

# impact

international fortnightly

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## REDUNDANT CHURCHES

## Need Muslims use them?

Following the decision of the Methodist Conference not to allow non-Christian communities to use Methodist premises for their own worship (see *Impact* 2 : 4), the General Synod of the Anglican Church at its meeting in mid-July became divided on the question of whether churches should be used as mosques by Muslims.

The issue was given prominence for Anglicans by the situation in the Wakefield diocese, where the Muslim community has applied to acquire St. Mary's Church in Dewsbury which was declared redundant and put on the market by the Church Commissioners.

There are discernible three attitudes within the Church on the sale of a church to the Muslims. One is that once a church has been declared redundant, it does not really matter what use it is put too. Last year a report from the Bishop of Lincoln noted that "our forefathers had no qualms about dealing with their heritage. Unwanted churches were demolished or converted to other uses without compunction". The Church Commissioners Report for 1971 lists some of the uses approved as suitable for redundant churches. These included religious worship by Roman Catholics, storage, light engineering and civic uses.

There is another section of opinion which holds that as an expression of Christian love, Muslims should be allowed to use church premises for worship. They argue that a place of worship and freedom to worship in it are basic needs for a religiously minded people as the Muslims are. But this attitude applies more to shared facilities than to the exclusive use of a church by Muslims. With shared facilities and with the church showing such virtues as hospitality, a strong hope of the proselytization of Muslims to Christianity is held out. This is perhaps the thinking behind the action of the Anglican diocese of Aston, Birmingham, which has put a church hall at the disposal of local Muslims with a room for a mosque, and other rooms for classrooms and social rooms. The distinction is clearly made that "this is not a disused church hall; it is also the place of Christian worship for the parish, and it also houses Boys' Brigade and the usual round of Christian activities".

The third section of opinion is passionately against the use of any church property by the Muslims in particular and to non-Christian bodies in general and even to non-Anglican Christians. They hold that once a building is consecrated for a particular purpose it cannot be used for anything contrary to that purpose, nor must it be demolished. It is calculated that in the next twenty-five years about 800 churches in England will cease to be used for their original purpose of public worship and will have to be put to monuments of history and beauty, or put to new uses or be demolished.

It is on the possible "new uses" of redundant churches that a veritable "storm" has arisen. Professor J. N. D. Anderson, Professor of Islamic Law at the University of London is one of those who firmly oppose the use of consecrated buildings by other faiths and in particular by the Muslims. At the meeting of the General Synod, he declared that "the teaching from the mosque was a denial of the deity of Jesus Christ. There was a further denial that Christ ever died on the cross. Was there not a danger of misunderstanding also if a church where it had been taught that Christ died on the cross was handed over to those who denied it?"

The Bishop of Wakefield said that the proposal to sell the church to the Muslim community had distressed many parishioners. The feeling was made the more intense because there were many Pakistanis in the area. It was feared that this would be a step towards the ultimate taking over of the area. The Bishop also said that he was convinced there were other places for the mosque. There was an obligation on the Dewsbury corporation, who received a substantial income in rates from the immigrant population, to provide them with premises suitable for use as a mosque.

It is significant that the General Synod has deferred the decision on the sale of redundant churches to non-Christian faiths pending a report on race relations which is being prepared by the World Council of Churches and pending consultation with church boards on the theological and sociological implications of the issue and also pending consultations with missionary societies. The issue is clearly bound up then

## Redundant churches . . .

not merely with theology but with race relations and the proselytizing efforts of missionary societies among the Muslim population in Britain and overseas.

So far as the Muslims are concerned they view it as basically a Christian problem. There is a considerable body of informed opinion which holds that Muslims should not attempt to purchase churches for use as mosques. Although churches are offered at lower prices than prevailing market rates, to offer to buy them would be extremely short-sighted for several reasons and would have very dangerous and far-reaching consequences.

Firstly, churches are not the most ideal places for a mosque. They are usually old and it is often difficult to effect the necessary renovations. Drains are doubtful, the heating system in many such churches is non-existent and they might have churchyards crowded with family graves that could not be disturbed. Also the uses of such structures are limited and their maintenance costly.

Secondly, the reactions of the local Christian community are of supreme importance. Often there is the emotional attachment to the church. Dear memories of a marriage or other ceremonies are nourished which would be destroyed by the penny-pinching attitude of the Muslims. And as the Bishop of Wakefield implied, it would severely rupture the possibility of any relationship between the Muslims and the host community. Muslims would be a target of incomprehension and even of abuse and of course it would alienate the local community from ever getting a proper understanding of Islam. It might produce the false satisfaction among the Muslims that by acquiring their churches, they were conquering the Christians. This would all detract from the ideal of a tolerant community and do harm to the image of Muslims as a people who have always propagated their religion by means of personal example self reliance and sacrifice.

Thirdly, it would perpetuate a backward image within the Muslim community. It would destroy the ability to set up their own mosques specially built for the variety of purposes required of a mosque. It might be a barrier to the smooth growth of the Muslim community in this country and would have an undesirable impact on the coming generation of Muslims, many of whom have absolutely no idea what a mosque looks like.

The Muslims might well drop the offer and approach the local corporation for the granting of an area where they can set up a mosque. There is no reason for either Christians or Muslims to offend the religious sensibilities of the other.

## Survey

● EGYPT & RUSSIA

### BYE-BYE ALEXEI!

Although there has been for some months now a steady worsening of Soviet-Egyptian relations, Sadat's decision to expel the estimated 20,000 Russian military advisers and troops from Egypt came as something of a surprise. Why was this action taken and what might be the consequences?

Among the masses of the Egyptian people and within the army and air force there has been a growing resentment of the Russian presence in Egypt. Despite the mass media's monotonous assertion that the Soviet Union is the "great friend" of the Arabs, people who know affirm that the Russians "do not like the Arabs and they cannot get used to different values between their society and the Middle East". The resentment stems not only from the attitude of the Russians. Because of the sheer size of the Russian presence Egyptians speak of the "occupation" of Egypt by the Russians and the "colonial" status to which the country has been reduced.

In the army and the air force, there is an added sharpness to the resentment against the Russians. Restless soldiers and pilots have awakened to the fact that the Russians do not really intend to give them the necessary offensive weaponry to make an encounter with the Israeli foe worthwhile. They feel that Egypt has been made the dumping ground for ineffective armoury. Sadat's requests for more offensive weapons like TU 16 long-range bombers to match the Phantoms which the USA has given to Israel have been consistently put off by the Russians who however kept on making promises. This was damaging Sadat's credibility to such a point that apparently he had to take some decisive action to show that he was indeed in control.

Two events at least brought home to the Egyptians that the Russians were not really willing to give the necessary support to the Arabs against Israel. In a revealing conversation with the Syrian Communists last May Russian officials said: "Our assessment is that the two armies (Syrian and Egyptian) cannot defeat the Israeli army . . . We are not against a military solution as such; we are only realistic . . . You must not imagine that you can enter Israel by war and set up a Palestine state. That is not realistic." The Russian officials are also reported to have said that the liquidation of the Israeli state was a wrong aim both tactically and as a matter of principle meaning that they were fully behind the existence of the state of Israel. Their friendship towards the Arabs was therefore called into account.

The same conclusion was even more dramatically illustrated as a result of the

summit talks between Nixon and Breshnev. By calling with the Americans for a peaceful settlement of the Middle East conflict, the Russians were selling out the Arabs. They wanted Sadat to move towards the kind of settlement with Israel that would pave the way for the maximising of Soviet influence on all sides and a better open relationship with the Americans and the Israelis. There has always been a hollow ring to Russia's denunciation of Israel.

Russia's reaction to this apparent rebuff may be quite interesting. Egypt of course is not exactly another Czechoslovakia but the Russians are still left with enough power in Egypt as to cause extreme discomfort to the Egyptian leadership. Sadat's decision does not affect the industrial and agricultural sectors where the main projects are dependent on Soviet assistance. Besides, Russians have been clever and far-sighted enough to have realised long ago the growing anti-Russian feeling in Egypt and to have started looking for other footholds in the Middle East. The treaty of friendship with Iraq and the growing Soviet presence there must be seen in this light.

What is interesting incidentally is the reaction of various people in the West. They tended to view the virtual Russian stranglehold on Egypt as being useful to NATO and believe now that the Russians' departure would "introduce a dangerous element of instability in the Middle East". The Russian's departure is very much like Nasser's departure: a "restraining influence" has gone.

As far as Egypt is concerned Sadat has by no means slammed the door on the Russians. When announcing the "decision to terminate as of July 17 the mission of the Soviet military advisers and experts who came at our request, and to replace them with our sons in the Egyptian armed forces in all the tasks they used to carry out", Sadat left the way open for a meeting in the coming stage "within the Treaty of Co-operation and Friendship with the Soviet Union". But the question is, where would he now turn to achieve the capability which the Russians refused to give? Would the Egyptian army and government (in the phrase of Prof. A. B. Zahlan in his analysis of "The Science and Technology Gap in the Arab-Israeli Conflict") continue to be the "victims of the agents of the weapon systems scrap industry"? The alternative is for Egypt and other Arab countries to build up their science base so that they can design and build their own military hardware. This would take years to do. It would depend on the degree of self-reliance that Egypt can achieve in education and industry and other sectors of the home front.



## Survey

● LIBYA ● PALESTINE LIBERATION ● SUN SIN

### Libya — apparently more civilian

Amidst rumours that Col. Muammar Qaddafi, Chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council in Libya was being stripped of his powers, Libya took the welcome step of changing over to predominantly civilian rule after nearly three years of military rule and the overthrow of the Sanusi monarchy.

The new 18-man cabinet which was sworn in on 16 July only has two members belonging to the RCC. One of them, Major Abdel Salam Jallud, is the new Prime Minister and commentators say that this has increased his power as against Qaddafi who intends to run unopposed in a yes-or-no referendum next month. It is even being suggested that Major Jallud would eventually seek the top position in the land and that he has the temperament and capability to achieve his aim.

Certainly Major Jallud who previously held the portfolios of industry, economy and finance has built up for himself a strong position. He was the one who headed the negotiations with Britain and the United States which led to the evacuation of their bases in Libya and he played a major role in the nationalisation of the assets of British Petroleum. He is said to be tough and shrewd but also obstinate and rather lukewarm to the type of Islamic radicalism shown by Qaddafi. He is expected to pay much more attention to the "Green Revolution" in Libya which is meant to diversify the economy by improving the agricultural and industrial sectors and relieving the excessive dependence on oil.

The new emphasis on civilian rule would probably be welcome to most Libyans who have recently been complaining of the growing regimentation in the country. It is to be hoped that this step would be successful and pave the way for a government which would be representative of the people who would achieve more maturity and responsibility if they are given a greater say in the running of the country's affairs. There is only a limited extent to which this could happen in a place where a one-party system is imposed. The experiences in places like Egypt and Ghana have showed up the limitations of an imposed one-party state.

What is left very much in the balance, too, is the position of Qaddafi himself. The western press perhaps has shown an excessive pre-occupation with him and this may be partly because of, what to them, is an "unpredictable" foreign policy and the fact that he is what they call a "fanatically devout Moslem". Qaddafi seems to have been playing foul of big-power interests—both East and West—who apparently would favour any amenable change.

### Palestine Liberation — another blow

The Palestinian guerillas or the Palestinian Resistance Movement (if it can properly be so called) have been dealt what appears to be a further blow. President Franjeh of the Lebanon told the guerillas that they could remain in Lebanon only if they halt raids across the frontier into occupied Palestine and evacuate their southern bases. Lebanon was the only front line country from which the guerillas operated after they had been crushed in Jordan, strictly controlled by the Syrian government and rendered harmless in Egypt. Franjeh's terms have been accepted by many of the guerillas. Yasir Arafat has said that he understands the position of the Lebanese brothers but at the same time he asserted that the Palestine revolution would continue to operate from all Arab countries and also deep within occupied territory itself.

It is this last point which has been raised in much recent criticism of the resistance movement. The nub of the criticism is that military operations across the cease-fire lines were the concern of the regular armies and that the guerillas should concentrate on striking "deep into Israel itself". Also, guerilla action could only be effective if it is carried out in secret. At the moment there is far too much vain-glory which has given rise to indiscipline which is the very antithesis of the liberation struggle.

### Bangsa Moro travails

A delegation made up of senior personnel in the Egyptian and Libyan Foreign Ministries visited the Philippines in early July to find out about the condition of Muslims there.

The leader of the delegation said that the Muslims of the Philippines were living in a state of terror and are subjected to killing and torture. He had seen some Muslims with their fingers and ears cut. The mission had asked the Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos to "stop the massacre of Muslims in the Philippines".

President Marcos had informed the mission that the government was tracking down Christian bandits known as "Ilagas" and, according to the mission, had shown complete understanding of the subjects raised. One of these was that the Ilagas had committed massacres of Muslims in several areas and that the army was not affording adequate protection to the Muslims against these attacks.

In Cotabato, the delegation was met by some 200 Muslims carrying placards. A ten-year old boy carried a placard which read "Soldiers killed my parents" while another placard said, "Give us arms, we

will fight."

The mission, after four days in southern Philippines, saw villages burnt to the ground, freshly dug graves and thousands of refugees, both Christians and Muslims.

The situation was such that there could be a flare-up of an all out civil war unless the gangs stop persecution of the Muslims. The delegation is recommending tighter security in Muslim areas and food and medical assistance for refugees forced to leave their lands. In addition, the leader of the delegation emphasised that peace in the area can only be established when Muslims are able to regain the lands which they had lost.

### Sun and censorship

On 16 July President Bhutto announced that certain vested interests were conspiring to overthrow his government by creating unrest and lawlessness and he warned that if things went on like this many newspapers will have to be closed. Next day under an ordinance issued in 1963 by Ayub Khan, was banned the anti-Moscow and Left-Wing Karachi daily *Sun*; its offices and press were sealed. The charge being that the paper in its issue of 17 July, i.e. the morning after President Bhutto's warning, published an ordinance purported to have been issued by the government of Sind. This was defying the censorship orders and constituted an attempt to fan hatred between the various sections of the population and a threat to law and order. Maybe a judicial authority will go later into the merits of the case but on surface the whole thing appears nothing but ridiculous and suspect, particularly in view of the warning issued a day prior to the actual occurrence of the alleged breach of censorship.

Earlier in April, the government had taken the unprecedented step of banning for life the publication of three periodicals imprisoning their editors and publishers and imposing heavy fines for 'obscene' and objectionable criticism (*Impact*, 28 April-11 May). The High Court later found that no obscene language was used, set aside the orders as being void and *ultra vires*. The obscenity, it came out, related to an allusion to the use of a four-letter word by the President while addressing a public meeting in Lahore on 19 March; the meeting was televised live. No effort thus seems discernible to learn from the previous experience.

This latest attempt to smother the press is, therefore, no more than yet another self-defeating exercise in press relations. The question to ask again is: whose interests does it serve?

*Postscript:* Three more dailies *Nawai Waqt* and *Imroz* Lahore and *Jang*, Rawalpindi have been asked to show cause as to why they should not be asked to pay a security deposit of £1,000—£2,000 for publishing inflammatory news about the language troubles. Baluchistan provincial government have offered to allow *Sun* to publish from Quetta.

# Survey

## India — a new worry on population

Whether population is a religious or economic or a political problem or even a non-problem, is very much an open question, but in India returns for the 1971 census have produced an interesting reaction.

The census figures show that although Hindus form 82.72 percent of the population, their percentage growth during the last decade was incomparably less than other minorities: 23.69% as against 30.85 for Muslims, 32.60 for Christians, 32.28 for Sikhs, and 28.48 for Jains. In a true and qualitative democracy, the numbers should not matter, but that not being so, Hindu opinion has shown a great deal of concern—not at their decrease but over the increase of others. Although both Christians and Sikh have shown a higher growth rate than Muslims, and Jains, to outpace Hindus, the focus of concern is on Muslims: their attitude towards family planning and polygamy. The Sikhs and Christians are neither cool towards family planning nor practise polygamy yet their growth rate has been higher than Muslims. Funny enough, the same returns show that the incidence of polygamous marriages amongst Muslims is insignificant and lower than Hindus.

Total Population	547.9m	Per-centage	Growth (%)	
			1951-60	1951-60
Hindus	453.3m	82.72	23.69	20.29
Muslims	61.4m	11.21	30.85	25.61
Christians	14.2m	2.60	32.60	27.38
Sikhs	10.4m	1.89	32.28	25.13
Buddhists	3.8m	0.70	17.20	2,267.01
Jains	2.6m	0.47	28.48	—
Others	2.2m	0.41	26.10	—

547.9

The root of the problem, however, lies in the closed and caste-oriented nature of the Hindu society. To be a Brahmin, one has to be born a Brahmin. While other faiths invite and accept, one cannot be a Hindu except in a negative sense.

Anyway pressure is now on to 'reform' and integrate the Muslim personal laws within one uniform civil code, and here the chauvinists and the secularists join hands. The object is to ban polygamy and restrict the ease of Muslim divorce. Although legal polygamy continues to be out of fashion all the world over, on divorce the universal trend is to move away from the old and restrictive practices of the pre and post-reformation era where divorce means either homicide or washing dirty linen in the public. But then many like to have their own share of re-experience in areas where angels fear to tread.

## Islamic Conference a problem of truancy

The most tangible achievement of the Third Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers in Jeddah earlier this year was the adoption of the Conference Charter. The Charter lays down the objectives and the statutory structure of the Conference, and accords it both purpose and personality. Yet the Charter was not adopted without trouble (*Impact*, 14-27 April 1972). Several states preferred a loose, club-type association and few others had the problem of 'conscience' — of reconciling their national secularism with outward Islamism.

The decision stipulated the participating states to ratify the Charter within two months of the Conference. The Islamic Conference Secretary General, however, recently disclosed that out of the 30 states which took part in the Jeddah Conference, only three, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Somalia, have so far ratified the Charter.

The situation should surprise none, though one had thought that the humiliating experiences of the recent past would make the rulers in the Muslim world alive to *realpolitik*, but it would seem that the Muslim world realities continue to remain as unreal and sub-normal as ever. The present Muslim world personality is very much a split personality, swinging between reaction and romanticism and living in fits and bits. The task of promoting unity—between the ruling classes—in the Muslim World is by no means an easy task. It does need a more than normal dose of caution, kindness and forbearance; yet it would seem that Tunku Abdur Rahman has been dealing with his truants rather too leniently.

The masses in the Muslim World would like to know about the precise attitude of each of their governments towards Islamic unity. The problem of truancy cannot be solved without the help of the guardians. So while the boys should be given ample latitude, the Islamic Secretariat may well proceed to develop and strengthen its popular base. It is at the popular level that the future and meaningfulness of Islamic unity really lies.

## Destroying Arab habitats in West Bank

Chemical war is an acknowledged crime against humanity. Now it has been officially admitted by the military government in the occupied West Bank that it has resorted to aerial chemical sprays in Akrabeh to kill the Arab-owned crops. Moshe Dayan admitted that 125 acres of wheat had been destroyed by this chemical war, but Israeli newspapers report that the area affected is ten times

larger (1,250 acres); the villages affected are now faced with hunger and permanent loss of their land. This, the victims point out, is one of the means to force out the Arab villagers, to "make room for Jewish settlers" and create a cheap and landless labour force.

The Western press has generally ignored this news. All those consciences, which are aroused if a theatre is closed in Russia, have shown an exemplary cool and indifference on this brutal chemical warfare against crops.

No effort has been made to measure its effects on land and on human beings in these villages. And all this in a year which is supposed to attain a high water mark in the anti-pollution campaign all over the world. The resort to chemical warfare against Arab crops may be the first step only. Recent researches show that even weapons of genetic warfare against people belonging to different racial stock are attaining operational level ("And now ethnic weapons", *Impact*, 24 March—6 April 1972).

A regime that wantonly resorts to chemical warfare can go to any length to destroy those whom it regards as obstacles in its plans for "settlement".

Crop-spraying is a signal and a warning.

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**P.L.O. OFFICE IN LONDON**

**Asserting the right to be understood**

*IMPACT* reporter

The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) has offices in New York, various capitals of western Europe, and many other countries including Red China. It is reportedly planning to open offices in a number of African countries including Senegal, Uganda, Nigeria and Congo Brazzaville. Plans to open an office in London have attracted a good deal of comment and not unexpectedly much opposition from the strong Zionist and pro-Israeli lobby in the British Parliament and the press. Israel itself has registered a strong protest with the British Government. A host of Jewish M.P.s both Labour and Conservative protested and one cried out to the Foreign Office: "Who authorised your officials to have discussions with these thugs and murderers and what guidance was provided by your officials in the light of the overwhelming public opposition to the establishment of an office."

Mr. Said Hammami, the PLO man in London, has been in the centre of all this. He has been subjected to many threats through the post and by telephone but nonetheless remains remarkably cool and even liberal. When I met him at the Arab league Office in London where he is temporarily attached, he explained to me the difficulties he is facing in setting up the office and what he proposes to do once the office is established. He also shed some light on the present mood of the Palestinians.

He said that the office might be opened within two months and the main difficulty has been finding suitable offices. The opposition was not as widespread as has been made out and thanks to "British democracy" the British Government has not gone back on its agreement with him. Under British law there is no means of preventing any organisation from establishing an office, though a Foreign Office spokesman has said that the "closest scrutiny" would be made of PLO members who might man the office.

On the face of it, it seemed that the activities of the Palestine Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and the recent indiscriminate carnage at Lydda airport were making the task of Mr. Hammami that much more difficult. The PFLP under George Habash has been known for its policy of hijackings. There has been some confusion about the PLO and the PFLP. It was partly because of the misunderstanding that the PLO was a hijack band which made the Council of Europe (of which Britain is a part) at its meeting in The Hague last June adopt a resolution urging European countries to close down offices of the PLO in their capitals.

Mr. Hammami explained the situation by saying that the PLO is the official representative of all Palestinians. The PLO is part of the Arab League States as a fully-fledged state and has a Charter similar to a constitution. This was why, incidentally, recent suggestions that the PLO should operate as an underground organisation were ridiculous and even dangerous. The PLO being the representative of all Palestinians, include those from the PFLP, Fatah, Saïqa and others. But the official army of the PLO was the Palestine Liberation Army in which every Palestinian is supposed to serve three years. The PLA believes "in fighting Israelis on the Palestinian soil".

About the Lydda airport shootings, Mr. Hammami said that first it must be condemned. But it must also be understood why people have become terrorists. The Palestinian people were "isolated, rejected, ignored, homeless and desperate." They are stateless and want back their land and this is why they say, "We are Palestinians and we could prove this."

About the work of his projected office in London, Mr. Hammami said that it would be confined to supplying information about the Palestinians and their viewpoint to the British public and among the Jewish community. He said that the PLO believes in co-existence, that Jews would not be thrown into the sea and would have the right to participate in the democratic, secular state of Palestine in which Jews Christians and Muslims would live together but of course not Zionists. Jerusalem as it had been under the Muslims would be a city for all three religions.

Mr. Hammami came up with the surprising assertion that the majority of Jews in Israel were not Zionists and his duty would be to see that the Zionists do not have the sinister and preponderant effect that they have been having in the West and in Britain in particular.

Much of Mr. Hammami's attention would be devoted to young Palestinians in Britain. "We don't want them to forget their homeland," he said. At the moment there are about three million Palestinians scattered all over the world—in the refugee camps in the Middle East and in many top positions as well, in Europe and in Americas and of course within the occupied territory itself. As a people who feel that their entity has been threatened, it was necessary to do everything to foster the idea of belonging to Palestine. One manifestation of this threat is that Palestinians now tend to multiply at a faster rate, and it is taken as a sociological fact that a group which is threatened reacts in this manner to perpetuate itself.

Somehow this led to the question whether the Palestinians see themselves as being the only ones capable of liberating Palestine especially in the present situation when not much help and even hostility seems to be coming from the other Arab states around. Mr. Hammami had the vision and the historical sense to see that the unity of the states surrounding occupied territory was a condition for the Palestinians to regain their land and their freedom.

Meanwhile Mr. Hammami has the difficult task of showing that the Palestinian cause is a just cause and one which rests very much on the conscience of the British.

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**INDEPENDENT MUSLIM VIEWPOINT ON CURRENT AFFAIRS**

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## Of Theology and Diplomacy in Muslim-Christian relations

A. HAMID, examining Mr. T. R. Young's views on inter-faith dialogue in education \*

Mr. Young's submission is on the whole a realistic one. It recognises the deep-seated differences between various religions and yet holds out as a noble vision the prospects of various believers in God working together and testifying for the existence of God in recognition of the inadequacy of the purely material. It also recognises that the differences between the various religions especially at the theological level are strong enough to render practically futile the mere pious wishes and expression of sentiments of goodwill and cooperation which are characteristic of inter-faith meetings of our times.

Basically Young speaks from a Christian vantage point. One feels that he is much more knowledgeable on the Christian and Jewish faiths and that his knowledge of Islam and other religions does not show an adequacy equal to his task and this not simply because of the constraints of space at his disposal. Some examples of this shall be given later. First, let us deal with some of the basic submissions.

The distinction between religions at the theological level and the actual life-styles of the people who practice these religious traditions is perhaps a commendable first step towards a recognition that followers of different traditions are different and should be recognised as such by others. For the Christian especially it is a convenient way of getting around certain very awkward facts so far as Islam and Muslims are concerned. One such basic fact is the divine origin of Islam. There has never yet been any significant body of Christians, who have recognised that Islam is the religion of the same God which they worship and that Muhammad, peace be upon him, was the inspired messenger of the same God and have adhered to Christianity. Muhammad has always been seen by the Christians and the Jews as a *soi-disant* prophet, an imposter or at best a sincere but deluded person who brought a religion which was the work of the devil or at best a rather unworthy hotch-potch of Jewish and Christian doctrines and practices. Perhaps Young subscribes to this latter opinion by unstated assumptions in his statement that "it is undoubted that Muhammad knew both Jewish and Christian communities." But at least he recognises the major stumbling block when he said that Islam "not only stands in the tradition of the other two, but also claims to subsume and finalise the revelations of both. And the difficulty arises over the very finality and completeness of revelation claimed by Islam".

In this context it is necessary to say

that nothing short of a total acceptance on the part of Christianity of the divine origin of Islam and therefore of the Qur'anic revelation can lead to a real understanding between the two religions. The minimum that one can expect is that Christianity should accord to Islam the same status that Islam accords to Christianity, not on the temporal plane, but on the metaphysical plane. Islam does not accept the Christian conception of 'Christ' but it does not prevent itself from admitting the divine origin of Christianity. Christianity would not be admitting the dogmas of Islam if at the same time it can accept the fact that, in the Qur'an, God has said, "I" and has spoken to humanity. Moreover in doing this, Christianity would not lose anything of its Christian essence. As long as the word of Jesus peace be upon him, "I am the Way" is interpreted as "I am the *only* Way" all rapprochement between Islam and Christianity would lie outside the bounds of religion and remain on a diplomatic level. It is this rapprochement on a diplomatic level which Young is essentially calling for and as such it may be useful, but essentially it would leave the major problem unsolved.

Looked at from this angle, one sees how difficult it has been even for Mr. Young to get to grips with what he himself is advocating—the necessity to see other people's traditions in their own lights. It is "a noble vision", to borrow his own phrase, but "a much more difficult task" as he himself admits.

But the task must be pursued as it is difficult to believe in the possibility of syncretism. Even if a synthetic religion were to emerge, as Sikhism or Bahaism did, it would merely compound an unhappy state of affairs.

For the Muslim the necessity to accord recognition to other people's traditions (so long as the latter does not provoke conflict) and even to grant them autonomy in the running of their affairs are not part of an opportunistic policy to accept or discard as the times demand. It is in fact a sacred duty, a sacred command, for Muslims are told in the Qur'an to treat with the People of the Book i.e. Jews and Christians in particular, in the best possible manner. And it is a historical fact that where Islamic law prevailed in a society governed by Muslims, Jews and Christians were given complete autonomy in the running of their affairs. In a supposedly enlightened age, people, and Christians in particular, should recognise the slander that has been perpetuated against Islam and the Muslims in saying for example that Islam was spread by the sword. If Mr. Young's conclusions are to have any effect then everyone should

realise the truth of the Qur'anic dictum that "There is no compulsion in religion."

It is precisely the fear, based on sheer realism, which impels the Muslim to believe that so far as the Christian Church is concerned Mr. Young's conclusions would fall as gently and without much effect on the dynamic forces within the Church on a raindrop in the ocean.

The intellectual forces within the Church and the aggressive Christian missions throughout the world have evolved methods for carrying out Christian witness which do not altogether seem always fair and honest and sometimes deliberately shatter the vision of believers working together and testifying for the higher spiritual truths and values. Most churchmen would be aware of the invective and the veritable onslaughts which various Christian intellectuals and missionaries over the ages have made against Islam and this has continued unabated. Most churchmen would know of the existence of the Fellowship of Faith for the Muslims which aims at the 'conversion' of Muslims to Christianity and which is working actively all over the world where there is a Muslim community whether it be in Iceland or Indonesia or the West Indies or Britain. It is known that the evangelical aims of some if not most of the missionaries are rooted in an intense hatred of Islam and nourished by persistent attacks on it. Their activities do not amount to 'propagation' of religion, which a Muslim would not object to, but they can be called instruments of political pressure, economic exploitation and moral and religious subversion. Missionary educational planning and institutions have produced and are producing a class of people who neither subscribe to Christianity nor remain wedded to Islam.

It is a fact without doubt that all convinced Muslims are scandalised by some of the manifestations of Christian activity in their midst, not because Christians witness to the presence of the Church of Christ, but because they introduce all sorts of temporal means to try to lead Muslims away from their own religion. Christianity is generally presented to the Muslims as an integral part of modern civilisation which is in fact the most anti-religious civilisation the world has ever known. The result is that in spite of an undoubted sincerity on the part of certain individuals, a deplorable hypocrisy generally prevails which serves to diminish Islam in the eyes of Muslims, not in the matter of citing the Gospels, but in having recourse to material means—hospitals, schools, roads etc which as one writer puts it, shows up the poverty of Christian theology and the debasement of Christian morality.

\* *Understanding other cultures from the inside out* by T. R. Young, *IMPACT*, 14-27 July 1972.



Islam too is a missionary religion but Muslims have not resorted to attacks on the Bible and on Christian dogma and of course so far as Jesus, peace be upon him, is concerned the Muslims hold him in extremely high esteem but of course do not recognise him as divine. It is because of this esteem that most Muslims find the caricature of Jesus which is being presented on the London stage in 'Jesus Christ Superstar' or 'Godspell' or in the film 'The Higher Class' starring Peter O'Toole as something which makes a tragic commentary on the religious sensibilities of our times. The Church in bending backwards to keep in touch with the times might be destroying itself in the process, and destroying too some of the transcendent values necessary to the preservation of human society.

Also, in the matter of personal relationships, Muslims have on many occasions expressed the rapport and the ease of communication with Christians and even with Jews and other believing people. Sometimes indeed very warm relationships develop. But the same cannot be said about relations with Marxists, orthodox Socialists, Baathists or even Humanists whatever be their erstwhile religious backgrounds—Roman Catholic, Scottish Presbyterian, Jewish or Muslim. With these rabid secularists and materialists, they often meet with wooden incomprehension and even outright intolerance and attacks.

So far as antipathy towards Islam is concerned this is very much part of a western Judeo-Christian tradition. Young rightly speaks of the convergence of aims and activities of these two groups especially on the social and political level. Without wishing to go into the details of this common relationship it is true to say that the Muslims have suffered a lot as a result of it and in no place is this more evident than in Palestine and now concerning the status of Jerusalem. It is difficult to forgive the almost blanket support which the Christian West gave in the establishment of Israel and the displacement of over a million Palestinians from their homes and which it continues to give to the squatter state.

What increases the sense of injustice and outrage is that this common Judeo-Christian heritage or tradition has only recently been found and fostered. It is partly the West's feeling of guilt over its treatment of its Jewish minorities which has helped to bring this collaboration about and partly because of the disguised efforts of "reformed" and politically aggressive Jews who have sought to merge themselves into the dominant culture.

For the Muslim this merging into the dominant culture would be a painful and even an undesirable process, as Mr. Young's anecdote of the girl in the shalwar illustrates. But the theological justification for the English girl's behaviour in the encounter shows up some of the peculiar attitudes of Christian

theology towards Islam. In this connection one may remark that Muslims do not view Allah as a power who coerces man by a naked display of power. God in Islam is not the firm tyrant that Christians say Muslims believe in. He is above all the Merciful and Compassionate God. Man indeed was created to serve God and to say that God needs 'sons and collaborators' inevitably detracts from God the Almighty, the all-Powerful.

There is too a misunderstanding of what free-will and pre-destination means in Islam. Certainly man is free to obey or disobey the laws and commands which have been laid down in the Qur'an but he is not free to change these laws and interpret them to his own convenience. He is allowed to interpret, mind you, and the instrument of *Ijtihad* which has been described as the principle of movement in Islamic Law provides the Muslim community with sanction to develop the Law but of course not to subvert it. There is also the cardinal principle that what is not expressly forbidden is allowed and so *aadat* or local practice does form a 'source' of Islamic Law. All this shows that Islamic Law is not stultifying and moribund but even the most learned cannot interpret it away according to his own whims and fancies.

With regard to the alleged Muslim dependence on predestination and his being fatalist in attitude, the Bible is as fatalistic (see the Sermon on the Mount) and as predestinatory as the Qur'an. But if the Christians replace the teaching of the founder of their religion by certain pagan philosophies of Greece, the Muslims can have no quarrel with them. Islamic 'fatalism' has impelled the companions of the Prophet, in the space of fifteen years, to traverse three continents in the service of their religion. And who can best demonstrate the spirit of the Qur'an than these early Muslims? These people's lives 'were shot through and through with religious requirements' and in the same tradition Muslims nowadays remember one of the most oft-repeated verses in the Quran: "verily in the creation of the heavens and the earth and in the alternation of day and night are signs for men of understanding who remember God while standing and sitting and lying on their sides." And their lives, very much like the orthodox Jew are constantly punctuated with prayers including "ejaculatory prayer": "I seek refuge with God, I seek God's forgiveness, Praise be to God, May God bless you etc.

It is this sort of Islamic practice (which Mr. Young is apparently unaware of) and the requirements of dress and food and other stipulations of Islam like the compulsory nature of the Friday prayer that the host community in Britain, to its peril, would find quaint and difficult to reason out in theological terms. If the elder among them cannot understand and appreciate the connection between proprietary dress and morality, for example,

how much more difficult it would be for the youngsters to come to some healthy understanding and tolerance. And it is true that in many cases children derive their attitudes from their parents and elders. It is because of these pressures, which sometimes have the sanction of local authorities and school teachers that Muslim parents and "religious leaders" do in fact "feel keenly that the faith of all their members below the age of 25 is in grave danger from a process of erosion."

If the Church is really interested in arresting this erosion, then the adoption of Mr Young's conclusion especially the third dealing with the need to appreciate each man as "a complete, coherent being, within terms of his own weltanschauung" would go a long way in this direction. The attempt, need it be said, must come first of all from the informed, sensitive, humble and compassionate *servants* of God among those who have the power to shape attitudes and policies within the Church.

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# A Third World View on Environment and Pollution

The UN Conference on Human Environment, held in Stockholm, 5-12 June, discussed the possible consequences and the remedies of pollution, population and depletion of natural resources due to high economic growth rates. **Dr. Yusuf Ali Erhaj**, a leading gynaecologist and Executive Member of the Kenya Family Planning Association attended Dai Dong Conference, one of the parallel conferences held simultaneously to condition the discussion of the main Conference. Here he reports on some unreported aspects of the UN Conference.

There were three main questions that dominated the UN and all other parallel Conferences on Environment that were going on simultaneously in Stockholm. Pollution by poverty and by chemicals, population and the depletion of natural resources.

The biggest question was pollution by poverty. This was a new phrase and something that developed nations did not really accept, neither did they expect to face it nor were they prepared for it in their minds. This was brought up by one of

the delegates from the Third World and it caught on very quickly. It was made very clear that pollution meant something quite different to the developed world than it meant to the developing nations. Pollution in the sense that the developed nations believe it to be does not really matter at all in the developing world, at least at present. In Africa, for example, there are not very many countries where you can point out to over-crowding, to the lack of open spaces, or to the chemical poisoning of rivers as it is in the case of the Rhine or for that matter in Mississippi. The Third World made it very clear that pollution created by lack of development can be as serious as pollution due to hyper-development.

If people continue to live in a state of under-development, the ecological state of their part of the world cannot be maintained. For example who expanded the deserts? It was not development, but lack of development. Who is continuing the poor water supplies, diseases, ignorance, starvation. It is not development, but lack of development.

The theme of the UN Conference was the well-being of men. You cannot talk of well-being by ignoring the two third population of the world which is living in deprivation and a state of slow-death. You cannot ignore them and go on to debate what will happen in the next 50 years in the one-third world, the developed world. When I say people in the Third World are living in a state of slow-death, I am only relating a medically accepted fact. If you take a man and lock him in a room and don't give him anything to eat, he will die in about 6 days, if you give him half the food, he will live a few years, give him two-thirds to three-quarters of the food he will live 30-40 years. This is what is happening to two thirds of the human race. They are not actually living, but they are dying a slow-death. Their average age is only 30-40 years and this was the prime concern of the developing world. They said if you are really concerned with the well-being of men, the first duty is to provide food for them, which from all considerations can be provided.

The mention of the word poverty brought an immediate polarisation inside the Conference. To many delegates from the West, the word did not mean anything. They never thought it would be mentioned. Yet the problem is that people who live or are forced to live in sub-human conditions cannot contribute much towards the betterment of the present ecological conditions. And if you want to get anything done to improve environment, you have to get the two thirds of the world population involved, you cannot succeed otherwise. So the core of the problem still remains: food, poor health, malnutrition.

The next important question was that of population. The Third World made it very clear that population phobia was

being used by the developed nations only to side-track the real issues. Population per se is no problem.

Everyone is being conditioned to think of population in terms of the Third World and that people are sprouting there like mushroom. There is nothing like that. I give the example of Kenya. The area of Kenya is six times that of Holland but Holland has one and a half times the population of Kenya, yet her per capita consumption is 20 times more than that in Kenya. So which is more populated? The population of Italy is 5 times the population of Kenya but its area is half of Kenya. Italy is more populated, more industrialised and is adding more to pollution. In Britain the population is 6 times more than that of Kenya, but the area is 40 per cent less. What population programme has Britain got? But in Kenya, we have 20 foreign organisations sitting there and telling us what should be the country's population. This is a deliberate effort so that the people in these countries don't start thinking of the root cause of the lack of their development, which is a continuing exploitation by developed nations. Who is using the resources of the Third World, or for that matter of the whole world? Who is dumping waste in the sea and polluting the air. It is not the Third World.

Many Third World delegates emphasized over and over again the developed nations should first start thinking of controlling their own population and their per capita consumption.

The demographic pattern in Europe in the 19th century was exactly the same as in Asia and Africa today. There was a high birth rate and high death rate. With the advent of the industrial revolution people started living better, started getting better education, women started working and without there being a single family planning clinic, the birth rate started stabilising. To expect the birth rate to fall before development is impossible.

The developed nations were very openly told that if you really want to preserve the human environment, the first thing is to assess an optimum per capita consumption rate in relation to pollution, and accordingly adjust production. For example, it was stated that we should not have any built-in, obsolescence factor i.e. these cars, fridges and all sorts of machines are manufactured to become obsolete after a certain period of time. This is done to keep factories running. This is contradictory, in fact hypocritical. On one hand, one talks about preserving human environment and on the other he adds to pollution by resorting to avoidably increased production.

The industrialists and industrialised nations have had no ideals. To them production was production. Industrial production meant industrial production. Everything else was a norm to them. They never bothered about pollution





Dr. Eraj, Prof. Paul Ehrlich, USA, and Obi Chizeza, Nigeria (l to r) taking part in a panel discussion in Stockholm.

until their lives and their own existence came to be endangered.

If we are attuned to think that material acquisition is the standard of achievement in one's life, certainly all our activity will be geared to keep on increasing these acquisitions. We must have two cars, we must have three cars, fridges, dish washers ... And for that you have to produce more. Since there is a limit to everything, this will be at the cost of production elsewhere. There resources, the energy, the metals, and the minerals will never be equally distributed. But if man develops a sense of values, which are abiding and immutable, only then will it affect the overall outlook. It is a reform of the values which will be needed most if we do want more from the present over-emphasis on crude technology. At the moment acquisition is the deity. This does not leave any room for change in values. You have got your values fixed, you earn more, you possess more, and you are more respected. Thus you produce more, you pollute more, you consume more, and all this is at the cost of somebody somewhere.

It is, however, doubtful if this would make much sense in the industrialist society. It has acquired a different set of values. In some countries there are organisations for the ecological defence. In America, for example, these organisations have taken cases to the courts. To some this may be a way to awareness. The Conference, did discuss the question of the pollution of the human mind, and it was discussed very openly. The question really is what should be the basis of values? The trial and error approach has so far given us nothing but more errors and more trials.

Political power in the world is held by the developed nations and it is they who dictate the pattern of economic development, by direct or implied means, in every country. And unless there is some equitable sharing of the political power, the Third

World will remain depressed and oppressed as it is today. It is the socio-economic pattern imposed by the developed nations that comes in the way of development. Unless this undergoes a qualitative change, you cannot expect much. The raw material, in most cases, is supplied by the developing nations but its price is fixed by the developed nations. If you buy a tyre in Malaysia, the price is not fixed by Malaysians. Similarly if you buy Kenyan coffee, the price is not fixed by Kenyans. There has to be some equity there.

This brought to fore the role of multinational corporations which came in for severe criticism. They are geared to profit, which is very human, quite legal, but is it right? They would go to any limit to have more production, no matter how much they pollute the environment and they will exploit all resources. It has been suggested that there should be a sort of international scrutiny for their operations. This was resisted very much by many governments because they never came prepared to hear such things.

So the people who hold the political power dictate what is to be done, and how much. This is very much a significant factor in human ecology.

Who is spending money on the development of armaments? What is happening in Vietnam today? Who is doing it? Is it a developing country? There are 26 million craters in Vietnam today. All the DDT that has been used so far could not do that much damage as these 26 million craters will. Not only won't they grow rice, they would also breed mosquitoes. Up to 1969, 75m litres of defoliants were sprayed over Vietnam. For years to come nothing will grow there. The land will be subjected to flooding. This is destroying environment.

I do not know whether like the Unctad-3 one can call this Conference a failure, but it did help to bring out many things and surely, many must have taken note of these.

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## PAKISTAN RUPEE

## From devaluation to devaluation

KALIM SIDDIQUI

In tracing the story of the Pakistan rupee, 1949 is a landmark. On 18 September, 1949 sterling was devalued by 30 per cent. All states in the Sterling Area followed and devalued their currencies. India devalued by 44 per cent. Until then India and Pakistan rupees had the same parity. But Ghulam Mohammad, Pakistan's then Finance Minister, announced that Pakistan would not devalue and the decision presented with a great fanfare of "economic strength".

Pakistan's decision had the desired psychological effect on India. Sirdar Patel, the Deputy Prime Minister of India, said: "We do not mind if our mills remain idle but we are not fools to pay Rs. 145 for Rs. 100 worth of Pakistani jute."<sup>1</sup> A Hindu told Sir Percival Griffiths: "I would rather see both countries ruined than agree that the Pakistan rupee should be worth one iota more than the Indian rupee."<sup>2</sup>

Until now Pakistan's dependence on India as a market for its raw materials and as a source of supply of manufactures had been total and complete. India imposed a trade blockade on Pakistan and began importing cotton from the United States and raising jute output in West Bengal. Pakistan began importing coal from England but it was difficult for her to find alternative markets for its jute and cotton. The economic war was going India's way and by the summer of 1950, Pakistan was almost on its knees.

Then in June of that year occurred the war in Korea which led to a boom in world demand for raw materials. Pakistan's fortunes were transformed.

EXPORT EARNINGS OF PAKISTAN BY COMMODITY (in million rupees)

	1949 <sup>a</sup>	1950 <sup>b</sup>	1951 <sup>c</sup>	1952 <sup>d</sup>
	Jan-June	Jan-June	Jan-June	Jan-June
JUTE	269.8	198.5	540.3	474.2
COTTON	143.6	272.4	818.5	535.6
HIDES & SKINS	30.1	22.6	49.6	20.5
WOOL	15.2	23.9	53.8	20.7
OTHERS	57.7	28.3	142.2	43.9

(a) Full half-year before non-devaluation, (b) Full half-year after non-devaluation, and before Korea war, (c) Full half-year after non-devaluation and after Korea war, (d) Beginning of recession, Source: State Bank of Pakistan.

Pakistan's export earnings in 1948-49 (the first full year after partition) were a mere 10.1 m rupees. These fell to Rs. 9.5 m in 1949-50 but then, because of the Korean War boom, rose dramatically to Rs. 24.7 m in 1950-51 and Rs. 24 m in 1951-52. The Indian Finance Minister announced: "The economic situation in the world has undergone a radical change in favour of primary producing countries like Pakistan. The Government of India has, therefore, in the altered circumstances agreed (to recognise) . . . the par value of

the Pakistan rupee."<sup>3</sup>

India's share in Pakistan's foreign trade consequently went down to 3 per cent in 1951 and did not rise above 6 per cent before 1960.<sup>4</sup>

The decision to maintain an over-valued rupee in fact had little to do with Pakistan's international trading position—it had everything to do with the Government of Pakistan's internal resource allocation bias in favour of the small urban sector and against the vast rural sector. Almost the entire wealth of Pakistan in 1947 was derived from agriculture with industrial output contributing just one per cent to the GNP of the new State. In West Pakistan 82 per cent of the people lived and worked on land, whereas in East Pakistan the rural agricultural sector comprised no less than 96 per cent of the population.

But the Muslim League leadership, almost exclusively drawn from urban interests, did not represent the economic interests of the peasants. The non-devaluation amounted to a revaluation against sterling when the bulk of Pakistan's exports were to the Sterling Area. It, therefore, led to the peasants getting only 9 as against 13 rupees for each pound Sterling worth of their exports. This, together with the Indian blockade, led to dramatic fall in prices—and therefore incomes—of the agricultural sector. Price of cotton (Sind, N. T.) fell from Rs. 88 in June 1949 to Rs. 78 in January 1950. The price of wheat (Iyallpur) fell from Rs. 9/8 to Rs. 6/5 per maund; and coarse rice from Rs. 36 to Rs. 23. But the greatest impact was on the 96 per cent of the people of East Pakistan: the price of jute (Dacca middle) fell from Rs. 35 to Rs. 22/8.<sup>5</sup> Non-devaluation thus cut the rupee incomes of the bulk of the people of Pakistan engaged in agriculture by as much as half. The resulting disparity in the rupee price of commodities, such as wheat, cotton and jute, between India and Pakistan produced the lucrative smuggling trade with Pakistan produce being taken across the border to obtain double the price fetched in Pakistan.

When the Korean War boom intervened the growers of Pakistan's exports should have been allowed to reap the benefit. But, the higher prices the exports fetched the higher export duty the Government levied. If the foreign exchange then earned had been used for meaningful economic development, the peasants' sacrifice would have been worthwhile. Instead the Government placed imports on Open General Licence, i.e., anybody could import anything. With an over-valued rupee, the imports were cheap. Import trade boomed with luxury goods topping the list. In the words of the Economic

Appraisal Committee report: "It is a matter of regret that . . . (the importers') . . . range of profit has been 50 per cent to 100 per cent or even more from landed cost to wholesale price and then to the retail price."<sup>6</sup>

By the time the Korean War boom ended in 1952, import licensing was re-imposed, and Pakistan became a huge protected market for industrialisation. The profits made from the boom were then turned to industrial investment. Agriculture was strangled to produce industrialisation of a wasteful variety. A normally food surplus country was turned into an international beggar. The needs of a beggar country then came to dominate Pakistan's foreign policy.

But the folly of an over-valued currency has been pursued ever since with only one minor adjustment in July 1955 when the Pakistan rupee was devalued by 43 per cent at a time when it was at least 100 per cent over-valued. Then in the early 1960s, Pakistan moved to a multiple-exchange rate with the introduction of the Export Bonus Scheme. The scheme's major line of discrimination was once again between the agricultural and manufacturing sectors. The bonus was not available for the export of primary commodities. One result of this depressed state of the agricultural sector was that, as population grew and pressure on land increased, peasants migrated to the towns and cities looking for industrial employment. The arrival of refugees from India in the early 1950s, and internal migration in the 1960s meant that wage labour was always plentiful and wages barely at the subsistence level. The export bonus earned by industry was not passed on to the industrial workers.

Within the urban sector itself, the varying rate of bonus and the cash-cum-bonus systems made the exchange rate anything between Rs. 4.7 per dollar (the official parity) to Rs. 13 per dollar. Thus, even within the industrial sector, costs of inputs varied not by the operation of any supply-demand mechanism but by arbitrary decisions of the bureaucrats. For instance, the import of industrial raw materials was allowed at the official parity. The industrialists, therefore, invested in industries that required imported raw materials even when such industries were already operating at around 50 per cent of existing capacity. Because capital goods import was also allowed on the cheap exchange rate, it prevented the growth of a healthy capital goods industry in Pakistan.

It is not possible here to examine the aid and foreign loan policies of the Government of Pakistan, suffice it to say that Ayub and Yahya regimes contracted



# Letters

foreign loans like drunken sailors. By 1969, (I do not have the latest figures) the total amount of loans contracted reached the staggering figure of 4.5 billion dollars<sup>7</sup>. The rate at which Pakistan's international indebtedness increased in the 1960s is reflected in debt servicing figures. In 1961 debt servicing claimed only 5.5 per cent of export earnings—this figure rose to 10.5 per cent in 1965 and 20 per cent in 1969. But during 1970 and early 1971 Mr. M. M. Ahmed Presidential Adviser went round the world signing more loan contracts.

Until 1967 the State Bank of Pakistan published an annual booklet called *Debt Servicing Liability*. In the 1965 election the opposition parties quoted official figures to accuse Ayub Khan of mortgaging the future of the country. Since 1967 publication of the State Bank's report stands discontinued.

So the people of Pakistan do not even know how much they owe. One thing is certain—the present devaluation of the rupee by 130 per cent has increased the country's debt burden by the same amount. And the loss of East Pakistan has perhaps halved the country's export potential. The only way to carry this burden is not to carry it at all and to tell the creditors to recover it from Ayub Khan, Yahya Khan, M. M. Ahmed and the "22 families". But it can only be carried out by a Government which is determined to pursue the welfare of the people as a whole and not that of the capitalist/bureaucratic sector alone. For that Pakistan will have to unplug itself from the international capitalist system.

The present model for economic development is certain not to produce growth rates required to repay the existing debts well into the next century or beyond, which clearly means that the degrading poverty of the Pakistanis will not be relieved for perhaps another 50 years.

The immediate economic and social objective must be to provide the people with food, shelter, clothing, elementary education and medical assistance. The land itself is rich enough to achieve this without external assistance. Industrial development will be meaningful only when it is achieved with the investment of the country's own surpluses produced by its own natural resources. Until that happens it is but wise to stop industrialisation of the kind that gets Pakistan deeper and deeper into debt and erodes her freedom.

The recent devaluation is a step in the right direction but comes 25 years too late.

## NOTES

1. G. W. Choudhury, *Pakistan's Relations with India*, London: Pall Mall, 1968, p. 148.
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## Plea for a Muslim Educational Corps

The most important problem facing the Muslim minorities particularly those in the West is the transmission of Islam to their coming generations. This needs a will and sense of duty of the Muslims both in the countries concerned and outside to help in building up such a capability to transmit Islam. In this one should aim at making the communities spiritually "self-sufficient", and progressive within the overall body of Islam. My proposal in this regard is to establish a voluntary Muslim Educational Corps. This Corps may comprise of all those Muslims who volunteer for this endeavour.

The Corp should consist of an Organizing Body, a Sympathizing Body and, an Educational Body.

The Organizing Body should be made up of volunteers who are dedicated for the spread of the teachings of Islam. It is preferable that the Corps' headquarters is in any Western country where Muslims are in minority (preferably a sizeable one) such as England, or Germany, France, Belgium, or the USA.

It should enrol volunteers, receive demands for help from the Muslim minorities, process such requests and finally organize the requisite help. It should also keep up-to-date its assessment of the requirements and organize an "information" drive for enlisting voluntary support for the other two groups.

At least 20 per cent of the membership of the Organizing Body would be based/drawn from the Headquarters town and should thus receive no salaries. Adequate budget provision should, however, be made for secretarial work.

The Organizing Body should also take care of the finances of the Corps, receive donations and fees etc., and decide on expenditure and investments if necessary.

The Sympathizing Body should comprise of individuals and organizations who agree with its aims and objects and support the effort financially. These contributions should depend on the individual capacity of each member whether an "individual" member or an "organization" member.

Donations from organizations, governments and individuals who are not members should also be sought.

The Educational Body should consist of volunteers of all ages who have a working knowledge of Islam. This body should be divided into three categories:

(i) Those willing to spend one year. They would live with the host community who would provide for his lodgings and food, but he would not receive any salary.

These volunteers would teach Islam to Muslim children in accordance with program given by the Organizing Body. They may also give courses to the adults, but the primary aim would be the education of children.

Young married couples or couples without small children to look after would make ideal volunteers.

(ii) Those who are willing to give less than a year: they could give short-term but intensive courses on Islam to a selected community and train local volunteers.

(iii) Those who are so qualified could participate in projects e.g., translation or writing of Islamic books for a given community. The Organizing Body would bear the expenses of editing, printing and publishing such literature.

The Muslim Educational Corps should strictly be a non-political and non-profit organization. I would be glad to volunteer to the aforesaid

bodies and to cooperate in developing these ideas to fruition.

*College of Petroleum and Minerals  
Dahran, Saudi Arabia.*

DR. ALI KETTANI

## A. K. Brohi's interview

Apropos the interview of Mr. A. K. Brohi carried by you in your issue of 23 June-13 July, 1972, would you be good enough to permit me to set the record straight.

When Mr. Brohi claims that he is not cut out for party politics and things like this, may I refresh your memory as well as of your readers that to my disappointment and disillusionment, it was Mr. Brohi who joined the Cabinet of the imported and imposed Prime Minister of Pakistan, namely, Mr. Mohamed Ali Bogra, a supineless figure who danced to the tune of his master, late Mr. Ghulam Mohammed, aptly described by *Dawn*, Karachi, as half mad and the principal figure who pulled the first brick in the dismemberment of Pakistan.

It is true that it was Mr. Brohi who was instrumental in writing into the Provisional Constitution, the Government of India Act, 1935, the celebrated Section 225-A which conferred the power of high prerogative writs on Pakistan's High Courts and the Federal Court. It was under this Section that late Moulvi Tamizuddin Khan was able to challenge the illegal dissolution of the Constituent Assembly. The petition was upheld by the High Court but dismissed by the Supreme Court in a decision which the Chief Justice Munir later admitted was given on political and not judicial grounds.

However, from a philosopher king and the 'intellectual giant' (to borrow the words of his Prime Minister), one expected a more dignified behaviour: he should not have joined the Bogra cabinet and lent his support to an unconstitutional measure. And then he accepted a diplomatic assignment in Delhi under the Ayub regime.

It is on men like Mr. Brohi whom Allah has given capacity and capability that the responsibility for the dismemberment of Pakistan falls. It was for him to have risen to the occasion and saved Pakistan, but alas . . . !

Even now it is not too late for him to come out of his self-imposed aloofness. Pakistan needs him and it is his duty to serve and to wage jihad.

SAIYID AFZAL AHMAD

*Nairobi, Kenya.*

## The Qur'an — English Translation

The undersigned has noted several errors, some of them serious, in the contemporary English translations of the Holy Qur'an.

I am particularly concerned about Pickthal and Yusuf Ali's translations which are widely circulated. I have been in touch with several Islamic scholars in this country, including some who have also qualified from the European universities and it is intended to prepare a detailed review of the two translations so that these could be suitably revised.

I shall appreciate if you can bring this to the notice of the Muslim scholars in other parts of the world whose assistance and cooperation would be most welcome.

M. HASAN

*P.O. Box 1286,  
Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.*

## Books

# Appraising India's Secularism

**Indian Secularism: A Case Study of the Muslim Minority** by Sharif Al Mujahid, *University of Karachi*, Karachi, 300 pages, with 19 appendices. Hard back £1.75, paper back £1.25.

Tragically the latest communal disturbances, killings, violence and vandalism in parts of Uttar Pradesh, principally Benaras and Ferozabad over the Aligarh Muslim University Bill passed by the Indian Parliament, makes Sharif al-Mujahid's book topical.

Ironically these riots, prove Sharif al-Mujahid true in that the forces of confessional chauvinism and Hindu militarism are very much a living organism in Indian politics and are still made use of regardless.

It also backs the author's thesis that the process of economic deprivation and attempts at cultural assimilation or elimination of Indian Muslims, which have been underway since 1947, are still being carried out under the umbrella of 'Indian Secularism'.

The book exposes, with the help of published and authentic documents from Indian sources, the Indian professions of democracy, tolerance and secularism. His work thus raises doubts about not only the sincerity, but also the authenticity of Indian secularism itself. It is the authors hypothesis that the Caste Hindus of India by tradition, up-bringing and by temperament, cannot be secular, even if they want to. Like a banyan tree, they can provide shade and shelter temporarily, but under no circumstances, can tolerate an independent growth underneath.

Hinduism, he says, has infinite taste for absorption. He outlines the moves which are afoot in India today to absorb Muslims and Islam, as it happened with Buddhism and Jainism, which had arisen from the bosom of Hinduism itself as revolt against the existing socio-religious order.

The author has drawn profusely from published sources. This might, to some, look irksome, even distracting but this dependence on outside sources, mostly Indian, helps to minimize the chances of too subjective an approach by a Muslim and a Pakistani.

He traces in great detail what forces in India of today are active in trying to erode Islam and absorb Muslims both from within and without.

Muslim teasing and Muslim baiting, which has become a pleasant pastime of Hindu chauvinists in India today is abated and connived by the Indian Govt.

The Hindu chauvinists see Aligarh Muslim University as the bastion of Muslim culture, values and traditions in India. They have set in motion a process of slow erosion of its Muslim-ness, says the author in the chapter on Aligarh University, by introducing large numbers of non-Muslim students at the University and through institutional reforms.

In 1963 the proportion of non-Muslim students in the University rose to 35 per cent. Another source had put down their number at 1,500 in 1967. In some departments their proportion was higher. For instance, 40 per cent in Engineering College and over 50 per cent in the Polytechnic School. Indian Education Ministry in a backgrounder to the press, says the author, alleged that Aligarh had become a centre of pro-Pakistan activities and a recruiting centre for highly skilled persons from engineering and medical faculties for Pakistan. Could this explain the moves against Aligarh!

The Benaras Hindu University, the counterpart of Aligarh, on the other hand, not only does not have more than one per cent Muslims on its rolls, but it has not allowed even a single Muslim in the engineering and other professional courses.

"Indian Secularism" which discusses in some detail the conditions of Muslims in the post-1947 period, begins by describing what an Indian author, Nirad Chaudhri calls the "terrible dichotomy" that characterizes the Hindu cosmos, and details and documents a number of "antithetical though connected traits which shape Hindu behaviour".

But the author, in the second edition, must try to tidy up at least some of the chapters so as to make them more concise and compact.

He has taken ample pains and put in great research in discussing relevant sections of the Indian Constitution to show to what extent it is defective from a purely secular viewpoint.

Appended to the work are certain documents, memoranda, addresses and studies some of which are not easily accessible, but all of which carry the argument of the book forward.

I found "Muslims in India: A Survey, 1950-53", included among the appendices of great value and interest. It is a Presidential address given by Syed Badrudduja ex-Mayor of Calcutta at the All India Muslim Convention at Aligarh in November 1953. I found it very illuminating because it was given by a nationalist Muslim who opposed Pakistan and supported the Indian National Congress in

the pre-independence days and was also a member of the Indian Parliament. Such documents are extremely useful in delineating the multifaceted dimension of the problems confronting the Muslims of India today whose case Sharif al-Mujahid so forcefully and ably takes up in this book.

Sirdar Vallabhai Patel, the Indian Home Minister's speech made on 17th January, 1950, openly exhorting Hindus of India to go to help liberate the Hindus of East Pakistan, goes to add to topicality of the book. The chapter details Indian/Hindu preparations for the final break-up of the Eastern wing of Pakistan in December 1971.

The chapter on "Cow Riots" reminded me of an evening on October 1971 in Vienna. I was "covering" Mrs. Gandhi's European tour, which she had undertaken before attacking East Pakistan.

At the Vienna University Hall, an Austrian girl, who was not very conversant with spoken English, asked Mrs. Gandhi about "the cow riots in India" and the reasons for them. The girl wanted to know — why so many people in India, every year are killed on account of killing a cow. Mrs. Gandhi gave a discourse on the subject of "dietary taboos in different religions of the world". The poor girl was confused and so is world opinion.

Sharif al-Mujahid's book is an objective and scholarly evaluation of "Indian Secularism". Such a book needs to be widely published for the sake of its rich documentation and a balanced appraisal of the democracy that is India.

Yehia M. Syed

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## Briefing

**The Letters and Papers of Chaim Weizmann, Series A, Letters, Volume II, September 1903—December 1904.** edited by Meyer Weisgal, *Oxford University Press*, £3.50.

Private letters of the well-known Zionist leader, Weizmann, recording perhaps the most crucial aspects of the history of world-Zionism. The volume covers controversy over the British government's offer of Uganda to the Jews and the death of Theodore Herzl, the leader with whom Weizmann differed on many important and basic issues. Weizmann opposed the British offer of a homeland, first on "Zionist principles" and later more seriously because of the "christian zionism" in Britain. It was a British civil servant Sir Harry Johnston, who advised Weizmann against accepting Secretary Joseph Chamberlain's Uganda scheme, because he said the English are the people of the Bible and the Zionists would do themselves great harm if they allowed themselves to be diverted from Palestine. Weizmann wrote: "Every serious statesman understands full well our renunciation of Africa and reckons with our aspirations to Palestine as a power factor. A small settlement in Palestine strengthens our prestige in the eyes of the world more than the half baked projects, which unhappily preoccupy us so much at the present."

After Theodore Herzl's death, Weizmann had to wait for his opportunity. Nordau, generally looked upon as the natural heir, had told him that he was still too young. So in August that year Weizmann wrote to his future wife: "The cause will summon me and I shall then come". When he came to Manchester University from Geneva, he met another Zionist zealot, Dr. Charles Dreyfus, the head of the Clayton Aniline Dye Company, who introduced him to Balfour. It was a fateful meeting. Like Lenin, his achievements lay in "catching the bus that only comes once". He persuaded Balfour to issue his historic declaration. His success also lay in articulating and promoting Christian Zionism. In a letter to a British M.P. he wrote: "The Whitechapel masses are a wretched sight. Herded into a filthy ghetto, perceptibly detached from Judaism, strangers to English culture! This is where the Zionists must begin and only by means of Zionism can unavoidable friction between the Jews and the English population be eliminated." Again on October 23, he writes "Work in Palestine is feasible; we know that by means of a slow and systematic activity in the spheres of culture and colonisation it is possible to create a force in the land... An organic tie between the organisation in the Golus (Diaspora) and Jewish organisation in Palestine".

*'Memoirs, Diaries, Letters' of Dr. Arthur Ruppin* (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, £4.00)

a German Zionist, who slowly and gradually forged the link which Weizmann had visualised in his private letters and writings, is a good supplement to the subject.

**Karl Marx** by Werner Blumenburg, *New Left Books*, £2.50.

Describes the younger days and the forties of Marx and continues the story down to his sixties but in somewhat less detail. The story is vivid, his first critical work on Hegel in 1843, and his life before and after the 1848 revolution and finally his lonely exile in London. The author, a German Social Democrat, who himself fled from Nazi Germany and had been a member of the Institute of Amsterdam for many years, depicts his subject as a true revolutionary right from his earliest to his final days.

**Egypt Under Nasir** by R. Hrair Dekmejian *University of London Press*, £4.20

The book is sub-titled as 'a study in political dynamics', and includes many useful charts, figures and tables. The theme in the author's words: "Circumstances of crisis, no less than peculiar personal attributes, propelled Nasir toward a revolutionary career based on charismatic leadership — a highly spiritual interaction between leader and followers rivalled only by two figures in Arab history — Salah al Din and Prophet Muhammad". The foreword contributed by Sir Harold Beeley, a former British Ambassador in Egypt, praises it for its depth of analysis and the success with which it helps dispel what the author calls the West's deep-seated myopia towards the non-Western world". The author is an Associate Professor of Political Science at the State University of New York.

**The Biharis in Bangladesh** by Ben Whittaker, *Minority Rights Group*, Report No 11, Price 45p

A first-hand account of the Biharis; Bangladesh citizens without protection and citizenship, disowned by Pakistan, and not the kind of refugees to interest India or the UN; the Report is strong in sympathy but weak in background and analysis.

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## The Media

### On some children's books

"It is children that read children's books", William Goodwin once told Charles Lamb, "but it is parents who choose them". If this is true, what do parents want from a children's book? Is it their desire to have their children instructed or entertained? Or is it that they wish to frighten them into good behaviour, persuade them into it or fill them with love of God? Or is it that they just want something to keep their children out of their way?

The answer is provided by children's books themselves. And as such they tell a great deal about contemporary tastes, about the virtues and the prejudices of the society—whether the emphasis is on truth-telling or obedience, on football or on animals. And precisely because of this they are, with a few notable exception (such as Alice), ephemeral.

It is doubtful, however, that what worries parents affect the children at all—lousy grammar, slipshod write-ups, dreadful twee illustrations, and the utter banality of story all are accepted as *de facto*. Also accepted with entire equanimity are the morals propagated. Thus if a popular children's book chooses to call its West Indian characters 'niggers' the nickname spreads swiftly amongst the young. Consider, the effect of the following example cited by Ian Steward in a survey of infant books for the University of Sussex Centre for Multiracial Studies: "I shall go on to Nigger Minstrels . . . they all look very funny. Their faces are as black as coal but their hands are not black. Do black men ever wash, Tommy?" (See also *Zenith*, London January 1972).

Racial bias such as this can be found—often in terms of innocent passing remarks—in many children's books. Lydia Whit, in a survey of children's books for Voluntary Committee on Overseas Aid and Development (VCOAD) gives many examples of racial bias in children's books, two of which I quote below:

"The natives, in fact, seem as destructive as the baboons, but it is very difficult to get them to change their habits".

"Africa . . . was like a huge cake just waiting to be eaten." (*Impact: World Development in British Education*, VCOAD, 1971).

Currently undergoing through their thirty-seven printing are Little Black Sambo books. Helen Bannerman writes authentic, rather touchy fairy stories, always charming, their fantasy never laboured. On the whole she ought to be congratulated for offering children a group of small non-white heroes—Sambo, Quibba, Quasha, Bobtail and Co.—with whom they can sympathize and emphasize (not least when Little Black Sambo devours 169 pancakes at one sitting). And the

underlying ethos seems quite inoffensive—except when one looks slightly below the surface. Consider the name itself: Black Sambo. Stanley Elkin in his book on slavery makes the following comment on the name: "the name 'Sambo' has come to be synonymous with 'race stereotype'". No wonder the West Indian youngsters after listening to the stories at school find themselves dubbed 'Sambo' in the playground.

At the age of nine and ten the kind of story books one reads can be loosely described as 'escapist'. This is usually generalised to mean the ostrich-like avoidance of the real world while a hysterical sublimation of an imaginary world is set in its place. For one thing such books may help to trigger off a reading habit which can later be channelled into more profitable directions: and if they are well written they can do a lot for improving the language of children. However, the moral side of children's books is not to be underestimated.

Puffin have published many fairy tales most of which make a pretty good reading. For those children who may take these books a little too seriously, a dose of Barries' *Sentimental Tommy* and its companion volume *Tommy and Grizel* may prove useful. Tommy is the boy who could not grow up, and the disastrous effects of this on himself and those with whom he comes in contact is the stuff that make the 'clinical-problem-story book' so popular today.

Still as popular as ever are Enid Blyton and Beatrix Potter. Although they cater for slightly different age groups, both exert a strange compulsion over children with styles that are at once both literary and graceful. This is much more than what we can say about another popular children's books series: the Ladybird series.

The Ladybird series are designed to help the youngsters with their reading. Ironically, this series suffers from the greatest of style defects: confusion of tenses. Allowing that on particular exciting moments one may change from the past to the present tense, but this is no excuse for such tripe as 'Now Peter is going into the castle'. At the centre of the Ladybird series is the scathless nuclear family: mum and dad, their two children, and of course, their dog, Rover. The stories involve having a *Happy Holiday*, meeting *Our Friends* and what have you in terms of the British middle-class chores. On the whole Ladybird series does possess some charm and quality but one wonders why something which is designed to be superb visually, with only a few words to nudge it along, should suffer from such style defects and is too invertebrate to make a good story. It is no wonder that these

stories fail to sustain the interest of most working class children.

After the familiar and the stereotype it is refreshing to look at *Hackney Half-term Adventure* (Centreprise, 34 Daltons Lane, London E.8, 20p). This is a book that has specifically been written for children of one locality: the inner London Borough of Hackney. The idea and the background philosophy of the book may, however, be of much wider interest. *En deux mots*, the story revolves round a group of four friends—two of whom are West Indians—and a genuine local hero, the famous footballer Alan Mullery. The text is illustrated with original photographs of familiar landmarks of Hackney, thus reinforcing a story which is fundamentally realistic. All this makes it easy for the young readers of Hackney to identify themselves with the characters and their life-style. And this is what makes the book so original and forceful.

Ziauddin Sardar

#### A Selection of Islamic Titles

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MUSLIMS IN BRITAIN

# Duty to distinguish, not to extinguish

Tunku Abdur Rahman has reminded the Muslims in Britain of their duty to distinguish and not to extinguish. In a message to the Second Annual Conference of Union of Muslim Organisations in Britain read by the Malaysian High Commissioner, Tan Sri Abdul Aziz, the Tunku briefly reviewed the present plight of the Muslim World and told them that only in their faith in God and the Prophet lay the solution of their problems.

The following is an abridged text of the message:

There are many matters of importance to Islam in Britain to give your thoughts to, for, there are the crises in the Middle East, the sub-continent of India (South Asia) and the Philippines which need your sympathetic attention.

There have never been so many Muslims in Britain as there are now and these are made up of students, immigrants and those others who have been born and bred and domiciled in the country.

The students come and go, some stay on but it is necessary for them to keep in touch with their Islamic brothers, and help them maintain their awareness of the Islamic religion, particularly in this unsettling influence of the society.

The immigrants have been forced to seek a living in Britain, a land which they hope would give them shelter, work and livelihood. These people have seen many Europeans doing business and other jobs of work overseas, particularly in their own country, enjoying a maximum of goodwill. They thought, when coming to Britain, that they would be reciprocated the kindness they had shown Britons there. It is necessary for them to seek solace and comfort in each other's company and above all to be in close touch with Islam which can give them peace of mind, and maintain their spirit. Your faith in God and the Holy Prophet can be a medicine for the mind and the body, and in time of stress and strain it can be your best companion.

Those who have made a home in Britain, they must keep in touch with their fellow Muslims so that they don't get lost in a land where religion of Islam is little known and so little understood. It is their duty not to extinguish but rather to distinguish themselves and their descendants as Muslims.

Muslims have of late suffered defeat and humiliation in many areas and parts of the world. We are humbled by the Jews, because of our weakness in the faith, in the Middle East.

Again in the South Asian sub-continent, the defeat of Muslims at the hands of the Hindus has been a bitter pill. The biggest Muslim country has been forcibly broken in two halves through the intervention of a third party. Millions of people suffered and still continue to suffer great hardship in the breakaway half and are in the cave of despair. Many move about without heart and without hope.

In the Philippines, the number of those killed was officially admitted

by the government as 1,845 to-date though in actual fact the number well exceeds 3,000.

The trials and tribulations which the Muslims are facing now are tremendous and terrible. They have at last realised the need for Muslims to come together, and so, for the first time in history, the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers was formed and entrusted with the duty of bringing together all Islamic countries. Now that we are together, we can look forward to closer co-operation between one and all; and with sublime devotion to Allah we may yet find strength to put followers of Islam on the pedestal where we should by right be—position of honour in the society of men.

● The Union elected Dr. Syed A. Pasha (General Secretary), H. R. Siddiqui and Col. Abdullah Baines-Hewitt (Asst. Secretaries), A. M. Hammar (Treasurer), S. S. Bokhari (Asst. Treasurer) and an executive of eleven.

## London Weekend Schools—parents and teachers meeting

Parents and teachers who are involved in the week-end schools run by the Islamic Cultural Centre, London, about fifty of them met at the Centre on Sunday 9 July to discuss what the schools have achieved and the various problems that are being faced.

At the moment there are 43 such schools listed, extending from Hounslow in the West to Forest Gate in the East and from Barnet in the North to Clapham in the South of London. Schools are held in classrooms rented from Local Education Authorities, in church halls, community centres or in private dwelling places. Inevitably some thrive more than others depending on the density of the local Muslim population, the ability of the teachers, the facilities which are available and the presence or otherwise of local parents associations.

It was generally agreed that schools in those areas where there are local parents' associations are better organised. With this in mind a committee was formed to encourage the setting up of more local associations. Mr. Ashraf Ali, Planner in Education at the Centre, Mr. M. Ikram of Hounslow and Mrs. Yusuf, President of Pakistan Muslim Women's Association. There was the

general feeling that the average of three hours a week tuition was not enough to provide adequate religious instruction and that it was important to educate parents themselves. Director of the Centre, the Raja of Mahmudabad, emphasised that it was not enough to impart certain facts to the children but it was more important to create the spiritual atmosphere in the home where Islam could be seen in practice. He lamented the fact that some of the most 'intellectual' homes turned out to be some of the most anti-Islamic ones.

The Assistant Education Attaché of the Sierre Leone suggested that intensive courses should be organised during the summer vacation and it might be possible to rent premises cheaply during this time. Mr Karamat Hossein, a Labour County Councillor from Brent suggested that Muslims should acquire the technique of lobbying their councillors and MP's—usually 'reasonable' people—in order to solve problems like the need for better premises etc.

A Committee was formed (Mrs. Saeeda Shareef, Mr. Ashraf Ali, Mrs. Nisa Ali, Mr. Tijani and Mr. Abdul Wahid, to deal with such matters as syllabus teaching aids and methods, the availability of text-books and pamphlets and specific problems encountered in teaching.

## Round-up

□ A national insurance appeal tribunal in Scunthorpe (Britain) is to rule whether Mrs. Azor Khan is entitled or not to receive maternity benefits. She is Mr. Khan's third wife whose earlier marriages no longer subsist and the rules require satisfaction that a marriage had at all times been monogamous.

□ The Family Division of the British High Court have ruled that a British subject of English domicile had the legal capacity to enter into a contract of polygamous marriage with an Egyptian national domiciled in Egypt. Miss Mary Magson is the third wife of Mr. Ridwan and the couple were married in the Egyptian legation in Paris.

□ Islamic Society Greater Houston paid a deposit of \$6,000 for a building to establish a mosque and an Islamic Centre in Houston. The Society has appealed for contributions to be sent to Mr. M. H. Quazi, 1909, Colquitt St., Apt. 1, Houston, Texas, USA.

□ A three-day International *Tabligh* Conference concluded in Sheffield on 16 July. The Conference was attended by 5,000 Muslims, of all nationalities, about half came from overseas.

□ The ninth Annual Conference of FOSIS—Federation of Students Islamic Societies in UK and Eire—devoted to discussing the "Spectrum of Tajdeed" concluded in Manchester on 23 July. The Conference elected Arifin Suhaimi (University of Reading) as President and an executive of ten.

## ISLAMIC COMMUNITY OF LISBON

Suleiman Valy Mamede\*

Islam has been in permanent contact with Portugal, since the origin of portuguese nationality. The first king of Portugal, Alfonso Henriques, in 1170, accorded the *Moors* from Lisbon, Almada, Palmela and Alcaccer do Sal, the special *forals* status i.e. of "forros", (free, from arabic, *horre*).

The territory's contact with Islam, (i.e. the metropolitan territory of Portugal) has been continuous, since the 15th century.

Since a long time, we were in urgent need of an Islamic community, not only to give moral support to all the muslims living in Portugal, but also to foster better understanding of Islam. On the other hand, we had felt a need for a serious and scientific study of Islamic Culture, because the so called "Islamologues" and "arabists" have up to now, looked upon it as an exotic culture and consequently, a negative view.

So, in Lisbon, was established the "Islamic Community of Lisbon", (Rua Luis de Camoes, 100-30 Esq. Lisbon-3 (Portugal)). Its statutes were ratified on 28 March 1968 and its members number nearly five hundred muslims living in continental Portugal, of all sects and of both portuguese and non-portuguese origin. "The Islamic Community" is a religious, apolitical and cultural association and its objects are: (a) to build the first mosque, since the 15th century, in Lisbon, (to attain our goal in this aspect, we need the support from all the muslims); (b) to correct the image of Islam in Portugal and everywhere; (c) to develop sincere and fraternal relations with people of other religions; (d) to publish in Portuguese language books about Islam; (e) to promote the classical arabic studies.

"The Islamic Community" publishes a quarterly magazine "O Islao", which is the only periodical in the Portuguese language on Islamic culture.

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**new spectrum** is a spectrum of news and activities of the Muslim communities in areas outside the traditional Muslim world. Cooperation of various groups and individuals active in these areas in improving the spectrum will be very much appreciated.



# news brief • news brief • news brief • news brief • news brief

**ALGERIA.** Spain to make a loan of \$39m to Algeria for purchase of capital goods from Spain.

**ARAB AFFAIRS.** A technical Committee formed in Tripoli to pave way for the establishment of a joint Arab-Maltese Chamber of Commerce.

**BANGLADESH.** An International Red Cross plane flew 55 Afghan nationals from Chittagong to Kabul and will fly back Bengalis stranded in Afghanistan to Bangladesh.

● A curfew imposed for eight and a half hours in parts of Dacca as a drive against anti-social elements.

● Bengali paper 'Azad' described Simla Agreement as a face-saving device for Mr. Bhutto. ● Foreign Minister denied Pakistan Press reports that Shaikh Mujib and President Bhutto would meet in Jakarta before Pakistan's recognition of Bangladesh.

● A Dacca radio report alleged that Gen. Yahya Khan has told the high powered commission appointed by President Bhutto that he had kept him in darkness about the real intentions of the US and China in the event of a war with India. Mr. Bhutto was also accused by the former President of insisting that the Chinese and Americans would intervene in Bangladesh "in a big way" by 14 December.

● Addressing journalists in Dacca, Shaikh Mujib urged them to help the government to implement "the four principles of Nationalism, Socialism, Democracy and Secularism." ● Bangladesh Government has requested Israel for help and advice in the establishment and organisation of a Ministry of Tourism.

**CYPRUS.** Vice-President Fazil Kutchuk described the recent appointments to the Council of Ministers by President Makarios a violation of the Constitution which requires such appointments to be made jointly by the President and the Vice President.

**EGYPT.** Cairo Radio 'Voice of the Arabs', celebrated 19th Anniversary on 4 July.

**INDIA.** India asked Hawker Siddeley for a Harrier vertical take off strike plane to carry out trials on Indian aircraft carrier, the 16,000 tons (ex-British "Majestic" class) Vikrant.

● The first exchange of gift parcels and mail for Pakistani POWs was carried out under the guidance of the IRC.

● Prime Minister Indira Gandhi said India's interpretation of bilateralism referred to in the Simla agreement covered the Kashmir as well as all other questions. She said India still regards Pakistan-held Kashmir as Indian territory. About the trial of POWs she said any trial for war crimes would not be against Geneva Convention. ● Bihar Praja Socialist Party decided to merge with the ruling Congress Party. ● Jewish Agency's Director in India, A. Sharon, has regretted that Indian Jewish emigrants to Israel "dishonour" their signed agreements on housing.

**INDONESIA.** Chinese publications, periodicals and pocket books, smuggled into the country were seized by the authorities.

**IRAN.** The Communist Tudeh Party of Iran accused the Government of denying the Baluchis in Iran their

rights as a tribe enjoying its own language national customs and traditions and suggested that Iranian interest in the matter was being extended to "Pakistani Baluchistan".

**IRAQ.** Foreign Minister warned Britain that all her interests in Iraq would be liquidated if the British Companies try to obstruct the sale of the nationalized oil.

**ISRAEL.** An oil refinery at Elat to process Sinai oil is expected to be completed in two years' time.

● Foreign Minister said Israel would not release the captured Egyptian and Syrian prisoners unless all Israeli prisoners in Egypt and Syria were freed. ● Foreign Minister said if PLO office in London was opened, relations with Britain might be strained.

● Mr. Abba Eban said the main obstacle to the resumption of the Jarring Mission is the Ambassador's note of February last year and the December 1971 UN General Assembly resolution, both of which call on Israel to withdraw to the pre-six-day war boundaries. ● An East Jerusalem Journalist, Mohammad Shelbayah has requested the Israeli authorities for permission to form a Palestinian Political Party to find a local solution based on a dialogue and co-operation with Israel.

**LIBYA.** An Agreement reached with USSR on working out a technical and economic basis for the unification of the power systems of Libya and Egypt. ● Spanish firm to build two 47,000 ton tankers for the Libyan National Oil Co. ● The Cabinet decided that the state employees opting to serve with PLO will be considered on a 'loan period', retaining all their usual service rights.

● Chairman al-Qadhafi swore in the new Cabinet at his headquarters, dispelling previous press reports that his government had been overthrown.

**OMAN.** The Omani Mission in UN accused the Marxist Regime of S. Yemen of pursuing a policy of slander, sedition and aggression.

**PAKISTAN.** A Press report that the government had decided to terminate the services of East Pakistanis was denied by a government official, saying that the services of only those opting for Bangladesh were being terminated. The judges of the superior courts were not affected by this decision as they held permanent Constitutional offices.

● After the violent demonstrations and clashes with police in Karachi and other cities of Sind following the Sind Assembly's decision on 7 July to make Sindhi the official language of the province, President Bhutto after consultations with the parties announced a compromise formula, allowing 12 years to the Urdu speaking Sindhis to adopt the new language. ● Pakistan denied reports that President Bhutto had ordered erection of a monument to President Sukarno in Islamabad. ● The National Assembly approved with "an overwhelming majority", the Simla Agreement. The National Awami Party leader, Khan Wali Khan and the Baluchistan Governor, Mir Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo welcomed it. The ruling NAP and

Jamiat-ul-ulema-i-Islam took out a joint procession in Peshawar on 15 July to protest against the postponement of the bye-elections in the province by the Central Government without consulting them.

**PHILIPPINES.** The leader of the Libyan delegation, Dr. Ali at-Turayki, after a week's visit said Libya could not overlook the sufferings of the Muslims of Philippines. The joint Libyan-Egyptian fact finding delegation submitted a report to President Marcos expressing extreme concern over the genocide of the Muslims in the South.

**POLAND.** The periodical *Zielony Sztandar* revealed that in Poland every day 700,000 to 800,000 people are drunk, the number of the chronic alcoholics being 1,500,000.

**QATAR.** A contract signed with a British Firm for the construction of a new 750 Kw broadcasting station.

**SAUDI ARABIA.** A delegation will participate in the Islamic Conference in Nigeria scheduled for 24 July to 5 August. ● 300 government employees participated in Foreign Languages Courses organised by the American, British and French Cultural Centres. ● A special office is to be opened to check all publications of the Holy Qur'an imported into the country. ● A joint team of Saudi and British expert will carry out new experiments on desert locust observation.

**SRI LANKA.** Sri Lanka decided to link its rupee to the pound sterling instead of dollar from 11 July.

**TURKEY.** Premier Ferit Melen warned that international Communism having failed to forcibly cross Turkish borders, is doing everything in its power to destroy it from within. ● 35 members of a 'Revolutionary Worker-Peasant Communist Party' were arrested in Izmir area by the Martial Law authorities. The Party had launched operations to set up a Marxist, Leninist and Maoist Regime.

**UGANDA.** President Amin offered the former residence of Israeli Ambassador to Palestine Liberation Movement to be used as their office.

● To a visiting Libyan delegation President Amin said: The present economic problems of Uganda were the creation of the Israelis who were employed in different projects.

**UNITED KINGDOM.** The Annual meeting of the Medical Council on Alcoholism in London was told that there were about 500,000 alcoholics in England. Alcoholism was five and a half times as common among men as among women, but that the women were better at concealing it. ● Plans are underway to establish next month an Anglo-Arab Chamber of Commerce, to promote industrial and agricultural co-operation between UK and the Arab World. ● The Secretary-General of Amnesty International after a recent tour of Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Iran, Israel and Italy, said the "worst news" is from Iran where early this year many were executed without a fair trial. ● The Publishers of the Cassell's English Standard Dictionary to make 'appropriate changes' regarding definitions of the word

"Jew". Mr. Harold Macmillan, Chancellor of Oxford University, is the principal defendant in another case brought against Clarendon Press, Publishers of the Oxford Dictionaries, over their definitions of the word "Jew".

## PEOPLE

Metropolitan Dimitrios, 58, elected as Oecumenical Patriarch of the Orthodox Church. ● Major Abd as-Salam Jallud, New Prime Minister of Libya. ● Sheikh Mujib resumed work on 12 July after 6 days' illness. ● V. V. Giri, Indian President visiting Afghanistan was awarded 'Golden Key of the City'. ● Bulent Ecevit, re-elected Party leader of the Republican Party of Turkey. ● Prof. Mihailo Djuric, of the Belgrade Faculty of Law sentenced to two years rigorous imprisonment.

## VISITS

Turkish Foreign Minister, Haluk Bayulkhan to Iran and Pakistan. ● Maurice Schumann, French Foreign Minister, to China. ● The US October League (Marxist-Leninist) leader, Michael Klonsky, to China. ● British Foreign Secretary, Sir Alec Douglas Home, to Indonesia. ● Bangladesh and South Vietnamese Foreign Ministers to Indonesia. ● Iraqi Foreign Minister, Murtada Sa'id Abd al-Baqi to Syria. ● Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi to France. ● Iraqi Minister of Industries to Bulgaria and Eastern Germany. ● Yasir Arafat, the PLO leader to Moscow. ● Shaikh Khalid Ibn Saqr, Crown Prince of Ras Al Khyma Emirate to Saudi Arabia. ● Saudi Ministers Shaikh Mohammed Al-Awadhi, of Commerce and Industry to Somalia in August, Shaikh Hasan Al-Mishari, of Agriculture and Water to Britain and Egypt and Prince Sultan Ibn Abdul Aziz, of Defence and Aviation to Egypt. ● Finance Minister of Uganda to Libya. ● Foreign Minister of the Union of Arab Emirates, Ahmad Khalifah as-Suwaidi to Libya. ● Egyptian Premier, Dr. Aziz Sidqi, to Moscow. ● Iraqi Foreign Minister, Murtada Sa'id Abd al-Baqi to Syria. ● Premier Saib Salam of Lebanon, to Italy. ● Queen Elizabeth to Yugoslavia in October. ● King Hasan II to Algeria next Autumn after Ramadan. ● Indian Foreign Minister Sawaran Singh to Ghana, Senegal, Gambia, Nigeria and Britain. ● King Hussain of Jordan to Abu Dhabi. ● President Amin of Uganda to Somalia. ● Nigerian Chief of Staff and the Head of Security to Libya. ● Arab League Secretary General Mahmud Riad to Algeria and Morocco. ● American Secretary of State William Rogers to Kuwait. ● Yemeni Premier Muhsin al-Ayni to China and North Korea. ● Sudanese President Numeiry to Somalia and Libya. ● Netherlands Foreign Minister to Egypt. ● Ethiopian Foreign Minister, Menessie Haile to Kenya. ● Jordanian Minister of National Economy, Said an Nablusi, to Egypt. ● King Constantine of the Hellenes to Iran. ● West German Defence Minister, Helmut Schmidt to Turkey. ● Rafique Saigol, PIA chief to London & New York.

## DIPLOMATS

Enayat Karim, appointed Bangladesh Foreign Secretary. ● Pope Paul received Raouf Boudiaki, Algeria's first Ambassador to Vatican. ● Liu Pu, first Chinese Ambassador to Malta. ● Teuku Maimun, first Indonesian Ambassador to Bangladesh. ● Malik-uswari Mochar Prabu Magnumegara, Indonesian Ambassador to Iraq. ● Ashok Balkrishna Bhadkamar, Indian Ambassador to Yemeni Arab Republic. ● El-Haj Rossan Indonesia's Ambassador to Saudi Arabia. ● New Pakistan Ambassadors: Aftab Ahmad to Italy, S. A. D. Bukhari to Rumania, Birgis Hussain to Bulgaria and Muhamad Yunus to Saudi Arabia.

## DIED

Bakhshi Ghulam Mohammad, 65, former P.M. of Indian-held Kashmir in Srinagar on 15 July. ● Oecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras, in Constantinople, on July 12. ● Nafidh Jalal, Iraq's Agriculture Minister, in Kirkuk, 12 July. ● Ghassan Kanafani, the Popular Front spokesman, assassinated 9 July, Beirut. ● Ex-King Talal of Jordan, in Istanbul, 8 July. ● Abdul Wahab Khan, 74, speaker Pakistan Constituent Assembly 1954-58, in Dacca on 11 July. ● Inayatullah, founder of Mashriq and Akhbar-e-Watan Urdu weeklies from London, in Lahore on 15 July. ● The Uniate Bishop, Dr. Miklos Dudas, 70, on 15 July. ● Prof Bayard Dodge, Arabist, former President American University of Beirut, OBE for services to British occupation forces during Second War.