commemorative currency notes and coins by all Muslim Governments.
- c) the design of a set of Hijra postage stamps.
- d) a motto to reflect the theme and purpose of the Hijra Centenary Celebrations.
3. Scholars to be commissioned to write a series of books on Islam.
4. Muslim expertise in mass media techniques to be mobilized from all parts of the world to explore possibility of making films on Islamic subjects.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES AT LOCAL LEVEL

1. Every district or Jamaah can organise a series of lectures on Islam. These lectures should deal mainly with fundamental questions such as: a) What is Islam? b) Who is a Muslim? Who is Allah? d) How the Muslim relates to Allah, to other Muslims to non-Muslims, to the rest of creation etc.?

2. A similar programme of lectures can be organised for the schools, both primary and secondary. The presentation must be varied to suit the age group of the children.

3. Organisations and groups can arrange seminars and camps.

Programmes for seminars should include a) the implications of the Hijra for the individual and for the establishment of Allah's Deen (Way of Life). b). the lessons present-day Muslims can learn from Hijra and use for planning for the future.

4. In every school that is managed by a Muslim organisation, earnest efforts should be made to improve the Islamic education given to the children, in terms of content.

5. All the Muslim organisations and groups meet together to draw up plans for setting up a model Muslim school to be run on truly Islamic lines. The curriculum must provide, besides subjects in arts and science, good grounding in Islamic concepts and training in practices.

6. During the Centenary Year, the Muslim Organisations should sponsor a giant rally possibly in a large square, or savannah, where the people will be addressed by local Muslim leaders and maybe foreign guest speakers.

Allah says in the Holy Qur'an "Work (righteousness). Soon will Allah observe your work and His Apostle, and the believers: Soon will ye be brought back to the Knower of what is hidden and what is open: Then He will show you the truth of what ye did." 9/105.

Islam is a system for the practical life of humanity in all its aspects. It is a system that entails the ideological ideal, the convincing concept, which expands the nature of the Universe and determines the position of mankind in it, as well as his ultimate objectives therein. It includes the doctrines and practical organisations which emanate from and depend upon the everyday life of human beings.

Life's aspects. Islam is comprehensive and inter-dependant so that it deals with and organises the following aspects:

1. Ethical foundation
2. Social order
3. Economic doctrine
4. Political system
5. International relation

Since all the needs and activities are organised, therefore, it is not a mere emotional belief cut off from the actual domain of human life. It is not the minimum rites of worship that believers would collectively or individually perform to achieve a modicum of faith. But it is the perfect system for mankind's life. It is the only system which can save humanity from the disastrous dangers towards which it is heading, attracted by the glittering illusions of material civilisation. Islam alone is the capable system which co-ordinates and harmonizes its progress on material innovation and spiritual exaltation. Such co-ordination and harmony has never been experienced by humanity throughout all history except under Islamic rule.

Islamic ideology does not admit a conflict, not even a significant separation between life spiritual and life mundane. It wants to mould individual life as well as the social order on healthy patterns in order to establish the "Kingdom of Allah" on the earth, and so that peace, contentment and well being may fill the world. As Allah says, "If the people of the towns had but believed and feared Allah, we should indeed have opened out to them (all kinds of) blessings from heaven and earth, but they rejected the truth and we brought them to book for their misdeeds." 7/96

Islamic system of life: The purpose of life in the Islamic view is to establish, maintain, and develop the virtues with which the Creator of this Universe wishes the human's life to be adorned, and to prevent and to eradicate the evils, the presence of which in the human's life is

The Importance Of Organisation And Leadership For Islamic Activities

utterly abhorrent to Allah.

This is the purpose to be achieved in order to establish the 'Kingdom' of the 'government of Allah', which means the Islamic system of life. In other words, in the sphere of life in which man has been granted authority, he should of his own will and desire accept the jurisdiction of Allah in the same way as every single particle of matter in the universe is bound to accept the natural laws of Allah. The system of Islamic life applies to both the individual and the social life — to prayers, to fasting, pilgrimage and charity, as well as to economy and society, culture and politics. The whole system in its entirety.

System and method: The areas which are related to the individual's personal life should become a part of the true believers existence. And those which cannot be established individually should be striven for by collective efforts of the believers through group organisation.

We have to keep in mind that the true believers real aim in this life is to attain acceptance by Allah and salvation in the Hereafter. This aim cannot be obtained without making efforts to establish the system ordained by Allah for this worldly life. How can one attain the acceptance of Allah and salvation in the Hereafter? How can we establish the Islamic system of life? It is very important to know that the best and the perfect way is the method of Muhammad (on whom be peace and blessings of Allah). That method has to be studied, understood and practised by all Muslims. If they do so they will not go astray. Allah says, "Ye have indeed in the apostle of Allah a beautiful pattern (of conduct) for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Final Day, and who engage much in the praise of Allah." 33/21

The main principles of the method are:

1. To seek the guidance of Allah with sincerity.
2. To seek knowledge and understanding of the Holy Qur'an which is the constitution for humanity, and the tradition (sunnah) of the prophet which is the practical implementation of it.
3. Not to follow, use, or accept any means which violate the principles of truthfulness, honesty, and morality.

Unfortunately, the Muslims of today have forgotten their mission. They conduct themselves different to their beliefs. It

is their habit to break the laws and principles of Islam one after the other, and they lose its significance. After all this, they still consider themselves Muslims!

The Muslim's duties: It is necessary at this time to understand the nature of Islam and to outline the duties of the individual Muslim in terms of character as follows:

1. To know the difference between Islamic and non-Islamic action in all aspects, to be familiar with the limits ordained by Allah, in order to enjoy the lawful (halal) and to avoid the unlawful (haram).
2. In all matters, one's point of view should be moulded according to the teaching of the Holy Qur'an and the tradition (sunnah) of the prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him).
3. To smash the idol of self-worship so that one may accept the commands of Allah in their entirety whether he likes or dislikes.
4. To purge from his life those customs and habits of non-Islamic ways which are against the teaching of the Holy Qur'an and sunnah of the prophet (P.b.u.h.) in an attempt to build one's internal and external life according to Islam.
5. To purge one's thinking of those narrow prejudices and interests of no importance in Islam.
6. To establish one's routine affairs of personal life on the principles of honesty, justice, fear of Allah, and uncompromising support for right and truth.
7. To limit the relation with persons who are unmindful of Allah, to terminate the relation with those who are of flagrantly immoral and criminal character, and to strengthen and promote the relation with those who are God-fearing, righteous and good in conduct.

Self obligations: A Muslim should dedicate his life to Islam, and also his death should be persuaded for this purpose. He has to urge others to do the same, but if no one steps forward, he must not hesitate to undertake the duty alone. To reach this degree of understanding one must:

1. Prepare himself for quite a long time to be fit for this unrelaxing task.
2. Be prepared by means of exalting himself to the level of the true religion of AL-ISLAM.

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3. Raise himself to its level by understanding all the surrounding and contemporary means and methods to know how to deal with others.

4. Raise himself to its height by genuine and deep faith in Allah by knowing Him, for no one can believe in Allah securely unless he knows Him well.

5. Join an existing working group, and if there is no active group working towards these objectives he should take the initiative to find one for there is no Islam without an organised group (Jama'ah).

Organisation and leadership: A Muslim cannot be alone because Allah says: "And there may spring from you a nation who invite to goodness, and enjoin right conduct and forbid indecency. Such are they who are successful" 3/104. So he must seek out others with whom he can co-operate to please Allah, who will encourage each other to practise the Islamic way of life. ".....But help ye one

another unto righteousness and pious duty. Help not one another unto sin and transgression, but keep your duty to Allah. Lo! Allah is severe in punishment." 5/2

If a Muslim is ordained to be in a group, then it becomes an obligation for this group to have a leader (Imam) or (Amir) because the prophet said, "If you are three Muslims or more you should select one of you as leader."

Discipline is very important, so Muslims should obey the orders and commands of the leadership for Allah says, "O ye who believe! Obey Allah, and obey the messenger and those of you who are in authority; and if you have a dispute concerning any matter, refer it to Allah and the messenger if ye are (in truth) believers in Allah and the Last Day", 4/59 as long as those orders are not against Allah's commands,..... A Muslim is totally convinced in the idea of "No objectives can

be achieved without planning, no planning without leadership. No sense for a leadership without discipline in the organisation (Jama'ah)."

The (Amir) leader of the group in any level should have some qualifications such as - beside the fearing of Allah - a special knowledge of the Qur'an and the sunnah, religious acumen, an understanding of practical matters, foresight and prudence, resolution and perseverance in the path of Allah. But if there is no one who possesses these qualities at one time Muslims are asked to select the best of the available.

We must not forget that sacrifices are required all the time, for great objectives cannot be achieved easily ... So Muslims must not reserve any effort, time, wealth, for the respectable causethe cause of Allah.

Haji Figures

1978 marked a significant increase (90,917) in the number of Muslims journeying to Makkah, Saudi Arabia to perform the Hajj (Annual Pilgrimage). Out of a total of 830,236 foreigners, North Yemen topped the list with 123,825. Saudi pilgrims from Saudi Arabia numbered 400,179 while non-Saudi pilgrims residing in Saudi Arabia were 669,005 bringing the grand total of pilgrims to 1,899,420. Below is a breakdown of those who journeyed to Saudi Arabia to perform the Hajj.

ARAB COUNTRIES							
Country	No. of Pilgrims						
U.A.E.	5183	Thailand	421	Dahomey (Benin)	550	Portugal	4
Jordan	31811	Turkey	29969	Rwanda	5	Bulgaria	3
Bahrain	2217	Maldives Island	22	Rhodesia	1	Belgium	2
Syria	56138	U.S.S.R.	25	Zaire	168	Poland	—
Iraq	68650	Singapore	1175	Zambia	9	Czechoslovakia	—
Oman	3944	Sri Lanka	976	Ivory Coast	1268	Denmark	2
Palestine	1992	National China	30	Senegal	3939	Romania	15
Qatar	1182	Phillipines	997	Sierra Leone	191	Sweden	2
Kuwait	5918	South Vietnam	—	Ghana	1228	Switzerland	2
Lebanon	6648	North Vietnam	—	Guinea	2098	France	492
Southern Yemen	7721	Cambodia	12	Guinea-Bissau	—	Finland	—
Northern Yemen	123825	South Korea	15	Upper Volta	1588	Cyprus	3
Tunisia	8971	Malaysia	6756	Fiji	42	Holland	49
Algeria	29899	Nepal	26	Cameroon	1414	Yugoslavia	953
Djibouti	511	India	20233	Congo	25	Greece	314
Sudan	17408	Hong Kong	7	Kenya	747		
Somalia	5419	Japan	24	Lesotho	—		
Libya	32915	OTHER AFRICAN COUNTRIES		Liberia	7	AMERICAN COUNTRIES	
Egypt	41828	Country	No. of Pilgrims	Mali	2765	Country	No. of Pilgrims
Morocco	26166	Ethiopia	346	Malagasy	12	U.S.A.	388
Mauritania	572	Uganda	2889	Malawi	4	Argentina	—
OTHER ASIAN COUNTRIES		Botswana/land	6	Mauritius	456	Barbados	2
Country	No. of Pilgrims	Burundi	4	Mozambique	—	Brazil	1
Afghanistan	8241	Chad	3259	Nigeria	56842	Panama	1
Indonesia	72527	Tanzania	800	Niger	4501	Trinidad	69
Iran	48268	Togo	417	Central Africa	437	Jamaica	—
Pakistan	61924	Gabon	3	EUROPEAN COUNTRIES		Venezuela	4
Bangladesh	7990	Gambia	466	Country	No. of Pilgrims	Canada	52
Brunei	420	Comoros Island	76	Spain	2	Colombia	—
Burma	8	South Africa	596	Albania	—		
		South East Africa	7	Germany	8	Australia	29
				Ireland	2	Other Countries	32
				Italy	3	GRAND TOTAL —	830236
				Britain	1652		

The foundations on which the Qur'an deals with man's relationship with Allah and the concept of life which naturally follows from that relationship are contained in this verse.

"Verily Allah has bought of the believers their lives and their properties for the price that theirs shall be the Paradise; so they fight in the way of Allah and slay and are slain. It (i.e., the promise of the Paradise) is a covenant which is binding on Him in the Torah and the Injeel and the Qur'an. And who is more faithful to his covenant than Allah? Rejoice then in your bargain that you have made, for that is the supreme triumph."
Qur'an 9:111

In the above verse the nature of the relationship which comes into existence between man and God because of Iman (the act of reposing faith in Allah) has been called a 'bargain'. This means that Iman in Allah is not a mere metaphysical concept; it is in the nature of a contract by which man barter his life and his belongings with Allah in exchange for the promise of Paradise in the life hereafter. God, so to say, purchases a believer's life and property and promises, by way of price, the award of Paradise in the life after death. This concept of bargain has important implications and we should, therefore, first of all clearly understand its nature and meaning.

The fact of the matter is that each and every thing in this world belongs to Allah. He is the real owner of them all. As such, man's life and riches, which are part of this world, also belong to Him, because it is He Who created them and it is He Who has assigned them to each man for his use. Looking at the problem from this angle, the question of any sale or purchase does not arise at all. God is the real owner, there is no question of His purchasing what is already His. Man is not their real owner; he has no title to sell them. But there is one thing which has been conferred on man, and which now belongs fully to him, and that is his free will, the freedom of choice of

following or not following the path of Allah. As man has been endowed with free will in this respect, he is free to acknowledge or not to acknowledge the reality of things. Although this freedom of will and choice that man possesses, does not automatically make him the real owner of all the energies and resources on which he has command, nor does he acquire the title to utilize them in any way he likes, nor his acknowledgement of reality or refusal to do so does in any way affect the reality as such, yet it does mean that he is free to acknowledge the sovereignty of God and His overlordship on his own life and belongings or refuse to acknowledge it and to arrogate to himself the position of total independence. He may, if he so likes, regard himself free from all obligations to the Lord and may think that he enjoys full rights and powers over all that he has, and thus may use them according to his own wishes unfettered by any higher command. It is here that the question of bargain does not mean that God is purchasing something which belongs to man. Its real nature is this. All creation belongs to God but He has bestowed certain things on man to be used by him as a trust from God. And man has been given freedom to honestly fulfil the trust or if he so likes, to betray it and misuse it. Now God demands that man should willingly and voluntarily (and not under duress or compulsion) acknowledge those things as His which really belong to Him and he should use them as a trust from God and not as something his own to be used as he pleases. Thus a man who voluntarily renounces the freedom even to refuse God's supremacy and instead acknowledges His sovereignty, so to say, 'sells' his 'autonomy' (which too is a gift from God and not something which man has acquired of his own) to God, and gets in return God's promise of eternal bliss that is Paradise. A man who makes such a bargain is a Mo'min (believer) and Iman (belief) is the Islamic name for this contract, while the one who chooses not to enter into this contract, or

after making such a contract adopts a behaviour in contravention thereof amounting to its gross breach, is a Kafir (non-believer) and the attempt to avoid or abrogate this contract is technically known as Kufr.

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Such is the nature of the contract. Now let us briefly study its various aspects and stipulations.

1. God has put us to serious trial on two counts: (a) He has left man free, but even after giving him that freedom He wishes to see whether or not man realises his true position; whether he remains honest and steadfast and maintains loyalty and allegiance to the Lord, or loses his head and revolts against his own Creator; whether he behaves like a noble soul, or tramples underfoot all values of decency and starts playing such fantastic tricks as make the angels weep.
- (b) He wants to see whether man is prepared to have such confidence in God as to offer his life and wealth in return for what is a promise, that is to materialise in the next world — and whether he is prepared to surrender his autonomy and all the charms that go with it, in exchange for a promise about the future.
2. It is an accepted principle of Islamic law that Iman consists in adherence to a certain set of doctr-

ines and whosoever reposes faith in those doctrines becomes a Mo'min. No one has a right to denounce such a man as non-believer or drive him out of the fold of Ummah, save when there is explicit proof of falsity or of renunciation of the belief.

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prohibited, it clearly shows that either he has not pledged his life and property to Allah, or even after pledging them to Him, he falsifies the pledge by his conduct.

3. This nature of Iman makes the Islamic way of life distinct from, nay, the very opposite of, the non-Islamic way of life. A Muslim, who has real faith in Allah, makes every aspect of his life subservient to the will of Allah. His entire life is one of obedience and surrender and he never behaves in an arrogant or an autonomous way, save in a moment of forgetfulness. And after such a lapse as soon as he becomes conscious of it, he again re-addresses himself to his Lord and repents on his error. Similarly a group of people or a society which consists of true Muslims can never break away from the Law of their Lord. Its political order, its social organization, its culture, its economic policy, its legal system and its international strategy must all be in tune with the Code of Guidance revealed by Allah and must, in no way, contravene it. And if ever through error or omission any contravention is committed, they must, on realising this, correct this immediately and return forthwith to the state of subservience to the Law of God. It is the way of the non-believers to feel free from God's Guidance and to behave as one's own master. Whoever adopts such a policy, even though he may bear a name similar to that of a Muslim, is treading the satanic path and is following the way of the non-believers.

4. The Will of God, which it is obligatory upon man to follow, is the one which God Himself has revealed for man's guidance. The Will of God is not to be determined by man himself. God has Himself enunciated it clearly and there is no ambiguity about it. Therefore, if a person or society is honest and steadfast in its contract with Allah, it must scrupulously fashion its entire life in accordance with the Book of God and the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him).

A little reflection will show that these aspects and stipulations are logically implicit in the bargain

and it is also clear from the above discussion why the payment of the 'price' has been postponed to the life after death. Paradise is not the reward for the mere profession of the bargain, it is the reward for the faithful execution of the contract. Unless the contract is fully executed and the actual life-behaviour of the 'vendor' complies with the terms of the contract he does not become entitled to the reward. Thus, the final act of the 'sale' is concluded only at the last moment of the vendor's life and as such it is natural that the reward should be given to him in the life-hereafter.

There is another significant point which emerges from the study of the verse quoted above when it is read with reference to its context. In the verses preceding it, reference has been made to the people who professed Iman and promised a life of obedience, but when the hour of trial came they proved unequal to the task. Some neglected the call of the hour and betrayed the cause.

Others played tricks of hypocrisy and refused to sacrifice their lives and riches in the cause of Allah. The Qur'an, after exposing these people and criticising their insincerity makes it clear their Iman is a contract, a form of pledge between man and God. It does not consist in a mere profession of belief in Allah. It is an acknowledgment of the fact that Allah alone is our Lord, Sovereign and Ruler and that everything that man has, including his own life, belongs to Him and must be used in accordance with His directives. If a Muslim adopts a contrary course, he is insincere in his profession of faith. True believers are only those who have really sold their lives and all that they possess to God and who follow His dictates in all fields of activity. They stake their all in obedience to the Commands of the Lord, and do not deviate even an inch from the path of loyalty to God. Such alone are the true believers.

Source: *The Islamic Way Of Life*,
by Abul A'la Maududi.

This is the legal aspect of the problem. But in the eyes of the Lord, only that Iman is valuable which consists in complete surrender of one's will and choice to the will of Allah. It is that state of thought and action wherein man submits himself fully to Allah, renouncing all claim to his own supremacy. It is something that comes from the heart. It is an attitude of the mind and prepares man for a certain course of action. If a man recites the Kalima, (There is no God but Allah and Muhammad is His prophet) enters the contract and even offers his prayers and perform other acts of worship, but in his heart he regards himself as the owner, and the sovereign dispenser of his physical and mental powers and of his moral and material resources, uses them to his own liking and upholds his freedom of will, then, however much the people may look upon him as Mo'min, in the eyes of God he will be a non-believer, for he has, in fact, not really entered into the bargain which according to the Qur'an is the essence of Iman. If a man does not use his powers and resources in the way God has prescribed for him and instead uses them in pursuits which God has

Islam has set straightforward rules on how one must dress. From the Qur'an and Hadith we gather that a girl, after coming of age must cover all of herself except hands and face, when she goes out. The reasons for clothing include modesty, recognition as Muslims (identity) and protection against many evils for the individuals and society as a whole. A number of books have been written on this subject, enlarging on these points, and giving the consequence of Allah's guidance on this matter if not followed. The point we want to discuss here, however, is the problems that arise in following the Islamic code of dress in the West and how we can combat them.

Physically, dressing in an Islamic way does not handicap anybody. One can learn, teach, walk down the street, and go about one's everyday business without any trouble. People can adapt their dress so that it is appropriate for the work they intend to do and at the same time keep within the Islamic limits.

The difficulty lies in having to accept that Muslim women, once stepping outside the house, will look different to the majority of people. This is the hard part. We may cause extra attention, for example on a summer's day when non-Muslim women are walking along with halter-neck jumpers and wearing as little as possible, a woman covered from head to toe would naturally stand out. Also we may be laughed at, stared at, mocked at and sometimes discriminated against. Most other practices in Islam are not so public. Prayer, fasting, paying zakah etc., as well as personal faith, are not visible 100% of the time. But dress is different. It is the first thing seen when people meet you.

It seems then, that the problem of dress is more of a psychological one — a mental one, and the best way to solve it would be in training our own minds to accept that we must dress differently, and look different. Equally urgent is training the minds of our young Muslim sisters. But from our own experiences we should find ways to help them in order to plant the right seeds, and not let this problem grow in the first place.

A young Muslim girl often becomes really aware of dress difference for the first time, when she enters Secondary School. Everyone is wearing uniform but she is that little bit different. She is wearing trousers as well. If there is some struggle in allowing her to cover herself, and the Headmistress and some Teachers show their displeasure, she may feel this difference all the more. It is also a difficult time for her as she is going through the experience of leaving Child-

Dressing With A Difference

hood and becoming an adolescent, and is becoming more conscious of herself anyway. From this time onwards, for many Muslim sisters growing up, dress is amongst their major problems. Covering one's head seems to be the hardest, whereas non-Muslims may cover their legs etc., they do not often cover their heads - and therefore the Muslim girl looks different.

We see quite a mixture of Muslim sisters. Some have been turned away completely. They have rebelled saying that religion is too hard for them. Others are content to copy the non-Muslims wearing short skirts or whatever, but still call themselves Muslims.

For some it is the nagging problem in the back of their minds feeling guilty and battling with their own consciences. There are others who compromise keeping to the Islamic limits. We want more like the latter, who have the courage and confidence in Allah, and feel they don't want to blindly imitate anybody. Those who feel that Islam is their way of life, that this is what they want to follow, and that they are responsible for their own self. They must feel that covering themselves properly does not make them inferior to anybody, and if it marks them out as Muslims, all the better.

There are some points which I feel may positively help in training, and strengthening the confidence of the coming generation of Muslims.

(a) Preparation before adolescence: If the child is used to wearing trousers right from Primary School; it will not feel a sudden change in the policy of dressing later on. Some people think it does not matter because the child is very young, but I think it does have an effect. Also children play together quite normally, irrespective of dress and there is no feeling of being different or odd.

(b) Secondary School: It helps to pick a school whose head is broad-minded and accepts that the girl wants to wear trousers due to her religion. Again, if one does not give way when there is little pressure, and the girl wears trousers right from the start, it prepares the girl in two ways. She will be used to covering herself properly according to Islamic Law. It will also prepare her mentally. Muslim girls will learn that they don't have to copy the majority of people to succeed. Later on in life, they will do things because Islam says so, and not what others say. They even have the courage to progress on their own initiative and be able to face people of differ-

ent views and practices. This is an important aspect in a Muslim's development.

When one person dresses differently from the norm, it is only natural for people to be curious. They may stare and ask questions, not to be unkind, but because they are interested. I found that in a matter of days, (in school) teachers and other girls accept you, and get used to your way of dressing.

The Muslim schoolgirl may feel odd at first, but she too will befriend and mix with others. If someone is going to dislike you just because of your Islamic dress (and this applies in general life too) they are not worth knowing anyway.

One girl, in the first year felt shy because she was the only one wearing trousers. It was only when some second year girls started wearing trousers too, saying that if she can then why can't we (and unfortunately forced not to wear them by Teachers) that she realised how lucky she was, and it was nothing to be ashamed of.

(c) Parents: It is very important for them to be a strong driving force and the most suitable persons for the child to fall back on in the beginning. If she has not the guidance of parents, she will have to follow that of the outside environment. A young growing Muslim cannot reason out properly at that age. At the same time she should not feel forced to do something against her will. There are cases where on the question of dress, there is battle between child and parents. The parents should give continual encouragement and explain why she should dress this way. The parents should be firm but not strict. Parents can only make a child do things when young but later it will follow its own mind. It is up to the parents to train that mind in the right way. Some Muslim girls feel resentment because they are doing things to satisfy their parents, and not because the desire comes from within themselves. It is a difficult task to instill within the growing Muslim a feeling of pride for his religion and a sense of achievement and progress.

(d) Outside school: One can adapt her dress so as to be reasonably fashionable and therefore not too conspicuous. However, one should bear in mind not to become a slave of fashion because whereas at this time it may be Islamic at other times it may not be. The non-Muslim designers have no criteria.

Continued on page 9

IN THE SHADE OF THE QUR'AN

Man's Marvellous Make-up

The basic fact outlined in this Surah is that of the upright nature with which Allah has created man. In its essence this upright nature is in perfect harmony with the essence of Faith, for with Faith it attains its ultimate perfection set for it. And when man deviates from this upright nature and from the straight path of faith he sinks into the lowest of ranks.

Allah (praise be to Him) swears to the validity of this fact by the Teen (fig), the Zaitoon (olive), the Tur Sinin (Mount of Sinai) as well as the Balad al-Amin (The secure city of Mecca).

The intrinsic fact of the Surah is this, *"We have created man in the best shape and form. Then we threw him back into the lowest of the low ranks. Except for those who believe and do righteous deeds: those will have reward which will not be held against them as an undeserved favour"*.

Here, Allah's care for man when He, in the first instance, created him in the best shape and form becomes apparent. Allah (praise be He) has perfected all His creation. Hence, the special emphasis here and in other places in the Qur'an

The company of practising sisters is most helpful. One gains in courage and in confidence if they know that they are not alone. The example of good observing Muslims who act and dress Islamically have been more effective on me than words, and it makes one realise that the Islamic dress is no bar to progress.

It is also important to read widely and gain knowledge. If we know why we dress so, and the wisdom behind it, it will strengthen our confidence and allow us to counteract misleading propaganda of anti-Muslims.

Finally we should not be too critical of those not yet observing fully. Faith is a continuous process, and we sisters should encourage each other. We are all striving to progress and none of us is perfect.

We pray to Allah to strengthen ourselves and our children and to help us in our Jihad against the weakness in ourselves and in our surroundings.

We pray to instill in us faith, courage, and patience. We also thank Allah for his kindness and mercy in giving us such wide guidance in the Holy Qur'an and saving us from much evil.

by Amina Khan

Courtesy: *The Muslim 'Woman'*
(London)

on man being endowed with perfect construction, perfect form and perfect creation shows clearly that this creature, man, has been privileged with extra care.

Allah's care for this creature despite his weaknesses, his deviation from upright nature and the corruption he falls into, suggests that Allah has given him a special rank and a special weight in the order of this universe. The omnipotence is best noticed in the miraculous way of His creation and shaping. This applies to man's highly complicated physical structure and to his unique mental construction as well as his marvellous spiritual formation.

The emphasis here is on the man's spiritual qualities since these are the ones which sink to the bottom of the lowest ranks when man deviates from the upright nature and the belief in Allah which is perfectly harmonious with this nature. It is of course obvious that man's physical structure does not sink down into such low level. Moreover, the superiority of man's creation is most clearly apparent in these qualities. He is made in such a way which enables him to attain a sublime standard which is superior to that of the highest-ranking angels. This is illustrated in the story of the Prophet's ascension to Heaven. Then Jibril (peace be on him) stood at a creation level and Muhammad, peace be upon him, the human being was elevated to the more sublime standard.

At the same time man is given the quality of sinking down to the levels unreached by any other creature; "Then we threw him back into the lowest of the low ranks". In this latter case the animals become superior to him and more upright, since they adhere to their nature, praise the Lord as they are inspired to do and fulfil their function on this earth as they are guided to do. But man, who is given the best shape and form denies his Lord and sinks down with his desires into a level which the animals cannot sink into.

"We have created man in the best shape and form." That is with respect to his nature and abilities. "Then we threw him back into the lowest of the low ranks", that is when he forces this nature away from the line of which Allah has guided him. After showing man this line, Allah left him to choose either one of the two ways.

"Except for those who believe and do righteous deeds". For these are men who stick to the upright nature, promote

it with faith and righteous deeds, elevate it towards its destined perfection until they finally attain with it the life of perfection in the world of perfection, "Those will have the reward."

But those who cause their nature to sink to the lowest of the low go down with it along the steep passage until it settles down in the lowest level. That is hell in which their humanity is shed and these become completely debased. Both ends are natural consequences of the starting point. Adherence to the upright nature and its promotion by faith and perfection by righteous deeds all make this nature eventually attain its ultimate perfection in the life of pure happiness. On the other hand, deviation from this upright nature, and surrender to the setback and isolation from the divine guidance will cause it to sink eventually into its debasement in the life in hell.

Thus, the importance of faith in the life of man becomes clear. Faith is the elevating path along which the upright nature ascends to its ultimate perfection. It is the rope stretched between the nature and its Maker. It is the light showing it where to put its feet along the elevated path going up to the sublime life of those who attain perpetual grace.

When this rope is cut, when this light is put out the inevitable result is the fall down the steep path into the lowest of the low ranks. From thence, the humanity of man is completely shed.

In the light of this fact man is addressed these words: "What then will make you believe this religion? Is not Allah the Wisest of judges? What makes man belie this religion after you have known this fact; after having realised the importance of faith in the life of humanity; and after becoming aware of it, you refuse to adhere to the straight path of Allah?"

"Is not Allah the Wisest of judges?" Is it not He the most Just of the just when He gives this ruling concerning the destiny of creation? And, is not Allah's wisdom clearest and the most assuring as He gives this judgement for the believers and the disbelievers alike? Justice is certainly clear and wisdom is manifest. Hence, the Hadith transmitted by Abu Hurairah; "When one of you reads, 'by the fig and the olive' to the last verse, 'Is not Allah the wisest of Judges' let him say, 'Certainly, and I am a witness to that'".

—Adapted from *Fi Zilal Al Qur'an*
by Sayyid Qutb.

Lawful And Unlawful Meat

by Dr. Waffie Mohammed.

This article was recently published by the author as a separate pamphlet for free distribution. However, because of its importance and relevance to our community, we reproduce it to ensure a wider circulation.

Sometimes people become confused concerning what they should do on account of the changes that are taking place all around. Revolutions, wars, disasters, etc. may tend to make us believe that the Quran does not have the answer to many modern problems, in spite of the fact that Allah says: ...and We have revealed unto thee (O Muhammad) the Book as an Exposition of all things, and a Guide, a Mercy and Glad tidings to the Muslims.'

Qur'an 16:89

Lack of knowledge of the Qur'anic Laws is a dangerous thing. It can cause many people to err under the pretext of solving problems. Take for example the Eid Sermon delivered by the Ahmadi leader Mustapha K. Hydal, about lawful and unlawful meat. His sermon does not only expose his ignorance of the relevant verses of the Holy Qur'an about lawful and unlawful food, but it is also misleading. For example he says:

'The Qur'an does not mention anywhere that if no name is mentioned that the animal is Haram.'

(The Call, vol. 3, No. 12, P. 4)

Mr. Hydal does not even seem to be familiar with the guidance given on this subject, by the Founder of the Ahmadi Movement (Lahore Section) far less for the guidance contained in the Words of Allah. His entire sermon indicates that Mr. Hydal seems to be unfamiliar with the following verse of the Holy Qur'an in which Allah says:

'Say I find not in that which is revealed to me aught forbidden for an eater to eat thereof, except that it be what dies of itself or blood poured forth, or flesh of swine — for that surely is unclean — or what is transgression, other than (the name of) Allah having been invoked on it'

6:146

Commenting on this verse Muhammad Ali writes:

'For the prohibition made known here reasons are also given, the reason for the prohibition of what dies of itself and blood and swine's flesh being that these things are unclean, while the reason for the prohibition of animals on which other than Allah's name is invoked is different.'

It is very clear from the verse of the Qur'an and the commentary quoted, that

the name of Allah must be invoked on the animal upon slaughtering, otherwise it is not lawful for Muslims to eat. It is in this context that Allah says:

Eat over that which the name Allah hath been mentioned if ye are believers in His Revelations'. Again He says.

'And eat not of that whereon Allah's name hath not been mentioned, for lo: it is abomination. Lo: the devils inspired their friends to contend with you, and if ye obey them you will surely be polytheist'. **6:122** Commenting on this verse Muhammad Ali writes:

'According to this verse a Muslim is allowed only to eat of the flesh of an animal slaughtered in the name of Allah'. (Fn. 816)

It is obligatory to take the name of Allah when slaughtering any animal because this is the Divine Command. Allah says:

'Forbidden unto you (from animals for food) is ... except that which ye make lawful (by slaughtering).

Qur'an 5:3

To make an animal lawful through slaughtering is to cut the throat, (allowing the blood to flow) and to take the name of Allah at the time of doing so.

Islam has made it very clear how an animal should be slaughtered. It is also clear about who can slaughter the animal and from whom a Muslim can eat. Because of the simplicity and clarity of this subject in the Qur'an, the Books of Ahadith and the writings of the Jurist and Scholars, it would have been a good thing if Mr. Hydal had at first studied the subject exhaustively before delivering such a misleading sermon.

Muslims know that all animals killed for food must be slain by Zabbah. In the literal sense Zabbah means act of cutting the throat while according to Islamic terminology Zabbah denotes the act of slaying an animal agreeable to the prescribed forms, without which it is not considered as eatable.

The prescribed form is to cut the jugular vein, the windpipe, and the oesophagus. The idea behind this is to allow the blood to flow out from the body.

Zabbah is of two kinds, viz:

- a) Voluntary: this is effected by cutting the throat above the breast.
- b) Necessity: it may be effected by a wound on any part of the animal's body. The second method, however, can only be possible if it is not possible to carry out the first.

Any Muslim can perform Zabbah — male, female, adult, child. That is providing the person can say Bismillahi Allahu Akbar, and cut the throat properly.

Zabbah can also be performed by those who claim to have received Divine Revelations, (i.e. Jews and Christians.) However, they will also have to say Bismillahi Allahu Akbar and cut the throat as Muslims do, otherwise it is not permissible to eat the meat slaughtered by them. It is not permissible to eat the meat of animals slaughtered by polytheists and idolaters, e.g. Hindus, Magians, etc. even though they may slaughter the animal in the prescribed way. The reason why we are to refrain from eating such meat is because of the saying of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be peace). He says that:

'You may deal with them as well as with Kitabees, (i.e. the Jews and Christians), but you must not marry their women (except if they become converts) nor eat from animals slain by them.

The Prophet (upon whom be peace) gave a little concession to anyone who forgot whether he/she took the name of Allah while slaughtering the animal. In this case, Ibn Abbas reports that he said: 'Whoever forgets to mention Allah's name while slaughtering, there is no harm in it.' (Bk. 68:15);

Such is only an exception because the Prophet emphasised that only if the killing tool causes blood to gush out and if Allah's name is mentioned, eat.

1bid. No. 406.

Taking the name of Allah is a must before the meat can be eaten by Muslims. This can be seen in guidance given by the Prophet concerning hunting with hounds. He said:

"If the hound catches the game for you, eat of it, for killing the game by the hound, is like its slaughtering. But if you see with your hound or hounds another dog, and you are afraid that it might have shared in hunting the game with your hound and killed it then you should not eat of it, because you have mentioned Allah's name on sending your hound, but you have not mentioned it on some other hound."

Bk. 77: No.384.

Thus it is not correct to say like Mr. Hydal that 'if no name is mentioned and the animal is slaughtered, even then it is permissible.'

Muslims must be very careful about the preservation of Deenul Islam. It is not our business to make compromise with the basic principles of Islam because after

all Islam is perfect, and if we want to become perfect, we must follow the prescribed way.

It is an act of cowardice to think like Mr. Hydal that,

'if the attitude of the Muslim Community continues then it can only lead to fragmentation and further hatred among Muslims, Christians, and Hindus.'

In other words Mr. Hydal is saying that we should try not to get the Christians and Hindus angry with us so we should do the things they are doing. Mr Hydal has forgotten what Allah says to tell them, 'For you your way and for me mine.'

O Muslims take note of the warning which Allah gave to us, He says:

"O you who believe, you have charge of your own soul, He who erreth cannot injure you if you are rightly guided." 5:108

May Allah strengthen our faith in Him, and may He cause us to always uphold what is correct and to disassociate ourselves with what is disliked.

OMAR YOUTH CAMP

The Omar Muslim Youth Camp was held for eight days (23 — 31 Dec.) at Chaguaramas Youth Camp, Tucker Valley, Trinidad. It was directed by Brother Hisham Badran and ably assisted by some local Muslims. Almost 200 campers included some from the Caribbean islands and Guyana attended.

Campers began their day at 5.30 a.m. with Fajr (Morning Prayer). This was followed with physical exercises or swimming. Between 9.00 a.m. and 12 p.m. there was an intensive educational programme during which these topics were discussed: — Tawheed (Oneness of Allah), Risaalah (the message of the Prophets), Akhirah (life after death), and some basic Islamic practices (Wudu, Tayammum, Salaah).

Sporting activities were organised from 1 — 4 o'clock. From 5 — 6 there was the daily camp quiz. Questions were based on the preceding morning's educational sessions. From 8.30 p.m. campers displayed their creative abilities by singing, reciting or acting in the 'Social Hour' session opened to the public for viewing. The five daily Salaah (Prayers) were performed in Congregation.

The general feeling of campers was expressed by one of the campers in these words: "It was the first time that I was living in an Islamic community. We had no loud, raucous music, no loud shouting and drunken singing. Indeed, all was peace. And this peace was reflected on the faces of the campers as they lived and breathed Islam."

SHUN INDECENCY!

'Al-Faa-hi-shah' is an Arabic term which has been used in the Qur'an to connote a very special meaning. Like many of the Qur'anic terms it is too vast and comprehensive to be rendered into an English term which may be regarded as its exact equivalent. Therefore, several related expressions will have to be employed if the full implication of this term is to be understood.

The terms 'Al-Faa-Hi-Shah' and 'Al-Fah-Shaa' are used in the Qur'an to connote all forms and shades of indecency, immorality and lewdness as well as all things which directly or indirectly lead up to them. For example drinking, free and uninhibited mixing of the sexes, singing many of the currently popular songs, dancing, wearing improper and inadequate clothing - like knee-length and mini-length skirts, sleeveless or form-revealing and form-fitting dresses - all constitute what the Qur'an calls Al-Faa-hi-shah or Al-Fah-Shaa. It is the height of ignorance and folly that the modern world should have elevated sheer indecency, in its myriad covert and overt forms, to the position of Culture. And it is a pity that some deluded Muslims too should have fallen a victim to the same wrong and fallacious concept of Culture.

From Allah's point of view all forms of 'Indecency' are repugnant and unacceptable, no matter under what subtle guise or exalted title they are practised or preached. Allah's admonition rings loud and clear:

"Do not even go close to any form of Indecency (Faa-Hi-Shah) whether it be open or covert, direct or indirect".

Qur'an 6:151

Shaitan, on the other hand, loves Faa-Hi-Shah, and enjoins, encourages and endeavours to promote and propagate it among his friends and minions:

"And do not follow in the footsteps of Shaitan: he is your open enemy. He only bids you to do evil and indulge in acts of Indecency and Immorality".

Qur'an 2:169

As for the human beings, among them there are those who hasten to repent whenever by mistake, or as a result of human weakness, they lapse into an act of Faa-Hi-Shah.

"Whenever they commit a Faa-Hi-Shah or otherwise wrong themselves they immediately remember Allah and seek forgiveness for their sins".

Qur'an 3:135

Some human beings however, on committing a Faa-Hi-Shah, instead of repenting and showing genuine shame and contrition, adopt an attitude of defiance and proceed to rationalise and justify their wrong-doing by using one argument or another. Some times they claim that they were following the path of their forefathers and sometimes they falsely

and arrogantly put the blame on Allah saying that it was Allah that asked them to indulge in their questionable practices. The fact is that such people have neither faith nor belief of any kind and their true friends and masters are the Shaitans i.e. the Wicked and the Evil.

"We have made Shaitans the friends and masters of those who do not believe. And when they commit a Faa-Hi-Shah they say: we found our fathers doing it and actually God commanded us to do it".

Qur'an 7:28

This of course is a brazen-faced lie for Allah does not ask any one to indulge in anything which is in the least indecent or impure.

"Say: Allah does not enjoin Faa-Hi-Shah. How dare you say things about Allah which you do not know".

Qur'an 7:28

Thus, while some human beings repent after unwittingly committing acts of indecency and others remain stubborn and adamant in their wrong ways, there are some others among them who go beyond mere personal indulgence in acts of 'Indecency' or 'Faa-hi-shah', and become the instruments and spearheads of encouraging and persuading others to indulge in it. Many of the Radio, and Television and Show-business personalities of today fall under this unfortunate and diabolical category of purveyors of Faa-hi-shah or Indecency. From the Islamic point of view, this last group is by far the worst of the lot. For, while practising 'Indecency' is bad and reprehensible in itself, preaching, promoting and propagating it among others is a sin and crime whose heinousness knows no bounds or limits. Again to propagate 'Indecency' in any community is bad, but to promote and propagate it among the members of the Muslim and Believing community, is such a grievous and mortal sin that the punishment for it begins in this world, and extends beyond the realm of death and continues in the next world:

"Those who love to see Faa-hi-shah spread and become popular among the Believers, for them there is a terrible punishment in this as well as in the next world".

Qur'an 24:19

May Almighty Allah make us of those who not only abstain from all forms of Faa-hi-shah, but also strive and struggle to make sure that the Community of Believers remain free and safe from all traces of Faa-hi-shah - open or secret; direct or indirect.

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COMMENT

ATTACK ON RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

To the great surprise of many Muslims in Trinidad a local radio station recently reported a government ban has been placed on Br. Hisham Badran from entering this country as a missionary. The radio station also stated that the objection to Br. Badran's activities was filed by Anjuman Sunnatul Jamaat Association (A.S.J.A.) a leading Muslim organisation.

Br. Badran who has visited Trinidad on numerous occasions (seven times) experienced great difficulty in re-entering this country last month to participate in a Muslim Youth Leadership Seminar organised by the local office of the Muslim World League and to conduct a Muslim Youth Camp. Br. Badran is well-known in Trinidad for the knowledge and practical demonstration of Islam in the field after having conducted seven camps from which many Muslim Youths have benefited tremendously. Br. Badran is not only a world-renowned camp director but also a qualified Arabic teacher and has his Masters in Islamic Studies.

With such a background and contribution in the Islamic field, the objection of A.S.J.A. is quite questionable and either reflects ignorance or a direct attempt to sabotage Islamic activities. One has to be very naive to claim ignorance. On the other hand A.S.J.A. has become well-known for imposing bans on scholars and Islamic activities (see Muslim Standard No. 10)

Rumours have been spreading that Badran is causing disunity among the Muslims. Is this true? Islam is very clear concerning the fact that unity among Muslims can only be forged on the basis of the Qur'an and the Sunnah. The reason for disunity among Muslims (whether Badran is here or not) is that

the leading Muslims and their following refuse to organise their affairs and lives in accordance with the instructions of the Qur'an and the Sunnah. We challenge A.S.J.A. or any Muslim whether Imam, Minister or layman to prove that any statements of Br. Badran were not in conformity with the Qur'an and the Sunnah.

Since the Jonestown massacre involving a Christian sect, Governments in the Caribbean are taking a very serious look at foreign missionaries and cults. The Trinidad government has even gone further and has established a committee to consider applications of foreign missionaries. It is unfortunate that our Government, in this frame of mind, has placed a ban on a Muslim Scholar. Certainly, Muslim Scholars can never fall under this category.

One wonders also if this action on the part of the Government was, in any way, prompted by remarks many of which were derogatory against Muslim Scholars and Br. Badran in particular, made recently by two leading Muslim Parliamentarians.

This matter cannot end so. The general public, and Muslims in particular, must get up and protest any action on the part of Government, Organisations or individuals to curb religious freedom.

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