

MUSLIM VIEWPOINT(S) ON CURRENT AFFAIRS

# impact

international fortnightly

HOW HOLY IS PALESTINE TO MUSLIMS?  Indo-Soviet Entente  Bangladesh Reconciliation  Iranian-Arab Relations  Turkish Impasse  Progressive Alcoholism  The Middle East File  Nagas, Muslims and Apathy  Thinking Over  Return of the Native

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## TO GENEVA TO WHERE ?

The Geneva Peace Conference scheduled for 18 December—if it is held—would be an important even traumatic event in a century of politics in the Middle East. Essentially what would happen is that the Arabs would be paying for the grave political blunders they committed in working with the European powers for the break-up of the Ottoman State which resulted in the carving up of the Middle East and the implantation of the State of Israel. For, the Peace Conference if it does not achieve anything significant in substantive terms would have by the mere fact of its being held accorded legal recognition to the State of Israel and validity to the idea that what is acquired by force could later be sanctified in international law.

As one looks at the position of the parties involved and of the United States and the Soviet Union, the two major powers directly wielding influence, it is difficult to escape the conclusion that the Arabs would hardly be going to Geneva in a position of strength whereas the Israelis are in a position to dictate what they want. All the Israeli stated positions so far confirm that all they are prepared to give up is some desert in the Sinai and even that is not certain in view of their emphasis on "secure borders". The Arabs have on the other hand practically been saying to the Powers and Israel, "Please let us capitulate". On the face of it, it would thus seem that any peace at Geneva would for the Arabs be the peace of capitulation and for the Israelis the peace of the victorious.

Still one may not think that the Arab Heads of State and the leaders of the Palestine Liberation Organisation are all so extraordinarily naive, gullible and powerless. So there must, arguably, be some good reason for going to Geneva. Much of politics and diplomacy have

always been a game of feints in public and secrecy in matters of great import. Behind the mandate given by the Algiers summit to Syria and Egypt must lie the hope or the conviction that something useful is to be gained by going to Geneva and sitting down with the Israelis, whether eyeball to eyeball or not.

Is it the hope that some territories would be handed back without going through the costly process of war? Is it a tactic to show up the Israelis for what they really are—a nation that does not know and does not want to know what the word peace really means, because this peace is contrary to its very nature and security which depends on keeping up the notion that it is always under threat of extinction? Or is it simply the need to keep up a momentum that something is being done, if not militarily then at least diplomatically, the alternative being the downward descent into a vacuum of frustration characteristic of the era of no war no peace? Or worst of all, does it reflect a desire to close the file on Palestine and get on with the task of each one building up his own state, of postponing or finally giving up all preparations for and determination to fight the decisive battle, the comprehensive battle, the battle of destiny?

Whatever the real answers, the Arabs and the Palestinians are faced with a dilemma of enormous proportions. President Bumadyan has summed it up most succinctly when he said that there were three possibilities for solutions. These were an Arab solution which was the best but demanded that the Arabs be in a position of strength; an American-Soviet solution which would never satisfy the Arabs completely and an American solution which would be at their expense.

The first possibility is automatically ruled out because the Arabs, despite an improved position internationally, do not have the decisive weight on their side at the moment. It is doubtful for example whether any amount of diplomatic pressures would shift the Israelis from Jerusalem (which the Algiers conference rightly insisted on as a major condition) or make them agree to the setting up of a Palestinian state any-

where except in the desert of Sinai. The only obvious weapon the Arabs have is that of oil and of course this is a double-edged weapon.

The third possibility, an American solution, would certainly be one to be apprehensive about. The Vietnamese peace farce and the American pounding of Cambodia (ordered by Dr. Kissinger) which followed is enough to make anyone wary of the bona fides of the American government and its State Department, which however much we may like to close our eyes to it, is led by America's top Jew. Dr. Kissinger's behaviour so far has not given any justification for discounting this fact.

What remains is the Soviet-American solution.

Bumadyan again has rightly expressed his reservations by saying that the Soviet Union has never been close to the Arabs as the Americans are to Israel. Even more significant is the statement by Golda Meir when she said of the Soviet Union—"this is a country I hope will change". Notice no word of criticism. The Arabs' assertion that the "diplomatic isolation of Israel has now become a reality" may thus seem a doubtful one or in any case one of limited importance so far as Geneva is concerned.

The immediate outlook then is not promising. Whether hopefully there would be any Israeli withdrawal and some minimum recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinians or whether there would emerge any closer identification of Israeli and Jordanian interests or some artificial arrangements (for internationally controlled areas for example) remains to be seen. In this regard, one caveat must be expressed. No proposal for the internationalization of Jerusalem should be entertained.

As the Arabs thus approach the tryst of destiny, they have to come up with something on the diplomatic front which is far more plausible than the recent war which was fought, they say, merely to prove that the Israelis were not invincible. It is doubtful whether this has been done, but in any case a less terrible comment on the contemporary state of Arab morale and sense of purpose is difficult to imagine.

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**Survey****● INDO-SOVIET ENTENTE ● BANGLADESH****The Yogi and the Bear**

The CPSU Central Committee Politburo, the USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium and the USSR Council of Ministers have noted "with most satisfaction the importance of the documents signed during Leonid Brezhnev's visit to India". Of much importance is the fact that the agreement signed "specifies and determines the long-term direction of mutually advantageous and fruitful economic cooperation". The visit accordingly also "confirmed . . . concurrence of views on a wide range of topical international problems" such as "ending the arms race, attaining general and complete disarmament, a world disarmament conference and full elimination of the vestiges of colonialism and racialism". As to "the outstanding problems existing in southern Asia . . . the two sides emphasised "that these can and should be solved through talks between the interested countries without any outside interference whatsoever".

In New Delhi too, Mrs. Gandhi has congratulated herself at the beneficial progress in the Indo-Soviet relations. While the showbizz effects—though not inconsequential in terms of domestic popularity benefits—of the visit may fade away in due course, the real-term advantages derived by India are many. The recent loan by Russia of 2 million tons of wheat has already earned her the title of "breadgiver". The conclusion, however, of a 15-year economic development agreement was a development of greater significance. Russia's involvement in India's scientific and industrial development already was considerable. In the heavy industry sector alone, 76 projects created and built with Soviet aid produced 80% of India's total metallurgical equipment, 30% of the steel, 20% of the electrical power, and refine 30% of the oil. The Soviet supported projects accounted for more than 50% of oil and 60% of the manufacturing capacity for turbines and hydroelectric set. It is now anticipated that by 1980 there could be as much as a 200% increase in the Indo-Soviet trade.

The military side remains secret, but the Japanese News Agency *Kyodo*, quotes New Delhi diplomatic sources that the Soviet Union has agreed to provide between 1974 and 1975, military aid worth 2,000m roubles (\$2,680m). Russia would also equip India with surface-to-air and surface-to-surface missiles. She has also agreed to defer and ease repayment demands on the Soviet military aid valued at over \$750m which she gave to India during the 1971 Bangladesh war.

What has India offered in return? The Russians describe the Indian Ocean as a kind of American and British-dominated lake and their own fleets in the area, do need, rather badly, port and bunkering facilities along India's vast coast-line. The "shipping discussions" between India and the USSR, as these are euphemistically termed, are to begin shortly at diplomatic level. Russia has been involved also in aiding India in surveying its marine fishery resources and assisting with the requisite fishing gear. India on the other hand, has been seeking dual purpose (fishing and military) trawlers as well as an association with Russia's space-research programme. It is, therefore, doubtful how in due course India would be able to escape the inevitability of providing "port facilities" to an active collaborator like the Soviet Union. Another area of relationship where India must have calculated its risks is the vast rupee credits being acquired by the Soviets in return for the goods they are and would be supplying to her. The confidence here would seem to arise from India's handling of a similar counterpart US PL.480 fund. Mrs. Gandhi has already refuted opposition criticism on a sell-out of the country's independence and asserted that "whatever the cost" India will never mortgage her political and economic freedom.

A Soviet foreign policy area where India has been notably unobliging is that of the Brezhnevian plan of Asian Collective Security. The joint statement said nothing about it but only a few

days after Brezhnev's return, Moscow home service told its listeners that while "there is constantly increasing public support in all countries for the concept of collective security systems in Asia as elsewhere . . . In some sections of the public, and among certain official representatives of the Asian countries, there do exist misconceptions about the idea . . . and prejudices against it". "These difficulties", said the commentator, Pavel Viktorov, "will have to be ironed out by all the interested countries and groups in mutual contact and cooperation on a basis of equality and respect for each other's point of view . . . We cannot afford to ignore them".

These "misconceptions" and "prejudices" referred not to Peking's known hostile attitude which in fact was described as "the subversive attitude of the Maoist leadership in China". As far as China is concerned the Soviet problem is not to convince but how to contain her and this the visit did help to attain. It referred not just to the attitudes of Japan, Malaysia, Pakistan and others but also to Mrs. Gandhi's reservations about walking into Mr. Brezhnev's parlour.

The Russians also know that they have to accept to be patient and balance their payments against the long-term gains—what the Politburo, the Supreme Soviet Presidium and the USSR Council of Ministers noted as "the long-term direction".

**Bangladesh bid for national reconciliation**

On 30 November the Bangladesh government having "further considered the question of granting clemency to persons who have been convicted for or accused of offences under the Bangladesh Collaborators Order" announced a decision to release by 15 December all the 36-37,000 or so held for "collaborating" with Pakistan. As it should be the reprieve will not apply to those accused/guilty of criminal offences such as murder, arson, robbery, rape, etc. Among those who are freed or to be freed are the East Pakistan's last Governor, Dr. A. M. Malik and his cabinet ministers; prominent politicians like the Muslim League Leader Khawaja Khairuddin and a former Central Minister, Abdus Subur Khan; and academics such as Dacca University V.C., Dr. Sajjad Husain and Professors Hasan Zaman, Deen Mohammad, Mohar Ali, and others. A former Awami league leader Shah Azizur Rahman and a religious leader Pir Sahib of Sarasina have also been released.

Though belated, yet the decision should be taken as a genuine and a welcome move. With the passage of little more time, public opinion in Bangladesh should be able to have an objective appreciation of the whole phenomenon of separation and the surrounding tragedies. It was in the fitness of things, therefore, for Sh. Mujib to have hoped that those released would come forward and take part in the nation-building activities. That should also imply that they would be reinstated in their respective positions.

Bangladesh does need such courageous men and men of conviction who would neither compromise nor yield on principles. Many of these East Pakistanis were well aware of the irony and risk of "collaborating" with a (West) Pakistani ruling coterie which actually wanted to push out the majority province. They failed to save "Pakistan" of their dreams yet in this age of divisive nationalism the example set by them is something which is unparalleled. A reprieve had been offered much earlier but not one of them came forward either to petition mercy or express regret. Given an appropriate framework these very maligned and misunderstood men can fill a great intellectual and political vacuum in Bangladesh. A day earlier, Foreign Minister, Dr. Kamal Husain, had asked the students to crush the enemies of freedom. He might have meant some-

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## Survey • IRANIAN-ARAB RELATIONS • TURKISH IMPASSE • PROGRESSIVE ALCOHOLISM

thing else but evidently Bangladesh has yet to establish itself as a truly independent state and now the threats to its freedom do not come from the direction of Pakistan. These erstwhile collaborators should be enabled to protect this freedom.

Since the object of the "clemency" appears to be to seek normalcy and reconciliation and move away from the politics of vengeance and retribution, it would only be appropriate that this extended also to those whose citizenships were cancelled earlier this year as well as to the hundreds (perhaps thousands) of academics, teachers and public servants who were removed from their jobs soon after the establishment of Bangladesh. There was no moral or even legal justification for such action. Many are known to be in extreme destitution and they too should be invited to join in the rebuilding task.

### The Shah on Iranian — Arab relations

Speaking to the Beirut weekly, *Al-Hawadith*, the Shah of Iran had occasion to clarify his position with regard to the continuing Arab-Israeli conflict. On the one hand questions were asked as to what was the difference between Iran's role and the role of such countries as Yugoslavia or Ivory Coast. On the other there was a *Washington Post* report that if the recent war had continued for one more week, Iran would have entered the war alongside the Arabs.

The Shah contradicted the *Washington Post* story but said, "Iran was prepared to intervene for the implementation of Security Council Resolution No. 242. Otherwise what use these resolutions have if the nations which have issued them do not implement them?" The Shah said: "No change has taken place in Iran's policy since 1967... I asked international society to implement this resolution not only in words and by adoption of policies but through practical and effective measures... Whatever was asked of us, and things that were not asked of us, were granted by us. From the start we supported the rights of the Palestinian people... Do you want us to talk about it every day?"

The Shah disclosed that they had "placed a number of aircraft at Saudi Arabia's disposal and they have done what was required of them. This is all I can say". And: "Why do you forget that we welcomed the invitation extended for a settlement to us by Iraq from the first hours (of war) and we told them that they could trust their borders with us and so they were able to send three brigades to the front? Why do you forget that we stopped the transit of Jewish volunteers... to go to Israel via Iran? Do you know what you gave us in return for this? The Arab representative at the Conference on pollution which was held in London... insisted that this (Persian) Gulf be called the Arabian Gulf?" The Shah said it is the British who created this problem. "About 20 years ago... *The Times* newspaper had referred to the Persian Gulf as the Arabian Gulf. I immediately understood the game. A few years later... President Abd an-Nasir said: 'From Atlantic Ocean to the Persian Gulf'. He referred to the Persian Gulf since that was the name that he had learned in school".

The Shah also defended his relations with Israel. He saw no use "in closing down Israel's trade office in Tehran." "We do not believe in negative policies... We did not establish diplomatic relations with Israel out of solidarity with the Islamic world, although many of your major friends have good relations with Israel. Why do you not ask them to sever their relations? Most of the Arabs are Sunnis. Why do you not ask Turkey, which is a Sunni nation to sever its economic relations with Israel. Why do you aim all your criticism against Iran only?"

The Shah was indeed bitter: "You have never been given an opportunity to harm us which you have not used freely". But in saying this he

agreed that "there are those who have wanted both in the past and now, to drive the Arabs away from Iran".

### Turkey—Election and Elitism

Government by choice, participation and consensus—this is what democracy should mean—is the only plausible and practical way of running a society's affairs, but is by no means an easy one or without strains and challenges of its own. The inability in Turkey, so far, to form a government since last October's general election was, therefore, neither unique nor unusual. What might now appear unusual is a certain tendency to prolong the impasse. There would have been no problem had either the RPP or the Justice Party been able to form a government jointly or enter into a coalition either with the Milli Nejat or the Democratic party. Since this has not happened President Fahri Koroturk has called upon the major parties to form a coalition. This was the best way, according to the Turkish President, to help the country out of the crisis. The final alternative was to call upon all the eight parties to form a grand coalition. This, the President said, was "the last democratic solution". The implication is ominous. Perhaps he wanted to cajole and hurry up the parties but the implication remains that the thing next to the "last" was military interference. On the other hand, "the last democratic solution" would be to call for a fresh general election. A fresh general election would perhaps be a better alternative to a non-policy government which might result from an assorted coalition. Any short-circuiting, however, of the democratic process would only aggravate the country's problems. The present situation is itself the product of a certain continuing elitism in Turkey. Instead of conferring any stability or adding any national cohesion, elitism has produced more division and more oppression. Elitism is thus no solution to Turkey's problems.

● The West German ambassador in Turkey while explaining the reasons behind his country's decision not to accept workers from countries not included in the EEC—which he said was of a temporary nature and caused by the present energy crisis—made one point which deserved a particular note by the Turkish authorities. The ambassador said, Turkey's problems would not be solved by sending workers to foreign countries. Work and work opportunities should be created in Turkey and West Germany, he said, was ready to assist.

### Experimental Morality

President Kaunda's concern and threat to resign (Zambia—a morality problem *Impact* 3:13) over the Zambians' excessive drinking habits only reflected on the dimensions of a problem which is getting more acute in various other societies and parts of the world.

In Poznan, Poland, the authorities reported a 42% increase in the consumption of branded spirits in 1972. Five percent of the national income was being spent on alcohol and the problem had started to affect even the minors. While a large number of building workers and drivers are affected by alcoholism, the trade does not have sufficient non-alcoholic drinks to offer (ostensibly because there is less money than in alcoholic drinks). In Belorussia the seriousness of the problem can be gauged by the fact that the Committee for the Struggle against Drunkenness is headed by the State Prime Minister. So is the case in the Caucasus.

It is interesting to note how the problem is being tackled in these various situations.

In Poznan the authorities observe "Sobriety Weeks", hold lectures and organise propaganda campaigns, exhibitions, etc. Until October 1973 lawyers, doctors, and psychologists had given 821 lectures. In Belorussia state and public organis-

ations in Minsk had recently organised 12,000 anti-drunkenness lectures. Under a decree the opening hours and total sales of the catering establishments have been restricted. A similar decree was in force in the Caucasus too, but the commission formed to combat drunkenness recently called for a more stringent application of the regulations on selling alcoholic drinks to trade organisations. Back in Zambia Kaunda was saying that he would not legislate against beer drinking because it is not harmful if taken appropriately. The solution offered by him was humanism, albeit Zambian style.

Obviously, however, all the different situations cited above point to the inadequacy of a purely experimental and/or legislative morality.

### Towards a West African Community

The second conference of the heads of state of the Lake Chad Basin Commission which was held in Yaounde from 3 to 4 December was important for several reasons. (The Commission comprises the Cameroons, Niger, Nigeria and Chad—all of whose heads of state attended. The president of the Central African Republic participated as an observer.)

The immediate concern of the Commission was the disastrous effects of the drought still raging in the Sahelian zone. Although the drought, according to President Hammani, "made it mandatory to look for more foreign aid" more "effective solutions" involving irrigation and conservation were discussed.

Politically, the commission is important because it is among the first examples of fruitful cooperation between French and English-speaking African states. The larger cause of West African economic cooperation will undoubtedly be advanced by the meeting of 14 states in the region which began in Lome, Togo, on 10 December.

### People

India's Burdwan University to confer D.Lit. on Sh. Mujib. Shaban Amin son of Pres. Amin left for a 7 to 10 years Aviation Mechanics course in the USSR. Able Alier nominated by Pres. Numeri as SSU candidate-chairman. Supreme Executive Council of the Southern Region. Pierre Brisson, Third Secretary, Canadian Embassy, Cairo recalled home for writing a letter to a Montreal paper about official Canadian bias towards Israel. Denise Hachnel, a Jewish girl, crowned Miss Tangier Tourism by Moroccan Minister of Tourism.

#### DIPLOMATY

Boris Leonedovich Kolokolov new USSR amb. to Tunisia. Lt. Gen. M. Yaqub Khan, Pakistan ambassador in Paris, transferred to Washington. S. M. Khan goes from Washington to Tokyo. Melih Akbil, Turkish Charge d'affaires in Tel Aviv appointed ambassador to Iraq and Ahmet Asim Akyamae new Charge d'affaires in Tel Aviv. U.S. ambassadors nominated: Ralph J. McGuire to Mali and Anthony D. Marshall to Kenya. Walter J. Stoessel Jr. to USSR. Dr. Abdulwahid Karim Afghan ambassador presented credentials to Pres. Sadat. Kuwait ambassador to Moscow Zakariyya al-Ansari, presented credentials. Jean Herly, France's new ambassador to Israel.

#### VISITS

Kurdish Democratic Party leaders Salih al-Yusufi (State Minister) and Dara Tawfiq, Al-Ta'khi Chief Editor to Moscow. Mitchell Sharp Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs to Moscow. Henry Turner, US Asst. Sec. of Commerce to Moscow, expecting this year's trade to increase to \$2 billion. Prime Minister Bhutto to Kuwait. Iran F.M. Khalatbari to India.

#### DIED

Urdu Poets: Salam Machlishehri in Delhi and Sharqui Bin Shaiq in Lahore. Ben Gurion, 87, Israeli leader, died on 1 December.

## The Middle East File

### Solidarity—The spirit of Algiers

The Summit Conference of Arab Heads of States met in Algiers from November 26-29.

The Conference issued five statements: a political statement and four other statements addressed to the African countries, the non-aligned states, the West European countries and the socialist countries.

The political statement charged the United States with active complicity in the policy of aggression and spoilation of the Palestinian people by Israel. It noted that as a result of the October war the "diplomatic isolation of Israel has become a reality". On the other hand, the "Arab peoples and their governments gained in this fight a sharp awareness of their responsibilities and their material and human means" which has given rise to "practical solidarity . . . and a new dimension in the process of Arab liberation".

The statement addressed to Western Europe expressed "profound appreciation for the positive constructive contribution" from the West European states. The one to the socialist states recorded "with pride the full political support of the Soviet Union and other socialist states, their military support and economic cooperation". Non-aligned countries were urged to increase their activity "unilaterally and collectively to find a solution to the Middle East question". In the African field, the Conference expressed "appreciation of the affirmation of the solidarity of fraternal African states with the Arab countries". One important decision in this regard which has not received wide coverage was made to set up an Arab-African development bank with initial capital of £125 million for which the subscription was actually made then and there.

#### Jerusalem

The political declaration singled out Jerusalem as the first and foremost area of Israeli withdrawal from occupied Arab territories. It did not make any qualification on what these territories were.

The following includes part of the declaration and some of the decisions taken:

The ceasefire, put into force more than a month ago, still keeps running into the Israel side's manoeuvres and obstruction. Also, official statements indicate that Israel has in no way abandoned its old policy nor has it given up its expansionist and imperialist policies.

The ceasefire is not yet peace and peace presupposes, if it is to be achieved, a certain number of conditions. Among these are two which are paramount and unchangeable:

1. Evacuation by Israel of the occupied Arab territories and first of all Jerusalem.
2. Reestablishment of full national rights for the Palestinian people.

So long as these two conditions have not been met, it will be illusory to expect in the Middle East anything but a continuation of unstable and explosive situations and new confrontations.

There is no doubt that the Arab nation will never agree to engage its future in an equivocal

way with the sole basis being vague promises and secret dealings. There is no question of allowing international public opinion, which has long been abused by Zionist propaganda, to be in the slightest doubt about the desire of the Arab peoples to recover their stolen rights and occupied territories.

Peace can be achieved only in full light, far from all manoeuvres and scheming and on the basis of the principles spelled out in this declaration.

If the conditions of a just peace are not available and if the Arab efforts in favour of peace run into refusal from Israel and its allies, the Arab countries will be forced to draw all the consequences and to continue, in the long-term perspective, their liberation struggle by all means and in all fields.

#### Arab-African Cooperation

The heads of state decided to continue their full support for the African countries in their struggle for national liberation and economic progress and against colonialism and racial discrimination.

They decided to adopt the following measures (1) to support Arab-African cooperation in the political field and to promote Arab

diplomatic representation in Africa; (2) to break off all diplomatic, consular, economic, cultural and other relations with South Africa, Portugal and Rhodesia by the Arab states who have not yet done so; (3) to apply a complete Arab oil embargo on these three countries; (4) to take special measures to continue the normal supply of Arab oil to the fraternal African countries; (5) to strengthen and broaden economic, financial and cultural cooperation with the fraternal African countries at the bilateral level and at the level of Arab and African regional organizations; and (6) to increase diplomatic and material support for the struggle of the African liberation organizations.

Other decisions to establish an Arab bank for industrial and agricultural development in Africa with an initial capital of about 125,000,000 dollars, for which the subscription was actually made.

#### 'Top Secret' file lost

A Lebanese official lost a file containing 'top secret' details of the private sessions of the Algiers summit. The file is said to contain decisions on Jerusalem and on oil.

## THE PROSPECT FOR PEACE

#### Israel—secure borders and guarantees

The Israeli position was expressed by Golda Meir in an Israeli Home Service interview on 1 December, 1973:

The idea now accepted in the world—and even among various circles in Israel—is that of international guarantees instead of secure borders or defensible borders. In this world of ours a small state which cannot defend itself and is completely dependent on the guarantees of others—I do not wish such a situation to any country. There was the India Pakistan war. We shall never have the same guarantees which India and Pakistan had in SEATO and CENTO, the American guarantees and so on.

When we speak of guarantees, we know that the Security Council will give us guarantees and also the United Nations.

Asked whether the Security Council and the United Nations were "a club of friends of Israel", she replied:

Yes, definitely. An abundance of friendship flows from there. If someone suggests a formula of security or guarantees we shall examine that—but, instead of secure borders? Definitely not. A state like ours should defend itself. God forbid that we reach the day when someone has to defend us.

About Israel's basic political concept in recent years, Golda Meir said: First, we strove to increase and reinforce our power, and in my opinion we have done great things in this respect. Second, we have enhanced our strength in the country. We wanted peace and strove for peace and have not given up anything essential that should have been kept for our security. We have not returned to the

1967 borders. We have not agreed to give up Jerusalem. We have established outposts and settlements in places that, without drawing maps, we thought would be within the perimeter of the borders that would be more or less essential to us . . . So, this was our policy: to seek friends, develop friendships, strengthen relations between us and the United States, and preserve the country which has been and still is more secure than before.

Of the Soviet Union, she said, "This is a country that I hope will change". On Israeli withdrawal: This Government has never accepted the concept of "not a single inch", and we have said: not the 1967 borders but a border between the post 1967 ceasefire lines and the borders of 1967. The Government concept is that between the Mediterranean and the borders of Iraq there can only be two states, the state of Israel, and Jordan. The Palestine issue should be solved within the area east of the state of Israel when a border is established between Israel and Jordan.

#### Security and peace defined

Salah Khalaf, member of Fatah's central committee, on peace prospects: Israel's structure and nature are based on two things: security and expansion. The Israel security theory is linked to the constant danger threatening it. If Israel tell its people that they now live in security then the whole theory on which Israeli society is based will collapse . . . If Israel is confined to this narrow strip (excluding the West Bank and Gaza), then every justification for its existence would end (because it would not then be able to absorb



the world's 15,000,000 Jews). Therefore, how can Israel accept peace? But the Israelis are pursuing a clear plan—the US peace plan which is no different from that of Israel.

We know the motives for Israeli intransigence because if Israel accepts peace then it would put an end to its existence. I say this even though some brothers would say that this is making propaganda for peace. I say that peace according to Israel's understanding is the peace of the victorious, the peace of the person who dominates new territories, the peace of the person who wants bases for new staging areas for more expansion. There is no real peace for Israel because it is contrary to its nature.

### **Bumadyan: Israel part of USA but Union Arabs never part of USSR**

President Bumadyan, reflecting the spirit of the Algiers Conference, spoke to Arab journalists thus on 2 December:

We have before us, three possibilities for solution: an Arab solution—this is the best and it demands that we be in a position of strength. An American-Soviet solution—this will never satisfy us a hundred per cent. An American solution—this will be at our expense as Arabs.

Undoubtedly, the presence of the Soviet Union in the area is linked with what the Soviet Union is giving for the Arab cause in the political and military field. But Israel is almost a part of the United States. The Arabs are not and never were part of the Soviet Union.

### **Business as usual**

A record number of Jews were permitted to emigrate to Israel by the Soviet Union in October and the number has remained at that high pace ever since, according to State Department officials. The October figure was 4,200. Leonid Brezhnev promised earlier in the year that about 35,000 Jews would be permitted to emigrate. Orders for an increase in emigration in the last quarter were issued by the Kremlin to insure that this figure was met.

Most of the Jews continue to pass through Austria which was roundly condemned for bowing to "Arab terrorist blackmail" last October by promising to close the transit camp at Schonau. The Arab guerillas were said to have achieved one of their most important victories, and "their satisfaction was at a peak".

There was no need to be satisfied. Though Kreisky, the Austrian Chancellor of Jewish origin, insisted that Schonau must close, he said: "We shall continue to allow the transit of Russian Jews as we have done before thus showing that there was no intention of staunching what Israel perceives to be its life-blood".

Meanwhile, on 3 December, about 50 Jews occupied the Soviet consulate in Vienna demanding to return to Russia. One demonstrator said: "I went to Israel in hope of a better life, but it turned out I had fallen victim to Zionist propaganda. Now I want to go back, but the Russians won't give me a re-entry visa".

### **Polygamy—a live issue!**

Fist fights broke out in Kuwait's parliament on December 1, according to an International Herald Tribune report, during a debate on polygamy. Almost all 50 legislators took part in the 10-minute brawl.

## **Palestine and Palestinians**

### **Government in Exile?**

The position of the Palestinians in any settlement in the Middle East always seemed to be somewhat clear-cut prior to the recent October war—namely, that whatever happened with the Arab armies the Palestine revolution would continue its war of attrition. Has the position now changed? Have the Palestinians now decided to take part in negotiations with Israel at the Peace conference (and thus accept the legality of the Zionist presence) and/or agreed to accept some proposals for the creation of a Palestinian state on the West Bank and Gaza?

Salah Khalaf, better known as Abu Iyad, second in command in Al-Fatah, said in Beirut that the central committee of the PLO had decided that under no circumstances should the West bank of the Jordan or the Gaza Strip go to Jordanian control. A provisional Palestinian Revolutionary Government was also under consideration.

### **If you don't toe the line . . .**

President Bourguiba said in Algiers that the PLO had accepted the United Nations General Assembly resolution of 1947 dividing the former British mandate territory of Palestine between Arabs and Jews. This was the "minimum" they were prepared to accept. This was conveyed first of all to the Soviet Union which is reported to have told the Palestinians that support will be withdrawn if they do not toe the line, and the line in peace. A meeting is to be held shortly of the PLO Executive Council and the Central Council to discuss the forthcoming peace conference and the creation of a Palestinian state, according to Yasir Arafat, Chairman of the PLO and Commander-in-Chief of its forces, on his return from Moscow.

Explaining the outcome of the "important and high-ranking" meetings with the Soviet leaders before the Algiers conference, Arafat said that the object of the discussions "with our Soviet friends was to understand more details and more of the facts which the Soviet friends understand better than we do, since they were the ones who discussed the ceasefire and the peace conference with the Americans and Kissinger". Of the USA and Kissinger, Arafat said, ". . . we men of the Palestinian revolution feel rather apprehensive because unfortunately the US Government is dominated by Zionism".

### **Arafat—Russians honest brokers**

In a Moscow radio interview, Yasir Arafat said: "We can speak only with gratitude and pride of the magnificent attitude of the Soviet people, the absolute support our Arab nation find in them. Lenin's teachings as they affect international relations were being followed well by the Soviet people and leaders. They are directed against the exploiters and persecutors and stand for right and real human civilization against the enemies of mankind".

### **PLO—sole legitimate representatives of Palestinians**

Of the resolution of the Algiers Summit recognising the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, the "Voice of Palestine" radio said that it has "destroyed some of the chains imposed by Arabs trusteeship (on the Palestinian people). It has made us more eager to achieve our national objectives and establish our democratic state over our whole Palestinian soil".

### **Hussains referendum**

King Hussain in a broadcast to the nation, 1 December, 1973:

We maintain that it is necessary to guarantee the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. We take into account that the majority of these people are on the East and West Banks of the River. The safeguarding of these rights is another basic condition for the final solution and the establishment of peace. These rights were bestowed by God, acknowledged by man, confirmed by the international resolutions and decreed by justice.

If God facilitates things for us and guides our steps on the path of liberation, the first thing which we will propose to all the sons of Palestine, as far as the land of Palestine is concerned, is that they be given the choice either to stay with us, unite with us or separate from us in a general referendum conducted under international neutral supervision. Perhaps the people will finally realise . . . that we shall never taken them against their will nor abandon them through negligence. We shall leave it up to them to choose the regime they want and the future they wish.

## **Qaddafi—The Arab Maverick**

President Qaddafi of Libya continues to play the part of maverick among Arab Heads of State. In Paris "shopping for arms" he gave his reasons for stepping out of line. "We do not think", he said, "that the Arab States always represent the conscience of the Arab nation. That is why we prefer to appeal to the Arab peoples themselves and call on them to pursue the struggle".

About the October war and the Israeli breakthrough across the Suez Canal, Qaddafi said: "We were told that only seven Israeli tanks had crossed the canal, but we soon discovered that seven Israeli divisions were on the other side of the canal. We are being kept in the dark. No one knows exactly where the Arab armies are today and what our losses have been".

Qaddafi was giving a teach-in attended by selected journalists, academics and politicians one of whom confessed that he was interested in Qaddafi for his political, rather than philosophical, importance. Qaddafi watchers however were treated to some new examples of his maverick philosophy. When for example several of his interlocutors argued the case for a secular state not dominated by any religion, Qaddafi replied that there was no antithesis between a secular state and an Islamic State, since Islam was essentially a secular religion.

It was reported that when Maxime Rodinson, the French Jewish orientalist, demonstrated that some of Qaddafi's ideas were derived from Marx (for instance the idea of history as a "dialectic" between nationalism and religion, Qaddafi countered by suggesting that Marx himself must have been influenced by Islamic philosophies. Perhaps this is not so maverick as one might suppose. The noted Muslim thinker and philosopher, Dr. Sir Muhammad Iqbal, once wrote: "European culture, on its intellectual side, is only a further development of some of the most important phases of the culture of Islam". The idea of reconstructing religious thought in Islam is not a new occupation.



## India Report

## Nagas, Muslims and Apathy

Zia Sardar

Jawahar Lal Nehru, India's first Prime Minister, once said that India "is not a communal State, but a democratic State in which every citizen has equal rights. The Government is determined to protect these rights."

This statement of Mr. Nehru is worth reflecting on. One wonders whether this "every" also included the 61-120 million Muslims in India. It was Nehru's post-freedom administration which actually laid firm traditions of persecution and discrimination against the largest minority of the globe. The present Prime Minister, Mrs. Gandhi, is after all only following in the footsteps of her illustrious father?

Talking of rights, is it not the right of a people to determine their own destiny? Even if the Indian Government does not think that the Nagas have an inherent and absolute right to self-determination, what justification is there in allowing the Indian army to get away with genocide, arson, rape and looting of the innocent Naga civilians?

Two reports, recently published, illuminate the plight of the two main minorities in India: Muslims and the Nagas. "*Muslims in Independent India—Twenty-five years after Independence* (A Statistical Survey of Representation of Muslims) by Bashir Ahmad is published by All India Minorities Civil Rights Association (33-A.P.D. Tandon Road, Allahabad, UP) and is a statistical survey of representation of Muslims in parliament, assemblies and services. *India and the Nagas* by Neville Maxwell, the latest report from the Minority Rights Group (36 Craven Street, London WC2), provides background and documentation on the attempts by the Nagas to gain independence from India.

Unlike the Muslims, majority of the Nagas do not consider themselves to be Indian. The Nagas are a tribal community living in the hill tracts of Assam and Burma. Numbering about half a million, the life style—which integrates well with their steeply rugged and mountainous environment—of the Nagas may be considered by some to be "primitive". They are a warrior race living in villages on hilltops and crest-lines ideally suited for warfare. Because of their fighting nature the Nagas have never been colonised, except by the British. Sir Robert Reid said of the Nagas that "they are not Indians in any sense of the word, neither in origin, nor in language, nor in outlook, and it is only by historical accident that they have been tacked on to an Indian province".

This "historical accident", which began in the 1820s, the Nagas are determined to undo. In 1929 a Naga delegation told the Simon Commission that they had no intention to become a part of Assam in any new constitutional arrangement the British established. They also urged that after the withdrawal of the British the Nagas should be given back the independence they enjoyed before the British stepped on their soil. "You are the only people who have ever conquered us", one of the delegates was reported as saying, "when you go back we should be as we were". Mr. Nehru and other leaders of the Congress, however, had other ideas.

In 1947 a Naga delegation went to the Indian Capital to assert the intentions of the Nagas to go their own separate way. The delegation met the Muslim leader Mr. Jinnah and told him of the intention of the Nagas to declare a UDI on August 14. Two days later the delegation met Mr. Gandhi who is reported to have told A. Z. Phizo, the leader of the Nagas, that the "Nagas have every right to be independent". On August 14 the Naga National Council (NNC) sent the following telegram to the Indian Government and to Secretary-General of the UN: "Southern Nagas including Manipur Hill Nagas and Cachar Nagas with Kanyak Nagas declare independence today the fourteenth of August 1947". The telegram was ignored by both. When Phizo met Mr. Nehru a few weeks later, the latter told him: "We can give you complete autonomy but never independence.

You can never hope to be independent. No state, big or small, in India will be allowed to remain independent. We will use all our influence and power to suppress such tendencies." Since then the might of the Indian army has been used on several occasions to suppress the desire of the Nagas to determine their own destiny.

By early 1955, after several attempts by the Nagas to negotiate with Mr. Nehru and the Lok Sabha, and after the arrest of several Naga leaders, including Phizo, the Nagas took up arms against India. The Indian Government replied by first moving in armed police and Assam Rifles—then a para-military force—and later by bringing the Indian army against the Nagas. By mid-1956 well over a division of Indian troops—assisted by Assam Rifles and armed police battalions—were operating in Nagaland. As fighting intensified the Lok Sabha in Delhi heard a member accuse the Indian army of having indulged in "an orgy of murder". Dr. Lohia, an Indian socialist MP, after visiting the fighting area reported that rape by Indian soldiers and police was widespread. This revelation resulted in his arrest and expulsion from the area. Retaliating against villages for the action of Naga guerrillas, the Indian forces frequently set fire to villages, granaries and crops. Reports of torture and massacre of innocent villagers mounted. All this happened under the rule of the illustrious Gandhian, Mr. Nehru, who remained unmoved even after the Nagas filed details on specific cases of atrocities, giving the names of victims, the nature of mal-treatment—which varied from brutal beating, rape and other sexual offences to torture by water and electricity, desecration of holy places, and killings by shooting or beheading—dates and quite often the names of units and sometimes even the individual soldiers responsible for the acts.

In September 1964 the Nagas agreed to a ceasefire while continuing to seek a solution to their demands by political negotiations. The negotiations, however, only lasted a few arid meetings with the newly elected Mrs. Indira Gandhi, but the ceasefire continued.

Neville Maxwell notes that India, after the success of her military adventures in East Pakistan, abrogated the ceasefire that had obtained in Nagaland until September 1972. The Naga resistance had suffered during the Indo-Pak war with the loss of training and sanctuaries it enjoyed in East Pakistan. The Indian Government used the situation to settle its scores with the Naga guerrillas and attempted to find a military solution to the quarter-century old problem of the Nagas' relationship with India. The Indian army, in strength between two and three divisions, claim the Nagas, had returned to its original violent repressive measure of 1957-58. Reports coming out of Nagaland claim that villages suspected of helping the guerrillas are being burned along with their crops and granaries; and the villagers are beaten, tortured, raped and murdered. Once again the Nagas have meticulously compiled these allegations and where possible provided names of those responsible for the crime. The Indian Government, in its turn, has refused to allow independent observers into Nagaland to investigate these charges.

Official estimates put the Muslims in India around sixty-one million. The unofficial figures go as high as 120 million with proportion in some areas exceeding 50%. During the last 25 years Muslim community has faced gross discrimination in all fields of life, besides being the target of over 8,000 major and minor communal riots. Apart from all this, there have been a number of legislations which have effected almost every Indian Muslim causing serious economic dislocation and harassment in life of the community. Such legislations as Evacuee Property Laws, the Enemy Property Act and the Citizenship Laws all had the effect of making the Muslim a tagged citizen. Not only this, even the Muslim personal laws are

encroached upon under the pretext of unifying the civil code through the passage of such acts as the Special Marriage Act, the Adoption of Children Bill, the Public Trust Bill and the Code of Criminal Procedure Bill. The passage of the recent Aligarh Muslim University Act robbed this age-old and celebrated Muslim institution of its Muslim identity and character; and the virtual takeover of the University as a department of Central Government only added pepper to bleeding wounds.

In the Government, local as well as national, discrimination against Muslims is most acute. The Hindu-dominated bureaucracy has, for some inexplicable reason, developed a pathological fear of the Muslims; and does its utmost to keep them away from government and administrative posts. There is virtually no hope for a Muslim to obtain a high post in the Ministries. Some years ago, when the post of Foreign Secretary was to fall vacant, it was openly said that Muslim Officers, the few who were in the highest echelons of the service, were completely ruled out from the selection. Early this year a Central Minister admitted at a meeting of newspaper editors that even if other things are equal Muslim candidates are rejected. Rejected they indeed are, and hence the not strange fact that out of 1,200 Indian Police Service Officers only 43 are Muslim. In Uttar Pradesh, there are only three superintendents out of 49. In the foreign services there are scarcely a dozen Muslims out of 270 foreign service employees. If one were to assume that Muslims are only excluded from "sensitive and strategic services", then a look at "non-sensitive" areas of employment quickly dispel this. In the Railways, for example, out of 8,216 Class I and II employees, only 150 are Muslims—that is less than 2%.

When Muslims try to go in the business sector, they find it quite difficult to obtain the requisite permits and licences. As regards obtaining jobs in private industry, Muslims at the very beginning of freedom were faced with such personalities as that of the late Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee, Industries Minister in Nehru's cabinet. He sent a secret circular asking industrial houses not to give employment to Muslims, especially to "Pakistanis and potential Pakistanis". The circular was later withdrawn but the harm was long lasting.

As if all this wasn't enough, Muslims in India are also subjected to systematic communal killings. Since independence 3,977—official figure—Muslims have been killed in communal riots. The security forces have at best turned a blind eye, and at worst joined in the looting, rape and killing of Muslims. The riots apparently a spontaneous affair, in fact they were "meticulously prepared by those who are later able to loose a reign of murder, looting and arson . . ." More often than not, the Government blames the Muslims for starting the riots. In the Bhandari (Gujrat) riots in 1969, the Government went as far as to file charges of "conspiracy to kill Hindus and destroy their property" against the Muslims. The charges were withdrawn only after protests in the press that Muslims were arrested on "forged and fabricated charges".

Inder Malhotra, a veteran Indian journalist, in an article entitled "What ails the Indian Muslims" in *Illustrated Weekly of India* (12 April 1973) summed up the situation thus: "According to the latest available statistics (1965), there are only six Muslim Officers in the top grade of CSS out of 681. In the next grade there are only four Muslims out of 2,000. As if this is not shocking enough, there are only 21 Muslims out of 9,900 clerks! Who can blame the Muslims for feeling that some deep-seated prejudice is at work against them?". Since 1965, the situation has not improved.

The stories of the Nagas and the Muslims in India have much more in common than injustice, torture, rape, arson, looting and genocide. Their stories are stories of repression and apathy. Repression by the authority in India and apathy by the world outside.



Each people reveres the things it holds sacred, what is consecrated to God according to their system. We in the US often hear that we are facing a breakdown in conventions, are involved in a decay of our moral system. Have you ever seen the "beat" generation performing in Pakistan or Morocco, bringing the blessings of Western culture to the mysterious East, as they try to locate the nearest hashish or opium fields? However the Qur'an tells us that "God does not change what any folk has until they change what they themselves have" (13:11); and that nations only exist for so long: "We let them enjoy themselves for a while", itsays (37:148).

Our magazines are full of trivia, if not down right pornography; what we read in the press is mostly cheap scandal, instead of information needed to train leadership in the people. The Hearst papers brought on the Spanish-American War in 1898; and when President Nasir died, the Scripps-Howards published blasphemous cartoons which the editor I protested to blandly said were to "educate" the American public! If you can get to speak to one of these jokers, it is interesting to hear his arguments: they have thought them out, and it is simply to mislead the public. Even, I think, in the journalistic way of spelling Nasir's name. We are subjected to daily vulgarity in the press and other means of communication. This vulgarizes not only the media and those who read it, but it also spreads a false image about Islam, if not about culture in general. Television is not much better, despite the fact that it comes right into our living rooms.

Who are the authorities to whom you may complain about these atrocities? Who are the experts who make up these programmes or write these articles, when you want to write a letter of protest about this situation? Have you ever tried telephoning them? What do they offer you as relief? They say we live in a democracy, where every vote counts; yet they or we do not even control the money system. Take out a quarter or a dime and look at it sideways, and you will see how the government is cheating us; inflation is ruining our savings and the cost of living.

If you are a professor of literature, history or sociology, have you ever noticed the textbooks that you are asked to teach from, so that they will be "relevant" to this decadent age, and interest the students? For four years I have had to use a psychopathic novel full of Freudian nonsense which has no relieving virtues except that it "interests" the student. I have had to use others which make society look like a dreamworld, with little relation to real life. This past year my son, who I hope is fairly normal, used an English text with articles on homosexuality and other decadent topics, as if these should be permitted and discussed. Lot's story in the Qur'an makes the Islamic attitude on this subject clear: "Do you approach males among (everyone in) the Universe, and ignore any wives your Lord has created for you?" (26:165-6). Such subjects should be studied in psychology classes or in penal criminology, but not in freshmen English! I could also mention athletics, both in college and professional, and how it leads to gambling.

When this is finished, we are supposed to tell our students that life is "absurd", and to take this hopeless announcement seriously. I have even had a dean who peddled this trash.

All this leads to a confusion of values: the Highest Common Factor in education must

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## Thinking Over . . .

T. B. Irving

yield to the Lowest Common Multiple when it comes to training children in the schools; this is Gresham's Law, which says that bad money drives good money out of circulation, working in the field of education instead of economics. Such is democracy working in what should essentially be an aristocratic process: young minds should be sorted out for their highest qualities, and not pushed down to their lowest. In one professional organization, the president's real name cannot be mentioned; if you bring up this subject, or ask what degrees and positions this person has held, you are told that you are displaying race prejudice. This is part of the breakdown in names, till they signify nothing. We have short names for everything, shorter and vulgar nicknames and surnames, so that they mean nothing or sound grotesque. The Qur'an says: "Nor should you criticize one another nor insult them by using nicknames; it is bad to use a dirty name instead of one you can believe in" (49:11). However even Muslims in this country, especially in the second generation when they are trying to show that they are real Americans, vulgarize their names in a sloppy attempt to avoid sounding different from the mass. You all know names like Mo and Al or something else to cover up a good Arab name. It would be better to go the whole way and use a proper Anglo-Saxon one instead. At any rate this subject merits study and may become a dissertation.

Racial stigma shows in this, and is another matter which begs for a solution. It should be found in dignity and not in capitulation. For instance South African *apartheid* is condemned in the press and we are supposed to be indignant about it; yet we are never allowed to discuss *apartheid* as it appears in the new government which is occupying Palestine, where they instead say, a democracy has been established and the desert is blossoming as the rose, even though the original inhabitants live in exile and are exposed to assassination in their apartments at night.

This moral crisis has injured American prestige abroad, for it shows how we live by a double standard. The United States is ceasing to be a world power, not only because the dollar has lost its value through wild spending and ill-considered overseas adventures, but also because it cannot assert any moral

leadership. In foreign policy this occurs partly because appropriations must be voted year by year by Congress, and thus they really have no forward thrust (except for anti-Communism, which was imposed from outside circles, and led the country into the morass of the Vietnam War through the bland advice in our newspapers which were so erudite on Indo-China, although they never knew any Vietnamese). The standards of this country have been abandoned, and the Puritan ideal it was founded under is openly mocked, laughed at. It too was a religious, ideal, and Puritanism has principles to guide it.

Look at the image that is cast by our public figures. One senator cheated on his examinations when he was at Harvard, and yet his name is mentioned constantly as a possible candidate for the presidency. We all whisper about his other adventures, especially at night. His family fortune was acquired in the liquor business. The head of a large industrial enterprise never received even his B.A. from Yale because of a similar scandal about his senior thesis. All this was before Watergate!

These men have power, but do they exercise it morally? The result is that the guarantee on automobiles, housing and many manufactured products, and even on such simple and necessary things as plumbing, are a public scandal. This comes right down to the service station on the corner, where you feel lucky if they do not overcharge or cheat you. Spain had a moral situation like this in the past century when a university degree did not mean a thing, especially if it belonged to the son of some rich aristocrat or public official, while the unofficial papers from Giner de los Rios' schools, who fought this scandal, were the only ones which could be accepted by persons wanting assurance of genuine study.

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A religious shrine may be defined as: "a place of some religious value to a given people, held by them in sentimental esteem and emotional veneration". Such a value may derive from the fact that the place is assigned as a house of worship and devotion; or from the fact that it had witnessed an historical religious experience; or from its association with an historical holy figure, be it a Prophet, a saint or a scholar of religion.

On the other hand, Islam is a faith that asserts to be a religion revealed from Heaven; and shares with Judaism and Christianity their original ideas and ideals.

Islam is based on the belief in the Supreme Being, the Almighty Allah, the One, invisible and indivisible, all power and all knowledge, Who is Eternal, the First and the Last, Who is Unique and nothing resembles Him; and He is neither contained in time nor in space.

Islam also stresses a belief in God's Messengers, the Holy Prophets. One of those who enjoys a high place of honour in Islam is the Prophet Abraham who is described in the Holy Qur'an as the *Khalil* "the close friend", of God. He was alone when he called for the worship of the Almighty God. He destroyed the idols which were worshipped by his people and was, therefore, persecuted and thrown into fire. God saved him and blessed him. At an advanced age, he was blessed with a number of children, prominent among them were Ism'ail (Ishmael) who settled in Arabia and Isaac who stayed in the Holy Land with his mother Sarah. Both Ishmael and Isaac were blessed men and became Prophets and Messengers of God. Isaac, in turn, was blessed with a son Jacob or Israel, who also became one of God's Messengers. His story and the story of his children, especially Joseph, are told in a most charming and noble style in the Holy Qur'an.

Another personality held in great esteem in Islam and counted, like Noah and Abraham, amongst the five topmost Holy Prophets is Moses. The story is told of his birth in Egypt where his people were severely persecuted by its ruler at that time, who ordered the slaying of all their male babies. Nevertheless, Moses was miraculously spared, and was cared for in the household of the Pharaoh himself. When he attained maturity, Moses called for the worship of the true God alone, contrary to the claims of the haughty Pharaoh. In the course of dispute, Moses miraculously defeated the expert magicians of the Pharaoh and won them to his side. Finally, Moses was able, with the help of God, to deliver his people from the tyranny of the Pharaoh into the way to the promised Holy Land. The sea was split open to them, to make a dry platform for them to cross, but the Pharaoh and his men who followed them were drowned. Moses' hope to reach the promised Holy Land was frustrated owing to the disobedience and renegeing of his own people. They feared its inhabitants, and said to Moses: "Go, you and your Lord to fight. As for us, we are to settle herein". The Qur'an relates.

However, they were able later to conquer the blessed city of Jerusalem under the leadership of David who made it the seat of his kingdom and who was also a Prophet and Messenger of God. His throne was inherited by his son Solomon who was blessed with wisdom, with singular power and with divine Prophethood.

## How Holy is Palestine to Muslims?

M. A. Rauf

Another great personality held in the greatest esteem and veneration in Islam, whose name is also associated with the Holy Land, is Jesus Christ who was miraculously born to Virgin Mary who had had no husband and was never touched by a man. She is regarded in Islam as the best and most virtuous woman ever created. The story of the birth of Jesus, his talk when he was still in the cradle, his mission, his preaching, his persecution and his deliverance is described in the Holy Qur'an.

All these venerated figures and many others like them, may the peace and all the blessings of God be upon them, lived and suffered in the Holy Land. Therein they were born, they grew, they preached, they knelt in prayers, they suffered pains and persecution, they died or were killed; and their noble remains are contained therein. The soil of the Holy Land is mixed with their noble blood.

The verses of the Qur'an which describe the service and achievement of these noblest and most pious of men, are recited by millions of adherents of Islam daily and almost hourly, in a most inspiring manner. Thus the love and veneration of these holy men and the veneration of the land which was the seat and arena of their work, struggle and devotion, is ever fresh and ever renewed in the minds and hearts of the Muslim people.

It is to Muslims alone that the whole of the Holy Land is dear and sacred, because it is they who hold that their faith is a continuation and incorporation of all the religions of the past, and it is they who are obliged by their faith to respect the rights of the adherents of these preceding religions.

Two particular places, however, deserve a special mention and a special emphasis. One is the town of Al Khalil (Hebron) and the other is the city of Jerusalem, especially the area known as *al-Haram al-Sharif*.

Muslim tradition goes that when Abraham's wife, Sarah, died, he sought to find a place for her burial. He was led to a cave in Hebron which he purchased from Affron, its owner. Then he carried the body of his beloved wife and laid her to rest in the cave. When he himself died later, he was buried beside her. Then followed the noble remains of Isaac and Jacob and their wives; and this place became one of the holiest burial grounds, deeply venerated by Muslims who refer to the enclosure as *al-Haram al-Ibrahimi*, "The

Sacred Mosque of Abraham". Muslim rulers in succeeding generations built, repaired and improved the area, and generously made endowments to ensure an efficient, sufficient and worthy maintenance of the Holy Place. Muslims make visits to the *Haram* and recite prescribed prayers.

The famous and great Muslim traveller Ibn Battutah who flourished in the 14th century, C.E., describes Hebron as: "a lovely town, small in area but great in esteem; of bright light and good appearance and venerated history, it lies in the middle of a valley, and its mosque is elegant, serene and impressive and is made of carved stones . . . Inside the mosque, there is the noble sacred cave which contains the tombs of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, may God bestow peace and blessings upon them and upon our Prophet. Besides them, the three tombs of their wives are found".

A Muslim intending to pay a visit to Abraham, peace be upon him, is expected first to repent sincerely from his sins, and recite prayers for the Prophets Abraham and Muhammad, peace be upon them, all the time while he is on his way.

On reaching the mosque, he halts a little in humility and then entering the mosque with his right foot first, recites:

"In the name of God, O Lord! Bestow Your blessings upon the Prophet Muhammad and open the gates of Your mercy to me".

After performing two *rak'ats* of prayers in the honour of the mosque he then approaches the tomb of *Sayyidina* Abraham, peace be upon him, and standing with a lowered head, prays for God's forgiveness and says:

"Peace be upon you, O you the Prophet, and the mercy of God and His blessings. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah. There is no partner to Him. And that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger, and that you are the servant of God, His Messenger and His close friend. May God reward you as you well deserve. May the prayers of God, the Bountiful and the Merciful, and those of the chosen angels and those of the Prophets and Messengers and the truthful people and the martyrs and all the righteous of those in the heavens and the earth be upon you, O you the father of the Prophets! You the friend of Allah, And may it be too upon your son, the master, the noble and the seal, Muhammad, the friend of the Lord of the Universe, and may it be upon all your family and your friends always and whenever you are remembered or even forgotten".

Then the visitor should make his request to God. He then faces the tomb of Lady Sarah, saying:

"Peace be upon you, the people of the Prophetic household and bearers of the Divine Missions, together with God's mercy and beneficence".

Then he turns to the tomb of Isaac, saying: "Peace be upon you, O you the noble Prophet, together with His mercy and beneficence", and then prays to God as he pleases. Next he greets the Lady Rabqah in the same way as he did at the tomb of Lady Sarah.

He then proceeds politely and calmly to the noble Prophet of God, Jacob, may God be pleased with him, and does as he did at the tomb of Isaac; and then turns toward Lady

\* Delivered on April 4, 1973, to a Symposium on "The Holy Places of the Land" held in the Shriver Hall, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Md. USA



Liqā and does the same as he had done at the tombs of the other two ladies.

He is recommended to go then to the window of our master Abraham al-Khalil, peace and blessings be upon him which is in front of that of our master Jacob, and stand by, greeting and praying, and then conclude by praying for *all* the Messengers and Prophets of God.

Coming now to Jerusalem and *al-Haram al-Sharif* the blessed Prophet Muhammad was once asked: "which was the earliest Mosque? The Prophet answered, *al-Masjid al-Haram*; i.e. the sacred Mosque in Mecca. He was then asked, "which mosque was next?" He said, *al-Masjid al-Aqsa*; i.e. the Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem. He was further asked, "and how long was the interval between them?" The Prophet replied, "Forty years".

Muslim tradition, and the Qur'an assert that Abraham and Ishmael were the builders of *al-Masjid al-Haram* of Mecca. While building the *Haram* they repeat the words:

"Our Lord! Accept (this service) from us. For Thou art the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing".

"Our Lord! make of us Muslims, bowing to thy (Will), and of our progeny a Muslim people, bowing to thy (Will); and show us our places for the celebration of (due) rites: and turn unto us (in Mercy); for Thou art the Oft-Returning, Most Merciful".

"Our Lord! send amongst them an Apostle of their own, who shall rehearse Thy Signs to them and instruct them in Scripture and Wisdom, and sanctify them: for Thou art the Exalted in Might, The Wise".

The coming of the Prophet Muhammad, son of Abdullah, was the answer and fulfilment of their prayers.

According to Muslim tradition Jacob, the grandson of Abraham, peace be upon them both, was the first builder of a mosque in the site of *al-Haram al-Sharif* in Jerusalem.

Isaac, advised his son not to marry from the Canaanites but seek his spouse from amongst the family of his maternal uncle. When Jacob reached the site, now known as *al-Haram al-Sharif*, he felt exhausted and needed to rest. So he lay down and rested his head on a stone. During his sleep he saw as if there was a column of light arising from this place and reaching the gates of heaven. Disturbed and awakened, Jacob was commanded by a revelation to build a mosque at the same site. So the interval between the building of the Ka'ba by Abraham and Ishmael, and that of the Aqsa Mosque was of forty years.

By the time of the conquest of Jerusalem by David, peace be upon him, there was no trace of the prayer house erected by Jacob and David was thus widely credited as the founder of the Aqsa Mosque, which was completed in great splendour by his son and successor, the great Solomon, the Prophet of Allah. On completion of the building, Solomon, as the Prophet Muhammad related, prayed to God for three things; two were manifestly answered by God; and the Prophet hoped the third too was accepted. Solomon prayed that he be granted wisdom and just ruling; and this was granted by God. He also prayed that he might be given a mighty dominion of no comparable splendour; and this was granted. Solomon further prayed that God may forgive the sins of everyone

who visits the Aqsa mosque for the sole purpose of worship. The Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, prayed that this third prayer of Solomon was also answered! He said: "Two *rak'ats* of prayer in the Aqsa Mosque will be rewarded like one thousand *rak'ats* elsewhere". The Prophet of Islam, Muhammad, also said that journeys for the sole purpose of visiting a mosque are permitted only for: "This mosque of mine (in Medinah), the Mosque in Mecca and al-Aqsa Mosque".

Greater significance was added to the sanctity of Jerusalem to Muslims by the night journey made by Prophet Muhammad from Mecca to the site of the Aqsa. This journey is known as *al-Isra'*, and the Holy Qur'an refers to it in the following words: Glorified be He, Who carried His servant by night from the sacred mosque (*Masjid al-Haram*) to the distant mosque (*Masjid al-Aqsa*), whose precincts We have blessed, that We might show him of our signs! Lo! He, only He is the One Who hears and sees (everything).

Arriving at Aqsa, the Prophet went through very significant experiences, culminating in a congregational prayer on the site with his brothers, the past Prophets who had assembled there, to pray with him and behind him. During the journey, Muhammad was asked to dismount and to pray. He was then told by Gabriel, the archangel: "You have prayed by the grave of your father Abraham!" Next time he was advised to dismount and pray; and was told: "You have prayed on the birthplace of your brother Jesus!"

The *al-Haram al-Sharif* was thus the end point of the Prophet's *Isra'* as it was also the starting point of his heavenly journey on the same night called *mi'raj*; and in this context the place has had the special distinction of a mention in the Holy Qur'an, a privilege denied to any other mosque except that of Mecca.

It was because of this special place and sanctity that Umar the great, the second Caliph bowed to the request of the Patriarch Sophronius and came all the way from Medinah to receive personally the keys of the city. The first thing the great Caliph did after signing a peace treaty with the Patriarch was to seek to find the site of the house of God; whose foundations were laid by the prophets respected and loved by all Muslims. The site when discovered had centuries of the garbage piled over it. As the garbage was removed and the sacred rock appeared, Umar immediately began to clean it with his own apparel; and all those present from amongst the Companions of the Prophet joined in the task. Umar ordered that the sacred rock henceforth shall never be desecrated and that a fence should be built around it. Soon the prayer time came, and on the Caliph's request, the renowned Bilal, the Prophet's *mu'adhdhin* recited the *adhan*, "Call to prayer", for the first time since the death of the Prophet. Umar and the other Companions present could not hold back their tears! Umar then led the prayers a little further from the stone where the Mosque of Umar was soon built and became popularly known as al-Aqsa Mosque. As an act of veneration, a splendid dome was built over the rock by the Umayyad Caliph Abd al-Malik bin Marwan. The title *al-Aqsa* in the Qur'an and Hadith, however, refers to the whole area.

Ever since the time of Umar, the site of *al-Aqsa* Mosque was visited and used by

countless numbers of Muslims in all generations, for the special merits of worship performed therein. Many started their pilgrimage to Mecca, and many others concluded it, with a visit to *al-Aqsa*. Many preferred to settle and die and be buried in the soil of the Holy Land. Many schools and religious endowments were made by rulers and by wealthy men in the area throughout the centuries. And thus, the Holy sites in the holy land became intricately enshrined in the Muslim Tradition. The value of these places to the Muslims is spiritual, historical, traditional and deeply emotional.

It will be a grave error, however, to think that the religious sanctity for Muslims is confined to certain given sites in the holy land, although the concept of sanctity may be a matter of degree. All Muslim properties and possessions, particularly the houses of worship, the inalienable religious endowments as well as Muslim cemeteries in which the remains of Companions and of men of knowledge and noblemen lie, like the cemetery of Manilla, are objects of religious sanctity, and their protection is the collective responsibility of all Muslims.

Dr. M. A. Rauf is Director, Islamic Centre, Washington, USA

● A reprint of the above article as well as Dr. M. A. Rauf's earlier article *Why must Jerusalem revert to Muslims?* (*Impact*, : ), can be obtained from the Islamic Literary Circle, 102 Golf Drive, Nuneaton, Warwickshire, U.K., by sending a stamped self-addressed envelope with a 10p remittance in postage stamps or otherwise.

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## Return of the Native

## In the land of "Controlled Chaos"

Jamal Sardar, 16, visits his homeland after 11 years in Britain

Karachi Airport is petite, modern and crisp. Airport officials do not bother to check the luggage, and ask a few routine questions. Gone are the days when returning Pakistanis used to fear their custom officials more than hijacks. Nowadays, at least at the airport, bribery is in a lower key and less in the open.

Outside the Airport the first thing to hit is the transport situation. The inhabitants of Karachi ride in 'autos' and fleets of taxis whose drivers' arrogance gives a hint of the class affluence—they have no shortage of customers. Autos are motor rickshaws and a ride in one of these is a hair-raising experience. In manoeuvrability and speed nothing can outmatch the autos in Karachi. The whole machine is shaped like a quarter-ellipsoid. You sit in the back behind the driver and hold on to iron bars covered in thick plastic tape. And if by any chance the machine overturns, and it happens more often than one would imagine, the passengers cannot be thrown out! Stories of spectacular crashes with passengers walking out unscratched are quite common!

Transport gives a unique character to Karachi. During evenings, when the hustle bustle of the city comes more to the fore, it is impossible to get a taxi or an auto as they all head for the port area and come back with up to five labourers to an auto (meant for two)—three in the back, two sitting with the driver! The rush on the buses reaches a peak and a passenger getting a 'hanging room' considers himself lucky. The Karachi buses do not stop at a bus stop, they merely slow down! Talking of bus stops it may be pointed out that in Karachi there aren't any! But everyone knows where the bus is supposed to stop. Karachi buses have, if anything in their favour, probably the cheapest rates in the world. This allows a person to pay 35 paises (two pence) for a distance of twenty miles. The newly arrived mini-buses charge about a rupee (4p) for a maximum of 15 miles.

Everything else, however, is not as cheap. For the pocket of an average Pakistani, the rest is astronomically expensive. The price of onions has risen 3,200 per cent in the last year! At four rupees a *seer* (around two pounds) they are well outside the reach of the lower middle class. Other necessities of life such as sugar, wheat and tea are rationed. Vegetable 'ghee'—Pakistani substitute for butter—is officially, if obtainable, five rupees a *seer*. This state of affairs arises from a massive export drive to gain foreign exchange for industrial development. So while the Gulf Sheikhs enjoy Pakistani onions, the natives line up for their daily bread.

The bazaars, last stronghold of the traditional Karachi, have responded to the skyrocketing prices. Walking through Karachi bazaars one is reminded of Seoul or some Formosan town with sharp declines in honest tradesmanship and a healthy level of the black market. Shops are small but skillfully laid out. Currently Ayub Khan's portraits are selling well as people nostalgically remember the old days when prices of bare necessities were within their reach. ZAB's (Zulfikar Ali Bhutto) portraits are more often seen but Ayub Khan's are in colour. In the market, Pakistani manufacturers undercut foreign products, black marketeers undercut the government exchange rates, and the police undercut the black marketeers as they squeeze them of bribes.

The blackmarket is an open phenomenon. Karachi's most lucrative black area is *Chore Gully* (thief avenue). Here well organised rings operate; as many as ten 'representatives' of a ring operate in *Chore Gully* itself with many more on the supply lines. I went there with some relatives. We entered *Chore Gully* with sleeves raised and watches removed. Before we had walked half a dozen steps, we were nudged: "Want a watch?"

"Have you any good ones?"

The gentleman looked around, then raised his hand and tapped his head three times.

"How much are your watches?" "Depends. I start from 80 rupees".

"Have you ever been caught?"

The man was surprisingly frank: "Day before yesterday. There was a raid. I had to pay 500 rupees to save myself. I am not sure if it was a bribe or a fine. Go over there", he told us.

At 'there' we met two smugglers who took us to a nearby flat where a few men were sitting on the floor. One of the men raised his sleeves: "This is a Rolex, reliable 90 rupees." Another man came towards us and raised his sleeves: "This is a Swiss automatic. Only 150 rupees. Now let me tell you, I haven't much time for bargain. I can lower it to 125 rupees, and no less".

"How do you bring these things into the country?" "In launches".

"And from launches to here?" "For that you have to live with me for a week".

I asked my smuggler friend if there was any danger of being robbed.

He shook his head. "You are our customer. We have to treat you with respect. In Landi Kotal (somewhere in the Frontier area) you can order 2,000 rupees worth of goods, pay 2,000 rupees, and get the goods delivered later".

The Pakistani welcome is the best description of "controlled chaos". The family ties are strong and families are usually large. A returning native is, therefore, confronted with a multitude of relatives all simultaneously trying to greet him in the wildest manner that civilisation allows. After hugs and embraces, which choke you almost to death, follow the high spirited "How are you?" "Haven't you grown?", "What's so-and-so doing?" which allows the guest to recover in the longest time possible. But all this shows that the Pakistani family unit has not given way to Western pressures of birth control and nuclear families; in children-parent relationships this is apparent even more. In general the children are disciplined and the elders command respect from the youngsters.

As regards dress the *shalwar-kurta* is still predominant with ladies. The *burqa* (veil) can still be seen, but is worn more as a ritual than as a requirement for *pardah*. The *dupatta*, a coloured, translucent *shawl* is still worn by all Pakistani women with a notable exception of Begum Nusrat ZAB. It seems to be their last cling to the principles of *pardah*. Skirts, rarely seen, are usually worn by Christians. Although considered more respectable, the *sari* has over the times been shortened of material, and is worn generally by upper class women. As for the men, *kurta-pajama* is fast disappearing. A bureaucrat will wear shirt-trousers to work while wealthy businessmen are commonly seen with three piece suits plus tie even in 120 degrees of temperature.

Anybody who is anybody speaks English, or rather attempts to speak English. Knowledge of English marks the division between the upper and middle/lower classes. Very few people in the upper class can speak fluent Urdu, and even fewer people make the effort. The class distinction is so strong that in a social gathering, Pakistanis of two different classes will find it impossible to communicate with each other. In certain cases, members of lower class, particularly the young, will bend backwards in their attempt to converse in English.

The English-enigma has something to do with politics. Anyone who can string a few sentences of English together, has influence over a few people, considers himself a leader. In Pakistan there are as many political parties as there are leaders. For the sake of simplicity we can assume

that the main dialogue is between ZAB's party—Mr. Bhutto does not only lead the party but is the party—and Jamaat-e-Islami. The leading and the hottest section of People's Party are young, upper and upper-middle class. *English speaking* exponents of Mr. Bhutto's blend of Socialism. ZAB himself is an English speaker—his Urdu, quite frankly, is abominable. ZAB does not only speak in English but performs such incredible feats of English oratory that one wonders why the Royal Shakespeare Company has not signed a life contract with him!

The Jamaat-e-Islami, well organised and well disciplined, has not proved itself at the polls. It seems basically an intellectual party and apart from students and intellectuals, the Jamaat's principles, aims and manifesto are unknown to the majority.

Not all Pakistani votes however, divide between the People's Party and the Jamaat-e-Islami. A vast majority of Pakistan's population cynically claims allegiance to the 'Pait Puja' (stomach worshipping) party (PPP—same initials as the ruling People's Party). One of the dictates of belonging to this group is to have contacts in and an affiliation—at least verbal—to the 'Party in Power'. People lining up to vote often shout: "For whom will we vote?" "The one with the big Quaid-e-Azam note?" comes the answer. (There are two notes which carry portraits of Mr. Jinnah, commonly known as the Quaid-e-Azam. The Hundred Rupee note has a big picture of the Quaid, and the fifty a smaller one.)

Of course not all votes sell for the same price. I discussed the question of bribery during elections with a student. "In our college", he told me, "you need thirty rupees to be elected. You simply open an account in the nearby cafe and everytime a student comes in, say "Oh, Ashraf! How are you? You must have tea with me". The student grinned: "I drink a lot of tea during elections". In villages a slightly different tactic is used. The same student: "They will come and put their arms around the *Numberdar* (head man) and say, "My dear friend, please have dinner with me. How's the wife? The kids? How glad/sorry I am. Vote for me. When I get elected I will make you my assistant/Police Inspector/Councillor... you can throw away your *dhoti* and wear a smart suit!"

Pakistan left two lasting impressions on me. I found that what is good about Pakistan is really excellent and what is bad, well... The sad thing is that corruption and social deviance is gaining ground continuously. The social chaos in Pakistan has almost reached a point of no return. Everyone looks at those slightly less well off than themselves with hateful eyes and exploits them at the slightest opportunity. A major proportion of Pakistani population is voluntarily mentally enslaved to the West. For example, more quality goods than ever before carry the 'made in Pakistan' label, yet an average Pakistani is always prepared to pay much more for foreign goods. Politically the country is a dictatorship maintained by mass brain-washing. Politics has always influenced the armed forces in Pakistan, pardon me, the armed forces have always influenced the politics. Should ZAB lose the popular 'support' he enjoys, it seems logical that the army would step in. The formation of the Federal Security Force (FSF)—who wear the same uniform as Border Security Guards and are therefore difficult to distinguish and count—is a coup deterrent, since it is controlled directly by the government, or more specifically by ZAB. Also the recent civil servant reforms are said by some to lead to a one-party state. As the *Punjab Punch* put it, civil servants, to keep their jobs, must begin the day with a lecture to the family on Chairman ZAB.



Letters

Philippines — “Less of a Christian - Muslim Conflict”

May I point out that the letter of Senator Maninlal Tamaro to President Marcos, (*Impact*, 3 : 12) was in response to the President's appeal for guidance from acknowledged Filipino moslem leaders on the problems of Mindanao. As you may note, most of the recommendations submitted by Senator Tamaro are of a long-range nature, and necessarily so, for the situation cannot be resolved by the mere stroke of a pen. That the recommendations are being heeded may be gleaned from the many government projects under implementation in Mindanao such as those enumerated in the attached pamphlets. In addition, I have recently received the information that a concrete road around Lake Lanao has been programmed for immediate construction and a top level mission was formed to visit Middle Eastern countries for possible assistance in the Government's Mindanao development scheme.

Inasmuch as I am in my country's foreign service, I noted in particular Senator Tamaro's call for more moslems in the foreign service. Our system of recruitment is by annual examinations. A number of moslems have taken and passed these examinations and are in the service. It is recognised, however, that there could be more moslems in the service and, as an initial response to this, I am informed that foreign service examinations will now also be held in Mindanao cities as differentiated from the previous practice of giving the exams only in Manila.

I am from Mindanao myself and the province where I was born (Lanao del Norte) is generally considered as a moslem area. Hence, I can say that I am familiar with the situation. Personally, I agree that the Mindanao problem is less of a Christian-Moslem conflict than one which is a combination of economic and political problems, fanned by rebel elements. The Philippine Government is not sparing any effort to resolve the situation and the people of Mindanao are

beginning to realise this. Not all conflicts end in destruction. It is the intention of every one concerned to see that the Mindanao situation will end constructively and beneficially for the people of the region.

By separate cover, I am sending a copy each of the publications entitled “Encounter of Cultures” and the “Mindanao Report”.

These pamphlets are government publications and while you may think that, because of this, they may be slanted, I wish to state that the pamphlet “Encounter of Cultures” has been widely accepted as an objective and scholarly study of the Mindanao situation. The other pamphlet recounts, in fair detail, the current rehabilitation projects of the Philippine Government in Mindanao.

Embassy of the Philippines, RAUL CH. RABE  
London, W8. Consul



Muslim Refugees: Welfare but not Rights

Anno Domini or Christian Era?

Surprisingly, a fair number of Islamic-minded scholars writing to day in English on Islamic subjects continue to apply the suffix A.D. to dates of the Christian Era. Some are: a notable Persian-speaking scholar, a notable Arabic-speaking scholar, an American Muslim writing frequently for *Impact*, and the unknown author of a pamphlet produced by the Muslim Students' Association of the U.S. and Canada under the title “Islam at a glance”.

To say, “Muhammad (may peace be upon him) was born in the year 570 A.D. . . .”, as the aforesaid pamphlet in fact does say, means in plain English that the noble Prophet was born in the year 570 of the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ). The abbreviation A.D. does not stand for “After (Christ's) Death”, as some may have assumed, which again is a questionable assumption on several grounds, but stands for the Latin *Anno Domini*, i.e., in the year of the Lord. Therefore, its use must be regarded as forbidden.

For centuries, Muslims have expressed the Gregorian year in their languages as follows: *tarikh meeladee* (Abraci), *sal-e-meeladee* (Persian), *miladi yil* (Turkish) and *san-e-eesavi* (Urdu); hopefully, the same caution is exercised in Swahili, Malay and Indonesian languages. Why hesitate to do the same in English, French or German languages?

A generation or two ago the suffix A.C. (After Christ) was used by certain writers. The practice did not catch on; and it was unsound anyway, since “after Christ” is not the same thing as “after the birth of Christ”. On the other hand, B.C. (Before Christ) is perfectly acceptable (but see below).

Woking's “The Islamic Review” in its day consistently adopted B.C.E. (Before the Christian Era) and C.E. (of the Christian Era), as is common practice among other groups that do not confer divinity upon Jesus. I for one would recommend standardising the same practice in all Muslim publications. Alternatively, the simple term “meeladi” can be adopted; it is widely understood and is consistent with the respect accorded to the Prophet Jesus in Islam. No confusion with the birth of our own Prophet should arise, as the dividing line in the Islamic Era is the *hijrah* (emigration) of the Prophet to Medina and not his birth. But we must learn to live with a certain amount of arbitrariness, as according to recent historical evidence the *meelad* of Jesus actually took place from four to seven years “before Christ”.

I look forward to hearing the opinion of better informed readers.

Albuquerque, New Mexico, I. A. ABBASI  
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## Books

### Tunes and Trumpets in Asia

**The Asian Newspapers' Reluctant Revolution**, edited by John A. Lent, *The Iowa State University Press*, Ames, Iowa, U.S.A. 373 pages, \$12.50

John Lent's comprehensive work which represents the first reasonably complete, one-volume review of the origins and development of the newspaper press in Asia, fills a long felt need in a much neglected field, and represents a valuable contribution to studies on the Asian press.

Understandably, the book concentrates a good deal on the historical development and present state of the press in fifteen Asian countries and Australia; (the last-named country's inclusion is justified by its being "immutably anchored by geography to the Orient"). The contributors comprise ten Asians, and eight American scholars. Wilbur Schramm, the most outstanding scholar in the mass communications field, contributes the "foreword".

In a compilation like this, a shift in emphasis from chapter to chapter is not altogether inexplicable. Despite this, however, some common themes do emerge—such as the western origins of the press in Asia; the influence of western newspapers (whether English, French, Dutch and Spanish language) on the vernacular press even in non-colonial countries (such as Japan, Cambodia, and Thailand); and the rather close relationship between press and propaganda in Asian countries. The work though by many hands, is extremely readable and structurally tidy, with the various chapters being not only self-contained units by themselves but also interlinked with each other through "over views", and the editor's "introductions" to press in each (geographical) region.

On the debit side is its lack of an analytical approach and framework. Not only to minimize the tedium of teeming facts, however unique and particular to a certain country or region, but also for purposes of a more meaningful crosscultural analysis of the prevalent press systems in Asia, the immense data presented in the volume should have been organised around some of the available theoretically oriented, pancultural categories in the mass communications and related fields. For instance, the measure of press freedom obtaining in various countries may be classified in terms of Siebert et al's somewhat western oriented framework—namely, authoritarian, libertarian, social responsibility, or communist press systems—or Sommerland's three broad, rather tentative, categories (authoritarian, liberal or evolving) formulated to meet the situation in the developing regions.

Linked with this flaw, but at another level, is the lack of consensus ("operational definition") among the various authors, on the meaning (or "connotation") and use of categories and constructs like "literacy" and "urbanisation", which, perhaps chiefly because of the national differences in their respective criteria, have been used differently by different authors. Thus, two Indian scholars give two different figures (114 and 170 million) for literates in their country (pp. 6, 292) while the Pakistani author claims 76 cities for his nation (p. 309).

While the chapters on most countries make an excellent reading, the chapter on Pakistan is rather thin. Its chief weakness stems from the fact that in tracing out the historical development of the "Pakistan" press in the prepartition era, the author (Abdus Salam Khurshid) has resorted to an extremely narrow geographical focus rather than a sociocultural (cum-political) matrix: he confines himself to discussing only those newspapers which were published in the areas that upon partition became Pakistan, whether they had any influence on Pakistani journalism or not

while ignoring those which did have, but were issued from outside the "Pakistan" areas.

Thus, in his discussion of pre-1947 journalism, he includes non-Muslim papers like *Koh-i-Noor*, *The Lahore Chronicle*, *The Tribune*, and *Sind Observer* (which had had little impact on Pakistani journalism) while excluding significant Muslim papers like *Comrade* (Calcutta/Delhi, 1911-14), *Al-Hilal* (Calcutta, 1912-14), *Asr-i-Jadid* (Calcutta, 1919-48), *Star of India* (Calcutta, 1838-48), *Morning News* (Calcutta, 1942-48), *Dawn* (Delhi, 1941-47), *Manshoor* (Delhi, 1937-47), and *Jang* (Delhi, 1941-47), although they had influenced Pakistani papers the most and although some of them, having migrated to Pakistan, became the nucleus of the newly emerging Pakistan press in the nation's early years. In the result the linkage between his account of the historical development of the "Pakistan" Press in the prepartition period and that of its development in postpartition era is rather incidental and tenuous.

Khurshid's discussion on press freedom in Pakistan sounds like a PR's handout. While the Press and Publications Ordinance (1963), press code and the Court of Honour are all lauded, there is no reference to the numerous encroachments on press freedom, for instance, during the Ayub decade. And his painstaking efforts to absolve the government of its acts of commission and omission leads him into a series of contradictions, e.g.,

The nature of press restrictions imposed under the Press and Publications Ordinance in the two provinces is *virtually the same* as elsewhere in the world. One *glaring difference*, however, is that the executive rather than the judiciary, has powers to impose penalties (p. 315; italics for emphasis).

The foregoing criticism, mostly on methodological grounds (and especially of the Pakistan chapter), however, does not really detract from the intrinsic value of the work as a source-book on the Asian press. The price, however, is exorbitant, at least for Asia.

Sharif al Mujahid

### Islam for the young readers

**The Young Muslim (Book 1)** by Alhaji Sheikh Ahmed Lemu, *Islamic Publications Bureau*, Lagos, 1972, 111 pages, unpriced

*The Young Muslim* is an easy reader intended as a brief introduction to Islam for school going children. It discusses the articles of faith in a simple and clear language and tries to spell out the importance of each and their relationship with one another. It throws light on the position of man in the universe and his relationship with God. In addition, the book covers such topics as personal hygiene, *wudhu*, *ghusl*, prayer and *du'a*. Attention has been paid to the five daily prayers and also to the *jum'a*, *tarawih*, and *'Eid* prayers. The performance of prayer and *wudhu* is described in graphic detail and punctuated with charming, natural illustrations. The details regarding aspects of prayer have been kept within reasonable limits, so as to present a composite picture of Islamic prayer and the concept of *'ibadah*. Lessons are followed by question exercises.

*The Young Muslim* is written in accordance with the Maliki *madhhab* (school of thought). It carries a Nigerian flavour and one finds technical terms such as *Qahli*, *Badi*, details about *sajda sahw*, and discussions of *Qurnun Karim*. The five prayers too get a Nigerian pronunciation: *Subh* becomes *Subhu*, *Zuhr* becomes *Zuhru*, *Asr* becomes *Asru*, *Maghrib* becomes *Maghribu* and *Isha* becomes *Ishau*. On the whole, however, the transliteration is accurate and is written precisely as it is pronounced in the prayer. Though the original Arabic should always be given, and in fact is given in this book, there is time now to give thought to developing a uniform and international system of transliteration, this will help in making such literature more useful throughout

the world Muslim communities.

Ahmed Lemu's book makes a valuable contribution to the pressing demand of time to provide young Muslims with useful literature in Islam. As a handbook of basic knowledge on Islam, his book expands elementary knowledge in such a fashion that the youngsters can read and comprehend it on their own. This does not, however, mean that the book is a substitute for parental teaching and guidance; it is only a supplement to parental teaching and does not relieve them of their duty.

Dr. M. M. Ahsan

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## Briefing

**Sociological Theory—Pretence and Possibility** by Keith Dixon, *Routledge and Kegan Paul*, £2.50 (paperback £1.25)

It is doubtful that the Establishment will agree with the view expressed by Mr. Dixon on the sociological theory which he attacks with timorousness of the medieval cavalry. Everyone agrees that what Sociology set out to do was and still is laudable and necessary—to make some sense, in an observing/generalising/predicting form of our behaviour as single individuals, families, tribes, nations, societies at large. It now appears that Sociology made a serious mistake in assuming the title of 'science'—a branch of 'social sciences'. On the one hand it brought Sociology—and indeed all social sciences—into immediate competition with the pure sciences on the pure sciences' own ground, where it didn't stand a chance: for example, a sociologist had to start measuring things, and in general the socially most interesting things happened to be unmeasurable, while the things the sociologist could fix on that which were measurable happened to be socially uninteresting. On the other hand, in order to live up to its claim of being a 'science', Sociology had to set itself up as an academic industry: and the fact that they were working in the same neck of the woods of human affairs as the Government and rich Foundations on which they relied for financial support made them particularly anxious not only to prove but to ingratiate themselves by their output—not to mention susceptible to develop an arcane and mysterious language, nowadays adjacent to mumbo-jumbo, by which to impress each other in the first place and the rest of the society in the second.

Mr. Dixon thinks that in confronting pure sciences Sociology is fighting a losing battle. Further, Sociology, trying to be a generalizing science of human behaviour, is spreading its feet beyond the sheet and consequently not engaging itself in, what Mr. Dixon thinks, is a more desirable and realizable role—that of under-labourer to the historian. According to Mr. Dixon, sociologists should only attempt at producing what he calls "sensitizing perspectives" and uncovering and measuring new sets of relationships which are relevant variables in the explanation of behaviour, instead of trying to produce generalizing systematic theories in a vain attempt to compete with the pure sciences.

But much more than that, Mr. Dixon claims sociological theory to be bias, and thinks that sociological data can easily be manipulated. "Clearly", he says, "it is rational for me to seek my own advantage where possible . . . it is not rational, however, for me to cite as an end the eating of a dish of mud". Mr. Dixon pays much attention to methods of achieving ends and says that "ends themselves may be evaluated as rational or irrational" and further argues that "a commitment to the 'rationality' of certain means and ends is a priori condition

of academic inquiry into human behaviour". To put it more simply: sociological enquiry cannot be non-aligned it can only be conducted within a certain framework of knowledge. This is indeed a bold statement and brings Mr. Dixon into "publish and be damned" category.

**Arms and Strategy** by Laurence Martin, *Weidenfeld and Nicholson*, £4.75

Defence expenditure of almost every country is taking a larger and larger slice of its Gross National Produce (6% of Britain), yet it is surprising that strategic studies do not command the audience they once did. It seems that society is spending more and more money on a subject it knows less and less about. Indeed Prof. Martin's massive book with photographs, pictorial statistics and maps shows the paradoxes and illogicalities in the world of defence. It may be surprising to note that all weapons, from the tank to the missile, are being developed for something which is more or less an impossibility in strategic studies—a massive land battle in Central Europe.

Modern, expensive and complicated weapons are in fact so expensive and complicated that the armed forces are forced to ask the technologists for non-complicated weapon systems that are cheaper and yet more effective. This has led to the re-introduction of the 1914 'Lee Enfield' rifle for sniping purposes, and now we have a long list of modern attack aircraft many of which have slower speeds than the Spitfire and Messersmicht of the old era, etc. Prof. Martin catalogues them all and provides an excellent guide, not only to arms and strategy, but also to its related economic and technical problems.

**The Historical Study of African Religion**, edited by T. O. Ranger and I. N. Kimambo, *Heinemann Educational*, £4.50 (paperback £1.50)

A collection of some of the papers delivered at a conference held in Dar es Salaam in June, 1970 on historical approach to the study of religions in Africa. As such the book offers a strictly historical interpretation of traditional religions in Africa. The first three essays discuss the role of archaeology, linguistics and myth in the development and understanding of religions in Africa. The following two papers talk of cults of the High God and raise questions such as: when does a local socio-political leader become a 'chief' and when does a 'chief' transfer to a 'king'? When does a remarkable primordial become a High God? The extent to which religious innovation reflects political change is discussed in the next three papers. The remaining five papers deal with religious crisis arising due to and under colonialism. One finds here detailed studies of conversion to Islam, of the Maji Maji risings religious overtones and of the acceptance and rejection of Christianity.

**Soldiers of Fortune** by John Glubb, *Hodder and Stoughton*, £4.95

The Mamlukes, Turks and Circassians, says Sir John, had no affinity with either the Egyptian fellaheen or the Syrian peasant, whom they protected and on whose behalf they despatched many an invasion between 1250 and 1517 CE. They defeated the last Crusaders, pushed back the 'destructive' Mongol hordes who did much damage to Persia and Iraq. But besides being 'soldiers of fortune' Mamlukes also had passion for fine arts they bestowed on Cairo and Damascus incredibly beautiful architecture that charms the tourists to this very day.

The Mamlukes took over the army and Sovereign Power, while the more enlightened Arabs looked after ministries of education, law and trade. This did not cause any friction between the Mamlukes and others for those were the times when race mattered little, it was important only to be a Muslim. When they were finally defeated by the Europeans, the Mamlukes were expelled by the Ottomans.

An interesting by-product of this book is the theory that empires die after 250 years. This the author deduces from the observation that the Mamluke empire did not fail because of hereditary reason—it just became too old and withered away.

● The Nauka Press has published a book by the Soviet scholar Rumyantsev entitled "The USSR Saved the Peoples of the Near and Middle East from the Perils of Fascist Domination".

"Akbar has planned his message . . . in 12 chapters, and has offered interpretations of the Antichrist (Dajjal or Al-Masih-al-Dajjal in Arabic), Gog and Magog (Yajuj and Majuj in Arabic), "Dhu al-Qarnayn" and his contact with Gog and Magog, the creature of the earth to be called "Dabbah al-Ard", etc., but does not consider his interpretation to be the last word on the subject: "as time goes by, more and more of its (i.e. Quran's) metaphorical meanings will come to light . . . Akbar's deep concern, interest, sincerity, and honesty can not be denied by even those who do not agree with all his interpretations . . ."

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(Professor M. Abdullah, University of Nottingham).

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## Malik Bennabi: "Man + Earth + Time = Civilization"

Rabie H. Ahmed

On October 31, Algeria lost her foremost thinker, the late Malik Bennabi. His departure is not only a loss to Algeria but it is as well a great loss to the Islamic world. The only consolation is that Malik Bennabi has left behind a legacy of literary works which by themselves represent a milestone in Islamic thought.

Malik's contribution to the Islamic library and Islamic movement has its unique quality. He tackled Islamic theories and Islamic ideology in a manner different from that of his contemporaries both in attitude and approach. His background and environment were chiefly responsible for the aforesaid. He was educated to be an electrical engineer and was successfully graduated from French University. As he tells in his autobiography he had the good fortune of having a solid and comprehensive Islamic education both at childhood and youth. In his days first and after the first world war the teaching of Arabic and Islam in Algeria was one of the gravest crimes. The country was at the time savagely colonised by the French. But also during Malik's lifetime he witnessed the closing chapters in the Algerian struggle for independence and freedom. The Jama'at Al Ulama (Association of Moslem Scholars) were the intellectual force behind the revolution which had strived to realise both the Arabic and

Islamic content of Algeria vis a vis the defunct Algerie Francaise, the slogan of the colonisers.

In early thirties Malik started publishing his numerous books. Paradoxically the only medium he was versed in was French. He remained unknown to the Arabic reader for about a decade. In the late forties and early fifties he moved to Cairo and based himself permanently there. Abd El Sabur Shahin, an able scholar took the task of introducing Malik's wealth of first rate writings on Islam to the Arabic reader. His writings met a receptive audience and by the late fifties and early sixties Malik was already well known in the field of Islamic writings.

One of his earliest books was the "Qur'anic Phenomena". A book intended to prove both the authenticity and supremacy of the Qur'an in respect to both what it contained and the way it is told. He ably defended the Qur'an against the rampant attempts at the time by Orientalists and other interested writers who disputed Revelation and accused the Prophet of authoring the Qur'an.

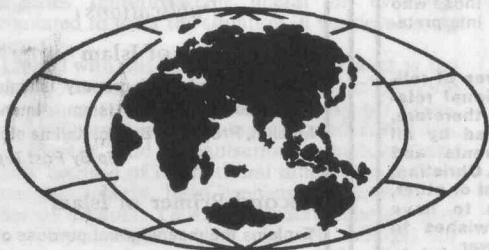
Later on Malik's books under the series "On problems of Civilization" were also translated. In this series he examined the different aspects and implications of his theory (man + earth + time = civilization). He aimed at solving the immediate theoretical problems which confront Moslems in their task of building Islamic civilization in this century. He tackled the problem of culture and that of Islamic society and social change. His approach is both scientific and practical.

His other important contribution is his political writings. Most notable are his books, Towards an Islamic Commonwealth and the Ideology of the Afro-Asian Commonwealth. In both books he expounded his theory that the world is divided into two axis: the Tokyo-San Francisco axis and the Tangier-Jakarta axis. The distinction is on grounds of wealth and culture. The former is primarily concerned with achieving material growth while the latter whether Muslim or other have a spiritual ideal prior to the material one. All Moslem countries, according to Malik, fall in the second region. Theirs is the group that is fully equipped with a progressive ideology, common culture and national cohesion.

It is not an easy task to summarise Malik's theory in this small note. I think what Malik wrote is for all practical purposes an essential reading for both scholars and ordinary Muslim readers.

May Allah accept all that Malik had contributed to the cause of Islam. Amen.

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**Plans for a Christian-Muslim Dialogue Conferences in mid 1974**

*Impact Report*

A Dialogue Conference with a view to foster better understanding of and between the Christian and Muslim faiths is being planned for May 1974. The aims of the Conference are to unite the Christians and the Muslims in the common task of raising the standard of morality in British society, to promote understanding between people for the sake of improving community relations in this country and to encourage cooperation in the field of religious education in the schools. The Conference will attempt to "discover the spiritual truths and values" of both faiths in order to assist "our growth into all truths and also to share our spiritual resources for the ultimate benefit of society at large", and the "ways and means in

which Muslims and Christians can make a united witness to the spiritual nature of man and the universe and point to the gracious Creator God and his Will for man". The Conference will also attempt to examine the role of religious man in the secular British society, making special reference to the family and to prayer.

A Planning Committee, consisting of members of the Muslim community and the host community, met in early November to chalk out a programme for the Conference. The Planning Committee also discussed other aspects of the Conference—provisions for worship, dietary arrangements, finances and publicity—and made a plea to both Muslims and Christians to avoid "controversies over dogmas".

**An Islamic Society for Netherlands**

from A. V. Syed

Although in its infancy, the Netherlands Islamic Society (P.O. Box 12034, Code 1127, Amsterdam, Holland) has achieved much in bringing together many of the 30,000 or so Muslims in Holland. There are several other organisations working in this small country of 12 million inhabitants, but they concentrate and confine their work within their national boundaries rather than develop an international basis. Thus the Turkish Association only works within the Turkish community and the Moroccan Society and Tunisian Club deal mainly with the social problems of their individual nationals. Communication and dialogue between Muslims has, therefore, up to now, been very poor. Also for this reason no real and concerted attempt could be made to build an Islamic Centre in Amsterdam.

In early 1972 some efforts were directed towards forming a society which would include in its membership Muslims from all backgrounds. But due to the fact that the communication between the Muslim communities was bad and with poor leadership nothing could crystallise. This attempt, however, provided experience which proved useful in June when a handful of devoted Muslims from India, Pakistan, Surinam, Indonesia and some Arab countries succeeded to form The Netherlands Islamic Society. The group has succeeded, within five months, to create a common platform for the Muslims in Holland.

On 25 August, the society celebrated *Meraj-un-Nabi* in

which, for the first time, Arabic, Urdu, Indonesian and Dutch speakers talked from one platform. Before the advent of the month of Ramadan, the society published and distributed Ramadan time tables and made arrangements for the *taraweeh* prayers. On 28 October Eid was celebrated and about 500 Muslims from all over Holland gathered for Eid prayers which were led by Maulana Mohammed Hanif of Surinam. The *tabligh* activities of the Society have resulted in the acceptance of Islam by three Dutch nationals.

The Islamic Society has now taken up the task of organising efforts towards setting up an Islamic Centre. Several contacts have been made and the local Council of Amsterdam has agreed in principle to permit the construction of an Islamic Centre in Amsterdam. Three sites are at present under consideration. A Working Committee for the proposed Centre which will include representatives from all important Muslim organisations in Holland is to be selected. The next step will be to engage an architect and prepare a plan for the construction and management of the Centre.

The ambitions of the Netherlands Islamic Society are high; but then so is the goal.

● At its first General Meeting the Islamic Society elected the following Office Bearers: A. V. Syed (President), Mohammed Islam Allah Din (V.P.), Liaqat Ali Dil Mohammad (Officiating Secretary), Manzoor Husain (J. Secretary).

**Call for democracy in Pakistan & Palestinian rights**

*Impact Report*

"New Pakistan", new circumstances and a new constitution, all these call for a new election in the country. The point was made by Malik Zahid Sarfaraz (representing Pakistan Istiqal Party) while addressing the second national convention of Pakistan Solidarity Front (U.K.) held in London's Conway Hall on 24 and 25 November. The people of Pakistan, he said, had only two options: either to bow to Fascism or launch a new and more vigorous struggle for the restoration of democracy in the country.

Mr. Wahiduzzaman, a former East Pakistani minister in Ayub Khan's government recalled East Pakistan's sacrifices for the cause of Pakistan, without which, he said, Pakistan would not have come into being. Let's not write them off, he pleaded.

Another session dealing with World Muslim affairs heard a Palestinian representative and Mr.

Nazer Ally, J.P., make an impassioned plea for Islamic unity and the Palestinian cause.

The Conference adopted a number of resolutions demanding restoration of democracy in Pakistan; expressing its opposition to recognition of Bangladesh; and for withdrawal to pre-5 June boundaries by the Israelis, and upholding of the Palestinian rights.

**Islamic Worship and Mosque Architecture**

Dr. James Dickie of the Institute of Arabic and Islamic Studies, University of Lancaster, continues his series of six lectures on "Islamic Worship and Mosque Architecture". The lectures are being held at the Faculty of Arts, University of Birmingham, Birmingham 15. The three remaining lectures are on 30 January (Liturgical Features and Furniture of the Mosque), 13 February (The Language of Islamic Design) and 27 February (Islamic Influence on Gothic Architecture). Admission is free. (*Impact News*)

**Indian Muslims: Stress on Loyalty and role in India's progress**

*Impact Report*

The 60 million Muslims of India are anxious to preserve their identity and religious heritage. At the same time, "they are loyal citizens of India and want to play an active role in the progress of India". Mr. Azim Husain, former Indian Ambassador to Egypt, made these observations while speaking at a recent Eid reunion meeting of the Indian Muslim Federation.

Mr. Husain, said the problem of the Muslim minority of India is no different from minorities living anywhere, in the sense that the members of the minority community must try to stand on their own feet and by uniting their efforts secure their rights from the Government. This is what the Indian Muslims are trying to do: secure their just rights from the Government of India.

Earlier Mr. Husain who is now Deputy Secretary-General at the Commonwealth Secretariat was welcomed by the Federation's President, Dr. Syed A. Pasha.

**FOSIS Winter Gathering**

Dr. Omar Austin of University of Durham is to speak on "What is 'Ibadah'?" at the FOSIS Winter Gathering. Other talks include "The Problem of God" (M. H. Faruqi) and "Jihad as 'Ibadah'" (Tayab Abedin). The Eleventh Winter Gathering of the FOSIS has 'Ibadah' as its theme and various Muslim scholars are being invited to address the meeting. The Gathering will be held at the Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick, Derbyshire on 21-23 December and the fee (boarding and lodging) for the Gathering is £5-50. The FOSIS Secretariat at 38 Mapesbury Road, London NW2 4JD will forward the application form on request. (*Impact News*)

**Return of "Zenith"**

The monthly Muslim youth magazine, *Zenith* is to be republished shortly by the Muslim Educational Trust, London. *Zenith* was originally started by the Muslim youth Trust as a magazine and carried the slogan 'A Monthly Magazine for and by the Muslim Youth in Britain'. Its publication was suspended in February 1971 because of heavy losses and shortage of funds. Since its suspension there has been a persistent and increasing demand for *Zenith's* republication, and the Muslim Educational Trust say, they are reviving the magazine as an experimental measure but unless there was the requisite support from both parents and the youth, they might have to suspend it again. Those desirous of contributing and/or distributing *Zenith* may get in touch with *Zenith* (33A, Stroud Green Road, London N4 3EF).

● The Muslim Education Trust has moved into a new office at 33A Stroud Green Road, London N4 3EF (*Impact News*)

**CALENDAR**

1 Dhu al-Hijjah—25 December  
Bahrain National Day—  
16 December



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

**AFGHANISTAN:** China is to undertake gratuitous construction of a 250-bed hospital at Kandahar.

**ARAB AFFAIRS:** The Arab Economic Council has invited the Ministers of the Arab states participating in the capital of the proposed Arab-African Bank to attend a meeting of the Bank in Algiers in February, 1974 to approve the Bank's bye-laws. The Council also proposed the formation of an action group of Arab experts to study the medium and long-term needs of the African countries in the various technical fields. It asked the Arab development funds to give first priority to projects of importance to the battle and employ portion of their funds in the front-line states and gradually transfer some of their assets in foreign banks to the Arab and joint establishments.

**BANGLADESH:** Sh. Mujib told the Communist Party of Bangladesh congress that people should be cautious against racketeers and adventurists, who under the mask of progressivism, indulged in communalism and acts against the interests of the country. ● A new party of the 'democratic left', Jatiyo Ganomukti Union (National Peoples Liberation Union) formed with Haji Danesh and Serajul Hosain Khan (former Bhashani NAP) as President and Secretary respectively. ● A £1,125m 5-year development plan (1973-78) announced. It envisages a 5.5% annual growth and stabilising prices at 1972-73 level. ● A second refinery is proposed to be established at Chalna.

**CAMBODIA:** The Voice of the NUFU broadcast an appeal by a representative of Cambodian Muslims saying that in the areas controlled by Phom Penh regime, Islam was subject to gravest sacrilege and oppression and that the Muslims should assist to carry on the fight against US imperialism.

**ERITREAN LIBERATION:** An ELF statement issued from Baghdad claimed expansion in revolutionary activities against the Ethiopian occupation authorities because of which emergency has been proclaimed in Eritrean cities since 24 Nov. A nightly curfew has been imposed in Asmara and the authorities arrested 50 citizens on the first day of the curfew.

**INDIA:** A bill to check the penetration of foreign money in the press is to be introduced soon. The Information Minister said the media were passing through a crisis of credibility and the Government was committed to separate it from big industry. ● Mrs. Gandhi inaugurated an accessories unit for the Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd. which she said would take India towards self-reliance in the Aero industry. India expects to attain a large measure of self-reliance in shipping by the end of the 6th plan. ● Mrs. Gandhi dismissed the usefulness of a dialogue with the Naga leader, Phizo, and urged the underground Nagas to come out and share the responsibility for building a prosperous Nagaland. She deplored the false propaganda abroad about the Nagas

and said no country can tolerate unlawful activities or violence of any kind. ● The Minister of State for External Affairs said, despite Mr. Bhutto's recent visit to Washington, reports indicate that America has not changed its policy of restricting supplies to non-military equipment and spare parts for equipment previously supplied. Supplies of arms had taken place during 1965 and 1971 through three to four Arab countries. About Indo-US relations, the Minister said, there are indications of a change and "a better and realistic understanding of India's status in the subcontinent". ● Indo-Soviet trade exceeded Rs. 4,000m a year and is expected to reach Rs. 5,000m next year. Last year imports from Russia increased by 19% while exports to Russia increased by 21.9% and of machinery and equipment by 37.5%. The results of Soviet research programme in Indian Ocean, surveys of fish stocks, migration chart and deep-sea fishing techniques presented to India "free of charge". ● India uses 40,000 Soviet-built tractors.

**INDONESIA:** Gen. Sumitro said the PKI remnants in West Kalimantan have organised a new type of communist party for their long-term struggle. ● A bill banning all types of gambling is to be submitted to Parliament shortly. ● The parliament resumed debate on the proposed "uniform" marriage bill. Armoured cars were called to protect the parliament and repel a student demonstration against the bill.

**IRAQ:** A plan for cooperation and party relations during 1974 between the Socialist Arab Baath party and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union has been signed.

**IRAN:** Prime Minister Hoveyda told the Majlis budget committee that Iran "had invested in North Sea oil exploration, was gradually benefiting from oil distribution in Germany, America and Belgium and had gained in the construction of some of refineries abroad". USSR to supply 3m roubles worth diesel generators to Iran.

**ISLAMIC SECRETARIAT:** A Pakistan Foreign Office spokesman said the most likely date for summit meeting of Islamic states to be held in Lahore was around 15 January, 1974.

**KASHMIR:** Pakistan Foreign Ministry spokesman described as illogical India's attempt to impugn Pakistan's support for the right of self-determination for the Kashmiris in the name of Simla agreement which was explicitly without prejudice to the recognised positions of India and Pakistan. ● Sh. Abdullah told a Plebiscite Front meeting in Srinagar that those who raise slogans for independent Kashmir were not taking into account the existing realities. The Pakistanis he said should seriously consider what they had done for the Kashmiris "in the occupied area" and not bother about the Kashmiris in India.

**KENYA:** The 4th regional conference of ILO in Nairobi considered an ILO report saying that migration

in Africa is taking place on a vast scale. Some three to five million Africans were living outside their land of birth and these migrants may be exposed to discrimination and loss of social benefits.

**LIBYA:** Tripoli started a new three hour broadcast called the "Voice of the Arab Homeland from the Libyan Arab Republic". Addressed to "brethren in the great Arab Homeland" the object was "to make it the only voice expressing the feelings of the Arab wherever he may be". ● Czechoslovak *Rude pravo* said the crisis in Egyptian-Libyan relations is a culmination of Gaddafi's contradictions; his constant anti-Soviet attacks in sharp contrast to Egypt's emphasis on the promotion of friendship with Russia. ● Libya and Yugoslavia have agreed to establish a joint fishing company, another joint company for land reclamation and prospecting ground water resources, a construction company and an aluminium factory.

**MALAYSIA:** Presenting his budget, the Finance Minister claimed he expected a high rate of economic growth of around 7% next year. Total expenditure would be 17% more than this year. In 1973 the GNP increased by 22% and the Malaysian ringgit emerged stronger than the pound and the US dollar.

● The Defence Ministry has asked an appropriation of 118m ringgit: 60% to be spent on the armed forces housing project, 5m ringgit on the development of the air force bases at Subang and 7m for the maintenance of aircraft and ground equipment; 1m ringgit worth of equipment is expected to be received under the American Aid.

**MAURITANIA:** Mauritania was admitted as the 19th member of the Arab League.

**NIGERIA:** Lagos Radio said the enemies of Africa are now facing a serious energy crisis and Western Europe and the US which have formerly flouted sanctions are also not in a position to rescue the racists. Africa now knows that the only language the colonialists understand is force. ● A nationwide census which had begun on 25 Nov. ended on 1 Dec. A summary report is expected to be published in January. As against 50,000 last year, the Pilgrims Welfare Board said that because of severe drought in the Northern states only 33,000 Nigerians are proceeding for Hajj this year.

**PAKISTAN:** Mr. Bhutto told the *Christian Science Monitor* that while US continued giving political and economic support it has not changed its policy on arms supply. He said Pakistan might seek financial assistance from Arab countries for its military requirements if the US persisted in refusing to deliver arms. He rejected the idea of obtaining arms from Iran and added: "We are not interested in aggression we are only interested in defensive weapons".

● The President issued an ordinance giving blanket powers to the executive to ban, suppress and penalise any party or person whose activities in its view threatened the integrity,

independence or internal security of the country. The ordinance also empowers action against anti-sectarian activities ostensibly to curb the increasing criticism about the "Qadiyani-Ahmadiya" domination of politics, military and bureaucracy in Pakistan. ● China is to assist the establishment of a 25,000 spindle textile mill at Mirpur, Azad Kashmir at a cost of 45m rupees. Abu Dhabi is to assist the construction of a \$120m oil refinery in Multan and a 500-mile pipeline to Karachi. ● A pro-government Pathan leader in Baluchistan, Abdus Samad Khan Achakzai, was assassinated on 2 Dec. ● **PHILIPPINES:** Pres. Marcos has informed Tunku Abdul Rahman of his concurrence to the proposal made by Muslim Foreign Ministers delegation for establishing a Relief and Welfare Agency for the Muslims in the Philippines. Marcos asked that the delegation visits the Philippines again so as to discuss details. ● The President also flew to Sulu and met the Muslim rebel leaders and pledged urgent steps to rebuild Muslim homes and mosques destroyed during the fightings of the last two years. He also promised economic development of the southern Muslim islands. This was the first official admission of insurgency in Sulu. Marcos has lately been facing difficulties with militant and liberal Roman Catholic youth and clergymen.

**PALESTINE:** Moshe Dayan declared that he would not be prepared to leave his post if it was decided that there is room for the establishment of a Palestine state West of the Jordan. This was because it was a danger to the very existence of Israel in such a situation.

● **SAUDI ARABIA:** The Muslim World League has presented a newly constructed Islamic Centre in Niger to the local community. ● The Commerce Ministry proposes to organise an Islamic Exhibition in Jeddah.

**SOMALIA:** Pres. Siyad Barreh told the closing session of Regional and District representatives that it was their duty to sort out those who are revolutionaries and those who are anti-revolutionaries, to erase from the brains of the people the anti-revolutionaries' illusions of the reactionary forces and to guide the masses to the right path by enabling them to understanding the true meaning and application of scientific socialism.

**TURKEY:** The Chairman of the Istanbul Chamber of Commerce and Industry said if Germany does not retract its decision to de-employ Turkish workers in Germany, then it must risk the possibility of Turkish industry rejecting German machines and manufactured goods. The quality of oil discovered in Thrace is reported to be one of the highest and 10,000 barrels are expected to be produced daily.

**USSR:** A "Soviet Muslims" conference at Tashkent expressed complete solidarity with the "brother peoples" of the Arab world and for a just and lasting peace in the area "where holy places of many religions are concentrated".