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Next Meeting at Darus Salam:

Date: **Sunday 5th March 2006**

Time: **3.00 p.m.**

Speaker: **Miss Habiba Anwar, LL.B.**

Trip to Woking: The date has been
changed to **Sunday 26th March.**

Regular activities:

Darus-i Quran and Hadith:

Every Friday at 2.30 p.m.

Meetings of the Executive:

First Sunday of every month at 2.00 p.m.

Meeting of the Jama'at:

First Sunday of every month at 3.00 p.m.

Islam's teaching on response to abuse and mockery

*Show patience under provocation,
disregard abuse and politely turn away
from abusers. Violence not allowed.*

by **Dr. Zahid Aziz**

According to the religion of Islam, Muslims can only respond to verbal abuse, mockery and lampooning of their faith and its sacred figures in the following forms.

1. Any criticism of Islam, or allegations against it, which underlie the abuse must be refuted and answered by means of words and speech.

2. Apart from answering specific criticism, all possible efforts must be made to present the true and accurate picture of Islam in general. With more enlightenment and less ignorance prevailing about Islam and its Holy Prophet Muhammad, the instances of abuse, vituperation and mockery will decrease.
3. As regards the offence or hurt that Muslims naturally feel as a result of such abuse, they are taught to respond by:
 - a) bearing the provocation with resolute patience,
 - b) ignoring the abuse,
 - c) separating themselves temporarily from the company of the abusers while the abuse continues,

- d) exercising forgiveness in view of the ignorance of the abusers.

All this is stated plainly and categorically in the Holy Quran and is evident from the actions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad. It is not allowed by Islam to respond intemperately with fury and rage, call for physical retribution and punishment, or threaten or attack anyone with physical violence.

It is entirely false and totally unfounded to allege that Islam teaches Muslims to attack or seek to murder anyone who verbally abuses their religion, mocks it, or offends their feelings towards their faith.

Below we give arguments from the Holy Quran and incidents from the life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad to prove the above points. We are confident that no one can cite any text from the Holy Quran which contradicts the position set out below.

We may preface our discussion with the following saying of the Holy Prophet Muhammad:

“The Muslim who mixes with the people and bears patiently their hurtful words, is better than one who does not mix with people and does not show patience under their abuse.”¹

What a noble and wonderful piece of guidance, which is so applicable in the modern world in which people of widely differing faiths and opposing views have to mix and come into contact so much!

Teachings of the Holy Quran

As a general point, it may first be noted that the Holy Quran itself records the many accusations made against, and the insults heaped upon, the Holy Prophet Muhammad by his opponents during his life (for example, that he was insane, or that he fabricated his revelation), and it answers these charges, but nowhere does it require Muslims to inflict any kind of punishment on the accusers. If such abuse or criticism requires to be silenced by force, then why should the Quran itself have quoted so much of it from its opponents' mouths and thus preserved it forever?

The Holy Quran tells Muslims:

1. “You will certainly hear much abuse from the followers of previous books and from the idol-worshipping people. And if you are patient and keep your duty — this is surely a matter of great resolution.” — 3:185

2. “Many of the followers of previous books wish that they could turn you back into disbelievers after you have believed, but you should pardon and forgive.” — 2:109

In connection with these verses, it is recorded in the Hadith collection Bukhari:

“The Messenger of Allah and his Companions used to forgive the idolators and the followers of previous books, as Allah had commanded them, and they used to show patience on hearing hurtful words.”²

Addressing the Holy Prophet, God says in the Quran:

1. “Bear patiently what they say.” — 20:130 and 50:39.
2. “And bear patiently what they say and forsake them with a becoming withdrawal.” — 73:10.
3. “Obey not the disbelievers and the hypocrites, and disregard their hurtful talk.” — 33:48.

In the verses quoted above, Muslims are taught to bear their feelings of hurt and anger with patience, and to ignore the abuse.

Another verse having some bearing on this subject is as follows:

“And if you invite them to guidance, they hear not; and you see them looking towards you, yet they see not. Hold fast to forgiveness and enjoin goodness and turn away from the ignorant.” — 7:198-199

This directs us that when we have to deal with people who are blindly prejudiced and ignorant, and therefore fail to understand the guidance, we must not give vent to anger, fury and violence against them. We should treat them with forgiveness, do our duty of enjoining simple acts of goodness that everyone recognises as good, and then turn away from them, leaving the matter in the hands of Allah.

Withdrawing from company

Muslims are told:

“When you hear Allah's messages disbelieved in and mocked at, sit not with them until they enter into some other discourse.” — 4:140; see also 6:68.

These passages deal with the case when the religion is being mocked and derided (as distinct

¹ *Mishkat*, Book: Ethics, chapter: ‘Gentleness, modesty and good behaviour’.

² Book: ‘Commentary on the Quran’, ch. 16 under *Sura* 3.

from being criticised). A Muslim is required to do no more than to withdraw from such a company, and even that only while the mocking continues, and actually to rejoin the same company when they have changed the subject! How far from ordering Muslims to kill such people! Muslims are instructed to part company with them for the duration of their gratuitous abuse but still maintain other aspects of their relationship with those very offenders. Can any teaching be nobler and more uplifting?

Any criticism underlying the abuse must, of course, be answered. But the response to any sheer abuse, ridicule or mockery is withdrawal of oneself from the company of the abusers. The following verse, addressed to the Prophet Muhammad, has already been quoted above:

“And bear patiently what they say and forsake them with a *becoming withdrawal*.”
— 73:10.

The word for ‘becoming’ here means literally ‘beautiful’. The ‘withdrawal’ therefore is to be done in a dignified, well-mannered way, not by descending to their level of misbehaviour and abuse.

Some incidents from the Holy Prophet Muhammad’s life

1. A man called Suhail ibn Amar had a voice suited to oratory, and he used to employ this talent in making speeches against the Holy Prophet. He was captured by the Muslims at the battle of Badr and brought before the Holy Prophet. A Muslim suggested that some of Suhail’s teeth should be knocked out to disable him from making speeches. The Holy Prophet replied:

“If I disfigure any of his limbs, God will disfigure mine in retribution.”

2. Once when the Holy Prophet divided some wealth among his followers, a man accused him to his face of being unfair and insulted him by telling him: “Fear God, O Muhammad”. After the man had left, a Muslim asked the Holy Prophet’s permission to go and kill him. The Holy Prophet refused to allow it and actually tried to find some good in the man by saying: “Perhaps he says his prayers”. That Muslim replied: Even if he does, there are many people who pray, but are hypocrites and what they say is not what is in their hearts. The Holy Prophet replied: God has not told me to look inside people to see what is in their hearts. (*Bukhari*, Book: *Maghazi*, ch. 63.)

3. Some Jews, when addressing Muslims, would sarcastically distort the greeting *as-salamu alaikum* (“peace be upon you”) and say it as *as-*

samu alaikum, which means “death be upon you”. When they once addressed the Holy Prophet in this manner, his wife Aisha retorted back in the same words. The Holy Prophet disapproved of this reply and said that God did not like harsh words.

4. Once there were four men who spread an accusation of immoral conduct against the Holy Prophet’s wife Aisha. Their allegation was ultimately proved to be false. One of them, called Mistah, who was poor, used to receive financial assistance from Aisha’s father, Abu Bakr (the foremost follower of the Holy Prophet Muhammad and later the first Caliph of Islam). After this incident, Abu Bakr swore never again to help Mistah. The following verse was revealed to the Holy Prophet on this occasion:

“Let not the possessors of grace and means among you swear against giving to the near relatives and the poor and those who had to flee in God’s way. Pardon and overlook. Do you not love that God should forgive you?”
(24:22)

Hearing this, Abu Bakr exclaimed:

“Indeed, I certainly love that God should forgive me.”

He then resumed providing assistance to Mistah, as before (*Bukhari*, Book: ‘Testimony’, ch. 15).

Note that this allegation was not made against just an ordinary Muslim woman, but the wife of the Holy Prophet, and therefore it struck at the holy household at the centre of the religion of Islam, which was required to be a model of purity for all Muslims. In view of this, the forgiveness taught in the above verse, and put into practice by Abu Bakr, the greatest of Muslims after the Holy Prophet, becomes all the more generous and magnanimous.

In incidents number (1) and (2) above, the Holy Prophet Muhammad *protected* from any harm those who had insulted and abused him. In number (2), *he did not even want to think ill* of his slanderer. In incident number (4), the Holy Prophet Muhammad received revelation from God asking Muslims *not only to pardon* a man who had slandered his wife with an accusation of immoral conduct but also *to continue providing financial help* to him. Obeying this, Hazrat Abu Bakr continued to financially assist a man who had stigmatised his daughter. One cannot imagine that anyone, whether Muslim or non-Muslim, faced with the same situation whether in those days or now, would ever forgive such a man.

Comments on current events

I sent a copy of this article up to this point to my M.P. who has agreed to forward it to the relevant government ministers. I also sent a copy to the Leader of the Opposition, Mr David Cameron. Now I add further comment below.

The material given above was first compiled by me several years ago as an article in response to the ‘Satanic Verses’ controversy, and it is now reproduced here with some amendments. The same kind of controversy has arisen again, and will continue to surface from time to time unless the general Muslim religious leadership devise some proper response in line with Islamic teachings. It is ironic that while we always find some over-zealous elements among Muslims announcing that anyone insulting the Holy Prophet Muhammad should be killed, but in fact the people who unfortunately are killed every time are Muslims themselves, in Muslim countries, while demonstrating against the publication of such scurrilous literature.

Muslims generally are unaware that Western publications defaming the Holy Prophet of Islam as “imposter”, “liar” etc., either through ignorance or mischief and malice, are quite common and have been widely published in the past 150 years in particular. If holding demonstrations of this kind was the proper response in each such case, then Muslims would be in a permanent state of protest and uproar. As it is, the news of only some outrageous publication now and then reaches the Muslim world or communities by chance, and this reaction flares up. What was achieved by demonstrations and protests in the ‘Satanic Verses’ affair? One result was that this fringe, little-known publication of no interest became a world-wide phenomenon far beyond the expectations of the author and the publishers, and even translations were produced in other languages. The book continues to exist to this day and the author holds the same views about Islam, 17 years after those events. Another result, both then and now, is that the focus of public attention shifts away from the vilification in these publications to the reaction of the Muslims. From being the aggrieved party, Muslims make themselves look like the guilty ones.

Muslim spokespersons have argued that these insulting publications should be stopped *out of respect for Muslims* and consideration for their feelings. It would be better to try to build in people’s hearts *respect for Islam and the Holy Prophet Muhammad* on the basis of the value and worth of their teachings, so that society in general comes to see these insults as vile distortions of the truth, and feels aggrieved by them as Muslims do.

Relationship between husband and wife

by Shahid Aziz

The following is the English translation, by Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Ali, of verse 34 in chapter 4 (*The Women*) of the Holy Quran:

“Men are maintainers of women, with what Allah has made some of them to excel others and with what they spend out of their wealth. So the good women are obedient, guarding the unseen as Allah has guarded. And (as to) those on whose part you feel desertion, admonish them, and leave them in the beds and chastise them. So if they obey you, seek not a way against them. Surely Allah is ever Exalted, Great.”

There is much misunderstanding about this verse. The first word, which is misunderstood, is *qawamuna*. If we look at various translations in Urdu or English, it is translated in many different ways. All of them, except the one that I have just read out to you, make men rulers of women. It is translated as *men are in charge of women, men are superior to women, men are prominent to women* etc. Interestingly George Sale, Christian translator of the Quran of the 18th century, actually gives reasons why men would be superior to women. For example, he says that it is only men who are duty bound to go out and fight in the way of Allah and this is what makes them superior to women.

Where men and women are concerned when it is said *qama-l-rajulu ‘ala-l-mar’ati* it means ‘he maintained her’. Remember here by women, it does not mean just wife it also means children in the household. Therefore, it is a husband’s duty to provide for both his wife and his children. Then the reason is given why men are appointed as maintainers of women. It is because Allah has made some of them excel others with what they spend out of their wealth. The first thing that we must remember is the reason why this extra duty was imposed upon men. In Islam a husband is duty bound to look after his wife and children. The wife may help her husband, if she chooses, with her wealth or money but she is not duty bound to do so. This is an extra duty placed upon them. The question is why man was made responsible for this. Usually men have to go out to get a job, do a business, do some trade or engage in some activity to provide some means of support. Women by their very physical nature are unable to do the same all the time. That does not make them inferior in any

way. If this duty was imposed on a woman and if she became pregnant then certainly in later stages of her pregnancy she would not be able to go out to work. After she bears a child, again, she needs rest and she cannot work or run a business. What will happen to that family? It is purely for these practical reasons that the duty is imposed upon men. It does not make them in any way superior. Allah has made men excel because they have been made duty bound to spend out of their wealth or money on them.

Islam is a practical religion and it takes into account physical differences between men and women. If people are going to say this is unfair then what about the saying of the Holy Prophet Muhammad that each day of a woman's pregnancy is rewarded as if she had fasted all day and prayed all night. Hadith also says that bearing of a child is rewarded by God in the same way as if she had performed Hajj and that Hajj had been accepted by God. Many people perform Hajj but not everyone's Hajj is accepted. Men cannot be rewarded in this way because, obviously, men cannot become pregnant and they cannot have children. So this is unfair because men are physically unable to get rewarded in this way. Hadith says that heaven or paradise lies at the feet of the mother and not the father, so you could again say that men are discriminated against. But this is simple recognition of the physical difference between men and women.

Some people would try to make us believe that men are greater in intellect or superior in other ways because the verse goes on to say "so the good women are obedient". Again this been misunderstood or mistranslated to mean good women are obedient to their husbands. If you look at the phrase, obedience here is to God; that women should obey God's instructions and God's commands. You could argue that what the verse is saying is that men have been made maintainers of women because they are the ones who spend on their households etc., and therefore they would want their wives to obey them unquestioningly. But here what God is telling them is that unquestioning obedience is due to God only, and not to their husband. That is not to say that they are not to listen to or discuss things with their husbands. This means that if there is a contradiction between what the husband is asking and what God has asked them then they must obey God and not their husband.

The other point is "*guarding the unseen as Allah has guarded*". This means that wives should guard and protect their husband's rights in the same way as Allah has protected women's rights.

Now the verse goes on to say: "*And as to those on whose part you fear desertion*". The word used

here is *nashuz* which Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Ali translated as 'desertion' but it means to hate or to rise up. The use of such a strong word actually means or shows that this is not a simple disagreement between the husband and the wife. This is not like a husband asking his wife to make him a cup of tea and the wife refusing. This is actual hatred being shown by the wife for her husband. Another translation of the word is: "if they rise up" and rising up and displaying of hatred is more than slight disagreement like what colour do we paint this room or do we go to this film or that film and such things. In fact, God also says to men that it may be you do not like your wives but remember that it may be someone in whom God has placed abundance of goodness, and that they should try and see the good in them. So, what should you do if there is breach which is so serious. The first thing you should do is talk to them and say to them that their behaviour is not correct. You should talk to each other and come to some kind of agreement. Attempt to sort out your disagreement. The next thing you do is to separate yourself from the wife who is behaving in this way and you say, I will go and sleep in a different room. We have quite often seen marriage counsellors say that the situation is having a bad effect on you, so you should go and live with your parents until things cool down. People in modern society do exactly these things.

Now we come to the most controversial, and perhaps the most misapplied word. If the above attempts fail you "*wa-dribu-hunna*". This is usually translated to mean that the husband should then hit or beat the wife. I fail to see how, when other means of reconciliation have failed, a beating is going to resolve the situation. The root word *daraba* is used in many places in the Holy Quran. In the same chapter, verse 101 says: "*And when you journey in the earth*". Here the same word is used to mean journey. In another place it says: "*and march on to the sea with thy staff*" (26:63). Here the same word is used to mean march. Again further on it is said: "*And set out to them a parable*" (36:13). Again, it is said: "*And, when the son of Mary is mentioned as an example*" (43:57). Here the root word *darb* is used to mean 'set out' to them or mention.

So, rather than "hit her", it can also mean that if the wife displays open hatred towards you, then first talk to her. If that does not work you separate yourself from her. If there is still no change in her attitude, then try to convince her by giving examples. Say to her, look at that family where a woman was behaving in this manner and what effect it had on the household and on the children and so on. Do you really want the same thing to happen to your family? Or that the wife in that

family behaved in this way and they got divorced and look at the problems.

You can also translate it to mean that you send her away, for example, to her parents, to see if they can achieve reconciliation between the two of you. Towards the end of the last Islamic century Shaikh Mahmud Shaltut of Al-Azhar gave some interesting interpretations of some passages of the Holy Quran which went against the traditionally held views. He gave a very interesting interpretation of this verse and he said that *daraba* can actually mean “cut off the wife’s maintenance”. His argument is that men are responsible for their household, for maintenance, paying for clothing, food, repairs and so on, and also give their wives some money for themselves. He says that if the wife is showing open hatred towards her husband and nothing would convince her that this is not a nice way in which to behave then the husband is no longer bound to financially support her. This argument also makes sense that if the wife hates her husband then why should he spend money on her. The point I am trying to make is that there are many translations of this phrase here and all of them are equally valid.

I suggest to you that criticism and hitting and negative actions have much less effect in changing someone’s attitude or behaviour than positive actions. If you encourage people, if you talk to them with love and consideration, that is much more likely to bring about change in their behaviour rather than if you criticise them and hit them.

This idea of sending the wife away if there is great disagreement is also supported by the verse which follows, where the Holy Quran speaks of appointing people to arbitrate between the husband and the wife. This is hardly likely to succeed if the husband has been beating his wife.

A further objection is that this verse only speaks about the wives and makes no mention of the husbands. There are two answers to this. First, most legislation in the world speaks of males in the singular (‘he’). This does not mean that the law does not apply to women or to groups of men. It is understood that the law covers these groups as well. In fact, the law of interpretation of statutes makes a one line statement to this effect. In addition, the Holy Quran says: “*And women have rights similar to those against them in a just manner*” (2:228). Thus the same applies to the husband.

I know people who interpret these things in very traditional ways will disagree with me but the Holy Quran is not a closed book. It is not a book whose understanding was closed 1400 or 1300 or 1000 years ago. Understanding of the Holy Quran

will continue to improve and if we remain stuck at how people understood the Holy Quran 1000 year ago, people will lose faith. We need to know how to apply the rules and regulations at this stage in a changed society. It is only then that we will become successful in competing with other religions of the world.

Editor’s Notes:

1. In his footnote on 2:60 where Maulana Muhammad Ali translates *darb* as “march on” and not “strike”, he writes: “*Darb* means *striking, smiting, marching on, going from place to place, setting forth a parable*, and carries a number of other significances. In fact, *darb* is used to indicate all kinds of actions except a few.”

2. Only a few verses before ch. 4, v. 34, it is stated in 4:19: “O you who believe, it is not lawful for you to take women as heritage against (their) will. Nor should you straiten them by taking part of what you have given them, unless they are guilty of manifest indecency. And treat them kindly. Then if you hate them, it may be that you dislike a thing while Allah has placed abundant good in it.” Therefore “kind treatment” is always required, and a man’s dislike for his wife may be harmful to him as he may be turning away from a very good thing.

Qadiani historian’s futile attempt to refute Dr Basharat Ahmad’s view

Did the Qadiani Jama‘at progress by preaching its beliefs?

In the Qadiani Jama‘at Urdu organ *Al-Fazl International* for 30th December 2005 (p. 7), their historian Dost Muhammad Shahid has written an article which begins by presenting it as a “resplendent sign” of the truth of their *khilafat* that their Jama‘at is building a new centre in England. He makes three points as to why this is such a grand sign of their truth, the second and the third of these points being concerned with the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement.

His second point is that Dr Basharat Ahmad, a leading scholar and writer of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement, had written in an article in 1934 that any progress made by the Qadiani Jama‘at under Mirza Mahmud Ahmad was only because he had the advantage of taking over an already built-up organisation in Qadian, and moreover he capitalised on being son of the Founder of the Movement. Dr Basharat Ahmad then added: If Mirza Mahmud Ahmad did not have these advantages and he were

to go out of Qadian and propagate his religious doctrines to create a new movement from scratch, only then could it be considered an achievement. Quoting this, Dost Muhammad Shahid writes that his Jama'at has indeed done this and thereby proved Dr Basharat Ahmad wrong: first, Mirza Mahmud Ahmad (Khalifa 2) emigrated to Pakistan from Qadian and created a new centre in Rabwah; second, Mirza Tahir Ahmad (Khalifa 4) emigrated from Pakistan to England and created a new centre there, and now with the founding of another new centre in England "God has set the seal of truth on the heavenly *khilafat* of the fifth Khalifa".

Even a little dispassionate thought shows that in *none* of these examples, cited by Dost Muhammad Shahid, has the Qadiani Jama'at proved Dr Basharat Ahmad wrong. In every one of these cases, the Khalifa arrived in a place where his followers were already well-established, and he still of course had the advantage of capitalizing on being a descendant of the Promised Messiah. It cannot at all be said that they created a new Jama'at out of nothing, merely on the strength of preaching their beliefs. In fact, far from preaching their beliefs, the Qadiani Khalifas dared not repeat most of those controversial religious doctrines that were a matter of dispute between them and the Lahore Anjuman members. They reneged on their cherished beliefs.

So, what are those Qadiani religious doctrines that Dr Basharat Ahmad is referring to? Dost Muhammad Shahid does not mention them himself in his article. Moreover, while he claims to be quoting "the actual words" of Dr Basharat Ahmad, he has omitted from inside the quotation the two or three words which tell us what those doctrines were. If we translate into English the ending of the quotation as given in Dost Muhammad Shahid's article, it reads:

"... If he did not have the spiritual seat of Qadian and was not the son of the Promised Messiah, and Mirza Mahmud Ahmad had gone into the outside world and shown that he could spread his doctrines and create a Jama'at from scratch, that would have been an achievement." (*Paigham Sulh*, 15 December 1934, p. 19)

If we consult the original article by Dr Basharat Ahmad we find that Dost Muhammad Shahid has **omitted** the words "of *takfir* and *nubuwwat*" occurring after "his doctrines", so that the text should read:

"... shown that he could spread his doctrines of *takfir* and *nubuwwat* and create a Jama'at from scratch..."

Mirza Mahmud Ahmad's doctrines "of *takfir* and *nubuwwat*" are that Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was a prophet and that any Muslim who fails to declare openly that he accepts his prophethood is an unbeliever (*kafir*) outside the fold of Islam, just as a person who does not accept the Holy Prophet Muhammad cannot be a Muslim. He had been proclaiming these doctrines as Khalifa since 1914, but when in 1954, shortly after his emigration to Pakistan, he appeared before the Punjab Government Commission of Inquiry investigating the anti-Ahmadiyya agitation (known as the Munir Commission) to answer questions, he disavowed his former repugnant belief that all Muslims outside the Ahmadiyya Movement are *kafir*. Similarly, Mirza Tahir Ahmad never mentioned these doctrines and indeed denied in many of his speeches and sermons that were broadcast that his Jama'at declares other Muslims as non-Muslims, outside the fold of Islam.

Not only was Dr Basharat Ahmad right, but the Qadiani leadership itself recognised that they could not proclaim these doctrines before the wider world. Even Dost Muhammad Shahid is careful not to specify them in his article. He quotes a statement against Maulana Muhammad Ali made by Mirza Mahmud Ahmad in his book *A'inah-i Sadaqat*, and before the quotation he remarks that Mirza Mahmud Ahmad:

"has written at the end of his falsehood-shattering book *A'inah-i Sadaqat* with full glory and grandeur".

Yet this is one of those books in which Mirza Mahmud Ahmad has declared other Muslims as *kafir* and outside the fold of Islam most forcefully and explained this doctrine in full detail. Its English translation was first published by the Qadiani Jama'at in 1924 under the title *The Truth about the Split*. We quote below some extracts from it to show exactly what Mirza Mahmud Ahmad has written in it "with full glory and grandeur" about his beliefs:

"... all those so-called Muslims who have not entered into his [i.e. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's] *Bai'at* formally, wherever they may be, are *Kafirs* and outside the pale of Islam, even though they may not have heard the name of the Promised Messiah." (p. 55 of the 1965 edition)

Giving a summary of an earlier article that he had written, Mirza Mahmud Ahmad writes in this book:

"Regarding the main subject of my article, I wrote that as we believed the Promised Messiah to be one of the prophets of God,

we could not possibly regard his deniers as Muslims.” (p. 137–138)

“And lastly, it was argued from a verse of the Holy Quran that such people as had failed to recognise the Promised Messiah as a *Rasul* even if they called him a righteous person with their tongues, were yet veritable Kafirs.” (p. 140)

These are Mirza Mahmud Ahmad’s religious doctrines regarding which Dr Basharat Ahmad wrote in 1934 that if he could successfully propagate these on their own merits in the outside world, then he could claim that as an achievement. But the Qadiani Khalifas have been distancing themselves from these doctrines for more than 50 years now. And Dost Muhammad Shahid avoids mentioning what these doctrines are, and even deletes their mention from inside his quotation from Dr Basharat Ahmad. As he has eulogised *A’inah-i Sadaqat* he must be fully aware of what this book says about these beliefs of his Jama’at.

As the third point of his article, Dost Muhammad Shahid gives two extracts from articles in *Paigham Sulh* by responsible writers who expressed dismay at the decline of the Lahore Jama’at and the level of faith of some of our members. He concludes that these show “the exemplary fate that befell the movement which denied the *khilafat* in 1914” as compared with the “amazing world-wide blessings bestowed on the *khilafat* system”. We are surprised that he is unaware of the fact that such expressions of disappointment or self-criticism are quite usual in religious movements. Let him read the *khutba* of his *khalifa* just above his own article on the same page. Addressing his followers in Mauritius Mirza Masroor Ahmad says:

“You have fallen behind in the work of propagation, one reason for which could be that you are paying more attention to worldly business ... Your forefathers understood Ahmadiyyat correctly, so Allah bestowed His unlimited grace upon them. You people, instead of looking at where the world is heading today, should look at where God is calling you to. ... Today there are many evils at large which are having an influence in our society as well ... May Allah allow you to make up for the loss caused by your neglect of the work of propagation”.

He should also read the *khutba* of Masroor *sahib* of 18 November 2005 in which he has reprimanded his followers for financial dishonesty and misappropriating the property of others. After quoting the teachings of Islam and the Promised Messiah on the subject Masroor *sahib* declares:

“Hence this is the teaching given to us. We claim to be presenting an example of the real teachings of Islam before the world. If our actions are contrary to this then we should realise that we are not fulfilling the duty of honesty, nor fulfilling our promises, but by deceiving others in business matters and delaying paying back our debts we are becoming sinners and falling in the category of mischief-makers. As the Promised Messiah said, some people don’t care about these duties and our Jama’at also has such people in it. So today I too want to say the same with deep sadness ...

“Some new members are involved in deceiving their business partners and behaving as before. But I feel more pained when some people belonging to old Ahmadi families are also participating in deceitful practices. People from outside the Jama’at write to me from Pakistan as well as other countries saying that such and such an Ahmadi of yours has embezzled so much of our money.” (*Al-Fazl International*, 9 December 2005, p. 7, 8)

Perhaps Dost Muhammad Shahid could tell us what conclusion people should draw about his Jama’at from the above words of his Khalifa.

Visit to Woking

On Sunday 26th March 2006, the U.K. Jama’at is arranging a visit to the Woking Mosque and Brookwood Cemetery. A world-famous mission of our Jama’at operated from the premises of the Woking Mosque from 1913 to around 1968. During this time the Mosque and the adjoining Mission House served as the national centre of Islam in the U.K. Muslim dignitaries from all over the Muslim world, including heads of government, kings, government officials, etc. used to visit this Mosque while in Britain. At Brookwood near Woking is a cemetery containing plots where Muslims have been buried for the past 90 years, including famous figures.

The Woking Muslim Mission is an important part of the history of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement. It is also a key part of the history of Islam in the U.K. We have a website where detailed information about this mission may be found:

www.wokingmuslim.org

We strongly urge our members to take part in this visit and see the Mosque which was opened for permanent public use for the first time in 1913 by Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, a founding member of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement.