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THE

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FEBRUARY—MARCH 1968

56th YEAR OF PUBLICATION THREE SHILLINGS

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" Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of God and the last of the Prophets. And God has full knowledge of all things "
(The Qur'án, 33 : 40)
" There is no prophet after me " (The Prophet Muhammad)

VOL. 56 Nos. 2–3 **FEBRUARY–MARCH 1968 C.E.** **Dhu'l-Qa'dah – Dhu al-Hijjah 1387 A.H.**

The Way of Blurring of the National Character and Racism in the Muslim Community which forms one-sixth of Mankind is Islam's own

In publishing the most recent statement on racism by the Unesco in *The Islamic Review* for January 1968, we pointed out that Islam was unique and reigned supreme in blunting, if not eradicating, the rough edges of racism and race consciousness from amongst one-sixth of mankind. We also hinted that Islam possessed the know-how to deal with this knotty problem now facing some of the most advanced and civilized countries — the United States of America and Great Britain. We added that it was not by the mere enunciation of the idealism of the oneness of mankind in grandiloquous words that Islam had been able to bring about the change of heart in the Muslim society towards racism which has not lost its momentum even after the passage of the long period of 1,400 years. If high-sounding words were enough, then the distinction of blurring the national character amongst the Muslims would have been shared with Islam by Christianity in the first place and some other ideologies, excluding Judaism and Hinduism, which are racist in their content.

We step aside to let some eminent non-Muslim writers and thinkers speak on our behalf that it is only in Islam that the ideals embodied in the phrases " the children of God " and " the Brotherhood of man " have become a reality.

Professor Arnold Toynbee, in his *Civilization on Trial,* London, 1948, p. 205, emphasizes the importance of the role which Islam can play in militating against the sinister forces generated by race consciousness in the civilized races in the following telling words :

" We can, however, discern certain principles of Islam which, if brought to bear on the social life of the new cosmopolitan proletariat, might have important salutary effects on the great society in a nearer future. Two conspicuous sources of danger — one psychological and the other material — in the present relations of this cosmopolitan proletariat with the dominant element in our modern Western society are race consciousness and alcohol, and in the struggle with each of these evils the Islamic spirit has a service to render which might prove, if it were accepted, to be of high moral and social value.

" The extinction of race consciousness as between Muslims is one of the outstanding moral achievements of Islam, and in the contemporary world there is, as it happens, a crying need for the propagation of this Islamic virtue, for, although the record of history would seem on the whole to show that race consciousness has been the exception and not the rule in the constant inter-breeding of the human species, it is in the fatality of the present situation that this consciousness is felt — and felt strongly — by the very peoples which in the competition of the last four centuries between several Western powers, have won — at least for the moment — the lion's share of the interitance of the earth.

" Though in certain other respects the triumph of the English-speaking peoples may be judged, in retrospect, to have

been a blessing to mankind, in this perilous matter of race feeling it can hardly be denied that it has been a misfortune. The English-speaking nations that have established themselves in the New World overseas have not, on the whole, been 'good mixers'. They have mostly swept away their primitive predecessors; and, where they have either allowed a primitive population to survive, as in South Africa, or have imported primitive 'man-power' from elsewhere, as in North America, they have developed the rudiments of that paralyzing institution which in India — when in the course of many centuries it has grown to its full stature — we have learnt to deplore under the name of 'caste'. Moreover, the alternative to extermination or segregation has been exclusion — a policy which averts the danger of internal schism in the life of the community which practices it, but does so at the price of producing a not less dangerous state of international tension between the excluding and the excluded races, especially when the policy is applied to representatives of alien races who are not primitive but civilized, like the Hindus, the Chinese, and Japanese. In this respect, then, the triumph of the English-speaking peoples has imposed on mankind a 'race question' which would hardly have arisen, or at least in such an acute form and over so wide an area, if the French, for example, and not the English, had been victorious in the eighteenth-century struggle for the possession of India and North America.

"As things are now, the exponents of racial intolerance are in the ascendant, and if their attitude towards 'the race question' prevails, it may eventually provoke a general catastrophe. Yet the forces of racial toleration, which at present seem to be fighting a losing battle in a spiritual struggle of immense importance to mankind, might still regain the upper hand if any strong influence militating against race consciousness that has hitherto been held in reserve were now to be thrown into the scales. *It is conceivable that the spirit of Islam might be the timely reinforcement which would decide this issue in favour of tolerance and peace.*" (Italics are ours. Ed. *I.R.)*

Dr. Maude Royden, a prominent British woman during the forties of this century, expressed herself on the achievement of Islam in the domain of the colour problem in the following words in her monograph, *The Problem of Palestine,* London, 1939, p. 37:

"The religion of Mahommet proclaimed the first real democracy ever conceived in the mind of man. His God is of such transcendent greatness that before Him all differences were nought and even the deep and cruel cleavage of colour ceased to count. There are social ranks among Moslems, as elsewhere, but fundamentally (that is to say, spiritually) all believers are equal and this fundamental equality is not a fiction as so commonly found among Christians; it is accepted and real. This accounts very largely for its extraordinarily rapid spread among different peoples. It accounts for its strength today in Africa, where the Christian missionary preaches an equality which is everywhere mocked by the arrogance of the white races and the existence of the colour bar. The Moslem, black, brown or white, alone finds himself accepted as a brother, not according to his colour, but his creed.

"During the (first world) war in France I was told of some Indian Moslem soldiers who created a disturbance in finding black troops from Senegal in the same *estaminet* as they were. When they were about to proceed to violence some of the better informed stated that these blacks were Moslems. Instantly the protests were silenced and an apology offered. White Christians do not always behave so, whether in London or American hotels."

Count Hermann Keyserling, a well-known German thinker and author of many books on philosophy, has the following observations to make on the structure of Islamic society in his *Travel Diary of a Philosopher,* London, 1925, p. 201:

"The national character always seems somewhat blurred wherever the crescent moon illuminates the landscape, which is particularly noticeable here in India, where the types are otherwise outlined so clearly. But its place is taken by a more universal and none-the-less definite character: that of the Mussulman. Every single Mohammedan whom I asked what he is, replied, 'I am a Mussulman'. Why has this religion alone undertaken to substitute national feeling by something wider? And by something which is stronger and significant. How is it that Islam, without a corresponding dogma, achieves the ideals of Brotherhood, whereas Christianity fails to inspire its ideals? It must be due to the intimate relations between the underlying tendencies of this peculiar faith and the fundamental nature of man."

The question that arises is, How does Islam do all this? It is evident that moral exhortations, even when backed by religious authority, are not efficacious. There is something else that is wanted. The diagnosis of Islam is that it is the lack of suitable formalism and of institutions through which alone man can get an opportunity to express his noble ideals that is responsible for the discrepancy and anamoly between the behaviour of man and the high ideals placed before him and which he really entertains and wishes to materalize in his behaviour. How does Islam try to remove the discrepancy existing between the sublime ideals of man and his behaviour?

The first thing Islam does is that it creates the suitable frame of mind by stressing, in common with all other religions, thinkers and sages of the world, on its followers the belief that mankind is one. The words of the Qur'án (49 : 11): "O you men! Surely We have created of a male and a female and made you tribes and families so that you may distinguish each other. Surely the most honourable of you in the eyes of God is he who is most careful of his duty", are reminiscent of the words of St. Paul when he said, "He hath made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on the face of the earth." Such words do create a desire in men's minds for a better world-order. But they definitely do not suggest how to express that change in practice.

According to Islam, although the mind of man is sound at the core, it is equally true to say that it is also sluggish by nature. It takes a shock, sometimes institutions, practices and religious formalities, to awaken man to the need for revising his preconceived ideas. Man, over the ages, had grown accustomed to living separated from, and independent of, others for centuries. He had developed a narrow tribal mentality which has continued to persist even in our times, when distances have been literally abolished and the world, so to speak, has shrunk. He is not willing to shake off his age-old hereditary outlook on life of tribalism, clanism, race consciousness and racism.

Even the views of philosophers, thinkers and saints, who set themselves to preach to their folk that they all were children of God and that they should love each other, does not seem to make a dent. It is thus clear that mere catchwords and high-sounding phrases which seem very promising on paper and sound well on lips do not lead the listeners very far. For is it not a fact that the behaviour of the Christian crowds in the most advanced countries of the world is indistinguishable from that of the crowds that believed in the virtues of clanism and tribalism before the days of Jesus and Buddha?

Muslims are never proud of themselves as being Chinese, Iranian, Pakistani or Indian. What they are proud of is their religious culture. This pride, let it be stressed, is not begotten of hatred or haughtiness. The Islamic nations, at the height of their culture and material glory, never thought of themselves as Arabs or Turks, but simply as Muslims. For Muslims the difference between themselves and others has always been spiritual. They are Muslims and others are non-Muslims. Muslims believe that the sole justification for their existence, other things being equal, lies in the propagation of an outlook on life which literally succeeds in brushing aside effectively those obstacles which stand in the way of bringing about harmonious relations, in the first place, between one individual and another and, for that matter, between one nation and another, thus eventually paving the way for a world brotherhood of mankind

Islam succeeds in brushing aside racial prejudices through its institution of prayer as conceived by the genius of the Prophet Muhammad, culminating in the institution of the Pilgrimage to Mecca. This institution is responsible for the removing of colour and race prejudices from the entire world of Islam. If Islam had done nothing else for mankind except the removing of colour prejudice from 500 millions of men and women, it would have claim enough to hold the world its debtor for all time to come. Islam alone can teach the world how to get rid of race consciousness. In Islam alone we have a way for establishing human brotherhood based on a concept of moral and spiritual equality.

Islamic Solidarity the only Cure for the Present Ills—the only Reliable Guarantee for the Future of the Muslims*

(A free English translation from the Arabic of **al-Tadhamun al-Islami,** *a brochure published by the Muslim World League of Mecca)*

(Part 2)

" The Islamic world occupies, in many respects, a central position in the world today. On the Muslim countries converge the various international political currents, and over the Muslim countries clash the big powers, struggling for world domination. The best contribution which the Muslim peoples can make towards the promotion of world peace is to remove their countries from the sphere of competition and clash by the big power blocs. **This can only be done by the Muslims themselves filling the ideological vacuum in their countries and which is attracting the Communist** bloc, **and at the same time rectifying the economic void which is attracting the Western** bloc. **The filling of the material and spiritual voids can be achieved only if the peoples of the region join hands to uphold their faith and their material and spiritual interests, to protect their personality, to defend their edifice, and to safeguard their stability and peace. Co-operation and solidarity have become the watchwords of peoples throughout the world and are enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations."**

Solidarity among the Muslims is a reality

Islamic solidarity is not a far-fetched idea, nor a pipe-dream, nor an aim which is yet to be formulated. It is a fact and a reality.

No Muslim would dispute this proposition, nor would any non-Muslim. Those who oppose the idea of an Islamic in-gathering do not in fact deny that there exists substantial solidarity between the Muslims. These critics may even say, in answer to those who preach an effective Islamic solidarity, that such solidarity transcends political relations, and must remain above political organization and superior to international groupings or gatherings.

Why is it that so many recognize the reality of Islamic solidarity and do not dispute its ramifications? The reason is that such solidarity lies in the heart of every Muslim, because it is something which runs parallel to the Muslim's belief in the oneness of God, of mankind, and of the Muslims in the context of a Muslim brotherhood and all that this implies in terms of mutual rights and obligations between Muslim groups and individuals.

Islamic solidarity takes shape in the existence of the Islamic community, which provides links between the Muslims, and which is the basis of many fundamental rules in Islamic religious laws *(fiqh)* regulating the lives of Muslim individuals and groups, whether they be families, tribes, peoples or states. This Islamic community is what is described these days as " the Islamic family of nations ". It is a phenomenon which in fact exists, and every Muslim believes in its existence and has tangible evidence of it. It links together all the Muslims, however remote their homelands, and however different may be their race, colour, ideas and policies, and however conflicting their interests might be in certain circumstances. Islamic solidarity is a reality of deep roots and origins. It was founded more than fourteen centuries ago, and has existed throughout in the form of a unified history for the Muslims in which they shared common glories, common destiny, common culture, and common interests. This solidarity envelops the Muslims in all their homelands, countries and states. For this reason it is something substantial in the realities of present-day life. It is substantial, firstly, from the geographical point of view, because it affects countries stretching from the seas of China in the extreme east to the Atlantic Ocean in the extreme west — a vast area indeed. It is likewise substantial in human terms, for it concerns some five hundred million human beings of all races and colours. This being the reality about Islamic solidarity, it is something which must not be ignored or denied, and it would be a grave error for either the Muslims or the non-Muslims to disregard this reality if they are to live in the present rather than in an unreal past.

The elements of solidarity

We shall now examine the question of existence of the elements of political unity and harmony in the concept of Islamic solidarity. If one analyses present-day international groupings one finds that chief among the bases upon which such groupings are founded is the geographic element. Other elements are the historical, the political and the economic.

*For the first part of this study, see *The Islamic Review* for July 1967.

International groupings and organizations are sometimes characterized by the predominance of one of these elements — *e.g.* in the case of regional organizations, political organizations, military alliances, and economic *blocs*. But the fact that a group or international unit was predominantly of the one kind rather than another does not mean that the other elements of unity and solidarity do not exist or are not important factors in holding the group together. For example, the fact that the Arab League and the Organization of American States are regional organizations does not mean that there are no political or military criteria in common between the members of these groups, nor does this deny the existence of economic considerations among the members. It simply means that the original and immediate cause of the formation of the group was a geographic element. There are many international groupings and gatherings, besides the Arab League and the Organization of American States, which have a regional or geographic element as the predominant element, such as the Organization of African Unity, and the Afro-Asia *bloc*. There are also international groupings in which an historic element takes the place of the geographic element which we have just mentioned. An example of this is the British Commonwealth of nations, and the French Communité (which is made up of former French African colonies). There has also recently existed a movement — of which President Bourguiba of Tunisia has been the chief advocate — for the setting up of a *bloc* of French-speaking states in Asia and Africa. All these groupings have an historic element, because they take the place of former empires — British and French — and do not have a geographic or regional element as their rallying point. Another example that can be given here is that of international groupings with a political or military element as the foundation. This exists in the case of Eastern Europe, which makes up the Warsaw Pact, and the states of Western Europe, which make up the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The South-East Asian Treaty Organization can also be mentioned in this regard, as well as the Central Treaty Organization. The economic element as a basis for the establishment of international units or groupings has also recently been evidenced in the formation of the European Common Market, which is likely to develop into a political grouping in addition to being a close economic one. There has also been started among the Arab countries of North Africa a movement designed to organize and harmonize their economies and to promote co-operation between them. There also exists in the Arab world a common Arab market in which a number of Arab states take part.

The geographic element

It is necessary, before any verdict can be given on the real nature of the concept of Islamic solidarity, to examine the present situation in the Muslim world, and to determine the extent to which the elements which we have indicated are present among various international groupings, and which originally caused the grouping to rally, are present in the case of Muslim countries and peoples. Predominant among these elements is the geographic one.

It is only natural that there should exist among neighbouring countries historical, cultural, linguistic, racial, economic and commercial elements in stronger or greater measure than in the case of countries not bound together by closer regional ties. There can be no geographic or regional unity or solidarity *simpliciter*, for such unity or solidarity is normally founded to an equal, if not greater, measure on other factors arising from regional considerations, such as the linguistic, racial, cultural or economic ties.

If one examines the map of the Islamic world one finds that it occupies a vast area of the globe. It stretches over three continents — Asia, Africa and Europe — from the China Sea in the east to the Atlantic Ocean in the west, from the Soviet Union and Southern Europe in the north to the Indian Ocean and Central Africa in the south. The area occupied by the Muslim states forms a distinct geographic unit, closely interlinked. From this geographic community there have arisen other factors — racial and linguistic — and a community of cultural and spiritual interests. These factors are more than sufficient to make of the Muslim peoples a regional international *bloc* which can easily occupy a central or intermediate position between the three components of the ancient world — commonly called the Middle East, the Near East, or North Africa.

The geographic elements which gave rise to the establishment of the Arab League are present in even greater force among the members of the Islamic group of states. It was in the nature of things that Arab solidarity should precede Islamic solidarity, but Arab solidarity must also naturally serve as the basis or core of the greater solidarity among the Muslims, and a step towards such solidarity. Arab solidarity paved the way towards the establishment of the Arab-Asian *bloc*, and subsequently of the Afro-Asian *bloc* and of the Organization of African Unity. It must likewise serve as a step towards the establishment of the Islamic *bloc*.

In the same way as the existence of the League of Arab States did not prevent some Arab states, or all of them, from taking part in other groupings, such as the African *bloc* or the non-aligned *bloc* or the Afro-Asian *bloc*, there should be no reason why Islamic states should not take part in an Islamic *bloc* based on regional factors or wider significance than that of the Arab League but narrower than that which serves as the basis for the establishment of the Afro-Asian *bloc* or the *bloc* of non-aligned states.

The historical element

There is in existence in the world today a respectable international *bloc* known as the British Commonwealth of Nations, of which India, Pakistan and other states in Asia, Africa, Europe and the American continent take part. There is no geographic factor linking together the members of this grouping, nor are there any religious or racial factors of solidarity. All that links the members of this group together is predominently of an historical nature, namely, the fact that they were at one time part of the British Empire. Pakistan, which is an Asian and Muslim state, is linked in this way with Ghana in Africa, Northern Ireland in Europe and Canada in the American continent. No one can possibly claim that the bonds between the people of Pakistan and the other members of the British Commonwealth — resulting from the historical accident of their all having been at one time part of the British Empire — are stronger than the elements which link Pakistan with other Islamic countries, such as Iran, Egypt and Morocco, all of which share an Islamic civilization and an Islamic character that lasted from the days of the Umayyads to those of the Ottomans.

The countries which at one time shared a common political regime might find it necessary after that regime disappears to form themselves once again into a grouping based on that historical fact. The reason for this is that the

common political regime which had prevailed in these countries might have left an indelible mark or a permanent imprint upon the peoples concerned, whether that be in terms of race, religion, language, culture, social conditions or economic interests. These subsequent common factors may induce towards solidarity. If one takes note of the fact that the Muslim countries have enjoyed relatively long periods of unified political rule, and that this has lasted longer than in the case of the British and French Empire, one cannot fail to realise that the common factors which were the by-products of Islamic unity among Muslim peoples cannot possibly be weaker than in the case of the factors resulting from European imperialism over an alien people. If there can be a grouping based on former membership of the British Empire or of the French Empire, is it not more reasonable and natural that there should be a grouping based on the membership, lasting for fourteen centuries, of an Islamic unit or group? One must not forget here that the British Commonwealth of Nations as well as the French Communité are the by-products of an alien imperialism originally imposed upon peoples against their wishes, and that the peoples concerned had waged long and bitter struggles to free themselves of this imperialism. If, nevertheless, the peoples of the former Empires could establish for themselves a distinct unit or group, would it not be more natural that the Islamic peoples who share a common Islamic civilization and who were at one time part of an Islamic Empire, in no way alien, should become a distinct group? It must be noted here that the Muslim peoples did not originally choose to cease to be part of the Muslim Empire, but that this was forced upon the Muslims by outside European forces which waged wars for the purpose of tearing asunder the unity of the Islamic world and breaking up its solidarity. It is also a significant fact in this regard that there is not between the members of the British Commonwealth of Nations and the French Communité themselves any geographic common element in addition to the historical element, while there is among the members of the Muslim group of peoples strong geographic and regional common denominators as well as other elements of unity and solidarity, such as the political and the economic.

The political elements

Whatever the factors characterizing a political grouping there must exist in that grouping a minimum of common denominators among the elements composing the group. Even the United Nations Organization, which seeks to be a universal body of all states, insists on a common denominator among the member-states, namely, acceptance of the principles of the U.N. Charter and ability and willingness to fulfill obligations thereunder (and this, in fact, is the objection raised by the United States against the membership of People's China in the Organization).

The aims and objectives of an international grouping indicate the common qualities required in the members of the group, and these are normally laid down in the Charter or constituent document of the group. This is the essential basis of every international grouping. There has been an intense struggle between the Eastern and the Western *blocs* in the recent past for the purpose of securing domination over the rest of the world, and the dispute now appears to have been resolved to the effect that every nation or group of nations will be free to choose its political creed and to defend its choice, and that there must be no interference in the domestic affairs of nations or any attempt to impose political or other views upon nations. This is what has become known as " peaceful co-existence ".

Every state or group of states has complete freedom to choose its political doctrines and creeds, and to strive to protect these doctrines and creeds from interference. There is only one condition here — that such doctrines or creeds must not be essentially aggressive and must not be of the kind that requires force for their promotion. At present, the Western *bloc* accuses the Communist *bloc* of seeking to dominate the world by promoting revolutions by the workers on an international scale, and to put an end to the capitalist and bourgeois classes throughout the world. In the same way, the Communists accuse the members of the Western *bloc* of having aggressive designs, and they seek to substantiate this by highlighting the existence of military alliances and military bases surrounding the countries of the Communist *bloc*.

It is inconceivable that anyone could accuse the Muslims of joining together for the purpose of seeking world domination. The Muslims only want to enjoy in their own countries freedom of belief and freedom of thought, and they want to avoid being dominated by any of the big *blocs*, both of which are alien to the Muslims. Indeed, it can be said that if a big power, or a big international *bloc* seeking domination, were to object to the Muslims joining together in a *bloc* it would thereby reveal its own aggressive intentions against the Muslims, for such objection is tantamount to seeking to impose upon the Muslims alien ideas and to prevent them from rallying to the support of principles and policies suggested by their very identity as Muslims. Such attempt to impose alien ideas would be strongly rejected and opposed by the Muslims, because this would be a preliminary to the imposition of political and military domination. The Muslims would be as vigorous in their opposition to the imposition of foreign doctrines as they would be to imposition of foreign political or military rule. The recent history of the Muslim peoples amply demonstrates this fact.

If there be no other quality or advantage in the concept of Islamic solidarity than that it provides a bar against the infiltration of foreign doctrines, and subsequently of the political domination attendant upon this, it would be more than enough to justify the Muslims seeking to promote solidarity and striving assiduously to protect it.

Economic elements

Modern technological and industrial progress requires that economic prosperity can only be based on substantial production. This requires economic, geographical and financial potentialities often in excess of those possessed by political units of the kind based on the narrow nationalist considerations which crystallized in the nineteenth century C.E. There is at present in the world a conflict between the requirements of economic co-operation and the concept of rigid national sovereignty. The dispute is likely to be resolved in favour of economic co-operation. The Muslims, like other nations, must equip their political and social systems to develop in the direction necessary for progress. It would not be possible to ensure this without establishing economic units transcending narrow or rigid national frontiers.

In addition to the general international elements which makes necessary the formation of groupings and *blocs*, it must be realized that the Muslim peoples occupy vast areas of varying characteristics and natural resources. Exchanges between these Muslim countries are bound to be of mutual benefit. In the Muslim countries there are huge natural resources often beyond the capacity of a single country to develop or utilize. For this reason there would be tremendous

benefit in the Muslim nations collaborating among themselves to derive full benefit from these natural resources, and to utilize them to promote industrialization and the national wealth and to make full use of abundant manpower. It is a fact that some parts of the Muslim world are over-populated, while others are under-populated. There is great disadvantage in either of these situations, and tremendous benefit in plans designed to exchange populations and to provide employment on a common basis. The Republic of Pakistan demonstrated great wisdom and realism in emphasizing the importance of economic solidarity in building up the edifice of general Islamic solidarity. It made clear that co-operation between the Muslim countries and peoples must be based on a plan of economic harmony between them and on the exchange among them of technical skill, financial and economic assistance and the free movement of industrial and agricultural products and raw materials. This is the kind of policy which countries now labouring under economic difficulties must pursue at once, and there must in this respect be an early realization of the fact that doctrinaire and idealogical arguments can achieve nothing in this practical realm.

It is the duty of the leaders of the Muslims to take early steps towards the implementation of the concept of Islamic solidarity as a framework within which there must be serious efforts to bring together the Muslim peoples throughout the world. The opportunity is still there. The future of the concept of Islamic solidarity is not to be decided in a single speech, or in press statements, or political manoeuvres. It is far more serious and long-term a project than that. It is time that the Muslim peoples as a whole examined their problems with a sense of practical reality and away from the influence of sectional political considerations or narrow regional criteria. It is for the technical experts to devise the framework of economic, technical and financial co-operation. There can be no valid objection to the promotion of Islamic solidarity in the economic sphere, and hollow theoretical arguments must not be allowed to undermine the idea of solidarity. What is required is that committees of experts should be established throughout the Muslim world and should be entrusted with the task of studying the economic potentialities of the Muslim countries and drawing up plans for the establishment of popular and governmental organizations to give effect to the concept of comprehensive solidarity among the Muslim peoples.

Comprehensive and positive solidarity

Solidarity between the Muslims is a tangible fact, generally admitted. The criteria conducive to such solidarity, and the factors leading to the regrouping of the Muslim peoples, are of various kinds — regional, geographic, historical, economic and political. This being the case it should be recognized that solidarity between the Muslims is a phenomenon of far greater significance, and of much higher quality, than any political grouping.

Some of the enemies of the movement for the consolidation of the ranks of the Muslims rely on the facts which we have just adduced to say that movement for Islamic solidarity is unnecessary and superfluous, because it is already an accomplished fact. The basis for this argument is a misunderstanding of the essence of the movement for Islamic solidarity and of its aims. Many of those who in good faith oppose the movement for the gathering together of the Muslims think that the aim of the movement is the establishment of a new political *bloc* similar to existing political *blocs* in Asia and Africa, and in which some Muslim countries take as big or as small a part as their own interests require. The argument put forward by these opponents of Islamic solidarity is that the proposed Islamic grouping is, to say the least, repetitious of other groupings and, for this reason, would add nothing to the realities of the situation in Asia and Africa, and might even make confusion more confounded. This view can be refuted, however, if we were to compare the *blocs* and groupings now in existence with the proposed Islamic grouping. The former are purely political in their very nature, basis, aims and content. But the proposed Islamic grouping would transcend the political framework in its aims, content, basis and nature, and would be intended to bring the Muslims together in constructive and productive co-operation in all aspects of their common civilization and heritage — the civilization and heritage of Islam which, over the centuries, had brought together the Muslims throughout the world, and which had bestowed upon the Muslims a distinctive imprint in the spiritual, cultural, social, economic and political spheres. For this reason it can be said that Islamic solidarity is a progressive step in line with the movement for world unity, because it seeks to promote the movement for human solidarity in general and to encourage all sections of mankind to come together.

A new stage in world solidarity

Political groupings, or *blocs*, in Asia and Africa, in which Islamic states now participate, are, with the exception of the League of Arab States, purely political in character. They have made no tangible progress beyond the purely political level, and are utilized by the member states merely as a means for the protection of political independence, rather than as a means of restricting or controlling such independence. The majority of the states taking part in these groupings, or *blocs*, are small and nascent states which have secured political independence after long and bitter struggles and many sacrifices, all of which make it difficult for them to surrender some of the attributes of hard-won independence and national sovereignty. This psychological element among the developing countries has inhibited them from seeking to join groupings and *blocs* except when harassed by passing fears and dangers to their national independence posed from their neighbours or by one or the other of the big power *blocs*. This, in fact, is the common denominator between the states' members of the Organization for African Unity or the Afro-Asian *bloc* or the non-aligned *bloc*.

The peoples of the world today feel, however, that there is urgent need for groupings far stronger in their content and purpose than merely political groupings of the kind we have indicated — groupings which would provide opportunities for constructive co-operation in all the spheres of worthwhile human endeavour, such as culture, economics, commerce, industry and communications. This is felt necessary for the purpose of meeting the requirements of the scientific progress of human civilization generally. But such co-operation cannot readily take place except between peoples who feel that they are linked together by stronger and more meaningful bonds than transient or expedient political circumstances, or factors concerning national sovereignty, independence or regional convenience. And it is generally recognized in this respect that the bond of Islamic solidarity makes it easy and natural for the Muslims to join hands for the promotion of such constructive and productive aims. The old-established and progressive European countries have for some time now been busy forging new economic links among themselves. Although such economic solidarity has necessitated some

limitations on national political sovereignty and restricted their political freedom, the states concerned have willingly proceeded along the path of integration. The reason for this is that these European states have much in common in cultural and similar spheres, and this fact is recognized as being of greater significance and relevance than political considerations. On the other hand, the nascent countries of Asia and Africa, which suffer economic and other backwardness, have not been able to reach a stage of *rapprochement* and solidarity which would enable them to disregard political considerations and to take steps towards practical and comprehensive integration. Instead they are confined to participation in political groupings for the purpose of implementing common political aims or to promote common political ideals. Little thought is given to the establishment of joint organizations at the popular or governmental levels which some aspects of the states' political sovereignty would be surrendered or delegated, and this attitude prevails in the cultural, social or economic spheres.

The Muslim peoples have always felt that the historical, geographic, cultural and economic factors which they have in common constitute bonds of integration and solidarity, which would enable these peoples to undertake practical steps towards co-operation and harmony in all spheres. For this reason it is the duty of the leaders of the Muslim peoples to take the initiative towards effecting this solidarity in a demonstrable form, and thereby to continue with the movement which the peoples at grass roots level have cherished for a long time. Such a movement for practical Islamic solidarity would be an important step, providing an example for the new countries in Asia and Africa, and would encourage them to forge bonds of solidarity which would eventually bring nearer the realization of the aim for world unity.

The scientific and practical content of solidarity

The nascent countries in Asia and Africa, which are linked together by political groupings or *blocs*, are trying hard to forge bonds of solidarity among their peoples under the pressure of political factors. In the case of the Muslim peoples, however, solidarity has prevailed for a long time and has very deep roots, and there is no need to contrive political factors to bring the Muslim peoples together. All that is required is that the Muslims should better organise and co-ordinate the various aspects of this solidarity.

The movement for the grouping together and integration of the Muslim peoples has the following aims:

1. The organization of popular and governmental institutions for the purpose of consolidating co-operation among the Muslims and unifying their plans and efforts towards the attainment of a common objective.

2. The utilization of the strength to be derived from the solidarity of the Muslims and their co-operation with one another for the promotion of common ideals and objectives in the economic, social, spiritual, cultural and political spheres, and for the advancement of human progress and world peace.

The fact is that all the Muslim countries and peoples are making great efforts to strengthen the concept of Islamic solidarity and are taking partial steps in this regard. Even the governments which had opposed the call for Islamic solidarity — basing their objection on the claim that they are strictly loyal to the concept of real Islamic solidarity, and publicizing all the efforts that they said they had undertaken in the service of Islam and the Muslims — are promoting the cause of Islamic solidarity. But the Muslim peoples now know that individual or solitary efforts by any one Muslim state are not sufficient for the triumph of the cause of solidarity, and that there is urgent need for common and collective efforts by all the Muslim states and all the Muslim peoples. This is both natural and logical, for it would be wrong to tell the Muslims that the co-operation of the various sections of mankind is possible and desirable, while the co-operation of the Muslim peoples with one another is not. It is very strange, therefore, that some of the critics of the movement for Islamic solidarity oppose the call for a Muslim summit meeting, but do not offer any suggestions about other means for the promotion of Islamic solidarity. It must be noted in this regard that the call for an Islamic summit conference has not been considered by those who proposed it as the sole or exclusive means of effecting Islamic solidarity, but has been suggested as one way of striving towards this ideal to be followed by other steps in various spheres. The concept of Islamic solidarity cannot possibly be confined to summit conferences. These are only preliminary steps in the movement towards the formulation of common plans for the co-ordination of the activities of the Muslim states in the cultural, social, spiritual and economic spheres.

Cultural and social co-ordination

The Muslim peoples in most of the Islamic countries have suffered long periods of foreign imperialism. This has made a definite imprint upon the social and cultural life of the Muslims. The removal of the last vestiges of imperialist influence would require joint efforts and a unified plan to be drawn up with the co-operation of all the Muslim countries. There is no doubt that the golden age of Islamic history has led to the making of a common culture for the Muslims and has forged the links of cultural unity among all the peoples of the Muslim world. But the relapse of the Muslims, together with foreign domination, have led to the diminution of the cultural personality of the Muslims. Some Muslim countries have had to adopt a foreign culture and a foreign language in order to be linked with the colonial régime, and this has created a barrier between these countries and their Muslim sister countries. The aim of the Islamic ingathering in the cultural sphere would be the eradication of cultural differences which resulted from foreign imperialist domination, and the revival of a common Islamic culture which would unify trends among all the Muslim peoples and facilitate co-operation between them. This result would be comparatively easy to accomplish if special attention were to be given to the Arabic language in view of the fact that it is the language of the Qur'án and the first language of Islam, and for this reason alone a useful means for promoting the cultural renaissance of the Muslims.

In the social sphere, it must be noted that many Muslim countries have made tremendous strides in the sphere of social progress at rates which varied in accordance with their special circumstances and needs. It would be difficult at present to formulate a single or unified line for the promotion of social progress in all the Muslim countries. But co-ordination among these countries would provide each one of them with the opportunity to proceed with its plan for progress in the method which suits its own circumstances, and without outside pressure. Co-ordination in this way would also provide the Muslim countries with opportunities to benefit from the experience of sister Muslim countries. In this regard, attention is drawn to the categoric statements made by King Faysal to the effect that Islam brings the Muslims together and does

not separate them, and that the call for solidarity is addressed to all the leaders of the Muslim peoples, whatever be their social or political leanings, and that the call is to the effect that they should all meet under the banner of Islam and be guided only by the light of the Islamic doctrine.

In the social and cultural spheres Islamic unity does not mean that the Muslim countries should all march towards the realization of the ultimate objective at the rate of the slowest or most under-developed among them. The peoples of every one of the Muslim countries have the right to proceed on the path of social, cultural, scientific and artistic progress at the rate which the country concerned finds most suitable in its own special circumstances. But there must nevertheless remain among all the Muslim peoples the bond of common belief, and the slower among the Muslim peoples should be enabled and encouraged to match the rate of progress of the more advanced sections of the Muslim family, and to benefit from their experience. All the Muslim peoples must realise in this respect that the path they would all be pursuing would be a purely Islamic one designed to achieve progress and development in all the spheres of modern life, and that the guidelines of the whole operation would be the common faith, the common culture and the common history of the Muslims, all of which gives the Muslims a special and characteristic imprint. The Qur'án says: " We take God's colour, and who is better than God at colouring " (39 : 138).

Spiritual and doctrinaire co-ordination

The promotion of solidarity among the Muslim peoples requires that they should be made to realize that their progress and development will have to be on the basis of their common beliefs and of the many common bonds between them resulting from their loyalty to the religion of Islam. For the Muslims, Islam is one of their essential distinguishing features, or characteristics, and it identifies their distinctive personality, history and civilization. Any progress the Muslims make on the basis of Islam is self-induced progress within a framework of complete independence and free from any foreign association.

Any attempt made to deflect any one of the Muslim peoples from pursuing this essentially Muslim path is destined to fail, because to invite them to abandon this Islamic policy is in fact to invite them to renounce their very nature and personality as Muslims, and to undermine their very existence. This is something which no free people would agree to, and which the Muslims would reject without hesitation. However hard the advocates of imported doctrines and ideas try to embellish them or dress them up in attractive garbs, the Muslim peoples would reject them. All the nice things said about these alien ideas will be found to be hollow and meaningless. Strong peoples would not pursue any path towards progress other than that which emanates from, and is guided by, their own nature and essence, and is based upon their own personality and characteristics.

There is another advantage in the common Islamic doctrine of the Muslims. It is that it removes the barriers and obstacles which have been erected by foreign elements to separate the Muslim peoples from one another and induce the Muslim countries to link themselves to one of the dominant world power *blocs*. Such association with foreign *blocs* creates a cleavage between the Muslim countries and undermines their solidarity, and benefits only the enemies of the Muslims. Loyalty to the common faith which links the Muslim peoples together would ensure that such attempts at isolating the Muslims would be thwarted, and that our peoples would be safeguarded from this mortal danger.

Spiritual co-ordination among the Muslims would also lead to the elimination of any sectarian differences among groups which had resulted from, and subsequently led to, political disputes throughout the history of Islam. These differences had created various difficulties for the Muslim countries which at times imposed a very heavy burden upon them and weakened their influence in the international sphere. They have also shaken the faith of the Muslims in the fact that they are but a single nation with a single common belief to which Sunnis, Shi'ah, Wahhabis and Zaydis owe loyalty. With co-ordination, the adherents to groups or sections would be made to realize that the Muslims are a monolithic unit, and that it is in the interest of all the members of the Muslim family, whether they be peoples or individuals, that sectional differences be removed and unity installed.

Political co-ordination

It would not be appropriate on this occasion to attempt to identify the Muslim countries which are comparatively free from subservience to, or connection with, any of the power *blocs* seeking to dominate the world. The reason for this is that such dependence or subservience takes devious forms, many of which are extremely subtle and difficult to classify. It is difficult, for example, to determine the exact nature of treaties of protection, colonial dependence, alliances, treaties of co-operation and other forms of association between states and to assess the extent to which one side to such arrangements dominates or controls the other. It is an established fact that the Muslim peoples, without exception, are determined to rid themselves of all the vestiges of foreign domination and influence in any shape or form, and that when any Muslim people finds it possible to guarantee their peace and security through collective solidarity with their Muslim brothers and neighbours they would utterly reject any harmful alliance with a foreign source.

It is significant here to recall that the establishment of the League of Arab States came at a time when the majority of the Muslim countries were labouring under foreign alliances and commitments. These did not, however, prevent the establishment of the League — rather, the existence of the League itself helped the Arab countries to throw off the yoke of foreign burdens. The establishment of an Islamic grouping on a sound basis would be likely to bring about in the Islamic sphere the same kind of result as ensued from the existence of the League of Arab States in the Arab sphere. The Islamic *bloc*, like the Arab League, would be a means of co-ordinating the efforts of the Arabs and the Muslims to secure full liberty and independence and to foster their solidarity in the political, cultural, social and economic spheres. It should also not be forgotten that the existence of the Arab League has helped a great deal in strengthening the policy pursued by the Arab states towards non-alignment with any of the big power *blocs*. The concept of Islamic solidarity would be likely to lead to the same result for the Muslim countries, and would make it possible for them to oppose links with foreign sources in the military and political spheres, as well as in the spiritual and doctrinal spheres. The Muslims make no distinction between the forms which association with outside elements take. Association in the doctrinal sphere is not less dangerous or menacing to the independence of the Muslims and their national edifice than other forms of association with foreign sources, and their resistance to this should not be on any smaller scale.

The experience of the Muslims throughout the ages amply demonstrates that Islam has tremendous capacity to

dilute or eliminate racial, sectarian, class or other differences between its adherents. Islam also has been demonstrated as capable of establishing a harmonious society on the basis of human brotherhood. The strengthening of Islamic solidarity is the best means of relieving some Muslim countries of the pressure and handicaps resulting from domestic problems arising from racial, sectarian or class conflict. Islamic solidarity also has a rôle to play in settling disputes among some Muslim countries on territorial questions — disputes which mar the peace and stability of the countries concerned and at times threaten world peace (examples are the disputes between Morocco and Tunisia, and between Iraq and Iran). Islamic solidarity would widen the horizon of unity and harmony among the Muslims and would transcend narrow and rigid territorial and national frontiers, and this would make a very substantial contribution towards the solution of the problems or exclusive national and territorial loyalties. There are also political and national problems in which the efforts and energies of the peoples directly concerned have not achieved satisfactory results. Chief among these are the problems of Palestine, Kashmir and Cyprus. Failure to solve these problems has done great harm to the peoples of the countries of primary concern, and has to a significant degree threatened the safety and stability of neighbouring and sisterly countries and peoples. This perpetual threat has induced the Muslim countries concerned to devote a great deal of their resources and energies to defensive and military purposes, and this has imposed heavy burdens on their economies and has robbed them of the opportunity to work more assiduously in the productive spheres, whether they be economic, educational or cultural. Islamic solidarity would convert all these pending problems — as well as future ones of a similar kind — to common Islamic problems to be undertaken by all the Muslim states within the framework of solidarity, co-operation and unity in aims and methods. The demonstration of a tangible and common Islamic interest in such problems would by itself break the deadlock into which they have lapsed for a long time, and would increase the chances of finding peaceful solutions for them through the exertion of influence by the Muslim countries as a whole — influence which would increase as a result of the strength which the Muslim countries would derive from the very fact of their solidarity and unity. Such influence would be much greater than that which any Muslim country can wield, and would also be greater than that of the League of Arab States, an organization that has so far not succeeded in making the voice of right and justice in regard to Palestine heard in the international forum.

Economic co-ordination

If the burdens which individual Islamic countries are bearing as a result of domestic or regional political problems were to be removed and made the responsibility of greater Islamic entity, the members of the group will find it easier to embark upon productive co-operation in the spheres of industry, production, economic development and social and cultural progress. The creation of such an Islamic entity would render a valuable service not only to its members but to the world as a whole, and would be an excellent example to be emulated by the developing countries for the purpose of co-operating in the solution of the problems of development in various respects.

The concept of Islamic regrouping would provide the best possible opportunities for the Muslims to co-operate in the economic and production spheres. It is a fact that the reason for the lack of progress in many of the problems of modern times is the failure to consider more carefully the economic aspects of these problems. It is also regrettable that some leaders in the Muslim countries have been critical of Islamic solidarity but have not bothered to justify their criticism on any reasonable or rational basis. None of these critics seems to have given a thought to the economic, commercial, financial or scientific advantages to be secured through Islamic solidarity. It is likewise ironic that while for these people economic co-operation between the African and Asian countries is deemed to be beneficial, it is considered harmful or undesirable among the Muslim countries. No evidence has been adduced by the critics to substantiate this theme against solidarity, while on the other hand fair-minded and serious experts studying this problem have amassed a mountain of evidence definitely proving that Islamic solidarity will bring unquestionable benefits to the Muslim peoples in the spheres of economy and trade exchange.

Conclusion

The regrouping and solidarity of the Muslims is a progressive step dictated by the logic of the history of the Muslims, the reality of their present state of affairs, and the facts about international realignment. It is also a step which would lead to positive results beneficial to the Muslims and to mankind generally. One consequence of Islamic solidarity would be that the domestic, regional and political problems with which the Muslim states are at present preoccupied will disappear, and the energies of the Muslim peoples as a whole would be realised for tackling the really serious problems bedevilling the world today. These are the problems of economic development, the raising of the standard of living and the proper development of social systems, and the channelling of international co-operation towards the economic, social and cultural aspects of life, all of which would lead to a better understanding between the various peoples of the world and would promote real harmony and friendship.

The solution, through solidarity, of the various problems from which the Islamic world now suffers would also be of great benefit to the cause of world peace. These problems mar the prospects for international co-operation and world peace. It has been amply demonstrated in the past that these problems can erupt into military conflict and cause the shedding of blood — as has happened in Palestine, Kashmir, Cyprus and Somalia.

The Islamic world occupies, in many respects, a central position in the world today. On the Muslim countries converge the various international political currents, and over the Muslim countries clash the big powers, struggling for world domination. The best contribution which the Muslim peoples can make towards the promotion of world peace is to remove their countries from the sphere of competition and clash by the big power *blocs*. This can only be done by the Muslims themselves filling the ideological vacuum in their countries and which is attracting the Communist *bloc*, and at the same time rectifying the economic void which is attracting the Western *bloc*. The filling of the material and spiritual voids can be achieved only if the peoples of the region join hands to uphold their faith and their material and spiritual interests, to protect their personality, to defend their edifice, and to safeguard their stability and peace. Co-operation and solidarity have become the watchwords of peoples throughout the world and are enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

The Agreement between Pakistan, Iran & Turkey known as the R.C.D.

(Regional Co-operation for Development Organization)

—A Step Towards Islamic Unity

Its Aims and its Achievements

By SHAMEEM AKHTAR

Our picture shows the three architects of the Regional Co-operation for Development between Pakistan, Iran and Turkey: President Muhammad Ayyúb Khan (extreme right), His Imperial Majesty Arya Mehr *of Iran (centre) and the Prime Minister of Turkey (extreme left).*

The R.C.D. is not a military alliance. It is a truly regional organization consisting of countries — Pakistan, Iran and Turkey — with common problems of under-development.

The Muslim world between the two world wars

Ever since the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire, Muslim countries have been shy of the idea of forging any form of unity among them. For volatile nationalism in its various forms which erupted with great force during the post-World War I period has not yet exhausted its momentum. But gradually the realization gained ground in the Muslim countries that in spite of their separate national existence they were still linked by inseparable bonds of cultural, spiritual and economic affinities and that it would be in their interest to co-operate with each other in the common spheres. During the inter-war and post World War II periods most of the Muslim countries found themselves engaged in liberation struggles against the British and French who had established their overlordship over them. In 1937 Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Afghanistan concluded the Sa'dábád Pact, which provided for non-aggression, consultation and mutual co-operation in suppressing the subsersive activities among the signatory States. The Pact was of a negative value and did not provide any enduring basis of unity. However, it kept alive the idea of regional co-operation among the Islamic nations.

The formation of the Regional Co-operation for Development Organization

The formation of the organization known as the Regional Co-operation for Development between Pakistan, Iran and Turkey in social, economic and cultural spheres with the object of promoting intra-regional harmony in July 1964 was not a flash in the pan. It was a bold and imaginative scheme of international co-operation. Indeed, it was the culmination of a long historical process. For what unites these member-countries is greater than what divides them. The geographical continuity, Islamic identity and a common historical experience and cultural heritage are some of the imperatives of unity among the neighbouring Muslim countries. Moreover, the march of science and technology and commerce in the modern age has ushered in an era of interdependence. According to the Western observers, the stimulus to the RCD came from the European movement which originated in the post-World War II period when the Western European states became painfully conscious of their insignificance compared to the two super-states, the U.S.A. and the Soviet Union. Later, however, in 1950, when the movement suffered a setback since it failed to make the Council of Europe a real success, the Western European states embarked upon a modest experiment and set up the European Coal and Steel Community, the European Common Market and Euratom (the European Atomic Energy Commission). It is, however, asserted by the critics that the RCD has been established because the idea of Pan-Islamism has failed of realization. While an analogy can be plausibly drawn between the frustration of supra-nationalism in Europe and Pan-Islamism in Afro-Asian regions, it would be wrong to conclude that this negative impulse was the driving motivation behind the RCD.

For in addition to the political, economic and cultural forces there is also at work an undercurrent of Muslim universalism cutting across the national frontiers of Pakistan, Iran and Turkey which serves as a strong emotional basis of unity. The creation of Pakistan represents the triumph of Muslim universalism. The integration of the various provinces of West Pakistan into a cohesive unit was another step in the direction of larger unity on ideological lines. It must be recalled that after the birth of Pakistan, the *Qá'id-i-A'zam* Muhammad 'Alí Jinnah had suggested the possibility of

some form of confederation between Pakistan and Iran. After his death the succeeding governments could not work upon the idea because they were beset with many difficult problems. Under the dynamic leadership of Field Marshal President Ayyúb Khan, Pakistan has rediscovered her destiny which lies in closer collaboration with Iran and Turkey and neighbouring Muslim countries in various fields of human endeavour.

The Constitution of Pakistan and the Regional Co-operation for Development Organization

The Constitution of Pakistan has enshrined this idea in the basic principles of state policy in these words: "The bonds of unity among Muslim countries should be promoted, goodwill and friendly relations should be fostered." The creation of the RCD is therefore in full accord with the Constitution as well as the *raison d'etre* of the Pakistan movement.

Fully alive to the international obligations of Pakistan to the Muslim world as well as to her allies, President Ayyúb Khan started re-formulating his country's foreign policy in the fast changing situation. Pakistan was already linked with Iran and Turkey and Great Britain in an anti-Communist military alliance known as the CENTO. The presence of the United States of America, though not a formal member of the Pact, was nevertheless most effective since she was associated with the Military Committee, Economic Committee and Counter-subversion Committee. One glaring anomaly of the CENTO has been that although it was believed to have been formed according to Article 52 of the United Nations Charter providing for "regional arrangements or agencies", one of its chief sponsors, Britain, did not belong to the region. Another major power associated with the alliance, the U.S.A., also was an alien to the Middle East, as she was from the Western Hemisphere. The alliance became a partnership of states with unequal power-status. The U.S.A. and Britain dominated the policies of the alliance, with the result that their global strategy, i.e., the containment of international Communism, defined the interest of the region. In short, the CENTO was not a regional arrangement.

With the advent of the New Frontiersmen in the United States Administration, there took place a reorientation in the American outlook and policy. With the comparative thaw in the cold war, and the developing Sino-Soviet split, the United States of America shifted the emphasis from military to economic struggle against Communism. As a result, the Alliance for Progress programme was launched providing for the economic development of Latin America with the assistance of the United States. Denouncing the military treaties, the West German Chancellor Kissinger said that they were signed by the Republican Administration which was suffering from "Pactitis". Consequently the United States Administration started cutting the military aid to Iran and Turkey.

Reasons that led to the formation of the RCD

Besides, Pakistan and Turkey were disenchanted with military alliances, since they failed to solve their problems. The stalemate in Kashmir and Cyprus continued defying solution. The United States of America, their military ally, would not take sides in the dispute because such were her global interests. It was against this international background that the Foreign Ministers of Pakistan, Iran and Turkey met at Ankara on 3 and 4 July 1964 to discuss political, economic and cultural relations between the three countries. It was already stated that the talks were "parallel to but outside the CENTO". A joint *communiqué* issued on 5 July 1964 stated that there existed a large field of co-operation outside the framework of the CENTO, in which the three countries could collaborate on national projects, especially in the spheres of communications, agriculture, industry, mineral resources, education, culture, health and regional development. The *communiqué* had called for an early settlement of Kashmir in accordance with the U.N. resolutions. It also declared support for Cyprus treaties and constitutions as being the only valid legal basis for a solution of the Cyprus question. President Ayyúb Khan's visit to Kabul on 1 July 1964 was reported in a section of the foreign press as an attempt to bring Afghanistan in the fold of the RCD which was emerging as a new grouping of Muslim Powers in the Middle East with a total population of 150,000,000. A CENTO official commented on 5 July 1964 that although the Organization was not participating in the tripartite talks, it had been kept informed on matters of interest to the Pact.

Later, the three heads of state met in Istanbul to confirm the regional co-operation agreement between these countries. In a joint statement issued on 22 July 1964 they declared that the "regional co-operation was an essential factor in accelerating the pace of national development and in promoting peace and stability". They hoped for further strengthening of the historical and cultural bonds between the neighbouring countries. They approved of the establishment of a Ministerial Council to implement the decisions, a Regional Planning Council to harmonize development plans and a secretariat to facilitate the work of the Organization.

The objectives of the RCD are in full conformity with Article 1, paragraph 3 of the United Nations Charter which provides for international co-operation in solving international problems of a social, economic and cultural nature. Article 55 provides for the promotion of economic development, social progress and a higher standard of living, and international cultural and educational co-operation. This is the reason why the United Nations Secretary-General, U Thant, welcomed the RCD as an important step towards world peace and prosperity. He stated that regional organizations such as the RCD would go a long way towards promoting the welfare of the peoples in developing countries.

The RCD is not a military alliance like the CENTO. It is a truly regional organization consisting of countries with common problems. They are engaged in a massive effort to overcome the hurdles imposed by under-development. The creation of the Organization is an historic turning-point, since it marks a shift in the foreign policies of the member-nations who have hitherto been identified with one of the power *blocs*. The absence of foreign powers from the RCD is indicative of the independent character of the Organization. That non-aligned Indonesia has concluded a bilateral economic and cultural agreement with Pakistan on the pattern of the RCD lends point to it. Having tasted the foreign aid which has been used as a tool of power-politics these countries have learnt to rely on their own resources. A concerted and planned drive by like-minded nations would accelerate the pace of change and emancipate the masses from economic disabilities.

Reasons that co-ordination of efforts of the RCD and CENTO in the economic and cultural fields is not desirable

It is often argued that since the CENTO also provides for regional co-operation in economic and cultural spheres its socio-economic goals are identical with those of the RCD. Dr. Khalatbary, the former Secretary-General of the CENTO, has expressed the view that due to this identity of objectives there existed the possibility of co-ordinating the economic activity of the CENTO and the RCD. In the opinion of this writer such a co-ordination of efforts even in the limited field of economic and cultural development is not desirable.

First, the CENTO is essentially a military alliance, and its development programme will be subordinated to the military interests of the Big Powers.

Second, there has been a great dissatisfaction in Pakistan, Iran and Turkey over the slow pace of economic development under the CENTO. The most that the CENTO can boast of is the current construction of a network of roads, railways and telecommunications between the capitals of Asian member-countries, while the RCD offers a full-fledged development programme and expansion of trade, commerce, banking and insurance.

Third, any co-ordination of the activities of the CENTO and the RCD would give the big Powers a preponderating influence in the working of the regional organization which would provide them with a lever to sabotage the work of the RCD.

Fourth, it has been stated by the architects of the RCD that the organization will work parallel to, but outside, the framework of the CENTO. Therefore any merger or co-ordination of their activities would run counter to the basic aims of the Organization.

The RCD is not just a mechanism ; it represents a movement which is in harmony with the Afro-Asian solidarity. Its limited experiment can be transferred to other regions of Asia and Africa.

President Ayyúb warned the Afro-Asians that their countries had a "very bleak future" if they did not shed off "inward-looking nationalism". He urged them to search for a "new and enduring basis of unity". The former Prime Minister of Iran, Hasan 'Alí Mansúr, asked the Asians to abandon the absolute ideas, for the days of economic nationalism were gone.

The impressive record of the RCD

Though its achievements have not been spectacular, the RCD has an impressive record to its credit during the first few years of its career. For example, Pakistan and Iran concluded an agreement in October 1964 for the abolition of the visa. Pakistan and Turkey signed a similar agreement, which would facilitate the movement of persons within the region. Agreements have been made between Pakistan, Iran and Turkey with the object of promoting tourist traffic among the three countries. A trade agreement was concluded between Pakistan and Turkey for the promotion and expansion of trade. The surface postage rates in the three countries were reduced to internal levels. A joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry has been established. Nineteen different types of industries have been identified for development as joint purpose enterprises. A commercial bank and a joint airline and shipping service have been set up, and a general agreement on technical co-operation has been concluded. A regional Cultural Institute has been established at Teheran to promote a closer understanding of the common cultural heritage of the member countries.

The RCD is potentially an expanding organization

The RCD is potentially an expanding organization. Some of the Arab countries may join the fraternity since it offers commercial and economic benefits to the member States. King Faysal of Su'udí Arabia has put forward the idea of an Islamic Congress with emphasis on cultural and economic collaboration. Five Arab countries such as the U.A.R., Iraq, Syria, Kuwait and Jordan have concluded an economic unity agreement which became effective on 1 January 1965, and provides for the establishment of an Arab Common Market. In the course of time it will not be difficult to work out some kind of arrangement between the Arab Common Market and the RCD countries. A non-political organization such as the RCD will attract the attention of industrialized nations of the Western and Communist *blocs*.

While it will be worthwhile to receive technical and financial assistance from the industrialized countries without strings, the RCD must not depend solely on any of the rival power *blocs*. It should be kept out of the cold war.

The value of the RCD lies in the rational integration of national economics in order to increase the rate of economic growth and the gross national product by utilizing resources within the region. This would ultimately reduce the economic dependence on foreign powers. The success of the RCD will lay the groundwork for greater unity in the area. The RCD summit meeting held at Ramsar, Iran, on 29-30 July 1967 shows that the organization can play an effective role in serving the interest of peace in the region. The heads of state or governments have denounced the forcible seizure and annexation of the Arab territory by Israel as contrary to the provisions of the U.N. Charter. The unequivocal support of the Arab cause by the RCD countries is concrete evidence of the solidarity of Islamic nations.

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Salient Features of Islam

THE following is a very brief account of Islam and some of its teachings. For further details, please write to the IMAM of the Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking, Surrey, England.

ISLAM : THE RELIGION OF PEACE.—The word "Islam" literally means : (1) peace ; (2) submission. The word in its religious sense signifies complete submission to the Will of God.

OBJECT OF THE RELIGION.—Islam provides its followers with a perfect code, whereby they may work out what is noble and good in man, and thus maintain peace between man and man.

THE PROPHET OF ISLAM.—Muhammad, popularly known as the Prophet of Islam, was, however, the last of the Prophets. Muslims, i.e., the followers of Islam, accept all such prophets of the world, including Abraham, Moses and Jesus, as revealed by the Will of God for the guidance of humanity.

THE QUR'AN.—The Gospel of the Muslims is the Qur'án. Muslims believe in the Divine origin of every other sacred book. Inasmuch as all such previous revelations have become corrupted through human interpolation, the Qur'án, the last Book of God, came as a recapitulation of the former Gospels.

ARTICLES OF FAITH IN ISLAM.—These are seven in number : Belief in (1) God ; (2) Angels ; (3) Books from God ; (4) Messengers from God ; (5) the Hereafter ; (6) the Premeasurement of good and evil ; (7) Resurrection after death.

The life after death, according to Islamic teaching, is not a new life, but only a continuance of this life, bringing its hidden realities into light. It is a life of unlimited progress ; those who qualify themselves in this life for the progress will enter into Paradise, which is another name for the said progressive life after death, and those who get their faculties stunted by their misdeeds in this life will be the denizens of the Hell—a life incapable of appreciating heavenly bliss, and of torment—in order to get themselves purged of all impurities and thus, ultimately, to become fit for the life in the Heaven.

The sixth article of Faith has been confused by some with what is popularly known as Fatalism. A Muslim neither believes in Fatalism nor Predestination ; he believes in Premeasurement. Everything created by God is for good in the given use and under the given circumstances. Its abuse is evil and suffering.

PILLARS OF ISLAM.—These are five in number: (1) Declaration of faith in the Oneness of God, and in the Divine Messengership of Muhammad; (2) Prayer; (3) Fasting ; (4) Alms-giving ; (5) Pilgrimage to the Holy Shrine at Mecca.

ATTRIBUTES OF GOD.—The Muslims worship One God — the Almighty, the All-Knowing, the All-Just, the Cherisher of All the worlds, the Friend, the Helper. There is none like Him. He has no partner. He is neither begotten nor has He begotten any son or daughter. He is indivisible in Person. He is the Light of the Heavens and the Earth, the Merciful, the Compassionate, the Glorious, the Magnificent, the Beautiful, the Eternal, the Infinite, the First and the Last.

FAITH AND ACTION.—Faith without action is a dead letter. Faith by itself is insufficient, unless translated into action. A Muslim believes in his own personal accountability for his actions in this life and the Hereafter. Each must bear his own burden and none can expiate for another's sin.

ETHICS OF ISLAM.—"Imbue yourself with Divine Attributes," says the noble Prophet. God is the prototype of man, and His Attributes form the basis of Muslim ethics. Righteousness in Islam consists in leading a life in complete harmony with the Divine Attributes. To act otherwise is sin.

CAPABILITIES OF MAN IN ISLAM.—The Muslim believes in the inherent sinlessness of man's nature, which, made of the goodliest fibre, is capable of unlimited progress, setting him above the angels, and leading him to the border of Divinity.

THE POSITION OF WOMEN IN ISLAM.—Man and woman come from the same essence, possess the same soul, and they have been equipped with equal capability for intellectual, spiritual and moral attainments. Islam places man and woman under the like obligations the one to the other.

EQUALITY OF MANKIND AND THE BROTHERHOOD OF ISLAM.—Islam is the religion of the Unity of God and the equality of mankind. Lineage, riches and family honours are accidental things: virtue and the service of humanity are matters of real merit. Distinctions of colour, race and creed are unknown in the ranks of Islam. All mankind is of one family, and Islam has succeeded in welding the black and the white into one fraternal whole.

PERSONAL JUDGMENT.—Islam encourages the exercise of personal judgment and respects difference of opinion which, according to the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad, is a blessing of God.

KNOWLEDGE.—The pursuit of knowledge is a duty in Islam, and it is the acquisition of knowledge that makes men superior even to angels.

SANCTITY OF LABOUR.—Every labour which enables man to live honestly is respected. Idleness is deemed a sin.

CHARITY.—All the faculties of man have been given to him as a trust from God for the benefit of his fellow-creatures. It is man's duty to live for others, and his charities must be applied without any distinction of persons. Charity in Islam brings man nearer to God. Charity and the giving of alms have been made obligatory, and every person who possesses property above a certain limit has to pay a tax, levied on the rich for the benefit of the poor.

Towards a Political *Rapprochement* between Turks and Arabs in the Muslim World of the Near and Middle East

Palestine and Cyprus: the Common Links in the Chain of Events which may lead to the Revival of Turco-Arab Relations

By SALAHI RAMADAN

The common factors governing the problems arising from Palestine and Cyprus

In spite of so many efforts by interested parties, both within and without the United Nations' framework, two vital and essentially dangerous problems, affecting Muslims, remain unsolved in the Middle East, namely, Palestine and Cyprus. Perhaps it would not be surprising if these problems, which are human as well as politico-economic, directly contribute to a *rapprochement* between the Turks and the Arabs in this predominantly Muslim region, for, the plight of the Palestinian refugees, and the predicament of the Cypriot Turks, should be the concern of all Muslim countries, however small or great.

One may ask, what are the common factors in both cases? To begin with, for the last twenty years or so, the Palestinian Arabs have been the victims of Great Power Diplomacy, resulting in their eviction from their homelands. They have been forced to leave their properties behind and seek refuge over the border, in an unfamiliar and difficult environment, under humiliating conditions. Similarly, four years ago, the Turks of Cyprus were victimized by the traditional expansionist Greek policy, historically known as the *Megali Idea* (The Great Ideal)[1], cloaked so skilfully under the slogan of *Enosis* (or the union of Cyprus with Greece), for popular consumption at home. In both cases the victimized peoples profess the same religion, pay allegiance to the same Prophet, and believe in the same Word of God.

Another factor is that both the Turks and the Arabs are two of the oldest peoples in the Middle East, the Arabs being older than the Turks, inhabiting huge areas of land, labelled, according to whim and circumstance, as "backward", "undeveloped", or "under-developed" by Western economists, who would, perhaps, like to ensure that this state of "under-development" persisted indefinitely; probably because it would help keep the delicate balance between the Western economic system, based as it is on capitalism-cum-industrialism, and this rapidly developing economic region, which has an agrarian, extractive economy, and which the Western economists think is complementary to their system.

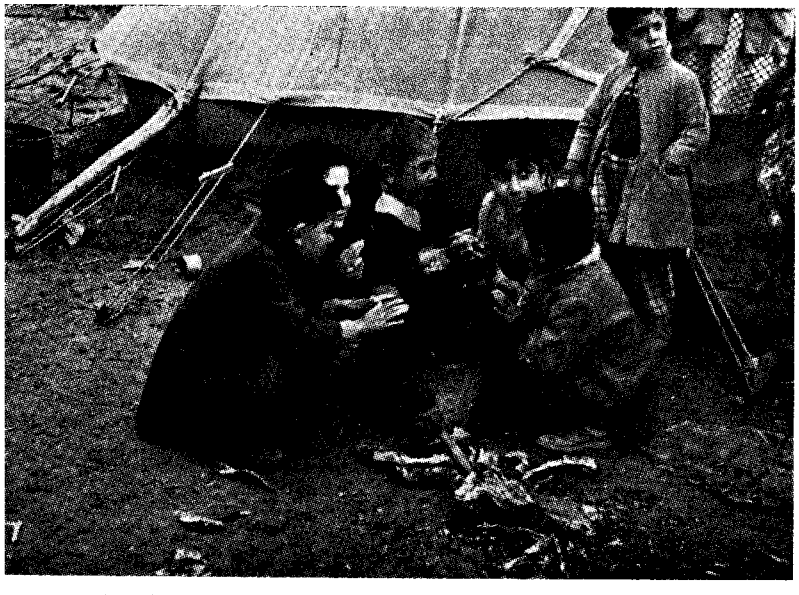
There is, perhaps, no need to stress the fact that the Great Powers, both in the East and in the West, are fully committed to serving their own interests. Who is not? It should equally be unnecessary to express an opinion on the attitude adopted by Soviet Russia during the recent Arab-Israeli war, and that of the U.S.A. in connection with the periodical flare-ups in Cyprus. These are too well-known to need any further comment. But one must never lose sight of the fact that the Great Powers are merely attempting (with, or without success, depending on the weakness of the ruling *élite*, and the force of public opinion in the Muslim countries) to use the Middle East peoples to further their own ends; and this, in itself, should be another driving force, urging both the Turks and the Arabs to join their forces in the pursuit of such means as would contribute to the logical, moral, and permanent solution of the afore-mentioned two most vital human problems, confronting Muslim Society and the world at large, together with any other problems, political or economic, which Muslim countries are facing today. I daresay this would certainly make Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's historical appeals for Turco-Arab *rapprochement*, unity and solidarity, come to the limelight again, and even contribute to the idea of a Muslim League of Nations[2].

1 Comparable with the "Drang Nach Osten" of German Imperialism.

2 See the appeal to the Muslim World by the Committee of *Shari'ah* of the Grand National Assembly, dated 9 May 1920 and signed by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk as President, published in the Turkish newspaper *Hakimiyet-i Milliye* (National Sovereignty) for 17 May 1920; also *Zabit Ceridesi* (Hansard of The Grand National Assembly), Vol. I, pp. 246-248; see also appeal by The Grand National Assembly to the Islamic World (dated as above) (*Archives of the Institute of Turkish Reform History*, No. 37/40859, and *Hakimiyet-i Milliye* for 13 May, 1920) which reflect the need felt by Mustafa Kemal and his group for the support of Muslim countries in the Turkish War of Independence.

Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the Arabs and the world of Islam

Perhaps it would be a relevant digression if I ventured into history, at this stage, to remind the reader that the history of Turco-Arab relations presents a continuous process of revolutionary transformation from the *status quo,* under Ottoman domination, to the Great Arab Revolt, and finally to the *rapprochement* of the Turkish and Arab peoples, which started during the Turkish War of Independence, following the secession of the non-Turkish territories of the Ottoman Empire. As early as December, 1919, and early January, 1920, in a despatch from Admiral Sir J. de Robeck, British High Commissioner in Istanbul, to Earl Curzon, the then British Foreign Secretary, mention was made of "rumours circulating for some weeks to the effect that (Turkish) Nationalists in interior (? are) getting together Delegates (? from) different Islamic countries, who will meet at Sivas or Erzeroum, and make some pronouncement regarding solidarity of Islam with Turkey". It was also claimed that Mustafa Kemal had convoked a general meeting of different Turkish, Kurdish and Arab chiefs in Erzeroum, in which they would discuss the means of resisting the establishment of an Armenian State[3]. There were also rumours that the meeting would consider the establishment of a kind of league, or federation, among the Muslim countries[4].



A refugee camp at Hamitköy, Cyprus, one mile and a half from Nicosia. Turkish children sitting around a fire to warm themselves.

One should also recall what Eliot Grinnell Mears expressed as a "suggestive statement which appeared in *The Times* late in 1922, from the widely-read Arab daily of Cairo, *al-Mokattam*: 'Two months ago it was known that Kemal Pasha favored the creation of an Arab Government, to include all the Arab countries which were formerly part of the Turkish Empire, to work with the Turkish Government in regard to questions of military, financial and foreign policy in a manner similar to that which obtained in Austro-Hungary before the war.' Such an arrangement is possible but unlikely, that is, assuming that Great Britain, France and Soviet Russia take no steps separately or jointly which may antagonize greatly the Moslem world . . ."[5]

Perhaps it would not be irrelevant to mention that in Turkey, before the abolition of the Caliphate on 3 March 1924, when Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk) himself was urged by "an emissary, claiming to represent Indian and Egyptian Moslems, to become Caliph"[6], refused to do so on the simple assumption that it would be beyond the principle of nationhood and national sovereignty to expect such a person as the Caliph-Monarch, or Sultan, to have the right of jurisdiction over all Muslims and all Muslim countries. It would have been illogical or unreasonable, he remarked, to designate, under the title of Caliph, a ruler destined to govern all the Muslim States and nations, some of which were independent, *while most of them were under a foreign protectorate.* He thought that Muslim States would not recognize the authority of the Caliph, because it would be in contradiction of the independence of the state and of the sovereignty of the people; but he would by no means deny the "beauty of the idea of the United States of the World". He pointed to the theory that Muslim communities dwelling in Europe, Asia, Africa, and in the other regions, sooner or later in the future, would attain the liberty and faculty of acting according to their will and carry out their wishes. Then, if they thought it expedient and advantageous, they would find certain points of union and accord in accordance with the exigencies of the century. If the delegates of these hypothetical independent Muslim States would unite in a congress and declare that this or that relationship has been established between certain states . . . that such states united in this manner would be represented by the President of this Committee, then they would, if so desired, give to these *United States of Islam* the title of Caliphate, and to the person elected to be President of this United Assembly the title of Caliph[7].

Nevertheless, Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk) did, in fact, attach great importance to Arab support and aid during the Turkish War of Independence[8]; although it should be stressed that, when most of the present Arab territories were under Ottoman rule, or suzerainty, this gave rise to misconceptions, jealousy and even enmity between the two brother nations, so masterfully exploited by British diplomacy, during and

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3 Despatch from Admiral Sir J. de Robeck, British High Commissioner in Istanbul to Earl Curzon (London); 26 December 1919, in *Documents on British Foreign Policy,* 1919-1938, 1st Series, Vol. IV, London, 1952, pp. 974-976.

4 So far no documents have been traced to give support to these rumours.

5 Eliot Grinnell Mears, *Modern Turkey,* New York, 1924, pp. 549-550.

6 Lord Kinross, *Atatürk — The Rebirth of A Nation,* London, 1966, p. 386.

7 *A Speech Delivered by Ghazi Mustapha Kemal, President of the Turkish Republic, October 1927;* Leipzig 1929, pp. 588-595. It must be added, however, that Atatürk believed "neither common sense nor reason will ever admit that any individual Mohammedan State will confer on any man the authority of guiding and administering the affairs of the whole of the Mohammedan world", which goes to show that he believed in the national sovereignty of Islamic States. I am afraid Irfan Orga, in his book *Phoenix Ascendant — The Rebirth of Turkey,* London 1958, p. 133, makes the sweeping statement that Atatürk, expressing his opinion in The Grand National Assembly, said that he was not a believer in a league of Islamic nations, nor even in a league of Turkish nations.

8 See note 2 above; also J. C. Hurewitz, *Diplomacy In The Near and Middle East,* Vol. II, Princeton, 1956, pp. 214-216 for the Treaty of Non-Aggression "Sa'dabad Pact" signed between Turkey, Afghanistan, Iran and Iraq; for previous Turco-Arab Treaties, see *British and Foreign State Papers,* which indicate the trend of Turco-Arab relations. For Mustafa Kemal's appeal to the Muslim world to extend aid to Turkey through the Red Crescent, see Turkish newspaper *Hakimiyet-i Milliye, op. cit.,* of 28 September 1923; and p. 514 of *Atatürkün Tamim, Telgraf Ve Beyannameleri* (*Despatches, Telegrams and Statements of Atatürk*) IV, 1917-1938, Ankara University Press, 1964.

Once a productive, self-supporting people, they are now dependent on relief supplies. The expression on the faces of these Turkish refugees in Cyprus tells its own story.

after the first World War[9], resulting in the great Arab Revolt against the Sultan-Caliph's call to *jihád* (Holy War) and the ultimate defeat of the Ottoman Empire[10]. Perhaps this Arab " stab in the back ", as the Turks came to call it, indirectly contributed to the foundation of a new Turkey, based on national sovereignty, and gave birth to the new, national and sovereign Arab states in the Near and Middle East. It must be stressed, however, that this Arab rising did not deter Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk), late in 1919, from seeking, and obtaining to a considerable extent, the assistance and co-operation of the Arab peoples, in his struggle against the *Entente* Powers, with a view to expelling them from the Turkish territories, which they had occupied under the pretext of Article 7 of the Armistice of Mudros (30 October, 1918)[11].

Turkey's recognition of Israel alienates the Arabs from Turkey

Although the abolition of the Caliphate and the secularization of the Turkish State cannot be said to have contributed to the betterment of Turco-Arab relations, and although the drifting of Turkey towards the U.S.A. within the N.A.T.O. and other alliances; and of the United Arab Republic towards Soviet Russia after the failure of the U.S.A. to finance the " Aswan High Dam Project ", were a direct strain on the Turco-Arab relations, yet, the bone of contention between the two sides actually came to the foreground following the establishment of the Jewish State of Israel.

Israel, " the off-spring of the Balfour Declaration of 1917 "[12], if I may be allowed the expression, and of the Anglo-American, French, and Zionist efforts to set up a " national home " for the world Jews in the middle of Arab country[13], was, for reasons beyond my comprehension, and probably with the persuasion, or even pressure, of the U.S.A., officially recognized by Turkey, a Muslim country. This was,

9 See the MacMahon-Hussein Correspondence leading to the Arab Revolt against Ottoman Turkey in Harry N. Howard, *The Partition of Turkey*, New York, 1966 (new edition), pp. 188-190; Amin Sa'id, *al-Thawrah al-'Arabiyyah al-Kubra* (*The Great Arab Revolt*), 3 Vols., Cairo, 1934, quoted by Elie Kedourie in *England and the Middle East, The Vital Years* 1914-1921, London, 1956; see also *Command* 5964 *of* 1919, *Statements Made on Behalf of His Majesty's Government During the Year* 1918 *in Regard to the Future Status of Certain Parts of the Ottoman Empire;* L. Gaillard, *The Turks and Europe*, London, 1921, pp. 310-313; L. Krajevski, *La Politique Anglaise en Arabie*, 1915-1927, in *Revue de Paris*, XXV, No. 6, 15 March 1928, pp. 378-381; Coke, *The Heart of the Middle East*, pp. 143 ff.

10 For an excellent account of the causes leading to the entry of Turkey into the war and the aftermath, see Harry Howard, *The Partition of Turkey, op. cit.;* see also Winston S. Churchill, *The World Crisis: The Aftermath*, London, 1929, Ch. VII; Ahmed Emin (Yalman), *Turkey in the World War*, New Haven, 1930; about the great Arab Revolt see Note 9 above and also Hurgronje, *The Revolt In Arabia*, New York, 1917; Colonel Lawrence, *Revolt in the Desert;* Richard Coke, *The Arab's Place in the Sun*, London, 1929; C. J. Edmonds, *Kurds, Turks and Arabs*, New York, 1957.

11 For more information about the help given to Turkish Nationalists by the Arab people during the Turkish War of Independence, see Elie Kedourie, *England and the Middle East, op. cit.*, pp. 170-172; *Documents on British Foreign Policy* 1919-1938, 1st Series, Vol. IV, *op. cit.*, p. 523; Ali Fuad Cebesoy, *Milli Mücadele Hatiralari* (*Memoirs of the National Struggle*) 2 vols., Istanbul, 1953, p. 289 re: a despatch from Mustafa Kemal to all Army commanders about possible help from Syria; see also *Harp Tarihi Vesikalari Dergisi* (*Magazine of the Documents on the History of War*), 1956, No. 15, p. 203, for a similar despatch from M. Kemal to Army commanders in the South; Kázim Karabekir, *Istiklal Harbimizin Esaslari* (*Principles of our War of Independence*), Istanbul, 1957, p. 479; see also Note 8 above.

12 For more details on this and on Zionism as a world movement, see *Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons*, Vol. 99, Col. 838, 2 November 1917; *Zionism, Peace Handbook*, No. 162; Leonard Stein, *Zionism*, New York, 1926; H. Howard, *Partition of Turkey, op. cit.*, pp. 197-198; Loder, *The Truth About Mesopotamia, Syria and Palestine*, London, 1923; *Documents on British Foreign Policy*, 1st Series; and *A History of the Peace Conference of Paris*, ed. by H. W. V. Temperley, London, 1924, Vol. VI.

13 Probably as a result of the wrong policy of Western statesmen who felt so sympathetic towards the Jews, especially following their mass-annihilation, or even genocide, at the hands of the Nazis; but the whole affair turned out to be a tragedy at the expense of the Palestinian Arabs; which goes to show how generous the Great Powers can get with other peoples' lands.

as it were, the last straw in the already strained Turco-Arab relations. The unenlightened, or perhaps reckless, even unwise, policies followed by some Turkish Governments towards the Arabs, alienated the two peoples and drove a wedge between them, which went as far as causing a severance of diplomatic relations between Turkey and the United Arab Republic.

Recent improvements in Turco-Arab relations

It is gratifying to observe, however, that recently, there has been a fundamental transformation in the policy of the Republic of Turkey towards the Arab countries, especially immediately before and after the recent Arab-Israeli war. The Arabs, too, have been responding favourably, and a happy situation has come about in which there have been systematic diplomatic exchanges between Turkey and the Arab countries, including official visits by Heads of State and Foreign Ministers. Particularly important were the visits of President Sunay of Turkey to Su'údí Arabia on 22 January 1968, in return for King Faysal's State visit to Turkey; and to Libya on 27 January 1968, when he met King Idrís.

It is noteworthy that in a statement made at Ankara airport before departing for his official itinerary, the Turkish President said, " Our common heritage and ideals are an unshakable basis for establishing and preserving world peace in our region. They are also the basis of our solidarity and co-operation, which are jointly trying to develop in various fields in the interests of our countries' welfare and happiness. I will try to strengthen further this basis through the talks I will hold in both countries. During my visits I will also convey our people's fraternal feelings to the noble peoples of both countries."[14]

Following President Sunay's State visits to Su'údí Arabia and Libya, official *communiqués* were issued in the three capitals in which the Turkish President reaffirmed the deep friendship between Turkey and the Arab countries and expressed the gratitude of the Turkish people for the support of both Su'údí Arabia and Libya on the Cyprus question. Both King Faysal and King Idrís agreed with President Sunay on the need to abide by international agreements and called for a just solution to the problem on the island, one which would guarantee the legitimate rights of the Turkish Cypriot community there. With regard to the Middle East situation, the Turkish President stressed the need to safeguard Arab interests and legitimate rights, and expressed the hope that an agreed solution would be found to the Arab-Israeli question, reiterating Turkey's opposition to the use of force for political or territorial gains and sympathising with the tragic condition of the Palestinian refugees[15].

Another important visit has been that of the Foreign Minister of the United Arab Republic, Mahmoud Riyad, to Turkey on 14 March 1968, which lasted for three days. In a joint *communiqué* issued at the end of talks in Ankara between the Turkish Foreign Minister, Ihsan Caglayangil, and the U.A.R. Foreign Minister, it is stated that bilateral relations have been reviewed within the framework of the existing brotherly and friendly relations between the two countries. The two Foreign Ministers agreed that, for the normalisation of the situation in the Middle East, Israel should, in accordance with the Security Council resolution of 22 November 1967, withdraw her forces from the territories she had occupied after 4 June 1967. They also agreed on the necessity for peace and justice for the two communities in Cyprus. Mahmoud Riyad said that the exchange of visits between the two Foreign Ministers greatly contributed to improved relations between Turkey and the U.A.R. The Turkish Foreign Minister, who visited Egypt in January last year, said that Turkey valued her relations with the U.A.R. and with all Arab countries. It was later learned that the U.A.R. has re-opened its Consulate-General in Istanbul after six years[16].

Before concluding, perhaps it should be mentioned that this article did not aim at tracing the diplomatic history of the Turco-Arab relations, which has been most ably done by other authorities on the subject. The aim of the present article has, rather, been to stress the main common factors which could contribute to a *rapprochement* between the two great Muslim peoples of the Near and Middle East, who have so much in common, and who have so much to gain, if they brush aside their differences, and join forces with a view to solving the perennial problems of Cyprus and Palestine, which are tragically human problems after all, and which directly involve a considerable number of Muslims, who should never be left to their fate. The writer would be very happy even if this article would do no more than serve as a spur or stimulus towards more constructive ideas and suggestions from Muslim scholars in solving the vital problems of Islam.

14 *News From Turkey*, Press Counsellor's Office, Turkish Embassy, London, Vol. V, No. 2, 29 January 1968, p. 1.
15 *Ibid.*, Vol. V, No. 3, 20 February 1968, p. 1.
16 *Ibid.*, Vol. V, No. 4, 18 March, 1968, p. 1.

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The Arab Refugees

A Tragic Human and Political Problem

By MUSA MAZZAWI

The problem of the Palestine refugee is at one and the same time a human and a political problem of the first magnitude. It is a human problem because it is concerned directly with the life and the elementary rights of ordinary human beings — the refugees themselves. It is a political problem because it has a direct connection with the Palestine problem as a whole, and has so far stood in the way of any settlement in the Near East that could bring stability and peace to its peoples. In fact, the political ramifications of the problem have not been confined to the countries and peoples of the Near East. The attitudes which countries outside the region have adopted towards the problem of the refugees have conditioned Arab foreign policies in regard to such matters as trade, cultural exchanges and other international relations. The lack of understanding of what the Arabs believe to be the truth about the problem of the Palestine refugees has also in many respects engendered a sense of injustice throughout the Arab world, and bitterness that has reflected itself in many Arab governments' attitude towards foreign powers on various levels.

A proper understanding of the rights and wrongs of the issues involved in the problem of the refugees requires some knowledge of the history and background of the Palestine problem as a whole. Both these problems, however, are in essence simple. In the case of the political problem of Palestine the Arabs had been in continuous occupation of the country for thirteen centuries, and the Jews, who had left the country some two thousand years ago, cannot possibly retain an automatic right to go back to Palestine and thereby to expel the settled Arab inhabitants.

The Zionists often talk about the Jews' "historic" right to Palestine—but it should be noted that the Jews had inhabited Palestine for a total of eleven centuries — two centuries less than the Arabs. Not only is the Arabs' right to Palestine more "historic", it is more realistic since it is the latest in point of time.

To the Arabs the issues are plain. The Palestinian Arabs have a natural and undoubted right to the land of their fathers. A large number of them now find themselves outside that land, and they have a moral and legal right to go back. Against the Arabs it is argued, *inter alia,* that it was all the fault of the Arabs because they had rejected the United Nations' Palestine partition plan of 1947 ; that the refugees had left voluntarily, or had been urged to leave by the leaders of the Arab states in the war against the new Jewish state ; that if the Arabs were to go back they would not be loyal citizens of the state of Israel, and by virtue of their sympathies for their people in the rest of the Arab world would present a security danger to Israel ; that Israel simply does not have the capacity to absorb the Arab

refugees, since their place has already been taken by Jewish immigrants from various parts of the world, including the Arab countries; that the Arab states have deliberately pursued a policy designed to prevent any resettlement of the refugees and to exacerbate the refugee problem for domestic and other political purposes; and, finally, that Israel has always been prepared to help solve the refugee problem as part of a comprehensive peace settlement with the Arab states, but that the Arab states have consistently neglected to take any of the positive steps suggested by Israel for a satisfactory solution of the problem.

For the aforementioned reasons the blame for the misfortune of the Palestine refugees, and for the consequent instability and turmoil in the Middle East, as well as for the threat to world peace attendant upon this, has been laid on the doorstep of the Arab states. And because of the vigour, dedication and skill with which these accusations have been levelled from various quarters against the Arabs, and also because of the lack of enterprise or sophistication in the Arab propaganda machine, public opinion in many parts of the world views the Palestine Arab refugees and their claims in a light not at all sympathetic.

This brief essay is an attempt by a Palestinian Arab to plead the Arab case. It is not an apologia for any official Arab body, but a personal statement of the truth about the Palestine refugee problem. I shall tell what has happened to my people, and suggest lines upon which a solution can be sought.

The roots of the problem

By a resolution of the United Nations General Assembly of 29 November 1947 Palestine was partitioned into an Arab state and a Jewish state. To the Jewish state was allotted approximately 56 *per cent* of the total area of Palestine. The Jewish population of the country at that time comprised 35 *per cent* of the total population (it was only 8 *per cent* in 1918 before Jewish immigration started, against the wishes of the indigenous Arab inhabitants). In the part allotted to the Jewish state the Arabs and Jews were almost equal in number, while in the part allotted to the Arabs there were hardly any Jews—not more than a thousand or so. Less than 10 *per cent* of the land in the proposed Jewish state was held or owned by Jews.

The partition resolution, whatever may have been said about the justice or otherwise of its apportionment of territory between the Arabs and the Jews, tried to forestall difficulties about the status and the freedom of residence and movement for Arabs and Jews in the two proposed states. It provided that in each of these states there shall be a democratic constitution "guaranteeing to all persons equal and non-discriminatory rights in civil, political, economic and religious matters and the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms, including freedom of religion, language, speech and publication, education, assembly and association"; and ensuring that there would be "no discrimination of any kind . . . between the inhabitants on the ground of race, religion, language or sex". The resolution also stipulated that there must be "no expropriation of land owned by an Arab in the Jewish State [or by a Jew in the Arab State] . . . except for public purposes" and upon the payment of full compensation. These provisions were declared as "fundamental laws of the State and no law, regulation or official action shall conflict or interfere with these stipulations, nor shall any law, regulation or official action prevail over them".

The Palestine partition plan was to come into effect on 15 May 1948. But a few months before that date fighting broke out between local Palestinian Arab and Jewish forces. The Jews had taken action to occupy certain areas, some of which, but not all, had been allotted to them in the partition plan. In regard to the areas which had been included in the proposed Jewish state, as well as in most other areas to which the Jews had directed their attention, the British authorities—who in theory were presumed to maintain exclusive control in Palestine until the coming into effect of the partition—had found it necessary for military and other reasons to give way and allow Jewish forces to assume control. From towns in the proposed Jewish state, such as Haifa, and from towns allotted to the Arab state, such as Acre and Jaffa, the Arab civilian population left in great panic when Jewish military occupation was established or became imminent. More than a quarter of a million Palestinian Arab civilians had been displaced in this manner when the armies of the Arab states decided to enter Pales-

tine on the day of the official termination of the British mandate.

The war, which involved active operations for about a year, resulted in the Israelis occupying about 35 *per cent* more territory than was allotted to them under the United Nations partition plan. More Arab civilians were displaced, uprooted dramatically and tragically from their homes.

United Nations recognition of refugees' rights

The plight of the Palestine refugees soon became serious, and the United Nations General Assembly in a Resolution dated 11 December 1948 solemnly decreed :

> *"that the refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbours should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date, and that compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return and for loss of or damage to property which, under principles of international law or in equity, should be made good by the Governments or authorities responsible."*

Since 1948 only a few hundred Arab refugees have been allowed by Israel to go back to their homes in Israel-occupied territory. These were hand-picked, on a so-called "family reunion scheme". The Arab community in the land occupied by Israel, which numbered about a million, had shrivelled to 150,000. Not a penny also has been paid in compensation for the property of the Arabs, now valued at £2,000m. At every session of the United Nations since 1948 the General Assembly has noted "with deep regret", and deplored, the failure by Israel to implement the provisions of the 1948 resolution on repatriation and compensation for the Palestine Arabs. The latest occasion on which this was done was in a Resolution adopted in December 1967.

One-fifth of the Arabs who left Palestine during the 1947-49 hostilities have re-established themselves in various parts of the Arab world and outside by their own unassisted efforts, and have never been a charge on any international organization. Of the remainder, mainly peasants, more than half have found homes for themselves in the host Arab countries. About 40 *per cent* of the total refugee population, however, remained destitute.

United Nations relief

In December 1949 the United Nations established an organization to give practical aid to the Palestine refugees — the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). For relief purposes UNRWA defines a refugee as "a person whose normal residence was Palestine for a minimum period of two years immediately preceding the outbreak of the conflict of 1948, and who, as a result of this conflict, had lost both his home and his means of livelihood". To be eligible for UNRWA assistance the refugee must have taken refuge in 1948 in one of the four host countries in which UNRWA operates (Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and the Gaza Strip) and must be in actual need and hardship. Children and grandchildren who fulfil certain criteria are also eligible for some or all forms of UNRWA assistance. Sixty-six *per cent* of the refugees receive basic food rations. Half of the refugees are below the age of 18, and for these some education is provided, and in certain cases follow-up vocational and other training, to enable them to stand on their own feet.

UNRWA has always been on a "temporary" basis, and its budget has never exceeded $40m. a year. Contributions have come from various sources (including the Arab countries), and the rate of contribution has depended on the states' sense of generosity — and at times also, significantly, on some states' sense of guilt for the role, active or passive, played in the perpetration and perpetuation of the refugees problem. The United States and Britain contributed between them about 80 *per cent* of UNRWA's budget. A recent official U.N. survey shows that UNRWA's budget has enabled it over the years to spend no more than an average of ten pence a day on each refugee in its charge. Of this, five pence has gone on rations and other forms of relief, such as housing, a penny on health, and four pence on education.

Statistics, published by UNRWA, show that on 31 May 1967 (before the recent war) 1,344,000 refugees were registered with the Agency — approximately 700,000 in Jordan, 300,000 in the Gaza Strip, 170,000 in the Lebanon, and 150,000 in Syria.

The nature of the services provided by UNRWA was described by the Agency's Commissioner-General in a report to the United Nations General Assembly in 1966 as follows :

> *"It should not be presumed that the existing UNRWA services correspond to and cover all the real needs of the refugees. Inevitably, there are many services and forms of assistance which UNRWA could usefully have provided for the benefit of the refugees but which it has been unable to undertake owing to lack of funds; and of the services it does provide, there are many which, for financial reasons, the Agency has been compelled to restrict to a minimal level."*

On the conditions of the Palestine refugees the Commissioner-General said in this report :

> *"It is clear that a large part of the refugee community is still living today in dire poverty, often under pathetic and in some cases appalling conditions."*

(More Palestinian Arabs were displaced as a result of the June 1967 war, and I shall deal with this later.)

THE ARGUMENTS AGAINST

Many aspects of the Arabs' case in regard to the rights of the Palestine Arab refugees are challenged. I shall now attempt to deal with those points which I personally have encountered in lectures and discussions on this problem.

Refugees' numbers inflated?

It is claimed that the numbers of the refugees have been inflated in official statistics by UNRWA and Arab sources. It is said that official records have not always taken note of deaths, for example, and sometimes continued to maintain on the books, for the allocation of rations, people who have in fact ceased to be in need.

There is some truth in this claim. A recent thorough check has revealed that the official figures exceed by as much as 20 *per cent* the actual numbers of refugees. The explanation for this is that simple peasant folk in dire need have at times been tempted to eke extra rations by not reporting the death or departure of a member of the family. This is understandable in the circumstances. But even if the numbers of refugees were so reduced there would still validly remain on the books of UNRWA more than a million people. And a million people is a sufficient number to give concern, and to merit attention.

Why the Arabs rejected the U.N. partition plan

"It is all the fault of the Palestinian Arabs and the Arab states for rejecting the U.N. partition plan, and had they accepted it and not invaded the new state of Israel there would not have been all this trouble about refugees." That is what many people have been saying. The answer, from the Arab point of view, is that there was nothing wrong, morally or legally, with the Arabs rejecting a plan which sought to deprive them of their natural right to their homeland, and which gave what belonged to them in law and morals to an alien people who had come to the country against the declared wishes of the established inhabitants. The Arabs say they had a rough deal from the U.N., and that the partition plan was unjust. Even if it were conceded that the Jewish minority in Palestine had a right to self-determination and national independence the Jews were given by the U.N. much more than either their numbers or their land-ownership justified.

There is nothing wrong with the parties to a judicial adjudication appealing against a judgement. The Arabs did not think the award against them fair, and they protested against it. If they eventually did not get any favourable response from the international community the original award would stand, and if it had been valid it remained valid at the later stage, and could legitimately be enforced. This is exactly what happens where a party in a legal case appeals against the judgement of the court — when he loses his appeal the original judgement is confirmed, and the mere fact of the appeal does not in any way affect the validity of the original decision of the court. Thus, if two people dispute over a piece of land, and the court divides it between them, and if the dissatisfied party appeals to a higher tribunal and loses, it would not be correct to say that the losing appellant had, by the fact of his appeal, lost all right to the land, and that the other party could then claim the whole of the land to himself. International law is by no means different from state law in this respect.

The legal nature of the partition plan approved by the U.N. has not changed. That plan requires full respect for the rights of the Arab inhabitants of territory occupied by the Jewish state, and repeated resolutions of the U.N. General Assembly confirm these rights and specifically call upon Israel to allow the Arab refugees repatriation and compensation. Nothing done by the Palestinian Arabs or by the Arab states in protesting against the U.N. award, or in challenging it militarily, affects the substance of Arab rights, or the solemn U.N. resolutions on the subject. Furthermore, the allegation that the Arab states' invasion of Palestine was an aggressive act is not justified. The Arab states came to Palestine when the Jews had already occupied vast areas which under the partition plan had been allotted not to them but to the Arabs; and large numbers of Arab civilians had already been displaced or killed in military and terrorist operations by Jewish forces. The Arab armies, whatever may have been their objective later on, came primarily to save their own kith and kin from mortal danger.

Did the refugees leave voluntarily?

There is no truth whatever in the claim that the Arab refugees had left Palestine voluntarily, or upon the invitation of the Arab states. Not a single piece of concrete evidence has been produced to show that any Arab Government or any recognized Arab leader had urged the Arabs of Palestine to abandon their homes and property. A large number of Palestinian Arabs did in fact leave, and the reasons for this were simple. Firstly, it is not unusual for civilians to get out of the sphere of active military operations and to seek safer quarters. It happens in all wars and in all places, and Britain during the last world war was no exception — many children and civilians were evacuated to Scotland and the remote countryside. Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, it is a well-established fact that the Jewish irregular forces before the proclamation of the state of Israel, and regular Israeli forces later on, had given good reason for the Arabs to leave. There was a deliberate policy of terror against the Arabs. One illustration of this is the massacre of Deir Yassin. On 9 April 1948 — more than a month before the proclamation of the Jewish state — this Arab village was attacked by Zionist terror gangs. Two hundred and fifty men, women and children were slaughtered in cold blood. The attack was described by the British Secretary of State for the Colonies in a statement to the House of Commons on 12 April 1948 as follows :

> *"The whole affair points to another brutal and appalling cruel outrage. I can hardly express the horror with which H.M. Government regards such barbarous action. These acts shock the world and arouse deep anger and bitterness and make the prospect of settlement recede still further."*

From a leading Zionist and Jew, Jon Kimche, comes another description of the massacre of Deir Yassin :

> *"Deir Yasin was one of the few Arab villages whose inhabitants . . . on occasions collaborated with the Jewish Agency. On Friday, April 9, 1948, a commando force composed of Irgun and Stern soldiers raided the village. There was no obvious occasion for them to do so. . . . Nothing they have said has explained, or can explain away, the murder of some 250 innocent Arabs, among them more than a hundred women and children. No less disgusting was the subsequent publicity parade by the Irgun of a number of poor Arab prisoners through the streets of Jerusalem. . . . The massacre of Deir Yasin was the darkest stain on the Jewish record throughout all the fighting. It is historically important because it was to become the begin-*

ning of a second legend with which the terrorists sought to justify their cause and justify their deeds. Just as they had claimed credit for the British decision to leave Palestine as being the result of the terrorists' attacks on British troops, so later they justified the massacre of Deir Yasin because it led to the panic flight of the remaining Arabs in the Jewish State area and so lessened the Jewish casualties."

(Jon Kimche, *The Seven Fallen Pillars*, F. A. Praeger, New York, 1953, pp. 227 and 229.)

Other acts of terror are described by the Zionist writer Jon Kimche in the aforementioned book. The operation against two Arab towns — Lydda and Ramla, from which the Arab Legion forces had been withdrawn — was led by Moshe Dayan (who subsequently became an Israeli Cabinet Minister), and took place on 11 July 1948 :

"[Dayan and his troops] drove at full speed into Lydda, shooting up the town and creating confusion and a degree of terror among the population . . . its Arab population of 30,000 either fled or were herded on the road to Ramallah. The next day Ramla also surrendered and its Arab population suffered the same fate. Both towns were sacked by the victorious Israelis."

There is abundant evidence that panic was spread amongst the Arabs by intensive broadcasts on the Jewish radio, urging the Arabs to "get out of the blood bath", and alluding to fears of epidemics and other alarming prospects for those who stayed behind. Predatory acts of this kind, and the wide publicity given to them at the time by the Zionists, were not designed to be understood by the Palestinian Arabs as hospitable invitations to stay under Jewish rule.

The part played by Jewish irregulars and organized Israeli forces in driving the Palestinian Arabs out is further illustrated by this extract from a letter by Professor Norman Bentwich, a prominent Zionist, to *The Observer*, London, on 11 June 1967 :

"Some Arabs left [because they were persuaded by the Arab States] but the mass went because of panic provoked by extremist bands and because of pressure by Israeli forces during the fighting."

That all this was part of a deliberate policy is emphasized by the following quotations from a book by David Ben Gurion, the first Prime Minister of Israel :

"Until the British left [15 May 1948] no Jewish settlement, however remote, was entered or seized by the Arabs, while the Haganah . . . captured many Arab positions and liberated Tiberias and Haifa, Jaffa and Safad. So on the day of destiny that part of Palestine where the Haganah could operate was almost clear of Arabs." (Ben Gurion, *Rebirth and Destiny of Israel*, N.Y. Philosophical Library, 1954, pp. 530-531.)

This policy of exclusive Jewishness of Israel has been consistently followed by the leaders of the Zionist movement since its very inception. Dr. Haïm Weizmann, the first President of Israel, said at the Versailles Peace Conference in 1919 that the aim of the Zionists was a state "as Jewish as England is English". This theme was repeated in June 1967, after the six-day war. Interviewed by C.B.S. Television, Israel Defence Minister Dayan emphasized that it was essential that the predominantly Jewish character of Israel be maintained, and that there would be a threat to this in the acceptance as citizens in the Jewish state of large numbers of Arabs who inhabit the territories occupied by Israel. "We want a Jewish State, like the French want a French State," he said. All this adds up to one thing : the Palestinian Arabs are not wanted in any territory held by Israel.

Whatever the reason for the Arabs leaving Palestine they have not thereby lost their right to go back. Neither in law, nor in morals, is a person's right to return to his country affected by the accident of his having left it at a particular time. This principle is proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights — which has been unanimously adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948. Article 13 (2) of the Declaration provides : "Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country." The right of the Palestine Arab refugees to return to Palestine was specifically upheld in United Nations resolutions.

Are the refugees "subversive elements"?

It is argued that the U.N. General Assembly resolution of 1948 (No. 194 III) on the repatriation of the refugees does not in fact give them an automatic right to go back to Israel. The refugees, it is said, are dedicated to the aim of destroying the state of Israel, and are unlikely to have genuine loyalty to the Zionist principles upon which Israel is founded.

It is no doubt true that the Palestine Arab refugees have sympathy and racial and religious bonds with the peoples of the neighbouring states. They cannot possibly be expected to divest themselves of these ties. When the U.N. provided for the return of the refugees to Palestine it did not make this conditional upon the refugees giving up all natural loyalties and sympathies. If the argument against the refugees is to be taken to its logical conclusion it really means that the refugees cannot have the right to be repatriated as long as they remain Arabs and Palestinians, and must become Jewish and Zionist to qualify!

The Zionists and their supporters also say that if a large number of Palestinian Arabs were to be admitted to Israel this would be a grave security risk. But what exactly is this "security" which is to be maintained? It seems to be merely the continuation of the Zionist policies of present-day Israel, without the slightest regard for any future change in the composition of the country's population. To put it in simple terms — what the Zionists are saying is that if too many Arabs were allowed to return to Israel they might want to change the country's outlook and policy, and that would not be to the liking of the people now in the country. Thus the Zionists consider that the best means for entrenching the existing policies of Israel would be either to admit no Arabs, or to give no political rights to the Arabs admitted. But this presumes that the state of Israel must remain absolutely rigid and inflexible on certain matters, and pay no

regard to the wishes of its people, or a section of them. This proposition blatantly conflicts with the provisions of the U.N. partition plan of 1947, which laid down in very clear and unambiguous terms that the proposed Arab and Jewish states should accord complete freedom to their inhabitants — the term "inhabitants" included people who were resident in the areas allotted to the two proposed states before 15 May 1948.

The attitude taken by the Israeli authorities in objecting to the repatriation of the Arab refugees is clearly incongruous and unjust. It means that the Arabs are not wanted in their homeland because they are "not loyal"—not loyal to the aims and ambitions of an alien people who emigrated to the country from outside and the majority of whom are only recent immigrants.

No physical room for the Arab refugees in Israel?

It is repeatedly said that the state of Israel is too small to accommodate the Palestine refugees. There is physically no room for them, it is claimed. The argument goes on : in any case, the refugees are mostly farmers, and the social and economic set-up in Israel has changed a great deal since the exodus of the Arabs, so that the refugees would not conveniently or easily fit into the new economic and social structure.

The answer which the Arabs give to these claims is that it is only when it comes to taking back the Arabs that Israel pretends that it has no room. For Jews it advertises itself as spacious and hospitable. Since June 1967 there have been big advertisements in Jewish newspapers in various parts of the world strongly urging the Jews to emigrate to Israel, and desperately pleading for half a million Jews to go to Israel "immediately". This plea has also been echoed by Israeli leaders who toured Jewish communities abroad. The Israeli Ambassador, in a message to the Jewish community of Great Britain, pleaded for emigrants to Israel, and said :

> *"the real challenge to us is a million new* Olim *[immigrants] from the western countries in the next five years."* (*Jewish Observer,* 29.9.67.)

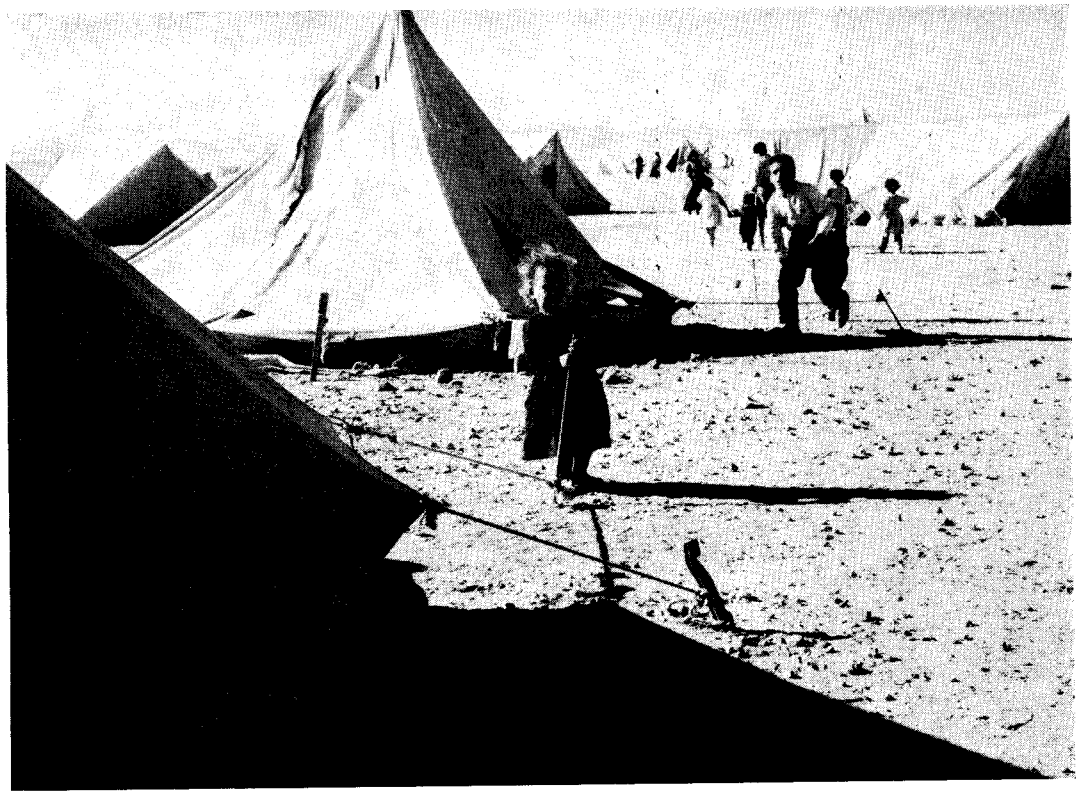
The Israeli Chief of Staff told delegates to a meeting in Basle of the European Zionist Assembly that :

> *"when we have four or five million Jews in Israel, nothing will be able to injure our State or cast doubt on its existence."* (*Jewish Observer,* 29.9.67.)

As for the changed economic and social set-up in Israel, there is no truth in the claim that all the refugees would be misfits. Things have not changed so much that the refugees would find it impossible to live normal and productive lives in the country. And, in any case, if things have changed one way they can be changed another. When a squatter takes my home, the Arabs say, I do not lose my right as owner merely because the squatter has carried out a few structural alterations.

Arab-Jewish refugees exchange

The attempt is often made to minimize the plight of the Palestine Arab refugees, and to doubt their right to their homes and property, by the claim that while there has been an exodus of Arabs from territory held by Israel there has been an equal exodus of Jews from the Arab countries.



Arab refugee camps around Amman, Jordan, in winter, 1967. The nights are extremely cold.

The analogy between the Arabs who left Palestine and the Jews who left the Arab countries, however, is false. Firstly, the Arabs who left Palestine did so under severe intimidation or terror, and had no option. But the Jews who left the Arab countries were mainly lured by the Zionists who were — and still are — active throughout the world trying to entice Jews to Israel and fulfil the declared Zionist objective of making Israel the home of all Jews. The Zionists resort to veiled blackmail in their attempts to get Jews to emigrate to Israel, and Zionist leaders have on many occasions stated that the Jew is not a "fulfilled Jew" unless he makes his home in Israel. Of course there have been cases where Jews living in Arab communities suddenly found themselves the target of mob anger. But such cases were few and far between, and the evidence clearly shows that the very great majority of Jews who left from the Arab countries to Israel left under no serious pressure.

The second point is that while the Arabs who left their homes in Palestine often left with the clothes they stood in, and with families separated in chaos, the Jews who left the Arab countries for Israel did so in conditions of leisure and ease, taking most of their possessions (except that there were some restrictions on the transfer of cash from Arab countries to Israel, but it is known that these technical restrictions did not in the end work any serious hardship upon the emigrants who found easy ways of getting round them).

The third aspect of the falsehood of the analogy between Arab refugees and Jewish emigrants from the Arab countries is that the Jews who left the Arab countries did not number more than half a million, while the Palestine Arab refugees were almost three times as many.

Finally, it is worth noting that the Jews who stayed in the Arab countries were treated in all respects as free and equal citizens, and in normal circumstances suffered not the slightest discrimination, while the Palestinian Arabs who stayed in Israel-held territory have consistently been treated as second-class citizens, and subjected to grave hardship.

Are the refugees pawns of Arab politics?

There is no substance in the allegation that the Palestine Arab refugees have been convenient pawns in the game of Arab inter-state rivalries, or have been a useful device manipulated by the Arab states against the West. Certainly the Arab states draw attention to the Palestine refugees problem as evidence of the misdeeds of Israel, and seek to gain support for the Arab cause by providing information about the plight of the refugees. But it is not true that the refugees have been kept purposely in a state of misery in order that they might provide political scoring points against Israel and the West.

The refugees have not been resettled for the simple reasons that they did not all want to be resettled, and also because the host Arab countries could not afford the cost of resettlement — estimated by the U.N. at £6,000m.

Certainly, if the resources of the entire Arab world were pooled, money could be found to resettle the refugees, and more. But such pooling of resources is not possible for reasons not explicable by purely Arab consideration. Arab politics have not always been purely Arab in origin, and there have been various alien hands manipulating Governments and politicians behind the scenes. But in spite of all this the richer Arab states have made generous contributions in money and materials towards the alleviation of the misery and hardship of the refugees. One thing has not been done, namely forcing the refugees to be resettled. The Arab Government have fought shy of this, and the mood in which the refugees have lived since the very beginning would have led to disastrous consequences, in the political and humanitarian spheres, if compulsion had been used. Despite their great suffering the refugees remained a proud people, and it would not have been easy to herd them to settlement against their wishes.

The Arab Governments, particularly those in the host countries, have nevertheless done a great deal to encourage resettlement. This has been admitted in unequivocal terms by leading U.N. officials on several occasions. The majority of the refugees were peasants, and the economy of the host countries could not allow the complete absorption of large numbers of them. UNRWA's rehabilitation activities, and the efforts in the same direction made by the Arab countries, are perhaps evidenced by the fact that at no time did the refugees living in UNRWA camps amount to more than 40 *per cent* of the total refugee population. UNRWA, in association with the Arab Governments concerned, has devoted considerable attention to training schemes and measures designed to help the refugees stand on their own feet. There have been "crash" programmes of vocational training to teach skills to as many of the young refugees as possible, and where the older generation could be rescued this was done. Proof of this is the fact that 42 *per cent* of UNRWA's funds are devoted to education services (general education, vocational and teacher training and university scholarships, 13 *per cent* to health services, and only 45 *per cent* to relief services (basic rations, milk, shelter, etc.).

The Arab Governments stopped short of ordering the mass resettlement of the refugees. For that they would have needed the co-operation of the refugees themselves, or brute force, and neither was in the circumstances forthcoming or opportune. But the assertion that the Arab Governments have been deliberately and inhumanely keeping the refugees in a state of destitution and dependence on international charity, as a weapon in the persecution of their political aims against Israel, is wide of the truth.

Although the Arab Governments have opposed mass resettlement schemes — for the reasons I have just indicated — their record in promoting the rehabilitation of the refugees as individuals through education, training and employment has been described by impartial U.N. officials as "humane and helpful". The Arab Governments concerned have extended substantial help to the refugees in spite of the grave difficulties which already confronted these countries in providing a livelihood for their own rapidly expanding populations.

It is true, on the other hand, that the Israelis have been able to resettle large numbers of Jewish immigrants, and that

they have taken practical measures to solve that problem, and did not directly involve other countries with it. But the problems of the Arab countries in regard to the Palestine refugees were different. Firstly, the state of Israel has received very large sums in aid from world Jewry and other sources, such as the Federal German Republic which paid Israel many millions in reparations for Nazi atrocities committed against the Jews. Secondly, the state of Israel was not confronted overnight with very large numbers of refugees who had to be dealt with immediately. The influx into Israel was planned over many years and was geared to meet the resources and potentialities of Israel. Thirdly, and perhaps more importantly, the immigrants who came to Israel found waiting for them in many cases the houses and land vacated by the Arabs, while the Palestinian Arabs who went to the neighbouring countries had to compete with the local population who themselves were already in strained circumstances.

Israeli offers on refugees

A point that has often been made is that Israel had offered to assist in the solution of the Palestine refugees problem by taking some of the refugees back, and by advising on methods for their resettlement and contributing towards resettlement projects. The fact is, however, that an offer made by Israel in the early 1950 was confined to taking no more than 100,000 refugees, a figure which at that time represented less than one tenth of the total Arab refugee population. Israel also was to have the final say on the type of person to be repatriated. Furthermore, Israel's offer was conditional on the Arabs entering into comprehensive peace negotiations for the solution of all outstanding political problems — and the offer on payment of compensation was accompanied by a demand by Israel itself for compensation for alleged harm suffered as a result of the Arab economic boycott and other acts which the Arab states had taken against Israel in the course of the hostilities and later.

A Palestinian Arab mother, one of the tens of thousands of Arab refugees — victims of the Israeli aggression.

An important fact about the aforementioned Israeli offer is that it was accompanied by statements from the leading members of the Israeli Government, particularly from the then Premier, David Ben Gurion, to the effect that Israel would not as part of any possible peace settlement with the Arabs surrender an inch of the territory it was occupying. In other words, the offer on the Palestine refugees had distinct preconditions which, in the circumstances, cast doubt upon the sincerity of Israel and made it impossible for the Arabs to take it seriously on this subject.

THE JUNE 1967 WAR

The number of Palestinian Arab refugees has been swollen as a result of the June 1967 war. Who started the war, and whether there was any justification for it on either side, are matters outside the scope of the present essay. Suffice it to say here that according to the latest statistics some 450,000 Arabs, mostly Palestinian, have been dramatically and cruelly displaced. 300,000 (half of whom were already refugees) fled to the East Bank of the Jordan from the West Bank; 116,000 fled from Syrian Arab Republic territory occupied by Israel (of these 16,000 were Palestinian refugees registered with UNRWA); 35,000 fled from Sinai to the U.A.R. west of the Suez Canal; and about 4,000 Palestine refugees from the Gaza Strip fled to the U.A.R. Arab refugees are still crossing into the East Bank of Jordan at the rate of more than 200 a day. Large numbers of the refugees are in tents and caves, and exposed to the hazards of rain, floods and cold. Despite the charity and response of the world community many of these people remain in most pitiable conditions.

There can be no denying the fact that these people had justification for leaving at the earlier stages of the campaign. The war was rough, and Israeli forces used napalm and resorted to terror tactics which encouraged many people to flee. After the cessation of hostilities the flight of people from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip to Eastern Jordan has continued. A small percentage leave because of incidental circumstances (the fear that by staying in Israel-held territory they may not be able to receive remittances from relatives working in the Arab world). But the greatest number of the refugees, especially from the Gaza Strip, are leaving because of menaces and intense harassment by the Israeli authorities. The truth about this has recently been given in the British press and in many parts of the world. Observers believe that the objective which the Israelis are pursuing is the expulsion of as many Arabs as possible from territory they plan to annex. This is making the problem of the refugee extremely difficult, and is adding to the burden which the Jordanian authorities are carrying in this respect.

By a resolution dated 14 June 1967 the U.N. Security Council called upon the Government of Israel "to ensure the safety, welfare and security of the inhabitants of the areas where military operations had taken place, and to facilitate the return of those inhabitants who had fled the areas since the outbreak of hostilities". The Security Council also urged scrupulous respect for humanitarian principles governing the protection of civilian persons in time of war contained in the Geneva Convention of 12 August 1949. This resolution was confirmed at the U.N. General Assembly on 4 July 1967 by a vote of 116 in favour, none against and two abstentions.

Only a handful of the refugees have so far been allowed by the Israeli authorities to return. Soon after the Security Council's resolution Israel said it was willing to consider the return of the refugees, and asked them to complete forms for this purpose. There was a wretched wrangle about the technicalities and the heading of the forms, and this delayed matters for a few weeks. Then forms were completed by about 178,000 of the refugees, who all expressed the desire to return (of these some 93,000 were previously inmates of UNRWA camps). Israel had set for the return of the refugees a deadline—31 August 1967. This was an arbitrary date, and it proved impossible for the refugees to meet the deadline. The Israeli authorities approved applications covering only 18,000 persons, and not all of these managed to return before the deadline. Approval was notified at very short notice — on a day-to-day basis — and the administrative arrangements on the side both of Israel and Jordan were inadequate to deal with the repatriation.

The policy adopted by Israel in the approval of applications by Arab refugees for repatriation was meticulously designed to prevent any large-scale repatriation. Thus some members of a family would be approved for repatriation but others in the same family rejected; refugees registered with UNRWA were excluded; those originating from the Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Jericho areas were shut out also — because Israel had either purported to annex these territories or would be likely to seek to annex them at some time in the future, and for this reason "vacant possession" was desirable.

Since the Israeli authorities refused to extend the deadline which they set for repatriation the great majority of those who fled from the West Bank of Jordan remain refugees. It is significant that the U.N. Security Council resolution on the repatriation did not mention any deadline. Further, there was no reason for any deadline. or for that harsh and inconvenient deadline itself to be maintained. There has been only one pretext given by the Israelis for the adherence to the deadline. It was that the Jordanians were urging the refugees not to co-operate with the Israeli military occupation authorities, and that the returning refugees would therefore be a security risk. The fallacy of this argument is that the Israelis did not exclude only able-bodied persons of military service age but women, children and old people as well. And the claim that the Jordanian authorities should preach to the refugees to fully co-operate with the Israelis and to facilitate their task as an army of occupation is ludicrous.

One conclusion to be drawn from the behaviour of Israel in this whole affair is that Israel simply does not want too many Arabs — or what it considers to be too many Arabs — in territory now under its occupation, in case it should want to annex it. Another conclusion is that the Israelis think that the human problem of the refugees can be used as a lever against the Arab countries, to blackmail them into making political concessions.

THE SOLUTION

It is unrealistic to seek a permanent and satisfactory solution of the Palestine Arab refugees problem unless the whole issue is approached in a humanitarian and compassionate manner. Certainly the problem of the refugees is not a question of money only, or predominantly, and that the payment of compensation by itself would not offer a solution. The United Nations has solemnly and emphatically recognized for the refugees the right to go back to their homes, without conditions attached. The Secretary-General of the United Nations, as recently as 19 September 1967 in the so-called "Six Principles" he put forward for peace between the Arabs and Israel, has declared that "the Palestine Arab refugees have a natural right to be in their homeland and to have a future".

It is not possible to tell now how many of the refugees would in fact want to go back to live in a predominantly Jewish community. Probably not more than half would wish to do this. The remainder would want the opportunity to settle in the country in which they had been living in the recent past. The refugees not wishing to return should be given compensation for the property they left behind, and the host countries should be helped economically to absorb them. The money needed for this purpose may not be within the capacity of the states directly concerned, and the international community should make a contribution for this purpose (they all have, in fact, been paying the cost of assisting the refugees on a day-to-day basis, and the sum required for permanent resettlement, though much larger, would be on a non-recurring basis).

No compulsion or menaces of any kind — direct or indirect — should be applied against the refugees to force them to settle against their wish anywhere. They must be treated as human beings with dignity, emotions and rights. They must not be pushed around by callous administrative orders or moved like cattle to settle in places not of their choosing. Unless full respect is accorded to the rights of the refugees in this respect no solution would be adequate or permanent, and the problem will continue to fester and disturb the peace of the region and of the world.

Would it be asking too much of Israel and its Jewish inhabitants to take back the Arab refugees? It is submitted that it wouldn't, because all that Israel is being required to do is to adhere to elementary principles of justice and morality. On the other hand, it would be asking too much of the Arabs to accept less than the recognition, in theory and in practice, of the rights of the refugees. If it were true that by the return of the refugees to their homeland Jews would be displaced, it might be unjust and impracticable to seek that result, however little one might think of the rights of new Jewish immigrants to the country. But nobody is being displaced, for on the admission of the Zionists themselves Israel (on the pre-June 1967 borders) can accommodate five million people; and in fact the Zionists are busy advertising for two million immigrants. The argument that what Israel now wants is more Jews, and that it has no need of Arabs, is true. But Israel and the Zionists must be made to realize that this argument is wicked because of its emphasis on racial criteria, and is something which the Palestine Arabs and the Arab peoples generally will find impossible to concede.

The tragedy of the Arab refugees is doubly tragic and ironic because of all the peoples with whom the Jews had come into contact during their long, and often unhappy, history the Arabs have been the kindest and most generous of hosts. The darkest chapters in the life of the Jews were not writ when they lived amongst Arab and Muslim folk. This in itself is sufficient proof that co-existence is possible between Jew and Arab.

If Israel wants peace it must recognize that Palestine is the home of the Arabs of Palestine, and that every Arab citizen of Palestine before 1948, and his descendants, have the inalienable right to return there if they wish, without any conditions or restrictions.

If the rest of the world wants peace in that troubled region it must see to it that Israel heeds the dictates of conscience and law. The spectacle of the United Nations passing resolution after resolution confirming in theory the rights of the Arab refugees, but doing little to give effect to these resolutions, must end. It is humiliating to the world that it should be consistently and arrogantly disregarded by a political entity which itself is the creation of the United Nations. And it is also dangerous, because the persistent disregard with impunity of the solemn resolutions of the United Nations threatens the whole fabric of the system of law and order upon which alone the family of nations pins its hopes for a peaceful and happy future.

"No wind is favourable for the man who knows not where he is going" — Seneca

A non-Muslim Scholar's Approach to

Islam's* Key Problem — Economic Development**

The tendency of planning and taking risks collectively in the Muslim World is of the highest importance for economic development

The changed nature of the economic function of Property in Modern Islam—*Waqf* Properties

by Professor JACQUES AUSTROY

B. THE PRESENT-DAY MODIFICATIONS

Without entering into detail regarding the possible consequences of this new orientation in Islam,[1] we can distinguish a symptomatic evolution in certain aspects of the juridico-social structures which appear to be decisive for economic development. We will content ourselves with discussing briefly the three significant changes which are apparent (1) in the conception of capital and interest, (2) in the assumption of responsibility for financial risk and (3) the significance of property.

(1) The " reconciliation " of interest and capital

We have already mentioned that loans at interest (*ribá*) had been forbidden by the Prophet and that generally speaking this ban had been respected in Islam. However, we should point out that the ban on *ribá* was meant to apply to a type of usurious interest rather different from interest as we know it today. In the time of the Prophet Muhammad the repayment (of double the sum advanced) was, it seems, connected with a loan for some hazardous or doubtful enterprise, or an advance of money for speculative purposes. So the purpose of the prohibition was to counteract the dire consequences which could arise from the imprudent gambling tendency of the Arabs. We might perhaps pose the question whether the conception of *interest as income arising from the productivity of invested capital* can be assimilated to *ribá. With the advent of the Western economic revolution* the conception of the term " interest " has *undergone a change.* An illegal premium or guarantee for a loan raised for speculation, for some hazardous commercial venture, or for some anticipated gain from agricultural products, has become the normal return or reward on the *productivity of capital.* It seems here that these are two fundamentally different matters which should be judged from different standpoints.

This transformation of the meaning of *interest-bearing loans* will explain, in part, the change in the attitude of Christian canon law on the subject of interest. We cannot see why it should not be the same in an Islam which has just become aware of the productivity of capital.

In fact, Muslim jurists have been able, by ruse and subtle manoeuvre, to circumvent the prohibition of loans at interest as defined in the Qur'án (2:276, 279; 3:125; 4:159; 30:38). Without going into the specious quibbling of the Muslim jurists, we will mention that there were two principal methods used for circumventing the *prohibition* of usury :

Firstly, it is ". . . a sale for the payment of a debt *(bay' al-wafá).* Actually this is a sale with the right of re-purchase. It covers a pledge (*rahn*), by which the object sold is the security for a debt, and the fruits thereof constitute the interest."[2]

Secondly, there is the *mukhátarah* (chance, risk), known in Europe in the Middle Ages as " mohatra ". This is a fictitious transaction, in which a person sells on credit at an enhanced price an object which is bought back at a lower price for spot cash. The difference represents the interest on what is really a loan disguised as a double sale (*thina*). It seems quite remarkable that in France of the 17th century,

*For the previous instalment see *The Islamic Review* for January 1968.

**In European languages the words Islam and Muslim are interchangeable.

1 On this subject consult the fundamental work by L. Milliot, previously quoted.

2 A study of this can be found in L. Milliot, *op. cit.*, p. 652. We would also like to thank M. J. de La Fressange for the many details he has given us on this part of our study.

Pascal was shocked at the adaptation by the Jesuits of this "mohatra" arrangement to the economic problems of the epoch. (Eighth *Provinciale* and 11th *Letter* of the 18 August 1656[3], in which he wrote: "Do you consider 'mohatra' to be so venerable a thing that it would be blasphemy not to speak of it with respect?".)

And at the time of Pascal it was from the Muslim jurists that the Jesuits borrowed the most effective means of circumventing the canonical ban on loans at interest. This seems significant, since it was only after the economic revolution of capitalist Europe that loans at interest found more ready justification in Christianity than in Islam, not only because of the laïcization of the economy, but especially because loans at interest took on a different significance after its "economic upsurge".

So that we can understand the optimism of the Iráqí jurist[4] whose observations are reported by J. Berque. According to this eminent magistrate the adaptation of Shi'ah law to the necessities of modern life does not present any great difficulty. Even with regard to interest, that "taboo of taboos", ". . . lawyers circumvent it . . ." *(ijâzah)*, by assimilating it to the profit accruing from a partnership, for partnership is legal. Only it will not be called by its name, *fá'idah*, or, as the Ancients would humorously put it, "*Salaf jarra naf'ah*" (useful loan-vehicle), but by the term "gain" *(Istirbáh ribh)*, "quest for gain", and all this remains perfectly legal and aboveboard[5].

Furthermore, there is no longer any reason why the modern legislations of Muslim countries which are based on Western legal machinery should not codify interest-bearing loans, by treating them as new norms which have come into being as a result of the meeting of the Muslim tradition of equity with the trends of the modern world.[6]

Indeed, Islam is beginning to "discover" the specific nature of capital and is now desirous of forming an "Arab capital fund".[7] And the integration of technique into the Muslim world, the discovery of the "object", and the mastery of measurement are combining to reinforce this understanding of the productive nature of capital. Time is no longer an attribute of God, an extension of the present, it has again become the number of movement as conceived by Aristotle. *Thus time is transformed to become the servant of economic growth.*

In a world which is being transformed, and which is set on bettering itself, *time is being given its real value and importance. Tawakkul* (submission to Divine grace for the provision of subsistence),[8] was a normal attitude in a world which was poor and static, where no doubt it was more advisable to place in the "hand of God" a tomorrow which in any case it could not greatly influence.[9]

In the determinist world brought into being by technical efficiency, it is a different story. *For capital allows man to look forward to a future of definite progress,* at least material progress. Thus it is understandable that the conception of interest viewed from this new perspective has nothing whatever in common with *ribá*. Consequently it can be accepted by an Islam which has recovered its dynamism, and which intends seriously to take its future in hand. This new approach also leads on to the mastery of risk (commercial and economic contingency).

(2) The mastery of risk in modern Islam

The fear of hazard has for a long time been a characteristic trait of Muslim mentality. The fear of risk aroused by the Qur'ánic prohibition of *Bay' al-Gharar* was, incidentally, a healthy one for the happy-go-lucky and improvident Arabs[10], to whom the Prophet Muhammad addressed his injunctions. It was a generalisation of this ban — a ban which basically was quite sound — which caused Arabs to look with suspicion on the growth *(namwah)*, the spontaneous increase, of capital, of which the legal tithe *(zakáh)* is the purifying and compensatory proportion.

But this prohibition, of great moral value in a static society, has become detrimental with the new opportunities now arising from the advent of economic growth. What was formerly a control-mechanism in a regulated world has become an obstacle in a dynamic world. Here again, by looking back at the past, Islam has suffered. The rigorous application of traditional rules was the classic *riposte* of the zealot. The closing of the "door of effort", justified perhaps by a certain penetration by the inspired philosophies of Aristotle and Plato, petrified in an ever-increasing anachronistic sense the attitude of the Muslim towards commercial risk. And yet this "retreat to self" was not a permanent one. The upsurge at present animating Islam allows it to draw support even from its own sources, in order to come to terms with commercial risk. And it is possible to find in the sacred texts of Islam the elements justifying the taking of a calculated risk. In fact, the Qur'án enjoins forethought, as seen in several of its verses: "And cast not yourselves to perdition with your own hands" (5:191); "O you who believe, take your precautions" (4:73); "Let them take their precautions" (4:103).

And the Prophet himself had set an example by engaging in a business partnership *(Qirád/mudárabah)*, which closely resembles a loan-agreement for a commercial risk. This contract, together with others accepted by Muslim Law *(fiqh)*, such as the association for agricultural seeding operations *(muzára'ah)*, the society for irrigation *(musáqáh)*, or the tree-planting society *(mughárasah)*,[11] were so many ways of circumventing the ban on usury and hazardous risks. In

3 *Provinciales*, pp. 91 and 130.
4 Ahmad Jamal Al Din, in J. Berque: *Les Arabes d'hier à demain*, p. 51 *et seq.*
5 J. Berque: *op. cit.*, p. 51.
6 In fact the majority of the Civil Codes of Muslim countries consider an interest of about 12% to be legal.
7 *Cf.* J. Berque, *op. cit.*, p. 74 *et seq.*
8 As was the practice in the Christian Middle Ages; *Cf.* St. Francis of Assissi.
9 It would doubtless be interesting to link up these economic perspectives of communities with the possibilities which they have of transforming energy into utilisable energy. The work of C. Cippola on the three great occasions in the struggle of humanity against the lack of utilisable energy, could furnish interesting explanatory details. Mme. Germaine Tillion observed, during a conference (previously mentioned), that *tawakkul* had never prevented any technical and economic adaptations which were found to be necessary.
10 It is noteworthy and significant that the heroes of the *Thousand and One Nights* are nearly always sons of eminent merchants, who have rapidly dissipated their fortunes and gone to ruin. So that fortunes are made, and lost, in a manner which is spectacular, but not very "economical". In fact, it is only when there arises the idea of revenue, the possibility of expending capital *without drying up its source*, that the concepts of interest and risk can become modified, and assume a beneficent character. They then become the possibility of the growth of wealth on an individual or world scale instead of the threat of squandering and the destruction of wealth.
11 *Cf.* Milliot: *op. cit.*, p. 664, *et seq.*

consequence they could have served as the springboard for a dynamic orientation in the economic domain. This draft on the future, drawn by the innovators, would thus have been met by the profits arising from economic growth. If this did not materialise, it is, we feel, for a fundamental reason — the fear felt by the Muslim *of being alone with his risk.*

The fear of commercial risk, which has prevented the development of economic growth in Islam, arises from the fact that the *risks* which are demanded by the capitalist system as conditions for success, are *individual* risks. As much as the anachronisms of certain prohibitions, *the feeble individualism of the Muslim* seems to have hindered the *creation of capitalistic risk.* The situation is different in the modern world, which is accustomed to *collective capitalistic activity.*

The possibility of planning and taking risks collectively is of the highest importance for the economic development of Islam. It will enable it to launch forth with the same kind of adventurous enterprise that gave birth to the Western economic revolution. But it will be a new kind of plan, the collective plan, where the Muslim *Ummah* (the Muslim community) will at last feel itself unfettered and morally free to act.

It is not difficult to find instances of this change of attitude. Insurance, which would be prohibited if considered as the taking of a risk, becomes, on the contrary, a permitted operation, and even a praiseworthy one when viewed as an expression of solidarity. It is not by chance that the term for nationalisation — *tá'mím* — has, as noted by R. Blachère[12], a root which is common with, or very similar to, the root of *Ummah* (the Muslim community). The plan is a calculated risk taken by the community. Now according to the actual declaration of the Prophet, the Muslim community, as such, is *infallible* (the basis of the *ijmá'* — automatic agreement of the constitutive community). A well-known Hadíth runs: "My people will never be in agreement about an error" *(lá tattífiqu ummatí 'alá dalál).*

This transformation of risk, today supported collectively, is accompanied by a transformation of the "sign".[13] The "speculator", the pioneer, the innovator, are no longer sheep who have strayed from the fold of the faithful Muslims, they are, whether *ra'ís,* or *za'ím,* the *Imams* of our modern times.[14] This new significance given to economic growth, also brings a new and decisive meaning to Muslim property.

(3) The economic function of property in Islam

André Piettre recently wrote:[15] "Distribution under a liberal régime was a distribution carried out on the basis of 'having', whereas the whole effort of the contemporary period tends to substitute a distribution made on the basis of 'being', carried out according to the rights possessed by every man, as a human being, to his share of the collective production and wealth." It seems that this evolution is not due solely to moral or social reasons, but rather to a transformation of the processes of production. To the individual creation (or creation considered as imputable to individuals), corresponded the property-privilege (Art. 544 of the Civil Code). To collective creation in a jointly-planned economy corresponds the functional property. The definite rôle of property and its utilisation in a collectively useful way are becoming essential. Here it is not a question of a voluntary amendment of the régime, but of the necessary changes entailed in a developing system. Even in American capitalism, François Perroux recognises four new phenomena which transform the nature of the régime:

1. the private ownership of the means of production is strictly rectified by public control.

2. private enterprise is intentionally made to form part of a complex machinery of *collective creation.*

3. the commercial principle of the greatest profit is rectified by the principles of human economy.

4. the exploitation of "free labour" by the capitalist method is counteracted by the conversion of institutions, and by the organisation on the part of the labour force.[16]

For their part, the authors of the *Soviet Manual of Political Economy* specify that, when the social ownership of the means of production is established, the contradiction between the private character of the capitalist appropriation of the fruits of production and the collective nature of the processes of production is eliminated.[17]

The Waqf properties in modern economic growth in Muslim countries

In the two systems, and by means of the two methods of economic growth which they propose, we thus arrive at a conception of *social property,* or *social ownership.* This idea, variously interpreted in the two régimes, expresses a profound reality — the transformation of nature and of the meaning of property, having regard to the present needs of production-techniques and methods of organisation of the modern economy.

And this evolution gives a fresh opportunity to Islam, where the *very profound conception of property* seems better adapted to the *new function* promulgated by modern economic growth than to the rôle imputed to it by liberal economic activity.

It is as trustee of the Muslim community that the State can expropriate the sacrosanct *milk* (private property) of an individual[18] for reasons of public utility. It is also as representatives of the highest interests of the community that the legislators in Egypt and Tunisia have seen it fit to put into "economic circulation" the *waqf* or *haboue* properties. These *habous* properties were "mortmain" properties (held by religious corporations and exempt from dues), which were "frozen", then sequestrated and assigned to foundations established for some pious purpose, or for some enterprise of public utility.[19]

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12 During a conference on Islam and capitalism, already referred to.

13 In connection with this transformation, we should note the remarkable progress and development made by the banks in Muslim countries in recent years. *Cf.* J. Berque: *Les Arabes d'hier à demain,* p. 78 *et seq.*

14 *Cf.* J. Berque: *Les Arabes d'hier à demain,* p. 119.

15 *Cours d'économie politique, Licence,* 2nd Year, 1959-1960, Cercle du Droit.

16 F. Perroux: *La coexistence pacifique,* p. 102, Note 1.

17 *Manuel d'économie politique,* Paris, 1956, p. 425 *et seq.*

18 *Cf.* J. Berque: *Les Arabes d'hier à demain. Cf.* also Osman Khalil: *L'expropriation en droit musulman,* quoted in *Travaux de la Semaine Internationale de Droit Musulman,* Paris, 27 July 1952, which considers that ". . . if Islam has made little use of expropriation for reasons of public utility, this is due more to the economic and social situation than to the effect of a superstitious respect towards the right of private ownership considered as being a divine decree."

19 L. Milliot: *op. cit.,* p. 537.

These *habous* properties, which had been created for some pious purpose (or to evade legal requirements), played a useful part in a society whose aim was to preserve the stability of a pre-established order, by protecting such properties from the despotism of rulers or the extravagance of the sons of noblemen.

In a society which had become economically progressive, they were becoming obstacles to a development which — it must be emphasised — involves changes in structure. This new-found efficiency on the part of the *Ummah* sheds a new light on the function of property, which has now been re-orientated in the direction of the " public interest ".

The new conception of property enables us to clear up the contradictions which the inadaptation of Islam to a category of private property (created via the " imported " Western capitalism), had set up.

Thus in agriculture the " fellah " now takes a personal interest in the land, while in industry capital is re-adapted for the purposes of production. The new status of the "fellah", his " reconciliation " with the land, is due to State intervention in almost all the Muslim countries. The agricultural reforms — carried out by the authorities — enable the " fellah " *to become the owner of land, but also endeavour to give him the means of mastering it. This initiative, when it is made by qualified representatives of the* Ummah *takes on a new significance.* It is capable of assuming gigantic proportions, if it is supported by the common world-wide ideal of the Muslim community. That is why the efforts directed towards agricultural organisation, like those taking place in Egypt,[20] even if they are still somewhat inexpert, should be followed up with interest, for they represent tentative efforts to find the main " guide-rope ", by means of which the potentialities of Islam in the domain of agriculture can be developed with the maximum of efficacy. In the same way, the mechanisation of agriculture in the Near East, the economic importance of which has been stressed in a recent book,[21] can become a means of radically transforming agricultural production and the social status of the " fellah ", provided it expressed a new " power-idea " for the *Ummah.* In the majority of Muslim countries, the expropriation of landed property by the State — the representative of the *Ummah* — can encourage this *popular* approval of mechanisation which is necessary for its success. *Here again we must explore the deepest sentiments and ideas of the people, as a guide to future action.*

Modern Islam is proclaiming the rights of the Ummah over all important sectors of industry

In industry also Islam is manifesting its new-found initiative by proclaiming the rights of the *Ummah* over this all-important sector. So that capital is both extracted from the " fabulous " hoards of wealth of Eastern legend, and redirected towards investment. Indeed, State action is essential in the formation of an " Arab " capital fund. Sometimes it is a direct action of the State, which participates in industries in an ever-increasing degree (as is the case in the U.A.R.), thus tending both to create and administer the industrial capital. Sometimes there is indirect action: the expropriation of the important landed proprietors creates a capital which is, at least in theory, available for industry. Or perhaps a legislation, such as the Egyptian legislative system which controls commercial companies, imposes a fairly high " ceiling " for reserve funds, and limits dividend distribution to 10%.[22] In any case, State action is decisive in the creation of capital in Islam. This creation is the expression of a new-found ideal on the part of the *Ummah,* which explains both the *spectacular* character of the formation of Arab capital, the tendency of which is to express itself by conspicuous *symbols,* such as steel-works, dams, etc., and *the non-orthodox manner of this formation from the point of view of the classic or traditional type of economy.* The short- or medium-term profit motive which used to govern the limited and prudent calculations of traditional Western political economy is, in the domain of investment, superseded by an evolution based on other criteria, where the influence of prestige and speculation on new structures take on a new importance. The strategy and the preferences of the *Ummah* modify to a certain extent — indirectly but essentially — a certain type of economic calculation.

By finding a present-day realistic meaning of its keen conception of property, Islam is establishing and promulgating its supreme rights over the various important domains, for it has realised that at the present time progress does not emerge from the *domain of the practical* in opposition to the *domain of the moral,* which extends its scope and is reorganised in order to become really effective. In brief, this particular sense of the collective which is characteristic of Islam can today become the motor which will activate economic progress if it is properly used, whereas it could only be a brake in a society where progress is considered as the fruit of individualism.

So that the emerging assimilation of a technique which is discarding its traditional characteristics, and the adaptation, by a return to sources, of juridico-social structures to the imperative needs of a progressive world, all combine, it would seem, to give a chance of success to a new type of economic system which would acquire its force and its " drive " from the Qur'án. For the Qur'án remains a potential source of energy and of social creativity which no one can either contest or deliberately neglect.[23]

(To be continued)

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20 For details as to the application of agricultural reform in Egypt, and the efforts to organise agriculture on modern lines, *cf.* our book: *Structure économique et civilisation,* and J. and S. Lacouture: *L'Egypte en mouvement.*

21 G. Saab: *La motorisation agricole au Proche-Orient,* S.E.D.E.S., Paris 1960, Preface by A. Piatier.

22 Decree No. 26 on limited companies, as in *Economic Bulletin,* 1951,, IV, 247, quoted by J. Berque: *Les Arabes d'hier à demain,* p. 110.

23 In this connection *cf.* L. Milliot, who writes: " There is in Islam a spiritual unity combined with a firm determination to assert itself as a political unity. For a fellowship like the Muslim religion, which has over the years developed continuous social movements — exteriorised in durable institutions — is a positive force and consequently, a reality: . . . of which it would be unwise to anticipate the disappearance. It would be contrary to the realities of history to imagine that the new tendencies have already ' absorbed ' the entire heritage of the past and are inevitably destined to annihilate it. In the ideological offensive, as, on the one hand, there is Western Europe wherein are embodied a certain number of essential truths, which no one can ignore without acting in contradiction of the course of history, so, on the other hand, there is Islam, a time-honoured spiritual tradition, a centuries-old form of culture, an ancient and intransigent religion, whose latent power and spiritual reserves no man can possibly fathom." *Op. cit.,* p. 96.

Children's Page

By OLIVE TOTO

Dear children,

There are two yearly very important festivals in the life of a Muslim. One is the 'Id al-Fitr, which in English means the " festival of breaking the fast ". The second is the 'Id al-Adha, which in English means the " festival of sacrifices ".

1. *'Id al-Fitr*

In celebrating this festival (after one month's fast) the Muslim is thanking God for giving him the help and strength to have fasted throughout the past month from daybreak to sunset. This month is called the month of Ramadan and on the following day after a month's fast, this great festival is held. This festival is called the 'Id al-Fitr.

I must tell you that during the life of our Prophet many important things happened during this month. For instance, the Holy Qur'án started to be revealed to the Prophet (may the peace and blessing of God be upon him!) 1,400 years ago. I think you already know what I mean when I say the Holy Qur'án. But to make sure I will tell you. It is a book in which everything that was revealed to Muhammad from God is recorded. This book is to the Muslims what the Bible is to the Christians. We as Muslims have to respect the Holy Bible. In fact, ours is the only religion which can claim to respect all religious books and also all the prophets before the Prophet Muhammad.

The Holy Qur'án says that all Muslims who can should go on a pilgrimage at least once in their lifetime to Mecca. If a Muslim goes on this pilgrimage he celebrates the 'Id al-Adha at a place called Mina, near Mecca. If you do not perform the Hajj, then you celebrate this festival wherever you are and join those in spirit who are at Mecca. A few hundreds of thousands of Muslims or even a few Muslims can get together and celebrate the 'Id al-Adha in a mosque, if possible, or anywhere else. But as I have said before, a Muslim is told in the Qur'án to go on a pilgrimage if he or she can afford it. But the pilgrim has to be sure not to leave his family in need, by going off to Mecca and leaving it financially or otherwise troubled. The words in the Qur'án are: " If you can afford to go."

The Hajj is the name of the pilgrimage performed at the time when the pilgrim has to be present in Mecca before the seventh day of the twelfth month of the Muslim year. This month is called Dhul Hijjah. Again I repeat, if one goes on Hajj, one must leave the family well cared for. What a practical religion Islam is ! It is full of common sense. You just think about it. I am sure you would not like your father to go off and leave you hungry because he was doing his religious duty.

The Prophet Muhammad once said: " Look at your parents with affection. Every time you do this it has the reward of one pilgrimage to Mecca." He also said: " The pleasure of the parents is the pleasure of God." If you are lucky enough to go to Mecca for the Hajj you should thank God for giving you the great opportunity of feeling and seeing for yourself this great occasion, when humanity becomes one large family of all colours and all nationalities, all speaking different languages Here the king and the beggar stand by the side of each other. They all gather together with one object only — to glorify God. They all repeat again and again and wherever an opportunity occurs, these words, which are: " I am here at Thy service O God ! " A pilgrim can be heard repeating these words at all times of the day, even when he is walking along, because he really feels so near to God at that time. The pilgrim wears two sheets without any seams. One sheet goes around him like a skirt, the other goes over one shoulder and the upper part of the body, just like a beggar, and the head uncovered. For are we not beggars before God?

Women pilgrims are not compelled to wear white, but many of them do. They can wear what they like and it is usually quite sober clothes that they wear, but their faces must not be covered. The first thing that one does when one goes to Mecca is to go to the Ka'bah to do the Tawáf. I have already explained to you all about the Ka'bah but not about the Tawáf. This is an Arabic word and it means " going around ". All pilgrims go around the Ka'bah seven times. After having done this, the pilgrims face the Ka'bah and say prayers of two *Rak'ahs* only. The pilgrims then run seven times between the two hills called Safa and Marwah. These small hills are just by the side of the Ka'bah.

You will ask, Why do they run up and down? This action of running up and down brings back to the pilgrim the memory of Hagar, who ran at this spot hopelessly looking for water for her tiny baby son; and also how at last when all seemed hopeless God showed her a well of water. This well is still there to this day and is called the Zam Zam. Most pilgrims bring back some of its water with them. By running up and down between the hills the pilgrim would, I am sure, feel hot and thirsty and would get to know a little of what Hagar felt when she was searching for water, knowing her child would die of thirst. The Bible (Genesis 21 verses 13-19) tells of how God showed her this well of water for her child. Muslim tradition also has it.

The pilgrims then go to Mina, a place about four miles away from Mecca, and stay there for a night. They arrive at

noon and say their prayers and stay in Mina until the next day. Mina is a small place surrounded by hills. From here they move to the plain of 'Arafát, a larger plain nine miles away from Mecca. I wonder if you remember about those few men who signed what is known as the Pledge of 'Aqabah. It was on a hill called 'Aqabah between Mecca and Mina that this famous pledge of loyalty was given to our Prophet by a band of men from Medina.

It is on the eighth day that the pilgrims reach 'Arafát. Here the pilgrims pray and recite again and again the words: "I am at Thy service, O God!" A sermon is given from a hill where there is a pulpit for the purpose. One reaches this pulpit by going up some steps of stone. From the afternoon until the sunset the pilgrims give praises to God in a loud and clear voice. In the evening they again move to the place called Muzdhalifah. Here, under the open sky, they pass the night. No tent or any other covering is allowed. This is to bring home to the pilgrim that there is complete equality between man and man. More prayers are said and very early the next morning. More or less before sunrise, the pilgrims leave again for Mina. Now this is the great day of the festival of sacrifices — 'Id al-Adha. On this day goats, sheep or camels are sacrificed by the pilgrims. The meat is given to the poor. The Qur'án says that it is not the meat of the animals that reaches God. But it is the good intention and the action of the pilgrim that reach Him. The sacrifice is only a symbol of devotion and obedience.

After this the pilgrim returns to Mecca and again does the Tawáf. All the time he is saying some kind of prayer.

When the Tawáf is completed, the pilgrim goes back to Mina to spend another two or three nights there.

You must remember that all this time hundreds of thousands of pilgrims are constantly on the move — one huge mass of white broken only by a colour here and there of a woman's dress.

When the pilgrims are back in Mina the two white unsewn sheets can be taken off and ordinary clothes worn. While at Mina the pilgrims have to do another rite to complete the Hajj ceremonies. This rite is the throwing of small stones at three short pillars at Mina. These pillars are a little distance from each other. What are these three short pillars? The story goes back to the time of the Prophet Abraham, who had been commanded by God to sacrifice his son. Whilst on his way it was in these three places that the devil (Satan) tempted him to disobey God. He picked up some stones and threw them at the devil. The devil moved a little further away. Again he tried to tempt Abraham but the Prophet Abraham stoned him again. He moved away and appeared again a few paces further away. The Prophet Abraham stoned him and he disappeared altogether. Each of these pillars marks the place where the devil had appeared to tempt Abraham. You see, the devil, or Satan, is an evil one who likes us to do wrong.

Now the last day of the Hajj has come for the pilgrims. If they are going away that very day (or whenever they wish to leave Mecca) they must go to the Ka'bah to do the Farewell Tawáf.

With this the Hajj is completed and the most wonderful experience of unity made, never to be forgotten.

Of course, all Muslims visit the three big mosques — the Ka'bah at Mecca, the Prophet's Mosque at Medina and the Dome of the Rock at Jerusalem. All pilgrims visit the Prophet's burial place at Medina and ask God to bless his soul.

I wonder if you noticed that we Muslims remember so many actions of the Prophet Abraham mentioned in the Bible and also in the Qur'án. We remember Hagar and we hold a festival in memory of Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son, Ishmael. I think I can easily claim that we are the only people who have so much respect for the prophets of the Bible. Of course, these prophets are of the Qur'án as well.

You already know that the Prophet Muhammad, after having lived for some time in Medina was not allowed to go to Mecca by the Quraysh. Nor were his followers. But the day came when our Prophet made Mecca a safe place for all Muslims to visit, as and when they liked. It is worth remembering that the Prophet and his followers could not go to Mecca as you and I can do today as and when we like.

The Ka'bah, so dear to our Prophet and his followers, was full of idols. The building so dear to the Prophet Muhammad was being used in the way of the unbelievers. It grieved him greatly.

Here is the history of how Mecca was taken away from these bad people and how the Ka'bah was again a place of worship for the true and only one God.

In the year 628 C.E. the people of Mecca agreed that they would be willing to let the Prophet Muhammad and his followers and also the Khuza'ah tribe go freely to Mecca. This agreement was made at a place called Hudaybiyyah outside Mecca. According to this agreement the Muslims were quite free to go to Mecca and visit the Ka'bah. This agreement was kept by the Quraysh for two years and during that time Islam became of great strength; for there was peace and no war or fighting between the followers of our Prophet and the Quraysh. But this did not please the enemies of Islam and they decided to break this agreement. A tribe called the Banu Bakr decided to do something against these followers of Islam. Some of the men of the Quraysh who also hated Islam met the men of the Banu Bakr tribe and started trouble. First of all, they thought they would get rid of the friendly Khuza'ah tribe, who lived nearby. So these evil men of the Banu Bakr planned to swoop down in the dead of night to murder the Khuza'ah. This they did. With warlike howls in the dead of night they killed many members of the Khuza'ah tribe. They were dazed and could not collect their thoughts to fight the foe. So they fled to the Ka'bah. Here they felt they must be safe. For tradition had it that within the walls of the Ka'bah no blood must be shed. But how sad! These bad men went mad and so blood was shed even within the Ka'bah. What a pity! The streets of Mecca turned red with blood from the killings.

The Prophet was at that time in Medina. A message was sent to him. "Save us," it said, "And come to our help or else we will perish by the sword of the foe." This moved the Prophet's heart. What a cry of woe it was! He listened to their cry and at once sent the message to the Quraysh telling them that they must pay the blood money to help the families of the Khuza'ah who had been left without their relatives. He also asked them not to mix with the bad men of the Banu Bakr tribe and that the agreement of Hudaybiyyah had been broken. Swiftly came back the reply.

" We will not pay the blood money. Yes, let the agreement be forgotten and exist no more." One man by the name of Abu Sufyán said to his friends, " No. Do not let this agreement go." You see, dear children, Abu Sufyán could see into the future. He knew that they all would be punished one way or the other if the agreement was put aside. But the bad men of the Quraysh did not care or regret the killings they had done. They meant to make the Muslim blood flow again if they got a chance. This could not go on, so thought the Prophet Muhammad, " I must see to it that Mecca is free and peace is reigning in it." He called his followers and told them that they must all prepare themselves to go to Mecca and take over the city without bloodshed. But amongst the followers there was a man called Hatib Ibn Abi Baltah, whose relatives lived in Mecca. Now Hatib thought that as soon as the Meccans would hear that Muhammad was at the city gates they would kill his (Hatib's) relatives. So he sent a letter through a Meccan woman called Sarah. She was not a Muslim, but she had come to Muhammad for help. Hatib gave her money besides the money she had got from Muhammad. In this letter he told his relatives of the decision of the Prophet. But someone got suspicious and got the letter back from her and let her go on her way unharmed. But the followers of the Prophet said, " Hatib is a traitor; he must die." Hatib declared that he meant no harm. He was then forgiven because the Prophet insisted that he should go free. The Prophet also said, " All Meccans shall go free if God gives victory unto me."

It was the tenth day of Ramadan 630 C.E. when, with ten thousand brave men, Muhammad started out to take Mecca. He and his followers camped outside the city of Mecca that night and hoped to put the bad men of Mecca to flight. In order to overawe the Meccans, the Prophet had great fires lit around the city. The flames leapt up high so that they seemed to reach the sky. The followers altogether cried *Allah Akbar,* which in English means " God is Great ". With the fires all around and the loud cries of Allah Akbar, the Meccans thought that twenty thousand warriors were camping outside the city. Do you know that these evil men of Mecca gave up without any fighting. Out of the city came a great enemy of the Prophet who had even killed some of the Prophet's relatives. He hung his head in shame. " Forgive me," he said, " I have been your enemy for 20 years. I know I have done wrong and I bow to your God for forgiveness and also ask you to forgive me." Muhammad forgave him and gave the order to his men that when they entered the city, they must have pity on its inhabitants.

One of his generals, Khalid, went first into the city. Honestly his heart was full of pity for those frightened men. At least he thought that they were really frightened and sorry. But were they? Oh no! When they saw Khalid approaching all of a sudden they sent a shower of arrows at him and his men. Khalid forgot the Prophet's order. Without a thought he did the most natural thing to do at that time because, as you know, I have always told you that a Muslim does not turn the other cheek. He defended himself. Khalid fought back and in the battle 28 of the enemy were killed.

When the news reached the Prophet he was unhappy to think that some blood had been spilt. But this killing was not within the Ka'bah, as the men of Mecca had done. The killing done by Khalid was only to defend himself and his men. All the Muslims now had entered the city and Mecca was truly saved for you and me to visit the Ka'bah in peace and safety now and forever.

In accordance with the Prophet's command no one was made a prisoner and no one was compelled to become a Muslim. So when people even in these days say that the Prophet Muhammad used the sword to get his way, you refer them to his entry into Mecca, where all non-Muslims were just allowed to go free. I must also tell you that this is the only example of its kind in history where the conqueror did not punish those who were at his mercy.

Why will people always like to think that the Muslims used the sword for spreading their religion? Why, I ask? When I was at school I heard stories of the infidels in occupation of the holy city of Jerusalem. But I was not told that the occupiers of the holy city had to love everything about that city because these people were *not* infidels but Muslims. Muslims to this day love this holy city. I was told at school the story of King Richard the Lionheart and Saladin, whose proper name is Salah al-Din al-Ayyubi. The story is that King Richard lay very ill in the holy land. Salah al-Din came to know of his illness. He went disguised as a doctor into the camp of his greatest enemy, King Richard, and gave him medicine to cure him. My teacher also forgot to tell that Salah al-Din was a Muslim and *not* an infidel but a believer in the one God. He was a man who would not have stood still and let King Richard knock him down but when King Richard was helpless he would help to cure him. When I was told the story I wanted to ask my teacher a question. It was, " But have you thought how Saladin could have poisoned King Richard if he had wanted to ? " If this story is told today, I hope the teacher now would say that Saladin was a Muslim. If they do not, you must tell them who and of what religion he was. He cured a man who hated him. Here is a wonderful action, especially when you know the person you have cured hates you.

This is a nice story and would be better if, as I said, one would remember to say that Saladin was a Muslim. Always remember that Jerusalem is loved by all Muslims and most Muslims visit it soon after their pilgrimage to Mecca. And don't forget that we also believe in all the prophets of God, both Biblical and non-Biblical. No other religion, excepting that of Islam, asks this of its followers.

Islamic Heritage in the Context of the World Affairs of Today

By N. H. MEHAL

" Islam was no instantaneous upheaval, it did not come on the world-stage unheralded ; it had its roots in human history.

" The basic function of Islam was to provide a moral basis for the new spirit of individualism. In order to make man's life on earth meaningful and wholesome, man was made a responsible member of society. . . ."

An important question

Is it true that Islam as a practical guide to our daily life has become meaningless; is it true that it has fallen out of step with the modern industrial society?

Of course every Muslim will say without a moment's hesitation to hold such a view is nonsense. But belief in a thing by way of habit is not enough. If our faith in the Islamic values is based on our passionate exuberance, it is bound to be shaken sooner or later. Let us, therefore, be analytical and try to answer this question dispassionately.

Perpetuity of the Islamic ideology is a vital question today and is becoming more and more vital with the modern way of life.

To answer these questions we shall have to answer a basic question, namely, What is meant by the word " Islam "? A definition of the word " Islam " will make it possible for us to determine whether Islam as a religion has any practical usefulness for us today. Such a definition is all the more necessary in the fact of technological progress : modern technology has, as it were, contracted the world, has unified it, so that today there are no geographical barriers to our getting from one region to another. Of course, this is a healthy development. Apart from making it possible to understand others, everyone can take part in technological progress, thereby improving the lot of mankind.

But it is precisely here that the Islamic world must be most wary. " Universalism " is an ambiguous term, and " world-culture " has a different meaning for different people.

To understand the meaning of the word " Islam ", not the literal meaning, one has to go back to the days of pre-Islamic Meccan society. Such an analysis will make it sufficiently clear that Islam fulfilled a basic human need. It is this basic human need, and its fulfilment, that is the true meaning of Islam. Islam was no instantaneous upheaval, it did not come on to the world-stage unheralded ; it had its roots in human history. The Islamic revolution began when the seeds of arrogant, selfish, anti-social vices were cast about. Every religion attempts at fulfilling a human need. Without such a function, no truly great ideology has ever been able to weather the storms over the centuries. Of course, once the preparatory period is over, an ideology becames explosive, takes everybody by surprise, and by the sheer force of its argument makes people lay down their lives in its defence.

The human " roots ", the basic social causes, impart meaning to an ideology ; and the strength of an ideology depends upon the importance of its background. In other words, the more basic the defect in a society, the greater will be the strength of the ideology which tries to remove the malady. Let it be emphasized here that no truly great philosophy has ever arisen out of a void. The stature of a philosophy depends upon the particular nature of the human problem it attempts to solve. When a human problem becomes universal, when it comes to deal directly with the soul of man, then the philosophy that resolves this problem, restoring the soul of man to health, rises to the heights of a true religion.

Social conditions before Islam

The fact that a true religion aims at solving a human problem means two things : first, the human problem must be real, it must have deformed the character, the tenor, of a particular society, bringing to it pain and misery ; secondly, the purpose of religion must be to cure that society of that particular disease — to reform the character of the society and to give life a new meaning.

This was true of Islam. The Meccan society immediately before the advent of Islam was suffering from a particular disease ; it was a disorganized society, one in which the supposedly responsible element had become irresponsible. W. Montgomery Watt, in his *Islam and the Integration of Society*, says, " If it is asked whether any important economic change is to be found in the historical background of Mohammad's preaching at Mecca, one soon presents itself, namely, a change from nomadism to commerce ".

Mecca around 610 C.E.

The Meccan society around the year 610 C.E. had a very strong commercial flavour. The leading families of Mecca had come to control the caravan trade through western Arabia ; through this route the luxury goods from India and Abyssinia were exchanged for the products of Syria and the Mediterranean.

This commercial enterprise led to the break-up of traditional social organization ; communal solidarity based on loyalty to one's clan disappeared ; monopolies and new alliances, based on commercial interests, played havoc with tribal solidarity. This is how W. Montgomery Watt, in his *Muhammad at Mecca,* p. 19, summarizes the situation : " The tendency to individualism and away from tribal solidarity was fostered in Mecca by the circumstances of commercial life . . . so we frequently find men acting in opposition to their clans. Abú Lahab adopted a different attitude towards Muhammad from most of the rest of Háshim. . . . Business partnerships seemed sometimes to have cut across clan relationships."

He goes on to say that a new concept of unity based on common material interests was beginning to take root among the prosperous members of the society : " It was this rather than the fact that they all belong to the Quraysh that led the Ahláf and the Mutayyabún to compose their quarrel."

Not only were the leading members of the society becoming very rich through commerce, they were also becoming more and more indifferent towards the less fortunate members of their respective clans and families. In this atmosphere of individualism and materialism, the interests of the poor and the destitute were pushed into the background. Obviously, this spirit of arrogant acquisitiveness made people less and less satisfied with the social set-up. The atmosphere became diseased. People began to talk about the *malaise* that had taken hold of the social framework.

'Uthmán Ibn Maz'ún, a prominent member among the batch of early Muslims, had previously been inclining towards monotheism. Then we have the well-known story of the four men who resolved to give up the pagan practices at Mecca and adopt the true religion of Abraham. These were, of course, individual outbursts of protest.

Thus, the Meccan society, just before the advent of Islam, was passing through a state of anomalousness : the traditionally accepted ways of social interaction were being replaced by new, and therefore " unsocial ", modes of behaviour ; the community-sense was fast disappearing before a wave of materialistic individualism. The Meccan society of that period was typical of the so-called civilized society of the world. The time-honoured religious, social, moral and intellectual ideas were overlooked.

Man became over-confident ; towards society, he became irresponsible ; man began to walk on thin air, and there was no new religion to make his existence significant.

Islam stepped into the breach. The basic function of Islam was to provide a moral basis for this new spirit of individualism. In order to make man's life on earth meaningful and wholesome, man was made a responsible member of society. The excesses of individualism were checked, and man was made responsible for his actions. How was this done?

Check on embryonic tycoons

It is a remarkable fact that the early passages of the Holy Qur'án deal squarely with this social *malaise.*

If the merchant princes were arrogant, irresponsible, anti-social, if they were neglecting the interests of the poor and the destitute, the Qur'án bade them to be generous. Thus we read in the Qur'án (104 : 1-4) :

> " Woe to every maligner, scoffer,
> Who gathers wealth and counts it over,
> Thinking that his wealth will perpetuate him."

Again we read in the Qur'án (92 : 5-11) :

> " So for him who gives and shows piety,
> And counts true the best reward,
> We shall assist him to ease.
> But as for him who is niggardly, and prides himself in wealth,
> And counts false the best reward,
> We shall assist him to difficulty,
> Nor will his wealth profit him when he perishes."

Again in the Holy Qur'án (89 : 18-21) the same theme is repeated :

> " Ye do not honour the orphan,
> Nor urge to feed the destitute ;
> Ye devour the inheritance indiscriminately,
> And ye love wealth ardently."

This concept of generosity was directed against the merchant princes ; they were exhorted to look after the poor and the needy. If the merchant princes were over-confident, and were boastful of their material prosperity, the Qur'án extolled the glory and omnipotence of the Creator, and reminded men of the impermanence of life on earth.

The Qur'án deals squarely with the new-fangled materialistic individualism. In the face of God's mercy and glory, man is rebuked for being ungrateful. Two words convey the idea of man's impudence, namely, *Taghá* and *Istaghná. Taghá* means he became impudent, insolent, exceeding the limits. The word applies to a man who presses on regardless of any moral or religious considerations. This word aptly describes the attitude of the wealthy.

Istaghná would mean he possesses wealth and independence. It was not a bad description of the rich of the day who, because of their financial strength, regarded themselves independent of any higher authority :

> " Nay, but verily man acts presumptuously,
> Because he thinks himself independent " (The Qur'án, 96 : 6).

Two points, however, must never be overlooked. First, the Qur'án does not condemn big business, nor does it condemn individualism as such. Its purpose is to eliminate certain practices ensuing from commerce and individualism, certain anti-social practices, practices based on arrogance, selfishness and greed.

The concept of generosity in Islam

Secondly, the concept of generosity has a special meaning in Islam. It is a symbolic gesture, and is fundamentally different from charity. It is a symbolic gesture because the man of wealth is a steward of his community ; he holds his wealth in trust for the community in which he lives. What is emphasized here is life within the community, not above it, nor apart from it. In the Qur'án (70 : 24-25) the pious are described as :

> " Those in whose wealth there is a recognized *right* for the beggar and the destitute."

So this, in fact, is the meaning behind the word Islam. Can we then say that Islam has become irrelevant to the ways of modern industrial society ?

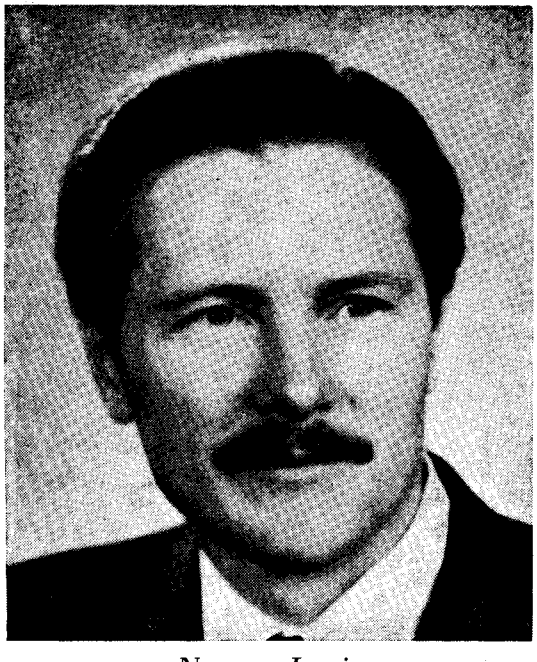
Everywhere, religion has been in retreat before economic changes ; ever since the 18th century, the world has been making social adjustments — and one may say, also, moral adjustments — to the demands of the Industrial Revolution. Materialism and individualism are once again on the prowl.

Indeed, technology has worked wonders : there seems to be nothing that man cannot devise for his comfort. But one has sadly to note that the characteristics of our modern age have come to be these : crimes, mental imbalance and drug addiction. Over-confidence has once again bred irresponsibility, and the concept of the welfare state has provided us with a slick veneer under which to hide our laziness.

It is advisable for us to pause and ask ourselves this : which way Islam? The twentieth century has been blessed with gigantic political changes. All over the globe, new Islamic countries have emerged. But independence has been a mixed blessing : the face of every new nation is badly seamed and scarred with poverty, disease and hunger. The material gulf between the industrial West and the materially backward East is great indeed ! This difference has created a psychological state of mind very much to the disadvantage of the East. But here is a word of caution from Professor G. E. von Grunenbaum in his *Islam* :

> " As the experience of the community changes, the power to formulate and answer new questions in terms of the traditional values and the decisions previously arrived at will indicate a culture's ability to continue. Once internal or external experience creates intellectual, emotional or organizational needs that cannot be met by the insights or hypotheses evolved within the closed system, its basic values as well as its doctrinal and ethical solutions will command less and less unquestioning adherence. The door will be opened for its transformation, or even displacement."

At its very beginning, Islam realized that man was a social animal " and is unhappy unless he has a group to belong to ". Material interests, of course, provide a new basis for a kind of group solidarity ; but this is a poor substitute for the feeling of social security one gets from the clan and family relationships. So Islam created a community of selves. This is our heritage, and let us not fritter it away.



Norman Lewis

Hafsah* Speaks

'Umar said when he gave it to me :
" This is the book for eternity,
The seal of the prophets, foretelling doom ;
See that no fire or rain or simoom
Destroys its pages or hurls them away,
But guard it well 'till the final day."

So the book that contains God's holy word,
The very accents Muhammad heard,
Was given to me that I guard it well,
And all the demons inhabiting Hell
Can never take this book from me,
The book that will live through eternity.

No chest of diamonds or rubies rare
For queens of India to deck their hair,
Or opals, sapphires, or emeralds bright,
Or amethysts filtering purple light,
Can have the worth of this sacred book —
I have hidden it where no one will look.

I ask only this, O God above,
That you keep in my heart the flame of love
And integrity such as few have known,
So that when I come to Thy splendid throne
This one kind word will be said to me :
" Thou hast guarded well what was given to thee."

NORMAN LEWIS.

*The daughter of the Caliph 'Umar the Great and one of the Prophet Muhammad's widows, who had in her possession a copy of the Qur'án belonging to the Caliph Abú Bakr.

What Our Readers Say...

A CHILDREN'S BOOK ON ISLAM AND THE LIFE OF MUHAMMAD, THE LAST PROPHET
THE ISLAMIC REVIEW CHILDREN'S BOOK ON ISLAM FUND, 18 ECCLESTON SQUARE, LONDON, S.W.1, ENGLAND

Dear Brother/Sister in Islam,

Assalamu Aleykum !

The need for a children's book in English on Islam and the life of Muhammad, the Last Prophet, cannot be over-emphasized. It is true there are available all sorts of books on the various aspects of Islam and the Prophet Muhammad. But, to the best of my knowledge, none caters for the requirements of the child's mind. The printing of a book for children on Islam and the life of Muhammad, the Last Prophet, involves an outlay of capital which unfortunately we do not possess at present. The book has to be attractive enough in its get-up and contents and profusely illustrated. All this raises the cost of production.

Believing that if the project of compiling such a book for children on Islam and the life of Muhammad, the Last Prophet, be brought to the notice of generous readers of *The Islamic Review*, I may be in a position to publish the projected book sometime during this year, in which the fourteenth centenary of the Revelation of the Holy Qur'án is being celebrated. I am encouraged to take this step by some letters that some friends have written to me and Mrs. Khan, who is helping me in raising funds for this book. Here is one I reproduce for your perusal.

Saffron Walden, Essex, England
8th March, 1968

Dear Mrs. Toto and Mrs. Khan,

We have just received the December issue of *The Islamic Review*, and I have just read your "Children's Page" article about prayer. We always use these for the guidance of our children (3 years and 6 years), as my husband and I are not yet Muslims, although we hope to be.

I can assure you a children's prayer book would be *most* helpful for parents like ourselves and I send you a small donation for your fund. If you have a bazaar in the summer, not too far from London, we would like to come. If I could help by making something, perhaps you could let me know. I enclose an envelope.

Yours sincerely,
BARBARA M. ANDREWS.

Hereunder I give a brief outline of the contents of the book :—

1. The format of the book will be 12 x 10 inches. The cover, in colour, will carry the title : "Children's Book on Islam and the Life of Muhammad, the Last Prophet". There will be about 250-300 pages in large type suitable for children to read. These pages will be divided into sections, each of which will be meant to be read by the parents daily to the very young.

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OLIVE TOTO

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