ISLAM, DEMOCRACY AND SOCIALISM

By Dr. Ahmed Giamil Mazzara Korol-Ghlu

The European Press, which is little qualified to treat Islamic matters, perpetually affirms that democracy is not an exportable product, and infers that Islam cannot adapt itself thereto.

Islam is the Supreme Democratic Religion

The verses of the Holy Quran, the laws laid down by the Holy Prophet, and the doctrines sanctioned by eminent Muslim religious luminaries, confute truth of this affirmation. Numerous other factors which are of importance in the history of humanity indicate also that the religion revealed to the Holy prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) has taught the loftiest principles of brotherhood and equality, thus becoming the religion of democracy.

One cannot deny the priority of Islam as a herald of democracy; for it was here well-known eleven centuries before the idea became familiar in Europe. One has only to remember the fact that democratic principles were born in Europe as a result of the French Revolution of 1789, when the rights of man were proclaimed.

Islam silently laid the foundations of democracy, without propaganda, violent demonstrations or disturbances, among the Arab people, and without bloodshed, in contrast to Europe, where even the most elementary principles of equality only spread after atrocious class-struggles during three centuries of political servitude.

The Romans themselves founded their empire through violence and reduced the conquered peoples to slavery. As compared to this, the Muslims treated other races differently. They guaranteed religious freedom to the inhabitants of the conquered territories, and also the integrity of their property and they treated them on an equal footing with regard to both rights and duties.

In this regard, it is but right to contrast two aspects of life among Greeks and Arabs in pre-Islamic days, so that the extent and value of the success achieved by the spread and acceptance of Islam can be appreciated.

Ancient Greece, on account of her geographical situation and the character of her inhabitants, lent herself to the development of the democratic conception. The Arabs, on the other hand, did not,
like the Greeks, live in towns, where it is possible for democratic ideas to arise and develop. They lived in tents and were divided into tribes, where interests were opposed and struggles perpetual.

Such an environment was hardly ideal for the triumph of democracy, and yet Islam adapted the Arabs to that social system. The success of Islam is not due to compromise with the people, or the fact that people became better disposed towards assimilating the ideas of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), who, proclaiming Islam as the natural religion for mankind desirous of perfection, inspired men to form a new society, and to desire a new life based on brotherhood and equality, the two natural and logical characteristics of democracy.

Islam is not limited to theoretical teachings; it pays attention to the practical education of the faithful, so that they may become participants of democratic principles.

One finds confirmation of this fact in numerous episodes of Arab life which reveal the democratic spirit of the new nation. One may mention that an Arab who came before the Caliph 'Umar Ibn al-Khattab, and boldly declared before the crowd: "I swear that if thou commitest errors, we shall not hesitate to punish thee with our swords." To these frank words 'Umar replied: "I thank God that there may be found among the Muslims the one to correct 'Umar's errors with a sword."

I have stated that the principles of a democratic form of government are to be found in the Holy Quran and the Hadith of the Holy Prophet. An explicit proclamation of the parliamentary system of government is found in these two verses of the Holy Book: "Advise them of that which they are to do" (42:38), and "Let them take counsel about matters of public interest" (3:159).

Islam was destined to conform to the dictate of the basic rules of the democratic State, leaving to those who were responsible to the people the liberty of fixing the details and procedure of their government.

The consultative system was scrupulously observed during the early years of Islam, and the Caliph 'Umar (d.644 C.E.), although convinced of the need of the Muslims to fight Persia, did not, however, wish to act as a despot, and first consulted his people. The history of this occurrence tells us that the people requested 'Umar himself to lead his troops, while the nobles suggested Saad Ibn Abi Waqqas. 'Umar followed the reasonable course. One sees that Islam laid down the bases of the consultative system, which the Caliphs Abu Bakr and 'Umar rigidly applied. When the Umayyads came into contact with the Persians and others, they repudiated this system on seeing how the governments of those countries treated their peoples.

Had the Umayyads not acted as despot, the Abbasid propaganda would not have succeeded in defeating and over-throwing them.

When the Arabs, led by 'Amr Ibn al-Aas, commenced the Egyptian campaign, the governor of that country sought information about the enemy forces. His messenger, who had witnessed 'Amr sitting in the midst of his soldiers and eating among them, described to the governor this scene, as a living and pulsating document of the democratic spirit which animated the Arabs, and he added, "It is impossible to conquer an army in which the leaders and the soldiers were on a footing of genuine equality".

The Westerners of today boast about their great men who rise from the masses. Islam can also show that the architects of her grandeur came from the masses. Equality before the law, with no distinctions between the poor and the rich, the strong and the weak, the great and the small, equality before justice equality in the distribution of public offices - the early history of Islam, and even that of the later period when the momentum had weakened, being full of how men of humble origin were able to attain to the highest positions, fiscal equality (nobody was harassed by taxes unless as a result of measures of a general nature). Equality, in one word, was as much for rights as for obligations.

The Democratic Justice of Islam

The social polity of Islam was able to attain perfect political and civil equality, but did not promise economic equality and division of riches, since being a religion it conformed to the demands of
human nature; for is it possible even to realize economic equality when men differ physically and intellectually? Natural laws do not permit of economic equality. The equality permissible in this field cannot be other than that of misery and poverty. Islam considers absolute economic equality an ideal impossible of realisation, but has always lessened the severity of natural laws by the imposition of a compulsory Wealth Tax called the zakat, which Islam believes, if rationally applied, will lead to the solution of the unequal distribution of wealth which gnaws at the consciences of the great European sociologists, and provokes so many class struggles and subversive theories. As is obvious from a record of contemporaneous events in the world, Islam is a rampart against which the extremist doctrines which disturb the West and the East and menace the West with extinction can only smash themselves.

It is sometimes maintained that Islam was spread by the sword. It is now admitted freely by Western writers that this statement is without foundation. Could in fact a handful of men have dominated by force of arms territories which the Romans only conquered after eight centuries? It was that justice of which the Arab Muslims converted to Islam became the brave defenders which facilitated their task of extending their rule over vast areas extending from the Indian frontiers to fruitful Andalusia.

When Muslims came up against a people they had unavoidably to fight, they took care to offer to the enemy one of the three alternatives proposed to it - the acceptance of Islam, the payment of a tribute, or war. By this procedure they indicated the highest degree of religious toleration. Once the areas had been conquered Islam allowed the greatest degree of religious freedom to the conquered races. The payment of the jizyan (a tribute) guaranteed personal security, possession of property, the protection of both faith and their temples.

"The dhimmis (non-Muslims) living in a Muslim country have the same rights and duties as ourselves. He who harms a dhimmi cannot be considered one of us." Such was the Islamic motto with treatment of the dhimmis.

In his Fatuh al-Buldan, al-Buldhuri mentions that before the commencement of the Battle of Yarmuk, the Muslims, not seeing how they might defend Hims, in Syria, returned to its population the tribute they had exacted, saying: "Being occupied elsewhere, we are unable to protect you, and you are therefore free to act as you think best."

The inhabitants of Hims stated that they preferred Islamic justice and government to the trials from which they suffered under Byzantine domination, and that they were ready to defend their town and its Muslim governor against the soldiers of Heraclius. "We swear on the Bible that Heraclius troops will only enter this town once our efforts have become totally exhausted." They acted according to their word, closing the town gates and preparing for its defence.

This episode gives clear proof that the jizyah was paid only for the defence and protection of subjects.

Islam, which has stood firm against the tempest for centuries, is the same which today repulses the attacks of extremists and anti-democrats and as an unassailable rampart of democracy, religion, freedom, brotherhood and equality.

Islam and Socialism

This question is difficult to deal with. There have been references to democratic, autocratic and liberal Islam, comparative studies have been made between Islam and democracy, Islam and Bolshevism, Islam and Fascism, between Communism and the other totalitarian systems, but little has been said about social justice of Islam.

The problem is very complicated when one takes into account the different conceptions of the socialist phenomenon among Eastern and Western races. Socialism in the East has aspects totally unfamiliar to the West, some of which deserve a special study, for they would certainly lead to the perfection of its political and social system.

One may affirm that the social justice taught in the seventh century C.E. by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of God be upon him) is far in advance of the form conceived by modern Western thinkers. The conception of democracy among the Muslim peoples during the four "Legitimate Caliphates" never provoked any idealistic discords.
During the following centuries, forms of government were so numerous and varied that it is impossible to distinguish in the Islamic countries between the tendencies towards an eclectic socialism and a purely proletarian democracy, since each State presented aspects in contrast to the rulers and environment.

An article published in the Italian socialist journal Avanti about 12 years ago stated that in the west "the conception of democracy ... is certainly antithetical to the concept of proletarian socialization, which means that the term 'social-democrat' is a contradiction in terms."

But in the opinion of the writer of these lines the term "social-democrat" is an exact definition of the social tendency of Islam according to the orthodox conception of its leaders.

In every country misery has afflicted humanity as a tragic spectre. Epic poems speak of the age of gold which brought peace and plenty. This age was to bring to an end class struggles and contrast between the rich and the destitute. Philosophers and thinkers seeking a solution to the problem propose political institutions. But the theories of these advanced minds are powerless before the innate egoism of man, who is unable to reach social peace based on an equal distribution of possessions whether under democracy, monarchy or aristocracy.

**Trying Times in the History of Humanity**

In his Das Kapital, Marx reveals his faith in an impersonal power. According to this international materialism, industrial society originates directly from feudalism and tends towards domestic industry. Such an industrial organization renders the wealthy yet wealthier, and permits the destitute to become yet more miserable. The only remedy proposed by Marx is the nationalization of industry. But from the economic point of view, work is not the chief cause, the prime consideration being the question of supply and demand.

What is the attitude of Marxian Socialism to religion? Socialists are not in agreement about this matter. Marx proposed the radical abolition of religion. All those who saw eye to eye with him sided with him. One must logically draw the conclusion that the ideals of Eastern Christian and Western socialism are not identical.

Western socialism stands for liberty, and brotherhood, with individualism subordinated to State control; every individual may intervene directly in state affairs. In a word, it is the annihilation of bureaucracy; one must live at the expense of another, class distinctions and castes are abolished, also hereditary fiefs and private property.

Socialism is a form of evolution of democracy, but is frequently the direct result of individualism, which has great affinities with egoism. A society founded solely on individuals is by its very nature destined for destruction; for democracy or socialism resulting therefrom must limit collective initiative and create a situation which cannot be maintained.

The only safeguard against the recrudescence of the individualism called "egotism" is religion. But this religious faith must be both felt and practised. Socialism as conceived by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is precisely a religion felt and practised, a sacred faith.

The more time goes by, the greater widens the gulf between the rich and the poor. Yet we obtain some consolation from the words of the Prophet Isaiah, then Jesus, the son of Mary. To a certain extent, his words bring to the poor a message of hope. Yet for centuries the Church persuaded the working class that the Divine order which had decreed for each the will of God could not be changed. To this extent, the Church refused any concessions to the poor. When sparks were kindled in obscure corners of a dark world, they spread, and the ensuing repression occasioned flow of much blood. Some saints, such as St. Dominic, the crucifix in one hand, the sword in the other, incited the troops to the most barbarous of horrors. This continued until the 18th century popular discontent, resulting from misgovernment, ended up with dramatic outburst in France.

A feeble spirit and degenerated Christian religion, had become a profession and a trade. Faith dwindled, and became purely a matter of ordinary administration. The partiality of the clergy provoked deep discontent in society, without, however, causing organized reaction.

The hour had arrived, and Jacques Rousseau became the leader of a new crusade which had but one motto: "The rights of man." Who could have foreseen such a mission in so degenerated a man
with so bad a reputation as Rousseau? Possibly his dissolute life was the very cause of the ideal he chose.

Poverty is not a natural product, but a product of human egotism and injustice. Rousseau opposed the system of private property, and proposed the subordination of individual interests to those of the community.

The creation of such a socialist organization rendered a fight necessary for the creation of an industrial socialism. Men such as S. Simon in France, and Robert Owen in England, set to work. Thus Europe arrived at the great stage of history concerned with Karl Marx.

Religion and social theory must be taught simultaneously. We mean that if no fear of God restrains human actions and individual aspirations, socialism, like all other political theories, can only lead to megalomania, to war, class struggle, and inevitable disaster.

Islam, like Christianity, teaches the love of one's brother-man, believing that without supraterrestrial guidance, no human being will make such a sacrifice as that of Jesus Christ. The Prophet of Nazareth was in fact one of the purest protagonists of social justice.

Modern society should be compared to a pyramid well-built from bottom to top, the structure representing the compact mass of individuals and the architect being the State. A serious error committed by modern socialists is that of building their socialism from the top downwards instead of vice versa. They are only slightly interested in the political education of the individual, and go straight to State reform, that is, to the abstract order which should govern the mass.

A similar anachronism is to be found in the typical matter of land administration and capital. Who does not realize that, just as much as wealthy land-owners and industrial magnates, the principal pivots of the State have also done nothing towards the creation of a model socialist organization?

What is necessary for a true humane socialism is not so much nationalization of land and capital as that of the State, and that not only in the order but in the very mass of the people.

Basing socialism on a group of unprepared men is but courting disaster. Before socializing a country, one must ask oneself: Are the people ripe to understand, accept and apply such a social theory?

A maladministered socialism, by the liberty which it proclaims, may produce effect contrary to that desired, by developing personal ambition. It can also have a deleterious effect on individual mentality and capacity and deteriorate the most evolved race.

One may consider those peoples who have attained the highest possible level of moral and intellectual education as being ripe for socialism.

The abolition of private property brings with it detrimental results to the economy of the country, and the country, and whole State machinery must forcibly cease to function.

Going back thirteen centuries, we see that the inhabitants of the Arabian peninsula were encouraged by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) to develop their intelligence sufficiently for living according to principles recognized today as those of the most orthodox and not interfering with private enterprise or industrial initiative, enriching some and despoiling others.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) avoided civil wars and forced none to accept his social and political theories. His success is due to religion being the basis of his social justice. Muslims possessed no other nationality than that of their universal religion, the tolerance of which recognized neither racial difference, nor those of beliefs or territorial frontiers.

Despite all the political and juridical restrictions imposed in the Oriental States by the interference of European governments, brotherly feelings among the Muslims have remained unchanged whatever the nationality or the political frontiers. In developing his political system the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) showed that social justice is based not only on work, but on the good work on the lines indicated by the Prophet. The Islamic State reached its zenith in the time of the second Caliph Umar. Under Umar's government, every citizen had an exact sense of his personal responsibilities, in a federal State of which he was a vital unit.
Beyond the institution of State colleges for youth, old age homes asylums for invalids, a system of social fore-thought came into force under the stimulus of religion. Other organizations busied themselves with children, families, war-orphans, etc. No citizen received exceptional salaries. The State gave only slight grants to notables and those who were entirely devoted to the service of the country.

When Caliph Umar received the news of the victory in the battle of al Qadisiyya (937 C.E.), he called the population of Medina together and stated: "Formerly I was a trader, now I have to attend to the affairs of the treasury." Discussions started, and as Ali maintained silence, Umar asked him: "And what do you think, Ali?" Ali answered, "you have a right to what is strictly necessary for your own maintenance and that of your family." "You have well answered," replied Caliph Umar.

Bureaucracy did not exist. The law dictated by God needed no Parliament, and the interpretation of the law was a matter for the community.

Democratic Policy

"For me the strong is weak until I have made him pay his due; while the weak for me is strong until I make him recognize his rights." These are the words of Caliph Umar.

The letter sent by Caliph Umar to one of his governors, Abu Musa al-Ashari, on the administration of justice, is another proof of Islamic equality. This letter reads: "Treat all alike, the noble and the poor."

When Jabala Ibn Ayham, King of Ghassan Arabia, was converted to Islam, he visited Caliph Umar with great pomp and a numerous retinue. He was received with due honours. One day when he went on pilgrimage to the Kaba, he struck a Bedouin who had soiled his coat. The Bedouin complained to Caliph Umar, who said, "You owe a reparation to this Bedouin unless you wish to be struck by him in return."

"Don't you make any difference between royalty and the common people?" asked Jabala. "No", answered Umar. "Before Islam we are all equal". Thereupon Jabala requested 24 hour delay. During the night he fled with his suite and sought refuge from Heraclius, the Emperor of Constantinople.

As is well known, all matters of State were treated by a general assembly, in which the people could take part. When one thinks that the chief of the State had not even the privilege of voting, one realizes that such a governmental system would today be welcomed by every citizen wishing to defend his personal interests. This system would be both ideal democracy and ideal social justice.

It was H. Umar who thought out the fiscal system. By juridical inheritance laws the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) had made impossible the maintenance of great properties. An equal distribution of the patrimony was the object sought.

The Shariah obliged the proprietor to pay a tribute to the State and the zakat to the poor, to an extent of 2.5 per cent of his annual income. The zakat is the institution "which enriches the poor at the expense of the rich." It releases positive forces of social justice.

Socialism in early Islam had reached the stage that if a field was not cultivated during a certain period of time, the neighbours could purchase the right to cultivate as public property.

Starting from the premise that all men are brothers and must mutually assist one another, Islam forbade all forms of interest and usury. The desire for commerce, industry and work was encouraged. But savings and deposits in banks were discouraged. Capitalism found itself thwarted.

Islam had strictly prohibited gambling and speculation. The object was to prevent one individual growing rich at the expense of his less fortunate neighbours. All monopolies were condemned and property was treated as a virtue.

One day Hazrat Umar met Hazrat Abu Bakr going to market with woollen cloths for sale. Pointedly he said, "you have been charged with governing the Muslims. Why are you attending to business matters?" Abu Bakr replied, "By what other means can I provide my family?"
The Muslims did not disdain business. Abu Bakr al-Siddiq, Uthman, Talha, 'Aod al-Rahman Ibn Awf all sold cloth. Saad Ibn Abi Waqqas manufactured arrows, while al-Awan, Bubayr's father, was a tailor. Zubayr and Amr Ibn al-Aas were also business men.

One sees that the East can give lessons in classical civilization to the Western races, and shed some sparks of light to dissipate the gloom of the Middle Ages.

THE HOLY PROPHET'S DIVINE MISSION

Islam is an eternal spiritual verity which continued to be revealed by Allah through His Scriptures and through His Prophets at every stage in man's spiritual evolution. The Prophets were not only the recipients of this Heavenly Recipe for the moral and material welfare of mankind, they were also endowed with the superb qualities of unique leadership so that they may convey the Divine Message to their people and thus wean them from their devious and dubious ways. Thus every Prophet's message before the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) was Islam of his age.

The Message and the Messenger are inseparable. The Message is enshrined in the Scripture which also is an insignia of the prophetic authority of the Messenger. One cannot understand the spirit of the Message in isolation from the Messenger. If a Scripture is separated from the Prophet it becomes a rudderless argosy in an uncharted ocean. Its passengers, no matter how hard they may exert themselves, can never reach the sunny shores of success. If, on the other hand, a Prophet is separated from his Scripture, his followers deify him and indulge in idolatrous adoration of his person. These two kinds of tragedies are writ large in history. The Hindus cast their apostles into oblivion and hugged their Books to the bosoms. The Books by themselves could not escape distortion by their devotees. The result was that they became rickmarole. Their scholars' vain attempts to clarify their contents made the confusion worse confounded. Now even the term Hinduism is bereft of any meaning and the Hindu Community has grown into an ocean of credal anarchy.

The Christians virtually cast the Gospels to the winds and set up the person of their Prophet for worship. Thus they cut themselves adrift from Allah and hitched their wagon to a person which is a figment of their misguided imagination. They tried to sublimate their heresy by designating their Prophet as the son of God. This vicious process climaxed into making him god. This is idolatry, pure and simple.

Like the ancient times, the modern age got the blessing of Islam in two ways - The Holy Book and the Holy Prophet (Allah's peace and blessings be upon him). Now the only way to get at the core and kernel of the divine truth of Islam is to know and understand the Holy Quran through the Sayings and Doings (Hadith and Sunnah) of the Holy Prophet (Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) and to comprehend the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) through the Holy Quran. He who follows this formula is blessed with the true meaning of Islam and is saved from going astray.

As the Holy Quran and the Holy Prophet (Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) are inseparable for the glory of Islam, it is imperative to achieve full comprehension of that Revealed Mission. In the absence of the complete appreciation of the summum bonum of these two inviolable Authorities, the Holy Book becomes a repository of sublime prose and sacred collection of events. One may pile up a heap of commentaries and write the life-story of the Holy Prophet (Allah's peace and blessings be upon him). It will be a store of literature no doubt. But all these researches will be devoid of soul which is identified with understanding the meaning of the Mission and not with mere reading the radiant prose or with the events narrated therein. The soul of the Holy Book and the Holy Prophet (Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) resides in the Mission for which they both came. One can have true understanding of the Holy Book and the Holy Apostle (peace be upon him) only when one has formed a correct concept of the Divine Mission.

There is no gainsaying the fact that the Holy Quran and the Secret of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) are transcendental phenomenon. Human intellect cannot
encompass their astral dimensions. The utmost one can do and should do, is to sincerely strive to understand both as much as is humanly possible.

The basic fact which has been very impressively stated in the Holy Quran is that the Holy Prophet (Allah's blessings and peace be upon him) belongs to the most honoured and revered class of prophets and is the Last Blessed Link in the chain of Nabuwat which had existed since the world began and reached the peak-point of perfection in his holy person. The Holy Quran has not confined prophethood and messengership to any one person or to any one community or to any one country in the past. Allah sent His prophets to every nation. They invited their people to the Straight Path and warned them of the dire consequences of misguidance and Godlessness. The Holy Quran says:

"There is no people to whom a Warner has not been sent" (35:24).

"We did raise among every people a Messenger who enjoined: Worship Allah alone and shun every transgressor" (16:37).

"Muhammad is but a messenger; of surety, all Messengers before him have passed away" (3:144).

After highlighting the true status of the Holy Prophet (Allah's peace and blessings be upon him), the Holy Quran states his functions which are of two kinds: He is to educate and elevate the people by his teaching and preaching moral excellences. To this effect the Holy Quran says: "Indeed, Allah has conferred a great favour on the believers by raising among them a Messenger from among themselves, who recites to them His Signs and purifies them and teaches them the Book and Wisdom. Before that they were surely in manifest error" (3:165). His function as an Ordained Teacher was to cleanse his people of all impurities and impurities. He thus enabled them to turn over a new leaf in their book. The wisdom that he infused in them so illumined their hearts and minds that they grasped the innate spirit of the Book and cast their lives in the Islamic moulds. It was a case of creating new heaven and new earth for the True Believers.

The second function relates to the practical life and its problems. In the fulfilment of this ordained duty the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), exhorted the people to lead righteous lives and scrupulously shun evil. He enabled them to distinguish between good and evil and emancipated them from the shackles of sins and relieved them of the crushing load of falsehood. The blessings of this function range over the whole gamut of human life. In this regard, the Holy Quran says: "Proclaim O Prophet: O mankind, verily I am Allah's Messenger to you all. To Him belongs the Kingdom of the heavens and the earth. There is no god but He. He bestows life and He causes death. So believe in Allah and His Messenger the Prophet, the Immaculate one, who believes in Allah and His words and follow him that you may be rightly guided" (7:159).

The functions entrusted to the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) completely rule out for good and ever the very idea of any prophet after him. When every teaching pertaining to moral and material regeneration has been given in all its ordained entirety through the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) there is no need of any Nabi. Now what is needed is that the True Believers should learn and practise what the Holy Quran says and make the Sunnah as their lodestar to be to follow the example of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), and thus by their own pious God-fearing conduct in the spiritual and secular realms, prove that the guidance vouchsafed to them in the Holy Book through the Holy Prophet leaves absolutely no room for any apostolic appearance.
TURNING PROFESSING MUSLIMS INTO PRACTISING MUSLIMS
THE GREATEST JIHAD OF MODERN TIMES

In the Holy Quran, we read:

"Ye shall be superior if ye are a believer".

This is what the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and all his followers were promised. What we see today is just the opposite. 650 million souls claim they are the disciples of Muhammad (peace be upon him) yet the promised glory is inconceivable in our times. Heaven forbid, Allah’s promise cannot be false. Obviously something is wrong with our being believers.

There does not seem any material gain or worldly glamour in identifying yourself as 'Muslim', yet with few exceptions, we insist and insist forcefully on calling ourselves "the Muslims". But Muslims are no purposeless slaves of Allah. The cardinal responsibility for putting into practice the doctrines of Islamic polity rests naturally with Muslims who are in power in the countries in which they live. So far as Muslims living in non-Muslim countries are concerned, they can only make a sincere and well meaning effort, within the limits of practicality of course, to persuade the ruling community there to honour and incorporate as many teachings of Islam as possible in their political systems.

The first step in the revival of Islamic structure in the Muslim States will have to be a religious reorientation of the lives of their Muslim inhabitants. By this we mean the subordination of worldly interests to the interests of the life Hereafter in order that it may become easy for them to forego material pleasures for the higher ideal of winning the approbation of Allah. There can simply be no other way. History underlines this truth and the innate spirit of Islam also demands it. Unless a religious re-awakening is worked up among the Muslims, the elevation of Muslim countries into genuine Islamic political societies will remain, at least in our present age, an empty dream. This is a hard and painstaking process, but there is no help to it. There is no alternative route and no short cut to an Islamic form of government. And even if by a stroke of good fortune, the Islamic system came into being somewhere, it would be impossible for it to function successfully unless the intellectual and emotional mechanisms of the Muslims living under it and their practical behaviour were dominated by considerations of high piety and moral rectitude.

There is a great need, therefore, that more servants of Allah make this auspicious field of work of turning professing Muslims into practising Muslims, their own; and devote themselves according to their capacity and merit, to the task of popularising the way of life the Holy Prophet had brought into the world.

To strive and struggle in this path and to make sacrifices for it is the greatest Jihad of the modern times, the truest form of loyalty and sincerity to the Holy Prophet and his most genuine deputyship. Those who will set their feet on it will see that other avenues will also be opened out to them by Allah. It was in circumstances not far different to what we are faced with today the following words of assurance and cheer were spoken to the Muslims of Mecca through the last verse of Sura Ankaboot:

"And those who strive in our (cause) We, will certainly guide them to our path; for verily, Allah is with those who do right."

Mankind has always been in need of a dependable shelter. Islam is the one and only unfailing shelter. It is the duty of Muslims to prove it so. But unfortunately there is no bright example of Islam
in practice nowadays in the shape of a truly Islamic state, while the Muslim countries seem to be hopelessly disunited and far behind the western nations in material well-being. The latter inevitably turn away with the idea that the guiding principles of such backward, unsuccessful people must of necessity be inferior to their own. And they have every right to do so, seeing what they see! The fault is ours, not theirs, if the West does not find Islam in its true colour translated into practical reality in the Muslim world.

If Islam is to be commended to the modern world, Muslims display again the spirit of jihad in every walk of life, and strive unceasingly for what they believe to be right against what they believe to be wrong and so gain the respect which the Muslims of yore gained. Their conduct and life example alone can commend Islam and its wonderful institutions to the other peoples of the earth. We cannot adopt the culture and institutions of any other people in place of our own without strangulating our life-line. The Muslims must be organised as Muslims, or they will lose the strength of their pure and perfect State which is the greatest contribution that they have to offer to the modern world. There is nothing in the free Muslim countries to prevent them organising themselves on Islamic lines and developing their own ideals and institutions to the highest point of strength and efficiency.

In the process, the Islamic workers everywhere would continue to face many problems, varying from indifference to direct hostility from certain factions. Gradually these circumstances will improve, as they are improving today, if Allah so pleases. It is certain, however, that if a devout and dedicated band of Muslims makes sincere and concerted efforts to make Islam a practical, social, political and constitutional reality - a live force to fashion all facets of our life, they will succeed in their avowed objective, for Allah creates a way for His faithful servants. Situations will arise and factors will emerge, as if from nowhere, that will alter the course of things and remove the difficulties in their path. Says the Quran:

"And whosoever keepeth his duty to Allah, Allah will appoint a way out for him, and will provide for him from (a quarter) whence he hath no expectation. And whosoever putteth his trust in Allah, He will suffice him. Lo! Allah bringeth His command to pass." (65:2-3).

By the grace of Allah, Muslims have with them the Holy Quran and Sunnah of the Holy Prophet to guide them through adversities and the obstacles of life. They must hold fast to true faith. The Holy Quran says:

"Or think that ye will enter Paradise while yet these hath not come unto you the like of (that which came to) those who passed away before you? Affliction and adversity befell them, they were shaken as with earthquake till the Messenger (of Allah) and those who believed along with him said:

"When cometh Allah's help? Now, surely, Allah's help is nigh". (2:214).

The Muslims have gained, and are regaining, some of their lost territories. But Islam is yet to regain control of its own society, economy, polity, world state and historic initiative. We must make an all-out effort for achieving this purpose; otherwise we perish!

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HAZRAT MIRZA GHULAM AHMAD

Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement

His Claims, Status and Mission

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"Allah has promised to those of you who believe and do good that He will surely make them successors (rulers) in the earth as He made those before them successors, and that He will surely establish for them their religion, which He has chosen for them, and that He will surely given them security in exchange after their fear. They will serve Me, not associating ought with Me. And whomever is ungrateful after this, they are the transgressors" (24:55).

It was in the fulfilment of this Divine promise that Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian was raised at the head of the 14th century al-Hijrah as a Mujaddid in this Ummah.

It has first to be seen what were the claims of the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement and on what basis. That is why I have referred to verse 55 of Chapter 24 (Al-Noor) and have given its translation. This verse is generally known as Ayat-i Istikhlaaf - the verse dealing with Caliphate in Islam - because it holds out a promise to the believers about raising of caliphs or successors in this Ummah who in the terminology of Hadith are called Mujaddid. This Qur’anic assurance is guaranteed by the following hadith in Sahih al-Bukhari:

"Spiritual guidance was provided for the Israelites by their prophets: when one died another took his place. Since there is no prophet after me there shall be successors (caliphs) instead" (Bukhari, Manaqib Umar).

In other words this hadith is an exegesis of Ayat-i Istikhlaaf. Another well-known hadith known as hadith-i mujaddid also promises the raising of spiritual successors or Mujaddids in this ummah at the head of every century. It runs as follows:

"Verily Allah will raise in this ummah, persons at the head of every century for the revival of Faith for them" (Abu Dawood, Book al-Malahim).

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement proclaimed to be a Mujaddid and also a Muhaddath (one spoken to by Allah) on the authority of the Qur’anic verse and hadith mentioned earlier. His claim to Mujaddidhood is to be found in his first unique work Barahin-i Ahmadiyya published in four parts. The first two parts were published in 1880.

The book was acclaimed by all as the excellent exposition of the teachings of Islam, beauties of the Holy Qur’an and grandeur of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. But a specific and definite claim is to be found in a handbill published in the year 1885 stating that he has been honoured with frequent true visions and divine revelations, thus he was a muhaddath also. In the year 1890 he received a revelation in the words: "Jesus, son of Mary, was dead; and We have made thee Jesus, son of Mary." After a cautious and thorough examination of this revelation in the light of the Holy Qur’an and the Hadith, he proclaimed on 26th March 1891 to be the Messiah, promised for this ummah.

About the significance of this pronouncement, the Founder writes:

"Be it known that the claim of being the Promised Messiah in no way excels the claim of recipient of divine revelation, a Mujaddid raised by Allah. It is lawful for Allah to name a recipient of revelation as Moses or Jesus..." (Aina-i Kamalat-i Islam, p.341).
It is to be noted here that the claim of being the Promised Messiah does not in any way indicate his elevation to the rank of a prophet. Evidently he has retained his basic rank of mujaddid.

Now let us evaluate his achievements. For a detailed exposition I would suggest a study of the book, Mujaddid-i Azam, a wonderful biography of the Founder in Urdu written in three volumes by the late Dr Basharat Ahmad. For the present I would like to give a summary of what has been written in the book about his achievements.

The greatest achievement of the Founder is that he has infused among his followers a living faith in a living God. He has repeatedly asserted that a religion, which fails to show fresh signs, was myth and such a religion could not satisfy and satiate human mind. He presented himself as a living example of the evergreen religion of Islam and invited people to come to him and witness heavenly signs at his hands. He also made prophecies which were widely circulated before the events mentioned therein actually happened as in the case of the murder of the notorious Arya Samaj leader Lekhram who abused and humiliated the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, in the most filthy language.

His another significant achievement is laying foundation of an organisation (Anjuman) to carry out, after his demise, his mission for the world-wide propagation of Islam. He declared that this Anjuman was to be his successor. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the appointed caliph of Allah, the mujaddid of the age, made it a rule that the decisions of the said Anjuman by a majority vote shall be final and binding on his followers. Such arrangements, he further said, in his Will, were to continue till such time another guide supported by the Holy Spirit is raised in this Jama'at. (The Will, p.6)

The Founder's saying that he is the last of the khulafa does not mean that there will be no Mujaddid after him, he did not interpret it so. In fact it imparts special significance to his position among the Mujaddids. It means that future Mujaddids will not only testify his truthfulness but will also work for the fulfilment of the same mission initiated by him - and shall defend and propagate Islam on the same lines. But the fact remains that a Mujaddid will appear at the head of each century as before and we quote from Mulfoozat of the Founder in which he expressed the same view in reply to a question: whether a Mujaddid can appear after him. The reply runs as follows:

"It does not matter if a Mujaddid comes in my wake. Prophethood of Moses, peace be upon him, had ended therefore, chain of his khulafa (successors) came to an end with the appearance of Prophet Jesus, peace be upon him. But prophethood of Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, will continue till the Doomsday. If there are survivors from the said destruction then someone may be deputed. We never denied that righteous and truthful persons shall continue to appear till suddenly the Doomsday will come to pass." - (Mulfoozat vol. viii, 29th September 1905, p.119).

The Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement has also produced marvellous, matchless and high standard literature, spread over thousands of pages, in defence and rebuttal of the criticism of the opponents of Islam. It has opened new vistas of exposition and reinterpretation of the teachings of Islam in the light of modern research based on the Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah. This progressive approach of the Founder gave new dimensions to the missionary activities of the Movement in the West. Appreciation of these masterly works by his disciples may be considered an act of partiality but I shall, later, quote scholars and men of letters who have frankly extolled these unique works for the predominance of Islam as a universal message over the teachings of other existing religions in the world. However, these remarks give an idea of the esteem and eminence in which the friends and foes held his books.

The Founder has claimed also to be an arbiter and mediator for this ummah. He, therefore, adjudicated upon the internal religious differences among the Muslims of his time. His thinking is very much valid today as it was at that time. Here too he based his verdicts primarily on the Qur'an. An example is to be found in his pronouncement in the Shia-Sunni conflict over succession of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. Relying on the Qur'anic verse Ayat-i Istikhlaaf, mentioned earlier, the Founder pointed out that this verse stipulates certain conditions to be fulfilled by the elected caliph, viz., "he will surely establish for them their religion and "give them security in exchange after their fear." The manner in which these conditions were fulfilled during the Caliphate of Hazrat Abu Bakr, Allah be pleased with him, is not to be seen anywhere else. Hence in the light of the Qur'an the election of Hazrat Abu Bakr, Allah be pleased with him, as the true successor of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, was correct, expedient and justified. (Mujaddid-i Azam, vol. iii, p.90)
Another important verdict given by the Founder and now acclaimed by the ummah concerns the difference of views among the Ahl-i Sunnat wal Jama'at and other Muslim ulama about the inter-se precedence of the Holy Qur'an, the Hadith and Fiqah (Jurisprudence). Muslim ulama of yore used to hold only two authorities i.e., the Qur'an and Hadith for adjudication in a religious matter. The Founder, however, asserted that as a matter of fact there are three sources of guidance for Muslims: (i) The Holy Qur'an, (ii) The Sunnah and (iii) the Hadith. As for the order of their precedence, he enunciated as follows:

"There are three sources of guidance for Muslims:

(i) The Holy Qur'an - the Book and word of Allah. It is most authoritative as the one we have in the form of the Qur'an.

(ii) The Sunnah of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. Here we may differ with the Ahl-i Hadith ulama regarding the significance of Hadith. We do not hold Hadith and the Sunnah as one and the same, rather we attach more importance to the Sunnah as a source of guidance. By Sunnah is meant the way or manner in which the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, displayed and demonstrated the divine commandments revealed to him; it has been followed in the ummah for centuries and has come down to us without break or modification and coupled with the teachings of the Qur'an, has always formed an integral part of our faith. In other words, it may be said that while the Holy Qur'an is the word of Allah, the Sunnah demonstrates the way and manner in which the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, translated these commands in deeds. Such performances are creditable and authoritative and stand next to the Holy Qur'an. It is admitted on all hands that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, neither dictated Hadith himself nor desired its preservation like the Qur'anic revelation.
  (Ref. Mujaddid Azam, vol.iii, p.91).

No doubt a majority of collectors and compilers of traditions are known for their piety, God-fearing traits, prudence and wariness and their works have been subjected to scrutiny and criticism in such a thorough manner that its parallel is not to be found in any other historical or religious compilation; yet the fact remains that Islam was perfect and complete even without the bulk of Hadith which was compiled long after the advent and perfection of Islam. The Holy Qur'an and its practical demonstration in the form of Sunnah had met all that was necessary as far as the basic teachings of Islam were concerned. It is, however, to be admitted that such collections augmented and provided details and guidance to the heavenly light of Islam and made it "Light after light". The Founder did not dispense with Hadith altogether, rather he laid down rules how to maintain its integrity as an important source of guidance. The Founder advised his followers to believe in all the reported hadith as far as possible unless it is repugnant to and inconsistent with the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. In this connection the Founder says:

"It is incumbent upon my followers that if they find a hadith in conformity with the concept of the Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah, they should follow it, even if, the source of such a hadith is doubtful and uncertain. Such hadith is to be given preference over the individual exercise of judgement as in the case of jurisprudence."

This does not mean that the Founder closed the door for ijtihad rather he has encouraged it in the following words:

"Where solution of a problem is not available from the Qur'an, the Sunnah or Hadith, his followers should act according to the Hanafi School of Fiqh, and when his Fiqh does not help the learned ones of my Jama'at, they should exercise their God-gifted prudence (Ijtihad) to solve the problem in the light of the Qur'an and the Sunnah."

(Ref. Mujaddid-i Azam, vol. iii, p.98; Review ber Mubahisah Muhammad Hussain Batalwi wa Maulvi Abdullah Chokralwi, p.5; Al-Tawzeeh wa-Talzeeh Usool-i Fiqah, Allamah Sa'ad al-Din Taftazani, p.474.)

It may be pointed out here that the term "the Qur'an and the Sunnah" was introduced by the Founder for the first time in the Muslim history as the two primary sources of guidance for interpreting the teachings of Islam; hitherto it was "The Qur'an and Hadith".
Now let us see the result of sustained efforts made by the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement for the defence and glorification of Islam and how far he was successful in his Mission.

Before enumerating the achievements of the Founder, I would like to mention the views of late Sir Muhammad Iqbal about the Founder’s scholarship and dedication to the cause of Islam:

"... Hegelian Dialect ... a doctrine which has always found favour with almost all the profound thinkers of Islam, has in this age been readvocated by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, probably the profoundest theologian among modern Indian Muhammadans" (The Indian Antiquary, vol. xxix, 1900, p.239).

It is also on record that Allama Isbal at one time took pledge at the hands of the Founder:

"According to Maulvi Ghulam Muhy-ud-Din Qasuri, Dr. Sir Muhammad Iqbal also took pledge (bai’at at the hands of the Founder ... in the year 1897."

(Daily Nawa-i Waqt, Lahore November 15, 1953).

This was the position of Allama Iqbal during the life-time of the Founder. But even after his death, Allama held the Movement in high esteem. In 1911, three years after the death of the Founder (d. 1908), the Allama in his address to a gathering of scholars and intellectuals at the Muslim University, Aligarh, exhorted:

"A sincere example of Islamic life has appeared in the form of the community which is called the Qadiani sect."

(Millat-i Baiza per aik Nazar, Aeenah Adab, Lahore 1970, p.84).

It is to be remembered that the death of the Founder in 1908 closed the chapter of his discourses, teachings and accomplishments and now there was no scope of any alteration, addition or modification therein. So three years after the death of the Founder Allama Iqbal believes Jama’at-i Ahmadiyya to be true followers of the pristine teachings of Islam. Not only that, two years later in 1913 the Allama sends his eldest son Aftab for schooling to Qadian. At that time Hazrat Maulana Noor-ud-Din was the head of the Ahmadiyya Movement. There was no dearth of first-class educational institutions in the country, but the choice of Allama fell on Qadian, the hamlet where he visualised the growth of pristine Islamic teachings in full bloom.

Now some remarks and views of notable contemporaries of the Founder. The list is pretty large but a few may be quoted as example:

(a) Maulvi Abdullah al-Ahmadi, Editor, Wakeel, the pioneer religious Journal of Amritsar, published the following glowing tribute on the demise of the Founder in May, 1908:

"The literature produced by Mirza Sahib in rebuttal of the malicious and mischievous insinuations of Christians and Arya Samajis has won public approbation and has been widely acclaimed by Muslims and needs no commendation. We cannot help express whole-hearted acknowledgement of its masterly grasp and utility even today although it has achieved its objective long ago."

(b) In another editorial note in this very Journal on May 30, 1908 the Maulana wrote:

"I am still under the influence of the ecstasy I felt on reading his matchless books in defence of Islam and exposing other faiths. He has an unblemished record and his conduct does not bear a smallest smudge. He led a righteous and devout life - the life of a Mutaqt (pious and God-fearing)."

(c) Maulana Abdul Majid Salik, a renowned journalist and Editor of daily Inquilab, Lahore tells us through his biographical sketches, Yaraan-i Kuhan, (Old Associates), Matbu-aat-i Chatan, Lahore, Pakistan; December 1955, p.42):

"Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad (associate Editor of Wakeel, Amritsar) came to Lahore from Amritsar and accompanied the cortege of Mirza Sahib upto Batala (the connecting railway Station for Qadian)."
(d) Mirza Hairat Dehlvi in an obituary published in his Curzon Gazette of 1st June, 1908 said:

"Clarks of the highest Order could not dare to face the deceased. Although a Punjabi, he was gifted with a forceful and fluent style a parallel of which is not to be found in the entire Punjab, nay in the entire Sub-continent.... Everybody can easily judge the success and triumph he achieved in his lifetime."

(e) Shams-ul Ulama Syed Mumtaz Ali of Dar-ul-Isha’at, Punjab, Lahore, lamented over this irreparable national loss in his Journal, Tehzeeb-i Niswan of Lahore, thus:

"He was an erudite scholar, a dauntless and determined reformer and a model of pure and chaste life. We may not subscribe to his views about the advent of the promised Messiah yet his leadership and guidance left undoubtedly a Messiah-like impact on these spiritually dead."

These statements amply prove that the Founder departed from this world after achieving unprecedented success in his mission as an outstanding scholar and missionary and rightly deserved the epithet "Sultan al-Qalam" (A Monarch of Penmanship) by writing eighty books in Urdu, Arabic and Persian presenting unique exposition of Islam and the prophethood of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. His services to the cause of Islam won country-wide admiration and approbation.

Now the question arises why the followers of such a true champion of Islam are being afflicted with trials and persecution and are being branded as non-Muslims? Here I will again quote Allama Sir Muhammad Iqbal. His short biography Harf-i Iqbal relates:

"In the year 1935 (the period when the Allama turned hostile to Ahmadiyya Movement) the Allama in reply to a question as to why he was bitterly opposing this Movement while quarter of a century ago he declared it to be a model of true Islamic concept, said: 'I have no hesitation to confess that I had great expectations from this Movement twenty-five years ago, but I got disenchanted and disheartened when a new prophethood superior to the prophethood of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, the Founder of Islam, was introduced and the entire Muslim ummah was dubbed as kafir (unbeliever). This disgust later turned into revolt when I heard with my own ears a member of this movement referring to the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, with insolence, impudence and in utter derogatory tone" (p. 122).

The late Maulana Muhammad Yakub Khan, editor of the renowned English weekly The Light, an organ of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement, got the following clarification published in the Paigham-i Sulh, the Urdu organ of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement. It related a statement of Maulana Syed Nazir Niazi, biographer and a close associate of the Allama, regarding the disparaging statement made by Allama about the Ahmadiyya Movement (mentioned earlier in this article): The clarification runs as follows:

"The statement of the Allama published a few days back in the local press was in the context of the present wrangling going on between the Qadiani Sect and Muslim masses. The statement did not involve the Lahore section of the Ahmadies nor did it intend to slate the doctrines put forth by Mirza Sahib (i.e. The Founder)".

(Paigham-i Sulh, November 19, 1935)

It must have been understood by now that the crisis through which the Movement is passing these days is the outcome of the audacious and exaggerated tenets concerning the claim and status of the Founder of the Movement, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad ascribed by the late Mirza Bashir al-Din Mahmood Ahmad who assumed leadership of the Movement on the death of Hazrat Maulana Nur-al-Din in the year 1914. Leaders of the Lahore Section have been vociferously rebutting and opposing these innovations for the last eighty years. It is a pity that the late Mirza Bashir al-Din Mahmood Ahmad and his associates turned a deaf ear to our sincere advices made in good time and were unmindful of the dire consequences pushing the Ahmadies into straits. Be it known that the Founder
bade his followers to eschew exaggeration in beliefs, but the Qadian Section overlooked these exhortations. A letter from the Founder published in *Al-Hakam* of August 17, 1899 reads:

"Anyone who transgresses in rejecting and opposing (me) is in a perilous state. Likewise a transgressor in the matter of beliefs, like Shiats, is also in a state of peril."

Likewise, the Founder has lamented the transgression in the beliefs of his kinsfolk in the following words:

"And my kinsfolk would soon step towards deviation from the right faith for the second time; their viciousness and animosity shall increase, so that the predicament destined for them by Allah, the Most High, would overtake them. Nothing on earth can avert this calamity nor can divert His Grace and Favour. I visualize how they are reverting to their previous traits; with their hearts hardened, as is the wont of ignorant and unmindful persons; they have forsaken God-fearingness and have turned again to aggression, highhandedness and have abandoned righteousness. Hence the decree of God will soon befall them when He observes that they have exceeded all limits in their exaggeration (ghulaw). And God never punishes people who are mindful and apprehensive of Him" (*Anjam-i Athsam*, pp.223-228).

Regarding Qadian the Founder apprehended: "But God the Most High is fully aware of and is a witness to it. He has likened Qadian to Damascus and has said about its people that they resemble Yazeed in their nature. That is, a majority of them behave like Yazeed in their traits and trends".

(*Izalah-i Athsam*, Footnote to p.73)

He further said:

"Then came a revelation in the words: "These Ulema have altered my dwelling house; cells of my worship have been turned into kitchen, their crockery and wares are piled up in my hermitage; they are rodent gnawing the *ahadith* of my Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him)."

(*Ibid.*, Footnote to p.76)

The act of gnawing at the *ahadith* of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) indicates as to how the high and low of the Qadian Section have grossly misinterpreted the Hadith. There are no less than forty *ahadith* wherein the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, has repeatedly averred that no prophet was to come after him. (*Ref. Khatam-al-Nabiyeen* by Maulana Muhammad Ahsan Amrohi, January 13, 1922). The Founder has repeatedly referred to the well-known hadith wherein the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, has likened the Divine Order of prophethood to a palace, and said: "The palace needed a brick only for its completion and I am that corner-stone. I am Khatam al-Nabiyeen (the Last of the Prophets) and this Divine Order has ended with me." Against these forty *ahadith* the Qadian Section dwells on the solitary hadith in *Al-Muslim* in which the words *Nabi Allah* (prophet of Allah) occur.

Let us see what the Founder says about this hadith:

"This term (*Nabi Allah*) occurring here is a figurative expression, a norm accepted in the Sufi literature and connotes 'divine revelation' ... otherwise how can a prophet come after the Khatam al-Anbiya."

(*Anjam-i Athsam*, Footnote to p.28)

Although we have nothing to do with the wrong and misleading beliefs of the Qadian Section yet we have also been treated as par with them in the matter of *Fatwa* of being 'Not Muslims'. In my humble opinion, this is in consonance with the divine law enunciated in verse 25 of Sura *al-Anfal* which warns: "And guard yourself against affliction which smites not those of you *exclusively who are not unjust.*"

It is incumbent upon us to bow our heads down before Allah, reform ourselves and cultivate love, affection and sincerity in our ranks for guarding ourselves against such affliction. May Allah grant us strength and fortitude to forbear and stand upon the turmoil and tribulations. **AMEEN**