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France’s Last Chance in Tunisia

The emergence of M. Mendès-France as France’s new Premier and the presence in his Cabinet of the progressive friend of the North African peoples, M. Mitterrand, raises hopes that the intolerable wave of oppression which has driven the Moroccan and Tunisian peoples into armed revolt will be somewhat calmed down. M. Mendès-France is himself well acquainted with the Tunisian Neo-Destourian Party, and M. Mitterrand, who as Minister of the Interior will be responsible for Algeria, a country whose political leader, al-Haj Massali Hadi, is living in enforced exile in France, was a bitter opponent of M. Bidault and Marshal A. Junin and all those responsible for deposing the popular nationalist Sultan of Morocco, Sidi Muhammad Ibn Yusuf, an action which the present Prime Minister of France considers to have provoked the worsening of the situation in that Protectorate.

In Tunisia about 2,000 Tunisian patriots have openly taken up arms against the French, who are pursuing the diabolical policy of employing the Moroccan Goums against their fellow Muslims with the help of al-Galawi, the quisling Pasha of Marrakesh, who has willfully kept the Southern Berbers in a state of poverty, isolation and ignorance and loaded them out as mercenaries to the French imperialists in Indo-China and Tunisia, where they are fighting their natural allies. This action is thoroughly abhorred by the vast majority of the Moroccan people who support the Istiqlal Party.

The French call the Tunisian patriotic forces Fellaghas, or bandits, but in a recent article in the Parisian French daily Le Monde, it was made perfectly clear that these troops, acting under the orders of the Lanskov or Lassoued brotherhood, have virtually been declared as a national State of their own and that wherever they went they temporarily at least freed the soil on which they stood from the oppressive rule of French imperialism. The French Government knows full well that this state of affairs can only be ended by the formation of a national Tunisian Government backed by that great Tunisian leader, M. Habib Bourguiba, and the Neo-Destourian Party and the trade unions, whose combined prestige remains as great as ever. The acts of terrorism carried out in Tunisia and in Morocco are a direct result of the oppressive French policy which by arresting all the responsible North African nationalists and by using armed force has obliged the Tunisians and Moroccans to resort to individual acts of terrorism in reply to France’s overwhelming use of armed brutality which the Muslims cannot openly oppose as in Indo-China in a large-scale battle.

The French colonialists are heavily arming themselves and have recently demonstrated against the French Resident-General in Tunisia, M. Voizard. The new French Premier, it seems, will very quickly be forced to show if the French Government or the French colonialists are masters of Tunisia. He has formed a new ministry for Tunisia and Morocco and has placed a Gaullist in charge in order to bring to bear gentle pressure upon the colonialists to persuade them not to take the law into their own hands and murder prominent nationalists (such as the late Farhat Hashash and Hadi Shaker). Certainly one would have preferred to see M. Mitterrand or General Catroux in charge of this ministry, as both of them have recently shown unmistakable signs of sympathy for the North Africans, but M. Mendès-France’s own party, the Radical-Socialist, is the party of the North African colonies, who have sabotaged all measures in support of North African reforms. M. Mendès-France is in no doubt feeling his way. Also he is clearly bitterly opposed to the United Nations mediation in the North African disputes. He aims at persuading Mr. Bourguiba, and the Moroccans as well, to join the French Union and to place their confidence in the French policy which has so far produced nothing but repression and disillusionment, and is contrary to the true spirit of the Charter of the United Nations.

Speaking in reply to two French Deputies, M. Renault and M. Guy Proisy, the French Prime Minister replied, “I believe that one should never abandon one’s friends, but one must not treat all forms of Moroccan or Tunisian as inimical. The nationalism which seeks to realize its aspirations in friendship with France and to retain all links of political and cultural solidarity with her is, I believe, recognized by both parties as indispensable, a nationalism which does not place in jeopardy the full security of the French living in its territory and recognizes their rights and thanks to whom the country in question has made so much progress, the nationalists who demand the application of the principles which France has taught to the whole world, such a form of nationalism cannot be dubbed an enemy (of France).”

In Tunisia the “phantom” Government of Mr. Mazali has been forced out of office by the resignation of the veteran General Sa’dallah, a sympathiser with genuine Tunisian nationalism; Mr. Tahir al-Safi, the Editor of a quisling Tunisian publication, has met the fate of all traitors; and Mr. Bourguiba has been transferred to an island off the coast of Brittany, where he is now completely isolated.

The period of political armistice which followed the appointment of M. Voizard in October last is over, and France, under Lanskov’s Government, realises that they have asserted her co-sovereignty in Tunisia, an act which resulted in an open rupture with the Tunisian nationalists in December 1951.

Summing up the present situation in Tunisia, Mr. Mongi Salim, the leading Neo-Destourian still living in that country, has blamed the Mazali Government for accepting the so-called reforms of 4th March 1954, thus accepting French co-sovereignty in Tunisia. He has denounced all attempts at “patchwork” and asserted the need to recognize the maturity of the Tunisian people and their right to administer themselves and the need to re-establish Tunisian sovereignty as it was accepted before the note of 15th December 1951. He has also pointed out that the Neo-Destour Party is prepared to accept the “legitimate and reasonable interests” of the French colonialists provided that the Tunisians were left exclusively to self-administration.

The French, who have recently suffered humiliating defeats in Indo-China and in the French-administered towns in India, are faced with a challenge in Tunisia and in the rest of North Africa. They can either build up a powerful Tunisian independent State or they can temporarily rule by force until they are finally thrown out and humbled as in Syria and the Lebanon, India and Indo-China.

The Muslim world rejoices at the application of all acts of obedience in North Africa, and it is grateful to all Frenchmen of goodwill, but it asserts its continued right to fight for the rights of its North African brothers until they have achieved full independence. This applies to Algeria as well as to Morocco and Tunisia. The so-called independence within the French Union is never likely to work owing to perpetual acts of aggression of the French colonialists and the narrow-minded avarice of the officials who control the North African policy of Metropolitan France.
The Qur'an on the importance of learning

The teachings of the religion of Islam place great emphasis on the importance and value of the acquisition of learning and knowledge by the Muslims. The Qur'an and the Traditions of the Prophet Muhammad abound with emphatic exhortations to the Muslims to seek knowledge. No religion more than Islam, and no Prophet more than the Prophet of Islam, have devoted such serious attention to the subject of learning. This assertion is a very easy one to prove by quoting only a few of the many provisions of the Qur'an and the Sayings of the Prophet Muhammad on this subject.

Perhaps one of the most significant proofs of this assertion is the fact that the very first verse of the Qur'an that was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad reads: "Read in the name of thy Lord who creates; creates man from a clot: Read and thy Lord is most Generous: Who taught by the pen; Taught man what he knew not." (96:1-5). The first commandment of God to the Prophet Muhammad was to "read", and this same commandment was purposely repeated in the verse that follows it. This repetition is purposeful — it was intended to lay additional emphasis on the question of reading. In the verse following, God refers to the instrument and means of reading and acquiring knowledge — "the pen". He exalts the importance of the pen when he says that by means of the pen "He taught man what he knew not".

The high position which learning and the learned occupy in the eyes of God is referred to in many other verses of the Qur'an. So exalted is learning and the learned that God solemnly affirms by them, when He says: "(By) the inkstand and the pen and that which they write. By the grace of thy Lord thou art not mad." (The Qur'an, 68:1, 2). To emphasize the difference between those who are learned and those who are not, God says: "Is he who is obedient during hours of the night, prostrating himself and standing, taking care of the Hereafter and hoping for the mercy of thy Lord? Say: Are those who know and those who know not alike? Only men of understanding mind." (The Qur'an, 39:9).

Again, God refers to the eminence of the learned and the respect which must be accorded to them by the believers when He says: "O you who believe, when it is said to you, Make room in assemblies, make room. God will give you ample. And when it is said, Rise up, rise up. God will exalt those of you who believe and those who are given knowledge, to high ranks. And God is Aware of what you do" (The Qur'an, 58:11).

God also says: "Seest thou not that God sends down water from the clouds, then We bring forth therewith fruits of various hues? and in the mountains are streaks, white and red, of various hues and (others) intensely black. And of men and beasts and cattle there are various colours likewise. Those of His servants who are possessed of knowledge fear God. Surely God is Mighty, Forgiving." (The Qur'an, 35:27-28). "The Beneficent: Taught the Qur'an. He created man, Taught him expression" (The Qur'an, 55:1-4). These verses show very clearly that only by learning and the acquisition of knowledge can man rise above the level of beasts and dumb animals, and that only by learning can he appreciate fully the greatness of God. Thus only those who have knowledge can grasp the evidence which the world holds of the attributes of God; and only by learning can man grow to fear and love God and abstain thereby from offending Him. This is the reason why God addressed the Prophet Muhammad in these words: "Supremely exalted then is God, the King, the Truth. And make not haste with the Qur'an before its revelation is made complete to thee, and say: My Lord! increase me in knowledge." (The Qur'an, 20:114). God also commanded the believers to make use of the knowledge of the men of learning when He said, addressing the Prophet Muhammad and the believers, "And We sent not before thee but men to whom We sent revelation — so ask the followers of the Reminder if you know not — with clear arguments and Scriptures. And We have revealed to thee the Reminder that thou mayest make clear to men that which has been revealed to them, and that haply they may reflect." (The Qur'an, 16:43).

The Hadith on the importance of learning

The Traditions of the Prophet Muhammad abound with clear and emphatic Sayings on the subject of learning. He was a man who valued learning so much that he is reported to have said to his people: "He who desires the world must seek it through learning, and he who desires the Hereafter must seek it through learning, and he who desires both must seek them through learning." He is also reported to have said: "For him who follows a path towards learning God will make easy the path to Paradise. . . . Those in Heaven and on earth will ask forgiveness for the one who is learned. . . . The status of the one who is learned compared to that of the one who is devout is like the status of the moon compared to that of the stars. . . . The learned are the heirs of the prophets. . . ."
Throughout the ages, the prophets of God never bequeathed to posterity money or worldly treasures. What they left behind them was only knowledge and learning to guide and help posterity.

It has always intrigued non-Muslims how the Prophet Muhammad, who was an illiterate man and had never learned how to read or write, should have had such a great and unmistakable love for learning, and should have exhorted his people so strongly to seek knowledge. It is one of the unique attributes of the Prophet Muhammad that he lost no opportunity to impress upon his followers the importance of learning. One of his most famous Sayings on this subject is the following: “Acquire ye knowledge, for the acquisition of knowledge teaches man to fear God. The pursuit of knowledge is devotion to God, its exposition is praise given to God, its pursuit is jihād,¹ and imparting it to others is charity. . . . Learning is a companion to a person in his loneliness, a friend to him when he is in foreign lands, a guide to him when he is in happiness or distress, a weapon which he can use against his enemy, and a decoration which he can display amongst his friends. . . . With learning God raises a people and makes them cowards in whose path others will follow, and whose example others will take, and whose opinion others will seek. . . . Learning is life for the mind, and a shining lamp which leads away from darkness. . . . With knowledge a slave can reach the same heights as the noblest of men, and with it he can aspire to the highest stages in this world and in the Hereafter. . . . Application to learning is equivalent to fasting. . . . Learning makes friendship more solid, and only with learning can good be distinguished from evil. . . . Learning is the guide and prerequisite of action, and action ranks next after learning. . . . Learning is a gift from God which makes people to whom it is given happy, and those to whom it is denied unhappy.”

How beautiful and subtle these words are! Could there be any better testimony of the Prophet Muhammad’s love of learning?

“The acquisition of knowledge is a duty on every Muslim,” the Prophet Muhammad has said. “Seek knowledge even in China,” he added, to emphasize that the Muslims must spare no efforts to acquire knowledge and that, if need be, they should travel to a far distant land like China to acquire knowledge.

The duty of every Muslim in this respect is thus very clear and unambiguous. He must seek knowledge above everything else. This is so because Islam recognizes that the people of Islam can prosper only if they are learned and knowledgeable. History has more than proved this. When the Muslims applied themselves zealously to the acquirement of knowledge and learning they reached great heights of power and prestige in the world. Now, even more than before, knowledge and learning are the keys to the prosperity and advancement of a nation. And the Muslims can again aspire to great heights if they followed the teachings of their religion and the example of their Prophet — and banished ignorance.

¹ Fighting in the cause of God.

The Ingredients of Democracy in Islam

By PROFESSOR AL-SAYYID KAMAL AL-SHOURAH

Equality before God

The religion of Islam is founded on truly democratic principles, for it decrees that all persons are equal both in the sphere of worship and in the matters of everyday life.

One example of this equality is to be found in a provision in the Qur’ān by which God commands all the believers to pray in congregations in mosques on Fridays and the two ‘Īds (Festivals), and to make a pilgrimage to Mecca. On these occasions, the rich stand side by side with the poor, and the mighty side by side with the humble.* The outcome of this is bound to be the realization of a greater measure of social solidarity and harmony between the various ranks of the Muslim community, and the strengthening of the bond of spiritual sympathy and union amongst its components.

The spiritual aspects of Islamic democracy

On the spiritual plane, the Islamic principle of democracy presupposes the existence of a determinate doctrine aiming at the attainment of higher objectives, coupled with a sincere desire for the doing of justice. This notion requires the nurturing of spiritual and religious beliefs in men. It also necessitates instilling in them faith in the fact that God should be served for His own sake and for no ulterior motive, and also faith that God is in no need of His servants. He has required them to render service unto Him solely because He desires them to contemplate the perfection of His handiwork, and in order that by doing so their actions and behaviour may be purified, their consciences cleansed and their circumstances improved. God is Just and Merciful, and does not encourage people to do mischief to themselves but exhorts them to strive for their own good. Lamartine, the famous French poet of the last century, once said: “Of what value is virtue, if it does not lead to freedom?”

The material aspects of Islamic democracy

From the material point of view, democracy in Islam means the exhortation of people to piety and good deeds. God says:

> “Surely the noblest of you with God is the most dutiful of you” (The Qur’ān, 49:13).

On the social plane, democracy in Islam means the protection of the rights and privileges of the individual, his freedom and liberty. Islam prohibits slavery and the burial of female children alive, and confers upon every individual the right of freedom of thought, belief, religion, speech, and expression. God says:

> “There is no compulsion in religion — the right way is indeed clearly distinct from error” (The Qur’ān, 2:256).

The teachings of Islam lay upon the rulers and Governors of the Muslims the duty of being merciful, and the duty of preserving law and order and of avoiding oppression and tyranny. It is related in this respect that one of the military leaders of a Muslim legion during the days of the Prophet Muhammad ordered his men to light a fire and then to throw themselves into it, so that he might know by their action who amongst them was the most obedient to his orders. As the men came to throw themselves into the fire, however, he ordered them to desist. When the Prophet
Muhammad heard of this incident he became angry at the actions of this military leader and said: “No obedience is due to a leader in anything repugnant to God”.

Education is a fundamental of Islamic democracy

There is also in Islam a practical democracy which is demonstrated in the right of every individual in a Muslim State to education and learning. It was in fulfillment of this Islamic doctrine that the Prophet Muhammad used to free the slaves who were proficient in the art of reading and writing, so that they might be free to teach people the religion of Islam. The Caliphs of Islam followed the noble example set by the Prophet Muhammad in this respect by upholding the torch of learning and education and by according a special prestige to the learned. It is related that the Caliph ‘Umar Ibn al-Khattab was once sitting amongst a group of the Companions of the Prophet, when a young lad entered the place of assembly. The Caliph ‘Umar then showed courtesy to this young lad and made him sit beside him. This action of the Caliph ‘Umar offended some of the Companions present and caused them to enquire from him the reason for his doing such an unusual courtesy and precedence to a young lad. The Caliph ‘Umar then said to them: “Tell me what you have understood by the saying of God: ‘When God’s help and victory comes . . .’? ” They gave confused answers, none of which were right. The Caliph ‘Umar then asked the lad to say what he understood by that verse, and the lad said: “The revelation of this verse was an indication of the nearing death of the Prophet Muhammad”. This was the correct answer.

The gulf between the rich and the poor narrowed

Another feature of Islamic democracy is that it ordains that funds should be provided by the State to meet the needs and necessities of the poor. Islam gives the poor a right and an interest in the wealth and fortune of the rich. God says: "And in whose wealth there is a known right, for the beggar and the destitute" (The Qur’ān, 70:24, 25).

The gulf between the rich and the poor was also narrowed by the provisions laid down in the Qur’ān in the matter of inheritance, the devise and bequest of property, and the system of awqaf (charitable trusts). If a needy person fails to acquire property or the money necessary for his livelihood through any of the above channels, he becomes entitled to assistance from State funds.

Islam also exhorts the believers to be charitable and generous to their fellows, and to prefer the needy to themselves. An example of the operation of this doctrine during the early days of Islam is to be found in the following true story. A Muslim of moderate means, who was the father of ten children, was given a present by the Governor in appreciation of services rendered. But upon receiving the present, the man asked one of his sons to take it to the family of another person, who, he said, had greater need of the present. The son then took the present over to that family, but they declined to accept it, saying that another family was in greater need of it. The son went to many families in turn, but each offered him the same reason for not accepting the present, until finally he had to bring it back to his father.

The doing of justice

Islamic democracy also rests on the principle that the individual has the right to bring any complaint to the authorities about an injustice from which he thinks he suffers. Islam requires that such a complaint should be investigated in public with thoroughness and fairness, and that the person complained of should be made to stand on an equal footing with his accuser and answer the charge made against him — even though the person complained of be the Caliph himself. A cardinal principle of Islamic justice is that judges should select solely from the ranks of persons known for their uprightness, virtue and piety, and that these persons should claim no remuneration for holding judicial office. All are equal in the eyes of the law, and no distinction is made between prince and vassal, Arab and foreigner, Muslim or non-Muslim.

A representative and responsible government

In the political sphere, Islamic democracy means a democracy “by the people and for the people”. The teachings of Islam impose on the ruler of a Muslim community the duty of consulting his people and abiding by their advice. God says: “... And consult them in matters” (The Qur’ān, 3:158).

It was in the light of these high ideals that the Caliphs and Governors during the early days of Islam governed the Muslims. It is related that when ‘Umar Ibn al-Khattab took over the office of Caliph he addressed the people, asking them to give him their advice promptly if he should err in the performance of his duties. A man from amongst the assembled crowds then retorted: "By Almighty God, O ‘Umar, if we ever find in you any deviation from the right path we shall put it right with the blades of our swords . . .!" ‘Umar then replied: "Praise be to Almighty God who has provided amongst our nation persons who would put ‘Umar right if he were ever to deviate from the right path".

Islam thus requires the ruler or Governor to do justice to his subjects. It imposes upon the leader of a nation responsibility for the welfare of his people and charges him with the duty of fulfilling those responsibilities without resort to oppression or tyranny.

The Caliph or Governor in Islam should be the elected representative of his people, and the Government should give effect to the will and desire of the nation. The supreme duty of the Government in Islam is to spare no effort in serving the interests of the people, in maintaining law and order, and in guaranteeing freedom, justice and equality for all.
Some Muslim geographers whose works still serve as a valuable source of knowledge

One of the most valuable contributions of Muslims to scientific literature is their work on geography. Muslims were induced to study geography by the duty of pilgrimage and their extended commercial enterprises. Business men and scholars vied in describing their experiences, and as the religion of Islam did not stand in the way of learning and promulgating their knowledge of geographical facts, they avoided all those fallacies into which Christians stumbled who were obliged to accept the Scriptures in a servile way, and consequently could neither recognize the globular nature of the earth nor compute its extension by scientific methods.

There is a long series of Muslim geographers whose works still serve as valuable sources of knowledge. Ibn Khordabih (first half of the ninth century C.E.) leads the splendid array. He was postmaster on the territory of ancient Media (a kingdom in what is now north-western Persia which attained its greatest power in the sixth and seventh centuries B.C.), and in this capacity he supervised communications and also had a certain political sway over travellers. His book, Kitab al-Masalik wa 'l-Mamalik (Roads and Countries) is the oldest guide-book extant. Abu Ishaq al-Farisi was born at the ancient Persepolis, called by the Arabs Istakhir, hence his name Istakhri. His book of travel was later transcribed by Ibn Hauqal and gives a minute description of the State and the inhabitants of every district. The tenth century gave birth to al-Maqdisi (born at Jerusalem in 946 C.E.), who presents us with a pleasant description of his experiences in his Ahsan al-Taqasim fi Mad'rifat al-Aqalim (The Most Beautiful Portions of the Knowledge of the Zones). Yakut (died 1229 C.E.) is considered the greatest master of geographical description. He was of Greek origin and was captured and bought by a Baghdad merchant, who sent him on business errands. When he was freed, he continued travelling on his own account. When the Tartars broke into Khawrezm he was compelled to flee "as naked as if he had been lifted from his grave on the day of resurrection". He immortalized his knowledge in his masterly Mu'jam al-Buldan (the Lexicon of Towns). Besides geography he showed a keen interest in literature and compiled a lexicon of literary men (Mu'jam al-Udaba).

Muslim geographers and their Christian contemporaries

In order to evaluate the merits of Muslim geographers we must cast a glance at the contemporary knowledge of the West. While Muslim geographers derived their knowledge from ancient Greek writers, the Latin authors of the Middle Ages, even their most learned representatives, knew only Pliny and his disciples, who, instead of scientific observations treated their audiences to fantastic tales. Science of the Western Middle Ages was cultivated by priests only. These were more interested in theological hair-splitting than in serious scientific research. Nay, they considered scientific investigation an impious deviation, and preferred to explain scientific facts with supernatural powers. They taught that the stars were held by angels who conducted them across the sky and thus caused the alternation of day and night, and the eclipses. As to the globular nature of the earth, no Christian priest was inclined to express an opinion. They taught that the earth rose like a huge bell out of the surrounding sea. They imagined the form of the earth either similar to a flat wheel, in the hub of which lay Jerusalem, or like a big quadrangle, as — so they thought — Moses had imitated this geometrical figure when building the ark of the Covenant. They believed the southern parts uninhabitable for its unbearable heat, and this false doctrine remained until the fifteenth century.

Professor A. K.Germanus

Muslim Geographers

By Professor Dr. ‘Abd al-Karim Germanus

"Muslims should be rightly proud of their learned ancestors and derive self-consciousness from their merits for future glory"
Idrisi and Ibn Batuta

The great expansion of the Arab empire increased the knowledge of the earth towards the East and West. Idrisi (twelfth century C.E.) considered the Faroe Islands, the northernmost point of Europe, but he mentions Ireland, which signified in the ancient Nordin myths America, where the Vikings established three settlements. Arab travellers crossed the north from Turkistan up the Volga to the Baltic Sea. In these regions a great amount of Arabic coins discovered testify to the active trade of Arab merchants who extended their connections up to Norway. Arab coins of Kufi legends were found even in Iceland. Yakut mentions Schleswig and the Norwegian Bergen; Idrisi knew Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, and had gained his knowledge of these far-off countries at the court of Roger II (1130-1154 C.E.), first king of Sicily from original Western sources. Arab geographers called the Baltic Bay Warang or Warog, which is being attacked by the Norman majuz. The great geographical work of al-Bakri contains an extract from the report of Ibrahim Ibn Ya'qub, who had visited the court of the Emperor Otto the Great (962-973 C.E.) by order of the Caliph of Cordova, and described Germany and the Slavonic lands. Professor M. D. W. Jeffreys (vide The Muslim Digest, Durban, for September 1953) even suggests on circumstantial evidence that the Arabs traversed the Atlantic. Arab coins were discovered at the Pechora (north-eastern Soviet Russia), and at the confluence of the Irtis and the Ob rivers metal looking-glasses have been excavated which bear the trademarks of Baghdad artisans. Ibn Batuta (d. 1377 C.E.) traversed perhaps the longest distances from his native Tangier, as far as China. With dog-carts he intruded into the northern steppes and states precisely the causes of long days during the summer months in the north. Arab sailors knew Japan and the island of Madagascar, “the hatching place of the fabulous Rukh-bird”. Arab geographers report on the Negro States between the Senegal and Niger rivers. In the Atlantic Ocean they knew the Canary Islands, and caught sight of Tenerife.

Abu 'l-Fida

The Caliph Ma'mun (d. 833 C.E.) had Ptolemy's Syntaxis translated under the title al-Majest. Arabs were convinced that the earth was a globe floating in the centre of the universe. Abu 'l-Fida (d. 1331 C.E.) teaches us that if two men started on a journey, one towards the east, the other to the west, they would eventually meet, but the one who had gone eastwards would arrive one day earlier at their meeting-place. When in 1552 — more than two hundred years later — the first European boat traversed the globe westwards, it was observed that one day was missing in the boat's log-book; the cleverest people could not find a reasonable answer to this enigma. The Caliph Ma'mun introduced a new measure-unit, the black fathom, which was the length of the cubit of a Negro eunuch. This black fathom was 54 centimetres. Ma'mun's mile was 4,000 black fathoms, and on this basis they computed one geographical degree by 511 miles by the help of the sundial or gnomon. This computation proved incorrect, but only by one-tenth of a mile!

The definition of localities was very important to the Muslims for fixing the true direction of the Qibla — the direction towards Mecca. They imagined radiant lines emanating from Mecca going all directions of the windrose, but they also knew that the believer who would supposedly stand at the antipode of Mecca could turn his face in many directions and still face the Ka'bah!

Zarqali

Astronomical observatories at Rakka, Baghdad, Antioch, Damascus and Toledo compared their results and determined the various meridians. Zarqali — the Arzechel of the Westerners — of Toledo stated in 1075 C.E. that the noon at Baghdad precedes that of Toledo by three hours and
twenty-six minutes, as Toledo lay westward from the meridian of "Arin", probably the Odzene of Ptolemy, the Indian Ujjain, where the first meridian was taken as the starting point — by four hours and six minutes. Zarqul almost measured precisely by his theoretical observations the length of the Mediterranean. Abu l-Hasan, a Morocoan, determined the localities of forty-four places from West Africa to Alexandria and measured their distances. He measured in the beginning of the thirteenth century the length of the Mediterranean, but with an error of exactly two degrees! A result which was reached and corrected by Europeans only in the seventeenth century with the help of the newly-invented telescope.

Al-Beruni

Al-Beruni (d. 1038 C.E.) discovered the peninsular character of India, which appeared on the Ptolemaeian chart as entirely flattened down. Al-Beruni not only surpasses his contemporaries in knowledge, but also his astronomical and ethnographical work, The Chronology of Nations and India, reveals such a mine of information about Indian philosophy and science and presents his findings with such a precision and liberal view as had not been witnessed until the English scholars in the eighteenth century again rediscovered the mysteries and century-old erudition of Indians. He studied Sanskrit and knew a vast amount of Greek scientific and philosophical literature in Arabic translation. He stated that the highest peaks of the earth were to be found in the confines of Tibet in Asia, and the Alps and Pyrenees in Europe, which run in an east-westerly direction, and considered them as the vertebræ of the globe.

Mas'udi and Qazwini

In the territory inhabited by Muslims there are few volcanoes, but Mas'udi describes the Demawend as such; Arab mariners recognized the volcanic character of the Sunda Islands (near New Zealand). It is noteworthy that although the Arabs did not set store by the transformative power of volcanoes and were prone to see a divine punishment in their outbreak, they recognized that the surface of the earth was not constant and registered the difference of the sea-level at the Laccadive and Maldives Islands. Mas'udi makes the astounding statement that no continent remains constantly dry or covered with water, and that in the long history of the earth's continents may submerge and seas dry up. He states that the deposits of rivers fill up their delta and towns recede towards the inland as a result of seaward extension of the dry land. He observed this geographical phenomenon in the deposits of the Tigris and the Euphrates. The town of Hira became hemmed in the dry land in the course of 300 years. Qazwini (beginning of the thirteenth century C.E.) noticed that the rivers and the wind slowly carried the hills down and accumulated their deposits into fertile soil on the ever-rising plains—a fact which has been recognized in recent years. It was also Qazwini who observed that the Asiatic northerly winds brought drought and the southerly winds spread humidity in the air, because the former blew from the desert regions and the later come from the sea. He knew that if the air is saturated with vapour and encountered high mountains it descended as rain. This is the reason for seasonal rains: "monsoons" — an Arabic word masoom, i.e., season. Mas'udi explained why the evaporated sea-water does not descend as salty rain, because the evaporation leaves the salt behind. This is the first instance that natural phenomena are explained on a chemical basis. Muslims knew that heat increased the volume of bodies and decreased their weight.

The scientific observations of the Muslim geographers compensate for some of their fantastic and superstitious accounts

On the other hand, they ignored the fact that the heat of the sun decreased with height, and thought that on hills which were near to the Equator human life was impossible; they stuck to the ancient theory of zones, beyond which no animal life was imaginable. They believed in the absolute validity of zones and consequently drew the lines of the charts of southern regions in an easterly direction, extending the African shores horizontally instead of vertically. Some of them observed, however, that, contrary to this belief, the palm-tree did not grow in India or China. Istakhri informs us that oranges and sugar-cane grew abundantly in Balkh, but no palm-trees were to be found there because snow fell in those countries in winter. Abu l-Fida (d. 1331 C.E.) knew that England lay northwards beyond the limit of the vineyards. Muslims who encouraged trade besides science report valuable economical geographical data. They present us with a rich botanical and zoological literature, not to speak of their extensive ethnographical observations.

If Muslims in the Middle Ages did not possess all the knowledge which developed much later in Europe, we must bear in mind that some of their defects are only attributable to the then still defective appliances of observation and not to their method and liberal views. Europeans could have learnt a great deal from the works of Muslim travellers. Mas'udi was the first to describe the windmills in the waterless Sijistan; Idrisi described the water-pipes of the Moors, and their pumping appliances at Toledo, and the cinnabar mines at al-Ma'dan. He gives us a full account of how metals were separated from gold by mercury-washing methods in North-West Africa; he mentions the manure of birds utilized for grape and date cultures.

All these valuable and scientific observations compensate for some fantastic and superstitious accounts which slipped into their reports in the Middle Ages, and which still lingered on much later in Western minds. Religious motives sometimes played their part in creating innocent superstitions: Qazwini tells us that the kindness of God is revealed in that He does not let the rain pour down in uninhabited regions but sends it to fertile fields.

The West recognized the value of Muslim geographers only after many centuries. Wilhelm Postell was the first, who in his Cosmographia, which appeared in Basle in 1561, drew material from Abu l-Fida. The name of Yakut as a source first appears in the academic lecture of Jacob Gronovius held at Leyden in 1702.

Muslims should rightly be proud of their learned ancestors and derive self-consciousness from their merits for future glory.
Friendly Relations of Early Islam with Christianity and how they Deteriorated

by

Dr. Muhummad Hamidullah,
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(Right) — The illustration, which is that of a mosque existing side by side with a church belfry at the Monastery of Mount Sinai, Egypt, is typically illustrative of the friendly relations of early Islam with Christianity.

The later deterioration of their relations is mainly due to the political ambitions and religious fanaticism of some of their followers.

The Prophet and his Christian contemporaries

Much innocent blood has been shed during the last thirteen and a half centuries in the wars between Muslims and Christians. Alas! no end to it is yet in sight. It may seem strange enough, though it is a fact, as we shall presently see, that it was not so in early Islam; and the personal disposition of the Prophet Muhammad was of the most sympathetic with regard to Christians and Christianity, not to speak of Jesus Christ himself, whom Islam is the only religion on earth excepting Christianity to recognize and venerate. An attempt is made in this essay to trace the causes both of the growing friendliness of Islamo-Christian relations and of their deterioration in the lifetime of the Prophet of Islam.

It is recorded by Ibn al-Jauziyy that when the Prophet Muhammad was a boy of eleven, he suffered from an eye ailment. The medical help in Mecca — one of the most advanced centres in the whole of Arabia in the matter of medical science in pre-Islamic days, judging from the fact that the biographical dictionaries of medical men in the Arabic language refer to several of them in those days, including one who had even compiled a book on hygiene before Islam in that city — proved of little avail. Therefore his grandfather, ‘Abd al-Muttalib, took him to a monk, who lived in a monastery near ‘Ukaz (south-east of Mecca), and the prescription of this Christian “doctor” cured the sick boy. Without trying in any way to link up this incident with the following verse of the Qur’an, it will be permitted to observe that the verse in question reflects fairly well the ideas of early Muslims, and even of the Prophet himself, as regards Christian monks and hermits. So, we read in the Qur’an (5:85):

“And thou shalt surely find those among them to be most inclinable to entertain friendship for the Believers (i.e., Muslims), who say: ‘We are Christians’. This is because there are priests and monks among them, and because they are not elated with pride.”
Here is another incident of the time when the Prophet was in the forty-fifth year of his life. During the five preceding years he had tried heart and soul to reform his people and serving them selflessly by preaching to them the exalted concept of monotheism in order to sever them from the abomination of idolatry and other social evils. All was far from well to him; opposition was growing stronger daily, and had degenerated into persecution, both physical and mental. Not only the Prophet but also his disciples shared this persecution. The Prophet then advised his adherents to migrate and to take refuge in Abyssinia. This neighbouring country had long since been Christianized, and seems to have been in advance of Mecca both in civilization and prosperity. (Had it not invaded and annexed the Yemen, and sent an expedition, with the famous elephant, which reached the very gates of Mecca, an expedition on the arrival of which all the Meccans had taken to flight and found refuge nowhere except in the mountains? And were the Meccan merchants not leading trade caravans to that country as one of the markets for their products?)

Our sources do not mention any personal contact between the Prophet and his contemporary, the Negus of Abyssinia, yet they do mention the presence, in pre-Islamic days, of Meccan notables in the court of the Negus. Anyhow, when the Prophet counselled his persecuted disciples to migrate to Abyssinia, he told them, as reported by Ibn Hisham in his biography of the Prophet, p. 208, “If you could go to the country of the Abyssinians! For there rules a king by whom nobody is oppressed. It is a land of truth. Remain there until God makes for you some escape from what you are suffering.” Moreover, the Prophet wrote a personal letter of recommendation, addressed to the Negus, and handed it over to Ja’far al-Tayyar, son of Abu Talib (a cousin of the Prophet), who was in the first batch of migrants. According to the historian Tabarir, the letter contained essentially this phrase, “I am sending towards thee my cousin, Ja’far, together with a number of Muslims. When he come to thee, give them hospitality “. (The tone of the letter suggests that there was some sort of previous acquaintance between the writer and the addressee.) The Muslim refugees were well received by the Christian king of the Abyssinians. Twice the pagans of Mecca sent diplomatic missions to persuade the Negus to extradite the fugitives; yet, unlike some modern “civilized” Christian countries, who let down even their faithful allies for motives not so very praiseworthy, the Negus twice refused to hand over the unfortunate Muslims who had taken refuge in his realm, even though they were so different from him in religion and race. The Negus is even reported to have bestowed upon different members of the refugee community, both male and female, from time to time, right royal gifts. The Sahih of al-Bukhari records that these Muslim men and women, could even freely enter the Christian churches— he refers to a certain Santa Maria — and look at their decoration, etc.

Let non-Muslims impute to Islam whatever crimes of bloodthirstiness and fanatically aggressive wars they like; they may yet remember the tender corner which the Prophet had in his heart for the Christians of Abyssinia. Had he not offered hospitality, doing the duty personally — instead of asking his servants — to some of the Abyssinians who had once come to Medina as the envoys of the Negus? Has he not left an everlasting testament for the Muslims by ordering, “Leave the Abyssinians unmolested as long as they do not take an aggressive action against you” (dātu al-Habashah mawaddakum? No war against the Christian Abyssinia, even though it be non-Islamic!

The Prophet’s entry into Mecca and the picture of Mary and Jesus in the Ka‘bah

Fifteen years had passed over this migration of the Muslims to a Christian country, and the Prophet was entering triumphantly the same Mecca from where he and his disciples were so mercilessly forced to escape to Medina. A very curious incident is recorded by the classical author al-Azraqi in his Akhbār Makkah (“History of the City of Mecca”). This work is the source of practically all the later writers on the subject. As regards the authenticity of this incident, I have consulted not only the edition published in Europe, but also manuscripts in Turkey, and there is absolutely no question of interpolation. Al-Azraqi says, “When in the year 8 A.H. (629 C.E.) the Prophet conquered Mecca and occupied the city, he cleared the compound of the holy sanctuary of the idols erected there to dishonour the House dedicated to the One God. Then he entered inside the Ka‘bah itself. He found there several frescoes and mural paintings, which he was pained to see in the sanctuary erected by the iconoclast prophet Abraham. He ordered at once to efface them all. However, he put his palms on one of the pictures, and said, ‘Efface them all except this one’. There was nothing other than the representation of the Virgin Mary with the child Jesus.”

These diverse incidents will perhaps show how sympathetically disposed was the Prophet towards Jesus Christ and Christians, even though he combated vehemently their beliefs and rites (which he believed were of later edition and did not form part of the teaching of Jesus Christ himself).

How relations between the Muslims and the Christians deteriorated

It was in the last weeks of the year 6 A.H. (627 C.E.) that the Prophet decided to imitate his brother”, Jesus Christ, and send foreign missions to preach Islam. Ibn Hisham and other trustworthy classical sources say that one day the Prophet assembled his companions and told them that he was going to select some of them for far-off missions, and hoped that they would not hesitate as the apostles of Jesus had hesitated when Jesus wanted to send them on missions. He told them the story of the apostles of Jesus Christ, then he selected a number of them, each to go to a particular country. The mission was not very difficult, not for life; they had only to carry letters of the Prophet, addressed to different rulers, inviting them to embrace Islam, and to answer any questions the rulers might put to them regarding Islam and its teachings. This is not the place to deal in detail with all the missions sent to Christian princes — the Byzantine Emperor, the Abyssinian Negus, the Egyptian chief of the Copts, etc. However, the fate of one of these religious missions concerns us directly. The Prophet had addressed a letter, of the same nature, to the Byzantine Governor of Busra (in Palestine, different from Basrah in Iraq). When he was travelling in the territory of Shurahbil Ibn ‘Amr, Christian chief of the Ghassanid tribe under the protection of the Byzantine emperor, he (i.e., Shurahbil) caught the ambassador, and in his Christian zeal put him to death without much ado.

This was evidently too flagrant a violation of all international custom and practice. What was worse, the Byzantine emperor would not set things right and amend the wrong done: on the contrary, he protected the criminal, merely because he happened to be a Christian. Early in the year 8 A.H. (629 C.E.) the Prophet sent an army of three
thousand strong to punish the culprit himself. The expedi-
ditionary force found in Mu'tah (now in Jordania) that the
emperor had sent an army of over one hundred thousand to
oppose them. In spite of the unequal numbers, the Muslims
would not retire: they attacked, lost their commander-in-
chief, as also his second and third in command (the second
in command was Ja'far al-Tayyar, cousin of the Prophet,
who had returned from Abyssinia some months earlier). They
still did not lose heart: the army elected on its own initiative
a new commander, Khalid Ibn al-Walid, and continued to
fight. When Khalid decided to retire to Medina, he had
inflicted such punishment on the enemy that they dared not
pursue the retiring opponent.

The following year (9 A.H.—630 C.E.) the Prophet led
in person a stronger force (of thirty thousand men this time),
made a halt in Tabuk (in the extreme north of Arabia),
and sent a letter to Heraclius. The text is preserved in Arabic
annals. It invited the Byzantine emperor to embrace Islam,
or to pay a tribute, or at least assure a freedom of conscience
in his territory so that anybody who desired to embrace the
religion of Islam could do so safely. As Abu 'Ubaid, the
famous traditiohistorian, in his Kitab al-Anwar records, the
emperor sent some gold coins as a gift. The evasive reply
which accompanied them led the Prophet to conclude that he
did not want peace, so the Prophet ordered that the imperial
gift be credited to the war booty, and not to treat it as a
friendly peaceful present. As to the demand of freedom of
conscience to his subjects, the emperor put his Governor of
Ma'an (in Jordania) to death. His only crime was that he
had embraced Islam of his own free will, and had informed
the Prophet of his action. (The correspondence of this
martyr Governor, Farwah, is preserved by the Arab
historians.)

This sealed the possibility of all negotiations and mutual
relations of peace and concord. A Ghassanid chief even
prepared an expedition to attack Medina, although it did not
materialize.

**Abu Bakr seeks to establish peaceful relations with Heraclius**

Not long after, the Prophet fell ill, and on his deathbed
he gave orders for the despatch of another army, under
Usamah, to attack the country guilty of the murder of the
Muslim ambassador and preparation of the projected attack
on Medina. It provoked retaliation, and some months later
the Caliph Abu Bakr was dragged into total war with the
Byzantine empire. After his initial successes, he again sent
an embassy to invite Heraclius to settle peacefully the
mutual relations. Dhababiy (in Tarikh Kabir) and Abu
Nu'am (in al-Muntaqa min Dala'il al-Nubuwwah) describe

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**THE ISLAMIC REVIEW**
A Miracle of Islam

These two views from Pakistan — the one on the left is that of a group of men from the North-Western Frontier Province at a cattle market, and the other on the right that of a Bengali peasant harvesting jute — fairly represent the dissimilarities between the two parts of Pakistan separated by 1,000 miles of Indian territory. In the case of some other people not owing allegiance to the ideology of Islam, the rough edges of these dissimilarities would never have been rounded off and never succeeded in bringing together the two so widely apart and different parts of the sub-continent of India. But under the aegis of Islam, which knows no barriers of race and geography, and to which the idea of nationalism is foreign, a new concept of nationhood and political geography, not known to the history of mankind before, has emerged in the form of Pakistan.

A PAKISTANI SPEAKS TO AMERICA ABOUT HIS COUNTRY AND HIS FAITH

By M. A. A'zam

"In the land of Pakistan we are a band of people dedicated to the will of God, and peace amongst men."

Pakistan is a type by itself — a bold experiment in a new concept of nationhood and political geography

I come from a country that did not exist before — politically. I am a citizen of Pakistan, which is a new concept of nationhood and political geography. Pakistan is a new nation founded six years ago by Muhammad 'Ali Jinnah. But Pakistan is also an old nation of five thousand years, as the anthropological excavations of the Sind Region have established. Pakistan is primitive in many ways, but Pakistan is also modern and progressive.

Unlike India, Pakistan was born free, and she never existed under the British régime, but she shares fully with her sister nation, India, all the evils of the long British domination, of which the proverbial policy has been "to divide and rule". India was divided, but it was not exactly a division on political issues, neither was it a truly geographical division. Pakistan is a socio-religious order based on the democratic principles of Islam — sometimes referred to us Islamic socialism, which abhors hoarding of private wealth but is strictly opposed to the Communist system of distribution. Again, it is not quite a secular form of Government. Neither is it a religious type like that of the Vatican. Pakistan is a type by itself.

Pakistan was not achieved through any regular war of independence, and yet there was a continued war of resist-

1 Being the text of a lecture delivered on 25th May 1954 before the joint session of Rotary Clubs of the Stillwater and Cushing Chapters, Oklahoma, U.S.A.
ance against the British Colonial rule. Pakistan was accomplished without bloodshed — and yet there was blood shed in the communal killings that preceded the partitioning of India.

**Similarities between Pakistan and the United States**

Pakistan offers some striking similarities to the United States of America. In the words of a Texas high school boy, Michael Grady Woods:

"The religious protestantism which played so signal a role in the founding of the United States was an even stronger motivating factor in the establishment of a separate Muslim nation on the Indian sub-continent. The two great faiths of the world, Christianity and Islam, which sprang centuries ago from the hill country of Judea, are the foundations on which rest the present United States Constitution and the Pakistan Document that is in the making. A strict moral code and a sense of duty to God and to country compose the underlying philosophy of both countries' governments. . . . The mystic, incomprehensible mirror of the East has at last yielded an image in which the American can for the first time see something of himself, a reflection of his own basic ideas and conflicts. The ties between the United States and Pakistan are, perhaps, the strongest that ever existed between two nations so far removed geographically. The West has every reason to see in this Eastern titan a powerful ally in her struggle for existence with corrupted Communion of the Soviet world."

Pakistan, like the United States of America, is an answer to their people’s prayer for freedom of thought, freedom of expression, freedom of enterprise and worship. The Americans and the Pakistanis, before their independence, shared and fought the crushing menace of the British Colonial rule. The geographical fallacy of the disjointed regions of Pakistan has also some resemblance with the situation in America before the historic Louisiana Purchase.1

Pakistan, with an approximate area of 365,000 square miles, is about the size of Texas and New Mexico put together. It is nearly four times bigger than Great Britain and a little more than one-tenth the size of the United States.

**Similarities and dissimilarities between the two parts of Pakistan**

The two parts of Pakistan, East and West, are distinct geographic entities with widely different climates, flora and fauna. These two parts offer interesting contrasts. East Pakistan has more people but less land area (density 800 per square mile), West Pakistan has almost five times more land, but less than 50 per cent of population (density 150 per square mile). East is wet, humid and green. It is mostly made up of soft alluvial soil of the Gangetic Delta. It has heavy rainfall and recurring floods. West Pakistan is dry, rocky, brown, and spotted with sandy desert areas. It has a wider range of climatic variations. Wheat is the staple food in West Pakistan as rice is in East. These are the principal food crops of the respective regions. In East Pakistan, people like fish more than meat. In West, the preference is just the reverse. The western region is richer in mineral resources and the eastern is agricultural. East Pakistan is the biggest producer of jute in the world. West Pakistan is very rich in cotton production, but she is also the world’s second largest producer of chrome ore.

The people of West Pakistan are comparatively taller and harder, and they make good soldiers. As a rule, they are more realistic in their outlook. On the other hand, the natives of East Pakistan are more or less idealistic. The two regions have different languages. An East Pakistani usually speaks Bengali and he writes from left to right, whereas a West Pakistani will, more often than not, speak Urdu and write from right to left.

Even with these highly contrasting features of the two regions of Pakistan in their geographic, climatic, physical, dicthetical and emotional backgrounds, never was a country more closely knit together and unified in the fundamental ideals of the people. The two main parts of the country, separated by 1,100 miles of Indian territory, are complementary to each other. They constitute a harmonious whole in the strength and stability of the nation. The late Muhammad ‘Ali Jinnah — the founder of Pakistan and father of the nation — had a following which is unparalleled in the history of the world. About a hundred million Muslims of the Indian sub-continent stood firmly behind him like a rock when he gave them a new concept, a new country and a new heritage. Mahatma Gandhi acclaimed him Qaid-i-Azam (The Great Leader), by which epithet he is now known all over the world. It was given in sincere admiration by his most worthy and strongest political opponent at that time. This, in itself, is unique in the annals of political rivalry.

**The four social and economic problems of Pakistan**

Although Pakistan is very rich in natural resources, her industries are yet to be developed, and unlike America we have in Pakistan:

(1) Too many people and too little space;
(2) High percentage of illiteracy (86.2 per cent);
(3) Primitive and unscientific methods of agriculture; and,
(4) Uneconomic fragmentation of land holdings.

During the period under British rule the progress of the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent in the field of education, agriculture and industry had to suit the foreign masters and meet their imperial demands. Education was designed to manufacture clerks for the Colonial offices and no substantial quantity of human product. Industry was purposely discouraged and deliberately crippled to preserve a perpetual and convenient market for British merchandise. Agriculture remained mercilessly exposed to the vagaries of nature — the floods, the droughts, the fire and the pests which could not be controlled for lack of funds in an unsympathetic and alien budget. The economic centre of gravity of the country lay wholly outside her soil.

But independence has brought new hope to the country and given new life to the people. Within the last half decade almost a miracle has been accomplished in the development of the country.

Tremendous progress has been made in forging out a balanced economy through a planned programme of industrialization and agrarian reforms. The financial position improved so satisfactorily that Pakistan alone of the sterling bloc was able to maintain her currency when all others devaluated theirs. There is an ambitious programme for irrigation and electric power development. Educational reforms are also well on their way and so are the people with their conscious pride of freedom and will to live.
The two political problems of Pakistan

Of the lingering political problems of Pakistan, two are of vital importance, namely, the dispute over Kashmir and over the Indus Basin Canal water, the supply of which could be cut off by India at any moment.

On these issues, a high school girl from Topeka, Kansas, Sigrid Jan Larson, has argued:

"International prestige appears to be the dominant factor in India’s claim to the princely state of Kashmir rather than any major economic, strategic or social significance, as it is to Pakistan. Since the Indus and Sutlej rivers flow through India-held Kashmir and the Jhelum River rises in that country, the significance of a free and impartial plebiscite is of even greater properties. From a strategic point of view, a Pakistan without Kashmir would be virtually undefended. One shudders at the thought of Kashmir under Hindu rule, for four-fifths of the country’s population believes in Islam."

Irrigation engineers of the two nations — India and Pakistan — met in June 1954 in Washington with engineers of the World Bank in an effort to work out a comprehensive development plan for the lasting benefit of both nations. Pakistan’s position on the irrigation water dispute is that "there is no solution other than a fair solution". Pakistan is firmly convinced that, "among individuals as among nations, respect for the rights of others spells peace."

Regarding Kashmir, Pakistan has always agreed "to take it or leave it" on the verdict of the people and the voice of democracy. For Pakistan is an arsenal of democratic principles and her people are united to preserve them.

A brief account of the principles and ideals of Islam, which is the greatest single force behind the concept and creation of Pakistan

The greatest single force and ideal behind the concept and creation of Pakistan is the religion of Islam — which literally means "peace" and resignation to the Will of God. It is significant that Muslims greet each other all over the world with the words "Peace be on you!" (in Arabic, al-Salamu ‘alaikum!).

Islam is the newest of the revealed religions, but at the same time it is the oldest. It is a living faith, but more than that, it is a code of life. The essence of Islam consists in the strictly monotheistic concept of one God — the Supreme Creator and Lord of the Universe. The first article of faith of a Muslim is, "There is no god but God and Muhammad is a messenger of God."

Islam, according to the Prophet Muhammad, through whom was revealed the Qur’an, had a unique message for the world. Although he is supposed to be the originator of Islam, which some foreigners wrongly call Muhammadanism after his name, the Prophet himself does not claim any originality. In fact, he positively disowns any credit for that. "I have not brought you a new religion," he explains, "it is a heritage from my father, Abraham" (The Qur’an, 22:78).

According to the teachings of the Qur’an, the sacred book of the Muslims, the religion of Islam originated right from Adam and was revived through the different prophets like Noah, Abraham, Moses and Jesus, all of whom must be equally respected by a Muslim. Islam is the religion of man
it is a universal religion, not confined to a particular geographic region or racial group.

The Supreme Authority of God, which has been specifically recognized in the objective resolution of the Pakistan Constitution, places all men as equal, irrespective of creed, colour or clime.

One of the fundamental characteristics of the human religion of Islam is that all prophets are considered as human beings. By being a human, a prophet acquires the basic right to inspire other fellow beings within the orbit of human limitations which he shares with others.

"I am a man like you," said Muhammad. Never before was the dignity of man raised to such a glorious height!

After the death of Muhammad, his successor was elected by popular vote. It was democracy in action. As a matter of fact, Islam in the early days of the Caliphate instituted a system of democracy which was never known before. Islam abolished slavery in the seventh century C.E., and enjoined on its followers kindness, respect and consideration for domestic servants. Islam also gave women a position of honour and equality with men. "They are your adornments and you are theirs," so says God in the Qur'an (2:187).

There is no caste system in Islam — social, economic or religious. The democracy of Islam is in constant and living interpretation in our daily prayers when the prince and the pauper, the ruler and the ruled, must stand in the same line before God. Muslim prayers are not necessarily led by an appointed preacher. The leader for the occasion is selected from the assembly and once he has started it becomes incumbent on others to follow him irrespective of their position, pelf or power, like soldiers in a parade or in the field of battle.

A few words about the practical religious institutions of Islam

Although we have mosques or places of worship, a Muslim may say his prayers anywhere according to circumstances — in his home, on a lawn, on a boat, or even on horseback. A sick person may pray lying on his bed. A mosque or fixed place of worship is preferred only for the advantage of a larger gathering — for promotion of unity and understanding among fellow Muslims. This unity and fellowship is progressively emphasized in the Friday prayers (held once every week), in the 'Id prayers (twice every year), and in the annual prayers of the World Fellowship Assembly of Muslims at Mecca — known as Hajj, or Pilgrimage.

In his prayers, a Muslim does not chant meaningless texts or formulae. He acknowledges in the language of the Qur'an the Supreme Authority of God and humbly seeks His mercy, help and guidance in living the life of a true Muslim:

"O Lord, lead us along the straight path — the path of those whom thou hast favoured."

"O Lord, grant us the gifts of this world and of the hereafter."

"O Lord, we have done injustice to ourselves. If Thou forgiveth us not, we shall be among the losers."

"O my Lord, increase my knowledge."

A Muslim pledges his submission to the Will of God in the following words of the Qur'an, which are also recited in his prayers:

"Verily, my prayers, my sacrifice, my life and my death are for the sake of the Lord of the Universe."

But this complete surrender to the Supreme Authority of God does not make him a passive fatalist. By his conquest of self and identification with the Supreme Will, he may approach nearest to God and become the maker of his own destiny. This idea is truly reflected in a poem written by Iqbal — the great poet and seer of Islam:

"Raise yourself to such a height that God Himself should ask you to dictate your own wishes."

A Muslim believes in the eternity of soul — in life after death. He strives to live in this world, a good life, a life which refrains from doing injustice to self and violating other's rights. This is a life that follows the golden rule and finds happiness in the service of fellow beings.

The religious practices enjoined on a Muslim and which are all meant to promote his physical, mental, moral or spiritual developments are four in number, namely, prayers, fasting, pilgrimage, and benevolence or charity. These practices are not unnecessarily burdened with elaborate rites and rituals.

Through fasting he learns self-control, the spirit of sacrifice, submission to God's will and appreciation of the trials of hunger and privation. A Muslim must give away in charity (so that his left hand does not know what his right hand has given) one-fortieth part of his savings every year. Besides, he is strictly warned against the practice of usury. This ensures a healthy and equitable distribution of wealth and guards against the wrong and artificial process of socialization in the Soviet way. A Muslim by his faith and tradition is severely opposed to the theory of Communism. He will die of starvation rather than accept the luxury of a Godless State.

A Muslim must observe cleanliness — physical and mental. He cannot perform his prayers without being clean. He washes his hands, mouth, face and feet five times daily before attending his prayers. He must refrain from drinking alcohol and taking pork for sound hygienic reasons, as modern dietetic science has conclusively shown.

The place of learning and knowledge in Islam

At a time when in Europe knowledge was considered dangerous and detrimental to faith, and science was branded heresy punishable with death, Muhammad made learning compulsory for all men and women. Moreover, he said:

"Seek after knowledge even in China."

"The ink of a learner is holier than the blood of a martyr."

"Whosoever has been given the knowledge of science has received immense benefit."

Muhammad not only encouraged scientific knowledge and tore out the shrouds of mystery that gathered thick and dense around religion — but also advocated individual thinking and the right of honest difference, which are two of the most important factors contributing to the growth of a dynamic civilization in modern democracy. "Difference of opinion amongst my followers is a source of blessing," declared Muhammad thirteen hundred years ago.

Islam is also very emphatic on the importance of tolerance and respect for minority rights. God in the Qur'an has warned:

"There is no compulsion in religion."

The universal religion of Islam through its various provisions of law and religious codes has taken the fullest cognizance of the human nature in its highest potentialities as well as in its bounds of limitations. Its remarkable flexibility has stood the test of time and age — of geography and of science. It is supremely human, and truly democratic in ideals and practices. In its ethical aspects, Islam satisfies the highest aspirations of man in his moral, intellectual and spiritual pursuits. This is our faith, Islam, the link between God and man, and the light between Heaven and Earth.

In the land of Pakistan we are a band of people dedicated to the will of God, and peace amongst men!
THE LONDON CENTRAL MOSQUE

The two men — founder trustees of the London Nizamiyyah Mosque Trust Fund — who worked hard and incessantly for the erection of a Mosque building in the heart of London.

The late Lord Headley (al-Farooq) (d. 1935), left, and the Founder of the Woking Muslim Mission and Literary Trust, The Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din (d. 1932)

A RETROSPECT

Thursday the 3rd June 1954, when the foundation-stone of the London Central Mosque was laid, is a veritable milestone in the history of the ever-growing Muslim community of Great Britain. The idea of endowing London with a mosque building worthy of the metropolis of the British Commonwealth of Nations, which attracts visitors from all parts of the world, and also of the traditions of the 400 million Muslims, has been seriously engaging the attention of prominent Muslims ever since the beginning of this century, when an eminent Indian Muslim scholar and legislator, the late Right Honourable Ameer 'Ali, who was a member of the Privy Council in London, launched an appeal for funds for this purpose. A sum of about £10,000 was collected, but owing to various reasons the fund did not reach the figure required for the project. Before anything could be done in this direction, there came the first world war, which did not improve the situation. A part of this money vested in a trust known as the London Mosque Trust Fund, with the late Mr. Ameer 'Ali as its first chairman, was utilized in buying a house in East London, which is now known as the East London Mosque. This mosque was opened on 1st August 1941.

In the meantime, the late Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, who had started his work of expounding Islam to the West, had arrived in England. Like his predecessors, he also realized the importance of a mosque building in London, the Shah Jehan Mosque at Woking not being large enough for the requirements of the British Muslim community. He, with his friend and collaborator, the late Lord Headley (d. 1935), who loved Islam and had the courage of his convictions to profess Islam openly at a time when there was a much greater prejudice against it than exists in England at present, explored all possible avenues for the materialization of (continued on page 22)
The Laying of the Foundation-stone
of THE LONDON CENTRE
on Thursday, 3rd
at
The Islamic Cultural Centre,

A NEW CHAPTER HAS BEEN WRITTEN IN

THE CEREMONY

On the auspicious day of 'Id al-Fitr, 1st Shawwal, 1373 A.H.—3rd June 1954 C.E., the diplomatic representatives of the Muslim countries at the Court of St. James’s took part in the laying of the foundation-stone of the London Central Mosque, to be erected next to the Islamic Cultural Centre, Park Road, London, N.W.8.

After the 'Id prayers, which were led by The Shaikh Dr. 'Ali 'Abd al-Kadir, Dr. 'Abd al-Kadir made a speech in Arabic and in English. The text of his speech in English is as follows:

"Today is a very special day and one which we shall long remember. We are going to lay the foundation-stone of the London Central Mosque.

"Building a mosque is always a significant event in Islam. Wherever they have settled, Muslims have always built a House of God. A mosque is not merely a place of worship — any spot upon the earth can become a place of worship. In the history of Islam, the mosque is a centre of all fields of activity. Therefore when we lay the foundation-stone of the London Central Mosque we remember that, first of all, we are acting for the sake of God, but, secondly, we are acting to achieve a higher level of human life which God intends for mankind.

"I feel that this mosque, in this great metropolis, has a special significance. Many Muslims from all over the world come to this capital and many settle here. They need this mosque as a centre for their worship, activity and guidance.

"We hope that in collaboration with the Muslim world we may fulfil this duty. May God make it a blessed undertaking!"

Dr. 'Abd al-Kadir then called upon the diplomatic representatives to lay the stone.

After the company had gathered around the stone, His Excellency the High Commissioner for Pakistan,
Mr. M. A. H. Ispahani, invited the diplomatic representatives of the Muslim countries to take part in the ceremony. Thereupon Dr. 'Abd al-Kadir handed a silver trowel to Mr. Ispahani, who is Chairman of the Board of Trustees, to lay mortar. The other Muslim diplomats followed suit in this symbolic act. After the stone had been embedded in mortar, the Muslim diplomats laid their hands on it as a symbol of their unity of purpose while Dr. A. A. Kadir, who also put his hand on the stone, read the Fatihah. Dr. Kadir finished with the words, "I declare that the foundation stone of the London Central Mosque has been laid well and truly."

The following diplomatic representatives took part in the ceremony: The Afghan Ambassador (Dr. Najibullah), the Egyptian Ambassador (Mr. 'Abd al-Rahman Hakki), the Indonesian Chargé d'Affaires (Mr. Marjoenani), the Iranian Ambassador (Mr. Ali Soheily), the Iraqi Counsellor (Mr. Saleh Mahdi), the Jordan Ambassador (al-Sayyid Sulaiman Nabuli), the Lebanese Ambassador (Mr. Victor Khouri), the Libyan Chargé d'Affaires (al-Sayyid Hassan Macklouf), the High Commissioner for Pakistan (Mr. M. A. H. Ispahani), the Saudi Arabian Ambassador (The Shahik Hafiz Wahba), the Syrian Ambassador (Mr. Fa'iz al-Khouri), the Yemeni Chargé d'Affaires (al-Sayyid Muhammad Ibrahim).

About two thousand people were present at the ceremony. They included Muslims from the Middle Eastern countries, Nigeria, Somalia, Burma, Siam. The plan of the mosque has been drawn by an Egyptian architect, Colonel Ramzi 'Omar, whose services have been placed at the disposal of the Trustees of the London Central Mosque. Colonel 'Omar is in the employ of the Egyptian Government.
this cherished project of erecting a mosque in London. Lord Headley, who was an ardent believer in the future of Islam within the British Empire, even went to see the then Secretary of State for India at the conclusion of World War I with the suggestion that a mosque should be built by the British Government itself in recognition of services of the Indian Muslims who had fallen for Great Britain during the war. The British Government did not view this proposition with favour, because, it was argued, that if the British Government gave a place of worship to the Muslims, it would have to do the same for the other many faiths which made up the British Empire!

But the idea did not leave him nor his friend, The Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, and in the winter of 1927 Lord Headley, upon the suggestion of The Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, who was at that time in India, was elected to preside over the Annual Session of the All-India Tabligh Conference at Delhi. In his presidential address he appealed to the Muslims of India and elsewhere to help him build a mosque in the "Metropolis of the British Empire". As a result of the favourable impression his lecture tour had produced, Lord Headley soon after was invited to Hyderabad-Deccan by His Exalted Highness the Nizam to be his guest. At a public meeting at which Lord al-Awwal 1356 A.H.—4th June 1937. But before the Trustees could look around to move further in the matter of the construction of the mosque, World War II had descended upon the world. Once again the idea occurred to prominent Muslims in England that as the British Empire was at grips with Nazism and that as the ideals of Islam and Western democracies were similar, it was but in the fitness of things if some definite goodwill gesture was made by the British Government to win over the world of Islam to its side. One of such men was His Excellency Hasan Nishat Pasha, the Ambassador of Egypt in London. He, like his predecessors, realized the necessity of having a Central Mosque in London. Thinking the moment was opportune, he approached the British Cabinet to induce it to show its goodwill towards the Muslims by giving them as a present a site in London for the building of a mosque.

The British Cabinet did not approve of the idea, the objection being more or less the same as was made to an earlier similar proposition of Lord Headley. The Egyptian Ambassador was not to be daunted in his efforts. He, as he put it, had a brain wave. He went again to the British Cabinet, this time with a new and more acceptable proposition. He said to his friend the late Lord Lloyd, a Minister in the British Cabinet, that if his former suggestion was unacceptable for various political considerations, it could easily make a gift of a piece of land to the Egyptian people, who only a few years before had given free a piece of land to the British community of Egypt for the erection of a cathedral in Cairo. This proposition was acceptable to the British Government, who accordingly voted a credit of £100,000 for the purchase of a building to be given as a present from the British people to the Egyptian people. His Excellency Nishat Pasha, having received the gift as the diplomatic representative of his country, made it over to the Muslim community of Great Britain by creating a Trust consisting of the diplomatic representatives of the various Muslim countries. It may be recalled that at that time there was neither Pakistan nor Indonesia. He also made an appeal for £250,000 for the building of a Central Mosque.

With the money at his disposal His Excellency Nishat Pasha purchased a mansion with vast grounds at Regent's Park, a fashionable part of London. Here, where a Centre called the Islamic Cultural Centre was opened by His late Majesty King George VI on 24th November 1944, with an Egyptian Muslim scholar, Dr. Ali 'Abd al-Kadir, Ph.D. (London), as its first Director.

Realizing that the funds of the London Nizamiyyah Mosque Trust were lying idle and in view of the fact that a bigger scheme in the form of the Islamic Cultural Centre and London Central Mosque had come into existence, the Trustees of the London Nizamiyyah Mosque Trust Fund decided that the sum of £80,000 vested in them (the piece of land at Kensington having been sold) should be given to the Islamic Cultural Centre and London Central Mosque Trust, so that a start on the proposed London Central Mosque could be made. Thus it was that on 3rd June 1954 was laid the foundation-stone of the London Central Mosque by the Muslim diplomatic representatives of the Muslim countries.

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Such is the object I aim at — a mere patrol in the field in which we are fighting our greatest battle for the liberation of our country from all fetters and shackles.

PART I

The Revolution starts within the
Youth of Egypt

The Revolution of 23rd July 1952 is an introduction to something still in the lap of the unknown

Before proceeding with this discourse I would like to pause for a while at the word “philosophy.” It looks big and sounds grand. As I see it, I feel I am facing a world that has no boundaries. I have within me a hidden feeling hindering me from plunging into a bottomless sea. From the shore I stand upon, I see in the distance no end to the other side. The truth is I am anxious to avoid the use of the word “philosophy” with reference to what I shall say. I find it difficult to discuss the philosophy of the Revolution for two reasons: first, the Philosophy of the Revolution of 23rd July 1952 should be treated by professors who should search deeply into it for the roots spreading at the very depth of the history of our people. The stories of national struggles have no gaps that can be filled with nonsense. Neither have they the surprises that spring into existence without preludes.

The struggle of any nation in its successive generations is a structure that rises one stone upon another. And as each stone lies solidly on another, so do the events of the struggle. Each event is the outcome of its predecessors, and is, at the same time, an introduction to something still in the lap of the unknown.

I do not pretend to be a professor of history. This is the last thing my imagination may entertain. Nevertheless, if I were to attempt to study the story of our struggle like a schoolboy just beginning I would say, for instance, that the Revolution of 23rd July is the realization of a hope that the people of Egypt, in modern times, have aspired to since they began to think of governing themselves and since they decided to be the masters of their fate.

One attempt failed to realize this hope when al-Sayyid ‘Omar Makram led the movement against appointing Muhammad ‘Aly viceroy of Egypt in the name of its people.

Another attempt failed to fulfill this aspiration when ‘Orabi rose demanding a Constitution.

Other vain attempts followed during the intellectual fervour in the period between the revolt of ‘Orabi and the revolution of 1919. This latter was led by Sa‘d Zaghloul, who again failed to reach his goal.
The origins of the Revolution of 23rd July 1952 are not the result of the war in Palestine

It is not true that the Revolution of 23rd July started on account of the result of the war in Palestine. Neither was it caused by defective arms, to which officers and men fell victims. It is still further from the truth to attribute it to the crisis of the elections of the Officers’ Club. In my opinion its causes are deeper and farther. Had the officers endeavoured to avenge themselves because they were cheated in Palestine or because the defective arms strained their nerves and because they suffered an indignity in the elections of the Officers’ Club, the whole affair would not have deserved to be called a revolution. A mere mutiny was the likely description even if it were attributed to causes fair and just in themselves. All these were incidental. Perhaps their greatest influence was that they urged us to march forward along the road to revolution; but without them we were marching just the same.

Today I am trying to recall all the events that passed and, after years have elapsed since we first thought of the Liberal Officers was then existing and active. I do not exaggerate when I say that the crisis of the Officers’ Club elections was caused, more than anything else, by the activities of the Liberal Officers. We were determined to fight then in order to test the strength of our mass formation and real organization.

That day lies again farther in my life than the beginning of the scandal of defective arms. The Liberal Officers’ Organization had existed before. Their circulars gave the first warning of the impending tragedy. Behind the upper that rose on account of the defective arms their activities lay. Nay, that day goes back still farther in my life than 16th May 1944, which marked the start of my life in the Palestine War. As I trace the details of our experience in Palestine I feel a strange sensation. We were fighting in Palestine but our dreams were in Egypt. Our bullets were aimed at the enemy lurking in the trenches in front of us, but our hearts were hovering round our distant Mother Country, which was then a prey to the wolves that ravaged it. In Palestine, Liberal Officers’ cells were meeting in trenches and posts studying and searching. And it was in Palestine that Salah Salem and Zakariyya Mohji al-Din came to me after having penetrated the siege of Falouga; there we sat besieged, neither knowing what was to become of that siege nor when it would end. We spoke of nothing but our country and how to deliver it. It was in Palestine that Kamal al-Din Husain sat beside me one day and spoke as his eyes wandered and his thoughts dispersed; “Do you know what Ahmad ‘Abd al-Aziz told me before he died?”. He asked. “What did he say?”. I asked in return. With a deep tone of voice and a still deeper look he said, “Listen, Kamal, Egypt is the field of our supreme war effort.”

In Palestine I met not only friends who shared the work for Egypt, but I also discovered there the thoughts that shed their light on the road ahead. I remember the days I spent in trenches pondering over our problems. Falouga was then besieged and the enemy had concentrated his guns and aircraft heavily and terribly upon it. Often have I said to myself, “Here we are in these underground holes besieged. How we were cheated into a war unprepared and how our destinies have been the playing of passions, plots and greed. Here we lay under fire unarmored.”

As I reached that stage in my thinking my feelings would suddenly jump across the battlefield, across frontiers to Egypt. I found myself saying, “There is our Mother Country, a far, far bigger Falouga. What is happening in Palestine is but a miniature picture of what is happening in Egypt. Our Mother Country has been likewise besieged by difficulties as well as ravaged by an enemy. She was cheated and pushed to fight unprepared. Greed, intrigue and passion have toyed with it and left it under fire unarmored.”

Besides, it was not only the friends I met in Palestine who spoke to me of the future of our country, not only the experience that I had gathered there that hammered at my mind with warnings and forebodings as to its destiny, but the enemy also played his part in reminding us of our homeland and its difficulties. A few months ago I read some articles about myself by a Jewish officer named Jerdan Cohen. They were published in the Jewish Observer. In these articles he related how he had met me during the contacts and discussions of the Armistice. “The subject that Gamal ‘Abd al-Nasser discussed with me,” he stated, “was Israel’s struggle against the English, how we organized our underground resistance in Palestine and how we succeeded in mobilizing world public opinion behind us against them.”

The Egyptian revolutionary leader Ahmad ‘Orabi (d. 1911), who raised the standard of revolt against the repressive taxation of the Khedive. ‘Orabi was defeated by the Khedive with the help of the British on 13th September 1882 and exiled to Ceylon whence in 1901 he was allowed to return to Cairo.

Revolution, to go back to the first day I discovered the seeds of revolt within me. That day lies farther in my life than November 1951, which marked the beginning of the crisis of the Officers’ Club elections. The organization of the
The seeds of revolt within me, and others like me, a legacy from a previous generation

The day I discovered the seeds of revolt within me was still further back than 4th February 1942. I wrote to a friend later saying, "What is to be done now that the catastrophe has befallen us, and after we have accepted it, surrendered to it and taken it submissively and meekly? I really believe," I continued, "that Imperialism is playing a one-card game in order to threaten only. If ever it knew that there were Egyptians ready to shed their blood and to meet force by force it would withdraw and recoil like a harlot. This, of course, is the state or habit of Imperialism everywhere." That event had a new influence on the spirit and feeling of the army and ourselves. Henceforth officers spoke not of corruption and pleasure, but of sacrifice and of their willingness to give up their lives to save their country's dignity. They all repented they did not intervene, however weak they might obviously have been, to redeem their country's honour and to wash this shame away with their very blood. But let us wait. Tomorrow will soon be here.

Some have tried to revenge this, but the time for revenge had gone. Hearts were full of fire and sorrow.

The fact is that that blow brought life back to some and made them realize that they should be prepared to defend their honour. That, in itself, was a severe lesson.

That day is again far more distant in my life than the feverish days I lived as a student, marching in demonstrations, clamouring for the restoration of the 1923 constitution which was duly restored in 1935, and when I used to join delegations of students calling on leaders in their homes and demanding from them to unite for the sake of Egypt; and as a result of these efforts the National Front was formed in 1936. I remember that during the period of boiling over I wrote on 2nd September 1935 to a friend of mine, now Dr. `Aly al-Nashshar, the following letter:

"Brother `Aly.

"On 30th August I telephoned your father enquiring after you. He informed me you were at school. I therefore decided to write what I had intended to convey to you by telephone. "The Lord hath said, "Prepare for them (the enemy) whatever force you can"; but where is that force we prepare? The present situation is critical and Egypt is in a still more critical position. We are just about to bid life farewell and meet death.

"Despair is a solid structure; and who is to demolish it?"

And then I went on until I finished the letter.

I wonder when it was that I discovered the seeds of revolt within me. I consider, moreover, that such seeds were not embedded in my heart alone, and that I found them in the very hearts of others who could not themselves trace them to their origin in themselves. It seems clear that these seeds were innate in us; they lay dormant and inherited in our souls, a legacy from a previous generation.

Now what I have said will explain why at first I found it difficult to talk about the philosophy of the Revolution and why it was that I mentioned that such talk needed professors to delve into the depths of our history and trace the roots therein planted. The second reason was that I myself was amidst that whirlwind of the Revolution. Those who are at the depths of the whirlwind are hardly conscious of whatever is away from it.

It was thus that my faith and my mind were following everything that happened, how it happened, and therefore I cannot divest myself of my soul when I discuss the events and what hidden ideas are at their roots.

I firmly believe that nothing can live in a vacuum. The truth that lies latent in our depths is this: whatever we imagine to be the truth is, in fact, the truth plus the contents of our souls; our souls are but the vessels wherein lives everything in us, and the shape of this vessel gives form to whatever is introduced into it, even facts.

I try, as is humanly possible, to check myself from changing the form of the truth, and I am sure I shall succeed to a considerable extent.

There is the question: and to do justice to myself and to the philosophy of the Revolution I leave it to history to gather how it was within me, how it was within others, and how it appeared in events; and from all these the whole truth will emerge.

Was our action on 23rd July 1952 justifiable?

What is it then I would like to discuss if I eliminate the word "philosophy"? I have but two things to mention in

The famous Egyptian nationalist Mustafa Kamil (d. 1908). His services to political awakening in Egypt are immortal in this connection. First, there are some feelings taking a vague form of a hope at the beginning and later becoming a definite idea and a practical plan prior to midnight of 23rd July. Secondly, there are some experiences that carried those feelings with their vague hope, their definite idea and practical plan into execution at midnight on 23rd July and onwards until now.
It is these feelings and experiences that I would like to discuss. One question has persistently occurred to me: Was it our duty, as an army, to do what we did on 23rd July 1952? I have just explained how the Revolution of 23rd July was the realization of a hope that dangled before the eyes of the people of Egypt since they began, in modern times, to think of governing themselves and having the final word on their destiny.

If this be so, and if what took place on 23rd July was only a military mutiny and not a popular revolt, why was the army, apart from any other forces, destined to carry out this revolution?

Throughout my life I have had faith in militarism. The soldier's duty is to die on the frontiers of his country. Why then was our army compelled to act in the capital and not on the frontier?

Once again let me reiterate that the defeat in Palestine, the defective arms, the crisis of the Officers' Club election, were not the real springs from which the current flowed. They may have accelerated the flood, but they could never be the original source. Why then did this duty fall upon the army? This question has often occurred to me. It came to me persistently during the stage of hoping, of thinking and of planning before 23rd July. It repeated itself several times during the experimental period after 23rd July. We had different factors to justify action before 23rd July and to explain to us why it was imperative that the army should act. "If the army does not move," we said to ourselves, "who else will?" We were the ghost with which the tyrant haunted the dreams of the nation. It was high time that the same ghost turned against the tyrant and upset his dreams. Other things we said; but what was most significant of all was the feeling deep down in our consciousness that this was our duty. If we did not perform it, we would betray the sacred trust in our charge. I admit that the complete picture was not yet very vivid in my imagination until I went through a long stage of experience after 23rd July. The very details of this experience were in themselves the very details of the picture.

The shock that we experienced after the Revolution of 23rd July 1952

I confess that after 23rd July I suffered fits in which I accused myself, my colleagues and the rest of the army of the rashness and folly we committed on 23rd July.

Prior to that date I imagined that the whole nation was on tiptoes and prepared for action, that it awaited the advance of the vanguard and the storming of the outside walls for it to pour down in a solid phalanx marching faithfully to the great goal. I thought we were only the pioneers and the commandos, that we would only be in the front for a few hours and that we would soon be followed by the solid masses marching to the goal. My imagination often carried me away. I felt I could hear the rattle of their solid, orderly rows as they marched onwards to the main front. My faith was such as to render everything I heard a concrete fact and not a mere illusion.

After 23rd July I was shocked by reality. The vanguard performed its task; it stormed the walls of the fort of tyranny; it forced Farouk to abdicate and stood by expecting the mass formations to arrive at their ultimate object. It waited and waited. Endless crowds showed up, but how different is the reality from the vision! The multitudes that arrived were dispersed followers and contrary remnants. The holy march towards the great goal was interrupted. A dismal picture, horrible and threatening, then presented itself. I felt my heart charged with sorrow and dripping with bitterness. The mission of the vanguard had not ended. In fact it was just beginning at that very hour. We needed discipline but found chaos behind our lines. We needed unity but found dissensions. We needed action but found nothing but surrender and idleness. It was from this source and no other that the Revolution derived its motto.

We did not expect this shock. We went to the men of ideas for counsel and to the men of experience for guidance, but unfortunately we did not find much of either. Every leader we came to wanted to assassinate his rival. Every idea we found aimed at the destruction of another. If we were to carry out all that we heard, then there would not be one leader left alive. Not one idea would remain intact. We would cease to have a mission save to remain among the smashed bodies and the broken debris lamenting our misfortune and reproaching our ill-fate.

Complaints and petitions poured upon us in thousands. If these did refer to causes worthy of justice, or mentioned oppression that might be redressed, they would be understandable and logical. The majority of these were but persistent demands for revenge as if the revolution were meant to be a weapon for revenge and hatred.

If I were asked then what I required most, my instant answer would have been, "To hear but one Egyptian uttering one word of justice about another, to see but one Egyptian not devoting his time to criticizing wilfully the ideas of another, to feel that there was but one Egyptian ready to open his heart for forgiveness, indulgence and loving his brother Egyptians." Personal and persistent selfishness was the rule of the day. The word "I" was on every tongue. It was the magic solution of every difficulty and the effective cure for every malady. Often did I meet men, referred to in the Press as "great men", of various tendencies and colours, from whom I sought the solution of a difficult problem. I could hear nothing from them save the word "I". He and only he was capable of understanding the problems of economics; the rest were but children creeping on all fours. He and only he was the expert statesman and the rest only learning their A and B and had not got to C. After interviewing any of these men I would go back to my colleagues bitterly exclaiming, "How utterly futile! If we were to ask that man about a difficulty in fishing off the Hawaiian islands his answer would only be 'I'!"

I remember once visited one of our universities and sat with professors endeavouring to profit by the experience of men of learning. Many spoke, and spoke at length. Unfortunately not one of them presented a new idea. Everyone introduced himself and listed his moral capacities, which, in his view, could perform miracles. Everyone eyed me as if I were to him more precious than the treasures of the earth or the blessings of eternity. I could not help but remark to them all: "Everyone in his place can perform miracles. The primary duty is to put all energy into it and if you, as university professors, ever thought of students and rendered them, as you should, your principal care, you would provide us with a tremendous force wherewith to build up our country. Let everyone remain at his post and strive hard at it. Do not look up to us. Circumstances have compelled us to leave our posts to perform a sacred task. We sincerely wish the country had no further use for us save as professional soldiers in the army. There we would have remained." I did not wish then to set before them the example of the members of the Revolution Council, who, before the crisis summoned them for the supreme task, were
performing their duties in the army most diligently. I did not wish to tell them that most of the members of the Revolution Council were professors in the staff college . . . a clear proof of their distinction as professional soldiers. Neither did I wish to mention to them that three members of the Revolution Council had received promotion on the field in Palestine, lest I should be regarded as boasting of my brethren and colleagues of the Revolution Council.

I admit the situation caused me a depressing psychological crisis. But later, experience and reflection, and the true significance I derived from them, lightened the reaction of the crisis upon me and made me seek pretexts from the world of reality that came to me when the complete picture of the state of my country became clear to me. It, moreover, provided me with the answer to the question which was always in my mind: “Was it our duty, the army’s duty, to act as it did on 23rd July?” The inescapable answer is “Yes”.

Egypt of today is going through two revolutions together and at the same time

I can now say that at present we are in the throes of two revolutions and not one.

Every nation on earth undergoes two revolutions: The first is political, in which it recovers its right for self-government from an imposed despot, or an aggressive army occupying its territory without its consent. The second is social, in which the classes of society would struggle against each other until justice for all countrymen has been gained and conditions have become stable.

Other nations have preceded us along the path of human progress and passed through the two revolutions, but not simultaneously. Hundreds of years separated the one from the other. In the case of our nation, it is going through the two revolutions together and at the same time, a great experiment, putting us to the test. This great experiment is due to the fact that the conditions of such revolution are remarkably different, strangely discordant and terrifically clashing. Political revolution demands, for its success, the unity of all national elements, their fusion and mutual support, as well as self-denial for the sake of the country as a whole.

Some characteristic signs of social revolution

One of the first signs of social revolution is that values are shaken and creeds are relaxed: fellow-countrymen struggle against each other, individuals and classes. Corruption, suspicion, hatred and selfishness dominate them. Between the anvil and the hammer we now live in two revolutions: one demanding that we should unite together, love one another and strain every nerve to reach our goal, the other forcing us, in spite of ourselves, to disperse and give way to hatred, everyone thinking only of himself.

Between the anvil and the hammer the 1919 revolution was lost and failed to achieve the results which it ought to have realized. The ranks that massed in 1919 to face tyranny were, after a while, occupied only by internal strife. Tyranny became more arbitrary whether it was in the open forces of occupation or their veiled cat’s-paws, headed by Sultan Fou’ad and later by his son Farouk. The nation reaped nothing but a crop of self-suspicion, egoism and hatred between individuals and classes alike. The hopes which the 1919 revolution was expected to realize faded. The fact that they faded and that they did not die out is due to that natural resistance which the hopes that our nation always entertained brings forth. This resistance was still alive then and preparing for another trial. Such was the state of affairs that prevailed after the 1919 revolution and which compelled the army to be the only force capable of action.

The situation demanded that a homogeneous force should break away, to a certain extent, from the struggle of individuals and classes. This force should issue from the heart of the people. Its members should have faith in each other and should have in their hands such elements of material force as to ensure swift and decisive action. Such conditions did not prevail except in the army.

It was not the army, as I mentioned, that determined its role in the events. The opposite is nearer the truth. It was the events and their evolution that determined for the army its role in the mighty struggle for the liberation of the country.

The Founder of the Wafd, Su’d Zaghloul (d. 1927). He with his colleagues headed a delegation (in Arabic Wafad, hence the name of the party) to the British High Commissioner and demanded the complete independence of his country on 13th November 1918

I have realized from the very beginning that our success depended on our complete understanding of the nature of the conditions we live in as related to our national history. We were not in a position to change these conditions by a mere stroke of the pen. We were also not in a position to put back or put forward the hands of the clock and dominate time. We could not act, along the route of history, as the traffic constable does on the road by stopping the passage of one revolution to let another through, and therefore avoid a
collision. The only thing to do was to act as best we could, and escape being crushed between the two milestones.

It was imperative that we should proceed with the two revolutions together. The day we marched along the path of political revolution and de-throned Farouk we took a similar step along the path of social revolution by limiting the ownership of agricultural land. I still believe today that the Revolution of 23rd July should retain its capacity for swift action and initiative in order that it might fulfill the miracle of proceeding with the two revolutions simultaneously, contradictory as our action may sometimes appear to be.

When a friend of mine came to me one day exclamining, "You asked for unity to face the British and at the same time you permit the Graft Court to proceed with its work," I listened to him with the image of our big crisis in my mind: the crisis of being between the two milestones. One revolution demanded that we should stand in one row and forget the past, another revolution forcing us to restore the lost dignity of moral values and not forget the past.

I did not say to my friend that the only way out to safety was, as I mentioned, the capacity for swift action and initiative as well as the capacity for marching along the two paths together.

This was not my will; nor was it the will of those who took part in the Revolution of 23rd July. It was the will of fate, of the history of our nation and the stage it is passing through today.

I have felt, since consciousness first dawned upon me, that positive action is the only way. But what action? The word positive action may appear on paper sufficient to solve the problem. But, in life as well as in the difficult circumstances our generation has been going through, and, in this crisis that ravaged deeply into the destinies of our country, it was not sufficient. At one stage of my life enthusiasm meant positive action as a means of appreciating. Then my ideal in positive action changed until I came to realize that it was not enough that my nerves alone should cry out, and that I must communicate my enthusiasm to others until their nerves also cried out.

In those days I was at the head of demonstrations in al-Nahda School. From the bottom of my heart I clamoured for complete independence; others repeated my cries, but they were in vain.

They were blown away by the winds and became faint echoes that do not move mountains or smash rocks. Later "positive action" meant in my opinion that all leaders of Egypt should unite in one thing. Our rebellious cheering crowds passed their homes one by one demanding, in the name of the youth of Egypt, that they should unite in one thing. It was a tragedy to my faith that the one thing they united in was the treaty of 1936.

A description of my mental processes

Then came the Second World War and the events that preceded it. Both inflamed our youth and spread fire to its innermost feelings. We, the whole generation, began to move towards violence. I confess, and I hope the Attorney-General will not incriminate me on account of this confession, that political assassinations blazed in my inflamed mind during that period as the only positive action from which we could not escape, if we were to save the future of our country.

I thought of assassinating many whom I regarded as obstacles between our country and its future. I began to expose their crimes and set myself as a judge of their actions and of the harm that these brought upon the country; and then I would follow all this by the sentence that should be passed upon them.

I thought of assassinating the ex-king and those of his men who tampered with our sacred traditions. In this I was not alone. When I sat with others our thoughts passed from thinking to planning. Many a design did I draw up those days. Many a night did I lie awake preparing the means for the expected positive action. Our life was, during this period, like an exciting detective story. We had great secrets, we had symbols, we hid in the darkness and arranged our pistols and bombs side by side. Those were the hopes we dreamt of. We made many attempts in this direction and I still remember, until today, our feelings and emotions as we dashed along the road to its end.

The truth is, however, that I did not feel at ease within myself to consider violence as the positive action essential for the salvation of our country's future. I had within me a feeling of distraction which was a mixture of complex and intermingled factors: of patriotism, religion, compassion, cruelty, faith, suspicion, knowledge and ignorance.

My belief that political assassination was the solution to the problems of Egypt began to die out

Slowly and gently did the idea of political assassination which was blazing in my imagination begin to die out and

PART II

The two questions the Egyptians ask themselves

The importance of the element of historical events in the development of the Egyptian national character

What is it we want to do? And which is the way to do it?

The truth is that I often knew the answer to the first question. Such knowledge was not confined to me; it was the hope that our whole generation has unanimously held.

As for the answer to the second question, namely, the way to which we want, I confess it has undergone in my mind as many changes as nothing else has done. I almost believe that it is the biggest bone of contention in this generation.

There is no doubt we all dream of a free and strong Egypt. No Egyptian would ever differ with another about that.

As for the way to liberation and strength, that is the most intricate problem in our lives. I had faced this complex problem prior to 23rd July 1952. I continued to face it after that until its many angles, which had lain hidden under the shadows that fell upon them, became clear to me. I began to behold horizons which were shrouded out of my sight by the pall of darkness that fell on our country for centuries.

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lose its value within me as the realization of the expected positive action.

I remember one night in particular which was decisive in directing my thoughts and my dreams along that channel. We had prepared everything necessary for action. We selected one whom we found essential to put out of the way. We studied the circumstances of the life of this individual, and made the plot in detail. This plot was to shoot him as he returned home at night. We organized a squad of assault which would shoot him, another to guard this first, and a third to organize the plan for getting away to safety after the plot had been fully carried out.

The appointed night came and I went out myself with the squad of execution. Everything went to plan as we had arranged.

The scene was deserted, as we had expected. The squads lay in the hiding places fixed for them. The person we wanted to get out of the way came and bullets were fired at him. The squad of execution withdrew, covered in its retreat by the guards, and the operation of getting away began. I started my car and dashed away from the scene of the positive action as we had planned. Cries, wailings and moans suddenly rang in my ears. The wailing of a woman, the voice of a scared child, and the continuous feverish appeals for help assailed my ears. I was steeped in my rebellious emotions as my car rushed me along. I then became conscious of something strange — the sounds I heard were still ringing in my ears, as well as the cries, wails and moans and the feverish appeals for help. I was then away from the scene, further than the sound could reach. Nevertheless, I felt all these beginning to haunt and chase me.

I got home, threw myself on my bed, my mind in a fever, my heart and conscience incessantly boiling. The cries, moans and wails and the appeals for help still rang in my ears. All night long I could not sleep. I lay on my bed in the darkness, lighting one cigarette after another. Wander- ing away with my rebellious thoughts, which were driven away by the sounds that haunted me. “Was I right?” I asked myself. With conviction I assented. “My motives were patriotic.” “Was this an unavoidable means?” I again asked myself. In doubt I replied. “What could we have done otherwise? Is it possible that the future of our country could change by getting rid of this one individual or another? Is not the question far deeper than this?” In bewilderment I would say to myself, “I almost feel that the question is deeper. We dream of the glory of a nation. Which is more important? That someone should pass away who should pass away or that someone should come who should come?”

As I mention this I see rays of light gradually filtering through these crowded sensations. “What is important,” I would say to myself, “is that someone should come. Who should come? We are dreaming of the glory of a nation: a glory that must be built up.” As I tossed on my bed in a room full of smoke and charged with emotions, I found myself asking, “And then?” “And what then?” a mysterious voice called out. With deep conviction this time I again said to myself, “Our method must change. This is not the positive action we should aim at. The roots of the question go deeper. The problem is more serious and more far-reaching.” At this I felt an undiluted relief which was soon dispersed by the cries, moans, wails and appeals whose echoes resounded inside me. Suddenly I found myself crying, “I wish he would not die.” It was indeed strange that dawn should find me wishing life for someone I wished were dead the night before. I rushed anxiously to the morn-

The vision of the positive action began to become clearer with the Revolution of 23rd July 1952

But this was not the fundamental problem. The principal question was to find out the positive action. We then began to think of something more deeply rooted, more serious and more far-reaching. We began to draw the preliminary lines of the vision that was realized on the night of 23rd July, namely, a revolution springing from the very heart of the people, charged with its aspirations and pursuing completely the steps it had previously taken along its destined path.

I began this discourse with two questions. One was: “What is it we want to do?” and the second, “Which is the way to what we want to do?” The answer to the first question, as I remarked, was a hope unanimously held. The answer to the second question, about the way to what we want to do, I kept discussing at length until 23rd July.

But was what happened on 23rd July all that we wanted to do? The answer is emphatically “No”, since that was only the first step along the road.

The ecstasy of success on 23rd July did not really deceive me. It did not appear to me as if it had realized our hopes or that spring had come. The opposite may be the truth. Every moment carried to me a fresh success of the Revolution, but it also unwittingly laid a heavy burden upon my shoulders. I mentioned in Part I of this discourse that before 23rd July I thought the whole nation was on tiptoes and ready for action, and that it had awaited but the storming of the walls by the vanguard for it to rush forward behind the vanguard in mass formations marching in an orderly fashion onwards. I stated that our role as the vanguard would not take but a few minutes to perform, after which we would be followed by the massed regular forces. I also drew up in that part of the picture the disputes, chaos, hatred and passions which were let loose, each trying by its egoism to exploit the Revolution for its own purpose. I said, and I shall go on saying, that this was the cruellest shock of my life. But I admit I should have expected all that happened since it was impossible to fulfill our dreams by merely pressing an electric button, and since it was impossible that the scum and debris of centuries could disappear in the twinkling of an eye.

The background of historical circumstances responsible for the problems of Egypt today

It was easy then, and I still find it easy now, to shed the blood of ten, twenty or thirty persons in order to strike fear and panic in the hearts of many hesitants, and thus force them to swallow their passions, their hatred, and their whims. But what result could such an action achieve? I used to think that the only way to face a problem was to trace it to its origin and to try to follow the source from which it began. It was not just to impose “The Reign of Blood” upon us, regardless of the historical circumstances which our nation had been through and which left its imprint upon us and made us what we are today. I have said above that I did not pretend to be a professor of history, for this is the last thing my imagination would aspire to. I said that I would make my attempts only as a child beginning its history course at school.

Fate has so willed that we should be at the crossroads of the world. Often have we been the road which invaders took and a prey to adventurers. In certain circumstances we
found it impossible to explain the factors latent in the soul of our nation without due consideration of these circumstances.

In my opinion we cannot overlook the history of Egypt under the Pharaohs or the interaction between the Greek spirit and ours, the Roman invasion, and the Muslim conquest and the waves of Arab migrations that followed. I think we should pause for a time and examine the circumstances we went through in the Middle Ages; for it is these that got us to the stage at which we are today.

If the Crusades were the dawn of a renaissance in Europe, they were also the commencement of the dark ages in our country. Our nation bore the brunt of the Crusades. They left it exhausted, poverty-stricken and destitute. At the time it was menaced by the war, it suffered tyranny and lay prostrate under the spikes of the horses of the despots of Inner Asia. These were slaves when they first came. Then they turned against their masters and replaced them as princes. They were brought to Egypt in droves as Mameluke slaves, and after spending a time in this good and peaceful country they became kings. Tyranny, oppression and destruction became the characteristic feature of their rule, which enveloped Egypt in its blackness for centuries. During that period our country became a forest ruled by wild beasts. The Mamelukes looked upon it as an easy prey. Their struggles turned on the partitioning of the booty. Our souls, our wealth and our land were the spoils.

Often, when I go back to turn the pages of our history, I feel sorrow tearing my soul as I consider the period when a tyrannical feudalism was formed, a feudalism which had no other objects save that of sucking the life blood out of our veins and sapping from these veins the remnants of any feeling of power and dignity. It left in the depth of our souls an effect that we have to struggle long to overcome.

In point of fact, when I visualize this effect I feel I can understand, on most occasions, some of the symptoms of our political life. It often appears to me that many adopt towards the Revolution an attitude of spectators who have no other interest except waiting to see the result of the battle in which two sides, with whom they have not the least connection, are struggling. I often rebel against this attitude, and say to myself and to some of my friends, "Why don't they come forward? Why don't they emerge from the hiding-places wherein they have put themselves, to speak and move?"

I do not find an explanation for this except in the deposits of the Mameluke reign, when princes used to wrestle against each other, and when horsemen fought in the streets, while people rushed to their homes, locking themselves therein in order to be away from the fight which did not concern them.

It often appears to me that we resort to our imagination and demand that it should fulfil our desires in the sphere of fancy; we enjoy this fancy, and thus remain too inactive to try to realize it.

Many of us have not yet rid ourselves of this feeling; we have not assimilated the idea that this country is ours and that we are its masters and the leaders of opinion and the proper authorities therein.

I endeavoured once to understand an expression I used to shout often as a child when I saw planes flying in the sky. I used to say: "O, God Almighty! Would that a calamity befall the English!" I found out later that we inherited the expression from our forefathers in the days of the Mamelukes. It was not then applied to the English, but it was modified by us or by the unchanged and latent deposits in us. We only changed the name of the oppressor. Our forefathers used to say, "O God Almighty! Send the ‘Osmanly to perdition!"

In the same unchanged spirit the idea was often expressed by us. The name English replaced the name ‘Osmanly, in accordance with the political changes that subsequently followed upon Egypt between the two epochs.

Then what happened after the Mameluke period? The French expedition came. The iron curtain that the Tartars imposed upon us was torn away. New ideas poured in upon us. New horizons, hitherto unknown to us, opened.

The dynasty of Muhammad ‘Ali inherited all the conditions of Mameluke life, even though it endeavoured to dress them in the fashionable clothes of the nineteenth century. Our contacts with Europe and the world were resumed anew. Consciousness, in a modern sense, dawned upon us and brought with it a new crisis.

We were, in my opinion, like a patient who spent too long a time in a closed chamber. Heat inside the closed chamber became such that the patient was almost suffocated. Suddenly a storm raged and wrecked the windows and doors. Cold draughts rushed in, lashing the body of the patient, still soaked in perspiration. The patient was in need of a breath of air. Instead, a violent cyclone burst upon him and fever ravaged his exhausted body.

This is exactly what happened to our society. It was a really dangerous experiment. European society had passed through the stages of its evolution in an orderly manner. It crossed the bridge between the Renaissance at the end of the Middle Ages and the nineteenth century step by step. The stages of this evolution systematically succeeded one another. In our case everything was sudden. We lived behind an iron curtain which suddenly collapsed. We were cut off from the world; we renounced its life, especially after trade with the East was diverted to the Cape of Good Hope. European countries eyed us covetously and regarded us as a crossroad to their colonies in the East and the South.

Torrents of ideas and opinions burst upon us which we were, at that stage of our evolution, incapable of assimilating. Our spirits were still in the thirteenth century, though the symptoms of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries infiltrated in their various aspects. Our minds were trying to catch up with the advancing caravan of humanity from which we had fallen back five centuries ago or more. The course was exhausting and the race was terrible and horrible.

The people of Egypt, with the mental make-up they have inherited, have realized a miracle in the Revolution of 23rd July 1952.

There is no doubt that this state of affairs was responsible for the absence of a united public opinion in our country. The gulf between one individual and another and one generation and another became particularly wide.

At one time I complained that people did not know what they wanted. They were not unanimous in their choice of the path to take. I realized later that I demanded the impossible and that I did not take into account the circumstances of our society.

We live in a society that has not yet crystallized. It is still boiling over and restless. It has not yet calmed or

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settled down, so as to continue its gradual evolution parallel with other nations which preceded it along the road.

I believe, without paying any compliment to people's emotions, that our nation has realized a miracle. Any nation, exposed to the same conditions as our country, could easily be lost. It could be swept away by the torrents that fell upon it. But it stood firm in the violent earthquake.

It is true we nearly lost our equilibrium in some circumstances; but generally we did not fall to the ground. As I consider one average Egyptian family out of the thousands that live in the capital, I find the following: the father, for example, is a tumbled "fellah" from the heart of the country; the mother a lady descended from Turkish stock; the sons of the family are at a school adopting the English system, the daughters the French. All this lies between the thirteenth century and the outward appearances of the twentieth.

which we expelled Farouk and for which we wish to liberate our country from every foreign soldier, if we add all these together, we shall discover the wide sphere in which we labour and which is exposed, from every side, to the winds, to the violent storm that raged in its corners, to the flashing lightning and roaring thunder. As I stated, it is not fair that a "Reign of Blood" should be imposed upon us in this sphere, if we take all the circumstances and conditions into consideration.

The answer to the question "Which is the way?" and the role of the Army in it

Therefore one may ask, "Which is the way, and what is our role in it?" The way is that which leads to economic and political freedom.

Our role is of the watchman only, no more and no less, watchman for a definite period with a time limit.

How similar today is our nation to a caravan that had to take a certain route! The route was long: thieves and highwaymen attacked it; it was led astray by the mirage; and finally the caravan dispersed, each group wandering to a different place and every individual taking a different direction.

How similar is our mission in these circumstances to the part of someone going out of his way to gather these wandering lost wayfarers in order to put them again on the right track and leave them to proceed with their march!

This is our role, and I cannot imagine any other. If it occurred to me to solve all the problems of our country I should be a dreamer; and I am not fond of clinging to dreams.

We have neither the capacity to do this nor the experience to achieve it. Our job is, as I said, to define the landmarks of the road, to lead the wanderers back to where they would resume their march, and to catch up with those who were pursuing the mirage and convince them of the futility of chasing the mirage as they do.

I fully understood, from the beginning, that our mission would not be easy and that it would cost us much of our popularity. We have to speak frankly and speak straight to the minds of the people. Our predecessors used to offer people nothing but dreams, and utter nothing but what people liked to hear.

How easy it is to speak to people's instincts and how difficult to address their minds! Our instincts are the same, but our minds are subject to diversity and disparity.
politicians, in the past, were intelligent enough to realize this fact. They aimed their words at the instincts of the people, leaving their minds wandering in the desert. We could do the same. We could charge people's nerves with big words, which are drawn from the world of imagination and which make them perform chaotic actions, for which they did not prepare or make any previous plan. We could leave them to cry their voices hoarse by cheering, “O God Almighty! Would that a calamity betake the English!” as our forefathers had done under the Mamelukes when they cried, “O Lord Almighty! Send the ‘Osmanly to perdurance!”

Nothing followed their cries. Was this then the mission for which we were destined, and what could we have achieved if we had really gone along that road?

I have mentioned in Part I of this discourse that the success of the Revolution depends on its comprehension of the real conditions facing it and its capacity for prompt action. To this I now add that it should be free from the effects of glittering words. It should proceed with what it deems its duty, regardless of the price it may pay out of its popularity or of the cheers and the applause it may receive. Otherwise we shall betray the trust we hold for the Revolution and its duties.

It was not possible for the Revolution to avoid arousing the wrath of interested sections of Egyptians

Many people come to me and exclaim, “You have angered everybody.” To which I always reply, “It is not people's anger that influences the situation. The question should be, 'Was what aroused their anger for the good of the country or in the interest of whom?'” I realize we have upset big landowners, but was it possible not to upset them and yet behold some of us owning thousands of acres while others do not own the plot of land wherein they are buried after their death?

I realize we have aroused the wrath of old politicians; but was it possible not to do so and yet keep our country a victim of their passions, their corruption and their struggle for the spoils of office?

I realize we have angered many Government officials; but without this was it possible to spend more than half the budget on officers' salaries and yet allot, as we have done, forty million pounds to productive projects? What would have happened if we had opened the coffers of the treasury of the State, as they have done, and distributed their contents among officials and let come what may thereafter. The year that ensued would have found the Government unable to pay the salaries of officials.

How easy it would have been to satisfy all those malcontents! But what is the price that our country would pay for its hopes and its future for that satisfaction?

Such is the role that history has fixed for us. We cannot escape from it, however high is the price we pay. We never misunderstood this role, or the nature of the duties it imposed upon us. These are steps to redress the wrongs of the past and clear away the deposits. We have gone ahead with them and have suffered hardships for their sake.

As for the future, it is not for us to say. In order to safeguard political life we have resorted to several leaders of public opinion of various classes and creeds. We said to them, “Draw up a constitution which will safeguard the country's sacred heritage,” and hence the Commission of the Constitution.

In order to guarantee economic life in future we sought the most eminent professors in the country and said to them, “Plan prosperity for the country and ensure for every citizen his daily bread” — hence the Council of National Production.

These are our limits, which we have not transgressed. To remove the rocks and the obstacles that block the way is our duty, whatever the cost. The way is open to whosoever has ideas and experience to contribute to the future in all its aspects. It is a duty imperative to us all. We must not be selfish and monopolize it. Our mission necessitates that we should unite them all for the sake of Egypt — Egypt the strong. Egypt the free.

(To be continued)

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**PEN PALS**

Mr. Abd Al-Rauf Ezz Eldine, 76 Sharjah al-Manial, Cairo, Egypt. Age: 23 years. Wishes to correspond with friends, especially from Japan, Australia, Germany, Indonesia and Turkey. Interests: Stamp collecting, exchanging photographs, magazines, and discussing Islamic subjects concerning the world of Islam today.

Mr. Mustafa Rajab, Beside Oumer Ibn Abdul-Azees School, Latakia, Syria. Age: 16 years. Wishes to correspond with friends from different countries of the world. All letters will be replied to promptly. Interests: Pen friendship, collecting pictures and reading magazines.

Mr. I. A. Haveliwa, P.O. Box 869, Lusaka, Northern Rhodesia. Age: 20 years. Wishes to correspond with friends all over the world. All letters will be answered. Interests: Stamp collecting.

Mr. A. Rushid Jugoo, 78 Nyion Street, Mabourgh, Mauritius. Age: 25 years. Wishes to correspond with Muslims all over the world in both English and French. Interests: Stamp collecting.

Mr. Irshadulhassan, M.A, Revenue Academy. Interests: Pen friendship, photography, international politics, music, literature, cinema, character reading and exchange of views.

Mr. M. A. Hossain, B.A., 27 Rusholme Road, London, S.W.15. Age: 26 years. Wishes to correspond with friends of either sex from all parts of the world in English, Bengali, French and Esperanto. Interests: General.


Mr. A. A. Noor Amin, 65 Lukmaniee Square, Colombo 14, Ceylon. Age: 29 years. Will be pleased to correspond with Muslims from Europe, America, the Middle East and Far Eastern countries, with a view to keeping in constant touch with Muslim affairs.

Mr. Nazir Ali, Alekna Road (South), P.O. Barisal, East Pakistan. Age: 15 years. Wishes to correspond with friends from all over the world. Interests: Exchange of views and cards.

Miss J. Houseman, 86 Bankastraat, The Hague, Holland, wishes to correspond with Muslims of both sexes between the ages of 25 and 40, preferably from Egypt, Arabia and India. Interests: Islamic literature, manners and customs, general. Can correspond in English and Persian.

Mr. Ghallalah Mohamed, Pl. Providence, East Bank, Demerara, British Guiana. Age: 23 years. Wishes to correspond with Muslims in the Middle East. Interests: Religion, stamp collecting, reading and international pen friendship.

Mr. Shaikh Abdul Qayyam "Piyaro", Noshaharo Gate, Shikarpur Sind, West Pakistan. Age: 21 years. Wishes to correspond with friends in English and other modern Indian languages. Interests: Literature, art, collecting magazines and picture postcards, correspondence.


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**THE ISLAMIC REVIEW**
Saladin—A Great Leader of Islam

By The Hon. Steven Runciman

His fame

There are many characters in history who were thought to be great and good by their contemporaries but who seem to us today rather unattractive. Fashions in behaviour and even moral standards have changed. But there are a few whose reputation has outlived the vicissitudes of time, so that we can still understand why they were admired and loved. Such a one was Saladin (Salah al-Deen), the Muslim prince who was the most illustrious enemy of the Christians in the religious wars that we call the Crusades.

Saladin was born in 1138 C.E., at a time when the Muslim world was at a low ebb. When he died, in 1193, the Muslims were in the ascendant again. The Crusaders, who had held most of Syria and all the Holy Land, were reduced to a strip of territory along the coast. His great triumph was to restore to Islam the city of Jerusalem — a city almost as holy to the Muslims as it is to the Christians — which the soldiers of the First Crusade had recovered for Christianity nearly a century before. He is perhaps better known to us for his fierce contest with Richard Coeur-de-Lion in the wars of the Third Crusade, when Richard came to the East, along with Philip Augustus, King of France, to restore the Kingdom of Jerusalem which Saladin had almost entirely obliterated. But it is not for its military and political successes that he deserves to be remembered, but for his qualities as a man — a man who lived in a harsh, philose and fanatical age, but who was himself what we could call in modern speech a "gentleman".

By race Saladin was a Kurd, a member of a mountain people of Indo-European stock who inhabit the wild country of eastern Asia Minor, a lawless people famed as brigands, but devotedly Muslim and with strong traditions of hospitality and honour. He had the physical appearance of a Kurd, fair-skinned and slightly built; but everyone who saw him was impressed by the peculiar distinction of his face. Its features were well-cut, and its expression in repose was one of gentle melancholy. His eyes were kind, and the charm and gaiety of his smile was irresistible. His health was never robust; illness continually interrupted his career, but he never complained of it nor made it an excuse for indolence. He was a man of simple tastes, who hated pomp and ceremonial. He liked to be easy of access and to enjoy the conversation of his friends and of scholars, though, as a pious Muslim, he deplored daring religious and philosophical speculation nor would he permit coarse jests or gossip in his presence. Best of all he loved the open air, and animals and gardens. He was particularly fond of children and wanted to keep them as long as possible sheltered from the horrors of contemporary life. For example, he would never allow the little boys at his Court to witness bloodshed. He was devoted to his religion, firmly believing that every infidel, Christian or Jew, was doomed to an eternity of Hell, and he never forgave an insult against his faith. But, all the same, he regarded the infidel as fellow human beings, entitled to be treated with humanity. He always acted towards everyone, whatever his origin, with the fundamental human virtues of justice and mercy, courtesy and compassion, honour and charity.

His mission to unite Islam

Every man's character changes in the course of his life; and I must confess that Saladin had not always been entirely admirable. He was of comparatively humble origin, and he owed his start in public life to his father, Ayyub, and his uncle, Shirkuk, Kurdish adventurers who had risen through their own military merits and become the trusted generals of the great Muslim leader Zengi and his son, the Sultan Nur al-Deen. Shirkuk had conquered Egypt for Nur al-Deen from its previous masters, the Fatimid Caliphs, and Saladin had gone there with his uncle and had succeeded him as governor of the province.
It was by a questionable trick that he had rid his uncle and himself of the last Fatimid vizier; and as governor he was far from being an obedient servant to his master Nur al-Deen; he might indeed have risen in open revolt against him, had not his old father Ayub not come to lecture him on the sin of disloyalty and the perils of ambition. Saladin did not at first entirely follow his father’s advice. His behaviour towards Nur al-Deen’s youthful heir showed a very loose interpretation of the fealty that he should have shown to his benefactor’s family. But he sincerely thought it his duty to try to unite Islam, which he alone could do; and as his power grew, so did his finer qualities. His determination, his patience, and his generosity in victory won him the leadership that he desired; and though Nur al-Deen’s family always considered him an usurper and the older dynasties as an upstart, yet it was as unquestioned leader of Islam that he performed his life-work of fighting against the Christian intruders in the Holy Land.

Saladin was eminent as a general, though not to be compared with his great opponent, King Richard, who was one of the most brilliant military leaders in history. Saladin’s victories were won partly owing to the folly of his enemies and partly through his own wisdom and personal example. His strength lay in devotion and the respect that he inspired. He lived in an age when warfare was harsh and pitiless; when prisoners of war were usually butchered unless they could raise a large ransom; when captured cities were ruthlessly sacked and the citizens robbed and slain; when a pledged word was seldom kept, especially if it were pledged to an infidel. Saladin’s Christian foes were guilty of all these practices, and no one more so than King Richard, the paragon of Western chivalry. His own fellow-Muslims were only a little more humane, but Saladin’s honour was such that he never broke his own word, whether it was given to Muslim, Christian or Jew; and he was often ready to forgive those that did him wrong.

His honour, mercy and charity

When Renaud, the Christian lord of Sidon, came to him and pretended that he wished to become a Muslim, and thus preserved his castle of Beaufort from attack, Saladin soon saw through the trick, but he pardoned Renaud because he had so much enjoyed the charm and wit of Renaud’s conversion. At the same time he admired honour in others. He released the young lord of Oultrejoudain on the promise by the boy’s mother to surrender the castle of the province. The garrisons refused to obey her orders, so she sent her son back to captivity. Saladin released him at once, as a tribute to her.

Still rarer qualities were the mercy and charity that he showed to defeated enemies. While Richard had no hesitation in butchering some 3,000 Muslim prisoners whose lives he had sworn to spare, the only Christian prisoners that Saladin slew were the Knights of the Temple and the Hospital, whom he had publicly vowed to slay, and the French baron Renaud de Chatillon, whose record for perfidy and savagery had seldom been equalled in history. When the Crusaders captured Jerusalem in 1099, they put all the Muslim citizens, men, women and children, to the sword, and they waded to the Holy Places through rivers of blood. When Saladin captured Jerusalem in 1187, not a civilian life was lost and not a house or church pillaged. The Christians were rounded up and held to ransom, but he himself gave help towards the ransom and compensated out of his own purse Christian widows whose husbands had died in the fighting.

Many stories were told of the kindness and patience with which he heard any petition, from whomsoever it came. There is the tale of the young Christian mother who came weeping to his camp before Acre, because the Muslims had stolen her little daughter. The pickets led her through to Saladin, telling her that he was very merciful; and he himself had the camp searched till the child was restored to her. A Christian prisoner who was led terrified before him said afterwards: “As soon as I saw his face, I was comforted, for I knew that he could do nothing evil.” He lost his temper at times, if men were unjust or treacherous, but he never nursed resentment. His personal generosity was such that he died a very poor man.

What his opponents thought of him

To his Christian opponents, most of whom considered gentleness and compassion as poor, womanish qualities, Saladin’s charm lay in his courtesy. They saw with admiration how in the heat of the battle of Jaffa, when King Richard’s horse was killed under him, Saladin at once dispatched him two swift Arab horses of his own, and they saw how when Richard lay sick in his tent he sent him fruits and snow from Mount Hermon. They told of how he went to besiege the castle of Kerak when the young chivalry was celebrating his marriage there and how the Saracens at his orders refrained from bombarding the tower in which the bridal couple dwelt. So struck were the Crusaders by his chivalry that they decided that he had received the accolade of knighthood in his youth, and they even whispered that on his deathbed he secretly baptized himself.

It is from Christian sources that we hear of his last act of humility, when, as he lay dying, he bade his standard-bearer go through the streets of Damascus carrying rays from his shroud, proclaiming that this was all that the great Lord of the East could take with him to the grave. Christian writers in the West might compare him to anti-Christ, but all who returned from the Crusades spoke of him with genuine respect; and the code of chivalry that their descendants developed owed not a little to his example. The measure of his greatness is that Christians as well as Muslims, then as now, recognized his essential nobility. He was a Muslim to whom the elimination of the Christians was a religious duty; but he tempered his duty with such gallantry and mercy that the Christians themselves were ashamed to see a paynim whose deeds were so much more Christian than their own.

Saladin’s career has inspired many poets and historians, but the most attractive book written about him is his biography by his devoted secretary, Baha’ al-Deen. As we read Baha’ al-Deen’s story the whole charm of Saladin’s personality comes vividly before us, with his little human weaknesses, his humour, his kindness and the high integrity of his standards. To the historian, whose time is too often spent in studying the records of crime and folly, he emerges as someone whose acquaintance it is a pleasure and a privilege to make — someone whose life enriches our faith in human nature. Baha’ al-Deen ends the last chapter of his book with the words: “My aim has been to stir men to pray for Saladin and to remember his goodness”. His goodness deserves to be remembered still, not only by the followers of his own great faith, but also by those of the great faith that he fought with such compassion and with such honour.
Suzerainty of Sa‘udi Arabia over Buraimi

by ‘ABD al-MAJID, M.A.

The geography and history of Buraimi

The world at large had practically never heard the name Buraimi before the sudden and surprising claims put forward by the British Government on behalf of two of its protégés at the expense of the traditionally friendly country of Sa‘udi Arabia.

For reasons known only to Great Britain, she has lately set herself to wrest from the Sa‘udi Arabian kingdom a tiny oasis in the north-eastern tip of the Rub‘ al-Khali (The Empty Quarter), which for over a century has remained unquestionably under the sovereignty of the Sa‘udi Government.

The oasis of Buraimi, six square miles of greenery, lies on 54° 40' E. longitude and 24° 20' latitude at the base of what is known as the Trucial Political Division, but well within Sa‘udi Arabian territory. Circular in shape with a diameter of six miles, it offers a permanent home to purely pastoral and agricultural population of about 6,000, the people dwelling mainly in eight villages, of which the largest is Buraimi itself.

Very few Europeans have visited Buraimi, scarcely half a dozen in the past hundred years. Many modern atlases do not even contain its name, so that the man in the street in Europe or America is perplexed by Britain’s demands and bewildered to know even where this “trouble spot” is located. To Arabs in general, it is a well-known place — the junction of several ancient caravan routes, which in the absence of other means of communication are still used all the year round by merchants going to and from the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of ‘Oman. Travellers from the ports of Abu Dhabi, Ras al-Khaima, Dabai and Sohar pass each other at Buraimi: it is thus the junction of four main caravan routes.

The inhabitants of the oasis are not nomads, but permanent settlers of pure Arab stock, divided into two tribes — the Nai‘m and the Banu Yas. The Nai‘m being in possession of the small local “fort” in Buraimi Village, and easily stronger in numbers, enjoy the greater prestige, but all dwell amicably together.

The adjoining villages of Jimi, Qattarah, Mu‘tardadh, al‘Ain, Hamasah, Heila and Sa‘ara are nestled together under the shadow of the rugged highland range known as Jabal Haft. Their dwellings are huts of mats woven from date leaves with a few mud houses besides.

No signs of wealth or importance are to be observed. The population subsists on dates, coarse bread, rice and salted fish and goat or camel flesh. The women help in the domestic economy by spinning, weaving and tending goats and cattle. The men work in the fields cultivating barley, jowar (lentils), rice and common vegetables; and for transportation they depend on the camel.

These pastoral, peaceful and contented people have known little of the outside world, and are satisfied to be governed according to their wishes and traditions. They have never been known to cause a disturbance to others. Over a century ago they accepted Wahhabi rule and have
happily paid their voluntary tribute (Zakat) to their lawful Sa'udi sovereign.

**Buraimi historically and traditionally Sa'udi Arabian territory, as evidenced by European travellers and writers**

The British claim arrived as a bolt from the blue in the year 1950 when the Foreign Office at Whitehall suddenly announced that part of Buraimi did not belong to Sa'udi Arabia, but to the Sultan of Muscat. On 14th September 1952 the British Government officially informed the Sa'udi Arabian Government that they recognized and supported the claim of the Sultan of Muscat to the Oasis of Buraimi, and added insult to injury by sponsoring also a totally new claim by a third party, the Sheikhdom of Abu Dhabi, to some of the oasis.

It was in 1800 C.E. that the Emir of Nejd, an ancestor of the present king, called upon the Sheikh of Buraimi to accept the Wahhabi interpretation of Islam. It was then that al-Hariq, Commander of the Wahhabi forces, made Buraimi his headquarters and collected zakat from the villages of the oasis. This was the beginning of Sa'udi suzerainty.

This narrative is borne out by Lt.-Colonel Arnold T. Wilson in *The Persian Gulf*, which on pages 196-7 contains the following passage: “The (Wahhabi) movement had such a profound effect upon the social and political affairs of the Persian Gulf during a large part of the nineteenth century. . . . In the year 1800 the capture of the Port of Qatif brought them down to the shores of the Persian Gulf and in the same year they occupied the Oasis of Buraimi . . .”

In 1811 the Wahhabi movement suffered a severe reverse at the hands of Muhammad ‘Ali, the Governor of Egypt. They lost the Buraimi area, which remained Turkish territory from 1811 to 1824. We also read in Wilson’s work on page 199: “Under Turki their position of influence in Eastern Arabia was largely regained, and by 1833 the whole coast of the Persian Gulf acknowledged Wahhabi rule and paid tribute, where its pressure was felt once more in Oman, where Sayyid Sa’id, ruler of Muscat, was also obliged to pay tribute to the Emir.” D. G. Hogarth states in his work, *The Penetration of Arabia*, on pages 220-1: “Bireima was not marked on Berghaus’ map in 1835. Being a Wahabi stronghold and the residence of the representative of Riad, it rejected the authority of the Sultan of Oman, . . . The missionary Zwemer, who was next to reach it, this time from Abu Thabi on the Persian Gulf, found its society in 1901 still Wahabi in sentiment, . . .” Then again: “And Miles heard in Bireima of a Najdean notable, one Sa’ud Ibn Jalawi, who came in 1870 in fifty-six slow marches from Nejran to Abu Thabi on the ‘ Pirate Coast ’ of the Gulf . . .” (p. 333).

Lieut. S. B. Miles referred to in the extract was the first Englishman to make a flying visit to Buraimi, arriving there on the 17th November 1875; his impressions were recorded in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1877.

Enough perhaps has been said to carry conviction that, despite a few ups and downs caused by military factors, the Wahhabi paramouncy prevailed almost continuously in the Buraimi oasis throughout the nineteenth century.

The same condition has continued during the past fifty years, and here also there is abundant evidence. The late Bertram Thomas, well-known traveller, and one-time Finance Minister to the Sultan of Muscat, failed in 1920 to enter Buraimi, and he confesses this in his work *Albums and Excursions*.

In 1926 Captain Elkins, a British officer in the Indian Army working in Muscat, published in the *Review of the British Society for Central Asian Affairs* his view that the al-Na'im tribe dwelling in the zone were in the habit of referring all matters to the Sa'udi Emir, Abdullah Ibn Jalawi. The probability is that Captain Elkins had merely been keeping in line with the British definition of 1920. For in 1920 there was curious assertion by the Foreign Office on Buraimi made in *A Handbook of Arabia*, Part 1, p. 281, published by His Majesty's Stationery Office. It reads: “There are two small independent tracts between the Sultanate of Oman and the Trucial Coast to which the Sultan of Oman (Muscat) has never laid claim: (1) Buraimi Oasis, (2) Mahadiah.”

Such then is the weight of the historical evidence showing that neither the Sultan of Muscat nor the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi has any right to claim this oasis.

The utmost that the British Government have been able to say is that there is no specific demarcation of the boundaries between Sa'udi Arabia and the Trucial Region.

**The efforts of the Sa'udi Arabian Government to reach an amicable settlement since 1952**

The mystery behind the British Government’s attitude is perhaps due to some vague idea that there is a likelihood of oil in the Buraimi Oasis, and that for this reason the Sa'udi Arabian Government wants to hold the territory. The British forget that Sa'udi Arabia has more oil than it can cope with at the moment, and large territories which have not even been surveyed for oil. Furthermore, the Buraimi area has never been probed for oil. The British Government is being misled by its advisers into believing that it can dispose of other people’s property by any method. No amount of false argument and ulterior motive on the part of the British Foreign Office can shake that resolution.

A series of incidents caused by the intrusion of the British Resident and his armed forces into that area, and by restrictions on food supplies to the local population, led the Sa'udi Arabian Government to propose a complete “standstill” in the Buraimi Oasis. On the 12th October 1952 a standstill agreement was signed by both sides. The two principal parties also agreed that negotiations should be resumed between Britain and Sa'udi Arabia to settle the question amicably. It should here be remembered that the inhabitants of Buraimi have consistently and regularly paid their tribute (Zakat) to Sa'udi Arabia and always welcomed the sovereign’s representative, to whom they have looked for peace and protection. It has thus been a long-standing custom for a Sa'udi agent to be stationed in Buraimi. In conformity with this, the Sa'udi Government in August 1952 (i.e., prior to the standstill agreement) had sent the Sa'udi agent, Emir Turki Ibn Ataishan, into the Buraimi Oasis to discharge the customary functions. There had been a brief interruption in this practice between 1948 and 1950 because of a temporary economic setback, and the Sa'udi agents had wished to give the local inhabitants time to recover their prosperity before offering Zakat.

The British interpreted this as an attempt to stir up feeling among the tribes by bribery and intrigue, choosing to take a completely distorted view of these events and seizing upon them as a pretext for embarking on a course of flagrant violation of the standstill agreement. The British authorities have repeatedly trespassed thereafter in the oasis area.

Despite provocation, the policy of the Sa'udi Government has been to continue to attempt a peaceful solution of a dispute which has been forced upon them. The Government of Sa'udi Arabia, scorning violent retaliation against them, know that they have the moral support of the civilized world, and the solid testimony of historical facts as well as the unshaken loyalty of the inhabitants of the disputed area.
WHAT THEY THINK OF US . . .

Professor Robert Montaigne, a French specialist in Arab affairs, made the following observations in his appraisal of the Moroccan problems during the course of a lecture he delivered recently at Rabat, Morocco.

Some simple Muslims say the people of the West have "stolen David's secret". The secret they refer to is the engine which drives ships, planes, trains and automobiles, and it is their way of explaining the technical superiority of the West.

The Muslim traveller Djamal al-Din al-Afghani, who visited Europe late in the nineteenth century, found there was no secret about the power of Western nations. They were powerful, he observed, only because of their technical skill and industries. On the other hand, he believed Muslim decadence was due to a decline in the practice of the Qur'anic faith and to divisions inside Islam.

The conclusion he drew from his observations was this: in order to regain their former splendour and to oppose the West victoriously, Muslims merely had to learn Western industrial techniques while practising the true Islamic religion. It is interesting to apply this hypothesis to the Muslim country of Morocco as it is today.

Since al-Afghani's time, Morocco has been unified under a central government by the French Protectorate. Divisions between Arabs and Berbers are daily becoming less marked as a result of the political, economic and social unification of the country. If the origin of this centralization is debatable, it is nevertheless an irrevocable fact and has transformed the people.

Europeans, especially the French, in Morocco are not what they were in 1912 when the Protectorate began. Their greater knowledge and technical skill have served to widen the gap between them and the Muslims, who are still Oriental in outlook. Moreover, they believe they are here to stay and have taken a preponderant part in the country's economy, a part they want to increase.

Under the influence of schools run by the Universal Jewish Alliance, Moroccan Jews have developed the most, especially since the Protectorate was set up. Closed in by their ancient religious code, they used to live in an economic and social system sometimes more archaic than the Muslim's way of life. In our time the creation of the State of Israel and the wave of world Zionism have increased the Jew's desire to quit his losing ground. He no longer wants to be the protégé of Muslims. He emigrates to France to escape Moroccan nationality or to Israel itself, where he rapidly loses his inferiority complexes. Jews who stay in Morocco learn to adapt their religion to modern needs.

But Muslims have not yet adapted their religion to modern needs. The commandments of the Qur'an and its scholarly interpretations seem to be incompatible with those needs. Moreover, there is no central authority capable of imposing reform. But it is by no means certain that Islam is condemned to decadence.

Christianity developed under the Reformation and afterwards. At one time it seemed to be done for, but its temporary eclipse was followed by a brilliant revival. Leaders became more Christian than the people — Christianity adapted itself to modern life. Perhaps the same will hold for Islam.

There is a social aspect of Morocco's development brought out in high relief by the birth of a proletariat. Since 1935, a million Moroccans have gravitated towards the cities, mainly Casablanca.

Foremost characteristic of this proletariat is the disappearance of the old order and traditions in the new living conditions. The natural groups and tribes are lacking; the Moroccan proletarian drifts with the caprices of city life and one sees a veritable break-up of the individual and of groups. This fact is illustrated by the case of the 130,000 Moroccans living in France.

Berber immigrants grouped together in France, who preserve their institutions and customs longest, are best able to resist the pernicious influences of urban centres, while the more dispersed and less solidary Arab immigrants cannot resist those influences. Thus the incidence of crime is incomparably higher among Arabs than among Berbers in France.

The evolution of women is shaking the whole of Muslim society. It is an amazing phenomenon in the new proletariat and is becoming a veritable matriarchy. Despite the dictates of the Qur'anic law, the divorced woman has charge of the children in most cases. It is incumbent upon her to organize the family; she sends her sons to school, while her daughters help with the housework or go out to work. Frequently one meets women who have been married eight times, men fifteen times. The latter come and go — the women remain mistresses of the households.

Then the disappearance of traditions, customs and institutions causes the abandonment of religious practices, which are ten times less prevalent among city dwellers than among any other group. Other ideas come to fill the vacuum — ideas such as nationalism.

The appearance of nationalistic sentiments is quite foreign to Islam's conception of the world. It is a Western idea brought by British and French administrations to all Arab countries. The setting up of frontiers and the notion of a State are also foreign to the Muslim mind. The Middle East was carved into seven or eight States by Western powers after World War I in order to speed up the modernization of the area.

While contrary to pan-Islamic and pan-Arab ideas, these divisions have nevertheless served as a framework for the development of States which today really do exist. And it is inside these States that nationalism is developing as a consequence, albeit unintentional, of the centralization process.

Briefly, relations between East and West, between Moroccans and the French in Morocco, have ended in the dislocation of the traditional Muslim society. The latter is in a quandary and expresses its confusion and resentment by reacting violently. Faced with these problems, the protecting authority has tried to solve them with technical means, with accelerated planning and centralization.

The problem is still a social, a human one. It can be solved only with equally social and human methods. France's policy should tend to persuade Muslims that they are being called upon to take their places in the modern world and by so doing rid themselves of their inferiority complex.— (Newsletter, No. 10, May 1954, Committee for Moroccan Studies and Surveys, Postal Box 511, Rabat, Morocco.)

The author — a Jew and a devout Zionist — is editor of the London weekly, Jewish Observer and Middle East Review. He was formerly a member of the Independent Labour Party of Great Britain and editor of The Tribune, the London Socialist weekly.

The title is a dig at The Seven Pillars of Wisdom by the famous Col. Lawrence of Arabia. These pillars, Mr. Kimche says, have fallen. And in a scathing, and often witty, style he describes their fall.

The book deals mainly with Palestine. It tells of the “cowardice” and “muddle-headedness” of the Arabs over the Palestine question, both in the political sphere and in the field of battle. It attacks British policy, and particularly the late Mr. Ernest Bevin, the Socialist Foreign Minister, for alleged pro-Arab leanings. It dubs “reactionary” nearly all the statesmen of the Arab world. And it preaches Arab-Jewish friendship as a means of combating Western imperialism in the Middle East.

The account of the struggle for Palestine, particularly the story of the handing over of Haifa to the Jews by the British authorities before the end of the Mandate, and the exposition of Zionist goodwill towards the Arabs, are bluntly tendentious and erroneous. The clever sugar-coating of the Zionist pill by the author is not likely to induce the Arabs to swallow it and extend the hand of friendship to Israel. But it is more than likely to misguide the non-Arab reader. And it is for this reason that the book is of importance. No comparable book putting forward the Arab point of view is available to the Western reader. Why? Because the Arabs have so far mysteriously failed to perceive the power of propaganda.


The author was Dean of Exeter (1935-50). In his book he purports to tell the reader all about the fundamentals and development of the Christian religion; and consequently it interested me greatly to read it, and the exercise has afforded me some illuminating sidelights on what the clergy today credit and what they discard of the popular beliefs of the Church’s teachings.

In particular he quotes with apparent approval some remarks made by Professor Gwatkin relative to the dicta in the Nicene Creed, with special reference to the words applied to Jesus — “Came down from Heaven”. The learned professor says, “These words are, strictly speaking, a metaphor. Heaven is not a place above the earth, from which it is possible literally to descend, but a state. Heaven is where God is, or where the pure in heart see God. And ‘ came ’ is a local term . . .” The author appends to these remarkable words the suggestion: “It may be that a further question will arise in the mind of the reader”.

He is perfectly right there. Several questions suggest themselves. Firstly, if there be no place called Heaven, what happens to the Church and Bible teachings about the Ascension? To what place did Jesus ascend in the full view of a multitude of people? Or, is that romantic and extraordinary story merely a splendid example of religious fiction, after the style of that other tale of Elijah’s ascent to the same heaven in the chariot of fire?

But it looks rather as if Professor Gwatkin is trying to pull our legs when he tells us that “ came ” is a local term. To our mentality it appears to be merely the past tense of the verb “ to come ”, and to invest it with some esoteric meaning savours of absurdity, which it is only fair to think that the venerable Dean must have noted and not quoted; instead of which he proceeds to explain the purport of the whole clause, “Came down from Heaven,” which, he says, “is to express the notion of arrival, the arrival of that which had not been there before, of that which could not have come from any other quarter, a divine reinforcement of human strength and virtue, not the surging up of a new wave, but an accession from elsewhere”.

“The Church,” the author says, “does not require any particular height of brow as a condition of membership, but there must be somebody, somewhere, who can answer hard questions in a sensible way.” So he calls in Professor Gwatkin to handle the lowbrows. Let us glance a little more into this apologetic: “Behind the Sermon on the Mount, it was said . . . but I say unto you” — there lies a profound metaphysical question, what is the status of the speaker of these bold words in the world of reality? What is there bold, we ask, about “I say unto you”? Modernized into the language of today we hear it countless times in a day — “I’m telling you”.

The Dean goes on to tell us that the Nicene Creed (which, incidentally, is the only accepted creed in the Church of England rubric — the so-called Apostles’ Creed being a merely local production, just as the word “ came ” was a local term for an age) contains difficult metaphysical affirmations. But they are not more difficult and no more metaphysical than the affirmations of Paul and John.”

That may be so, but perhaps Paul’s and John’s metaphysics are no more acceptable to the thinking man than the Nicene Creed declarations. What then?

This leads to point three of the Dean’s comments. “The exposition of the momentous affirmation as that of the divinity of Christ cannot but tax the intelligence.”

I do not think much benefit is to be derived from any further pursuit of this exposition of Christianity, and perhaps our author was beginning to feel that way himself, and that he was encountering heavy weather, because having explained how the doctrine of the divinity of Jesus taxes the intelligence, he refuses to tax his own any more and lamely
breaks off with: “To leave these high matters and return to the general course of Christian history in the ancient world …” No question is satisfactorily solved by glossing it over!

I have no wish to attack Christianity as such, there are many earnest believers in its teachings, but I do feel most strongly that if the Church’s leaders are standing on so precarious a logical foothold, the Church itself stands in need of a thorough overhaul, and a re-examination of its doctrines and rites, the laity should have a clearer knowledge of their origins, and this they can quite easily do in many of the books issued by the Woking Muslim Mission and Literary Trust.

The Dean quotes Bishop Westcott as saying: “We shall not understand the gospel of St. John until there grows up a large-scale Indian Christianity”. Then what has the Church been teaching in India for a century or more, something they did not understand? The remark implies that Indian traditions and Indian beliefs have some contribution to make to Christianity before it is complete. The Dean’s meaning is quite clear from other parts of his context.

“The meaning is that each nation has something to contribute to the fullness of the Body (the Church),” and to emphasize his theory, he adds: “In like manner, the African negro, the Maori, the Melanesian, have a glory to bring in.”

The Dean doubts. His religion and church are to him incomplete. His religion borrowed or adapted pagan rites, beliefs and festivals. Pagan holidays became Christian holy days. It borrowed the fabulous stories of pagan gods and characters, and took them over with names complete, for incorporation into its calendar of saints. Now he waits for fetishism from Africa, perhaps the witch-doctors of the Mau Mau, the idol worshippers, or worse, from Melanesia, to make their contribution to the fullness of the “Body”.

What our Readers say …

RELATIONS BETWEEN THE MUSLIM WORLD AND JAPAN
895 Kashiwagi 4-chome,
Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo.
22nd May 1954.
Sir,
Assalamu ‘alaikum

After my departure from Indonesia ten weeks ago, I attended the religious conference in Japan, but found it was an affair designed chiefly to try to make a number of delegates (noticed across the world under false pretences) subscribe to some very primitive shamanistic ideas of a Japanese sect with universal Messianic pretensions, etc.

When this was over I decided to settle in Tokyo provisionally for a number of reasons. I have now become the adviser on Middle Eastern affairs to the Japan-Arab Association, which was founded in Tokyo last year with a view to promoting cultural relations between the Arab lands and Japan. It now proposes to work towards increasing facilities for a better knowledge of Islam and the Arabic language and culture among the Japanese people; and is desirous of offering opportunities to students from the Arab countries to study in Japanese universities in the near future, as well as sponsoring parallel opportunities in the Middle East for Japanese students.

In order to improve its economic position and thereby become increasingly active in the above fields, the Japan-Arab Association intends also to open up commercial centres for the sale of Japanese-manufactured goods in the Middle East in the near future. It is expected that the first zones will be those in the Persian Gulf area.

Any person interested in the above project, whether from the point of the promotion of Islamic tabligh among the Japanese or considerations of cultural or commercial relations, is requested to get in touch with the Japan-Arab Association, Yaesuguchi Hotel, 3 Gofukubashi 3-chome, Chuo-ku, Tokyo, or to write directly to me, since I have accepted the post of adviser to the Association, and shall be accompanying the Japanese representatives to the Middle East in the near future in order to study on the spot the best way to give a practical realization to the above-mentioned projects.

Up to the present time there is no organized tabligh in Japan, though the thirst of the people for new religious ideas is at present very great. Little is known of Islam.

Yours sincerely,
HUSEIN ROFE.

A MUSLIM THINKS ALOUD
18 Djalan Beskui,
Djakarta. Indonesia.
Sir,

No Muslim, to whatever country he might belong, would deny the necessity for the thoughts expressed by Mr. Uthman M. Addo in his article, “A Gold Coast Muslim Thinks Aloud” (The Islamic Review, April 1954, p. 37). However, I presume what stands out in his article is his statement that “one of the essentials of a Muslim community is a mosque. Not simply a place of worship … but a mosque around which could be built scientific laboratories, museums, libraries, lecture halls, dispensaries, co-operatives, schools, colleges, sports clubs, etc., etc.”

Much the same thought, I believe, has been expressed by Mr. Kemal A. Faruki in his Islamic Constitution (Appendix V, pp. 112-113), while propounding his views on the subject of once again bringing into harmonious relationship the mosque and the Muslim, leading to a sort of a
natural social set-up commensurate with the true spirit of Islam, without, of course, laying greater emphasis on dogmas, traditions and codified interpretations of the Qur'an, derived from theories in the abstract.

That is how we can bring back our lost glory and give the mosque the place it once occupied in early Muslim society. That will be the resurgence of Islam; that will be our contribution to the faith — a vivid symbol of unity between the spiritual and the temporal, which, during the decadence of Islam, had been divorced from Islamic thought and practice. To quote Iqbal:

The East saw God but failed to see the world of matter.
The West got embroiled in the world and neglected God.

That is how the Muslims can translate into reality what Iqbal dreamt and preached — a synthesis of the Eastern and Western cultures "by wedding reason to love". How beautifully he exhorts his co-religionists to the acquisition of knowledge not only of materialism or spiritualism but of both, and under the shadow of the mosque. In this respect we are glad to see the Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking, is fast setting an example as a centre of Islamic activities.

It is a happy augury that Muslims not only of Pakistan but of other lands also are thinking and "thinking aloud" in the same vein. Efforts in the right direction based on action and belief will lead the Muslims onwards.

Yours faithfully,

SAEED MALIK.

* * *

TOWARDS RE-ORIENTATION OF ISLAMIC THOUGHT

20a Penang Street,
Penang, Malaya.

Sir,

I fully endorse the views expressed by the Council of the Academy of Islamic Studies, Hyderabad-Deccan, India (The Islamic Review, April 1954, p. 3).

It is by far the most logical of all suggestions that have been published by your magazine in connection with the revival of Islamic solidarity. I sincerely hope that Muslim leaders the world over will consider and extend their firm support to this call for introspection.

Let it not be just one of those admirable articles on Islamic affairs to be read and forgotten.

Yours sincerely,

ABDUL JALIL.

* * *

A NEWCOMER TO ISLAM

c/o New Jersey State Prison Farm,
Rahway.
New Jersey, U.S.A.

Sir,

I am an inmate of the New Jersey State Prison Farm at Rahway.

Since I came to this institution I have discovered that I had never before had a religion which I could say was mine, let alone observe. So I decided to do something about this, because deep in my heart I was a religious person, although I could never completely understand the many unexplained Christian dogmas.

I was introduced to Islam by an inmate of this prison, and became interested in Islam after reading the life of the Prophet Muhammad. I now know that Islam is the religion for which I have been searching for so long, the religion which I need and can understand to a point where I can get benefit out of my prayer.

I have joined a group of Muslims here and have been observing all the five daily prayers. I am also learning Arabic. So far I have read the first five chapters of the Qur'an. There is only one copy of the Qur'an here and it has to be passed round to give many of the inmates a chance to read it.

Yours sincerely,

* * *

ARAB STUDENTS' UNION IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

The Arab Students' Union in the United Kingdom,
c/o The Northern Polytechnic,
Holloway Road, London, N.

Sir,

I shall be grateful if you will kindly announce in your esteemed journal that a Union of Arab students studying in the universities and technical colleges of the United Kingdom has recently been formed. The Union has amongst its aims the strengthening of the bonds of friendship between Arab and British students; and it will endeavour to acquaint the British public, and particularly the students, with the national cause of the Arab world. We feel that there is a deplorable lack of knowledge in Britain about Arab affairs, and in our humble way we shall endeavour to tackle this problem.

We are very anxious to develop contacts with students' organizations in various parts of the world. Will those who are interested please get in touch with me at the above address.

Yours sincerely,

SIHAM H. KARMI (Miss)
(Hon. Secretary).

* * *

THE NEED OF MUSLIMS IN WEST AFRICA

C/o P.O. Box 4, Ilorin,
N. Nigeria, B.W.A.
20th June 1954.

Sir,

Assalamu 'alaikum

In The Islamic Review for May 1954 there appeared Mr. I. A. Pedro's letter on the need of Muslim missionary activities in West Africa. Many enlightened Muslims in this part of the world hold the same view. We in Nigeria have a high percentage of Muslim population. But I regret to say that with the rise in standard of Western education and civilization our youth is drifting away from Islam. The fundamental reason for this unfortunate situation is due to the fact that most of them lack knowledge of Islam. On the other hand, they are well-equipped with knowledge of other religions, especially if they attend schools run by other religious communities. The situation is worsening because Muslim or Government schools are few as compared with the Christian mission schools. Most of these schools and high institutions receive grants-in-aid from the Nigerian Government. It is an ironic commentary on the local state of affairs to remember that most of the money comes from Muslim pockets. The Muslims in this country, though many, have lost their grip. They need external help to regain it. I therefore join Mr. I. A. Pedro in appealing to the Woking Muslim Mission to send trained Muslim missionaries to this part of Africa. I also take this opportunity of availing myself of the courtesy of the space in The Islamic Review to appeal to the more fortunate Muslims in all countries to bear in mind that their services for Islam are needed badly in West Africa.

Yours sincerely,

'ABDUL KADIRI OBA.

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