ISLAM AND COMMUNISM

by
MAULANA AFTAB-UD-DIN AHMAD
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FOREWORD

Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad (1901 - 1951), the author of *Islam and Marxism*, was a distinguished scholar, specialist in Comparative Religion, and missionary of Islam to East and West. He was for many years the Imam of the Woking Mosque and Secretary of the Woking Muslim Mission, Woking (Surrey, England). He also edited the monthly *Islamic Review* (from both Woking and Lahore) and the weekly *Light* (Lahore).

Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad believed in simple living and high thinking and sincerely and earnestly practised what he preached. He was the least dogmatic of the religious scholars and was amazingly liberal and progressive in his views. He always kept an open mind, was receptive to new ideas, and ever ready to embrace truths wherever he found them. He combined a genuine interest in mysticism (Sufism) and mystical insight with modern, enlightened, scientific approach to religion. His deep commitment to Islam made him genuinely sympathetic to man and inspired him to work to the utmost for the welfare and happiness of human beings.

Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad had considerable knowledge of modern thoughts and intellectual and social movements of the twentieth century and showed sympathetic understanding of the problems and difficulties of the modern youth. He had given deep thought to the problem of presenting Islam to the modern young men and women in a manner that they could understand and appreciate.

*Islam and Marxism* was originally published as a series of articles in the *Light* Weekly during 1951. The Communist ideology and movement have undergone considerable changes since then, but the central thesis here presented is as valid today as it was in 1951.

THE PUBLISHERS
INTRODUCTION

Nobody today is likely to dispute the fact that Communism is an important force in our modern world. Not only are there nearly sixty million Communists (in the precise sense of members of Communist parties) spread throughout the world, but more than a third of the total population of the earth lives under Communist governments, and outside that area the ideas of Communism are an inescapable challenge to all thinking people.

No single man invented Communism. But of all Communist thinkers Karl Marx is by common consent the greatest as well as the most influential. Marx was at once a philosopher, a historian, a sociologist, an economist, and an active controversialist in the struggles which characterized his lifetime. He outlined a framework of the future course of events on which he based prescriptions for strategy on the part of those who wished to change the nature of society.

There are, according to Lenin, three sources and three component parts of Marxism: (1) the Marxist philosophy, (2) the Marxist economics, and (3) the Marxist theory of state and revolution.

Marxist Philosophy

In the background of the philosophy of Marx is Hegelian dialectic and nineteenth century materialism. Materialism before Marx had developed on mechanistic lines. According to this view, matter from all eternity had followed unchangeable mathematical laws of motion. Marx did not agree with the mechanistic view of matter because it left no room for development. The purpose of Marx was neither metaphysical nor epistemological. He was primarily a revolutionary. The purely mechanical explanation of the universe did not fit into his purpose. As a revolutionary
Marx was naturally attracted to Hegelian dialectic because it depicted conflict and change as the essence of existence. He therefore combined materialism with Hegelian dialectic to produce his theory of Dialectical Materialism.

According to Hegel, reality is dynamic and rises to higher forms by perpetual creation of opposites (thesis and antithesis) and a subsequent synthesis of the conflicting factors. This process of conflict goes on, according to Hegel, in reality as well as in thought. Thus there is progressive unfoldment of the Absolute Idea in the universe. Karl Marx rejected the idealistic nature of the philosophy of Hegel and replaced the Absolute Idea with Eternal Nature conceived as matter, though he retained the basic pattern of the Hegelian dialectic. "To Hegel", wrote Marx in the first volume of *Capital*, "the process of thinking, which under the name of 'Idea' he even transforms into an independent subject, is the demi-urgos (the creator, the maker) of the real world.... With me, on the contrary, the idea is nothing else than the material world reflected by the human mind and translated into forms of thought." The ultimate reality is, thus, material but dynamic and perhaps even purposive.

While thus expounding philosophical materialism, Karl Marx carried it through to the end, extending its mode of understanding nature to the understanding of human society. Just as a man's knowledge, according to Marx, reflects nature (*i.e.*, matter in a state of development), which exists independently of him, so also the social understanding of man (that is, his various views and teachings: philosophical, religious, moral, political, etc.) reflects the economic structure of society. In this way Marx arrived at an economic interpretation of history. Marx's theory of Historical Materialism states that the economic system prevalent at any given time is the substructure of society which is primary, and that religion, laws, ethics, political system and other insti-
tutions form the superstructure, which is secondary, being determined by the former. From the point of view of production and distribution, Marx divides human history into five stages—the primitive communist or cooperative stage, the stage of slavery, feudalism, capitalism, and socialism. The progress has taken place inevitably from stage to stage, according to the dialectical principle. Marx states that capitalism contains within itself the germ of its opposition and, by the inexorable process of history, capitalism must give way to socialism.

Marx, it has been pointed out, took over the triad of thesis, antithesis and synthesis from Hegel, which he found to be true of material nature. Nevertheless, Marx endows matter which should, on the strict materialist theory, have neither values nor purposes, with purposive dialectical movement in which every stage of synthesis is higher than the thesis and the antithesis. This means introducing through the backdoor an idealist principle while professing to banish all idealism as unscientific.

The rapid progress of the physical sciences and technology in the nineteenth century had led to the concept that all reality was material and that even the mind of man was but a refulgence of the material brain and had no independent substantive reality. Many scientific thinkers of that age were inclined towards materialism. Marx's philosophy is a typical product of the intellectual climate of the nineteenth century. Since then, in the twentieth century, many new discoveries have been made by scientists that have brought about radical change in human outlook and thought. Great scientists like Eddington, James Jeans and Einstein have in their books expounded the idealistic implications of modern science and made it possible for many modern scientific thinkers to return to religion and believe in God.
The design, harmony and purposiveness in the universe; the miracle of life; the instincts in the animals by which they are guided successfully in the course of their lives; the reason, free-will and conscience in man; his capacity to distinguish between right and wrong, good and bad, true and false, and his will to fight against his own desires, which he judges as evil, and even to lay down his life for an ideal—all these are indisputable proofs of the existence of God. The fact is that belief in the existence of God is an inescapable demand of moral consciousness. In order that morality may be a conscious and rational pursuit, it is necessary that the universe should be a Moral Order. And it cannot be a Moral Order unless there is a Moral Creator and Ruler, who has created it for a moral end and endowed it with a moral constitution, and who governs and rules it for the fulfilment of a moral purpose. Indeed, morality has no valid and inviolable sanction except in the belief in the existence of God. Above all, God's existence is the stern demand of the spiritual consciousness of humanity, which found its most vigorous expression in the lives of numberless spiritual luminaries throughout human history, which influenced human destiny in a manner as no other force did. Ultimately, the surest proof of the spiritual nature of the ultimate reality (as opposed to the materialist view of Marx) and of the existence of God is God's revelation of Himself to those who sincerely and earnestly seek Him and to the prophets of many nations and ages.

Scientific method and reason are undoubtedly valuable sources of knowledge and of great practical use to man, but they have their limitations. Scientific method and reason can tell us nothing about the ultimate reality, the meaning of the universe, the purpose of man's existence, the mystery of life and death and many other similar questions that have persistently appeared in the mind of man and are of vital interest and importance to him. They can tell us nothing at
all about values like truth, beauty and goodness. The answers to these questions come to man only by means of what Iqbal called Religious Experience, the highest form of which is God’s revelation to the prophets.

Marx’s view that the economic factor is the primary factor (the substructure) in human society, and that the religious beliefs and moral values are parts of the superstructure which is determined by the economic system at a given time, is a falsification of history. This theory totally ignores the role of great prophets, saints and idealists in history. Again and again it has been seen that a new religious faith, revealed through a prophet, has brought about revolutionary changes and reforms in the socio-economic system, rather than being itself determined by the latter. The fact is that man is a being endowed with intelligence and this develops as he rises in the scale of civilization. Through it he provides himself with the means of subsistence, and at the same time with the political system, the laws, art forms and the like that he regards as necessary for his security and well-being. The two are parts of the same process, and there is no occasion to bring them into opposition and to make the one dependent upon the other. If it be that the way in which men think and the various institutional and other forms to which their ideas give rise are influenced by the manner in which they make their living, the converse is equally true. It must be conceded that Karl Marx has made an important contribution to human thought by emphasizing the importance of the economic factor, which had been seriously neglected, but he has given it an undue prominence and thus oversimplified the complexity of the social situation.

**Marxist Economics**

Marx accepts in its entirety the doctrine which embodies the orthodox English economics of the nineteenth century, that labour is the source of value, develops it, and
then bases upon it conclusions which are almost exact antithesis of those drawn by the orthodox economists.

Like most of the writers who preceded him, Marx attributed the economic value of commodities to the labour expended on them. This was in essence Ricardo’s view. Marx developed this view by adding that in order to produce value the labour must be socially necessary. Value in exchange, as markets develop, may be measured in money terms, but if all illusions and deceptions of money are penetrated, the consumer who wishes to use an article is merely paying for the socially necessary labour that went into it. Money is the intermediary.

The capitalist, however, is not buying articles for use, he is buying articles for resale. A cotton-mill owner buys yarn, spindles and the labour of the workers. Each of these components of the final product costs him the price of the labour that went into it. But he manages to sell the product of his mill for more than it cost him. If he did not then there would be no profit in the transaction. From where does this extra value come? It is created by the labour of the workers. What the employer pays the worker is only enough to keep the worker alive (Here is the Malthus-Ricardo “Iron law of Wages”). But what he collects from the customer is the true value of labour put into the article. There is a great difference between the true value of the labour put into the article by the labourer and what the capitalist pays the labourer as his wages. The difference between the two is what Marx calls “surplus value”, which is created by the labour of the worker but is appropriated by the capitalist as his profit. Thus, the capitalist, in the process of accumulating wealth for himself, robs and exploits the worker.

Let us assume, for example, that it would take only a half working-day's work to produce the minimum of sub-
sistence of a wage-earner for a whole day. Since the employer need offer no more than is required to maintain the supply of labour, he will pay a wage equivalent of the minimum of subsistence, or for a half day's work. But does he require his employee to work only half a working-day? By no means; he insists that the worker shall put in, not four hours (half a working day), but eight hours (a full working day), though he pays him wages equivalent to the value of the labour of only half a working day. Or suppose the employer introduces new machinery that will double the output of the worker in a day. Does he then double the wages? Not at all; he keeps the surplus value for himself. Only in such ways is privately owned capital accumulated, since if the capitalist paid out to the worker all the value created by the latter, he would accumulate nothing.

By thus putting together the classical theory of value and the classical theory of wages, Marx demonstrated the inevitability of exploitation of the worker by the capitalist in a system where the means of production are privately owned (i.e., in a capitalist system). Marx predicted that the natural laws of capitalist development would lead to the elimination of neutrals in the class struggle, so that a relatively few capitalists, on the one hand, would confront a vast propertyless class of workers, or "proletariat", on the other. This division of people into opposing forces would come about through the spread of industry and big business, which would gradually absorb farmers of the land, take away the occupation of handicraftsmen and small tradesmen, and concentrate the ownership of capital in fewer and fewer hands. As the development of capitalism approaches its climax the working class would be subject to increasing misery. In the end, capitalism would falter and collapse as a solvent system from its own "internal contradictions". It could maintain itself only by continual extension into new sectors of production in the countries where it was strongest,
and into new areas of the world. Marx regarded monopolies, cartels and colonialism as advanced stages of capitalism. After Marx, Lenin expounded the theory that 'Imperialism' was the final, the 'highest' stage of capitalism. Eventually capitalism would have spread its blight so widely that there would be no more territory for it to conquer and exploit. In the meantime it would be subject to more and more periodic crises, caused by glutting of markets and accompanied by general unemployment.

It would be futile to deny the greatness of Karl Marx as a political economist or the truth of his general theory of capitalist exploitation. But that does not mean that all his ideas are equally true or that his theory is completely valid even today when capitalism itself has changed radically from what it was in Marx's lifetime. Modern economic thought has cast doubt on the classical explanation of 'value' as proceeding from labour time. Its derivative, the surplus value theory, therefore, also goes by the board and removes one of the principal planks from the Communist bark. It would be arbitrary to assign all surplus value to the efforts of labour, to the exclusion of the persons who provide land, capital and machines or the entrepreneur and the manager.

Karl Marx regarded his political economy to be a science. One recognised test of any scientific theory is the valid predictions by use of its logic. A favourite and obvious method of criticising Marx's economics is to demonstrate the historical errors in his predictions. Agriculture has not become subject to concentrated industrial ownership; independent businessmen and self-employed persons greatly outnumber big capitalists, the "industrial proletariat" proper, far from being almost all-inclusive, is not even a majority in most countries. The working class has not suffered increasing misery, but has enjoyed, in most industrial nations, rising trend of real wages and higher standards of living ever since
the middle of the nineteenth century. There have been severe depressions, inflation and unemployment, but no proof exists that depressions are, on the average, deeper or longer than when Marx wrote. The proletariat has not carried out a socialist revolution in any higher industrial state; what goes by the name of Communism has won its victories chiefly in backward and marginal regions.

Marxist Theory of State and Revolution

Karl Marx is in a very real sense the father of socialism. Before Marx there had, of course, been numerous theorists who, dissatisfied with the existing society, had found vent for the dissatisfaction in criticising capitalism and planning ideal utopias in which property was held in common and injustice was unknown. Some, like Robert Owen, had even attempted to give their ideals concrete expression, by the formation of model communities whose inhabitants were required to live the particular kind of life which the founder of the community considered to be the best life for men. But "utopian socialism", writes Lenin, "could not show a real way out." It was unable to explain the essence of wage labour under capitalism, to discover the laws of its development, or to find that social force capable of becoming the creator of a new society."

Marx, then, is the first socialist writer whose work can be termed scientific. He not only sketched the kind of society which he desired, but described in detail the stages through which it must evolve. He considered the collapse of capitalism and the socialist revolution to be the inevitable results of the "Internal contradictions" of capitalism and of class struggle. In the famous Communist Manifesto, Marx and Engels wrote:

"The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles."
"Freeman and slave, patrician and plebian; lord and serf, guild-master and journeyman, in a word, oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time ended, either in a revolutionary reconstitution of society at large, or in the common ruin of the contending classes. .......

"The modern bourgeois society that has sprouted from the ruins of feudal society has not done away with class antagonism. It has but established new classes, new conditions of oppression, new forms of struggle in place of the old ones.

"Our epoch, the epoch of the bourgeoisie, possesses, however this distinctive feature: it has simplified the class antagonisms. Society as a whole is more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps into two great classes directly facing each other: Bourgeoisie and Proletariat."

Marx pointed out that the bourgeoisie and the proletariat have no interests in common. Between them is a gulf which only a revolution involving a complete transformation of society can bridge. The ultimate Marxist-Communist aim—that is, the emancipation of humanity and the abolition of classes—would be realized in two distinct stages:

(1) Following the revolution and seizure of power by the Communist party, representing the proletariat, there would be a transitional socialist stage based on the domination of the state by the working class; (2) then will come a Communist, classless stage, in which the state as a repository of authority would vanish.

In the first (the socialist) stage, constitutional means would be abandoned, the machinery of the existing state
superceded, and a revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat proclaimed. In the economic sphere, the private ownership of the means of production would be abolished and important industries and services would be brought under public ownership and control, industry would be carried on for the purpose of administering to the needs of the community, and not with the object of making profits for individuals; the motive of social service, which is at present thwarted by the capitalization of industry, would be substituted for the incentive of private profit, and the principle governing the society will be "From each according to his ability, to each according to his work". Modern Communists have never hesitated to emphasize the severity and bitterness of the struggle which will accompany the overthrow of the capitalist class. Armed violence will be necessary on the part of the workers, not only to dispossess the capitalists, but to resist counter-revolutions designed to restore them, from within as well as from without.

In the final (the Communist) stage, there will be no classes and the state will become superfluous. Being an organization formed on a class basis to advance class interests, the state ceases to have any raison d'être as soon as it has suppressed class distinctions. It will then, in Lenin's words, "wither away", giving place to a free society of voluntary associations formed for the transaction of public business. The principle which will govern this society will be "From each according to his ability, to each according to his need".

There are two aspects of the Marxist theory of the state and the revolution, as sketched above, which the conscience of mankind finds most disturbing: (1) the doctrine of class struggle; and (2) the dictatorship of the proletariat.

To begin with, the notion of class struggle is a myth, and the very exhortation to the workers to unite is an
admission that there is no natural proletarian solidarity, as is attested by the relations in any particular country between white and coloured labour, skilled and unskilled labour, etc. Still less is there an identity of interests between workers in different countries. Measures which perpetuate the poverty of workers in one country are beneficial to those in another; while in no advanced country will the workers accept cheap foreign labour. And, again, all experience has hitherto proved that whenever the existence of any country appears to be threatened from without, its preservation is regarded as the dominant interest by all classes. And yet on the basis of this myth of class struggle the Marxists create hatred between various sections of the society and stir up troubles and revolutions which result in terrible cruelty, bloodshed and destruction.

The critics of Marxism have not failed to point out that the application of Marx's revolutionary doctrine leads to a greater tyranny than that which they overthrow. The dictatorship of the proletariat in fact means the dictatorship of the Communist party bosses, who, soon after the revolution settles down, become, as Milvan Djilas has ably shown, a New Class and begin dominating and oppressing the masses of people just as any ruling class in former times has done. Marxism was an ideology of protest against the evils of capitalist industrialization, but it has become instead the ideology of state-industrialization leading to centralized controls, postponement of consumption and rapid economic growth, as in Russia. The workers in that state, where the Communist experiment was first tried, are now subservient to a dominant governing class—the party—which has acquired ownership of all property, in effect. The most formidable objection to the Communist system is that it leads to compulsive regimentation of all activities and no place is left for individual initiative and freedom of thought and action. Against the party line no one can think, say or
do any thing. The workers can have no right to strike, for, in theory, that would be a strike against themselves. Under such a system the personality of man has little chance of fulfilment in all its reaches. Marx had predicted that ultimately the state would wither away. But the fact is that in Communist countries the state is all powerful and the ideals of classless society and stateless democracy have receded farther than ever. What has withered away in Communist countries is not the state, but individual personality, human rights and basic freedoms.

The Islamic socio-economic system

Like the other great faiths, Islam totally rejects the materialist philosophy of Karl Marx and believes in an Omnipotent, Omniscient, Omnipresent, All-wise, All-good, All-just, All-merciful and All-loving God, Who is not only the Creator, Sustainer and Ruler of all the worlds, but also the supreme Guide to man. He is a living God Who reveals Himself to man and guides him to the right path. Islam believes in the immortality of the human soul, in man’s personal responsibility for his actions, and in the life after death. It exhorts, encourages and strengthens man to become good and to do good, and has its modes of worship as means to spiritual and moral ends. But what distinguishes Islam from other faiths is that it is not a religion in the narrow sense of the word: it is a complete way of life. It is concerned not only with salvation in the next world, but also with establishing a just and harmonious social order in this world. It guides man not only in the matter of faith, but also in the right management of political, economic and international affairs. It does not have one set of principles and values for the private life of man and another, quite different, set of principles and values for his public life.

In the economic field Islam ensures social justice and equality without smothering individual freedom and initia-
tive. Islamic collectivism strikes a happy medium between the two extremes of laissez faire capitalism, which leads to uneven and inequitable distribution of wealth, and state capitalism (Communism), the totalitarian supremacy of a party or state such as would crush individual personality and turn man into a conditioned automaton.

In Islam the individual and the society have their rights as well as obligations marked out for them. To God, of course, belongs all that is in the heavens and the earth. He alone is the Absolute Owner of Wealth. While not completely abolishing private property, Islam imposes several limitations on it.

The first limitation on the right of ownership over property is imposed by the dictum that all property in the hands of man is in the nature of a trust for carrying out God’s purposes. As individual men are not the absolute owners of the property (God alone being the Absolute Owner), so they can be in all fairness deprived of it by the state if they are not observing the limits of God in the interest of social justice.

The second limitation on the right of ownership over property is that it should have been acquired by lawful methods. Islam considers all unearned income as unlawful. “Man shall have nothing except that for which he has worked and laboured”, says the Holy Qur’an (53 : 39). It upholds the dignity of work and labour. The Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, said, “No man eats better food than that which he eats out of the work of his own hands”. Among the business practices and incomes declared illegal are all dishonest and underhanded dealings, blackmarketing, profiteering, inordinate and unjustified raising of prices, speculation in goods and commodities, gambling, usury, monopoly. Above all, Islam checks exploit-
ation by the interdiction of Riba, which is “money bred of money” i.e., the augmentation of one’s wealth, not by any productive activity or work, but by investing or lending it to others so as to appropriate for oneself, the fruits of the labour of others. Says the Holy Qur’an: “O you who believe, Do not devour Riba, doubling and redoubling, and be careful of your duty to God that you may be successful” (3:129). “And whatever you lay out for Riba, so that it may increase in the property of men, it shall not increase with God, and whatever you give in charity, desiring God’s pleasure—these it is that shall get manifold” (30:39). Islam severely condemns the exploitation of man by man, depriving a man of the full return of his labour, and appropriation by any man or group of men of wealth produced by the workers.

The third limitation is imposed by the Quranic declaration that in all property owned by individuals there is a definite share of the needy and the less fortunate. No individual has the right to use his lawfully earned wealth on himself till he has given to the needy and the poor the share due to them. This takes two forms in Islam: (a) compulsory capital levy on savings, called Zakat, and (b) Voluntary charity and aid given to the deserving to eradicate human want and misery. In fact, according to Islam, a man has the right only to so much as is required to fulfil his needs. Whatever is in excess of his own needs must be spent in the way of God, which, in the terminology of the Quran, means the welfare of the community as a whole.

The fourth limitation is on the manner of spending one’s income or wealth. Islam condemns profligate expenditure on the one hand and niggardliness on the other. It wants that all men should live simply and shun luxuries. It is strongly opposed to riotous living and all kinds of unhealthy and improper pleasures and pastimes. In all fields and spheres of life (including the sphere of earning and spending money)
man must observe the moral values and pursue the high ideals prescribed by Islam.

Some properties requiring exploitation in the interests of the community as a whole are recognised as communal property, e.g., air, running waters, mountains, forests, pastures, natural springs, mines and mineral wealth, energy resources, etc. Cooperative marketing, consumer stores and co-operative farming can be resorted to as means of social amelioration. Besides, other properties and means of production can also be treated as national or communal properties on payment of adequate compensation to the owners of the properties involved (if they were honestly and legally acquired by them by their own productive labour) if the interests of the community as a whole call for such action. The Islamic state must regulate trade, commerce, industrial enterprises, distribution of income between employer and employee (so as to prevent exploitation) and take steps to establish social justice and bring about equitable distribution of wealth as part of comprehensive economic planning.

Just as in the economic sphere Islam seeks to put an end to capitalist exploitation as well as to "state tyranny" under Communism, so in the political sphere the Islamic system is different both from the bourgeois democracies of capitalist states on the one hand, and from the "dictatorship of the proletariat" (euphemistically called "people's democracy") of the Communist states, on the other. Islamic democracy starts with the conviction of the basic unity of all humanity. In an Islamic state all human beings are equal and have equal rights and obligations. The ultimate object of the Islamic democracy is the freedom of individual self-realisation. The object of life is the unification of the human will with the will of God as revealed through the moral and spiritual experiences of the prophets, mujaddids, and saints. But this surrender has to be achieved freely,
not by coercion. For Islam the state is not a super-individual entity or deity to be glorified and worshipped, it is only a means to enable the individuals to live in peace and security, to exercise their freedoms in ways that appear to them desirable to prevent them from exploiting one another, to ensure equality of opportunity, fundamental human rights and basic needs of life to all. The Islamic laws are claimed to be valid for all times and all climes and this is ensured by the principle of Ijtihad which is the principle of dynamic progress. This takes care of the variables of life and enables Muslims to frame a corpus of subsidiary laws, in the light of and within the limits set by the Quranic principles, so as to retain harmony with the vicissitudes of changes in time and place. The collective functions in the Islamic system are to be discharged by representatives of people (elected by universal franchise) by mutual consultation in a spirit of service and co-operation for the individual and general good. The Islamic state is under a duty to afford equal opportunities for progress, both spiritual and material, to all its citizens. All individuals enjoy the freedom of thought and expression. The non-Muslims living in an Islamic state have the same political and economic rights and opportunities as the Muslims. They have full freedom to profess, practice and preach their respective faiths. Islam postulates equality before law and equality of opportunity for all, for no privileged classes are countenanced within its fold. There are no intermediaries between God and man and there is no official priestly class. The Islamic polity is also free from colour prejudice and race-prejudice. It does not believe in narrow-nationalism. Islamic brotherhood transcends geographical and political boundaries and embraces within it as equals men of all races, colours, cultures and nationalities.
CHAPTER-1

ECONOMIC NEEDS – SUBJECTIVE AND OBJECTIVE

In attempting to solve problems, a start is often made at the wrong end of things. All factors that exist in the outside world are taken into consideration, but the most potent of all factors, the one that lies within our own selves, is invariably ignored. It is difficult to say whether it is just an oversight or a deliberate evasion of a task which appears insuperably hard. Whatever it be, there is little doubt that it is overlooking a factor which is the most essential of all. Economic needs there undoubtedly are and we appreciate the tacit belief of our communist friends that there is enough in the world for every one to be satisfied with. In a way, it is believing in a wise providence. But there is certainly a world of difference between genuine need and greed. The one can be satisfied but not the other. And so it is our firm belief that all attempts at an equitable and satisfying distribution of life’s provision must be frustrated so long as the greed in man remains uneradicated. If you analyse jealousy, the basic element in class war, you will find it nothing but a kind of uneasiness arising out of a sense of scantiness of one’s provision. This sense, of course, is awakened in man through a comparison with the possessions of others, but its source lies within his own self. And this sense of scantiness should not be regarded a limited or a conditional thing. Left to itself, it brooks no limitation and suffers no condition. Lack of self-culture has produced a class of people in our modern civilization who are jealous almost of every one. They are jealous not only of those who are better than themselves but also of those who are on the same level with themselves. So even if a complete equality of possession and amenities be brought about—a consummation still an elusive dream—the feeling of jealousy, from a psychological calculation, will be rampant all the same. Nay, if we go deeper we may
discover that it is the very same feeling that causes what we call the exploitation of the weak and the simple-minded by the strong and the resourceful. The spirit of grabbing is only the ugliest form of jealousy. The velocity of what is called struggle for existence, accelerated beyond a certain point, makes one feel jealous of the very existence of others. To such a perverted man the only justification for any other person’s existence is the latter’s abject subservience to his own existence and comfort and power. So the root cause of all injustices and iniquities is this feeling of jealousy which again has its source in the greed of the human mind. This does not mean that man is by nature greedy. Greed is only a perverted form of the urge of acquisition and love of possession. In its original uncorrupted form it is the mother of all earnings, enterprises, and inventions. It is the indiscriminate and unregulated exercise of this faculty that produces greed. The true urge for acquisition is judicious. It knows what things can be acquired without disturbing the social peace as also what is really useful to himself and to others. And if it fails in its objective it feels neither any dejection nor any annoyance. Whereas greed is rash and desperate and when baffled it becomes either down-hearted or furious. Preponderance of greed in a man or a society shows that there is lack of guidance or training in the exercise of this very fundamental and beneficial urge of the human mind. It makes the individual or the society not only unfit to earn fairly but also a stranger to the art of spending. The needed training in this respect can be provided by religion alone. One should enter a sound religious system to prevent the wholesome faculty of acquisition from turning into greed. The system of Islam had a very successful experiment carried out in this respect at the hand of the Holy Prophet Muhammad.

Islam created a society of people who not only scrupulously maintained in the course of their economic activities, the distinction between what is lawful and wholesome and
what is not but also were "neither extravagant nor parsimonious and (kept) between these the just mean". By a presistent self-culture, described in the words: "And the servants of the Beneficent are they who walk on the earth in humility, and when the ignorant address them, they say, Peace! And they who pass the night prostrating themselves before their Lord and standing" (The Quran, 25 : 63 - 64), they had freed their minds from the contamination of greed. They were a people of vigorous action, self-reliant and enterprising, a fact which shows that they had a keen sense of economic needs. But they were neither marauders nor pirates nor imperialists, because they successfully banished all greed from their minds. In other words, they were aware of the distinction between a true sense of need and the false craving called greed. Guided by the prophetic genius of their master they realised that the subjective aspect of man's economic life was even more important than the objective one. And if we of this age, with all our sincerity, leave this fact out of consideration and confuse genuine need with the greed of man, we shall never satisfy his economic needs and banish either individual or class jealousy. There can, then be no peace on this score anywhere at any time in the world.

To be clear, the sense of need in an imaginative mind is more often a mental phenomenon than a physical fact. It hardly needs any pointing out that civilized existence makes one aware of ever newer "needs" and lack of a corresponding moral culture aggravates this awareness to a degree that if one man is given the wealth and comfort of the whole world, to the exclusion of all others, one will still need more. The most sensible attitude should, therefore, be to be satisfied with the actual necessities of physical existence and, if anything more, whatever may fall to one's lot without much craving for it. But this needs a self-culture, that comes only through devotional practices. It is only through such a culture that a man can confine his sense of need to the things
actually needed for his physical existence and to what may come to him without being jealous of others. It is to this moral attainment that the Holy Qur'an refers when it says: "And whoever is saved from the greediness of his soul, these it is that are the successful" (64:16).

It is exactly here that our economists have blundered. In the beginning of their speculations they just evaded this subjective aspect of economic needs. But as they proceeded in formulating their theories they came positively to repudiate the claim of inner culture on the peaceful settlement of the economic demands of man. The result is before us. The economic classes are engaged in a war of mutual annihilation. Not able either to hide or avert this unpleasant fact these economists and social thinkers have come forward to console us by their specious dictum that this horrible state of things is a necessary stage in the social evolution of mankind, as if burning hatred from both sides has by itself ever given birth to love and amity between two contending parties. A more depressing and helpless philosophy cannot be imagined. Possibly it is a logical conclusion to the theory of "the survival of the fittest" deduced from a mal-observation of the animal world. Man is but too apt to read facts in the light of his own predilections. Civilized humanity, however, is getting tired of these "theories," advanced as principles of social action. It is coming gradually to realise that it is not for the scientists and economists to adumbrate rules of social behaviour and that a higher type of people is needed to handle this rather delicate and responsible task. It is dawning on thinking humanity that questions of social relationships can be properly solved by leaders who have an understanding of the power of the mind over matter. It is being increasingly appreciated now that the so-called needs of man are more often unreal than real and that they can be considerably reduced by a suitable culture of the mind. Such a reduction, if it comes to be accomplished, will not
only facilitate an equitable distribution of wealth but also give man that inner happiness which he actually seeks through his passionate pursuit of worldly comfort and possession. Given a correct vision of the subjective aspect of our economic needs, we shall be able to distinguish between the real needs and the artificial ones, as also between the right means of their satisfaction and the wrong ones. The effort for the supply of real needs to every one born of human parents is undoubtedly a praiseworthy one. But unless due attention is paid to the subjective aspect of the question, artificial needs unleashing the unbounded greed of man will defeat the very object of this noble effort. As we have already remarked, it is the uncontrolled greed in man that lies at the root of all exploitation. If, therefore, we are able to create a standard of culture that makes it dishonourable to give expression to the weakness of greed in man, we shall have stopped the tyranny of exploitation at its origin. Neither is it an impossible task to attempt. All prophets—the founders of religion—have attempted it and have succeeded in their attempts. It is all a question of determination and a vigorous action on such a determination. It is, moreover, the only correct way to achieve the object in view.

Unfortunately the rules of our current civilization not only condone the exhibition of greed but even regard it as quite decent to arouse and excite greed in others under cover of art, entertainment, business propaganda and the like. We all own and even admire misguided people who misguide a whole world by an appeal to its fancy for economic needs. We concede that in the course of this avalanche of debasing propaganda, certain things are introduced in the everyday life of man, which are truly beneficial to him and have accordingly a really economic value. But their proportion is ever so small compared to those numerous other things of which the value lies only in the fancy of man. As
a matter of fact, it may be truly said that a modern man is overwhelmed with his sense of "needs" thanks to the insidious and licensed propaganda of those who control and manage our civilized life through thoughts and suggestions as much as through manufacture. And while this state of things continues to exist, we in our simplicity still hope to bring satisfaction to the mind of man in respect of his economic needs through outside regulation and management of things. Surely this is nothing better than running after the will-o' the -wisp.

Analyse a modern mind and it will be found to consist principally of two things: (1) An extreme dissatisfaction with life owing to unfulfilled "economic needs"; and (2) a dread of poverty, in the sense of the lowering of the standard of life.

Whether at any time in the future, the state will be in a position to enforce the rule "to each according to his needs" is yet a question of speculation. Far from approaching that ideal state of things, we find a contrary tendency in states that profess a faith in this ideal. The reason is not far to seek. To ascertain individual needs in all their details is a task too stupendous to be undertaken by a human state at any time in history.

And unless and until this ideal is attained, the external arrangements cannot bring any relief to the mind of man on these two scores if the collective mind of society is not instructed to look down upon any expression of or any appeal to the greed in man. In the absence of this training the raging dissatisfaction on the basis of fancied economic needs together with the dread of poverty will paralyse the urge of civilized existence and letting loose anti-social feelings in the minds of men will disrupt even social life itself. Rightly has the Holy Quran called the latter a disease, i.e., dread of
poverty, the work of the devil: "The devil threatens you with poverty" (2 : 268). Indeed, if the chief function of the devil is to jeopardise the prospect of man through wrong suggestions, this dread of poverty must be regarded as the most potent of its weapons in accomplishing its object in these days. This dread chases a modern man all throughout his life and haunts his mind perpetually like the proverbial sword of Damocles. It paralyses all his energy for good and noble deeds. It makes him self-centred and cowardly. Above all, it makes him dissatisfied with his fellow beings and even with his own self. And what is poverty to the vast majority of these people? It is mostly a fall in the existing standard of living. What a boon of our much vaunted civilization! Indeed, we have mistaken the weed for the plant and are frightened by a ghost of our own creation. It is obvious, that freedom from this false fear will make mankind heal- their economically as well as morally. It will be ridding humanity of an evil spirit, so to speak. But this cannot be accomplished but through a sound religious culture of the mind.

Religion and Class War

One may agree or differ with the view that the history of social humanity, as known to us, is a history of class war or class struggle, but there is no denying the fact that class antagonism exists in an acute form in the present-day society. The hatred and ill-feeling between different economic classes have assumed fearful proportions. And when it is said that class antagonism is a very old story, it really means no more than that material comforts have a great attraction for men and that it affords a strong ground for mutual jealosies. It would be equally true to say that sex also furnishes a strong ground for jealousy. The stories of Helen of Troy, of Cleopatra, of Sita, or of Draupadi, are repeated every day in different forms. The police records will disclose the exact proportion between the wealth-crimes and sex-
crimes. The one may be more fundamental and universal an urge than the other, but they both lead to jealousy and bad blood. Absolute equality of worldly possessions, in spite of relentless wars, both class and international, still remains a distant ideal. It cannot be denied that the basis of class war exists today as it did centuries ago, and, for all we know, it may continue to exist for all times to come. But this does not mean that the relationship between the classes will or should continue to be of the same bitter nature as we witness to-day. Things must improve if humanity is not to experience a social cataclysm. Jealousy and class hatred will raise its head here and there, in every case of human possession and assertion, but they ought to be kept submerged beneath a higher and better feeling, and should be controlled by a more refined standard of the values of things. No sane person can assert that the materialistic tendency can ever be altogether eliminated from human nature and hence the view that jealousy and class struggle on this score is as old as the historical man is correct in its own way. We are prepared to go further and say that it is as old as man himself—even the primitive man—who lived in supposedly small communistic groups. In spite of all this it would be incorrect to say that this is the only tendency working in the social life of man. Concurrently with this tendency is the idealistic tendency in man which curbs its fury by a sublime diversion. It has been the role of religion to keep this idealistic tendency alive in man. And it is only when religion has failed to play its part efficiently that the other tendency becomes predominant and gives one the impression that it is the only and the most basic tendency in man. It must be recognised that efficiency and talent has a value of its own. In the absence of a higher standard it demands a material valuation. An efficient man, a talented person, a high-thinking personage, would demand a "good living" as we call it—one may say "high living". But analysing the nature of man one can see that he does not necessarily want this kind of valuation. He derives
greater satisfaction from less concrete valuation of his gifts. He may as well feel satisfied with such an abstract thing as honour and esteem. As a matter of fact, man has been found to give away his material possession to see such an abstract return for his service. Indeed, even to-day, when materialism reigns supreme, there does not appears to be anything possessed by man more valuable than his honour. The highest security that a man can give to his fellow being is his "word of honour". In a society artificially built, such as our modern society is, honour seems to be indissolubly connected with material possession. We honour a man only when he happens to have an appreciable possession of material wealth. But it is so because there is no device in our days to detach honour from material wealth. This task of detachment has always rested with the people of religion. It is the religious leaders that, possessing a high vision of things and able to maintain an abstract measure of valuation, set an example of how high efficiency and high thinking can be maintained in the midst of material simplicity. They embrace what is called poverty in popular parlance but it is a self-imposed one. The communistic programme aims at evolving this type of man, but has so far failed in creating this class. A man of this type is extremely efficient and deserves highest material return, but he exchanges it for an abstract prize—the esteem and regard of people. Through him the centre of honour is shifted from affluence to asceticism, from the aristocracy and the bourgeois to the proletarian quarters. It is with reference to this self-imposed poverty that the Holy Prophet Muhammad is reported to have said: "Poverty is my pride." Yes, one who has experienced this kind of poverty, is undoubtedly proud of it. But to create such a valuation of efficiency in one's mind and have it established in, and recognised by, the society, one needs a higher kind of culture which religion alone can provide. And as a point of fact religion in all ages has provided this culture. It is only when the religious culture has waned in a particular society
and its religious teachers have themselves fallen victims to
the general worldly standards of valuation, that the society
is left with this as the sole standard. Then a keen competition
for material possession, and consequent jealousy, becomes
the order of the day. Having no example of high thinking
and plain living, people vie with one another in high living on
the slightest pretext of efficiency, or, even without any such
pretext, not only because high living is enjoyable in itself
but more so because it is the only, though artificial, criterion
of honour and respectability in society. Christianity has
suffered this fate. From early times in its history the Chris-
tian clergy has been betraying a weakness for worldly power
and possession. The continuous struggle of the Church with
the State, the Pope’s love of power, the Church’s anxiety for
worldly possession, are all matters of history. Not once do
we find during this period the clergy establishing their
supremacy on pure spiritual grounds. With the separation
of the Church from the State, the political ambitions of the
clergy were all dashed to the ground. But the money greed
continued and the clergy found its melancholy satisfaction
in the fact that they were classed with the aristocracy every-
where. They discarded their real role of combining the
mental vigour, and moral refinement of the ideal bourgeois
with the material surrounding of the natural proletariat. Had
they stuck to their allotted position they would not only
have been a consolation and an encouragement to the “have
notts” but would also been a whip for the “haves.” By creat-
ing an abstract standard of honour, they could have mini-
mised the honour and prestige of the people of wealth. The
jealousy between the economic classes could thus have been
prevented from assuming any fearful proportions. But the
weakness of the flesh, deplored by Master, prevented the
Christian clergy from playing their part faithfully. They
failed in their mission and would not allow their flock to
come in contact with another religious tradition that could
remove these drawbacks. The history of the Holy Prophet
Muhammad, and his Successors in spiritual office, was shut out from the knowledge of Christian nations. No wonder, the laymen in Christendom should develop a system of society that "has stripped off its halo every occupation hitherto honoured and looked upto with reverent awe...has converted the physician, the lawyer, the priest, the poet, the man of science, into its paid wage-labourer, has torn away from the family its sentimental veil and has reduced the family relation to mere money-relation." *(The Communist Manifesto).*

For all these outrageous changes in man's social psychology, the entire responsibility rests with the priestly class. They were expected to rise above the money value of things and set a standard of moral values for the people at large. But they themselves became victims of the "money value" and the whole structure of society was inevitably reduced to this despicable depth. Material possession thus became the sole standard of man's honour and class-war became inevitable.

What then is the remedy? Is it to fan the flame of class-war, as is proposed by Marxism, and thus to annihilate the bourgeois by force? Let sane humanity give some thought to the question before plunging headlong into any action.

Let us remember that efficiency must have its price, and economical living, the true basis of capital, must have its reward. When nature has gifted a man with a talent, does it besem man or even lie properly in his power to deny him the credit for it? Indeed, to deny it will be to upset the order of nature. Then if you do not reward thrift, you will be penalising a virtue, which, apart from its moral values, is the only safety-valve in man's grim struggle for existence.

Give unskilled labourer his human rights, and maintain him in his human dignity by all means. Rather give a vir-
tuous labourer more respect and honour than to a skilled but unscrupulous labourer. But still the skilled labourer must have his due and thrifty worker must have his reward.

Let us not be frightened by the fact that capital has led to Capitalism with all its current evils. The tragedy of Capitalism is no fault of capital as such or of thrift out of which it grows. It is rather due to a lack of proper guidance in the accumulation of capital and its use in trade and commerce. If Europe had adopted Islam as a code of social conduct when it took to large-scale production and international distribution, this calamity would never have befallen humanity. We should not forget that suppression of any tendency by violence, has never succeeded in the world; it has always fostered animosity and suppressed rage bursting out into a counter fury.

The remedy, therefore, does not lie in this direction. Efficiency, talent and economical living must be rewarded in some way or other. For an ordinary man with no higher vision of things, money or worldly possession can be the only measure of such a reward. But the matter should not be left there. Let religion do its work and create a value higher and truer than the material. Let civilized humanity be introduced to a religion which has a living tradition for creating such a value, a religion of which the leaders have always been proud of their altruistic and self-imposed poverty—meaning extreme simplicity of living, in spite of their extraordinary talents and the capability of producing enormous wealth. In other words, let the tradition of Islam be widely known to Europe.

Nor would we be confused to find this class struggle as a recurring phenomenon in history. This repetition merely establishes that Divine intervention in human affairs is a recurring need of humanity. This feature of history can
confuse only those who believe that Divine Will has ceased to be revealed after a certain point in history. Muslims believe in a God Who is never indifferent to human affairs and repeats His guidance from age to age. Thus, so long as the effect of one guidance continues, struggle of the classes is kept within its bounds. Classes do exist, as they must. The less fortunate do feel uneasy. The more fortunate do exhibit some arrogance as it is natural for them to do. But the higher values of life created by religion do not allow this uneasiness and this arrogance to break all bounds of moral consideration. These feelings are controlled and checked together with other passions of men, in the interest of ordered social life and the common interest of humanity. A time comes, however, when the religious inspiration received through one revealed guidance ebbs in a particular society. The teachers of religion themselves become worldly-minded. Greed and avarice sway their minds as much as those of other people. The society is thus left with only one standard whereby to judge a man’s worth and honour, the standard of material possessions! When such a state of things prevails, the antagonism between the classes naturally becomes acute. The higher class becomes more wealth-conscious and the lower more jealous. But all that such a situation indicates is that a fresh intervention of God has become necessary to re-establish the discarded moral values of things, as a sublime diversion from the raging competition in the field of money possessions. Believers in the providential care of God look for and do find this Divine intervention coming at the proper moment, and illuminate their souls with the light thus provided. The rest of the world turns to it only after prolonged and painful experiences in other directions.

It has also been suggested that a kind of evolution is noticed in this class-struggle, that it does not appear in the same hue and colour at every fresh appearance, that classes show a steady progressiveness with the progress of history.
This again will confuse such people of religion as do not believe in the evolution of human social relationship. Islam believes in such an evolution. Islam inculcates that from the Patriarchal to the International life there has been a steady progress in the social consciousness of man and that this is one reason why religious guidance is repeated from time to time, that a progressive revelation is needed to meet the new social conditions. With the advancement in social consciousness, social evils assume an advanced appearance too. People who would stick to a guidance vouchsafed at the clan or tribal period of history, may regard religion inadequate for an advanced stage of social consciousness. But to a Muslim the case is very different. He finds his religion quite abreast of the international age and finds therein ample provision for mitigating the bitterness seizing the economic classes of this evolved stage in human social consciousness. It is for the world to turn to the religious leaders of Islam to be benefited by this Divine light and guidance.

Islam and the Eradication of Poverty

Only one man in history has tried to define poverty and it is he who has prayed to God to be spared the ignominy of poverty. It is the Holy Prophet Muhammad, (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). The fact is that when you specify the barest necessity of human life you really define poverty, as it is deficiency in the barest necessity that, strictly speaking, constitutes poverty. Without this specification it is difficult to say what poverty is. Equal distribution of the national wealth, the object of Communism, may still leave the members of a nation poor. Seen from the point of view of a higher standard of life, under the socialistic administration, far from poverty being eradicated, a whole nation may be regarded as suffering from poverty. The

1. "O Allah! I seek refuge in Thee from infidelity and poverty" – Al-Nasai.
reformers may only have the satisfaction of making all the members of the nation share the poverty, instead of it being shared by a section of people; but poverty may still be regarded as a feature of the nation's life. Take the case of India. An average middle class man here lives in conditions which will be unbearable to an average so-called poor man in England. If to-day India is socialised, we do not expect the standard to be raised higher than the middle class man level. And if the dream of the Western socialists comes true and the whole of the world is socialised, and equal provision be made for inhabitants of fertile productive countries as well as for those of barren and unproductive ones, the standard of living may, for all we know, have still to be lowered. So judging by the current capitalistic standard, the whole world may in that case be regarded as suffering from poverty. It is essential therefore for a correct understanding of the true nature of the economic disease, called poverty, to come to a decision as to what constitutes poverty, i.e. the absence or shortage in the barest necessity of life. In the absence of this, eradication of poverty will ever remain an unrealised dream. In the words of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and be blessings of Allah be upon him): “The son of man has no better right than that he should have a house wherein he may live and a piece of cloth whereby he may hide his nakedness, and a piece of bread and some water” (Tirmizi)

And in the absence of a better and a more sensible standard, the world will have to accept this as the correct standard to judge the presence or absence of poverty in a nation or an individual. Neither does it need any facts and figures to convince one that taking this as the measure of poverty, poverty can indeed be eradicated from the world. But if you leave the matter to the unbounded desire of man, you will never remove poverty either from an individual or from a nation; far less from humanity. Indeed, the more you think of it, the greater will appear to you the essential
need of specifying this barest necessity of human life. Because, unless you first settle it, you cannot start on any programme for the eradication of poverty. While once you settle this question the movement for the socialisation of property and national wealth loses its sting of extremism, and the compromise between capital and labour becomes a practical proposition. Because, any system that guarantees this barest necessity to the most unlucky man or woman in the realm, can be regarded as having rooted out poverty from its body politic. Systems of society may vary from nation to nation and from country to country, but so long as they agree to guarantee this minimum necessity of human life to its individual members, they may be regarded as having conceded the principal demand of Socialism. And for all we know, no enforcement of a dead level of equality is needed to ensure this minimum. As a matter of fact, the idea of absolute communism may be regarded as already dead, seeing that Russia itself has discarded it. So, all that really remains of this social commotion of the 20th century is this question of the eradication of poverty.

Now, this responsibility for the provision of the minimum need of the individual may wholly, categorically and unconditionally rest with the Government, which as we have always contended is an unwieldy affair, or the responsibility may indirectly and ultimately rest with it. In the Islamic system the responsibility of the state is of the latter type. Had the European social systems acknowledged this much of responsibility of the state one can say, without any fear of contradiction, that the extremism of Marxism would never have come into existence.

Living in a world which condones poverty making it almost an invariable feature of social life it is difficult for a modern man to believe that poverty may be an exception and an accident even in a society where there is no
enforced socialism. And the Islamic Society is exactly the type of society where it is really an accident. Yes, in a Society where man’s mind works normally, inspired by an enlightened philosophy and code of life and social behaviour follows normal rules of conduct, poverty in the sense enunciated above is an accident just like any other accident, such as a motor-car accident or the accident of drowning. And it needs no wild imagination to comprehend that even in a perfectly organised socialistic state, such accidents of want of food or barest clothing or barest residence may not be altogether non-existent. The only thing to see is whether it is really an accident taking place in spite of all the effort to avert it or a course of things allowed to happen by sheer callousness or by lack of will to control and stop it altogether. Since a wrong social feeling and social behaviour in the West has produced a state of things that condones poverty and in a way enjoys it, it is wrong to suppose that poverty is a rule with all other societies and not an accident with them. As a rule it may be abolished even by force, but as an accident it will be there so long as accident of all sorts will continue to take place owing to the inherent imperfections of human control of things. Thirteen hundred years of experience has shown that in Islam poverty has never been a rule, unless it be in a society that has been de-Islamised through its close contact with outside cultures. The standard of living may be low in a particular Islamic society but to call it poverty in the true scientific sense of the term will be a mistake if not an international attempt to confuse issues. The social system of Islam does not allow any individual to go without food or minimum dress or residence. The institution of the mosque apart from other institutions which are many, is a guarantee against such a mishap. Any wayfarer or homeless person can stay in the mosque and has to be fed by the congregation if he so stays, and clothed as well if indeed he needs that too. But while waging ruthless and ceaseless war against true poverty, Islam has created
a mentality in its followers which makes it honourable to
give and not to take, either from an individual or from a
collective body, call it state or whatever you like. This sense
of self-respect, if you will think over it, is the only guarantee
of economic stamina in a nation. Devoid of it, it may turn
into a nation of shameless indolents. It needs a positive
effort to banish poverty from a nation. Islam started this
double war in the beginning of its history, and succeeded
quickly to achieve its object. It is reported in authentic
history that at the time of Caliph Umar, one could not find
a person that would receive any help; every one was in a
position and a mood to give and not to receive. This, indeed,
is the ideal society towards which Western Socialism called
Sovietism is vaguely groping. The hand that gives, whether
individual or collective, is better than the hand that takes
whether individually or collectively. That is a dictum of the
Prophet Muhammad, (peace and blessings of Allah be upon
him). It is a strange understanding indeed that whereas
private charity is deemed as derogatory to a man’s self-
respect the Western mind does not revolt at the idea of
collective charity, viz, the help that comes from the state.
Perhaps it will be said that the private rich man shows an
arrogance while giving the help but that again is lack of
culture. Any man who has any experience of the Islamic
Society, will readily aver that the giver in Islam assumes the
humility of a beggar whereas it is a common experience to
see a beggar assuming the pride of a giver. It is not unoften
that one sees a beggar reprimanding a rich man who has not
given anything to him or whose gift falls short of his expec-
tations. No doubt, this is carrying a thing too far but it is
a case of virtue carried to an excess becoming vice. In Islam
it is honourable not to ask from any one but from God, the
Sustainer of the Universe. But if one does need any help he
is never made to feel the small man that he will be if he
becomes a member of the Christian community.
In Islam it is the foremost duty of the state to see that no poverty in its true sense exists anywhere in the nation, but not always through direct interference. And here comes in another question that has been unnecessarily puzzling the minds of our Christian friends of the West.

State is neither a curse nor a punishment nor indeed the sole vehicle of collective social expression. It is a self-felt need of the individual. State is a provision made by the individual himself for guiding and controlling himself in moments of forgetfulness or excitement. It is an essential need and yet not the supreme need of social life. In normal condition of things, the native social feeling of man guided by his practical common-sense is enough guidance for social behaviour. State interference in such a condition will do more harm than good. It will stunt the growth of the nation mentally, morally, economically and politically. The state, however, must look after the cases of accident. Islam favours that view of the question which stands for as little state interference as possible, but it insists that its range of interference must cover all cases of accident.

Like all other accidents, the accident of poverty must be its duty to avert and to redress. The State is accordingly held responsible for the provision of food, clothes and residence to the individual if he cannot provide for these himself. But it must not be burdened with the entire duty of feeding, clothing and housing the whole population. That will be a task too unwieldy and cramping at the same time. It will, moreover, be an unsuitable approach to the question to paralyse the instincts springing from biological elements of animal life, because on these lines, as Islam rightly holds, lies the moral and spiritual evolution of man. It is noteworthy that whereas other religions as they exist today discard animal instincts as wholly Satanic, Islam considers these as the very basis of spiritual faculties. According
to this religion original animal instincts properly guided and controlled are transformed into moral qualities which in their turn give birth to spiritual life in man. As we see it, Marxism has its moral source in the other, i.e. non-Islamic theology and believes animal instincts as of the devil and productive of nothing but evil. That is why it is so anxious to crush the animal instincts of family affection and natural group loyalty. It may be that it possesses no means whereby to utilise them to the advantage of man but that was a weakness of Christianity as well. But just because you cannot handle a thing, is it wise to kill it particularly when you find some other systems using it to the great advantage of humanity? It is not only wrong but arrogant. So at bottom with all its abhorrence for religion and theology, Marxism is blindly following Christian theology. It would appear as if one can never get rid of theology particularly when one is dealing with human conduct and character. You have to go by some theory or other about the potentialities and drawbacks of human nature; you must have some conception of the ultimate aim of human social life and this is entering in the field of theology. Let, therefore, no one be seduced into the belief that Marxism involves no religious belief and has nothing to do with Christianity. Let it be realised that although Marxism has repudiated some mystical beliefs of Christianity it has faithfully adopted what really matters in that faith viz., the conception of human nature and its ultimate goal. Its conception of state and the idea of its jurisdiction is a natural and logical sequel to the Christian conception of human nature. It wants to dedicate poverty by force because it cannot trust the good sense of man. It regards poverty as natural state because it regards human nature instinctively callous. It fails like Christianity to see that man's callousness towards some has its paradoxical counterpart somewhere in the opposite quality of exorbitant love for some others. It is the want of balance and proportion that cause the mischief. If one religion has failed
to establish the balance all religions cannot be said to have failed. Islam's appeal to our Marxist friends is that they should not wholly distrust human nature and for that matter the individual man and his natural affections, as these are the seeds of the spiritual man to whom are revealed the hidden laws of existence and the soul-stirring vision of the ultimate destiny of man.

Given necessary guidance, the nature of man functions quite normally, making for the best of ordered social life. But it has its lapses, causing accidents and consequent disturbances which must be provided against. It is here that state must step in. Provided the state knows where to step in and stop the accident growing into a menace, the society will exhibit all those qualities of brain and heart which are the only real safeguards against poverty.

If in this controlled and guarded freedom, there still remains some room for accidents, it is not a very heavy price to pay. As we have said, even in the enforced eradication of poverty there must be some room for such accidents, and we do not think the number of accidents in the system contemplated by Islam will be any greater. This is a strange age in which one is more impressed by riddles than by plain logical truths. And of such riddles one is that a rule of unmitigated state violence is a necessary preliminary to the dissolution of all states. It is really a wonderful proposition that whereas you cannot trust the individual human nature you must have implicit faith in a group of people having uncontrolled power of violence to evolve an era of absolute peace and concord in the world. Power is always a hard thing to digest whether it be in an individual or a group. The person to whom uncontrolled power is first delegated is invariably a benevolent man. But benevolence in a man of power is a rare quality and more often than not dies with the man and even before him. History has shown that the group is no better than the
individual in this matter. And of all powers the power of violence is the most unsafe thing that a population can delegate to any individual or group. At least, Islam never recommends such a delegation of powers. All executive powers in Islam must be under the strictest supervision of constitutional law. As for violence, there is no room for it anywhere in its system.

It disallows all kinds of revengefulness. Its attitude towards the enemies is enunciated in the following words:

"Repel (evil) with what is best, when, lo, he between whom and thee there is enmity would be as if he where a warm friend" (The Qur-an, 41 : 34).

In what a sharp contrast does this stand to the policy of terrorisation advocated by Marxism and implied in the term class-war! Islam has no faith in violence. It believes only in fighting in self-defence and in replying in the same term and on an equal footing, never regarding anyone or any party as incorrigibly inimical. It knows that violence reacts in a greater violence, and cruelty in a greater cruelty. It knows that man goes wrong only through misguidance or through temporary insanity, if the term may be permitted in this connection. One may act with the object of stopping the evil so produced from spreading trouble but in no case should one regard the man as inherently vicious. That being the attitude of Islam, it does not favour either wholesale responsibility of the state in the eradication of poverty nor yet any violent measures adopted for the purpose. It believes in the native goodness of man to work for the imperceptible eradication of poverty provided no immoral influences are at work. Like all other sins, economic sins fall within the purview of state censorship. Indeed if economic sins, i.e., earning by anti-social ways, are not allowed to consolidate themselves in any society, poverty in its real sense, cannot
find any room to grow. It is because the Christian social system has no principles to guide them in this matter that they now feel obliged to cause violence to certain instinctive play of human faculties. Islam, luckily, is placed in a more fortunate position. It has regulations to guide man in his small economic affairs so that even when matters assume wider dimensions nothing is found to threaten social peace. The dictum, "A stitch in time saves nine" is very appropriate to this case.

Given proper guidance to the individual man, telling him clearly which line of economic effort is right and which wrong, he will never be a callous hoarder. It is the sins of earning that mostly hardens the heart of a man. Nay, he must also be told the wholesome ways of spending the money. Given these instructions, there remains very little for the state to do in the eradication of poverty, excepting to bring the stray sinning person to book and making reparations for any accident that may have been caused either by intentional sin or the unavoidable imperfections of human efforts. In short, the state’s function should be one of supervision and correction like that of the police and nothing beyond.

“Capitalism,” a typically Western phenomenon, may be regarded by some as a natural evolution of human social organism but to us, Muslims, it is a calamity befalling humanity in consequence of a wrong religion putting a premium on human sins, individual and social. From the era of Islam to that of Capitalism is a lapse, a fall. As a true offspring of the current system, Marxism may condone it, but we Muslims deplore its very existence and consider it a nightmare. It plays no part whatsoever in human social evolution unless it be to stay its progress. The poverty which forms the basis of Marxist slogan is a peculiar creation of Capitalism with all its Western implications. And if any system can really eradicate poverty in its truest sense, it has to be the one
which believes Capitalism to be a false system in its very origin. And while believing it to be false it must not adopt any violent measures to rectify its mistakes, otherwise the evil will go on swinging from extreme to extreme in the manner of a pendulum. And this is exactly the attitude of Islam towards the question.

Indeed, the enthusiasm for any reform of this nature must be enlightened by a correct knowledge of the deeper laws of human nature. The absence of this enlightenment always makes matters worse in the course of time.
CHAPTER—II

ASSUMPTIONS AND PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNISM

Dreams and Realities

“So set thy face for religion, being up right, the nature made by Allah in which He has made men. There is no altering Allah’s creation. That is the right religion—but most people know not” (30 : 30).

In the evolution of human civilization it is essential that new desires should arise in human mind and efforts be made to fulfil them. But it is necessary to take note of the fact that the desires for improvement in the condition of living are never fulfilled in exactly the same manner in which they first appear. There are certain inexorable laws of nature, which force modification on our desires before they happen to materialise. Man felt the desire of flying in the sky. To-day he actually flies in the air, but with all the progress of science, he does not enjoy that freedom in the air which is enjoyed by a bird. Man felt the desire of crossing the river and the sea. After thousands of years of experiments and improvements in the art of navigation, man wields great power to-day over water. But with all this control he cannot be as free in water as a fish or a duck. Having noticed that all the different metals come out of the same earth, man felt that baser metals like copper and brass could be chemically changed into noble metals like gold and silver. The science of chemistry had its rise in this desire. The efforts in this direction brought about countless valuable inventions, but even after centuries of struggle man has not acquired the power of actually converting a base metal into a noble one.

In the same way, from the beginning of history man has
been feeling the desire of establishing perfect equality in the social life of humanity, a desire which has flamed up like a wild fire in our age. But like his numerous other desires this one also has to pass through a series of modifications before it can be realised as a fact of life.

In the enthusiasm of a revolution, the Russians had seen many a golden dream. But the experiences of only a few years have proved that those dreams must pass through a good few modifications, if they are actually to materialise. The leaders of Russian Socialism have now realised that absolute equality is impossible in the economic-social life of man. Thus those who still adhere to this extreme idealism that swayed the imagination of early revolutionists, have been dubbed "Equality Merchants" as a term of derision by the present dictator of Russia. Enthusiasm for reforms is always a good thing, but it must be controlled by practical wisdom, otherwise we should be creating more troubles than we are anxious to remove.

Western Socialism, of which Russia happens to be the cradle at the moment, is based on certain assumptions, which are rejected by Islam and the free and balanced judgement of man, as wrong and harmful in the extreme.

The first of these assumptions is that a person who possesses a lesser amount of wealth must necessarily hate and be jealous of another who possesses a large amount. This is wrong. If to-day we find the poor actually hating the rich, this is not because the former has no access to such comfort and necessities of life as are in the control of the latter, but because in our times wealth has been unfortunately recognised as the sole standard of honour, as a result of which a man is considered low and worthless just on the basis of poverty. A poor man may possess any number of qualities of the head and heart, but he will be condemned
as of no worth if he happens to possess no material wealth. And the hatred of the poor is only in reaction to the hatred of the rich. If to-day the rich can free their minds from the hatred of the poor or cease to stick to wealth as the only measure of a man’s honourableness, the hatred of the poor for the rich will disappear to a very large extent.

(2) Another assumption of the Western Socialist of the extreme Communist type is that man is by nature averse to graded social scale and to being subordinate to another in social and economic scale. This also is equally wrong. Since nature has reposed in different men different capabilities and has appointed different grades in these capabilities and has attached different values of different faculties, it has also reposed satisfaction in the mind of each man corresponding to his own capability. In other words, each man is more or less contented, unless he is incited differently, with his own share of nature’s gift. To take a direct example, a man does not feel unhappy just because his wealth-producing power is less than that of others. He may rightly complain of inequality of opportunities if it exists. But given equal opportunities, no one is by nature inclined to grudge other’s greater powers of production and acquisition. The hatred between the existing classes is due to the fact that superiority in these days is not based on personal qualities of body and mind but on birth and similar chance incidents. The basis of superiority is not natural and real but artificial and unnatural. If a person possesses a really good quality or gift of nature, others not so gifted are by nature inclined to pay him due allegiance and even to see him enjoy a better living on that account. As a matter of fact, this is how social classes have come to exist. It is a wrong reading of human history that the social order has come to exist on fraud and exploitation or that the generality of people throughout history have been all simpletons. No, the common man has all along been quite wise and under-
standing, at least more so than our modern intellectuals and theorists, and he has been generous, too. He not only acknowledges the superiority of individuals but even admits the possibility of gift residing in a whole family at times. What he feels rightly indignant about is that worthless relations and descendants of a gifted man so often conspire to maintain the leadership and prestige in the family. This indeed is an injustice against which the mind of the common man revolts. But the matter does not stop here. This kind of conspiracy when it attempts to deliberately maintain the undeserved prestige and privilege and unscrupulously closes the door against the gifted poor rising to deserving leadership and attendant prestige, aggravates this bitterness in the minds of the poor, till at last when this galling tyranny goes beyond all powers of forbearance it results in a bloody revolution. The pity of it all is that these conspiracies of the privileged class far from appreciating and acknowledging the talents in the poor, and giving them their due position in the social system, keeps them deprived of the very means of their existence. The bitterness and resultant revolution is quite natural under the circumstances.

(3) The third assumption is that if a person gets engrossed in his private and family life, he must necessarily be devoid of general sympathy for humanity at large,—that unless an end is put to his interest in his family and private life, there is no chance of developing in him any true and lasting feeling of universal human sympathy. In other words, as they see it, there is an inherent incompatibility between the domestic life of man and his duties to his species as a whole. Both cannot go on together. This theory is also rejected by Islam and believed by facts of life. Islam rightly holds the view that the feeling of sympathy and love in a man is like a stream of light, springing from his heart and becoming wider in its range as it proceeds further and further. It is not possible for it to suspend action at a closer range and
resume the same at a distant point. If you stop it at a near range you stop it from proceeding further. In other words, it is unnatural that a man should cease to be interested in his own family circle and become kind and loving for the whole world of humanity. A man who is incapable of loving his own children cannot really love others' children. Of course, it is a common experience that a person obsessed with a narrower love becomes cold and callous in respect of wider sympathies. But this is not the fault of the emotion of love of the narrower circle of interest, but of the system which is supposed to guide this emotion. If the invididuals of a society are found mostly to neglect the larger interest of society in their anxiety to see their respective families prosper, or are found to ride roughshod over the universal interests of humanity in their anxiety for national prosperity, the social system is to blame for such irregularities.

The ideal of international brotherhood as realised by Islam is still an object of wonder for the world. In this brotherhood there is neither any distinction of colour nor of race nor of language. The social solidarity and feeling of sympathy which penetrates the Islamic fraternity is not to be found in any other community of the world, whether based on race or geographical situation or language or religion or even economic interest. To make this fact of brotherhood noticeable by the world, the Founder of Islam established, in its early days, a wonderful tie of love between the Immigrants and the Helpers, the like of which the world has not seen either before or after. Every Helper made an Immigrant an equal sharer in all that he possessed. This, no doubt, created an unparalleled example of religious brotherhood but it tended to violate a law of nature which is deep in its action. It was the same law as is under discussion here. In its anxiety for religious brotherhood it overlooked the tie of blood relationship which is a basic law of creation. Hence it is that while emphasising the importance of religious
brotherhood, the Qur-an insisted on man's duties to relations, near and distant. And in putting a timely check to Muslims' overflow of religious enthusiasm it ordained:

"And the possessor of relationship are closer one to another in the ordinance of Allah than (other) believers, and those who fled (their homes), except that you do some good to your friends. This is written in the Book" (33:6).

In short, the social revolution brought about by Islam has shattered the theory that man's love for his family cannot go hand in hand with his love for humanity at large.

(4) The fourth assumption in this connection is that the character of the individual is entirely a product of his surrounding. That is to say, that such vices of man as jealousy, malice, avarice, cruelty and all that tend to make man anti-social in his conduct, have their origin in a defective social system. In other words, if the social system is perfect, particularly from the economic point of view, for instance if all people are provided with equal amenities of life, these vices will disappear as a matter of course. But this is also a misreading of facts. It is mere wishful thinking that if two persons are given absolutely equal material possessions of life there will be no jealousy between them. On the contrary, it has been found in actual experience that even the richest man is liable to be jealous of a poor man in respect of a particular humble possession or acquisition. Islam does admit that for complete social peace, the social system must be based on economic justice and a reasonable amount of equality as well. But Islam is opposed to the view that a mere change in the material environment will necessarily bring about a total change in the mind of man. Islam does insist on the improvement in the material environment, but it insists with an equal emphasis on a distinct and effective code of moral culture to achieve the end in view.
Remembrance of God, self-analysis, cultivation of the sense of repentance and an appreciation of the higher values of life, are among the steps prescribed for this inner culture. A systematic and regular struggle on this line working hand in hand with an equitable social system will alone bring the improvement in human character aimed at by the Western socialist movements.

(5) Still another assumption of this Western movement is that individual economic freedom and a satisfactory socialistic system of society are mutually exclusive things and cannot go together. To put it in clearer words, if a person is absolutely free to earn any amount of money he is capable of, by using his relevant God-given faculties, he is bound to exploit others by means of his money. In other words, a person’s freedom to earn any amount of money, will necessarily make him a selfish man, trampling upon the rights and comforts of others. This idea is also wrong. Islam has formulated such wise rules and regulations as will leave a man free to earn as much money as he is truly capable of and yet will render the money he earns beneficial to the people at large. It so manipulates the production and distribution that while it makes the earning man happy with the results of his work, it creates a soft corner in his heart for others that are either his rivals or less fortunately placed than himself. The fact is that a man develops devilish tendencies of mind only when he acts in a manner that is opposed to certain immutable laws of nature. If, however, he does not violate any of these laws in the course of exercising his God-given powers, he does not run any risk of being harmful to others, however much armed with various powers he may become. It is a misfortune for humanity that it does not try to know these laws and knowing follow them. And when, as a result of man’s disregard for these laws, his affairs go seriously wrong and chaos prevails in his social relationships, he does not try to find out his own fault in the matter but
the particular line of action in which the failure has been met. This is certainly not a scientific attitude towards things. In the course of an experiment so many and various are the laws that have to be brought into operation, singly at times and collectively at others, and the slightest mistakes at any stage of this procedure will nullify the whole effort of the experimenter. It is no wisdom to discredit the experiment itself just because the person carrying out the experiment is ignorant of any or all the laws that have to play a part in experiment.

For man's struggle for economic existence, Nature has appointed a well-defined procedure. So many sets of laws come to operate upon this process that man cannot afford to handle the matter lightly without any serious damage to social existence. And yet this is what Europe has been doing for a pretty long time in the past. Now that as a result of their mishandling of the situation the whole social structure of humanity has been showing signs of a collapse they propose to deny those fundamental freedoms of the individual on which society has been resting from the beginning of history. Islam, however, has a more hopeful and confidence-inspiring proposal for remedying the evils let loose by the child mind working in the so-called civilized humanity of to-day.

The Correct Structure of Society

The proletariat as a whole is really never worthy of the powers of rulership. The contentions on behalf of leadership are undoubtedly sound, as they accord with the scheme of nature. It has been rightly said that leaders are born—leaders in any sphere of life, in science and arts as much as in politics and religion. The responsibility of the society in this matter is only to remove the unnatural obstructions from the path of the true leaders rising to power. That should be the aim of all reformative movements. It is unnatural,
therefore, that a whole body of people who are the least imaginative, least responsible and least capable—for this is what proletariat in a natural society means—should aspire after rulership over those who are better than themselves in every way and who are always in the minority in any society. But leaving aside this general leadership of the nation, even with regard to economics, it is obvious that all men and women are not equally capable as producers. There are geniuses in economic production as in any other activity of life. The financial administration and welfare of the nation must go to these natural leaders and not to the vast mass of the unimaginative and unenterprising proletariat. The step towards any progress is that in which the weak and the low is raised up to higher levels and not that in which the high and the advanced is dragged down to the levels of the low and the backward. That there will always be weak and indolent as well as strong and active members in any society and that there will always be a graded scale of efficiency in all departments of life, no sensible man will deny, as to deny that will amount to denying the structure of society itself. Of course, economically speaking, the best leader is he who, being a genius of production, dedicates all his productive energy to the interest of the people at large. But an enforced Communism in which the dull proletariat dominates is incapable of bringing such geniuses into play. I will rather kill them. Religion alone is known to have produced this miracle.

The leaders of Soviet Russia realise this fact in their heart of hearts as is evident from the manner of their administration which admits of grades of efficiency and remuneration and it is a false hope which they hold out to people when they say that the present system in Russia called Socialism is only a stepping-stone towards the more perfect stage of Communism where from each will be taken what it is his capacity to produce and to each will be given what he
needs. At least mere administrative laws cannot call such a society into being. This is never to be and the pronouncement of the Qur-an:

“And He is Who has made you successors in the land and exalted some of you in rank above others, that He may try you by what He has given you” (6:166).

“And Allah has made some of you excel others in the means of subsistence; so those who are made to excel give not away their sustenance to those whom their right hands possess (i.e. their subordinates and dependents), so that they may be equal therein” (16:71) will hold true for all times as it has held true up till now in all systems of economic administration, not excluding the system in force in Russia at the moment. There will always be grades of money-possessions as there will always be grades in any other possession in life—gifts of art, of thinking, of penmanship, of oratory, of poetry, of administration, of military skill, of sportsmanship and every other power of body and mind. We generally forget that a person, if he is a follower in respect of one gift, may be a leader in another. If a king leads his subjects in one sphere of life, he is led by some of his subjects in other spheres of life. If a millionaire dominates over people in one aspect of life, he is dominated and awed by many of his compatriots gifted in other ways. The trouble arose in our time when misguided by the Jewish values of life we began to think that material wealth was the only measure of a person’s greatness and resultant honour. The Capitalistic callous competition and exploitation had its source in this perverted valuation of things. And it is a pity that while Socialism proposes to combat the evils of Capitalism, it accepts the valuation of things as given by Capitalism as if with a vengeance. Whatever its practice, Capitalism acknowledged in theory at least other values of life besides material wealth. Socialism came forward with a theory of life, wherein
the acquisition of bread and butter is virtually a religion. This is, ineed, a trial. When the only competition left between man and man is of material wealth, there is bound to be chaos in the world, as man’s desire for wealth is insatiable, whereas the quantity of wealth in this limited world is always limited, with all our devices of increased production. Besides man always desires more than he deserves. The law of avarice and jealousy works irrespective of equality or inequality of possessions. If, on the other hand, a diversion can be created in other forms of possession, the tension of competition in the material plane of existence will be much relieved, particularly if it be in the plane which pulls at the other end of this tendency—such as the moral qualities of sacrifice, self-denial, asceticism and the like. This was the great truth missed by Karl Marx when he repudiated religion as a basis for social endeavour. Sometimes you best serve a cause by leaving it alone and the cause of economics is a case in point. We do not mean that there should be no guidance whatsoever in this matter, as we know that it is an absolute lack of guidance in Christianity in this regard that has created the present situation. All we mean is that there should be the minimum of directions—some very broad principles and general rules to guide our steps—leaving the higher faculties of man to do the major part of the work of the economic adjustment between man and man—which faculties again should be given some positive encouragement. And this is what Islam has done. It has not neglected the economic side of man, rather it has made it one of the five pillars on which its socio-religious structure rests. It has evolved a whole system of laws, administrative and fiscal, to work the institution in the practical day-to-day life. It has done all this but it has not made the mistake of making economic production and distribution the basis of social existence. It is noteworthy that the difference in wealth has been characterised as “trial” by the Holy Qur-an. If it can mean anything it is that if some will be carried off their feet by the
accentuated temptation it provides there will be others who, realising the unreality of its appearance and of the excitement it causes and the futility of making it an objective in life, would be inclined to shun it as an unmitigated evil. Unfortunately for Christianity if its followers were tried by the latter appearance of wealth at one time, they are being tried by its former appearance at the moment. The master had asked whosoever would follow him to sell all he had in the shape of material wealth; his present-day votaries cannot think of life without material wealth. We have yet to realise that what Karl Marx says about Socialism being an evolved state of Capitalism has more truth in it than what appears at first sight. Indeed, it was Capitalism which made money the measure of life's happiness and success. All that Communism adds to this theory is that what is sauce for the goose, should also be sauce for the gander. Communism is therefore money value of life plus the idea of the equality of all human beings.

Islam, the latest expression of religion, proposes the following as against the Soviet programme for the social salvation of man:

(1) The government by the good, the conscientious and the selfless, irrespective of their economic affluence. Money should be neither a qualification nor a disqualification for rulership.

(2) The Government must be responsible for the relief of economic accidents in the life of the individual as also of financial drawbacks of the enterprising. But it should not be expected to encourage indolence by enforcing a dead level of equality in economic possessions.

(3) The Government must as a systematic policy discourage the tendency of attaching exaggerated importance
to material possession and encourage the appreciation of higher values of life.

(4) In order to effectively achieve the last object the Government must suppress with a heavy hand callous hoarding of money and its immoral display.

Communism and Internationalism

People have different and conflicting theories about the ready response with which Hitler's proposals for the reconstruction of the German State were hailed. Whatever spontaneous response he received, however, if viewed with an unprejudiced mind, would appear to be due to a lamentable lack of national enthusiasm consequent upon the insistence of Communism on an international outlook. And it is here that we find the explanation of the effective use made by Hitler of an otherwise glorious term "international", in an abusive way. The term "Jewish international" had almost an electrifying effect in rousing the Germans to fury. The psychological explanation is simple. The international outlook proposed by Bolshevism of the Lenin's days had a very disintegrating effect on the minds of people in Germany. The success of the cult in Russia was due to a background of intolerable oppression and exploitation, that fostered a spirit of rebellion in the poor against the rich. Some other countries had experienced similar outbursts, with this much of difference that state organisation on socialistic lines came to stay in Russia, however temporarily it might be—I say 'temporarily' advisedly for I have always regarded and still regard the Russian outburst as nothing more than a juvenile enthusiasm for a new and changed state of affairs. As far back as 1935, I could say that before long the Russian movement would settle down as a national constitution, at the best, satisfying the peculiar psychological and social needs of its people. To claim for it a universality of appli-
cation, so far the privilege of religion, could be nothing more than a fantastic dream. And that I was not at all wrong in my reading of the situation is finally proved by a recent declaration from Moscow (May 21, 1943) winding up the Communist International and freeing the Nationalist Communist Parties from obligations arising from statutes and decisions of the various Comintern Congresses. True, the father of this system of philosophy, Karl Marx, intended to make of it a religion, superseding all other religions the humanity has known so far and that recognise the spiritual destiny of man. At least he was understood by the vast bulk of his followers to have so intended. In any case every enlightened communist, conversant with Marxian writings, subscribes to this idea regarding his attitude towards religion in general. That is why the Marxists have coined slogans and composed songs breathing a spirit of internationalism. But like most of human sentiments, it is destined to remain a sentiment, unrealisable amidst hard facts of life. In actual fact man is not so low as Marx and Marxists think him to be. Economics does play a great part in determining his actions, individual and collective; the impulse it generates may appear irresistibly powerful to some philosophers, but the deeper and nobler emotions of man, though not so clamorous, have far more to do with his social behaviour than his economic impulses even at their worst. In actual application to life the economic sense has failed to generate as much heat for collective activity as nationalism has been doing. We leave aside the still higher impulses for the time being. It is evident, then, that in tapping the source of human energy, the economic sense in man, though of universal experience, far less to inspire the whole of humanity, has not the power to arouse even a nation to necessary collective action.

True religion appeals to a feeling of man which transcends the world of matter, and yet it is this which is of proved effective inspiration for the universal collective.
activity of mankind. Some philosophers may ridicule the idea of solving man's social problems with reference to values that are intangible, but are not the objects of the physical world governed by laws that are more or less intangible? At least, the knowledge of science has obliged man to rise above the crude material philosophy of existence. And if the gross physical existence is controlled by forces that elude our intellectual comprehension, how much more is man, who has the intangible mind attached to him, expected to be governed by forces that elude comprehension by our physical senses and physical understanding of things! Like many other forces we must accept the power of religious emotion over collective human activity as a fact of supreme importance, through its effects, if not through its rationale. At the same time we as scientific-minded people must reject once for all the theory of the economic views of life supplying any greater incentive to human collective actions than the religious view. Experience has proved that too clearly within recent times. And this shortcoming of Communism must have been felt in the national life of Germany—a disappointment seized upon by Hitler for his own purposes. The German people must have felt as the Russians themselves have felt that the professed international outlook of Communism is of no avail either this way or that; that far less from tapping the supposed reserve energy of collective human action on an international scale, it has helped the dissipation of what little energy for collective activity was still left in the German life. Determined believers in organised social life, the German intelligentsia must have sensed a danger in this state of affairs. This explains Hitler's rise to power. Clever that he was he knew where the shoe pinched. His success in rousing a whole civilized race to a frenzy of racialism, is thus due to a fundamental defect in Marxism. But however much we may understand the difficulties of German intelligentsia when they supported Hitler, we cannot forgive them for the resuscitation of grim racialism in this age where inter-
nationalism alone can assure any peace to the world. Thus even while accepting the Socialistic proposals in the main, Nazi Germany found it necessary to relapse into a feeling which would act like a thorn in the flesh of civilization, for how long it is difficult to say. What is the remedy then? Well, the remedy can be found if we can ascertain the malady. We must know the needs of humanity before we can hope to satisfy them. From what we have discussed above, the needs of humanity will appear to be threefold: (a) certain changes in the social feelings of man and in his social behaviour, (b) a real international outlook, and (c) a zest for collective action in the midst of international life. Communism tried to satisfy all the three needs by a social system based on a certain philosophy of life. So far as the social programme is concerned, it has been accepted in bare bones by those whom it came to reform as well as by those who claim to reform it in turn. But in so far as it tried to inspire humanity with an international outlook on life and wake up its hidden energy for social action, it has miserably failed. The country which happens to be its official headquarters, has itself repudiated its international responsibilities. The most disturbing thing about the Marxian proposals is its simultaneous appeal to the narrow instinct of self-preservation and the universal spirit of altruism. Even from the plainest logical point of view there is a paradox in the two-fold demand, and hence it is that unsophisticated human nature has refused to respond to it. Indeed, when you think of it, it is surprising that its author should have possessed such enormous brain powers. But with all its faults, it had, as we have seen, a modicum of truth in it and this consisted in a just protest against Capital callously trampling under its feet the human rights of labour. And in so far as it represented that truth, it has achieved some amount of success, but nothing beyond this. And even here one may rightly say that the demands put forward have been grossly ex-aggerated.
The Economic View of Life

Man's motive for action is the satisfaction of his economic needs. The history of man is the history of his economic struggle, individual and collective. That is the philosophy of the communist. As a matter of fact, one need not go to history; even a casual observation of man as he exists today will make this appear as a self-evident truth. The toiling human beings in their millions seem to have but one motive, *viz.*, economic. Living in this world of matter, man has to satisfy the recurring needs of his physical existence by a continuous struggle against external nature, which is sometimes bountiful, at others merciless. He wants to make up for the inclemencies of Nature by co-operation with his fellow beings. Social life will thus appear to be a sort of safeguard or insurance against economic difficulties which man cannot overcome by his individual efforts. Death, disease and natural calamities must always be there and man must provide against them. Hence he must live in society. All this would make a plausible case for the Communist theory and for his contention that religion bungles the situation by introducing values supermundane. But man has some inherent weaknesses of his own which spoil the otherwise serene atmosphere of this social arrangement, supposed to have been built up by the economic needs of man. He is disinclined to work and desires what he does not deserve. He is anxious to enjoy the rights of social existence without caring much for its obligations. For a healthy social life there must be punishments for these irregularities. Individualists and Capitalists prescribe indigence and starvation for the sin of indolence, and harsh criminal measures for the infringement of social laws. Had the benefits of these measures been greater than their harms mankind would have been spared the horrors of Red revolution and the huge commotion it has created in the world. A saner and more merciful method of handling the situation has to be evolved if we have the peace and prosperity of humanity really at heart.
The Communist contention is undoubtedly based on some realistic experiences. Man is not revolutionary by nature. Peaceful home-life and an orderly society has an irresistible attraction for the average man of the world. A whole mass of people cannot rise in revolt against the established order unless they are driven to despair. There must, therefore, be something seriously at fault with the general economic order of the world. The Communist, to be sure, is not an anarchist. And yet we should not treat the Capitalist as subhuman beings. They must also have some real and strong reasons for their contention. A compromise is possible, nay desirable, in the best interests of humanity. Man should be made to work but not through fear of starvation, nor by the iron rod of a dictator. He should be supplied with incentives that would relieve the drudgery and monotony of economic work. He should be deterred from the breaches of social laws, but not by the mere threat of corporeal punishments, but mostly by the inner susceptibilities of a refined and awakened soul. And here comes in the function of religion. Religion handles the emotions and manipulates the psychology of man. Religion knows that man is not a mere physical being, that he lives more through his emotions and imagination than through his physical needs and through reactions to immediate surroundings. Religion enlivens imagination and regulates emotion. But while doing so, it does not ignore the present and the solid earth either. On the contrary, its services to the economic ordering of humanity are far more effective than those of the economists themselves. In any case, it effects a reconciliation between the higher emotions and the material needs of man. It recognises the fact that economics is an essential requisite for physical existence. But it knows also that even for the smooth running of the economic system, man needs a culture of his higher emotions, and a system of discipline calculated to chasten his lower and material feelings, whence spring actions that tend to disturb the equi-
librium of society. It makes man aware of the fact that even from a purely economic point of view man increases in efficiency and energy as he experiences the joy of sacrifice and giving. Indeed, a deeper study of man's economic motive will reveal that a strictly selfish man is a very poor producer. If all men were grossly selfish, the world would suffer terribly in economic production. Thus while true religion judiciously regularises the economic efforts of man, it provides food for those higher emotions which enable man to jeopardise, of his own free choice, the interests of his physical existence. It is aware of a great truth which the Communist has deplorably missed. It is that man lives more for others than for himself; he lives more for sentiments and causes than for the crude physical aspect of his own life. Leave aside the very higher sentiments for God; Truth, Justice in its broad sense, Beauty in the very comprehensive sense of art and culture—the masses of people even in this age of rank materialism, even the masses of communists, are still irresistibly swayed by emotions, mostly racial and national. Man is so constituted that he cannot live for his own self alone. He fulfils himself by identifying himself with others.

Indeed, it is difficult to justify on purely economic grounds the actions of those millions of idealists and visionaries who have embraced physical annihilation to establish a regime in Russia that would do justice to the surviving proletariat. Mere concern for the physical existence would make a despicable coward of every man, and even defeat the very object of the struggle for existence. A man wedded to purely materialistic outlook on life cannot die for a cause, for the safety and comfort of others, even if these others be his own people, his very kith and kin. When you yourself are annihilated and when there is no value other than purely economic that is material, it should mean nothing to you to be told that your nation or people would reap the benefit of your sacrifice.
Fortunately for man, he is not the selfish and materialistic being he is painted by our enthusiastic Communist friends. No doubt, he is selfish and exploiting; but he is also found to throw his own interest and comforts to the winds for the sake of others. This is an aspect of his character which cannot be explained by the economic theory of life. And yet I do not blame the propounders and upholders of this theory. They are not inspired teachers. They do not deal with the possibilities of human nature but with how it expresses itself at the moment, a moment extremely abnormal in the history of our species. They take into account only the surface expressions of human nature and have tried to regulate our social relationship on their basis, at a time when the surface expressions are very deceptive indeed. To cite an example of the abnormality of our emotional reactions, we may refer to the modern man and woman's attitude towards their offspring. Man in all ages, and even the lower animals, have experienced unalloyed joy at the arrival of an offspring. Some male animals, of course, feel jealous of a male offspring but this is not on any ground of economics, but on the basis of rivalry in leadership. Towards the female offspring even this animal father is affectionate. As for the female parent, it is invariably loving and sacrificing. But a modern woman, not to speak of man, has a dread for children, purely on economic considerations. The lack of means is a false plea, seeing that couples belonging to nations that enjoy comforts and amenities, which the bulk of humanity cannot even imagine, complain of this lack of means and this complaint is heard not so much from the poorer sections as from the higher classes. From the various and conflicting contentions on the subject, it is difficult to see what standard of living will make these men and women cheerfully undertake the responsibility of rearing children. If one analyses their minds carefully, one will find nothing but selfishness, masquerading under the name of economic consideration, at the back of
their unwillingness to produce children. All they care for is enjoyment in its grossest form and a child in any case spoils this kind of enjoyment. Children means sacrifice on the part of parents—sacrifice of material comforts, of time and energy; which modern man and women are so averse to. Throughout the ages, the natural instinct of animal life has made this enormous sacrifice appear joyful and cheerful through certain active emotions. Parents have always valued the life of their offspring more than their own. In the modern civilized man and woman, for reasons which this is not the place to discuss, the instinctive play of these emotions has stopped. This is a very abnormal phenomenon indeed; man has become worse than animal. To base any theory on this kind of abnormal expression of human nature is certainly unwarranted. When Karl Marx was propounding his theory he was mistaking a diseased state of human mind for a healthy condition. We admit that the history of this disease in the human mind is as old as humanity. Man relapses to it every now and then. But to say that this is the rule, the fundamental principle of man’s social existence is a travesty of facts. One might as well say on the basis of gigantic proportion of diseases that there is no such thing as health in the human body or that diseased condition is a rule with man’s physical existence. It seems, although a Jew, by race Karl Marx was much impressed religiously by the Christian theory of evil deduced from the doctrine of the inherent sinfulness of man. Perhaps, the melancholy history of his own race gave additional support to his predilection to this view of human nature. The economic theory of history is the same theory of original sin stated in terms of Sociology. The Holy Qur-an rejects this view of human nature, in one of its early Makkah Chapters, when the great mind of the Great Prophet must have been greatly agitated over this problem. With the appalling barbarity, selfishness and callousness of man before his eyes, he was given a vision of the deeper aspects of human history.
It was revealed: "Consider the Fig, the Olive and mount Sinai (the three standing as symbols for Buddhism, Christianity and the Mosaic Dispensation respectively) and this city made secure (meaning the tradition of Abraham and Ishmael to be renewed under the aegis of Muhammad). 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 their's a reward never to be cutt off" (The Qur'an, 95 : 1-6).

In formulating his theory of the social development of man, Karl Marx evidently has lost sight of the genuine religious history of man. He forgot that there have been persons in history like Buddha, Moses, Jesus and Abraham, whose lives are a living refutation of the theory that man's only consideration for social action is economic. It was to making man spurn at the anxiety for what is called economic existence, that their whole energy was devoted. Not that they forbade people to do any work for their living. But they certainly meant to say that it was not a matter to engage the whole or even a major part of our attention. At the most it should hold a very minor position in the activities of our life. They had the insight to see that economic order of our social life has the danger of toppling over by an undue emphasis on it. They proposed instead a scheme for the development of higher faculties. Under their noble guidance, man and woman instead of fighting for their economic rights, came to know the pleasure of sacrifice. They knew that when every one knew the joy of sacrifice, even the smallest amount of economic resources would appear plenty. They also demonstrated the truth much ignored in these days that man could be moved to enormous social activities by an appeal to such an intangible ideal as of God, an ideal that cuts at the root of the economic theory of life, and in the face of which the activities based on pure economic motive pale into insignificance. Their lives and
successes have proved beyond doubt that man is not the selfish creature that he appears to be. No doubt he is capable of being worse than animal in selfishness and meanness but that is because he is averse to being benefited by Divine guidance.
CHAPTER–III

COMMUNISM IN PRACTICE

The October Revolution

"And thus did We make for every prophet an enemy, the devils from among men and jinn, some of them suggesting to others varnished falsehood to deceive (them) and had your Lord pleased, they would not have done it, therefore, leave them in that which they forget—And that the hearts of those who do not believe in the hereafter may incline to it, and they may be well pleased with it, and that they may earn what they are earning" (The Qur’an, 6:113, 114).

The Russian Revolution of 1917, generally known as the October Revolution, is decidedly a great event in the history of Europe. It is the culmination of many such revolutions that preceded it, aiming at the liberation of the downtrodden masses of the West from the tyrannies of their rulers. In the opinion of M. Morozov, whose well-written article on this subject has been published by the U.S.S.R. Embassy in Karachi. "The October Revolution differs in principle from all preceding revolutions, which only replaced one form of exploitation of the working people by another, but exploitation remained. Only the great October Socialist Revolution overthrew all the exploiters and set itself the aim—to abolish all exploitation and to eliminate every kind of exploiter and enslaver".

Not only M. Morozov, but all Soviet writers and speakers, and indeed all Marxists and friends of Marxism, have been lavishing their praises on this event in European history. Marshall Stalin speaks of it as “a radical change in the life and traditions, in the culture and ideology, of the exploited masses throughout the world”.
In the background of the horrible atrocities perpetrated on the masses of Christians, by their heartless rulers for long long centuries, such exaggerations in estimating the importance and value of this revolution is understandable, but the real merits of such praises in the light of reason and facts of history yet remain questionable. We have great regard for the sentiments of the toiling masses and their leaders in the West. We have great sympathy for their agonies and sufferings. And we appreciate their disappointment at the tragic failure of their ancestral faith in accomplishing their social salvation. It is really a pity that a religion that came as a gospel for the poor and the humble, for the hungry and the destitute, a religion that spoke of the impossibility of a rich man’s entry into heaven, should become the handmaiden of exploitation by rich men and prove a message of despair for the toiling masses in actual facts of life.

But with all this sympathy of ours, we cannot easily swallow the claim made on behalf of the Socialist Revolution of Russia that it “signifies a radical change in the history of mankind”. We may concede that it is a radical change in the history of Christendom or atleast of that section of it which has come under the sway of Soviet Russia. A neutral observer will find it altogether a different story. Fortunately, the history of mankind has in no way been similar to the history of Western Christendom. It has never seen the callous and scornful indifference of the rich for the poor. Nor has it seen anything like the violent reaction to this state of affairs in the form of Western revolutions. Devoid of any definite social code, the Western people have, from the beginning of their history, been living in the midst of a social anarchy. The violent and persistent suppressions from above and their equally violent and frequent reactions from below, were quite natural under the circumstances. We are afraid, we are unable to find any message in these blasts and counter-blasts for the rest of humanity. They may serve as warnings
but not as models.

As for exploitation, we are in a way sure that no end has been put to it in the Bolshevik regime. The word 'exploitation' in its traditional, harmless sense, will always be there, if human social life continues to be what it has been uptil now. The gifted minority in any society must, in the course of events and in the interest of the society at large, exploit or utilise the labour of the majority who are not similarly gifted. The Commissars of the U.S.S.R. are undoubtedly at this moment the gifted minority in Soviet Russia just as the much-criticised capitalists or administrators are the corresponding minority in countries that have not fallen in with the Marxist view of life and society.

As for the newly acquired meaning of the word 'exploitation' i.e., fraudulent appropriation of the fruits of others' labours, we can only say that we are not in a position to ascertain the truth or otherwise of the Soviet contention that this has ceased to exist under Soviet regime. The fact is that for want of true access of outside neutral observers into the territories of Soviet Russia, no reliable evidence is available on this particular subject. And if one is allowed to form any opinion on the basis of the system prevailing there, one is tempted to conclude that there must be more of exploitation going on in Soviet Russia in this particular sense than any where else in the world, because the system of government there is avowedly dictatorial, albeit in the name of the proletariat. And it has never been claimed that selfishness has been eliminated from the Russian mind after the establishment of socialist economic system in that country. The modified socialist dictum "to each according to his work", is a frank admission of the existence of this human weakness in that dreamland of Marxism, as anywhere else in the world. As a matter of fact, it has been most unphilosophical and illogical from the very beginning to have expected
any altruism from the followers of a creed that is professedly materialistic at its foundation. And the matter has been made worse, as we have said, by the dictatorial nature of the government. The reason is that the only check on the universal selfishness of man, in the absence of moral consideration, is protest and rebellion of its victims, whereas it is exactly these things which are an utter impossibility under a totalitarian form of government such as one that prevails in the present-day Russia. It is time to realise that exploitation in its bad sense is no monopoly of Capital, as the Communist propaganda would have us believe. 'Capital and its owners' unfettered freedom to employ it are not the only privileges that open the book to exploitation. Any privilege, whether of political power or of administrative authority or skill in any art or craft, can be equally used as a means of exploitation. A clever man has hundred and one ways of exploitation whereas in Soviet Russia private capital has been debarrèd from the privilege of exploitation, the other factors that have similar privileges are allowed complete freedom for the same. As a matter of fact, in the absence of private capital to contend the monopoly of these other exploitations, the administrative authorities may be, for all we know, exploiting the people of Russia in a manner unknown to any generation of people before. It is not at all difficult to see how the exploited masses can be better off in a system where there are two or more rival exploiters than in one where there is a monopoly of exploitation. No amount of suffrage can in any way alleviate the distressing position of the unimagi-native and toiling masses, otherwise known as the proletariat, under such a system. So, whatever the professed sympathy for the real proletariat, when the time comes for the appropriation of national wealth, a clever Communist leader must be as anxious for the exploitation of this unfortunate section of humanity as the most despicable lot of bourgeois capitalists. As a matter of fact, this irony of fate becomes all the more ironical by the fact that having risen to power in the
name and with the help of the exploited labour, these pseudo-saviours would themselves prove to be the greatest exploiters of unsophisticated labour. It is a case of double exploitation and as such a greater fraud than that of Capitalism. Thus, the enemies of God, which the Communists proclaim themselves to be, are circulating in the world nothing but "varnished falsehood", as the Qur'an rightly characterises these propaganda to be, when they say that they have succeeded in abolishing "All exploitation" and eliminated "every kind of exploiter and enslaver". The fact is just the reverse. Never has the proletariat been so completely at the mercy of the exploiting classes, the guarantee for a pittance notwithstanding.

It is worthwhile to remember that the protest against the Capitalistic order was not solely a bread-securing movement, it was a protest of human dignity against the insults of the Capitalists heaped on manual labour. The movement accordingly had a moral basis and it continues to do so even now in spite of the attempted direction of the Dialectic Materialism of Karl Marx. It is quite plain that those who fought the battles of this Revolution, braved death and destruction and cheerfully gave their lives in the attempt, were not materialists in any sense of the word, but fanatical idealists and Zealots, the very opposite of what Karl Marx and his philosophy wants to make of man. The October Revolution, therefore, was a kind of misguided public fury aimed at the establishment of social justice in economics and human honour in social morals. But the method adopted to bring this about, the dictatorial nature of the government in particular, has unfortunately taken the bottom out of the whole movement and the elimination of private capital has carried the matter to a point of desperation.

Communism and Sex-Morality

"Then set thy face upright for religion in the right
state the nature made by Allah in which He has made men; there is no altering of Allah’s creation; that is the right religion, but most people do not know” (The Qur’an, 30:30).

“And whoever desires a religion other than Islam, it shall not be accepted from him, and in the hereafter he shall be one of the losers” (Ibid., 3:84).

Propaganda papers of Soviet Russia reaching this country in recent years would have us believe that the sanctity of family life is as jealously guarded there under the present regime as at any time before and anywhere else in the world and that it is a malicious propaganda of the enemies that family ties are in any way ridiculed by the Communists. No one will be more happy than ourselves if it is so. Islam’s is the first culture in the world that inculcated a spirit of an out-and-out internationalism and wonderfully succeeded in creating a society that actually demonstrated this spirit in history, in sharp contrast to all other societies with similar ambitions. And yet perhaps no other culture is so insistent on th solidary of family life and the sanctity of relations arising out of it. The reason is not far to seek. Any wider social life, if it is to be real, must be rooted in family affections as ordained by nature. Although as Muslims we believe in the spiritual basis of human social life, we also believe that the physical aspect of our life has much to do with its abstract and emotional sides. Blood and matrimonial relations are some of those physical aspects which cannot be ignored in the correct development of our social consciousness. We are convinced that the suppression of the social instinct in the family circle will spell disaster to all growth of wider social consciousness in man.

We are therefore, happy to see even Soviet Russia avowing this principle of sanctity of family life, which Islam so strongly advocates. It is really immaterial under
what name a particular social system passes so long as that system cares to obey the natural laws of life. So even if under the Soviet regime, the sanctity of family relations is regarded as inviolable, the social solidarity of the Russian people can be expected to be more or less intact, despite its violation of other laws of civilised existence. As Muslims we see in this belated Communist wisdom a confirmation of a Quranic principle.

With all this appreciation of the Soviet attitude towards the question, we are anxious to find out the true position of Russian Communism in this particular regard. If the Communist Manifesto is to be regarded as holding the same position in the Communist Church as the Athanasian Creed does in Christianity, one is naturally reminded of the following passage in that famous document:

“Abolition of the family! Even the most radical flare up at this infamous proposal of the Communists”.

Whatever criticism the Communists may offer to the bourgeois family life, the Manifesto does not give us any picture of the kind of family life with which they intend to replace it. We are given the destructive side of the picture but nothing has been said anywhere about the constructive side. On the contrary Karl Marx’s sole collaborator in the preparation of this document, Frederick Engels, wrote a whole book on this subject, entitled “The origin of the Family, Private Property and the State”, in the year 1884 C.E., full twelve years after the publication of the Manifesto, in which he tried to belittle, as much as he could, the emotional aspect of family life and divest sex life of its religious halo. He seems to be the happiest when he presents the case of group-marriage which is explained by him as, “the right of sexual intercourse between a number of men and a number of women”. The whole tenor of this book is
to emphasise the flexibility of sex relationship in a particular society. He does not mince matters:

"According to the materialistic conception, the decisive factor in history is, in the last resort, the production and the reproduction of immediate life. But this itself is of a two-fold character. On the one hand, the production of the means of subsistence, of food, clothing and shelter and the tools requisite thereto; on the other, the production of human beings themselves, the propagation of the species. The social institution under which men of a definite historical epoch and of a definite country live, are determined by both kinds of production: by the stage of development of labour on the one hand and of the family on the other. The less the development of labour, the more limited its volume of production, and, therefore, the wealth of society, the more preponderatingly does the social order appear to be dominated by ties of sex. However, within this structure of society based on ties of sex, the productivity of labour develops more and more, and with it, private property and exchange, differences in wealth, the possibility of utilising labour power of others and thereby the basis of class antagonism...... The old society based on ties of sex bursts asunder in the collision of the newly developed social classes; in its place a new society appears, constituted in a state, the units of which are no longer sex groups but territorial groups, a society in which the family system is entirely dominated by the property system".

It is not casual feature of the book under discussion that it ends with an appendix entitled, "A newly-discovered case of group marriage". Indeed, the reader will search in vain throughout the whole book for any statement that encourages a feeling of reverence for sex-relations or a sense of sexual purity as distinguished from promiscuity of sex connections. We have purposely put in inverted commas
a certain expression in the foregoing quotation and this just to show the trend of the author's thoughts.

In face of this it is surprising that an author of Mr. Maurice Hindus' standing should characterise, as a legend, the story of the nationalisation of women in Soviet Russia that "swept the world" in the years immediately following the Revolution. He wants to convince his readers of the correctness of his view by quoting the following words from an American correspondent in Russia: "The longer I stay here the more impressed I am with the stabilisation of morals and family in this country".

As we have said, we are glad to learn that sex morality and family life persists in Russia even to this day. It is all the more pleasing to learn that the Communist Government of Russia refers to this as a happy trend of their history. What however, we cannot understand is how to connect this feature of Soviet social life with the Communist regime and how to reconcile this with the trend of Communist thought at its highest sources. Mr. Hindus, however, gives us an insight into the real spirit of Russian Revolution when he makes the following observation in his book *Mother Russia* from which we have just quoted:

"Russian youth, or rather certain groups of it, rose in clamorous, almost hilarious, revolt against the sex morality of Czarist times. The peasant youth was not a participant in this rebellion, though the old morals had suffered visible set-backs even in the countryside. Chiefly it was the student youth that championed the new age of liberation from all the restraints and compulsions of the old days. This youth grew riotously lax and often stupefied itself with sex orgies. A vast literature grew out of and around this new emancipation".
Mr. Hindus seeks an extenuation for this on behalf of Communist Russia in the following words: "Those were tense, irresponsible, exciting times and the emancipated youth made the most of it".

And he proceeds to tell us, "With no little scorn and sarcasm, Lenin denounced its care-free behaviour. To him undisciplined sex indulgence was no more edifying than 'drinking from a mud puddle'.

But the author also tells us that "The campaign was essentially of a verbal nature. Meanwhile the policy of official Laissez-faire in sex led now and then to sensational forms of hooliganism. In Leningrad for example a crowd of boys collectively raped a girl".

It is clear from this that freedom from sex restraints was understood by the youth of revolution to be a part of the movement, and official connivance confirmed this idea in the minds of these enthusiasts.

For ourselves, we do not blame either these youths or the authorities which adopted the policy of laissez-faire in the matter. As we have noticed there is enough material in the thoughts of the founders of modern Communism to lead the later champions of this cult to this attitude towards sex life. From our experiences of politics in this sub-continent we know how a word of indignation uttered by a leader leads to murderous assaults by his followers. It is a well known fact of psychology that the faintest idea in the leader assumes the size of a gigantic movement in the followers. This is particularly the case with the baser passions of the human mind.

The restraints that the collective will of a people imposes upon individuals are undoubtedly irksome to the
generality of people who are everywhere guided more by impulses than by insight and wisdom. If, therefore, any one with a reputation for leadership in thought drops a hint as to the possibility of a state in which such restraints will be more or less slackened or even altogether removed, such a person is sure to be hailed always as hero by the more passionate sections of humanity. This is what actually happened in the case of Communism. The fathers of this cult, in their fury against all conventions and their passionate zeal for equality of opportunity, had unconsciously landed themselves in a mood wherein the marriage bond appeared to be as much a shackle as the economic disabilities of capitalistic labour. This is evident from the tone of the Communist Manifesto and the trend of Engel’s thoughts on the subject. The chaos in sexual life that prevailed in Russia after the Revolution was undoubtedly inspired by these authorities. It is no wonder, therefore, that, as Mr. Hindus says: “There were voices of denunciation, loud and fierce, which pointed to the family as the embodiment of the worst evils of Capitalism and deserving annihilation”.

It is quite another thing that “With the end of the civil war the family, wherever it was broken or mangled, started, plant-like, to mend itself—attacks on it continued, now wildly, now vehemently, but again without official sanction and receiving support neither in law nor in the utterance of the men holding power”.

But then there was no need for such a sanction; there was enough of it in the literature of the highest authority. If the leaders maintained silence in the matter it was because they realised that discretion was the better part of valour. They found out that Utopian dreams do not accord well with the hard realities of social life. They found out that after all, civilized human traditions and religious codes, were not wholly wrong when they imposed certain restric-
tions on human volition. It was this experience that made them wiser than the founders of their cult. The laws promulgated in June 26, 1936 to regulate sexual relationships were thus:

"So drastic a departure from established and formerly sanctioned, almost sanctified, usage that it shocked the outside liberal world and multitudes of Russians... Abortions were banned completely for the healthy woman... birth control remained legal, but the literature on the subject suddenly disappeared from news-stands and bookshops... divorce was tightened. The post-card system of notifying a divorced husband or wife of the separation was out-lawed... the fee was boosted to fifty Roubles for the first divorce, hundred and fifty Roubles for the second, three hundred Roubles for the third... presumably there was to be no fourth divorce".

All this is decidedly a return to sanity and to Islamic standard; the conception of divorce in particular, will appear to all readers of the Qur'an, an echo of the Quranic regulation on the subject.

So it boils down to this. Whatever the feelings of impulsive reformers, they are not given the correct knowledge of human nature. Nor can they set aside the laws of nature in their attempts to mould human nature on new foundations of their own. And even if they try to do so they will be defied and repudiated in practice by their own followers, if these latter happen to be true patriots of their nations.

Capital and Capitalism

Christian emotionalism has been responsible for a succession of extremist views on various aspects of life and creation. Any idea that occurs to a brilliant western mind on any such subject is regarded as the last word on the matter
concerned and assumes the force of a whirlwind that sweeps everything before it. The latest of these trumpeted truths is the Marxist conception of capital, or to be more precise, of private capital. Thanks to the frightening volume of Karl Marx's *Capital*, a large number of educated men to-day would rather face death than acknowledge any sympathy with private ownership of capital. Any association with the idea of Private Capital is an anathema to these modern minds in the East as well in the West. Because it is believed to be a proven fact that Private Capital is another name for fraudulent robbing of the labourers. The capital, according to Karl Marx, swells and concentrates through what he calls "Surplus value", that is the amount of profit that should have legitimately gone to labour, but has actually gone to the pocket of the bourgeois Capitalist.

"Our friend Money bags, must buy his commodities at their value, must sell them at their value, and yet at the end of the process must withdraw more value from circulation than he threw into it at starting. These are the conditions of the problem. Hic-Rhodus! hic Salta! (*Capital*).

"By turning his money into commodities that seem as the material of a new product, and as factors in the labour process, by incorporating living labour with their dead substance, the capitalist at the same time converts value—i.e. past, materialized, and dead labour into Capital value big with value, a live monster that is fruitful and multiplies." (*Ibid.*)

And yet this "fraud and robbery" as Karl Marx would call this process is a stage in the evolution of the socio-economic life of humanity:

"We see, therefore, how the modern bourgeois is itself the product of a long course of development, of a series
of revolutions in the modes of production and of exchange”.

“The bourgeoisie, historically, has played a most revolutionary part”. (Communist Manifesto)

However strange the logic may seem to an unsophisticated man, this fraudulent system of exploitation of labour has been productive of immense good for humanity.

“Modern industry has established the World Market, for which the discovery of America paved the way. This market has given an immense development to commerce, to navigation, to communication by land”. (Communist Manifesto)

“It has accomplished wonders far surpassing Egyptian pyramids, Roman aqueducts and Gothic cathedral; it has conducted expeditions that put in the shade all former exoduses of nations and crusades.” (Ibid.)

We take this opportunity of telling the Marxists of the world that while we do not regard Private Capital as such an evil, we Muslims nevertheless consider the present Capitalistic Civilization as a huge deception played on humanity. Thirteen hundred years ago our Holy Prophet saw this age in his vision and was shocked to perceive the evil forces that it was to let loose on the world and warned his followers against these evils. In the language of our Prophet, this whole civilization with all its outward brilliance, deceptions and ugly inside was Dajjal (Anti-Christ). He has described it with a wealth of details that cannot but set any man thinking. We invite all sceptics to see if they are not true to picture. There is, therefore, a world of difference between our appraisement of the bourgeois civilization, as Karl Marx would call it and that of Karl Marx himself. Whereas according to him this civilization is a natural development of human
history and highly beneficial to mankind, from the Muslim point of view it is a calamitous event in the history of our species, the marvellous inventions of the physical sciences notwithstanding.

It is remarkable that inspire of his grim, cold, scientific analysis and theorisings and his 'scientific' appreciation of the achievements of the current Capitalistic economy, the human heart within him has felt the ugliness in the moral and social aspects of this civilization, as is evident from his invectives against the present system, contained in a passage in the Communist Manifesto — an inexplicable departure from his general attitude and tone:

"The bourgeoisie, wherever it has got the upper hand, has put an end to all feudal, patriarchal, idyllic relations; it has pitilessly torn asunder the motley feudal ties that bound man to his "natural superiors" and has left remaining no other nexus between man and man than naked self-interest, than callous "Cash Payment". It has drowned the most heavenly ecstasy of religious fervour, of chivalrous enthusiasm, of philistine sentimentalism, in the icy water of ego-tistic calculation. It has resolved personal worth into exchange value, and in place of the numberless indefeasible chartered freedoms, has set up that single unconscionable freedom — Free Trade. In one word, for exploitation veiled by religious and political illusions, it has substituted naked, shameless, direct brutal exploitation".

"The bourgeoisie has stripped off its halo every occupation hitherto honoured and looked up to with reverent awe, it has converted the physician, the lawyer, the priest, the poet, the man of science into its paid wage labourers.

"The bourgeoisie has torn away from the family its sentimental veil, and has reduced the family relations to mere money relations".
Of course, Karl Marx and his comrades and followers can be no authority on previous ages because it is not possible for them to examine the feelings and actual human relationships of people of those times but what they say about the condition of things in their own age can be taken as and is in fact, correct. The veiled indignation of Karl Marx at the state of affairs he has described, cannot be missed by an intelligent reader. The predominance of money relationship obscuring all other and higher human relations, is not a very desirable state of affairs even in the eyes of the man in Karl Marx. And yet he bases his whole philosophy and economic system on this relationship and has misguided the greater part of the world into thinking that this is a natural order of things and hence the only true order. If it has been done out of vengeance it is all the more deplorable. To play with the actual lives of men and their mutual relationship is neither wise nor humane.

As a matter of fact, the present state of affairs is the result of Christian teachings on extreme other-worldliness. It was really a worldliness with a vengeance and as such rightly regarded by Islam as a calamity for humanity, because Christians being the predominant people they have infected the whole world with their own moral disease. Muslim proposal for the eradication of current evils are accordingly neither fantastic nor subversive of the natural order to society. Muslims still believe that the man who has been endowed by nature with a special gift for the production of Wealth is also potentially equipped with the moral virtues of nobility and fellow feeling. It is true that in actual experience we do not find it so, but that is because such men are not provided with the proper culture that can bring out what is best in them. In any case we do not despair of the natural goodness in human mind and can fully trust the people who are clever at producing wealth for the nation. Of course, we know they are not angels and in the absence of proper
guidance they may go wrong socially and morally. But with a proper appeal to their higher consciousness and a suitable guidance for their practical life, these men should be expected to act in a manner beneficial to themselves, to their own nation and to humanity at large. After all, if we cannot agree to believe in a living God, we can at least agree to believe in the wisdom of nature. If nature has picked up certain individuals and bestowed on them the special gift of producing and distributing wealth it does not be seem us to distrust them because of these gifts and to appoint other people arbitrarily to do the job or to make the gifted people slaves of other's views and caprices. Islam, at any rate, cannot think of man as such a despicable creature and nature's selection as so full of mischief. Muslims have a profound faith in nature's wisdom and its order. They, nevertheless, believe in certain guiding principles of action to avoid pitfalls, but this without upsetting the order of nature. They believe that the social and moral evils that attend the present Capitalistic Economic order are due to the non-observance of these principles and rules and that their observance alone are enough to put things right. They do not believe that private capital must necessarily degenerate into an instrument of exploitation and oppression. They believe that even in the hands of private owners, capital can discharge its expected humanitarian functions, provided, of course, capital is owned by proper men. We mean by men who have real gifts for such ownership and these owners in their turn are guided by principles and rules whose observance is keenly watched by a wakeful society. They also believe that the present system that goes by the name of Capitalistic System is not a natural growth but a lapse and a perversion and that private capital need not and should not have led to it. It is further their conviction that a peaceful self-evolving economic order is that in which private capital is not only allowed but even acknowledged as the foundation of the social order with the proviso that the order is guided and
controlled by the Islamic Shariah, which, among other things, categorically bans interest in all forms and insists on a division of such capital at the death of the proprietors among their natural heirs, and which requires the state, a really democratic body, to see to the enforcement of its economic injunctions and to establish economic justice in the society, scrupulously and vigilantly.

It is true, Judaism and Christianity have failed to save the 'have-nots' against the exploitations of the 'haves'. But that does not mean that Islam should also fail if it is given a chance. In fact, to repudiate the basic economic rules of Islamic on the one hand and to assume on the other that all religions have failed to manage the situation, is most unfair to say the least of it.

Muslims, in any case, do not, for a moment, think that the situation is so hopelessly out of control as to necessitate the abolition of all private ownership of capital, the emergence of large scale industries notwithstanding. They, on the contrary, feel that private capital and private enterprise are among the best safeguards for individual freedom against the inherent tendency of the state powers towards absolutism.

Capital, in the sense of private capital, therefore instead of becoming a curse for humanity, as it has been at the hands of spiritually bankrupt Jews and Christians, can prove a blessing for it, if properly guided and controlled: that is the Muslim belief and we are looking forward to a time when tired of their vagaries, the Jewish-Christian block of humanity will also come to see the wisdom of this principle.

But whatever measure of freedom we may allow to private capital, we shall see to it, as we have always done when we controlled the world affairs, that it is never permitted to dominate our politics, national or international.
The Point at Issue

It is an open secret now that while the Western democracies have been able to guarantee their respective peoples freedom of thought, of initiative and of expression, they have not so far been able to give them an equal guarantee of economic justice and security. It is also becoming more and more evident every day that Soviet Socialism while it has guaranteed to the people under its sway economic security to a large measure, it has miserably failed to assure them freedom of thought and occupation. For this failure of the latter, one need not be in a hurry to condemn its intentions. The very responsibilities which the Soviet type of socialism has taken upon itself is bound to force its hands to acts of violence which appear so odious to us who happen to live outside its zones. Perhaps coercion to the extent of forced labour and concentration camps for unwilling workers, was not so clear in the minds of the early exponents of the Marxist doctrines. These unpleasant developments, however, were bound to take place by the very nature of things. Karl Marx and his fellow-travellers might have meant well with the suffering workers of the world, but it was not given to them to rightly comprehend the manifold workings of the human mind and its essential needs. They failed to see that to relieve a common man of all responsibilities for economic existence would eventually mean encouraging him in indolence.

As the earliest economists had very rightly pointed out, any work that involves the earning of livelihood is distasteful to human nature, because of its monotonous and compulsory nature. Most unfortunately this wisdom of the early economists was lost upon the Marxist thinkers, who in their extravagance of emotionalism thought that freedom from the anxieties of economic existence would make every man altruistic and idealistic. Hard facts of life have belied this dreamy assumption. Experiences have shown that the spirit
of selfishness in man, with all its attending evils, is the only guarantee of efficient and progressive economic efforts. Leave a man to his own resources and he will be found to exert himself to the utmost to make his two ends meet, in the same manner as a man thrown into water will automatically begin to swim or attempt to swim. Props, economic or physical, take away from man the incentive to struggle. So far as this aspect of the question is concerned, capitalism has got some solid ground under its feet. It rightly believes in the personal responsibilities of every man for his own economic condition and carries this principle further by acknowledging the utility of the spirit of competition in economic efforts. Its error does not lie so much in principle as in its application. Alongside its belief in this principle, if it could just postulate the necessity of some kind of regulation for individual economic efforts and economic competition, it would have been more or less on the right track. The theory of LAISSEZ FAIRE, however, conceived under a wrong emotion, vitiated the whole atmosphere of capitalistic economy.

The idea of absolute freedom which was condemned in every other department of life was, most unfortunately, regarded to be a sound principle for action in the economic field. Most of the ills, social or economic, from which the western democracies and their satellites have been suffering, are traceable to this ill-conceived theory of absolute freedom of the individual in the economic field. It is really ridiculous that while the users of public roads have some rules to follow, there should be no rules to guide the interminable flow of economic efforts proceeding from millions of men in the same country. It is here that the ship of capitalistic economy has floundered.

But apart from the economic aspect of the question there is also the moral aspect. Laissez faire postulates total
absence of responsibility on the part of the rich for the poor. The rigid idea of supply and demand and of exhausting all responsibilities with the payment of wages to the labourers, has been responsible, among other things, for the social chaos which has provided the communists with their pet slogans.

Prejudice dies hard, and so does the obstinacy of social opinion. Opinions once formed and acted upon assume the appearance of infallible truths, whatever the troubles and miseries they may bring in their train. It is not always selfishness that blurs the human vision in this way. More often than not, self interest would advise a different course of action. In the case under consideration, if among other things, capitalistic economy, both social and political, would just acknowledge its human obligation to the poor over and above those dictated by the law of supply and demand in the field of labour, it would very easily cut the ground from under the feet of Communism. It is, indeed, a sad commentary on our religious faith and liberal democratic thought, that we should not be prepared to consider our less talented fellow-human beings as more than mere factors of production and distribution and that a grossly materialistic philosophy armed with dangerous political powers, should have to give us a lesson in fellow-feeling at this late hour of the day. It is better late, however, than never.

Communism will feed, clothe and house every man and woman at the cost of his or her freedom. In view of its thoughtless undertaking and the constitution of human mind being what it is, it could not do otherwise. But can we, believers in private capital, decently look after our poor people while maintaining them in their freedom of occupation and thought? That is the real issue before civilized humanity to-day.

After the experience of labour concentration camps in
Russia, we think the idea of charity, in its original-higher sense, will not appear so nauseating to our proletariat as it used to do before the Soviet experiments. Yes, an appeal to our sense of human obligations and a suitable response to it, can even now set things right. In a free race of economic life, however well-regulated, there must be accidents, some of them even disastrous. A section of people may be left without resources, either for their own faults or for somebody else’s faults or for no fault of any one. Individually and collectively, we owe a human duty to this section. They are our own flesh and blood, and since we believe in soul, they must be possessing the same soul as ours. And for all we know out of these may appear persons who will one day prove our temporal and spiritual leaders. So, far from leaving them to starve in their helplessness, we should do our utmost to enable them to stand on their own legs in their full human honour and dignity.

This, of course, presupposes an active religious emotion. And if Christian emotion has not proved quite so active in this regard, religious emotion as such should not be regarded as having failed. There is still the Islamic religious emotion to be tried. Indeed, the balanced principles, the elaborate economic regulations and the past achievements of this religion—all suggest its possibility of success when all other systems have failed. What strikes a student of this religion, however, at first sight, is that it wonderfully combines individualism with collectivism, freedom with discipline, economic motive with a sense of moral obligations, in its code of life, and that its history is the only one, wherein economic classes have never been so scandalously exclusive and so hopelessly at war with one another.

The question for a Muslim, therefore, is not which of the two western economic systems to applaud. They both stand condemned at the bar of Muslim opinion. The one may be
more dangerously wrong than the other but neither of them promises any solution to the present problems. Freedom of thought and action is the fundamental spiritual right of a human being. But living in this world of matter, as we do, security of our economic existence is equally important. Can they both go together? Both the western systems have given in practice as well as in theory, a negative answer to this question. Islam, its Prophet and its past history, however, reply it in the affirmative. Will the contending parties in the present world give them a chance to prove the truth of their assertion?

**Moral not Economic**

He must have been an extremely shallow thinking and self-conceited man who claimed that 'social science is Know-able', meaning that he himself was able to find out through his own intelligence and observation of relevant facts, the law governing social psychology and behaviour. He was too superficial an observer to realise that human social action is mostly inspired and influenced by emotions, of which the laws are too subtle to be discovered by man through the dim light of his empirical knowledge. A sounder thinking would have made him realise that it needs a super-mind and a higher light than empirical reasoning, to ascertain the correct laws that govern social psychology and human social actions.

The presumptuous attempt to find out these laws by unaided human reasoning has resulted in our day in the much-vaulted theory advertised in the world as dialectical materialism. The gist of the theory is that the social history of man is but a history of continuous struggle between the economic classes and that with this material fact as foundation there have grown up from time to time different cultural systems at different periods of history. The underlying suggestion is that the people of lower economic grades are at perpetual war with the people of higher economic grades.
The implication of this theory is that people with lesser amenities of life must in the very nature of things bear an undying hatred towards those with better amenities. Apparently, it is quite a plausible theory, but a closer scrutiny will expose its hollowness. But before we proceed to the philosophical aspects of its untenability we may be excused for showing its absurdity in actual practice.

Communism, acquiring political power in Soviet Russia, proposed to do away, consistently with this theory, with all inequalities of economic resources. After thirty years, however we find these interesting enthusiasts turning round and telling the world that the existence in Russia of multimillionaires is an evidence of Soviet anxiety to give every man his due. In a plainer language a man is entitled to a greater or less amount of the means of material existence according as he is endowed by nature by a greater or a smaller capacity for earning them.

It is very interesting to note that these believers in a perpetual war between economic classes have developed within this short period the wisdom of acknowledging the endowments of nature. And here collapses like a house of cards, the whole theory of class-war. Because once you admit nature's endowments as the basis of your judgement of people's deserts, you indirectly challenge the correctness of the theory of class-hatred and class-war. Because, the implication of this theory is that the inequalities of material possessions is contrary to the law of nature and hatred or war is only a reaction to this unnatural order of things. Once you admit, however, that the wealth acquisitive power is different in different men by the very nature of things, you can not in the same breath avow your faith in the theory that the acquisition by different men of different measure of wealth is not in accordance with the scheme of nature.
Evidently, the present position taken up by Soviet Russia in this regard, is a return to sanity and is undoubtedly a reversal of the whole idea underlying its slogan of class-war. It is really not difficult to understand that the best that man can do to bring about a peaceful and happy order of society is to follow the design of nature. It does not lie in the power of man to create a scheme of his own. When nature has gifted different men and women with different kinds of genius in different measures for the acquisition of wealth, all we need to do it to give a free scope to these gifts of nature for unhampered expression. Unfortunately this is not generally done. By artificial means man wants to perpetuate his own affluence or of his family or of his clan or of his nation. Here originates the trouble which has been wrongly diagnosed by Karl Marx and his followers as economic class-war. In reality the hatred of one class against another shows itself and assumes a destructive form only when the classes cease to be natural ones and are supported by immoral and artificial props. It is only when social structure is so reared on fraudulent measures and devices, and not before that that one economic class begins to hate the other. The basis of hatred therefore is not economic as suggested by Karl Marx but moral.

Where Karl Marx seems to have stumbled is when he fails to see the distinction between natural economic grades and the unnatural ones. He also seems to have failed to see that the difference of economic possessions is as varied as the number of men in the world. In other words, no two men are alike in such possession. Should therefore each man be at war with the other? This is absurd on the very face of it. The fact is that each man, while he may feel uneasy to see another man possessing thing which he does not, is more or less satisfied with what comes to his share as the full measure of what he is entitled to by his gifted powers and capacity to work. Such uneasiness as he may experience when he
compares his own lot with those of others is of an ephemeral type and is incapable of creating that organised struggle which ends in the replacement of one class of people by another in the rulership of a country.

The truth of this assertion of ours may be verified by a reference to corresponding facts in other aspects of our existence. We never find, for example, a league of ugly people united against the handsome ones. Even the ugliest man or woman finds some sort of beauty in his or her own self. Again, for all we know, people with ugly faces and features may very well be expected to enjoy the sight of handsome faces and shapely figures. This clearly shows that there is always to be found in the human mind a substantial satisfaction with the allotments of nature and no perceptible heart burning is to be expected on that account in any quarter. And man’s economic existence should be no exception to this rule.

The flames of class-hatred which have been sedulously fanned by Karl Marx and his disciples must, therefore, have their origin not in the economic inequalities arising out of nature’s allotments but in something else. And we assert with all the emphasis at our command that this something is of a moral nature.

State and National Economy

The convulsion created in the economic world by the intensive and extensive Communist propaganda has brought the question of state responsibility for National economy to the forefront every where in the world. The Muslim world unfortunately is no exception. And it will be no exaggeration to say that inspite of the most rational code in their hands in the form of the Qur’an and the most tried social system in which they live, our Muslim political thinkers, even some of the best of them, are found to-day to be more or less
nervous on this question. The practical surrender of Christia-
nity before the onslaughts of Communist philosophy is to a
great extent responsible for this unsettled condition of
Muslim economic thought. It is undeniable that the Muslim
press, reflecting as it does the leading minds, has been
showing a more or less defeatist attitude on the question of
Communism. Some of our best newspapers are decidedly in
favour of that pernicious cult. In view of this general ner-
vousness it is not a little heartening to see a widely read
English daily of Lahore to conclude its editorial on the
Jagirdari System with the following remark:

“While making every provision for the maintenance of
a decent standard of living for the common man and for the
removal of ignorance, poverty and disease, Islam does not
put any limit on man’s wealth acquisitive capacity.” — Civil
and Military Gazette, Lahore.

This statement is very courageous indeed and breathes
a faith in the soundness of Islamic social principles, which
unfortunately has become very rare in these days. It is a
timely reminder to the Muslims that they should have that
conviction about their tried and rational principles which
the Communists have in their own ram-shackle and illusive
creed and system.

With all its merits as an affirmation of the right Muslim
attitude towards this most burning question of our day, the
statement quoted needs certain clarifications to avoid
possible misunderstandings. It is true that Islam puts no
limit to the quantity of wealth a man may acquire through
his own ability and efforts. But it is equally true that Islam
has a large number of restrictions imposed upon the manner
of acquiring such wealth. It has as many don’t’s as do’s
in its instructions for earning. The do’s are called Halal in
Islam, and don’ts, are known as Haram. A Muslim accord-
ingly has to decide at every opportunity for earning wealth, whether the method presenting itself is \textit{Halal} or \textit{Haram}. And as every Muslim knows, the \textit{Haram} methods are practically as numerous as the \textit{Halal} ones. To start with, any earning that comes through interest and usury is unlawful in Islam. Then one is forbidden to trade in forbidden things and the number of these is quite large. Further, it is forbidden to adopt unfair means in trade or to trade in a manner that is harmful to the nation or to humanity at large, such as adulteration, dumping and under-selling in competition. It may be said that Non-Muslim societies as well regard certain methods of earnings as improper and impose legal restrictions on them. We must not forget, however, that in societies not Islamic such legal restrictions have no religious sanction behind them, or even if there is some sort of sanction it is rather vague and of a general nature. In Islam the case is quite different. While the Qur'an lays down principles of general behaviour in every department of life, including trade and commerce, the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, gives the details of their application by his actions and rulings. It may be further objected that even if such rules do exist in Islam, their value should be of a spiritual and moral nature and should not constitute any basis for legislation or police action. Herein is a misunderstanding which must be removed to make the Muslim attitude towards national economy definite and clear. Islam, unlike Christianity, can never countenance laissez-faire policy either in the production or in the distribution of wealth. It is true that in the days of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, no punishment was awarded on economic crimes. But it is a well-known fact that the Holy Prophet stopped every such improper conduct on the spot. In his own time the Holy Prophet's word was enough to stop any action, private or public. The prohibition of wine, for example did not need any promulgation of law or any executive action. In later times, however, a whole legal system had to
be devised and a whole executive was employed to see the enforcement of Islamic prohibitions. Take the case of a domestic dispute. A husband keeps his wife in suspension. In the Holy Prophet’s time, his asking the man to release the woman was enough to settle the question. In our days, the Woman, for all we know, may have to go through an elaborate legal proceeding and may even need police help to secure an honourable release and exit from her husband’s house. What applies to these other kinds of misbehaviour must of necessity apply to economic crimes.

Economic acts that are condemned by God and His Prophet must form an important basis for Islamic legislation, due regard being paid to the peculiar needs of a particular time. The economic crimes must be taken cognizance of in the same way as other crimes against individuals and the society. Indeed, one fails to understand why black-marketeer, a profiteer, a callous hoarder, a tyrannically exacting landlord, a man running a gambling house, a Muslim brewer, if such there be, and a maker of counterfeit coins and a forger of documents should not be treated as equally liable in the eyes of the Islamic law.

And what applies to the earning of money should also apply to its disposal. The Book of God and the rulings of the Holy Prophet lay down quite a large number of restrictions on the rights of the individual to the disposal of the money earned and these can very well serve as a basis for relevant legislation. For example, a man of substance squandering his wealth on a dancing girl or some demoralising art or on luxury dogs and horses, should be liable to be punished in the same way as a man offering bribe to a government servant or committing similar acts calculated to disturb the orderliness of society.

It is high time Muslims had realised that there is a world
of difference between the basic Christian approach to the question of National Economy and that of the Muslims. While our Christian friends can think only of two extreme views of the question viz., absolute freedom of individuals in matters of production and distribution, otherwise known as laissez-faire or the ownership of the same vested entirely in the government, otherwise known as nationalisation of production and distribution, Muslims can think of a via media in this department of life as in any other. Muslims are neither for absolute freedom in the matter of production and distribution, otherwise known as laissez-faire, or the ownership of the same vested entirely in the government, otherwise known as nationalisation of production and distribution. They are neither for absolute freedom in the matter of production and distribution nor for the total abolition of private ownership in such matters. The Christian mind unused to legal restrictions because of the very nature of its religious creed, seems incapable of thinking of restricted freedom and of state responsibility for private conduct, even if it has a bearing on the collective life of the society. Discarding law as a curse at the very beginning of its religious history, Christianity has always had a dread for restrictions on individual actions. The laissez-faire policy was a natural corollary of this Christian outlook on life. Those, however, who could break the bonds of religious thinking and had courage enough to take stock of solid facts of existence were forced again by their Christian tradition to go to the other extreme of advocating state ownership of all property. A classical example of this peculiar trend of Christian thought is to be found in the following statement of the great English thinker and writer John Stuart Mill, at one time a great advocate of laissez-faire:

"If, therefore, the choice were to be made between Communism with all its chances and the present state of society with all its sufferings and injustices; if the institution
of private property necessarily carried with it as a consequence that the produce of labour should be apportioned as we now see it, almost in an inverse ratio, the largest portions to those who have never worked at all, the next largest to those whose work is nominal, and so in a descending scale, the remuneration dwindling as the work grows harder and more disagreeable, until the most fatiguing and exhausting bodily labour cannot count with certainty on being able to earn even the necessaries of life; if this or Communism were the alternative, all the difficulties, great or small, of Communism, would be but as dust in the balance". *(Mill's Principle, B. II, Ch. 53).*

An attitude typical of Christian culture, and herein lies the tragedy of Christian Economic history. No believer in any forbidden food and drink or any religious law of social beaviour, a Christian is temperamentally unfit to believe in any forbidden method of producing wealth. He is either for recklessly adopting any method of earning that comes handy or leave the whole question of production of wealth to be handled by the State in any manner it likes. The Muslim attitude towards this question is entirely different. He knows that freedom of production and distribution, in the manner in which it has been permitted to work, has brought into being a horrible state of affairs in the world. But he is also aware that this is due to some serious defects in the Christian social conscience and in the Christian view of State responsibilities. No believer in State ownership of the means of production, a Muslim still holds the State ultimately responsible for all economic maladjustment and consequent iniquities, just as it holds it responsible for all other irregularities of social relationships. The State, according to the Islamic conception of it, should prevent and cure all economic diseases that may make their appearance from time to time, and this without robbing the private man of all freedom of private enterprise. There may be any amount
of supervision, guidance and control in the field of economic production and distribution, but no abolition of the system of private enterprise. Economic crimes may be punished with any amount of severity as the exigency of the time may dictate, but the right of private enterprise as such should be left untouched.

The State in Islam, therefore, has a dual responsibility—the regulation and maintenance of peace in the field of economic relationships and safeguarding the right of the individual citizen of freedom of economic enterprise.

It is high time Muslims had shaken their minds free of all nervousness in this regard and courageously proclaimed their own independent economic ideology to a world, dazed and excited over this very question.

A Study in Comparison

Marxism presents not only a scheme for the production and distribution of national wealth as is generally supposed but also offers a whole system of life together with its philosophy. As such it very much resembles a religious code of life. Hence it is that it is determined to overthrow all other religious systems existing in the world. Its creed is accepted as dogmatically by its adherents as a religious creed is believed unquestioningly by its followers. It is a Godless religion, one may say, possessing all the features of a religion minus the God idea and spiritual life. All men of religion, therefore, justly regard it as a menace to the religious faith of humanity.

There are two parts of this movement that stand quite distinct from one another. One is its appeal in the name of suffering humanity together with an analysis of the present ills of human social life; and the other is its philosophy of life and formulation of rules for the social conduct of man.
So far as the former is concerned it receives almost universal response from all right thinking men and from the masses of suffering humanity of our time. But like every other man-made creed and scheme of false prophets its diagnosis of and prescription for these evils, is not only erroneous but even fatal to the social existence of man. We propose here to take Marx's philosophy of life and the principles of social existence he enunciates, one by one, and test them on the crucible of facts and rules of sound thinking.

It goes without saying that although Karl Marx denies the existence of God and spiritual life, he attributes to the earth and what man makes out of its products, certain powers which have throughout been attributed by men of religion to the spiritual God in heaven. For example he says:

"In the social production which men carry on (i.e., in the production of the material values necessary to the life of men) they enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will; these relations of production correspond to a definite stage of development of their material forces of production. The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society— the real foundation on which rises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness". (Critique of Political Economy).

Evidently Karl Marx credits the material forces of production with an evolution and self-unfoldments, which, to him, is the creator of the evolving legal, political, cultural and moral sense in man. In a way, the self-developing material forces of production may be regarded in the light of Karl Marx's theory as the demi-gods of man and his destiny if not his actual creator. How far this conception of the mother earth differs from the heathen conception of the
goddess earth it is difficult to ascertain. But more of it later on.

It is, however, not only in this that Karl Marx’s creed approximates religion—albeit a perverted religion—but in some other doctrines of his pseudo religion also which he offers to the world as scientific truths, he has only borrowed from recognised religious sources. For instance, he believes along with Hegel that history is no mere jumble of isolated facts, but a series of systematised inter-connected phenomena produced by a set of immutable laws. While believing and preaching this idea of history the Marxists forget that they are preaching an idea distinctly Quranic in origin, because before the revelation of this book no one ever conceived of history in this way. It is a recurring burden of the Holy Qur’an that the rise and fall of nations and civilisations are caused by certain laws which are as immutable in their operation as the laws of physical nature.

Next comes the idea of evolution in the social life of man. This also is a Quranic idea that never occurred to the mind of man before the revelation of this Book. It is implied in the master attribute of God in the Qur’an, viz., Rabb al-Alamin, i.e., Evolver of the Nations.

It is suggested by another verse of the Holy Qur’an which speaks of God replacing one of His signs by another like it or better than it. (2:196).

The word Ayat or sign, as used by the Qur’an in this verse, means not only a scripture or a phenomenon of nature but also a turning point, a phase or a decisive event of history. So the idea underlying is that there is a systematic evolution and no regression in the social history of man. Thus, directly or indirectly this idea of social evolution of man as pronounced by western philosophers is evidently borrowed
from the Qur’an. But here we must guard against a common error. There are phases in this history which apparently go against this doctrine and seem to encourage a contrary view. For example, the present state of affairs in the world would make one feel as if humanity is going back to its primitive barbarism wherein each man’s hand was against all. The fact, however, is that just as in the case of the physical body of man, in the social evolution of mankind there are occasional jerks and set-backs, in the same way as there are accidents and illnesses in the case of human body. Just as at the onslaught of a serious illness a man may appear as almost dead and yet on recovery he quietly and invariably proceeds to the next stage of his evolutionary journey, similarly the human society at times looks as if it has finished its course of life and is going down to annihilation but after every such tribulation it starts afresh for an advanced stage in its evolutionary course. The present state of humanity with all its gloomy prospects is a temporary setback of this nature preceding a fresh march towards the destination. The Qur’an likens such periods to the dry season of the physical nature which precedes the rainy season and which sees the end of all life in the vegetable world. Such like suggestions of the Qur’an may even to-day widen the vision and add to the knowledge of a Marxist philosopher.

The next rung in the ladder of Marxist system of philosophy is the idea of dialectics in history. Following Hegel, Karl Marx believes that everywhere a new situation or phenomenon appears as a result of the struggle between two opposites or contradictions—in other words all evolutions come as a kind of reconciliation between two opposing forces, ideas or systems. One of these forces is called thesis, in the terminology of this philosophy, the other one, i.e., the opposing one is termed antithesis, and a third one which appears as a reconciliation between the two previous ones and brings into being a new condition of things has been
given the name of synthesis. Here also no Muslim will find anything contrary to the spirit and teachings of Islam. The idea of opposites working together at the basis of all life, existence and progress is the recurring burden of the Qur'an. The Book repeatedly draws our attention to the alternation of the day and the night, to the successive changes of season, and to the struggle between life and death—and all this to bring the corresponding laws of social humanity within the grasp of our understanding. So this high sounding law of dialectics is also no peculiar discovery of Marx and accordingly no Muslim has anything to quarrel with him on this score.

We may say before we proceed further that it is because of these elements of religious truths embodied in the Marxist philosophy and not because of the errors it contains that it has appealed so strongly to a very big section of thinking humanity. But now we come to the parting of the ways.

We are afraid neither in his idea of evolution nor in what he calls dialecions, can one find any support for his doctrine of revolution or class war, because evolution necessarily implies a gradual and peaceful advancement with the continuity of identity and the dialectic process also as observed in nature, i.e., the law of struggle between two opposites ending in a reconciliatory third phenomenon, is no revolutionary or cataclysmic process as our Marxist friends would have us believe. Here Karl Marx seems to be a victim of that psychological confusion expressed in the proverb, “Wish is the father of thought”. Opposites do struggle in nature to produce ever newer phenomena but without any violent outburst of any kind. So while approving his theories of evolution and dialectics, we Muslims strongly disapprove of Karl Marx’s doctrine of class-war and violent revolutions since it is not only unscientific but also runs counter to his two other theories. Thus most that can be said of such occa-
sional outbursts in human history is that these are an indication of a serious ailment or abnormal state in the social health of humanity. They are what a cyclone or an earthquake is to the physical nature. As Muslims or followers of the religion of peace we are rather concerned with the normal and peaceful laws of nature than with these extraordinary outbursts.

Reverting to Marxian dialectics we are tempted to ask our Marxist friends a question. How are we to apply this principle to the present conflict of social ideologies? The existing order viz., Capitalism is evidently a thesis of their terminology. Now what position are we to allocate to Communism? Are we or are we not to regard it as antithesis? Obviously it is this ideology which constitutes the opposing force and is the very negation of Capitalism. If this is not Anti-thesis what then is the Anti-thesis of the Capitalistic ideology? We have, moreover, yet to find out the third item of the trio, viz., synthesis. Evidently Communism can not be both the Anti-thesis and the Synthesis. We Muslims rightly believe therefore that Islam is the synthesis between Capitalism and Communism. But let a third party be called to witness. Professor Gibb the author of Whither Islam says:

"Within the Western world Islam still maintains the balance between exaggerated opposites. Opposed equally to the anarchy of European materialism and the regimentation of Russian Communism, it has not yet succumbed to that obsession with the economic side of life which is characteristic of present-day Europe and present-day Russia alike".

Then he quotes professor Massignon of Paris University, a Roman Catholic by faith, as saying:

"Islam is hostile to unrestricted exchange, to banking capital to state loans, to indirect taxes on objects of prime
necessity; but it holds to the rights of the father and the husband, to private property, and to commercial capital. Here again it occupies an intermediate position between the doctrines of bourgeois Capitalism and Bolshevik Communism”.

We need hardly add anything to this observation. The synthesis is noticed even by outside observers.

Let us now proceed to examine Karl Marx’s peculiar doctrine of the materialistic interpretation of history to which we have already referred in passing. According to him, the foundation of human social life is not to be found in the emotions and idealism of man but in his economic urges. In plain words, the structure of society is based first and last on the economic needs of man. Of course, in a very doleful tone he speaks of this as a peculiar evil of modern times and holds the capitalistic system responsible for it. We find for example the following passage in the Communist Manifesto, a joint work of Marx and his friend Engels:

“It has drowned the most heavenly ecstasies of religious enthusiasm, of philistine sentimentalism, in the icy cold water of egotistic calculation”. But unfortunately with all this apparent solicitude for these values of life, instead of attempting to redeem them Karl Marx has proceeded to regulate and systematise this process to make it a permanent feature of human social life. Believing as he does in the economic urge of life as the basic social urge he could not do otherwise. It is interesting, however, as we have seen, that Karl Marx does not stop here. He attributes evolution not to the mind of man but to the economic conditions of living, which to him is a self-unfolding primal force. And here he exposes the error of his judgement. He forgets there are nations still existing in the world, like the Hindus, the Jews and the Chinese, who after having attained a sufficiently high level of this economic evolution, have gone back to the
primitive stages and have been staying there for centuries without any attempt to move forward. So this theory of a steady evolution supposed to be inherent in the economic conditions of living or mode of production, as Marx likes to call it, falls to the ground. Had Marx been given a deeper insight into the social history of man, he would have found that there are other and higher laws at work than his much-vaunted economic laws to determine the course of this history. The Quran points to these laws when it repeatedly says:

"Then travel in the land and see what has been the end of those who have given the lie to the truth" (6:11).

In other words it is the rejection or acceptance of the moral and spiritual values of life that retards or accelerates the social progress of a nation. And the whole force of the argument of facts would seem to lie on the side of the Qur'an and none whatsoever on that of Marx.

A similar analysis would reveal the true nature of the pet theory of Marx, viz., class struggle producing social evolution. We agree there is a kind of class struggle involved in this process but it is not a struggle between the economic classes of Marx but between a degenerate class of rulers and those who are fitted by nature to supplant them. There is absolute democracy in the providence of God in the disposal of rulership as in His other gifts. By the very nature of things no particular class ever holds monopoly of this honour. All classes are given a chance by rotation. As the Qur'an would put it:

"These days We bring by rotation to different classes of people" (The Qur'an, 3:139).

It is the operation of this rule of moral and intellectual fitness to rule that brought about the present regime in
Russia. As all students of Marxism know Karl Marx’s theory of social evolution has been disproved by the Russian Revolution. According to this theory every nation must pass, step by step, through the various stages of economic evolution as defined by him viz., serfdom, feudalism, capitalism and lastly socialism. According to this schedule and Marx’s prophecy, Great Britain and America having attained a very high degree of Capitalistic order should have, among all nations, been the first to experience the Socialistic revolution in their systems. Russia on the other hand, being still at the feudal stage at the end of the First World War should have headed for Capitalism before it could have been fit for such a revolution. But belying all these expectations of Marx while Great Britain and America continued to be the foremost capitalistic countries, Russia all of a sudden jumped overhead to the socialistic stage. The Marxists are ill at ease to explain this startling aberration of their law. The fact is that it was the extreme unworthiness and corruption of the administrators and priests and the extreme backwardness of political life in Russia, in the midst of progressive administrative machineries and advanced political consciousness of the surrounding nations, that caused this startling change in the Russian political life.

It was the working of moral and social impulses in man, and not that of the economic factors of life as Marx would have us believe, that was at the back of this revolution. The political situation in Russia in relation to world conditions demanded a change of rulers and in the method of administration, and this took place irrespective of the economic conditions of living and the course of evolution supposed to be inherent in it. And by a strange irony of fate, duped by the theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat as forged by Karl Marx, the Russian revolutionaries have fastened on the neck of their nation the same chains of autocracy as was its lot to bear in the hated Tsarist regime. This deceptive
theory needs a little analysis in passing. Dictatorship of the proletariat is an anomalous nomenclature. Since by its very nature, dictatorship requires one man’s will to dominate the whole population. The whole mass of people can not possibly wield the power of dictatorship. There must of necessity be two parties in a dictatorship—the one is to dictate and the other to be dictated. Obviously the dictatorship has to be vested in one person supposed to be representing the mass of the proletariat, who in their turn are to receive the dictation. It is necessary to remember in this connection that all autocracies have their rise in this formula. The first autocrats in every state are supposed to represent the popular will. So by their very constitution the Communists are laying the foundation of an absolute despotism and distribution of national wealth, sets the stage, as we shall presently see, for a return of the society to the stage of unredeemed serfdom.

It is a well-known fact that Karl Marx is for the total abolition of private enterprise and private capital, which include not only money used for this purpose but also instruments of production. It is really strange that while the founder of Communism sees the root of all freedom in the economic freedom of man, he places the individual man in abject dependence on the State in the matter of production, so much so that his very livelihood is in a way to be doled out by it. This combined with the fact that a Communist state is to be a dictatorship makes the position of the individual man exactly the same as it was the case in the age of serfdom and even worse in some respects. Because under the latter system the serf had not only his right to his own consumer’s goods but was also guaranteed his inalienable attachment to the tract of land he cultivated.

In order to justify his proposed abolition of private capital from the world, Karl Marx had to propound his famous theory of surplus value by which he designates all
profits accruing from commercial capital. This latter again is butteressed by another theory of his invention known as the labour theory of value, which in a nut-shell means that the entire value of thing demanded and supplied in the market, is in reality meant for the economic maintenance of that amount of human labour which has been consumed by the commodity upto the point of its final disposal and that the part of the value which is carried away by the manufacturer or the tradesman as profit should have in justice gone to the labourers concerned and this profit-making business is thus at bottom an act of misappropriation or exploitation on the part of the said manufacturer or tradesman. If, however, one analyses the labour theory itself one will find that in propounding it Karl Marx has only taken the supply side of the question into consideration and has ignored the demand side altogether. Obviously there are cases where an extraordinary demand alone creates the value of a thing because the supply involves no labour whatsoever. The case of antiques is one in point.

We Muslims, are, therefore, neither for absolute freedom of trade nor for the total abolition of private capital and this in the interest of both the economic and political freedom of the individual man. The State may and should enact laws to maintain this via-media and the code of Islam has many suggestions for it, but it should never shirk the responsibility of a guardian for each and all living under its sway, nor should it assume the rule of God in this matter.

In speaking of the rule of God we are reminded of the Communist claim in the beginning to give, “To each according to his needs”, which had later to be modified and reduced to the less arrogant slogan, “To each according to his work”. Experience taught the early enthusiasts how utterly impossible it was to ascertain the real needs of each individual person in their endless multiplicity and variety. We hope
some more experience will make them realise before long that to decide the exact share of wealth due to every worker is equally impossible, humanly speaking and that one has to leave a big margin for the invisible forces of nature to adjust things in the economic life of man—forces which Karl Marx would perhaps ascribe to the material factors of life but which people of religion would ascribe to a being who is above both matter and mind and who in their view is responsible for the creation of both and whom they call God. Speaking from the intellectual plane one may say that much has to be left to the cultivated good sense of man and the free play of natural human instincts, which should not be condemned as is done in Christianity and impliedly in Marxism as the source of nothing but evil for the social welfare of man.

We may state in passing that while offering Islam to our Marxist friends as a fulfilment of Marxism we are asking them to consider a proposition that is not in any way contrary to their own view of historical evolution. Because they also believe in humanity recovering an ideal state, viz. Primitive Communism, which is supposed to have existed in the distant past and which was lost by some unknown catastrophe. If challenged by anyone that this return to the past runs counter to the theory of evolution the Marxists' only possible reply would be that the future Communistic State would differ from the past one in colour and complexion. We Muslims would say the same thing in regard to revived Islam. As a matter of fact, our position in this respect is far stronger than that of the Marxists, because the first age of Islam is a broad daylight fact of history which takes one only thirteen hundred years back, whereas primitive Communism, if it actually existed, has practically passed into a legend.

One word more and we have finished. Inspite of Karl
Marx's view that mind is the creation of matter it was his mind that produced the Communist system. But have our Marxist friends ever considered that although the mind of man is capable of discovering the laws working in the world of matter for the discovery of its own laws it needs a higher and superior consciousness? After all, it is not for nothing that all hitherto known societies ascribe their respective origins to some sort of revealed code. Revelation in fact is the working of the supermind, detecting the laws of human mind, that determine the course of social history of man inspite of all that Karl Marx may say to the contrary. Thus while Marxism is a product of human mind, Islam is the product of revelation. And it is remarkable that while the one has all the marks of bitterness and confusion characteristic of a struggling human mind and is a creed of naked violence, the other carries with it the peace and serenity of a supermind approaching the subject of life with a calm confidence, a perfect clarity of vision and love for the ignorant and the erring. It is worthwhile to recall here in passing that the Christian West had wrongly and unjustly accused the sinless Prophet of Islam of violence. The sin of this blasphemy seems to have recoiled on it in the form of Communism which is avowedly a creed of ruthless violence. Let the Christians take heed of this irony and let the Marxist also ponder. And if a Marxist has any misgiving as to the reality of the very phenomenon of revelation he should do well to devote some time to the study of the life and work of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement and a contemporary and highly intellectual witness of this phenomenon.