Holy Qur’an—The Incomparable, Unequaled Word of God

The Superhuman Character of Words and Works of God

By HADHRAT MIRZA GHULAM AHMAD, Founder of Ahmadiyyah Movement in Islam

It is firmly established that all things created by God are unequaled in their excellence, and, conversely, things which have no parallel are essentially of supernatural source; thus the puerile proposition, which asserts that it is not necessary that the Word of God should be unique or that its being unequaled does not necessarily prove that it is from the Almighty, becomes baseless.

However, it is alleged that there exists in the universe many a word of man, the like of which has not so far been produced, and yet these have not been accepted as divine word. This erroneous conception has arisen from want of thought and deliberation; otherwise, of human word, however precious it may be, it can never be claimed justly that it is beyond the power and possibility of human mind, and that the author of it has done a deed which may well be called God-like. A man can do what another man has done. When a word is called the word of man, the conclusion that it is, therefore, not beyond the power of another person, is indisputable and the possibility of its being unparallelled is also precluded.

There has never been a man who ever claimed that his words and deeds can be compared with those of the Divine Being. And, if there had been such an impudent person with such an arrogant claim, many would have challenged him. It should be known that it is exclusively the privilege and glory of God to have challenged all the nations of the world to produce, if they could, word like unto His Word, and to have roused them to summon all their resources for this contest. And when hundreds of reputed poets have laid down their lives without being able to produce even one small chapter like that of the Qur’an, it will indeed be the limit of ignorance to call their writings unsurpassable, and to associate them with the Almighty in this attribute of His. The Qur’an says that “if you are in doubt as to that which We have revealed to Our servant, then produce a chapter like it and call on your helpers besides Allah if you are truthful. But if you do (it) not—and you can never do (it)—then be on your guard against the fire whose fuel is men and stones; it is prepared for the disbelievers.” And again the challenge is thrown that “if men and jinn should combine together to bring the like of it, though some of them were aiders of others. And certainly We have made clear for men in this Qur’an every kind of description, but most men consent to naught save denying.”

It is thus clear that the distinctive quality of being unparallelled and unapproachable in excellence belongs exclusively to the Divine Word and Deed. It is this very argument which helps to induce belief in the existence of the Creator, and without which the way to reach Him through the gateway of reason would have been closed. The fact of the existence of God, it cannot be gainsaid, is so closely connected with this great principle that it will be nothing short of cutting at the very root of Reason and Faith if we should dare admit mortal men into its purview, and ascribe to them the divine attribute.

If a person should refuse to accept this general principle, established after a careful observation of the laws of nature, he should not, thereafter, refer to Reason nor speak of the Laws that govern the universe, and should discard all books on logic and philosophy. How will he feel when he asserts that a bee, so perfect in its make, has undoubtedly been created by God, but His Word, with all the grandeur of its phrase and greatness of its teaching, cannot be so perfect as to evince its supernatural source? Is it not a matter of regret that, whereas in the case of a bee, he professes that

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EDITORIAL

Islam On The March

By Masud Akhtar

According to the U.N.E.S.C.O. studies, Islam is the fastest growing major religion of the world during the last decade. During these years, an average of one thousand persons embraced Islam every day from areas as diverse as Africa, Western Europe, Soviet Russia (including its satellites in Eastern Europe), Japan, and Korea in the Farthest East. These converts to Islam come from so diverse stratas of life, ranging from the members of nomad tribes of Africa and the untouchables of India to the highly educated professors of universities and intellectuals of Europe, who have found appeal in the teachings of Islam and have expressed disenchantment with Marxism and disgust with the Christian churches who have made so many compromises with authority and Christian hypocrisy and the cynical Western pretense of equal opportunity to all sections of the society. Roger Garandy, who was a member of the Central Committee of the French Communist Party and one of its leading ideologues and highly regarded poet and translator Eva de Vitary Meyerovitch, a life-long and devout Catholic, are amongst six hundred thousand French citizens who have embraced Islam. So spectacular has been the spread of Islam during this decade that Pope John Paul II took an extensive tour of African countries for mobilizing missionary and episcopal forces for a counter-attack against Islam, which claimed 50 million converts in Africa during the last 15 years. The tragedy with the Christian Missions in Africa is that, because of their origins in the Western world, they suffer from the inherent contradictions of the Western world and, as such, are no match for Islam’s simple message of unqualified justice and equality for all human beings without any distinction of CAST, COLOR, ORIGIN, RACE OR SEX, and its total disassociation from the much-hated exploitation by the colonial powers of Europe lagacies, of which still continue to mar the life of African people in many parts of Africa, in one form or the other.

The New Orientalists are alarmed at the fast pace of

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THE OBJECT OF PROPHETHOOD

By The Maulana Muhammad ‘Ali

Divine promise that for the upliftment of humanity guidance from God will be sent

To understand the aim and object of prophethood (nubuwah) and messengership (risalah) we shall first turn to that part of the Qur’an where the creation of man has been mentioned and where a picture of man’s nature has been drawn together with a way for its attainment to perfection. This is the story of Adam, which has been related at several places in the Qur’an.

Surely there will come to you a guidance from Me, says God after referring to Adam and the error he had committed, then whoever follows My guidance, no fear shall come upon them, nor shall they grieve. And (as to) those who disbelieve in and reject Our messages, they are the companions of the Fire, in it they will abide. (1) It has been pointed out here that men by their own efforts cannot reach that high state of life where, in the words of the Qur’an, no fear shall come upon them, nor shall they grieve. Therefore God, in His perfect mercy and Providence, has arranged to send guidance to mankind from time to time and those who follow it would continue to reach the height of moral and spiritual excellence.

All prophets brought guidance from God

Thus the story of Adam and the concluding verses thereof show that God’s attribute of Providence (rabubiyah) demands that for the upliftment of mankind He should send guidance from time to time. And this is the very object of raising the prophets that they, through Divine guidance, should free men from the bondage of sin and help them to attain to moral and spiritual perfection. Accordingly, in the beginning of the Qur’an the object of its revelation has also been described in the following words: This Book, there is no doubt in it, is a guide to those who keep their duty. (2) This in other words refers to that guidance the promise of which was given to Adam and his descendants that Surely, there will come to you a guidance from Me. Because, for us, all the scriptures have been incorporated in the Qur’an, and all the prophets’ excellences have, been blended together in the person of the Prophet Muhammad (may the peace and blessings of God be upon him!), therefore, whatever object has been stated for the advent of the Prophet Muhammad should necessarily be considered the object of the raising of all other prophets.

Moses and all the prophets who were raised before or after him were the bearers of guidance

Similarly, the book of Moses was also called guidance, which in fact also referred to this original Divine promise. Further, the prophets who appeared before Moses and those raised among the Israelites after him, were all mentioned as being sent with guidance. This is clear from the verses of surah al-Anam. After mentioning Abraham, the following other prophets have also been named: Isaac, Moses, Aaron, Zacharias, John, Jesus, Elias, Ishmael, Elisha, Jonah, Lot (peace be upon all of them). This list carries the names of Noah, Abraham and Moses and those prophets also who appeared after Moses, though they did not bring new law. It has been said about all of them: And We chose them and guided them to the right way. This is God’s guidance whereby He guides whom He pleases of His servants. (3) This was God’s guidance, revealed to the prophets and, through it, He guided who He willed among His servants. Thus He Himself guided the prophets and through them other people were guided. In further explanation of this point it has been said:

These are they to whom We gave the Book and authority and prophecy. (4) Book (kitab) is, in fact, the collection of the guidance which is given to every prophet so that by means of this he should uplift his people and lead them to the right path. This point will be dealt with in detail later but it must be borne in mind here that the thing granted to the prophets has been called guidance on the one hand and book (kitab) on the other.

Together with this the fact has been mentioned that it was given to all the prophets. It is exactly the same as in the beginning of the Qur’an. First the Qur’an has been described as a book and then the name of guidance has been given to it, and further in the surah al-Anam it has been stated:

These are they whom God guided, so follow their guidance. (5) Thus it has been made clear that the real object of every prophet’s advent, whether he brought law or not, was the bringing of guidance and making his people follow it, which, in other words, could be described as perfection and upliftment of humanity, as God had promised in the beginning that Surely there will come to you a guidance from Me. (6) It was, however, this guidance which He revealed to various prophets from time to time.

The real object of prophethood is purification

To understand the real object of prophethood and messengership it is enough for us to know what was the object of the advent of the Prophet Muhammad. This has been mentioned in the Qur’an at various places. For instance, in the prayer of Abraham and Ishmael;

Our Lord, and raise up in them a Messenger from among them who shall recite to them Thy messages and teach them the Book and the wisdom, and purify

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them,(7) and at another place in fulfilment of this prayer it has been stated:

Even as We have sent among you a Messenger from among you, who recites to you Our messages and purifies you and teaches you the Book and the Wisdom.(8) Again, in another surah, after mentioning that God has decided to purify the believers from all defects, it has been stated:

Certainly God conferred a favour on the believers when He raised among them a Messenger from among themselves, reciting to them His messages and purifying them, and teaching them the Book, and the Wisdom.(9) Then in the surah al-Jumu’ah, while referring to the universal and everlasting mission of the Prophet Muhammad, it has been declared:

He it is Who raised among the illiterate a Messenger from among themselves, who recites to them His messages and purifies them, and teaches them the Book and the Wisdom—although they were before certainly in manifest error—and others from among them Who have not yet joined them.(10)

It is, however, strange that, at all these four places, the same object of his advent has been mentioned, which includes (1) Recitation of God's verses, (2) Teaching of the Book, (3) Teaching of Wisdom, and (4) Purification. In fact these are the four works which every prophet has been performing in his own way. As the former three points are a means of tazkiyyah nafs or self-purification, which in fact is the ultimate object of prophethood, I shall therefore only discuss it here and leave the others for the second chapter.

Purification means perfection

What is meant by tazkiyyah or purification? There is a beauty in the Arabic language that the meaning of the word also contains a scientific significance. That is, the word possesses in itself a proof for its meaning. And this is so, exactly as every assertion and claim in the Qur’-an is accompanied by a substantial argument. That is, very often the argument is not put forward for the sake of argument but because it originates from, and is found in, the claim itself as life is found in the body. Thus, the distinction which the Qur’-an enjoys over other Divine scriptures is the distinction which the Arabic language enjoys over all other languages. It was for this reason that out of His perfect wisdom God selected the Arabic language for the revelation of the Qur’-an. Now the word tazkiyyah is derived from sakat the root meaning of which is it increased. The famous lexicologist of the Qur’-an, Imam Raghib, writes in his al-Mujradat:

"The real significance of sakat is the progress attained by Divine blessing, i.e., by the development of the faculties placed by God within man which relates to the affairs of this world as well as to the hereafter, i.e., to man's physical as well as spiritual advancement. Thus, it is said of the sakat of the crop when the increase and blessing is obtained by it...and from it is sakat which a man takes out of his wealth as God's right for the needy, and the giving it the name sakat is because there is a hope for blessing in it or because it helps in the self-purification, i.e., in its growth by means of good works and blessings, or for both of them because they exist within it."(11)

Thus the purification of the self (tazkiyyah nafs) in its original sense signifies the growth of the self, or in other words its development and its acquisition of high rank and excellence. In fact the purification(tazkiyyah) includes both the aspects, i.e., the removal of the causes which obstruct the growth of a thing and the acquisition of the qualities which help its progress. Unless defects are removed, the proper condition for growth cannot exist, but the removal of defects alone is not enough unless such circumstances are brought about which can help man to progress. It is, however, a mistake to think that purification only means the removal of weaknesses and defects. A fine illustration of this point is that of a sown field. For the increase of the seed produce the first thing which is essential to that the ground must be cleared of all defects, for instance its hardness should be removed, and stones, weeds, etc., should be picked out of it. But this alone is not enough. The ground must have the strength and resources which would let the seed grow and increase. For this reason the Qur’-an has compared the believers with seed-produce:

Like seed-produce that puts forth its sprout, then strengthens it, so it becomes stout and stands firmly on its stem, delighting the sowers that He may enrage the disbelievers on account of them. God has promised such of them as believe and do good, forgiveness and great reward.(12)

Here God by comparing the believers with seed-produce has mentioned two things. The first is maqghirah (forgiveness), the meaning of which is protection, i.e., protection from defects, and the second is the great reward, i.e., achievement of excellences. In short, the real meaning of tazkiyyah is to carry (a person or a thing) to perfection. Besides the testimony of the lexicon and the above references from the Qur’-an, the same meaning is confirmed by other Qur’-anic verses as well, such as: He indeed is successful who causes it(nafs) to grow,(13) and He indeed is successful who purifies himself.(14) The word fulah signifies real success, as has been described in the beginning of the Qur’-an. After all, the fundamental principles of Islam have been mentioned along with the great principle of faith and righteous action, it has been stated about the righteous servants that 'These are on a right course from their Lord and these it is that are successful.'(15) That is, they would be successful in attaining to moral and spiritual excellences. The verse he indeed is successful who causes it(nafs) to grow has the same significance. That is, anyone who purifies his self and helps it to reach to its perfection, his is the one who succeeds. Thus, to help men to reach the stage of self-purification or tazkiyyah nafs, which is synonymous with self-perfection or takmil nafs, is the real aim and purpose of prophethood.

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The revelation of guidance is essential for the upliftment of humanity

To sum up, the revelation of some guidance is necessary, according to the Qur'an, for the upliftment of humanity. Nobody can attain real perfection unless he is a follower of that guidance. All prophets of God brought guidance with them. So did the Prophet Muhammad and so did Moses, and so did the prophets who appeared before Moses and the prophets who brought guidance. The word of God does not confine this universal principle to a few nations or tribes. It comprehends all the peoples of the world. As was promised with Adam that "Surely there will come to you a guidance from Me". (16) in a similar way it has been said in the Qur'an that for every people a guide(17) was sent, which means that the Divine law was not limited to the children of Israel or Ishmael, but that every nation had a bearer of guidance. The promise given was universal, so it was universally fulfilled.

The most perfect and the last of all the guides is the Messenger Muhammad

But at the end of all came that perfect guide who was the first of all and the last. It has been mentioned in the Qur'an:

Certainly the first house appointed for men is the one at Bakkah(Makkah), blessed and a guidance for the nations.(18)

The word musbah(blessed) in the Arabic language signifies the blessing which is never cut off.(19) This is which is never cut off.(19) Thus in space and time this house spreads its skirt far and wide and is a source of guidance for all the nations and men forever. As this house is the first and the last, similarly the Prophet Muhammad is the first prophet and the last, as has been mentioned in a hadith: "I am the first prophet in creation and the last in advent," (20) i.e., in creation shown later, even alterations and changes in the law were also made by the prophets, because these were after all not perfect. At any rate, giving of judgement according to the Torah does not mean that no guidance from God was revealed to these prophets. Such a conclusion is clearly opposed to the teachings of the Qur'an.

Prophethood is a gift and not an acquisition

It is evident from the Qur'an and the hadith that Muslim theologians are unanimous on the point that prophethood is a gift and not an acquisition(iktsah). Nobody can acquire the office of prophethood by his effort. On the other hand, God, out of His bounty, whenever He wills, stations a person of His choice to this rank. In reply to the demand of the unbelievers that We will not believe till we are given the like of that which God's Messengers are given, the Qur'an says, God best knows where to place His message.(24) that is messengership is a favour of God and He knows best who is fit to receive it. Similarly the Qur'anic verse

He makes the spirit to light by His command upon whom He pleases of His servants that he may warn men of the day of the meeting.(25) shows that the Divine revelation is granted only to the elect. Ruah(spirit) means the Divine revelation, not the soul which is given to every man.(26)

Similarly, the reports of the Prophet also confirm that prophethood is a gift and cannot be retaliated by effort. As the Prophet is reported to have said, I am a prophet before the birth of Adam.(27) Or by way of creation I am the first among the prophets.

Thus to acquire prophethood by effort or by following some other person is against the plain teachings of all these Qur'anic verses and the reports of the Prophet.

A person who acquires an excellence by effort cannot be called a prophet

After hearing in mind it is easy to understand that prophethood is only conferred directly by God and what

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man realizes by his own effort or by following another person, however close it may be to prophethood, cannot be called prophethood in reality. He who has been perfected and purified directly by the hand of God is alone entitled to be called a prophet. All the prophets were called prophets in the sense that they were mediators between God and mankind. God made them perfect and stationed them at a place were they could themselves make others perfect. And although at times one prophet after another might have appeared, or sometimes a prophet with another prophet might have been raised, one prophet had no share at all in conferring the office of prophethood on another. For it was essential that whoever was raised as a prophet should reach the stage of prophetic perfection directly by the hand of God and not by following any other person. As for others, they should follow him in his footsteps and, by his car, attention and spiritual power, should be able to reach the stage of self purification. Their light is the light of their master-prophet. The light which is a gift is genuine as the light of the sun and those who borrow it receive it as a reflection and their light is as the light of the moon; and as for this (reflected) light further light is not reflected, therefore, such persons cannot be called prophets.

The view of Shah Wali Allah that a prophet is he who makes a deficient person perfect, himself following no Imam

Shah Wali Allah writes in one of his books: "Similarly, people differ in their moral condition on which depends their happiness(sad'adat)...and in some people the moral condition is latent and its signs are manifested by them but for its fuller expression they stand in need of an Imam for the betterment of this condition and according to this is the saying of God, the Most High: 'The oil whereof gives light though fire touch it not.'(28) Such people are called the forerunners and from among them are the prophets. They can bring the excellences of this moral condition into action and can adopt its proper condition. Without the help of a leader and invitation from anyone they make the imperfect perfect and according to the nature in whatever way they act their behaviour results into such a code that remains with the people as a remembrance. They make it the way of their conduct."(29)

This clearly shows that prophets are those whose every nature is gifted with excellences from God and therefore they do not stand in need of any Imam, leader or guide.

The view of Imam Ibn Hazm

Imam Ibn Hazm writes: "Thus it is correct that prophethood is within possibility and it is the raising of a people who have been distinguished by God, the Most High, with excellence not for any reason but because He wills it to be so. Thus God teaches them without being taught and without making them progress by stages and without their search for it and from among this kind is the vision(ru'ya) which comes true."(30)

This proves that learning without being taught is the condition of prophethood, which, in other words, is called receiving without mediation, or a gift(ma'ushah).

The view of Imam Fakhr al-Din Razi

Imam Razi divides all men into three classes, from among which the last class is of prophets, about whom he writes: "Those who are perfect in these two stations(i.e., knowledge and conduct, M.'Ali) and they have the power to cure the imperfect and can lift up the deficient from the depth of immaturity towards the height of perfection, they are prophets.(may the peace of God be upon them!).(31)

The view of al-Ghazali

Similar is the opinion of Imam al-Ghazali:

"With regard to the point whether messengership(risalah) is a matter of acquisition or is a Divine influence, I say let it be known that messengership is a heavenly influence, a Divine decree and a Godly gift. It can neither be acquired by effort nor by acquisition. God knows best where to place His messengership."(32)

Similarly, at another place he writes:

Prophets are a medium for the transmission of God's command, as an angel is a medium between the creation and the command...As by the mediation of the angel He revealed in every heaven its affair, similarly, through the mediation of a prophet. He revealed His affair in every age. Thus the first revelation is measurement(taqdir) and the second is obligation(taklid). (33)

Two conditions for a prophet: (1) For the purification and upliftment of humanity he should bring guidance from God. (2) Acquisition, education or anyone's discipleship should play no part in it.

The sum and substance of the whole discussion is that the real object of prophethood is to bring some guidance for the upliftment of humanity or for self-purification. A prophet serves as a medium between God and His creation. The prophet's moral and spiritual excellence is a Divine favour(ma'ushah) but that of all other people is due to following the prophet, that is, by way of acquisition(kitsah). He receives his light directly from God, while other people receive their light from him, and whatever they receive is only the result of their discipleship. But prophets do not acquire their excellence by following others. Those who do so are following are not in fact prophets. All these conclusions are confirmed by the Qur'an, the Hadith, and sayings of the Muslim Imams. Thus after full deliberations over the real aim and object of prophethood, we arrive at the conclusion that, according to the terminology of Shari'ah, about which the Qur'an, the Hadith and the whole ummah of Islam has unanimously agreed and it should be remembered that the ummah of Islam does not mean the common and illiterate people; to say this is rather a great audacity and impudence), only that person could be called a prophet who fulfills these two conditions: (1) he should bring some guidance from God for the perfection and upliftment

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the growth of Islam in Europe, hitherto considered the exclusive realm and motherland of the Church. In their writings, they are not leaving any stone unturned in charging the people of the Western nations away from Islam. At times, apprehensions are expressed at the so-called Islamic Jihad and, at other times, it is being propagated that Islam is incompatible with the demands of the modern world of science and technology. In this respect, special attention is focussed on Orthodoxy and militant political groups in the Middle East and other Muslim nations. The statements of political leaders of various Muslim countries, who reject any compromise in the matters of the teachings of Islam with the Western ideologies or social values and behavior, are being extensively publicized. It is being argued that, from these patterns, it is evident that any change is simply impossible. We will deal with these assertions of the New Orientalists in a separate article, as it requires going into details of religious, historical, socio-political and economic issues working behind the present wave of militant movements in the Muslim world on the one hand and the minds of the New Orientalists on the other. For the present, we address the Muslim brethren about this March of Islam.

If we Muslims care to think about it then, by establishing a model Islamic society in Muslim countries, this march of Islam can be accelerated manifold. Khalifa Naseeruddin Siddiqui, a eminent Muslim writer of Pakistan has rightly invited the attention of every Muslim to certain revealing matters when he wrote, “Perhaps our mutally warring and wrangling sects, led by well-known and well-revered personalities, are a damper on any genuine effort to study and examine Islam and what it stands for. Late or soon, we shall have to highlight the deeply universal and humanistic character of our faith by pondering over its basic elements with renewed and reoriented minds, not hidebound and fettered by sectarian points of view. We are tired of hostile schools of thought and aggressive systems of theology. They are only an inescapable phase in our spiritual cun-intellectual evolution as Muslims. We must eschew viewpoints which go for disruption and disintegration. The need of the hour is to make a positive approach for the vindication, reinterpretation, and reconstruction of Islamic doctrine and thought by laying the main emphasis on their universal, all-embracing and humanistic character in all spheres of life and thought, such as social equality, economic justice, liberty of the individual, elasticity and freedom of thinking and reasoning and, above all, an openminded attitude to all ideas and ideologies, old or new. But this stupendous task necessitates the closest cooperation and team work between the powers that be and sensitive and thoughtful Muslims, a pooling of resources, intellectual, financial, educational, etc; designed to encompass the paramount aim of all aims, namely to vivify, renew and reconstruct truths and realities which lie hidden under biased and sectional ways of thought and action.” Establishing a God-conscious and Qur’an oriented dynamic society is the call of the hour. Evidence of the existence of such a society throughout the course of our history, and not only during the Holy Prophet’s time or early Caliphates times, is preserved in the pages of Muslim history. In this our century, such a society was traceable in Qadian through the efforts and spiritual influence of the Mujaddid of the Fourteenth Century Hijrah. Amongst this society we find not only the men of working classes but also very able graduates of modern universities; professors, scientists, engineers, doctors, physicians, surgeons, lawyers, and scholarly Ulema too. They were all dyed in one color. They fashioned their lives in accordance with the teachings of the Qur’an and Sunnah and simultaneously kept marching on in the pursance of their respective professions. About them, Allama Doctor Sir Muhammad Iqbal, the poet philosopher of India who is accredited with giving the idea of Pakistan, had said in his speech in the Muslim Anglo Oriental College Aligarh in the year 1910, “The true example of the Islamic character has appeared in the Punjab in the Jamaat of Qadian (Millat-e-Baiza par ek Imamz Nazarz).” The members of the Ahmadiyyah Anjuman Ishaq Islam Lahore, the followers of the said Mujaddid, have the distinction of being one such group of Muslims who believe that any one who recites KALIMA, LA ILAHI ALLAH MUHAMMAD AR RASUL ALLAH(There is no God but Allah and Muhammad is His Messenger) is a Muslim and no one has any right or power to throw such a person out of the pale of Islam. Hurmata Kalimah is the cornerstone of the Unity of the Muslim Ummah and whomsoever violates the sanctity of the Kalimah is not a well-wisher of the Ummah. The injunctions of the Qur’an on this point are quite clear and so are the numerous Ahadith(sayings) of the Holy Prophet, Muhammad’s peace be on him. It is the time to choose between the words of Allah and his prophet and those of the self-appointed expounders of the tenets of the faith, who tire not in calling the reciters of the Kalimah as Kafir day in and day out. United way is the way of the triumph of Islam over all competing ideologies and religions and for achieving Unity, we will have to dislodge the forces of diversity and dismantle the fortresses of disunity. Thus and thus alone will we be able to tread on the path of releasing the dynamics of the teachings of Islam to the rest of the world. Masud Akhtar

Every person is sinless at his birth.

The Holy Quran

Object Of Prophethood cont.

of mankind, and (2) his own perfection and guidance should be the result of the gift of God, and not the result of acquisition, i.e., by following somebody else. A person in whom these two conditions are not found the word prophet cannot be applied to him in reality.
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its physical structure is such that it lies beyond the power of man to produce a like thereof, but in regard to the Divine Word he avers that its like can be produced?

Such a person contemplates that a man cannot create honey, but he has all the power to produce word like unto the Word of God. Does he not feel that if there should be, in the Divine Word, not even as much excellence as in the make-up of an insect, the objection thereof would have to be laid at the door of the Almighty, Who has exalted the inferior creation over and above the superior and higher in excellence, and has endowed the former with such arguments, pertaining to his own person, as have not been conferred on the superior one?

These truths are so evident and clear that even he who has not entered the fold of Islam can understand that it is necessary for the Word of God to be unequaled and unsurpassable in excellence. Every sensible man who reflects on the working of the laws of nature, realizes that every thing created by God, however trifling it may be, is so full of marvel and wisdom that it is far beyond the power and capacity of a human being to produce; nor will he ever be able to accept the possibility of association of a created being in the person, attributes and deeds of the Creator.

For a man of intelligence and understanding, there are, besides what has been stated in the foregoing pages, many more arguments which establish the fact of the incomparability of Divine Word in a very clear and lucid manner. Suppose, for instance, some men of letters enter into a contest for the production of a composition which should be pure and full of knowledge, wisdom and learning. It needs no saying that the palm, in this contest, will be borne only by that writer who will have a vast knowledge and profound practice in the art of writing. No other person, deficient in learning and intelligence, comprehensiveness and capability, will be able to reach the former’s elegance and grandeur in writing, and become his equal.

We may here take another example of a physician, who is not only an expert in the art of diagnosis and healing, but is also an adept in the art of speaking and writing. The perfect and precise manner in which he will dilate upon and discuss the causes, symptoms and treatment of a disease, will not be equaled by another man who is not endowed with the gift of the bag. The speech of an illiterate cannot, therefore, be at par with that of a scholar.

Now that it has been established that the disparity, which exists in the literary and intellectual power of a human being, finds its expression correspondingly in his speech, it becomes necessary that the word, which is claimed to be that of God should, in regard to internal as well as external excellences be unapproachable by human word for the reason that the knowledge of no other being can be equal to that of the Divine Being.

When human beings, notwithstanding the fact that they belong to the same species, have different powers of expression on account of the disparity in their knowledge and wisdom, experience and practice, so that a man of small understanding and knowledge cannot attain to the higher level of a scholar’s speech-excellence, how could it be possible for a created being, whose knowledge is insignificant, to be an equal of the Creator? The fact that all the internal and external grandeur of a word is solely dependent on the literary capability and practical experience of a person now stands proved.

Some controverts argue that it may be acceptable in theory that the Word of God should be unequaled and unique, but such a word is yet to be found, the matchlessness of which has been proved by some strong argument. If this claim be urged on behalf of the Qur’an, it shall have to be established, they contend, by means of an indisputable argument, for the incomparability of the Qur’anic diction and idiom may be an argument for a man whose mother-tongue is Arabic, but it cannot carry any conviction for others who cannot also derive any benefit from it.

It is true that some knowledge of Arabic is necessary for the proper appreciation of certain points regarding the matchlessness of the Qur’an. But it is a mistake to think that all the arguments on its grandeur rely for their support on a knowledge of the Arabic language, and that its marvels can be appreciated by the Arabs only. This is certainly not the case. It is well known to any learned person that many of these arguments are so simple and easy that no proficiency in Arabic is required to understand them; even an ordinary sense suffices for their understanding. It should be noted that the Qur’an is so short and succinct in volume that it can be scribbled with a medium pen in four or five parts only; it contains all the religious doctrines and principles ever taught. Another marvel of the Book is that however many truths of religious learning a man may discover through deep deliberation and hard work, or expound with his own intelligence or arguments on any religious topic, or demand to be shown from it, the remedial treatment of any of the moral and spiritual maladies that human beings have been suffering from, he will find the replies in its chapters. Yet another easily comprehensible proof of its matchlessness consists in the fact that the dignity of its action, and the perfect choice of its words is so great that no human effort can ever approach it.

DEMOCRACY, SOCIALISM, AND THE CONSENSUS—
rudimentary precautions to politicians and by obliging them to produce a clearance certificate from a specified authority we should be able to filter out of our public life a great deal of that self-satisfied stupidity, that authoritative senile incompetence and that down-right dishonesty which at present contaminates it.

Now a few words about the elections. Only the candidate who has somehow mustered a lakh of rupees or is wealthy enough to throw it away on the election gamble, has any chance of being elected. So that entirely on the strength of liquid cash, inferior and sub-human types are permitted to rule over people head and shoulders above them in faith and intelligence. If at all the government of the day realizes the grave risks involved in such elections, it should take prompt action in announcing the minimum qualifications for candidates; ensuring also the effective supervision and check of expenses incurred in the course of elections and eliminating once and for all corrupt practices therein during the conduct of elections.
TRIBUTES TO THE FOUNDER OF THE
AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT IN ISLAM

By the Late Maulana Abul Kalam Azad

HAVING ACHIEVED in twenty years what others could not have done in 200 years, the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Sahib, passed away on May 26, 1908, at Lahore. The last words on his tongue were 'Allah, my beloved Allah.' To his beloved Allah he went back, to Whom he belonged. May Allah shower his choicest favors and blessings on him Ameen!

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad was an outstanding religious leader of the subcontinent and an author, who later joined the political movement against the British, went to prison, and ultimately became, after independence, the Federal Minister of Education in the Nehru Government of India. He was acting as the editor of the Vakeel of Amritsar (Punjab), a paper of high standing, during the temporary absence of its permanent editor, Maulana Abdullah Al-Imadi, when Hazrat Mirza Sahib passed away. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad wrote the following editorial on the deceased:

'That man, that very great man, whose pen was a magic wand and whose tongue was spell-binding; that man whose brain was a complex of wonders, whose eye could revive the dying and whose call aroused those in their graves, whose fingers held the wires of revolution (moral, spiritual and religious) and whose two fists were two powerful batteries; that man who for 30 years was for the religious world an earth-shaking quake, who, like the trumpet of the doomsday, awakened those lost in the slumber of this life, left this world empty-handed. This bitter death, this cup of poison, which entrusted the deceased to the dust, will remain on thousands, nay millions, of tongues, as the words of bitter disappointment and regret. The stroke of death which slaughtered, along with one who was very much alive, the hopes and longings of many, and the wails it raises of lament, will remain in memories for a long time to come.

'The passing away of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Sahib Qadiani is not such an event that a lesson should not be learnt from it, nor should one be content with consigning it to the passage of time to efface. Such people who cause a revolution in the religious world, or the world of intellect, do not come into the world often. These sons of history in whom it rightly takes pride are very rarely seen on the world scene, and when they do come they demonstrate to the world a revolution to remember.

'In spite of our serious differences with Mirza Sahib in respect of some of his claims and beliefs, his separation for ever has convinced the educated and enlightened Muslims that one of their very great personages has left them. And with him the mighty defense of Islam against its opponents, which was linked with this person, has come to an end. His peculiarity that he performed against the enemies of Islam the duty of a victorious general, compels us to express openly our feeling that the grand movement which for a long time defeated and trod over our enemies should be continued in the future also, and that too—if ill-fortune does not obstruct peace and good-fellowship (between Muslims)—with the compulsory partnership required by a joint duty, and in consonance with the blessed principles of Islamic consensus.

'Mirza Sahib appeared in the front line of lovers who for Islam accepted the dedication to sacrifice their time from the cradle, through the springs and autumns, to their graves in fulfilling the pledge of loyalty to their beautiful beloved (Islam). Syed Ahmad, Ghulam Ahmad, Rahmatullah, Ali Hassan, Wazir Khan and Abul Mansoor, these were men who were foremost and in front (in the service of Islam) and who took on its defense and were busy in that effort till the end....

'Mirza Sahib’s literature which was produced by him in his confrontation with the Christians and the Arya Samajists has received the seal of general approval. And in this peculiarity, he stands in need of no introduction. We have to recognize the value and greatness of that literature from the bottom of our hearts, now that he has completed his task. That is because the time when Islam was surrounded and was under attack from all sides cannot be effaced from our minds nor forgotten. And the Muslims who were entrusted with the safety of Islam by the Real Saviour, in this world of material means and causes, were lying flat sobbing in the aftermath of their shortcomings. And they were doing nothing for Islam, or perhaps they could do nothing. On the one hand the attacks were so virulent that the whole of Christendom was bent on blowing out the light of Islam, which alone enlightened the true reality, as it (Christendom) found it to be an obstruction in the way (of its darkness). And the powerful forces of wiliness and wealth were behind the back of these attackers. On the other hand the weakness of the defense (of Islam) was such as if against the enemy’s cannons they did not have even arrows. And counter-attack or defense did not exist whatsoever. Because, against reality and through the misfortunes of our evil deeds, the Muslims were held to be the moving spirit behind the riots of 1857, therefore in all Christian countries, particularly in England, there was a storm of political agitation against the Muslims. And the Christian missionaries exploited it no less than their ancestors who exhorted the Christians to fight the Crusades. Just about when their religious passions were about to cure their hereditary rancour of twelve to thirteen centuries by achieving its objective, the defense of Islam began, in which Mirza Sahib had a part. That defense not only shattered to pieces the initial influence which Christianity had because of its being under the protection and promotion of the Government. And thousands, nay, millions of Muslims
LIFE AFTER DEATH

By the late Khawaja Kamal-ud-Din

Belief in life after death is an essential article of faith in every religion. It has a most wholesome effect in moulding human character, and is at the same time a source of consolation to the disappointed heart, and a treasure of happiness to one in distress; especially when the misery that comes to him is undeserved. It is moreover an efficacious check on wickedness and iniquity, even in cases where there is least chance of detection.

On the other hand, disbelief in accountability for his actions after his death will naturally weaken a man's sense of responsibility. Morality, in the absence of such belief, will become only the soundest method of securing happiness in life, and, therefore, merely a matter of expediency. There will be no incentive to the practice of virtue for the sake of virtue, and no person will ever shrink from committing wrong, if it serves his purpose, provided he can avoid, or disregard, public censure. But all this, as a sceptic would say, is apology and nothing more. It does not, of itself, afford a ground for belief in a life beyond the grave.

Belief in life after death has always been a hard problem for teachers of religion to solve, and they have from time to time been hard pressed by scepticism. It confronted Jesus in the form of the Sadducees. They went to the Master for enlightenment on the subject, and the reply of Jesus was, that if there is no life after death, why did they style their God "God of Abraham and Moses?" By doing so, the Sadducees, so argued Jesus, did evince their belief in the life after death of those Patriarchs. The logic of the gentle philosopher from Galilee, however, was not without its flaws. It perhaps silenced the rationalists of his time, but the Sadducees of today will not fail to detect the fallacy of *petitio principii*, in the argument of Jesus. He started with the presumption, lacking in proof, that the Sadducees were believers in the life after death of the Patriarchs, if they styled their God the God of Abraham.

Though the belief in question is the cornerstone of every religion, yet the whole sacred literature of pre-Islamic days is wanting in its proof. It will be but a waste of time and energy to go, page after page, into the whole Bible record, or the Vedic and Zoroastrian scriptures, in search of something logical to substantiate the theory of Resurrection and continuity of human individuality, after this earthly frame has once been disintegrated; and this paucity of logic is chiefly responsible for Materialism in Europe, and has raised up Atheistic tendencies everywhere in the Westernized minds. Were it not a wide digression from my subject, and perhaps somewhat out of place, I could give excellent reasons to show that the recent conflagration into which the whole world has been dragged, ws not kindled by zeal for the cause of right on the part of all belligerents, but was the outcome of the lustful and greedy disposition of European nations, hardened by their disbelief in life after death; which is a natural consequence of the feebleness of Church theology in the face of Rationalism.

Spiritism, popularly called Spiritualism, has however, arisen in modern days to combat Materialism of this kind. Spirits of dead persons have been seen and talked to, so the report goes, by some of the new creed, which has managed to secure support from certain of the luminaries of the scientific horizon, Sir Oliver Lodge and Arthur Conan Doyle being amongst them. Some of my best friends are Spiritualists, and have had personal experiences of this sort; and I have not the least reason to doubt the veracity of their statements.

Besides, such experiences are not new to Muslim divines. The Church in the West may brand them as devilry and witchcraft, as she used to brand scientific researches in the days of Roger Bacon; but Islam has no need to question them, for it has an extensive literature on the subject dating from very early days. I may observe, however, that such experiences, being personal, cannot afford a substantial proof for others to believe in the life hereafter. A sceptic would accept the story of the Spiritualist as a true statement of what the latter thought he had experienced, but might explain it away in a variety of ways—illusion, imagination, etc.

Again, people who claim to have such visits from the world beyond the grave, forget to note or tell all the circumstances which attended their spirit-experiences, and so make their case weak. Moreover, a good deal of swindling, unfortunately, is going on in the name of Spiritualism; though the creed in my belief is very opportune in these materialism-ridden days.

Finally, such a method of proving life after death is not of permanent value. It is like the miracle of the olden days. A miracle might very well satisfy some of those immediately around its worker, but it became a mere story in subsequent times, and as such, could not command universal acceptance.

Beliefs, like that in question, which constitute basic principles of religion, should be founded on rational grounds. These, however, need not necessarily come within the scope of our senses, especially if the things to be proved lie beyond our normal comprehension. Reasoning by analogy may be helpful, but it is not sound logic and is often misleading. We may, however, safely refer to one class of phenomena in nature to prove another, if the principle underlying both is one and the same. Most of our knowledge, indeed, in the realm of science has come to use in this way.

It is not the question of Resurrection, but that of the continuity of the individual personality of every man removed from this world to the next, that arouses scepticism. If birth, death, and resurrection may be taken to be nothing more than terms for the combination and recombination of various elements and atoms that go to create different organisms in the course of Nature, the whole thing becomes clear as it unfolds itself under

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our daily observation, each year, in the vegetable kingdom. Death overtakes the tree each autumn, while spring comes unfailingly to give it life anew. Deeper observation, by a scientific eye, will also show that every tree has all its distinctive features restored at this spring resurrection. In winter we find trees stripped of all their foliage, flowers and fruits. All their constituent elements become disintegrated, mixing confusedly with the rest of the elemental and atomic world in the universe. The dry and dead trunks, though still enveloped by the same mass of matter that nourished them in the past spring, can no longer assimilate it since the vivifying principle has gone from them. Then comes spring, with its showers, and the water from the heavens brings new life to every member of the vegetable kingdom. All the elemental components that clothed and constituted the individual entity of each particular tree, rush back to it again; spring winds, rain sunshine, bring new life; the whole of dead Nature springs up again in resurrection, and every tree resumes its own individuality, with all its distinctive features. The last Book of God, revealed to man to create in him an intelligent belief in all religious truths, has not failed to refer to the spring-phenomenon, when dealing with the doctrine of Resurrection, in the following words:

"Almighty God and the glorious Qur'an. Nay, they wonder that there has come to them a Warner from among themselves, so the un-believers say: What, when we are dead and have become dust? That is a far (from probable) return. We know indeed what the earth diminishes of them, and with Us is a writing that preserves. Nay, they rejected the truth when it came to them, so they are (now) in a state of confusion. Do they not look up to heaven above them how We have made it and adorned it and it has not gaps. And the earth, We have made it plain and cast in it mountains and We have made to grow therein of all beautiful kinds; to give sight and as a reminder to every servant who returns frequently (to Allah). And We send down from the cloud water abounding in good, then We cause to grow thereby gardens and the grain.

A thing once come to life, never meets destruction, as long as the universe is existing. It contains in it inherent qualities that must come to perfection through one or more shapes or stages. Death is but the name of its passing from one stage to another. But in this translation and transformation, everything manages to maintain its individual entity up to its final development. In the course of evolution, whenever things reach a certain stage of perfection, they begin to lose all those accessories which contributed to their existence in that particular stage; then they die and disappear, but they never become annihilated; they assume a new shape of a size imperceptible to human senses. Their further potentialities remain in abeyance for a time—a period called Barzakh in Muslim theology, i.e. the period of intervening between death and resurrection—then they rise again for further progress, with every favourable circumstance to aid them.

But apart from all the question of the preservation of our personal individualities after death, even our actions and movements, though lost sight of when once performed, remain intact in that great repository of Nature, and may be brought before us when needed.

Miss....sings in America, but her melodies are recorded in Paris and heard in Berlin. It would have been an impossibility for her to do so, if her utterances had not been first recorded on the big disc of Nature, before the Parisian disc was prepared. Similarly, wireless telegraphy could not have come to our aid if there were no provision in Nature for the permanent preservation of every note and sound that once receives utterance. Cinema pictures have come to prove that all our other movements will likewise remain preserved in the film of nature, and can be brought to us at any time, as a witness to our past conduct. God-given Science has stepped forward after all to establish the very Qur'anic truths that, only the other day, aroused ridicule from ignorant Christian Missionaries. The Holy Book, emphasizing the accountability of our actions on the Day of Judgement, says the following: "On that day We would set a seal upon their mouths and their hands shall speak to Us, and their feet shall bear witness of what they earned" (ch. xxxvi, v. 63). The Book of God makes mention also of another interesting natural phenomenon that has recently come within the ken of science, and goes to prove, still further, the continued existence of individuality, after whatever may be its present form has been lost.

The fire which comes from ignited wood is not the product—the child of the tree. It derives, in the first instance, from the world's great luminary, in the form of sunlight; then clothing itself with hydrogen and carbon, which it separates from water and carbonic acid gas, it assumes the shape of a tree—sometimes called, for this reason, "bottled sunshine," by way of popular explanation of a scientific process. What we call the "burning" of fire, or rather the burning of the tree, is only the process of separating the fire from tree's other components, that is, hydrogen and carbon, and here we find continuity of individual entity, not of fire only, but of other things too, with mathematical exactitude.

Suppose, therefore, one unit of fire to be spent in one unit of water, and another in one of carbonic acid gas, with a view to separating their respective components, the result would be two units of fire from sunlight producing between them two units of hydrogen from water, and one unit of carbon from carbonic acid gas, and suppose that the two units of hydrogen, and the one unit of carbon, combined to produce one cubic inch of wood in a tree, then that piece of wood, when ignited, will give back exactly two units of fire, two units of hydrogen and one carbon. They will all go back to make units of sunshine, water, and carbonic acid gas of the same magnitude as those from which they originally came. Look at it how you will, it is a circumstance, a problem, that cannot well be passed over. How did the Holy Prophet of God (peace be upon him) divine these, and a hundred similar secrets of Nature, which have taken many centuries to come to our knowledge—how is it that they are actually

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mentioned in the Qur-an to explain and illustrate its teaching, if the Book itself was not revealed to him from God?

This phenomenon of fire, which is perhaps the best illustration of the continuity of entities when they lose one shape and assume other forms, has been thus beautifully referred to in the Qur-an in elucidation of the subject under discussion. It says: “Does not man see that We have created him from the small life-germ? Then lo! he is an open disputant. And he tries out a likeness for Us and forgets his own creation. Says he: Who will give life to the bones when they are rotten? Say: He will give life to them Who brought them into existence at first, and He is cognizant of all creation. He who had made for you the fire (to burn) from the green tree, so that with it you kindle(fire)” (ch. XXXVI, v. 77-80)

All the illustrations I have as yet taken from the Qur-an refer, no doubt, to things material, and may not perhaps satisfy those who seek proof of the continuity of individual consciousness after death; this being, one may say, ultra-material. Consciousness in the first place shows itself in the animal organism. It becomes individualized in the human frame. One man differs from another, not only in physique and outward appearance, but in his moral, mental, and spiritual attainments. In short, every person possesses a marked and distinctive personality in his passions, moral and the other components of his consciousness; whether he will possess the same at his resurrection, is the question which lies at the root of the whole doctrine of life after death, and that of the Day of Judgement. Individual accountability after death for actions done in this life can scarcely be imagined, if there be not a continuation of the consciousness which inspired those actions. The Qur-an could not give a better illustration in proof of this doctrine than the following, which we find in Sura “Tariq” (ch. lxxvi). “There is not a soul but over it is a keeper. So let man consider of what he is created. He is created of water pouring forth; coming from between the back and the ribs. Most surely He is able to return him (to life), on the day when hidden things shall be made manifest.”

The life-germ, microscopic as it is in its size, is the repository of all the physical, intellectual and moral features of its source. In a word, sperma is the vehicle by which the individual consciousness of the father is carried to his children. It becomes affected when combining with the ovum, and receives a tinge of the mother’s peculiarities. Sometimes the genital seed brings the traits of forefathers from generations far removed, thus proving conclusively that the essential constituent parts of a thing can be epitomized in something microscopic; that leaving their source in a form that is imperceptible, they straightway become the nucleus for yet further development. Death, as I have said before, does not mean annihilation. Death is but the separation of a member of a particular species from he rest of his class, his translation to another and higher state of existence, itself ever progressive onward to the goal. Man has rightly been called “a miniature of the universe.” His heart represents the earth in its shape as well as in its qualities. It contains within itself the essence of the whole earth. As the Qur-an says, “And certainly We created man of an extract of clay” (Ch. XXIII, V. 12).

A new world of passions becomes created in man’s heart called human consciousness; there they must attain to a certain stage of perfection in this life, that is to say, must be sublimated into high morals, philosophy and spiritualities, before leaving this world for further progress in the life to come. In some cases, they reach the required perfection in the human frame, but, in general, their success in only partial and must, for their future development, wait for the inevitable accident in life that is popularly termed death. At death, at the moment of dissolution—something gaseous in form, visible in trance to those alone in whom the spiritual faculties of their nature are developed in an exceptionally high degree, may be observed to rise from the human body, through the head, and ascend heavenward. Herein is contained the whole of the individual consciousness possessed by the dead man in this life. It remains in the ethereal world suspended, with all its faculties for progress preserved, but in abeyance, during that period of waiting which Muslim theology calls Barzakh. It will remain so till the day of Resurrection, when it will take on a new garb for the furtherance of its progress, which is limitless and knows no bounds.

“Certainly We created man in the best make; then We render him the lowest of the low, except those who believe and do good so they shall have reward never to be cut off.” (Ch. XCV, v. 4-6).

Tributes to the Founder cont.

were saved from this dangerous attack which deserved to succeed otherwise. Not only that, but the talisman of Christianity itself was blown away like smoke....

'so, this service rendered by Mirza Sahib will place the coming generations under a debt of gratitude, in that he by joining the front rank of those waging Jihad by the pen discharged their duty to defend Islam. And he has left as his memorial a literature which will last so long as the Muslims have blood running in their veins and the championship of Islam is visible as their national symbol.

'Apart from that, Mirza Sahib performed a very special service of Islam by crushing the poisonous fangs of the Arya Samaj....The writings he produced highlight the claim that they cannot possibly be overlooked however much the defense of Islam may be enlarged in future.

'Natural ability, application and dexterity, and continuous debates (with the opponents of Islam) had lent Mirza Sahib a special splendor. He had vast knowledge, not only of his own religion, but also of other religions. And he used to make use of his vast knowledge with great finesse. His preaching and persuasion had acquired such ability that the person addressed, whatever his ability or his faith, was thrown into deep thought by his spontaneous reply...It cannot be questioned that Mirza Sahib

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Dear brother Munir Umran,

I have been reading the Muslim Journal and its predecessor publications since 1979. An article about the Ahmadiyya Movement by Adib Rashad has appeared in its issue of January 24, 1986, which is studded with misstatements of facts. I am writing the following lines to straighten the record and I hope these will find space in your esteemed weekly.

The statement in the article under reference reading, “for several generations the family of Ahmad held offices of respectability under the British Imperial Government and it was only when the Sikhs became powerful that it fell into a degree of poverty,” is not factually true. It is a matter of common knowledge that the British Government in India had been the successor to the Sikh Government and not vice versa, as the learned author of the article makes us believe. The correct position is that, for several generations, the family of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad held offices of respectability under the Mogul (Muslim) Government in India and when the Sikhs overthrew the Moguls from the Punjab, they persecuted the family of Ahmad for their loyalties to Muslim Mogul Government.

Another statement in that article to which I draw attention reads, “Ahmad claimed to be the Promised Mahdi and Messiah but, needless to say, he was quickly condemned by the Muslim Community(Ummah) as an imposter and heretic.” I do not know what the learned author means by the word Ummah. As for my knowledge of the teachings of Islam goes, the Ummah means all the true followers of the Holy prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be on him, all over the world. It is not fair to call a segment of the muslims of the subcontinent of India “Ummah.” It is highly misleading. If this is Ummah then these so-called Ulema have issued so many Fatwas of Kufra against all the righteous Imams, starting right from Hazrat Ali, Allah be pleased with him, down to the present age and against all sects and schools of thought in Islam that no one be left in the pale of Islam. They even do not recognize the members of the Nation of Islam and its chief Imam W. Deen Muhammad as Muslim. But the righteous Ulema of his time held Hazrat Mirza Ghulam in very high veneration. I just give one quotation from the tributes paid by the Late Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the translator of the Qur-an and a very highly venerated Muslim scholar of Islam who later was the president of the All India Congress party and after independence became the Education Minister of India and, after that, the President of India:

“The passing away of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Sahib Qadiani is not such an event that a lesson should not be learnt from it, nor should one be content with consigning it to the passage of time to efface. Such people who cause a revolution in the religious world, or the world of intellect, do not come into this world often. These sons of history in whom it rightly takes pride are very rarely seen on the world scene, and when they do come they demonstrate to the world a revolution to remember .................., his separation for ever has convinced the educated and enlightened Muslims that one of their very great personages has left them. And with him the mighty defense of Islam against his opponents, which was linked to his person, has come to an end. His peculiarity that he performed against the enemies of Islam the duty of a victorious general, compels us to express openly our feelings that the grand Movement, which for a long time defeated and trod over our enemies, should be continued in the future..............Mirza Sahib appeared in the front line of lovers who for Islam accepted the dedication to sacrifice their time from the cradle, through the springs and autumns, to their graves in fulfilling the pledge of

loyalty to their beautiful beloved(Islam)........" (The Vakeel, Amritsar, May 30, 1908).

The statement about the split in the Ahmadiyya Movement which reads, “After his death, there was a split in the movement between those who accepted Ahmad’s claim, and those who insisted that he was a great reformer of the faith and no more than that.” The true facts are that both the sections of the Ahmadiyya believe in the Founder’s claims of being the Promised Messiah and the Mahdi. The split was caused by the claims of the son of the Founder that his father was a prophet(Nabi) and a non-belief in him as prophet causes one to become a Kafir taking him out of the pale of Islam. These issues have been discussed in details by the late Maulana Muhammad Ali, in his The Ahmadiyya Movement. The statement about Maulana Muhammad Ali, reading “who later rejected his claim to be the Mahdi, and accepted him only as a reformer,” is yet another instance of misstatement of facts. The true fact is that the late Maulana Muhammad Ali believed in the Founder as the Promised Messiah, the Mahdi and the Mujaddid of the fourteenth century Hijrah. The word Mujaddid means the renovator of the faith or the Revisor of the faith. The use of the Reformer of the faith is neither the literal meanings of the term Mujaddid nor its terminological meanings. At best, one may be called a reformer of the muslims but not of Islam, as Islam does not stand in need of any reform in it.

Further comment about the Ahmadiyyah Movement, “a liberalizing influence, seeking to reconcile the teachings of Islam with modern education, and its methods were taken from the techniques and terminologies of christian missionaries,” are completely baseless and mischiefous. The writings and beliefs of the Founder and all

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Scholarly Ahmadis like Maulana Nurud din, Maulana Muhammad Ali, and Khawaja Kamalud din are counted amongst the orthodox muslims by scholarly muslims and even by the orientalists. The Founder and the Ahmadis believe that the teachings of Islam, based on the Qur'an and the Sunnah, are unalterable. Hence, the very talk of any attempt on their part to even try to reconcile these to any other teachings or education is simply nonsense.

The author of the article, when he wrote, "on the other hand Ghulam Ahmad's claim to prophethood demanded an exact denunciation which came from Pakistan in 1974," seems to have presupposed that the Founder of the Ahmadiyyah Movement had claimed to be a prophet. This is factually incorrect. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Sahib, during all his life, denied having laid any claim to prophethood, rather he went on to say, "those who impute a claim to prophethood to me, fabricate a lie against me or they else have ulterior motives. (Hammamatul Bushra)." He always expressed his belief in the Finality of the prophethood of the prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be on him, in these words: "We firmly believe that our Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be on him, is the Khatar an nabiyeen, and no prophet, whether old or new, can appear after him." More recently, in November 1985, the claims ofMirza Sahib have been thrashed in a civil case in the Supreme Court of South Africa; and that court has held that he did not claim to be a prophet (Complete text of theJudgement appeared in the Islamic Review, Oct./Nov./Dec. issue).

It is interesting that the author places the late Syyed Abul Ala Maududi amongst the traditionalists Ulema inspite of the fact that the late Maulana never considered himself amongst them nor did the traditionalists bestow this honor on him during his lifetime. He was not spared even from their Fatwa of Kufur. Since the author of the article is an admirer of the late Maulana Maududi, we refer him to the letter dated the 23rd of Muharram 1357 A.H. written by the late Maulana. He wrote:

"Among the Followers of Mirza Ahmad Sahib I do not include in one category the Qadianis and the Ahmadis (i.e. Maulana Muhammad Ali's Lahore Jamaat). The Qadiani group is in my opinion outside the pale of Islam. But the Ahmadi group must be counted among the followers of Islam."

This letter has been quoted in the Judgement of the Supreme Court of South Africa, referred to above. The same verdict was given in his book Islami Riyasat Ke Bunyadi Aasoal. Evidently, Maulana Maududi considered the Founder of the Ahmadiyyah Movement as a Muslim or else how could he consider the followers of a non-Muslim as Muslims. Similar views have been expressed by Dr. Asrar Ahmad, a well-known religious scholar of Pakistan at page 190 of his book, Tehrik e Jamaat e Islami. He writes, "To call Lahori Ahmadis as Kafirs is not in any way correct."

The statement, "politics manifests itself when one knows that under the Hindu Raj the Ahmadiyyas were treated as Muslims, in fact, they received support from the British, which I am sure added to the resentment towards them," is yet another example of untrue facts. The author himself informed the readers in the beginning of his article that the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement lived from 1835 to 1908 and that the Ahmadiyya Movement was founded in 1889. One wonders what Hindu Raj was in India from 1889 to 1908 which treated the Ahmadiyyas as Muslims? Lie, it is said, has no legs to stand on.

Coming to the oft repeated charge of receiving support from the British, we admit that we received the same support from the British which was being received by all other sects and schools of thought in Islam in India; the same said support which all religious communities in India enjoyed in British India. It is the same support which all religious groups in the USA, including the Nation of Islam, receives today from the Government of the United States of America. This was nothing more than the freedom of professing, practising and propagating one's religion and freedom of expression. These freedoms enabled the Ahmadiyyas to play their historic role of nipping in the bud the dreams of Christian missionaries for converting all Indians to Christianity and the Arya Smajist Hindues dreams of reconverting all the Indian Muslim population to Hinduism through their Shudhi Movement.

The defeat of almost all the leaders of the Jamaat e Islami and almost all its candidates in the recent Elections held under the Government of General Zia ul Haq, a government favorably inclined towards the Jamaat e Islami, speaks volumes about how the people of Pakistan view the Jamaat compared to the author's statement, "The Jamaat e Islami, under the direction of Abul Ala Maududi, became the spear head of a movement to transform Pakistan from a Muslim homeland to an Islamic state." I very much appreciate that you deemed it fit to inform your readers about the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam. It would have been really great if our friend and learned brother Adib Rashad had taken care to straighten his facts before sending his article for publication in your esteemed Journal. Misstatement of the facts is neither fair to the readers nor to the reputation of the Journal itself. I am retaining a copy of this letter. In case the policies of the publishers of the Journal stand in your way in publishing the corrections to the misstatements, which are defamatory in nature, then I will feel morally justified in publishing this letter in the Islamic Review.

With the sincerest regards,

Yours in Islam,
Masud Akhtar
Editor, The Islamic Review

Tributes to the Founder-cont.

had a special ability to make Islam prevail over all other religions...It is not likely that a person of his status will be born in the religious world of Hindustan(now India and Pakistan) who would devote his highest talents like him to the study of religions.

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DEMOCRACY, SOCIALISM AND THE CONSENSUS

By Kh. Naseerud Din

There are certain rules of the game in mutual communication which, though more often than not ignored and even deliberately sidetracked, are a must if any constructive results are aimed at. In the course of a discussion, a mutual exchange of ideas or a controversy, many terms, concepts and expressions are employed in common. It frequently happens, however, that these common terms, concepts and expressions bear different connotations and implications for each participant. For example, the term democracy signifies adult suffrage for the protagonist of representative government or as he claims, the government of the people, for the socialist it very often means the power of the vote exercised by the members of the dominant group, wielding power; for the Muslim it signifies the freedom of criticism and the full play of the conscience of the Umma.

How then is this tangle to be resolved? If the various contenders in a discussion agree on definitions, much of the confusion, the mutual recriminations and vituperation and the eventual disillusionment would be avoided.

Democracy is a Greek word composed of Demos and Cracy, meaning government of the people. This only amounts to saying that it is a government which aims at being popular among the people on the strength of its policies as such which have been approved and confirmed by the representatives of the people. This analytical description, while doing full justice to the sense of the term democracy, leaves ample room for all points of view however divergent and contradictory. To declare democracy synonymous with adult suffrage would be to block a pragmatic and empirical approach to the question of popular and representative government. All that can be said is that the sponsors of democracy who advocate laissez-faire in the socio-economic sphere, regard adult suffrage as indispensable for bringing it about. Further the socialist democrats while accepting representative government restrict the power of the vote to the members of a party which has pledged itself to pursue and implement the objectives of Marxist Leninism, Trotskyism, or any other socialist school of thought in a particular country or political organization.

The Muslim democrat also accepts representative Government. But the responsibility of running a government and ordering a society is not only to the people concerned but to God, according to the moral order ordained through the Messenger of God, the Holy Prophet Muhammad.

The issue is now parently clear which of the ideologies mentioned above have offered the most effective, the most practical and the most moral solution of the fundamental problems of representative and responsible government?

We shall deal with present day democracy first. The essence of democracy existed even in pre-historic tribal society. Every member of the tribe had the privilege of sharing the councils of the tribe and no decision could be made without popular approval. The head of the tribe held office only so long as he preserved the social and economic unity and integrity of the tribe. But this system, however efficient and popular, had to give way to ideas which suited much larger societies, needing more elaborate and organized measures to keep their cohesion. When at last we come to the Greek era in human history, the seed of the concept of democracy as envisaged by the modern world had already been sown. The rules for the selection of public representatives by election were laid down. This, in turn, gave birth to the idea of adult suffrage. But the vote was only confined to the ruler in the Greek city-state and three fourths of the population, who were slaves, did not have any voice in running the government.

It was only in comparatively modern times that adult suffrage was introduced in the United States of America, France, and the United Kingdom and some other European countries. But man's control over nature, the ever-expanding world of science and technology, far outstripped his old-world ideas of democracy and adult suffrage. Power in all spheres of human activity, including the political, passed to the owners of capital, the technocrats and the managers of industry. The masses were like autumn leaves before the winds of change in the industrial world, drifting from job to job—economically insecure and politically abject. The greater and most important part of the means of production and exchange of commodities in a laissez-faire economy, i.e., capitalistic democracy, belongs to a numerically small class of persons, while the overwhelming majority of the population has no other means of existence than the sale of their labor-power to the small group of property owners. In this way, the people who are supposed to be sovereign politically through adult suffrage, by their labor create the income of the upper class in society, the factory owners, bankers and landlords. Competition, between individual capitalists and between international groups on the world market, makes it more and more difficult for capitalism to get rid of the goods produced in ever-growing quantities.

The inevitable effect of the growth of productive forces in capitalist society is over-production leading to periodical crisis and widespread misery and unemployment.

The capitalist had created something whose development he cannot control and the whole system of capitalist production in free

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enterprise is in its very nature planless and anarchic, an anarchy rendered all the deeper and more painful since the consuming capacity of the market can never expand enough to meet the growth in production. It becomes clear to millions of desperate and hungry voters that the perfection of technique, the conquest of the air, the almost miraculous perfection of communication, the increase in the productivity of human labor, are there apparently in mocking contrast to the poverty and helplessness of the majority of the voters. The great gap between those who have and those who have not, the mad waste of human talent, creativeness and energy, the awful insecurity of life, have never more been in evidence than in a capitalistic democracy.

Let us now proceed to examine the views of the most important economists and political philosophers of the West on democracy from Socrates down to Bernard Shaw, there being no better means of assessing the worth and practicability of an ideology than the opinions of those very persons who represent it. It is indeed very relevant for us that most western thinkers have misgivings about the efficacy of capitalistic and laissez-faire democracy in its technique for the selection of representatives and for the making of laws.

Socrates, one of the wisest and best men who ever lived, has evinced his apprehensions about the rule of the mob. In fact his exit from this world, having been forced to end his life by quaffing hemlock on the consistent clamour of the mob, is a standing example of its hysteria and mindlessness. Plato, the ablest disciple of Socrates and one of the greatest political philosophers and in his own right the high-priest of democracy, is sceptical about spending on the gullible mob for running an enlightened society. Later philosophers from Voltaire down to the present age of Shaw have rejected adult suffrage and of course democracy in no uncertain terms.

According to them, democracy puts mediocrity into power and turns itself into a procession of short-lived demagogues. Men of worth are clothed to enter the lists where they must be judged and rated by their inferiors. Mob rule is a rough sea for the ship of state to ride; every wind of cheap oratory stirs up the water and deflects the course. The upshot of democracy is tyranny or autocracy; the crowd so loves flattery, it is so hungry for honey that at last the wildest and the most unscrupulous of flatters, the self-styled protector and liberator, rises to power. People at last prefer tyranny to chaos.

Democracy, which means the absurdity of seeking equality between unequals and the judgement of superiors by inferiors, has only promoted and fostered exploitation by vested interests so that wealth is considered to be of more account than ability. The whole state becomes avaricious and immoral as the consequence of what social psychologists call 'prestige imitation.' Marxism or Socialism has effectively dealt the coup de grace to capitalistic democracy by an analytical approach which still holds the field in political controversy. The philosophers of yore and of today have not gone one step further from the philosophering of Plato and Shaw's King Magnus. The latter has struck an amusing parable, quite in Biblical style, by parodying democratic elections as a crowd of people assembled to see a balloon going up, while their pockets are being picked during their absorption in the tamasha. Anybody with a grain of sense must believe that adult suffrage is not the recipe of a master-physician meant to cure a patient but a formula which has been found wanting in all spheres of human activity and, therefore, more likely to kill the patient.

What other proofs against capitalistic democracy could be more convincing than the eventual transformation of laissez-faire governments into socialist states in our time. Furthermore, a capitalistic democracy of the American pattern, the so-called American way of life, has done more damage than all the wars in history. The barbaric destruction of humanity in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the liquidation of millions of human beings in Korea and Indo China, the emergence of the puppet state of Israel, etc., all manifestations of the power wielded by a supposedly enlightened and ultra-modern democracy, thoroughly representative of the people and elected on the basis of adult suffrage.

Moreover in a world in which democracies have assumed the garb of militant nationalism, which in its turn is the outcome of political and economic rivalries culminating in two world-shaking and world-destroying wars among the denizens of adult suffrage and believers in the sovereignty of the people, to talk of the blessings of the democratic system would be a mockery and a sham. The ideal democratic state, in which even postmasters are elected and a land flowing with milk and honey, twenty per cent of the masses live in dire poverty, segregated and ostracised by a so-called civilized society, has badly shaken the faith of emergent and yet developing nations of the East in this panacea of the West. For them, the paramount necessity is not adult suffrage but food, clothing and shelter for the poverty stricken masses.

In Pakistan, it is not at all necessary to have illusions about the miracles democracy and, of course, adult suffrage are going to work in our decadent socio-economic set up.

We should now attempt to discuss the alternative offered by those who feel that the only way out is the Marxian solution, namely, the control of the means of production and distribution through the expropriation of the bourgeoisie by the proletariat.

The protagonists of Islamic Socialism, therefore, claim that they are the vanguard of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie, the industrialists, business tycoons, landlords, financiers, etc. Let us therefore, probe into their credentials, hoping and praying that they may take us to the promised land. Before we agree to award the adjective of 'Islamic' to socialism, we should make an attempt to understand what it actually means and represents.

Socialism may be defined as an ideology which aims at the establishment of the Government of the proletariat by snatching control of the means of production and
distribution. To socialists, all history, past and present, are but the manifestation of the principle of dialectical materialism involved in this unceasing revolt of the proletariat. This is, in fact, Hegelianism applied to material life. All creation, according to them, is a conflict or struggle which ends in synthesis. All causation, therefore, can be explained away by the inherent contradictions which develop in every phenomenon in nature. The Idealism of Hegel is, therefore, superseded by Materialistic Realism. The mode of production is the most potent factor in human society. Religion, morality, politics and human knowledge are all derived from it. Ideas and Religions are nothing but the material world reflected by the human mind.

Social, political intellectual and religious life is conditioned by this mode of production. Social changes, political revolutions and religious movements are not due to any increasing insight into eternal truth and justice or to any revealed messages to Prophets but their causes must be sought in the economics of the epoch concerned. God, religion or social and ethical ideas are subservient to and products of the material and economic conditions prevailing in the epoch concerned. Religion and God are but figments of the imagination and a legacy of superstitions prevalent in pre-historic times. Engels, the collaborator of Karl Marx and an equally authentic theoretician of socialism, says: “When society (represented of course by the proletariat) has taken over all the means of production and man will not only possess but will also dispose (in other words, becomes God), then will the last extraneous force which is still reflected in religion vanish, and with it will vanish the religious reflection itself, for the simple reason that there will be nothing to reflect.”

Illustrations galore from the writings, pronouncements and acts of the socialists are to hand to substantiate my view of Socialism’s hostility to religion and God. Wilfully shutting one’s eyes to the basic ingredients of Socialist ideology and to keep on this blather about Islamic Socialism, could only be characterized as deliberate mischief. It comes from ignorance of both Islam and Socialism. It is born of unbelief and immorality. It is the child of social and moral anarchy and lack of education and upbringing. We might as well talk of Islamic Hinduism, or Islamic Christianity or even Hindu Islam and Christian Islam. The eagerness among our politicians to offer the bait of Islamic Socialism to the Umma comes from the most unscrupulous motives, which can only be described as attempts to run with the hare and hunt with the hounds.

As the propaganda of Islamic Socialism is bound to mislead and deceive the masses posing as it does a menace to their belief in Islam and the Qur’an, it is our bounden duty as Muslims to clarify the issues involved; to tell them what the Qur’an has to say about it, to help them to see the trickery and subterfuge inherent in this propaganda, meant ostensibly for Islamic ideology but actually designed to mutilate and destroy it.

How dare they couple the name of Islam with an anti-religious ideology for which the name of God is anathema?

These self-styled supporters of Islamic ideology have now taken refuge in the Socialism of the British pattern as an answer to the daily mounting opposition to their propaganda of Islamic Socialism. They seem to forget or presumably have never known, that social legislation in England was primarily motivated and enthused by the humanitarian, religious and evangelistic movements of the latter half of the nineteenth century. When this liberalism, which religion had activated, dovetailed with Fabian socialism, the religious aspect of the socio-economic revolution was lost sight of John Ruskin, Carlyle, Robert Owen, James Fy, Wilberforce and James Booth, the leaders of the religious and humanitarian movement in Great Britain, would have turned in their graves at the wave of Godlessness which swept the country as soon as socialism took hold. If some political adventurer also propose to destroy Islam in similar fashion, let them beware that they are digging their own graves. They shall not be permitted to repeat the performance of the British socialists in appropriating the victories of religion and morality for their own nefarious ends. Thus it is crystal clear that this propaganda for Islamic Socialism is a veiled attempt, may a conspiracy, to dismantle the fabric of the Islamic faith.

Reverting to socialism as a means of eliciting the views and wishes of the masses, it cannot be denied by its sponsors that the salient idea of their ideology is the struggle of the proletariat to displace the bourgeoisie by any methods—violent or immoral—to snatch the means of production by expropriating and liquidating them. The conduct of socialist governments ever since their inception is glaring proof of their opportunism, immorality and callousness to human life, their shift of policy at home and abroad on the national and international level, having exposed them as being capitalistic and imperialistic states on their own ground. Dialectical materialism has failed to produce popular government, reflecting the loyalty and contentment of the masses but has only added to the number of the giants among the powers whose only aim is to fight among themselves to the detriment of peace and prosperity of mankind. Islam refuses to be a fellow-traveller to exploitation and imperialism in a socialist garb, nor can it subscribe to the conception of a popular or democratic government as envisaged by socialism in theory and practice. It cannot permit the hegemony of a party which should assume the role of arbiters of the destiny of the rest of the people. It looks upon with abhorrence at the violent and immoral means employed to bring about a socialist revolution and the immoral, inhuman and genocidal policies pursued by socialist governments when they have eventually liquidated the bourgeoisie and set up states to teach socialism to their own masses and to the rest of the world. The question of all questions is not that a few pseudo-intellectuals, self-seekers, fellow travellers and atheists are determined to introduce socialism, which they glibly call

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Islamic Socialism. The question is how the masses, who are Muslims to a man, are to be saved from the insidious propaganda which aims at destroying the roots of their faith in the name of faith, their cherished beliefs in the name of those very beliefs, their Tawhid in the name of Tawhid and their unity and integrity as an Umma in the name of the Umma.

Having now examined on merits, the claims of Democracy and Socialism vis-a-vis responsible and representative government, we shall go on to indicate briefly the Islamic view of the government of the people.

In another chapter of this book I have endeavored to describe in some detail the significance of Ijma or the consensus. The consensus is synonymous with democracy in Islam. It is not confined to the framing of a legal code but pervades the gamut of man’s life on earth. It covers all social, economic and political aspects of society.

The question which is generally asked, however, is: how is the principle of Ijma to be applied to the administrative and legislative mechanism of representative government? In the history of politics, the idea of panels for selection of public representatives has been seriously mooted and even implemented on many an occasion. The Islamic concept of consensus is analogous to a panel of men of wisdom and faith who are entrusted with the task of nominating suitable representatives of the people. The panel of Islam will, therefore, probe into the credentials of each candidate for election and approve and direct the nomination of candidates of the basis of their faith, their knowledge of the Qur’an and Sunnah, their grounding in modern ideas and movements, their character, their freedom from vice and immorality, their previous record of public service and their efforts for the public weal, their honesty and integrity, the standard of their education, etc.

These panels or Ijma committees can be multiplied at all levels of society among laborers, office workers, professionals like doctors, engineers, etc. They must procure the main evidence and data for the panels appointed for nomination of public representatives to enable them to make their decisions. The mechanism of the system of Ijma may eventually evolve into a very elaborate and well-organized institution, because it will have to cater to a teeming population which is becoming increasingly sensitive to the inequalities, the anomalies, and contradictions of the socio-economic pattern of our society. They are also sensitive to the unrelenting propaganda of socialism, especially socialism masquerading as Islam. Unless we communicate with them and identify ourselves with their problems without further delay, the pace of events in this small world—a world of supersonic travel and electronic communication, will liquidate all our values, all our culture and all our solidarity. Whether adult suffrage can be guided and controlled by Ijma are questions for us to decide after due deliberation, consultation and study. We may not have much respite to deal with these problems, but if we lose no time initiating the first steps towards implementing the ideology of Islam in our political life, we must, God willing, eventually reach the frontiers of the Islamic society that we aspire to live and die for.

As far as possible we have discussed the representative aspects of Democracy, Socialism and Consensus on the political level in a short compass. It is self-evident that in so far as the projection of the public viewpoint which in Islam may be described as the conscience of the Umma, the recipe offered by Islam is neither retrograde nor impracticable. The Islamic stand point is, as in the case of Democracy and Socialism, designed to select the most suitably qualified representatives to translate the Islamic polity into action. This objective is binding on us as Muslims, as we fervently believe in their eternal truth, efficacy and suitability and are irrevocably committed to apply them and act on them in all spheres of human activity. In Islam, the demarcation of the spiritual and temporal, the religious and the secular is unthinkable. We must, therefore, adhere to the basic concept of polity, namely the Ijma and recognize it as the alpha and the omega of our political programs and once for all eschew alien ways of thought which, as we have seen, have only served to aggravate racial, economic and political conflicts and have signalized failed to better the human condition.

It is now almost a decade that a controversy has been raging about Islamic Socialism as the panacea of all our socio-economic ills. In all such controversies, both the winner and the loser are indistinguishable. The loser, if any, even though vanquished, can argue till eternity. The question, however, is: Has so much polemics, point counter point, intellectual brain waves, etc., gone for any clarity about the issues involved and only adjudication about them?

Comparative studies of Islam and Socialism are not lacking but it is hardly likely if the combatants know about them or cared to give them a perusal. The generation of so much heat on Islamic Socialism has only served to make confusion worse confounded, obviously to the detriment of the younger generation and the older literate laymen: the latter products of Macaulay’s system of education and the former helpless victims of conflicting ideas about the reorientation in educational method which is still in embryo and, therefore, devoid of any agreed modus operandi. The casualty is our Islamic solidarity and nobody knows what such disruptive tendencies will bring in their train.

The founding of a stable or forward-looking society, morally, socially, economically and politically aware of its goals, seems to be as remote as the stars.

For the angry young man to wade through militant and mutually exclusive ideas, ideologies and religions and reach a haven of relief and belief has become so impossible of attainment that he has given it up as a bad job. Ill-equipped that he is to understand the implications of a way of life as laid down in the Qur’an, he is lacking in a dependable criterion for assessing the reason, the authority, the logic behind diametrically opposed ideas and tenets that he is confronted with. On the other hand, he is intellectually well-armed for the
comprehension of Das Kapital and what it stands for. He is what you have made him: nurtured in Christian institutions and educated in our colleges, none of which cater to his spiritual needs, he is the product of a society which lauds Western ways of life and thought to the skies while paying lip service to the Qur’-an. He is acutely conscious of glaring but inexplicable anomalies around him; he observes the most fervent devotion to religious formalities, coexisting with the most ruthless and immoral pursuit of wealth among those whom he is supposed to emulate.

Is it not an irony that he should be swept off his feet by a philosophy of hate as envisaged by Socialism and be at the same time completely oblivious to the message of the Qur’-an which is replete with ideas and injunctions for a just and peaceful socio-economic order? While Marx, unversed by the inexorable advance of Industrialism, could only discover a solution which had its mainsprings in violent revolution and a perpetual state of war between the haves and have nots, the Qur’-an ushered in a bloodless upheaval in ideas by advocating a moral basis of thinking and planning in human affairs. If ends and means matter in civilized societies, then the philosophy of socialism stands self-condemned in attempting to achieve economic justice through blood and tears. If the ultimate touchstone of human behavior is moral in nature, then any ideology which envisages eternal conflict among human beings, denies this fundamental truth and endeavors to encompass economic justice through immoral means. It is self-evident too that the theorists of Socialism aim primarily, even exclusively, at leveling economic disparity and ignore the gamut of man’s instinctive and teleological urges which have built up culture and civilization through the ages. Only through the regimentation of human beings in the aggregate in which individuals have no place can economic equality, regarded as coextensive with human happiness and welfare, be attained. This for them is the be-all and end-all of existence.

The Qur’-an, on the other hand, presents an all-embracing picture of the human condition and offers a solution which is comprehensive and all-inclusive. Its inner and non-mundane approach to the needs of humanity is in glaring contrast to the socialist approach which is brazenly materialistic and confined entirely to the economic aspect of life. Islam recognizes the primordial instincts and their later development into more complex forms of human conduct which it aims to discipline and regulate on the personal, individual and social level. Its view of economic activity is non-materialistic and non-tyrannical. It is awarded its due place but it is not permitted to cloud higher issues and disturb the basically ethical complexion of its doctrine.

Accumulation of wealth is derided emphatically; all the elements of a welfare society are present in its scheme of things and the aims and objects of life on earth are clearly defined, so that there is no ambiguity in fundamentals. Time and again, the Qur’-an insists on the sanctity of the individual with his desires and aspirations and gives him the fullest freedom of thought and action. It denies categorically the efficacy of worldly, materialistic and immoral motives in bringing about constructive and ethical objectives in human society because evil begets evil. A person’s conduct shall be judged by his motives, intentions and God consciousness (Taqwa) and not by the consequences thereof. Taqwa is the highest good, the pre-eminent virtue. It epitomises the immediate and the ultimate good in all its forms and manifestations and is the antithesis of evil in the concrete and the abstract. The concept of Satan as the embodiment of evil is the symbol of disruption, immorality and confused thinking.

In Socialism, man is like a waif thrown to the mercy of any ill wind that blows. His indentity is submerged in the class struggle, as he is only an instrument of the attainment of the aims and objects of dialectical materialism by any means available or conceivable.

No moral law is observed in this wilderness of clash and conflict, hate and bitterness. The juggernaut of Socialism is its progress towards the ideal, the ultimate goal of anarchy, tramples upon and destroys everything in its wake.

The Qur’-an has given economic justice its pride of place in the hierarchy of Islamic virtues in as much as expending generously for the good of society and keeping economic activity alive and money in circulation has the highest priority. Not only shall the state incur expenditure for the common good but shall impose any tax for encompassing economic justice. The economic structure of Islam starts from below, from the individual and not from above, from the State. It is the individual who will set the pace and the powers that he shall translate his wishes into collective action to achieve its economic and social objectives.

After all society means individuals in the aggregate and its moral tone will depend on the attitude and conduct of each single person comprising it. This basic, moral and inner approach of Islam is the sheet anchor of its philosophy and its system of belief, in contradiction with Socialist thought and doctrine, the sole aim of which is to achieve economic equality by depriving the individual of all freedom of action and thought and harnessing him like a galley-slave to the ship of state which alone shall dictate as to how he is to live, think and act. The concepts of life and liberty as understood in civilized societies since the dawn of history have lost their meaning in the dictionary of Socialism. They connoted only the subservience of the individual to the State which is the arbiter of virtue and vice, freedom and slavery, socio-economic justice, education, art, literature, science, religion and what not.

This implies assumption of unrestricted and unbridled power by the State with the sole aim of bringing about economic equality to the exclusion of all other aims and aspirations of human beings, except in so far as they can be instrumental in establishing the regime of the proletariat. Inevitably, therefore, all creative human activity in literature, art and science is controlled and directed by the State. This invasion of

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find it at all incumbent on them to couple a political term like Socialism with the fair name of Islam? Is it a manifestation of the inferiority complex or sheer loyalty to Socialism as a political philosophy? One thing at least is crystal clear: their total ignorance of the spirit and principles of our faith. They have not taken any pains to know Islam. Perhaps our mutually warring and wrangling sects by well known and well revered personalities are a damper on any genuine effort to study and examine Islam and what it stands for. Late or soon, we shall have to highlight the deeply universal and humanistic character of our faith by pondering over its basic elements with renewed and reoriented minds, not hidebound and fettered by sectarian points of view. We are tired of hostile schools of thought and aggressive systems of theology. They are only an inescapable phase in our spiritual cum-intellectual evolution as Muslims. We must eschew viewpoints which go for disruption and disintegration. The need of the hour is to make a positive approach for the vindication, reinterpretation, and reconstruction of Islamic doctrine and thought by laying the main emphasis of their universal, all-embracing and humanistic character in all spheres of life and thought, such as social equality, economic justice, liberty of the individual, elasticity and freedom in thinking and reasoning and above all an open-minded attitude to all ideas and ideologies, old or new. But this stupendous task necessitates the closest cooperation and teamwork between the powers that be and sensitive and thoughtful Muslims—a pooling of resources—intellectual, financial, educational, etc., designed to encompass the paramount aim of all aims, namely to vivify, renew and reconstruct truths and realities which lie hidden under biased and sectional ways of thought and action.

When every politician, irrespective of party or class, claims a loyalty to the Islamic Ideology, it raises questions in the minds of good Muslims. What, if they are to be believed, is the cause of this exhibition of fire and fury, particularly when they are all set on the same errand, viz., the implementation of Islamic Ideology in Pakistan?

Is it because they have their own respective interpretation of what it is or is it only an election slogan designed to bamboozle and exploit the average Muslim? many, at least as knowledgeable and devout as the political leaders, have an unshaken faith in the Qur’an and know that the injunctions of the Holy Book are quite clear as regards polity and Government. They have natural misgivings about the credentials and designs of these self-appointed expounders of the tenets of the faith.

It is a great pity that superficial and erroneous interpretations are publicized by the Press with such impact that the layman fails to see any tangible viewpoint which he can reconcile with his own personal and individual conception of faith. Just as western civilization believes fervently in Hellenism as the founder-on-head of all their thinking in political matters, the most illiterate Muslim’s fervor for the ideal Islamic State established by the Holy Prophet permeates his entire personality and is an integral part of his faith. However ignorant he may be, he is poignantly aware of the glaring contradictions between our socio-economic order and the way of life of our politicians and rulers and the simple and selfless personalities who set up the most humane and the most effective political and social organization for the betterment of man.

Whatever his shortcomings in modern knowledge and his lack of education, he has heard of kind, humble and unworldly spirits:

And the servants of Allah (the most merciful) are:
Those who walk upon the earth with humility and when the ignorant address them, they say: "peace"; (258)

Those who spend in the times of prosperity and in the times of trouble, And who suppress their anger, And who overlook the faults of men For God loves the doers of good. (61:33)

The arrogance and pugnacity of our political leaders are a sad commentary on their profession and advocacy of Islam and the Qur’an. Their conduct

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and behavior in everyday life, their lust for power, their parochial and sectarian mentality, their immoral and worldly attitudes, are a standing negation of their promises to the electorate which has subsided into an apathy and indifference and passive obedience—a manifestation of their kindliness, faith and a strong feeling of solidarity.

The Ideal political set up of Islam and God-conscious and Qur'-oriented personalities in politics and government are in evidence throughout the course of our history and not only during the Holy Prophet's lifetime and under the rightly-guided Caliphs. Edward Gibbon, one of the greatest historians who ever lived and no friend of Islam, describes in his inimitable style an incident of Malik Shah, the successor of Alp Arslan: 'It would not be easy to extract a sentiment more pure and magnanimous than is contained in a saying of the Turkish prince. On the eve of the battle, he performed his devotions at Tus before the tomb of the Imam Rada. As the Sultan rose from the ground, he asked his Wazir Nizam-ul-Mulk, who had knelt beside him, what had been the object of his secret petition. 'That your arms may be crowned with victory,' was the prudent and most probably the sincere answer of the minister. 'For my part,' replied the generous Malik Shah, 'I implored the Lord of Hosts that he would take from me my life and crown, if my brother be more worthy than myself to reign over the Muslims.' The favorable judgement of Heaven was ratified by the Caliph, and for the first time the sacred title of the Commander of the Faithful was communicated to a barbarian. But this barbarian, by his personal merit and the extent of his empire, was the greatest prince of his age.'

The number of politicians and rulers who, out of devotion to the faith, to the Qur'-an and Sunna, held aloft the Islamic Ideology, can be counted in thousands in various countries, climates and races on the earth. Deviations from and contraventions of an immaculately Islamic standard are but natural, but our record in humaneness, in justice, in toleration, in a moral, social and economic order is incomparable and unique in world history. Our savants and sufis, who were the politicians of those days, played significant and decisive roles in making far-reaching impacts on the governments of those days and even served as statesmen, rulers, judges and administrators, living simple and unostentatious lives, entirely oblivious to filthy lucre and worldly gain and the lust for power and prestige.

The Qur'-an after declaring that power in this world is a gift from God:

'Say: 'O God! Master of the kingdom, Thou givest the kingdom to whom Thou pleasest, And Thou snatchest the kingdom from whom Thou pleasest; And Thou exhaltest whom Thou pleasest, And Thou abasest whom Thou pleasest.'

Surely God commands you to pay back the trust to their owners; And that when you judge amongst men You judge with equity; (4 : 58)

places an unqualified obligation, in a categorical statement on the community and the government of the day, etc. As already stated, the Holy Prophet himself has explained his verse by pointing out that it signifies the responsibility of wielding power in the land. Nobody should be placed in the position of a politician (politics is defined as the means for the ideal socio-economic organization), a ruler, an administrator, or a judge, etc., unless he is competent to do so in the Qur'anic perspective about which there is no ambiguity as to what it constitutes.

The qualities and abilities that the politician who aims at running the country for the betterment of fellow human beings must possess, are described in graphic detail in the Holy Book. Even the fate of those who having been granted power and did not discharge it honestly is pointedly mentioned in these verses:

And when he turns back, He strives in the land in order to cause disorder therein, And to destroy tilth and offspring; And God loves not disorder.

And when it is said to him, 'Reverence God' His pride carries him on to sin, Then sufficient to him is hell, And surely an evil cradle is that. (2 : 205-206)

'The word 'tilth' is used metaphorically implying the deterioration of economic conditions, apparent in unemployment, disparity in wealth, etc. How prophetic these verses are now in relation to the state of affairs in our midst!

In the world of politics, the chances of getting imbecile leaders who have not the ghost of an idea of the Qur'-an and its explicit and mandatory injunctions for the wielders of power, under an elective system could be considerably reduced by applying to politicians a few of those tests for moral, intellectual and physical fitness which we apply to the candidates for almost every kind of job, including the highest services. Obviously, if we have the wisdom to do anything about it, we must include a working knowledge of the Holy Qur'-an and a fairly good grounding in Pakistan Ideology, as pre-qualifications to nomination for election. How careful we are to employ suitable persons for the most menial jobs. And yet, where the destiny of a whole people and the future of the Islamic way of life is concerned we do not hesitate to entrust the direction of affairs to men of doubtful antecedents, to men so old and infirm that they cannot do their work or even understand what it is about, to men without ability or without even education or the haziest idea of the Qur'-an and what it stands for!

In practically every other sphere of activity we have accepted the principle that nobody may be admitted to hold a responsible position (except of course the custom of hereditary succession in business and industry where even a lunatic can succeed to vast wealth), unless he can pass an examination, show a clean bill of health and produce satisfactorily testimonials as to his moral character. And even then the office is given, in most cases, only on the condition that its holder shall relinquish it as he reaches the threshold of old age. By applying these...
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MUHAMMAD THE GREATEST MAN OF HISTORY

"If greatness of purpose, smallness of means, and astounding results are the three criteria of human genius, who could dare to compare any great man in modern history with Muhammad? . . . Philosopher, orator, apostle, legislator, warrior, conqueror of ideas, restorer of rational dogmas, of a cult without images; the founder of twenty terrestrial empires and of one spiritual empire, that is Muhammad. As regards all standards by which human greatness may be measured, we may well ask: Is there any man greater than he?"

—Alphonse de Lamartine in Histoire de la Turquie

QUR’AN, THE GREATEST SPIRITUAL FORCE

"It is the one miracle claimed by Muhammad—his standing miracle, he called it—and a miracle it is."

—Bosworth Smith

"Never has a people been led more rapidly to civilization, such as it was, than were the Arabs through Islam . . . And to it was also indirectly due the marvelous development of all branches of science in the Moslem world."

—New Researches by H. Hirschfeld

"Here, therefore, its merits as a literary production should, perhaps, not be measured by some preconceived maxims of subjective and aesthetic taste, but by the effects which it produced in Muhammad’s contemporaries and fellow-countrymen. If it spoke so powerfully and convincingly to the hearts of his hearers as to weld hitherto centrifugal and antagonistic elements into one compact and well organized body, animated by ideas far beyond those which had until now ruled the Arabian mind, then its eloquence was perfect, simply because it created a civilized nation out of savage tribes, and shot a fresh woof into the old warp of history."

—Dr. Steingass, Hughes' Dictionary of Islam

THE BEAUTIFUL CHARACTERISTICS OF ISLAM

"I have always held the religion of Muhammad in high estimation because of its wonderful vitality. It is the only religion which appears to me to possess that assimilating capacity to the changing phases of existence which can make itself appeal to every age. I have studied him—the wonderful man—and in my opinion far from being an anti-Christ, he must be called the Saviour of Humanity. I believe that if a man like him were to assume the Dictatorship of the modern world, he would succeed in solving its problems in a way that would bring it the much needed peace and happiness. I have prophesied about the faith of Muhammad that it would be acceptable to the Europe of tomorrow as it is beginning to be acceptable to the Europe of today."

—George Bernard Shaw