

Quest for Unity

and other works by Imam Achmad Cassiem



And hold fast, all together, by the rope which
Allah (stretches out for you), and be not
divided among yourselves

Quest for Unity

and other works by Imam Achmad Cassiem

And hold fast, all together, by the rope which
Allah (stretches out for you), and be not
divided among yourselves

**IHRC
Press**



www.ihrc.org.uk

First published in Great Britain in 2011
by IHRC Press

PO Box 598, Wembley, HA9 7XH

© 2011 IHRC Press

Design & Typeset: Ibrahim Sadikovic
Cover design: Dawud Mwilwa Kapansa

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reprinted or reproduced or utilised in any form or by any means electronic, mechanical, or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publishers.

ISBN 978-1-907517-00-6

The works contained herein were first published by Silk Road
International Publishers and Distributors, Cape Town, South Africa

Contents

Profile of the Author	5
Foreword by Imam Mohammed Asi	6
Introduction	8
QUEST FOR UNITY	9
Dedication	10
The Foundation of Islamic Unity	11
The Unity of Islam	12
Unity of Purpose	13
Unity of Expression	13
Unity in Action	14
Causes of Disunity	15
Consequences of Disunity	15
Consequences of Islamic Unity	16
The Global Community	16
The Global Community of Knowledge	16
The Global Community of Compassion	17
The Global Community of Sharing	18
The Global Community of Self-discipline	18
The Global Community of Sacrifice	19
The Global Community of Action	19
The Global Community of Justice	20
The Global Community of Excellence	20
The Creator is One	21
Unity Of Believers	24
The Characteristics Of Those Who Enter Into This Unity	26
The Munafiqun	28
The Enemies within the Ranks of the Ummah	28
What are the Characteristics of the Munafiqun?	29
The Solution	33
Justice In Human Relationships	35
Just Social Order	36
Justice: A Prerequisite for Peace	39
Jihad: Islamic Paradigm	41
Jihad Culminates in Revolution	42
Overview of Unity Initiatives in South Africa	44
Qibla: Aims and Immediate Objectives	56

RAMADHAN: THE MONTH OF HIGH INTENSITY TRAINING	57
Introduction	59
We Change Ourselves in order to Change the World	61
Positive Thinking Produces Positive Action	61
Personal Responsibility	62
What is the Purpose of Fasting?	63
Conclusion	70
Selected Du'ahs	72
Important Events during Ramadhan	82

EID MESSAGE: INTELLECTUAL ROOTS OF THE OPPRESSED AND ISLAM'S TRIUMPH OVER APARTHEID	83
Intellectual Roots of the Oppressed	84
Introduction	84
Death Sentence	85
Islam: Lost Property of Azanians	87
Anti-Racism in Action	87
Alcoholism: Undermining Morale	88
Tuan Guru & the Sunnah	90
Heritage of the Slaves	91

ISLAM'S TRIUMPH OVER APARTHEID	92
Introduction	92
Why Muslims Rejoice	92
Ummah versus Racism	92
Ummah versus Nationalism	94
Ummah versus Absurdity	95
Ummah versus Dehumanization	97
The Ummah versus Oppression, Exploitation and Injustice	98

WHY DO WE CELEBRATE EID?	99
---------------------------------------	-----------

Appendix A: Charter 3:103 Letter	101
Appendix B: Charter 3:103	103

PROFILE OF THE AUTHOR

Imam Cassiem was first arrested in South Africa and detained in August 1964 and held under a 90-Day Detention law. He was later charged under the Sabotage Act and sentenced on 2 December 1964 to 5 years imprisonment. Although he was released on 1 December 1969, he was subjected to a Banning Order for 5 years which expired on 31 December 1974.

In September 1976, Imam Cassiem was again detained for allegedly inciting armed revolt against the State whilst addressing students in a Masjid in Surrey Estate.

He was served with a 5 year Banning Order on 19 December 1979 whilst teaching at Westridge Senior Secondary School in Mitchells Plain.

In 23 April 1980, he was arrested again for organising school boycotts against racist education. He was held incommunicado for 14 days and then detained under Section 10 of the Internal Security Act. He was finally released without charge on 9 December 1980 - 240 days in detention without trial.

The Supreme Court later issued a judgement against the Prison Department for imposing 14 days of total solitary confinement on Imam Cassiem without him being charged. The State had to pay the cost of the application.

Imam Cassiem was re-banned in June 1983 because the previous banning order was abrogated by the Internal Security Act. His new order expired on 31 March 1986.

In December 1984, he was arrested at Jumu'ah with 56 others for attending an illegal/unlawful gathering whilst banned. He was subsequently charged for contravening the banning order by being present at a social gathering, i.e. the Jumu'ah. He was arrested outside Court which sparked off a mass protest and conflict with the Security Police.

He was also charged for being outside his residence after 6.00pm – he was found at his place of employment.

On 2 May 1986, he was arrested and placed under Section 29 of the Internal Security Act. He was charged on 2 December 1986 for Terrorism and sentenced on 28 October 1988.

The State declared that Quranic ayahs were subversive. He was convicted on the basis of Quranic ayah only.

He was released on bail on 22 February 1991 with the following stringent conditions:

- I) R5.000 bail;
- II) May not travel 100kms from his home, i.e. Cape Town;
- II) May not speak on behalf of QIBLA or PAC;
- IV) May not call for Mass Mobilisation or promote Unlawful Violence;
- V) He must sign at the nearest police station at least once per week.

From the original profile by QIBLA

FOREWORD

by Imam Mohammed Asi

I have known brother Imam Achmad Cassiem for over two and a half decades. Our first coming together was during the struggle against Apartheid. I had been introduced to the Qibla movement in South Africa by a mutual friend, and the Qibla movement invited me to give some talks and have some brotherly get-together with activists who were on the liberation-path against the racist South African Apartheid regime. Since that time my relations with the brothers in South Africa has grown into one that has me involved in the progress of the movement of oppressed peoples in South Africa. I still remember the warmth and hospitality of the brothers and fellows I met there throughout those historical years. And Imam Achmad Cassiem was always there in Cape Town to help out – many times from behind the scenes – with the activities and programs that were scheduled for me while I was in the Cape area, and elsewhere.

I remember the Mass Jumu'ah that was held upon my arrival to Cape Town and the tense and charged atmosphere of those times. There is always a sweet core to the bitter crust of a struggle and a revolution; and in the 1980's you could taste that in the dynamics of South Africa. Since that time, many sincere and struggling brothers who were around Imam Achmad Cassiem have passed away. I have observed over the years is that Imam Achmad Cassiem remains committed to the Islamic objectives that bind committed and revolutionary Muslims all over the world.

There are, from time to time, Islamic programs that bring us together. I see him from time to time, infrequently as that may seem. And he still is the dedicated Muslim that he was the first time I met him. Being locked up on Robben Island for many, many years did not take away from his belief in the fact that, as the Quran tells us, the final days will eventually see the triumph of the oppressed peoples over the oppressive elites. Many Muslims who are incarcerated lose sight, lose momentum, or lose interest altogether in this futuristic inevitability, but not Imam Achmad Cassiem.

I therefore recommend reading his writings with the mind and heart of a Muslim and a revolutionary. Remember, Achmad Cassiem is a pioneer. He has his own personal experience, one that should be observed closely by others who want to take the struggle forward.

We may not see eye-to-eye on certain particular details, and that is natural. Even the companions around the Prophet (P) had their independent opinions; but they remained true to their concern for Islamic solidarity and cohesion.

I remember, after I had the first couple of volumes of my tafsir published, Imam Achmad Cassiem told me that while he was in bed from an ailment taking his medication, he could not put down the tafsir. I felt sincerity and earnestness in what he said.

I hope that Muslims will give a listening ear to what Imam Achmad Cassiem has to say; and may I also hope that in the future Imam Achmad Cassiem will consider writing his memoirs about the struggle for freedom, equality, and justice in that dear part of the world.

Imam Mohammad Asi
Washington, DC area, USA

INTRODUCTION

These works of Imam Achmad Cassiem have been chosen as the first publication for IHRC Press. Related to IHRC and its existing publishing arm Islamic Human Rights Commission, IHRC Press seeks to put into the public arena, polemical, theological, creative and other works that push the reader towards an understanding of the struggle for universal justice.

Given the Islamic underpinnings of the lead organisation, and its publishing ventures, what better start than the words of a veteran from the anti-Apartheid struggle in South Africa. Cassiem leads Qibla, the Islamic movement that took part in the struggle at every level based on Quranic injunctions to struggle for justice for all. The chosen texts were written towards the end of the apartheid regime in the late 1980s and early 1990s and reflect the revolutionary spirit of those times. Whilst many, both contemporary Muslims and currently, may object to Cassiem's interpretations of the Quranic injunctions to struggle for justice, they remain deeply rooted in Islamic thinking as well as current world events. As the world struggles with many apartheids by other names in 21st century, it is worth asking what principles if not these, do Muslims call upon if they are to be considered part of the global network looking for a just social order world-wide?

In the name of Allah,
Most Gracious, Most Merciful

QUEST FOR UNITY

Achmad Cassiem

Dedicated in memory of As-Shaheed Imam Abdullah Haron who was martyred in detention-without-trial on 27th September 1969.

On Saturday, 27th September 1969, Imam Abdullah Haron died in detention after being held for 133 days.

The post-mortem revealed the following:

- a) 26 bruises ranging from as large as 10cm x 8cm to as small as 1cm x 1cm;**
- b) the seventh right rib was broken;**
- c) a haematoma 2.5cm x 2.5cm near the base of the spine;**
- d) at least 10 bruises had been sustained 7 to 10 days before death - most on the right leg;**
- f) the stomach was empty.**

The inquest into the death of Imam Abdullah Haron was presided over by Magistrate S J Kuhn who found:

'... a substantial part of the said trauma was caused by an accidental fall down a flight of stone stairs. On the available evidence, I am unable to determine how the balance thereof was caused.'

Muslims do not suffer from the illusion that the hearts of the oppressors can be transformed while they perpetuate oppression and the social structures, which made those hearts sick, are left intact.

Martyrs always put the hypocrites to shame; that is why they are remembered and loved by the sincere, but ignored and even hated by the hypocrites.

Achmad Cassiem

THE FOUNDATION OF ISLAMIC UNITY

The foundation of Islamic unity is Islam itself. We needn't look for any justification, outside the realm of Islam, in order to unite Muslims.

'And your Lord is one Allah: there is no deity but He, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.'

[Qur'an 2:163]

Those who believe in the unity of Allah are required to submit totally to His Commands. In order to safeguard the security, the unity and solidarity of Muslims, they are not allowed to have any discretion in this regard. This prevents internecine strife and futile conflicts.

'And for those who divide their religion and break up into sects, thou has no part in them in the least; their affair is with Allah: He will in the end tell them the Truth of all that they did.'

[Qur'an 6:159]

Every obligation in Islam is therefore a building block in the quest for unity. Being ignorant or unaware of certain obligations weakens the struggle for unity; neglecting certain obligations does exactly the same; being lethargic and unenthusiastic about any of our obligations retards the process of unity.

'If Muslims abandon commanding what is good and prohibiting what is bad, evil-doers will dominate over them.'

[Hadith]

'Let there arise out of you a band of people inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong: they are the ones to attain felicity. Do not be like those who are divided amongst themselves and fall into disputations after receiving clear signs: for them is a dreadful penalty.....'

[Qur'an 3:104-105]

These injunctions make it an obligation upon Muslims to purge the community, the social order and the world community of everything that is non-beneficial and detrimental to it.

THE UNITY OF ISLAM

'O ye who believe! fear Allah as He should be feared and die not except in a state of Islam. And hold fast altogether, by the rope which Allah (stretches out for you), and do not be divided among yourselves.'

[Qur'an 3:102-103]

The mosques are centres dedicated to *thikrullah*, to the remembrance of Allah, and hence they are centres of *tauheed* (unity). They definitely are not centres of division, dissension and chaos. Not only should there be no rivalry and dissension within a particular mosque, there should be no rivalry and dissension between various mosques. All mosques (*masajid*) are propagating one message - the Message of Islam, the Message of Qur'an.

All Muslims start with the same *Kalimah* (testimony), the same Qur'an, the same principles. In other words with the same ideas, values and ideals.

Because the Qur'an is essentially a Book of instructions we cannot therefore be theoretically obedient to the commands of Allah. Obedience describes a practical performance; to be obedient means **to do what needs to be done**.

The crucial importance of the following ayah cannot therefore be over-emphasised:

'O ye who believe! Obey Allah, and obey the Rasul, and those charged with authority among you. If ye differ in anything among yourselves, refer it to Allah and his Rasul, if ye believe in Allah and the Last Day; That is best and most suitable for final determination.'

[Qur'an 4:59]

Without unity there is no *Ummah*; without unity there is no discipline; without unity there is no sincerity; without unity we are powerless; without unity there is no Islam in us; and without unity there is no Islam in the community.

To unite means **to know what to unite; to know what not to unite; to know the purpose of uniting; to know the principles around which we unite**.

To know this and to commit ourselves to implementing it means we have to attain ideological unity.

UNITY OF PURPOSE

It follows, therefore, that if we have ideological unity, then we also have unity of purpose. **Sincere Muslims cannot, do not, and will not work against each other.** Unity of purpose can only be achieved through knowledge and understanding.

An invitation to Islam is an invitation to unity; a call on the people to gather, to congregate, to consolidate under the banner of Islam. **A Muslim, no matter where he resides, should promote understanding, discipline and compassion among other Muslims.**

'Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah; And those who are with him are strong against the Unbelievers, (But) Compassionate amongst each other.'

[Qur'an 48:29]

It is quite obvious that any human being will support an effort if it benefits them, and if it has an excellent chance of succeeding.

We want our efforts to benefit all the oppressed people and we have a guarantee that we will succeed.

Allah has promised, to those among you who believe and work righteous deeds, that He will, of surety, grant them in the land, inheritance (of power), as He granted to those before them; that He will establish in authority their Deen (religion) - the one which He has chosen for them; and that He will change (their state), after the fear (in which they lived) to one of security and peace: They will worship Me (alone) and not associate aught with Me. If any do reject Faith after this, they are rebellious and wicked.'

[Qur'an 24:55]

UNITY OF EXPRESSION

Unity of expression does not necessarily imply expression in unison; we can also have expression in harmony. We need not all say the same thing in the same words; we can say the same thing in different words or from a different perspective.

Harmony necessitates consultation and co-operation. Disharmony and disunity in expression cannot be encouraged, condoned and even tolerated in Islam. Urgent steps must be taken when this does occur.

'If two parties among the Believers fall unto a quarrel, make ye peace between them: but if one of them transgresses beyond bounds against the other, then fight ye (all) against the one that transgresses until it complies with the command of Allah; but if it complies, then make Peace between them with Justice, and be fair: for Allah loves those who are fair (and just). The Believers are but a single brotherhood: so make peace and reconciliation between your two contending brothers; and fear Allah, that ye may receive mercy.'

[Qur'an 49:9-10]

'As for those who divide their religion and break up into sects, thou hast no part in them in the least; their affair is with Allah: He will in the end tell them the truth of all that they did.'

[Qur'an 6:159]

UNITY IN ACTION

Unity of expression is but a form of unity in action. We may speak about unity of expression and also declare our unity of purpose, but unity in action is not something that we just speak about, but something which we must demonstrate in our daily lives and particularly in our struggle against oppression, exploitation and injustice.

The Ummah (this global community of Tauheed) must in all places, at all times, and under all circumstances, whether in adversity or prosperity, be vigilant about our unity, and especially about our unity in action.

'O ye who believe! Why say ye that which ye do not? Grievously odious is it in the sight of Allah that ye say that which ye do not. Truly Allah loves those who fight in His cause in battle array as if they were a solid cemented structure.'

[Qur'an 61:2-4]

'O ye who believe! When ye meet a force, be firm, and call Allah in remembrance much (and often); that ye may prosper; and obey Allah and His Rasul; and fall into no disputes, lest ye lose heart and your power depart; and be patient and persevering; for Allah is with those who patiently persevere:...'

[Qur'an 8:46]

If Muslims act in accordance with these principles, then they will never rise against one another and their energies, prestige and power will not be squandered.

To ignore these commands is to court disaster; and if Muslims actively fan and incite disputes, then they are guilty of a grave crime against the Ummah. This is tantamount to an act of treachery against the Ummah.

CAUSES OF DISUNITY

'Be not like those who are divided amongst themselves and fall into disputations after receiving clear signs: for them is a dreadful Penalty,...'

[Qur'an 3:105]

One of the causes of disunity is, of course, ignorance about our obligation to strive for unity and to maintain unity. But as the above ayah clarifies, some believers cause disputes, dissension and therefore disunity after they have been informed of their duties.

Other major causes of disunity are: advocating and adhering to Nationalism, propagating and practising racism and racialism; love of material goods; desiring praises and promotions from the oppressors; greed and selfishness; egoism and egotism; and inattentiveness to the basic law of cause and effect.

Hypocrisy is another major cause of dissension and disunity.

CONSEQUENCES OF DISUNITY

It is self-evident that the consequences of disunity are all detrimental to the Ummah in general and to each Muslim in particular.

The Ummah becomes weak; suffers from low morale; wastes time and energy addressing minor problems, personality conflicts arise, factual problems are ignored and more attention is paid to attitudinal problems; and while all this is happening, the enemies of Islam are rejoicing.

We need to address the problem of disunity with great urgency but also with great care because it is going to be the basis of our entire argument in support of unity.

'O ye who believe! Fear Allah as He should be feared, and die not except in a state of Islam. And hold fast, all together, by the rope which Allah (stretches out to you), and be not divided among yourselves; and remember with gratitude Allah's favour on you; for ye were enemies and He joined your hearts in love, so that by His Grace ye became brothers; and ye were on the brink of the Pit of Fire; and He saved you from it; Thus does Allah make his signs clear to you; that ye may be guided.'

'Let there arise out of you a band of people inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong: they are the ones to attain success.'

[Qur'an 3:102-104]

It is abundantly clear that 'a band of people inviting to all that is good' can only emerge from an Ummah that is United; they cannot emerge from a disunited Ummah. And this argument is sealed with the ayah which reads:

'And be not like those who are divided amongst themselves and fall into disputations after receiving Clear Signs: for them is a dreadful Penalty,...'

[Qur'an 3:105]

Now this is exactly what we are doing at the moment! Because of this we cannot qualify as:

'Ye are the best of Peoples, evolved for mankind, enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong, and believing in Allah.'

[Qur'an 3:110]

For to sow seeds of dissension; to cause splits; to cause division; and to encourage disunity is definitely **not forbidding what is wrong!**

CONSEQUENCES OF ISLAMIC UNITY

As Muslims move closer to unite, the less chance the superpowers have of dominating, oppressing, and exploiting us. Our morale will be high; liberation of the Muslims and the oppressed of the world will be attainable; victory over the superpowers will be possible; a new world social order can be propagated with confidence; and justice, peace and security will not merely be passed as resolutions but will become a reality, Insha' Allah!

THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY

THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY OF KNOWLEDGE

Islam begins with knowledge; Islam thrives on knowledge and knowledge

thrives on Islam. Islamic governance is the governance of knowledge.

"Say: Are those equal, those who know and these who do not know?"

[Qur'an 39:9]

"The learned must not hide his knowledge nor the ignorant his ignorance."

[Hadith]

Islam sets us the objective of a 100% literate community. Literate not only in the sense of being able to read, write and spell, but also being conceptually literate. Once a person is conceptually literate, behavioural changes can take place more efficiently. Within an Islamic community such a person will be functionally literate.

Many of our problems stem from conceptual and functional illiteracy. Illiteracy and ignorance in general, is a factual problem as well as an attitudinal problem.

The causes of dissension in the Ummah can be divided into these two distinct categories:

- I) Factual problems
- II) Attitudinal problems

Factual problems are resolved by putting the facts on the table; but attitudinal problems are not necessarily resolved by putting the facts on the table. Attitudinal problems are only resolved by changing attitudes.

THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY OF COMPASSION

'Muhammad is the Rasul of Allah; and those who are with him are strong against the Unbelievers (but) compassionate amongst each other.'

[Qur'an 48:29]

Because of the behaviour of some Muslims towards others one would think that they are supposed to be harsh and uncompromising with each other and compassionate and compromising with their enemies!

'A Muslim is he whose tongue and hands are not annoying to other Muslims.'

[Hadith]

'And those who annoy believing men and women undeservedly, bear (on themselves) a calumny and a glaring sin.'

[Qur'an 33:58]

Is it so difficult to establish cordial relations between Muslims?

THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY OF SHARING

'And they feed for the love of Allah, the indigent, the orphan and the captive, (saying), we feed you for the sake of Allah alone; no reward do we desire from you, nor thanks.'

[Qur'an 76:8-9]

'By no means shall ye attain righteousness unless ye give (freely) of that which ye love, and whatever ye give, of a Truth Allah knoweth it well.'

[Qur'an 3:92]

In Islam knowledge, skills, food, wealth and even our joys and sorrows are shared. And of course the best example is that of the Muhajirs and the Ansar.

In this country we have so much that we can share with the less fortunate, the oppressed, the exploited and the downtrodden. And all of this can be more effectively done if we are united and administer our resources from a central administration.

THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY OF SELF-DISCIPLINE

Self-discipline implies accountability and responsibility. Our self-discipline is evident in our adherence to dietary laws, ablutions, *salaah*, *zakaah*, fasting and *hajj*. This self-discipline must also extend into our mutual relationships; as well as our communal and national relationships.

'Verily Allah will never change the condition of people unless they change it themselves (with their own souls).'

[Qur'an 13:11]

We can achieve this, but:

We must be able to distinguish between right and wrong, good and bad;

We must be able to fulfil our responsibilities;

We must be willing to fulfil our responsibilities;

Human integrity (and obviously Islamic integrity) cannot be achieved if duties and obligations are avoided;

One's own wishes and personal interests must not take preference over duties.

THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY OF SACRIFICE

'Let those fight in the Cause of Allah who sell the life of this world for the Hereafter, to him who fights in the Cause of Allah, whether he is slain or gets victory, soon shall We give him a reward of great value.'

[Qur'an 4:74]

'Truly my prayer and service of sacrifice, my life and my death are (all) for Allah, the Cherisher of the worlds.'

[Qur'an 6:162]

Now surely those who are prepared to sacrifice their properties and their lives in the Cause of Allah will not hesitate to sacrifice their privileges, prejudices and positions. And why should these things not be sacrificed in order to achieve the unity of the *Ummah*? There is no legitimate excuse for evading this question, just as there is no justification for perpetuating our disunity.

Why should Muslims take instructions from those who are only thinking in their own interests? And who are prepared to compromise the position of Muslims simply to attain to positions of power?

THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY OF ACTION

'O ye who believe! Why say ye that which ye do not. Grievously odious is it in the sight of Allah that ye say that which ye do not. Truly Allah loves those who fight in His Cause in battle, as if they were a solid cemented structure.'

[Qur'an 61:1-4]

'Actions are judged according to intentions.'

[Hadith]

Good intentions are not good enough. Once we have made an intention we must acquire the necessary skills to execute that intention, to bring that intention to fruition.

An intention to unite the Muslims in this part of the African continent must be followed up by acquiring the requisite skills, and preparing the groundwork for that unity.

'Man shall have nothing but what he strives for.'

[Qur'an 59:35]

Islam has no place for fellow-travellers or summer-time patriots.

Being Muslim means never being too busy, never too tired, and never disinterested to serve the Cause of Islam. To serve the Cause of Unity is to serve the Cause of Islam.

THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY OF JUSTICE

'O ye who believe! Stand out firmly for justice as witnesses to Allah even as against yourselves, or your parents, or your kin, and whether it be against the rich or poor. For Allah can best protect both. Follow not the lusts (of your hearts), lest ye swerve and if ye distort (justice) or decline to do justice, verily Allah is well-acquainted with all that ye do.'

[Qur'an 4:135]

Causing disunity and perpetuating disunity amongst Muslims is an act of injustice against the Muslims. It is also an act of injustice against the 40 million oppressed people in this country because the oppressed masses are looking towards the Muslims as exemplars in the quest for unity.

THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY OF EXCELLENCE

'Thus have We made of you an Ummah justly balanced, that ye might be witnesses over the nations, and the Rasul a witness over yourselves;'

[Qur'an 2:143]

'Ye are the best of peoples (nations) evolved for mankind, enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong, and believing in Allah.'

[Qur'an 3:109]

In order to achieve **excellence of performance** one needs to:

- I) be fit to perform;
- II) establish correctness of performance.

Those who are the cause of disunity, dissension, bickering, religious wrangling and division in the Muslim community are obviously not fit to perform. Especially not fit to execute the task of uniting the Muslims.

Correctness of performance can only be evaluated against the criteria of the Qur'an. Similarly with excellence of performance.

THE CREATOR IS ONE

'Say: He is Allah, the One and Only; Allah, the Eternal, Absolute: He begetteth not, nor is He begotten; And there is none like unto Him.'

[Qur'an 112:1-4]

'Allah! There is no God but He, - the Living, the Self-subsisting, Eternal. No slumber can seize Him nor sleep. His are all things in the heavens and on earth. Who is there that can intercede in His presence except as He permitteth? He knoweth what (appeareth to His creatures as) Before or After or Behind them. Nor shall they compass aught of His knowledge except as He willeth. His Throne doth extend over the heavens and the earth, and He feeleth no fatigue in guarding and preserving them for He is the Most High, the Supreme (in glory).'

[Qur'an 2:255]

'Allah is He, than Whom there is no other God; - Who knows (all things) both secret and open; He, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.'

'Allah is He, than Whom there is no other God; - the Sovereign, the Holy One, the Source of Peace (and Perfection), the Guardian of Faith, the Preserver of Safety, the Exalted in Might, the Irresistible, the Supreme: Glory to Allah! (High is He) above the partners they attribute to Him.'

'He is Allah, the Creator, the Evolver, the Bestower of Forms (or Colours). To Him belong the Most Beautiful Names.

'Whatever is in the heavens and the earth, doth declare His praises and He is the Exalted in Might, the Wise.'

[Qur'an 59:22-24]

THEREFORE HIS CREATION IS ONE:

'Blessed is He Who sent down the Criterion to His Servant, that it may be an admonition to all creatures; - He to Whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth: No son has He begotten, nor has He a partner in His dominion: It is He who created all things and ordered them in due proportions.'

[Qur'an 25:1-2]

MANKIND IS PART OF CREATION, THEREFORE MANKIND IS ONE:

'Mankind was one single nation, and Allah sent Messengers with glad tidings and warnings; and with them He sent the Book of Truth, to judge between people in matters wherein they differed;....'

[Qur'an 2:213]

'O Mankind! We created from you a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other (not that ye may despise each other). Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you. And Allah has full knowledge and is well acquainted (with all things)'

[Qur'an 49:13]

BECAUSE MANKIND IS ONE, THE UNIVERSAL FORM OF GUIDANCE FOR MANKIND IS ONE:

'Say: O People of the Book! Come to common terms as between us and you; that ye worship none but Allah; that we associate no partners with Him; that we erect not from among ourselves lords and patrons other than Allah. If then they turn back, say ye: "Bear witness that we (at least) are Muslims (bowing to Allah's Will)'

[Qur'an 3:64]

'O Mankind! The Rasul has come to you in Truth from Allah: Believe in him; it is best for you. But if ye reject Faith, to Allah belong all things in the heavens and on earth; and Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.'

[Qur'an 4:170]

'O Mankind! Verily there hath come to you a convincing proof from your Lord: for we have sent unto you a light (that is) manifest.'

[Qur'an 4:174]

'... the Command is for none but Allah; He hath commanded that ye worship none but Him; That is the right religion, but most men understand not....'

[Qur'an 12:40]

'So set thy face steadily, and truly to the Faith: (Establish) Allah's handiwork according to the pattern on which He has made mankind: no change (let there be) in the work (wrought) by Allah: that is the Standard Religion: but most among mankind understand not.'

'Turn ye back in repentance to Him, and fear Him, establish regular prayers, and be ye not among those who join Gods with Allah, - those who split up their Religion, and become (mere) sects, - each party rejoicing in what is with itself!'

[Qur'an 30:31-32]

'The same religion has He established for you as that which He enjoined on Noah - that which We have sent by inspiration to thee -and that which We enjoined upon Abraham, Moses and Jesus: namely, that ye should remain steadfast in religion, and make no division therein....'

[Qur'an 42:13]

‘The Rasul believeth in what hath been revealed to him from his Lord, as do the men of Faith. Each one (of them) believeth in Allah, His Angels, His Books and His Apostles. “We make no distinction (they say) between one and another of His Apostles”. And they say: “We hear, and we obey: (We seek) Thy forgiveness, Our Lord, and to Thee is the end of all journeys.”’
[Qur’an 2:285]

It is clear then that Allah is the Creator of everything in the Heavens and the Earth. Allah is the Creator of Mankind - and the Qur’an states in Surah Nisaa (i.e. Qur’an 4:1) that Allah created Man from ‘a single soul’. Mankind therefore have a single Creator and also have common ancestry.

Mankind also have a common human nature - even if only in the sense of potentiality. Mankind was created as *Khalifatullah* (Qur’an 2:30-38). Guidance from Allah is therefore addressed to the whole of mankind. The charges therefore, of sectarianism and sectionalism are absurd to say the least.

UNITY OF BELIEVERS

The unity of the Believers is based on a set of eternal principles which cannot be deviated from in any manner whatsoever. These are:

Tauheed - Allah is One, His entire creation is one, and a universal set of laws governs the entire creation;

Nubuwwat (Prophethood) - individuals sent to mankind to teach them the set of universal laws governing the voluntary actions of mankind;

Ma’ad (Resurrection and Accountability on the Day of Resurrection) - if Allah created man in the first instance, then the same Creator will re-create man; and because man has personal responsibility, each individual is held accountable for his conscious, voluntary actions;

Adl (Justice) - the specific mission of All Prophets was to establish just social orders based on Revelation. Justice of man to himself (i.e. to be true to his own human nature); Justice to his fellow human beings; Justice to the rest of creation. This principle is pivotal to the existence of the social order of the Believers.

Imamate (Leadership) - this leadership is based on meritocracy as specifically mentioned in Qur’an 2:124 and Qur’an 4:58-59.

If these principles are violated, then the unity of the Believers is not only endangered, but harmed, damaged and destroyed.

The Qur’an states with absolute clarity:

‘Mankind was one single nation, and Allah sent Messengers with glad tidings and warnings; and with them He sent the

Book of Truth, to judge between people in matters wherein they differed; but the People of the Book, after the clear signs came to them, did not differ among themselves, except through selfish contumacy. Allah, by His Grace, guided the believers to the truth, concerning that wherein they differed. For Allah guides whom He will to a path that is straight.'

[Qur'an 2:213]

'The religion before Allah is Islam (submission to His Will); nor did the People of the Book dissent therefrom except through envy of each other, after knowledge had come to them. But if any deny the Signs of Allah, Allah is swift in calling to account. So if they dispute with thee, Say: "I have submitted my whole self to Allah and so have those who follow me."

'And say to the People of the Book and those who are unlearned: "Do ye (also) submit yourselves?" If they do, they are in right guidance, but if they turn back, thy duty is to convey the message; and in Allah's sight are (all) His servants.'

[Qur'an 3:19-20]

'Say: O People of the Book! Come to common terms as between us and you: that ye worship none but Allah; that we associate no partners with Him; that we erect not from among ourselves lords and patrons other than Allah.

'If they turn back, say ye: "Bear witness that we (at least) are Muslims (bowing to Allah's Will)."'

[Qur'an 3:64]

'O Mankind! The Rasul has come to you in truth from Allah: Believe in him, it is best for you. But if ye reject Faith, to Allah belong all things in the heavens and earth: and Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.'

[Qur'an 4:170]

'O Mankind! Verily there hath come to you a convincing proof from your Lord: For We have sent unto you a light (that is) manifest: then those who believe in Allah, and hold fast to Him, - soon will He admit them to Mercy and Grace from Himself and guide them to Himself by a Straight Way.'

[Qur'an 4:174-175]

'Follow (O Men!) the Revelation given unto you from your Lord, and follow not, as friends and protectors, other than Him. Little is it ye remember of admonition.'

[Qur'an 7:3]

'.... the command is for none but Allah: He hath commanded that ye worship none but Him: That is the right religion, but most men understand not....'

[Qur'an 12:40]

'And we sent down to thee the book for the express purpose, that thou should make clear to them those things in which they differ, and that it should be a guide and a mercy to those who believe.'

[Qur'an 16:64]

'O Mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other (not that ye may despise each other).. 'Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you. And Allah has full knowledge and is well-acquainted (with all things)'

[Qur'an 49:13]

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THOSE WHO ENTER INTO THIS UNITY

'O ye who believe! Fear Allah as He should be feared, and die not except in a state of Islam. And hold fast, all together by the rope which Allah (stretches out for you) and be not divided amongst yourselves; and remember with gratitude Allah's favour on you; for ye were enemies and He joined your hearts with love, so that by His Grace, ye became brethren; and ye were on the brink of the pit of Fire, and He saved you from it. Thus doth Allah make His Signs clear to you; that ye may be guided.'

'Let there arise out of you a band of people inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong: They are the ones to attain felicity.'

'Be not like those who are divided amongst themselves and fall into disputations after receiving signs: for them is a dreadful Penalty.'

[Qur'an 3:102-105]

'Ye are the best of Peoples, evolved for mankind, enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong, and believing in Allah ...'

[Qur'an 3:110]

'O ye who believe! Persevere in patience and constancy; vie in such perseverance; strengthen each other; and fear Allah; that ye may prosper.'

[Qur'an 3:200]

'Whoever recommends and helps a good cause becomes a partner therein: and whoever recommends and helps an evil cause shares in its burden: and Allah hath power over all things.'

[Qur'an 4:85]

'As for those who divide their religion and break up into sects, thou hast no part in them in the least: their affair is with Allah: He will in the end tell them the truth of all that they did.'

[Qur'an 6:159]

'O ye who believe! Take not for protectors your fathers and your brothers if they love infidelity above faith: if any of you do so, they do wrong.'

Say: 'If it be that your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your mates or your kindred; the wealth that ye have gained; The Commerce in which ye fear a decline; or the dwellings in which ye delight -are dearer to you than Allah and His Rasul, or the Striving for His Cause; then wait until Allah brings about His Decision; and Allah guides not the rebellious.'

[Qur'an 9:23-24]

'Fulfil the Covenant of Allah when ye have entered into it, and break not your oaths after ye have confirmed them; indeed ye have made Allah your surety, for Allah knoweth all that ye do.'

'And be not like a woman who breaks into untwisted strands the yarn which she has spun, after it has become strong. Nor take your oaths to practice deception between yourselves, lest

one party should be more numerous than another; for Allah will test you by this; and on the Day of Judgement He will certainly make clear to you (the truth of) that wherein ye disagree.'

[Qur'an 16:91-92]

THE MUNAFIQUN

THE ENEMIES WITHIN THE RANKS OF THE UMMAH

'When the Hypocrites come to thee, they say, 'we bear witness that thou art the Rasul of Allah'. Allah knoweth that thou art indeed His Rasul, and Allah beareth witness that the hypocrites are indeed liars. They have made their oaths a screen (for their misdeeds): Thus they obstruct (men) from the path of Allah: truly evil are their deeds. That is because they believed then rejected faith: so a seal was set on their hearts: therefore they understand not.

'When thou lookest at them, their exteriors please thee; and when they speak thou listenest to their words. They are as worthless as hollow pieces of timber propped up, (unable to stand on their own). They think that every cry is against them. They are the enemies; so beware of them. The curse of Allah be on them. How are they deluded (away from the truth).

'And when it is said to them 'Come the Rasul of Allah will pray for your forgiveness, they turn aside their heads, and thou wouldst see them turning away their faces in arrogance.'

[Qur'an 63:1-5]

The ayaat quoted above come from the Surah titled 'Munafiqun' meaning the 'Hypocrites'. In English, the term hypocrite means a double-dealer; an impostor; a pretender; an insincere person; a dissimulator; a two-faced person or a false person.

Later we shall see that the term double-dealer and two-faced, accurately describe the type of business in which the Munafiqun engage. One face is turned towards Qibla and the other is turned somewhere else. In other words, the Munafiqun have dealings with the Ummah and also with the enemies of the Ummah.

The two-faced person is also an accurate description of a person with a split personality. In modern psychology a person with a split personality is termed a Schizophrenic. This person's thought processes are split off from his emotions. Emotions are dulled or he expresses inappropriate emotions. He

smiles when he speaks about tragedies or appears dull and lifeless. But the most serious symptom is disturbances in thought. His life is characterised by meaninglessness.

WHAT ARE THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE MUNAFIQUN?

The best place to look for an answer to this question is in The Book of Clarity and Clarifications. And the most appropriate Surah will be Surah Munafiqun. Let us therefore re-read the introductory ayah:

'When the Hypocrites come to thee they say, 'we bear witness that thou art the Rasul of Allah'. Yea Allah knoweth that thou are indeed His Rasul, and Allah beareth witness that the hypocrites are indeed liars. They have made their oaths a screen (for their misdeeds): Thus they obstruct (men) from the path of Allah: truly evil are their deeds. That is because they believed then rejected faith: so a seal was set on their hearts: therefore they understand not.

'When thou lookest at them, their exteriors please thee; and when they speak thou listenest to their words. They are as worthless as hollow pieces of timber propped up, (unable to stand on their own). They think that every cry is against them. They are the enemies; so beware of them. The curse of Allah be on them. How are they deluded (away from the truth).

'And when it is said to them 'Come the Rasul of Allah will pray for your forgiveness, they turn aside their heads, and thou wouldst see them turning away their faces in arrogance.'

[Qur'an 63:1-5]

We notice with what superb mastery the characteristics of the hypocrites are conveyed.

Let us reflect on these points:

1) Allah states explicitly that the Munafiqun are liars. This means that a Munafiq is not the type of person who says and acts on the ayah,

'and cover not truth with falsehood nor conceal the truth when ye know (what it is).'

[Qur'an 2:42]

The hadith also states: 'Actions will be judged according to intentions.'

And the Qur'an also clearly states:

'Whether ye show what is in your minds or conceal it, Allah calleth you to account for it.'

[Qur'an 2:284]

Allah knows the intentions of the Munafiqun and therefore, judges them accordingly. The moment the Kalimah Shahada comes from the lips of the Munafiqun, they are already lying.

II) 'They have made their oaths a screen (for their misdeeds).' In other words, they are practising intentional, wilful and malicious deception. In the Qibla booklet – 'The Dimensions of the Kalimah', we learn that the Kalimah is a declaration of Truth, a Covenant, a Manifesto, a Declaration of Obedience as well as an Oath.

In Islam a promise is a serious undertaking and an oath is an even more serious undertaking. This violation of an oath is very serious indeed because it is the foundation of all other actions. This means that the Munafiq destroys his foundation before he starts building. And he uses the good to conceal the bad that he does and intends doing.

III) 'Thus they obstruct (men) from the path of Allah;' The Munafiqun obstruct men from the path of Allah in three ways:

(a) they do evil - and people generally are not attracted to anything by evil;

(b) they deceive and mislead fellow Muslims who follow them;

(c) they put obstacles in the path of their own development.

And the Qur'an is very explicit about the end result of those actions which are calculated to obstruct men from the path of Allah:

'Those who reject Allah and hinder (men) from the path of Allah, - their deeds will Allah render astray (from their mark).'

[Qur'an 47:1]

The Munafiqun and all those who follow them and are deceived by them, can never be successful.

'But those who believe and work deeds of righteousness, and believe in the (revelation) sent down to Muhammad, for it is the truth from their Lord - He will remove from them their ills and improve their conditions.'

[Qur'an 47:2]

'Those who resist Allah and His Rasul will be amongst those humiliated. Allah has decreed: 'It is I and My Rasul who must prevail; For Allah is one full of strength, able to enforce His Will.'

[Qur'an 58:20]

IV) 'Truly evil are their deeds'

The Munafiqun rank foremost as the opponents of those who enjoin what is good and forbid what is evil. The Qur'an refers to them in the following terms:

'The Hypocrites men and women (have an understanding) with each other; They enjoin evil and forbid what is just and are close in their hands. They have forgotten Allah; so He hath forgotten them. Verily the Hypocrites are rebellious and perverse.'

[Qur'an 9:67]

As the ayah illustrates, they, the hypocrites, actively oppose whatever good the believers fight for and they support whatever the Believers fight against. Is their role therefore any different from the enemies of Islam?

V) 'That is because they believed, then rejected the faith.'

This is a clear reference to their insincerity, their lack of commitment, their refusal to be steadfast. The Deen becomes a plaything, a source of amusement and a means for personal, material gain. No wonder the Qur'an states emphatically:

'Leave those alone who take their Deen to be mere play and amusement, and are deceived by the life of this world. But proclaim (to them) this (truth): that every soul delivers itself to ruin by its own acts.'

[Qur'an 6:70]

In Surah Baqarah we also have a very apt description of the activities and actions of the Munafiq:

'Of the people there are some who say: 'We believe in Allah and the Last Day;' but they do not really believe but they only deceive themselves and realise (it) not. In their hearts is a disease; and Allah has increased their disease; and grievous is the penalty they (incur), because they are false (to themselves). When it is said to them 'Make not mischief on the earth,' they say: 'Why we only want to make peace.' Of a surety they are the ones who make mischief but they realise it not.

'When it is said to them: 'Believe as the others believe', they say: Shall we as the fools believe?' Nay, of a surety they are the fools but they do not know.

'When they meet those who believe, they say: 'We believe', but when they are alone with their evil ones, they say: 'We are really with you, we (were) only jesting.

'Allah will throw back their mockery on them, and give them rope in their trespasses; so they will wander like blind ones (to and fro). Those are they who have bartered guidance for error: But their traffic is profitless and they have no true direction.'

[Qur'an 2:8-16]

VI) '.... so a seal was set on their hearts: therefore, they understand not'.

What greater calamity can befall any people than to be led and misled by people who have no understanding of themselves, no understanding of other people, no understanding of history, no understanding of the dynamics of Islam and no understanding of the demands of the present?

People who have no understanding are in no position to analyse, to criticise, to evaluate, to guide or to command. In brief, they are worse than useless. Please bear in mind that this is not man's opinion about other humans - this is what Allah Almighty warns us about. Does the Qur'an not state?

'Are those equal, those who know and those who do not know? It is those endued with knowledge and understanding that receive admonition.'

[Qur'an 39:9]

VII) 'When thou lookest at them, their exteriors please thee; and when they speak thou listenest to their words.'

It is only fools who would want to judge people by the amount of material possessions they have - and if this is going to be the criteria for deciding who shall give leadership to the Ummah, then it is indeed a sad day for us.

They also have the gift of the gab, that is, they are very smooth tongued; but all this is vain talk. They are past-masters at talking about Islam. Their hearts are at variance with what they say with their tongues.

VIII) ‘ ‘And when it is said to them, “Come, the Rasul of Allah will pray for your forgiveness,” they turn aside their heads, and thou wouldst see them turning away their faces in arrogance.’

Arrogance is most definitely the most outstanding hallmark of the Munafiq. If Rasulullah (SAW) was rejected by them - how is any other human being going to convince them? Is there then any wonder that Allah says in the Qur'an:

‘Allah hath promised the Hypocrites, men and women, and the rejecters of faith, the fire of Hell: Therein shall they dwell: sufficient is it for them: For them is the curse of Allah and an enduring punishment, ‘

[Qur'an 9:68]

These then are the characteristics of the Munafiqun: They are liars, they practice deception, they obstruct men from the path of Allah, they enjoin evil and forbid the good, they play the fool with the Deen of Islam, they are people without understanding, they deceive with their beautiful appearances and sweet talk and they are arrogant. Then ‘Why should you be divided in two parties about the hypocrites?’

THE SOLUTION

Hypocrites exist in each and every society, every nation, every organisation and every movement. But it seems that because Muslims are so tolerant and compassionate, the proportion of hypocrites in Islam could be much higher than in other communities. We must bear in mind that the rot within, is a much greater danger than the rot without. The Hypocrites are worse than the declared enemies of Islam. Not only are they a source of danger, they also weaken us because they secretly intrigue with the enemy and yet publicly proclaim their loyalty to Islam. And we know that when you have no sincerity, then everything you do is worthless, is valueless. To put it clearly: You cannot buy something with counterfeit money. And when counterfeit coins or notes are in circulation, you must check all your money. Who then are these people behind the masks? Who are the double-dealers? And what must be done with the wolf in sheep's clothing? Let us briefly refer to Quranic injunctions.

a) *'The hypocrites - they think they are over-reaching Allah, but He will over-reach them: when they stand up to prayer, they stand up without earnestness, to be seen by men, but little do they hold Allah in remembrance; (they are) distracted in mind even in the midst of it - being (sincerely) for neither one group nor for another. Whom Allah leaves straying, never wilt thou find for him the way.'*

[Qur'an 4:142-143]

b) *When it is said to them: 'Come to what Allah hath revealed and to the Rasul:' thou seest the hypocrites avert their faces from thee in disgust.'*

[Qur'an 4:61]

'Those men, Allah knows what is in their hearts; so keep clear of them, but admonish them, and speak to them a word to reach their very souls.'

[Qur'an 66:9]

c) *'Why should you be divided in two parties about the hypocrites? Allah hath upset them for their own (evil) deeds. Would you guide those whom Allah have thrown out of the way, never shalt thou find a way.'*

'They but wish that ye should reject faith, as they do, and thus be on the same footing (as they): But take not for friends from their ranks until they flee in the way of Allah (from what is forbidden).'

'But if they turn renegades (traitors), seize them and slay them; wherever you find them. And in any case take no friends of helpers from their ranks; except those who join a group between whom and you there is a treaty (of peace) or those who approach you with hearts restraining them from fighting you as well as fighting their own people. If Allah had pleased, He could have given power over you and they would have fought you: Therefore if they withdraw from you but fight you not and (instead) send you (guarantees) peace, then Allah hath opened no way for you (to war against them).'

[Qur'an 4:88-90]

d) *'O Prophet, strive hard against the unbelievers and hypocrites and be firm against them. Their abode is Hell, - an evil refuge (indeed).'*

[Qur'an 66:9]

The Ummah has no need for directionless and purposeless people. What the Ummah demands and needs are people who have Kalimah and who have Qibla (direction) in every facet of life. These ayaat do not need elaboration, but implementation in order to prevent the Munafiqun from sowing confusion and chaos. And we pray that all of us follow the injunction:

'O ye who believe! Enter into Islam wholeheartedly and follow not the footsteps of the evil one; for he is to you an avowed enemy.'

[Qur'an 2:208]

JUSTICE IN HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS

'And who is more unjust than he who forbids that, in places for the worship of Allah, Allah's name should be celebrated.'

[Qur'an 2:114]

'Allah doth command you to render back your Trusts to those to whom they are due; and when ye judge between man and man, that ye judge with justice: verily how excellent is the teaching which He giveth you! For Allah is He Who heareth and seeth all things.'

[Qur'an 4:58]

'O ye who believe! Stand out firmly for justice as witnesses to Allah, even as against yourselves or your parents, or your kin, and whether it be (against) rich or poor: for Allah can best protect both. Follow not the lusts (of your hearts) lest ye swerve and if ye distort (justice) or decline to do justice, verily Allah is well acquainted with all that ye do.'

[Qur'an 4:125]

'O ye who believe! Stand out firmly for Allah, as witnesses to fair dealing, and let not the hatred of others make you swerve to wrong and depart from justice. Be just, that is next to piety: and fear Allah for Allah is well-acquainted with all that ye do.'

[Qur'an 5:9]

'Allah commands justice, the doing of good, the liberality to kith and kin, and he forbids all shameful deeds, and injustice and rebellion: He instructs you, that ye may receive admonition.'

[Qur'an 16:91]

'.... but say: "I believe in the Book which Allah has sent down; and I am commanded to judge justly between you. Allah is our Lord and your Lord: for us (is the responsibility for) our deeds, and you for your deeds. There is no contention between us and you. Allah will bring us together, and to Him is (our) final goal.'"

[Qur'an 42:14-15]

'If two parties among the Believers fall into a quarrel, make ye peace between them: but if one of them transgresses beyond bounds against the other, then fight ye (all) against the one that transgresses until it complies with the commands of Allah; but if it complies, then make peace between them with justice, and be fair: for Allah loves those who are fair (and just).'

[Qur'an 49:9]

There is no legislation, textbook, constitution or ideology in the world that remotely comes near the concept of Justice in Qur'an. But moreover, the Qur'an also furnishes us with a complete and perfect set of principles which when acted upon encourages, propagates, facilitates and manifests this concept of Justice.

It is therefore absurd and ridiculous to suggest that Muslims encourage 'unity at all cost or at any costs'. It is abundantly clear that the unity espoused by Islam and in Islam is a qualitative unity - a conglomerate of millions of weak-kneed, ignorant and avaricious hangers-on is not conducive to a just social order.

This is also the reason why we say that the phrase 'post-Apartheid Society' is a wishy-washy, escapist, and deliberately vague concept with which to fool the unwary. If our demand, our minimum demand is for a just social order then the onus is on us to spell out the nature of this just social order. Significantly, our minimum demand is also our maximum demand - that is, a just social order. It is also unreasonable for people to make maximum sacrifices to give Apartheid a face-lift.

JUST SOCIAL ORDER

'O ye who believe! Stand out firmly for Justice as witnesses to Allah, even as against yourselves, or your parents or your kin, and whether it be (against) rich or poor: for Allah can best protect both...'

[Qur'an 4:135]

No favouritism, nepotism or corruption of any sort can be tolerated in the leadership of a people who are espousing and struggling for a just social order. If it is tolerated, the goal itself is already defeated. Leadership entails responsibility and accountability -not privileges. Bearing in mind that every act of polytheism (shirk) is injustice and every injustice is an act of polytheism. The Qur'an states:

'It is not for such as join gods with Allah, to visit or maintain the Mosques of Allah, while they witness against their own souls to infidelity. The works of such bear no fruit: in fire shall they well. The Mosques of Allah shall be visited and maintained by such as believe in Allah and the Last Day, establish regular prayers, and practice regular charity, and fear none (at all) except Allah, it is they who are expected to be on true guidance.'

[Qur'an 9:17-18]

'Let there arise out of you a band of people inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong: they are the ones to attain felicity.'

'Be not like those who are divided amongst themselves and fall into disputations after receiving clear signs: for them is a dreadful Penalty...'

[Qur'an 3:103-105]

'Ye are the best of Peoples, evolved for mankind, enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong, and believing in Allah'

[Qur'an 3:110]

'O ye who believe! Persevere in patience and constancy, vie in such perseverance; strengthen each other; and fear Allah; that ye may prosper.'

[Qur'an 3:200]

'O ye Apostles! enjoy (all) things good and pure and work righteousness, for I am well acquainted with (all) that ye do. And verily this Brotherhood of yours is a single brotherhood, and I am your Lord and Cherisher: therefore fear Me (and no other). But people have cut off their affair (of unity), between them, into sects, each party rejoices in that which is with itself. But leave them in their confused ignorance for a time.'

[Qur'an 23:51-54]

'If two parties among the Believers fall into a quarrel, make peace between them, but if one of them transgresses beyond bounds against the other, then fight ye (all) against the one that transgresses until it complies with the command of Allah; but if it complies, then make peace between them with justice, and be fair: for Allah loves those who are fair (and just).

'The believers are but a single brotherhood: so make peace and reconciliation between your two (contending) brothers: and fear Allah, that ye may receive Mercy.'

[Qur'an 49:9-10]

The emphasis throughout the entire Qur'an stresses the essential principles on which a just social order must be established. Moreover, the same principles form the basis of the just leadership of such a just social order. Such a leadership obeys Allah, obeys His Rasul; they enjoin what is good and right; they strive with patience and constancy; they strengthen each other; they fear no one except Allah; they maintain their unity in accordance with the principles of Qur'an; they oppose those who violate the principles of unity of the Believers and force them to comply with the Commands of Allah.

It is established beyond any shadow of a doubt that the unity espoused in Islam is based on Justice. There has never been, and never will be unity of Mankind unless it was or is based on Justice. There is no substitute for Justice. There will never be a substitute for Justice. Justice is therefore a prerequisite for Peace. Let us for the sake of clarity repeat this very important principle:

'If two parties among the Believers fall into a quarrel, make peace between them, but if one of them transgresses beyond bounds against the other, then fight ye (all) against the one that transgresses until it complies with the command of Allah; but if it complies, then make peace between them with justice, and be fair: for Allah loves those who are fair (and just).

'The believers are but a single brotherhood: so make peace and reconciliation between your two (contending) brothers: and fear Allah, that ye may receive Mercy.'

[Qur'an 49:9-10]

'Allah doth command you to render back your Trusts to those whom they are due; and when ye judge between man and man, that ye judge with justice: Verily how excellent is the teaching which He giveth you! For Allah is He Who heareth and seeth all things.'

[Qur'an 4:58]

'O ye who believe! Obey Allah and obey the Rasul, and those charged with authority amongst you.

'If ye differ in anything among yourselves, refer it to Allah and His Rasul, if ye do believe in Allah and the last day: that is best, and most suitable for final determination.'

[Qur'an 4:59]

JUSTICE: A PREREQUISITE FOR PEACE

'And fight them on until there is no more tumult or oppression, and there prevails justice and faith in Allah; but if they cease, let there be no hostility except to those who practice oppression.'

[Qur'an 2:193]

Why should the oppressed people sacrifice their lives to defend those who are the cause of our suffering? Why should the oppressed sacrifice their lives to defend an abominable system which is without rival in the world? What does the oppressor expect when he gives us the choice between slavery and liberation?

Under the vociferous bravado of 'we shall fight to the bitter end to defend white civilisation' we now detect a nervous giggle. How ironic it is that 'Blacks' must now be enlisted to defend 'white civilisation'!

We know, and the oppressor knows, that 'white civilisation' has always been a myth; there is nothing which a human being can't learn - and civilisation is precisely determined by what we learn, how we learn it and what we do with what we learn.

Learning the art of warfare is not an end in itself; it must serve some purpose.

There is no great virtue in boasting about a well-equipped army because we know that weapons of war in the hands of gangsters will only result in gangsterism.

It is not power which comes out of a barrel of a gun, but a bullet -the real power lies in the intellect and the truth which inspires our actions. The ideological commitment of the person who carries arms is of vital importance.

Why waste our military power and lives in the propagation and defence of that which is obviously false and unjust?

There is, however, every reason in the world why the truth must be propagated, implemented and defended.

No conscious oppressed person, and especially a Muslim will voluntarily enlist in the oppressor's army.

Muslims have a very clear perspective on this issue:

'Let those fight in the Cause of Allah who sell the life of this world for the Hereafter, to him who fighteth in the Cause of Allah, -whether he is slain or gets victory - soon shall We give him a reward of great (value).

'And why should ye not fight in the cause of Allah and of those who, being weak, are ill-treated (and oppressed)? - Men, women and children, whose cry is: "Our Lord! Rescue us from this town whose people are oppressors; and raise for us from Thee one who will protect; and raise for us from Thee one who will help!"

'Those who believe fight in the Cause of Allah, and those who reject faith fight in the cause of evil; so fight ye against the friends of Satan: feeble indeed Is the cunning of Satan.'

[Qur'an 4:74-76]

All oppressed societies are pervaded with various forms of compulsion, e.g. compulsory schooling, compulsory tax and compulsory military service. It is worthwhile to reflect that the first Muslim army was an army of volunteers. In fact, it was a people's army with one common ideology and method.

The Ummah was therefore established with a handful of Muslims. They were few but they did what they did. The following words can best describe the contribution of the Sahabah: 'Never in the history of mankind has so much been done by so few for so many'.

'There is no compulsion in Deen: Truth stands out clear from error.'

[Qur'an 2:256]

The Muslims cannot therefore be compelled to do military service in the army of the oppressor; because if our Creator does not compel us to believe in His Message and Method, then no oppressor, exploiter, racist or tyrant can compel us. And to obey the oppressor would be to violate an important principle of action in Islam; that is:

'O ye who believe! Obey Allah and obey the Rasul, and those charged with authority among you.'

[Qur'an 4:59]

In Islam every Muslim is a soldier (a mujahid) in the Cause of Allah and he therefore obeys only his own commanders.

He who defends what is wrong is doing a greater wrong. He who defends an oppressor is worse than the oppressor. He who defends a munafiq, knowing that he is one, is worse than the munafiq (hypocrite).

'And he who brings the truth and he who confirms (and supports) it - such are the men who do right.'

[Qur'an 39:33]

'Among those we have created are people who direct (others) with truth, and dispense justice therewith.'

[Qur'an 7:181]

It is evident that opportunism and expediency is retrogressive and therefore detrimental to the cause of justice.

JIHAD: ISLAMIC PARADIGM

Islam stands for the preservation of life not for its destruction. Islam promotes Peace not War.

When an unprovoked war is waged against you, what are your options? Do you submit? No! Islam commands us to defend ourselves and to put an end to the hostilities.

The revolutionary spirit of Islam demands that we fight until the tyranny is wiped from the face of the earth.

Defence of legitimate rights is a natural right. This right belongs not only to certain human beings but to all human beings, as well as to all animals.

Human beings, therefore, must remove the obstacles which threaten them in the course of their lives. If human beings cannot or will not defend themselves, then they are doomed to destruction.

Unless there exists the right to defence beside every legitimate right, that legitimate right will be violated and rendered useless and impotent. Self defence is a matter of honour, not of shame.

Every sane human being therefore accepts and advocates that the stoppage, destruction and eradication of oppression is legitimate. The right to self-defence can never be illegal, unreasonable, illogical or illegitimate.

'To those against whom war is made, permission is given (to fight), because They are wronged; and verily, Allah is Most Powerful for their aid.'

[Qur'an 27:39]

The answer to aggression is counter-aggression. Whoever is advocating anything else is living in a fool's paradise or is an agent of the oppressors.

'And why should you not fight in the Cause of Allah and of the oppressed who (being weak) are ill-treated and oppressed?'

[Qur'an 4:75]

There are two groups of people who ask the question: 'Is our struggle in Azania a Jihad?' The first group consists of those who are ignorant about Islam. These at least are posing a question that we can answer. The second group consists of those who are knowledgeable about Islam but they are advocating Islam minus Jihad. Islam minus Jihad means Islam minus Islam.

The reason this group pose the question: 'Is our struggle in Azania a Jihad?' is to imply that it is not. In other words, this liberation struggle is not our struggle. This is not only stupid but also treacherous.

Jihad means to enjoin what is good and to forbid what is wrong with all the power at our disposal. Thus, Jihad is standing up with all the power at our disposal against all forms of oppression, exploitation and injustice. It is an effort, an exertion, a striving for truth and justice.

'To those against whom war is made, permission is given (to fight) because they are oppressed; - and verily, Allah is Most Powerful for their aid; (They are) those who have been expelled from their homes in defiance of right.'

[Qur'an 22:39-40]

We oppose oppression whenever it is perpetrated and on behalf of the oppressed wherever they may be.

Jihad is an effort, an exertion to the utmost, a striving for truth and justice. The purpose of Jihad is to stop, remove, destroy and eradicate injustice and not to replace one unjust system with another, or to replace one dominant group with another dominant group.

Jihad is therefore a ceaseless, continuous, super conscious and effective struggle for justice.

JIHAD CULMINATES IN REVOLUTION

We, the ideological unit amongst the oppressed known as Muslims, are under an obligation to promote and defend what is right and just and to combat, destroy and eradicate what is evil and unjust.

Any social order which does not rotate on the axis of justice is not fit for survival. The minimum demand of the oppressed under the guidance of Islamic Ideology is for a just social order.

Anything less than a just social order is betrayal, is treason to the oppressed people and their glorious martyrs.

The essence of Jihad (revolutionary struggle) is sacrifice. And this is necessary because a revolutionary is not merely an exponent of revolutionary rhetoric but one who attacks what is oppressive and exploitative in order to destroy and eradicate it. No revolutionary worthy of the name is therefore threatened and blackmailed - not even with death.

'And fight them on until there is no more tumult and oppression. And there prevail justice and faith in Allah; but If they cease, let there be no hostility except to those who practice oppression.'

[Qur'an 2:193]

'Did not Allah check one set of people by means of another, there would surely have been pulled down monasteries, churches, synagogues and mosques, in which the name of Allah is commemorated in abundant measure.'

[Qur'an 22:40]

The struggle against the oppressors is a Jihad because manifestations of religion and centres of worship have been violated and attacked by the oppressors. If they have not pulled them down physically, then the oppressors have destroyed the churches and mosques by forcing the communities around them to Group Areas far removed from the churches and mosques. Thus we are under an obligation not only to defend manifestations of religion and centres of worship but also to prevent their destruction.

Our struggle is a Jihad because it is a struggle to eradicate the vicious and dehumanising system and to establish a just universal social order.

The minimum demand of the oppressed under the guidance of Islamic Ideology is for a just social order. Anything less than a just social order is betrayal, is treason to the oppressed people and their glorious martyrs.

Peace emanates from justice; justice therefore precedes peace. Justice is a pre-condition, a prerequisite, an indispensable prerequisite for peace.

In fact, we love justice more than we love peace.

Peace unto the peaceful.

'Let there be no hostilities except against those who practice oppression.'

[Qur'an 2:193]

OVERVIEW OF UNITY INITIATIVES IN SOUTH AFRICA

"ABSENT" (MUSLIM VIEWS - MAY 1990)

QIBLA, ICSA and the Institute of Islamic Shari'ah Studies informed the organisers they could not attend the National Conference. Although ICSA's statement explaining its absence was read out at the conference, Qibla's was not.

Qibla said the organisation's requests for clarification and details on the conference had not been answered.

Qibla said it received an invitation late and due to lack of information and time they were unable to research the Quranic position on issues to be discussed.

ICSA said it was clear from the lateness of the invitation and a report in which Ebrahim Rasool said that their alliances with government would cause objections, their presence was not desired.

Explaining their absence, the Institute of Islamic Shari'ah Studies said they could not prepare anything due to short notice.

Commenting on Qibla's statement the organising secretary of the Call of Islam, Mr Natheem Hendricks said there were two opposing views from Qibla members on whether the statement should be read out.

He said he was approached by members of another Qibla sect that Qibla had no mandate to present the letter at the conference.

'We were then faced with the problem of who is the more authentic Qibla,' he said."

"THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE" - QIBLA REPLIES

'And he who brings the Truth and he who confirms it (and support) it - such are the men who do right.'

[Qur'an 39:33]

We would like to examine the role of the Muslim Press in the light of the above ayah, but in order to do so there are two concepts which we need to understand.

They are the concepts of Truth and Justice. Both are fundamental and absolute in Islam. A truth cannot be a half truth or an untruth nor can Justice emanate from falsehood. Thus, Justice is nothing but truth in action.

The execution of the above concepts leads to the development of a critical consciousness.

CRITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS

'O ye who believe! Stand out firmly for Justice, as witnesses for Allah even as against yourselves, or your parents or your kin or whether it be against rich or poor: for Allah can best protect both. Follow not the lusts (of your hearts) lest you swerve and if ye distort Justice or decline to do Justice verily Allah is well acquainted with all that ye do.'

[Qur'an 4:135]

It is therefore incumbent on every Muslim to develop a critical consciousness. A free press is essential for the functioning of a healthy and free society. This is a fundamental issue for the oppressed in occupied Azania because we have never known a free press. MUSLIM VIEWS and others exist despite the tremendous odds stacked against them.

MUSLIM UNITY

We are proud of them. It is our duty to nurse them in whatever way we can. MUSLIM VIEWS have always encouraged Muslim unity and expounded the Islamic perspective by having as one of its objectives the propagation of truth.

In the loneliest moments in the history of the oppressed it was MUSLIM NEWS and now MUSLIM VIEWS which carried the suffering and victories of the oppressed to all parts of the world.

This was without fear of the oppressors or prejudice to any section of any liberation movement anywhere in the world. Against this background we wish to raise three matters pertaining to the recent issues of MUSLIM VIEWS.

MISCHIEVOUS REPORTS

Firstly, Shafiq Morton's reports in Muslim Views on the National Muslim Conference had singled out Qibla as one of the apparently boycotting parties.

This report was mischievous and blatantly untrue. We have and will continue to strive towards a principled unity of the Ummah, because without unity there is no Ummah.

The Unity of the Ummah necessarily implies direction and purpose as provided by Islam. In the absence of Islamic direction and purpose we fool only ourselves.

Morton's report was more surprising when one considers that Muslim Views received prior to the conference a comment from Qibla supporting the conference and secondly, a copy of a letter handed to the NMC setting out why we were unable to attend the conference. Both the comment and the letter were not published.

'NO MANDATE'

Secondly, Muslim Views reported on a statement by the organisers claiming that the movement had 'no mandate' to have this letter read out at the conference. Qibla was not asked to verify this statement.

We wish to add that:

Qibla was officially invited by the organisers and was given five invitations;

The organisers received the letter on an official letterhead with an address and a phone number to verify its authenticity and, a representative was in daily communication with the organisers prior to the commencement of the conference in order to clarify details relating to the conference.

Furthermore, as we were made to believe attendance of the conference was by invitation only, how was it possible for these people to attend when we were in possession of the official invitations?

CRITERIA

Thirdly, we have always understood Muslim Views' criteria of reporting to be truthful, accurate, objective with an Islamic ideological editorial policy. In our view, Shafiq Morton has not conformed to Muslim Views' policy.

We already have the position where other alternative newspapers have openly aligned themselves with certain ideological perspectives. It would be tragic if Muslim Views or its reporters were to abandon its ideologically clear Islamic editorial policy.

May Allah grant us strength and the courage to take on the international forces of Taghut and may Allah make us the instruments through which the glorious Islamic state becomes established -Insha'Allah.

SHAFIQ MORTON REPLIES

Firstly, I would like to commend Qibla for the dignity and thoroughness of their reply which is in the spirit of Islamic debate.

Secondly, I have to point out that the report attributed to me was not written by myself. I was not the reporter responsible for the article.

The only comment I made about Qibla was their 'apparent' boycotting of proceedings. This was what I was fairly and honestly led to believe. My comment was an observation of that, nothing more.

Thirdly, I take great exception to innuendo that I am pushing a particular 'ideological perspective' at the expense of Islam.

Finally, apropos the report I did not write. It has since come to our attention that what we published in good faith was in fact disinformation from certain individuals who nullified actions and statements of Qibla."

[MUSLIM VIEWS - JUNE 1990]

Some observers contend that there are essentially three or more unity initiatives currently underway amongst Muslims in South Africa. AI-Qalam's editorial March 1992 states:

THAT ELUSIVE UNITY

"Every once in a while different persons and organisations within the South African Muslim community attempt to forge some kind of 'Muslim unity' to pull together all sections of the community, speak with one voice, and act together.

While these are noble and laudable attempts, the results have thus far not been much to feel excited about.

We have seen the formation of an organisation to represent all Muslims - ICSA, we have seen 'ulama unity conferences, we have seen the National Muslim Conference. **All have failed in some way in achieving the stated objective** [*Author's emphasis*]. Sometimes the failure was due to personality clashes, to organisational affiliation being more important than unity, to the exclusion of certain groups of organisations.

Two new attempts have now been made with similar kinds of objectives. In Qibla's analysis, previous attempts have not been successful because they were convened by only certain organisations. The solution then, according to Qibla, is for a unity conference that is jointly convened by all 600 or 700 Muslim organisations throughout the country. Such an attempt, they believe, must work. Unity is a duty on all Muslims and if we all work together for it, it is achievable.

The Interim National Muslim Front believes a limited agenda needs to be set up towards a process of developing a front, and the front can be initiated by organisations that have common ideological visions and a history of cooperation. They also feel the transitional period in South African politics is an ideal opportunity for the front they want to build.

While both groups are talking unity, the differences in their understanding of the process will determine the extent of the support either receives.

Muslim organisations are faced with two options - and two invitations. This is not to imply that many will not participate in both initiatives; however, in devoting their resources and energies to the process they might be forced into choosing.

On the one hand we have an almost absolutist understanding of unity derived from a Quranic injunction for Muslims to be united. All organisations will jointly decide on the agenda and direction of the conference and process.

On the other hand there is the interventionist - almost opportunist and selfish understanding of the necessity for Islamic unity. This option considers the current forces to play in the political and socio-economic scenario and attempts to unite Muslims around contributing to this larger process.

While both initiatives will undoubtedly attempt to gain maximum support, an important reason for the non-success of previous initiatives must be remembered; unity is nothing if it does not succeed in getting ordinary Muslims, those not part of any organisation to participate in the process.

It is only by involving Muslims at a mass level that any such effort can hope to succeed.

If all Muslim organisations met together they still could not claim to represent the entire community. If either of the two proposals are to succeed, they need to involve our people not only in terms of getting 'support' - moral and financial - but by ensuring that issues to be discussed are raised at various community forums, that these issues are discussed, that our people are part of decision-making after being properly informed, that the feelings of the mass of Muslims, and not a few individuals or organisations, are represented at a national level.

The responsibility, however, for such consultation to occur does not lie just with organisers of conferences and executives of organisations. People must demand that they be consulted before any representation is made on their behalf.

For too long have our people sat apathetically expecting the 'Ulama or certain organisations to do their thinking, their decision-making and their acting.

Whether we participate in these processes or not, and whether we like it or not, the results of these processes will be said to represent 'the Muslim community'. No-one deserves to be such a representative unless an informed community makes that decision. We must not - and this is a great lesson for us from apartheid - allow anyone to talk and decide on our behalf without consulting us first.

This is the lesson of apartheid, this is the lesson of the Prophet's life. The Messenger of God himself consulted his people at every opportunity before a decision was made. If we shirk this responsibility we alone will be to blame when decisions are imposed on us and our children that we had nothing to do with and that we do not even like!

In May 1992, Al-Qalam stated that the composition of the Interim Muslim Front was Call of Islam, Muslim Youth Movement of SA, Council of Masajid and the Muslim Students Association. The aim of the Front is:

- I) To establish a national Muslim Front representative of Muslim organisations across the broadest possible spectrum.
- II) To act collectively when responding to socio-political issues, yet not compromise organisational autonomy.
- III) To ensure negotiations for a new constitution to protect Muslim interests, particularly in areas of religious education, personal law, foreign policy, religious practice.

The Interim Muslim Front, it says, 'grew out of the National Muslim Conference (May 1990) with insignificant developments until 1992'. Moreover, it states:

'An effort on the part of certain Muslim groups active in the democratic movement to recapture the initiative in articulating a progressive Muslim voice in ongoing political negotiations'.

It is significant that the National Muslim Conference (May 1990) passed no binding resolutions. Muslim Views (May 1990) stated that:

'At stake was the political credibility of a notoriously divided community....'

'Although polarity and intolerance was evident in the Conference, its success lies in the fact that Muslims finally got together under one roof to discuss their future.'

Muslim Views' editorial was even more interesting:

"NEGOTIATIONS"¹

The diverse views Muslims hold on the question of negotiations was the major issue that grabbed attention at the recent National Muslim Conference.

It was apparent that the positions of some of the organisations on negotiations were shaped by their leanings towards the various political tendencies within the broader liberation movement. At the same time, an effort was made by some to add an independent perspective.

What we need to guard against is that the debate on negotiations should not be used as a lobby to win support from the Ummah for any particular tendency. If we allow this to happen we will further polarise an already deeply divided house.

By all means, Muslims are free to attach themselves to an organisation and espouse a particular viewpoint. However, what we should not be doing is to take that position and attempt to pass it off as the Islamic directive.

Far too little work has been done by Muslims for us to say that we have a clear-cut position on negotiations vis-a-vis Islam. The issue needs to be discussed, studied and debated in an atmosphere of tolerance and with the genuine desire to reach the truth.

Of course, negotiations are just one of the many issues facing us that need this type of approach. However, since our attitude towards negotiations will have a chain reaction on related issues, it is a topic that should be addressed urgently.

The historic National Muslim Conference has, to an extent, laid the foundations. We now need to build on it.

Ultimately, what we need to bear in mind is that while consensus may not be reached on negotiations - and other issues for that matter - Muslims must move out of their organisational pigeon holes in order to understand, and therefore respect, the other person's viewpoint. This is the first stage to the elusive goal: a united Ummah!

¹ This text was first written at a time when the apartheid regime was in terminal decline.

‘And hold fast, all together by the Rope which Allah (stretches out for you), and be not divided among yourselves; and remember with gratitude Allah’s favour on you; for ye were enemies and He joined your hearts in love, so that by His Grace ye became brethren...’

[Qur’an 3:103]

[MUSLIM VIEWS - MAY 1990]

The following article published in Muslim Views (February 1992) throws further light on the supposed contentious grounds for unity.

‘ALL FOR UNITY - BUT LET’S DO THE GROUNDWORK FIRST’

A call by a Cape Town activist for a single body to unite the Muslims of South Africa has met with qualified support from organisations canvassed by Muslim Views.

In a recent interview with the AIA news agency, Qibla leader, Imam Achmad Cassiem mooted the idea of a Supreme Council for Southern Africa that ‘would bring about, reflect and maintain the unity of all Muslims in this country’.

‘Such a formation,’ he said, ‘would mean that the strength in numbers of the Muslims, their financial resources and their military capabilities would be consolidated.’

He added that such a body would be larger than any other existing political party and could therefore have an impact on the entire liberation process.

QURANIC COMMAND

‘We are not doing this (unity) out of political expediency. We are saying that Muslims have a personal obligation to unite in obedience to the Quranic command “not to be disunited and divided amongst yourselves.”

While all the organisations who commented endorsed Imam Cassiem’s call, there were those who stressed that the basis for unity should be clearly set out. Furthermore, a close study should be made of previous attempts at unity that had failed.

The Muslim Judicial Council pointed out that ‘the forging of unity in the Ummah is an ongoing process on the agenda of the MJC’.

'ULAMA CONFERENCE

A conference of Cape 'Ulama in George during October 1991 was cited as an example of the efforts it was undertaking in this direction. A follow-up conference, where all major Muslim organisations will be invited, is now in the pipeline, according to the MJC statement.

The idea that a united Muslim body would be able to directly influence the present political process was, however, dismissed by the MJC as **'far-fetched and irrelevant at this stage.'** *[Author's emphasis]*

'Our major objective should be to put all our efforts into the forging of unity amongst the divergent groups regionally and nationally', the MJC stated.

The president of the Islamic Council of South Africa, Dr Rashid Saloojee, fully endorsed Imam Cassiem's call.

He said the unity of all Muslims was ICSA's prime objective when it was first established but 'because of subsequent events of a divided Ummah, the idea was stillborn.'

Giving ICSA's unqualified support to the unity call, Dr Saloojee stated: 'The interests of Islam demand that we reassert the right of the wider Ummah to regain its position of influence in an area where Muslims at one stage played a highly progressive role.'

Thus we are prepared to discuss and deliberate with any or all of our brothers to plan how best to achieve this meritorious goal. Let us bury those differences which in the past obstructed the unity of the Ummah and meet to further the Deen of Islam.'

COMMENDABLE CALL

The Jami'atul 'Ulama of Natal noted that Imam Cassiem's call was 'commendable'.

It added that the call for unity was not new to the Muslims of South Africa having been repeatedly stated from various platforms.

'Unfortunately, the problem seems to be compounding and more divisions are taking place,' the Jami'at said.

'It would be worth studying the causes of the failure of ICSA to unite the Muslims under one banner.'

While urging that 'Brother Achmad Cassiem must be given all the encouragement' the Jami'at cautioned: ***He must be made to realise that it is not easy to unite the Muslims until and unless the basis of unity has been decided upon.'** *[Author's emphasis]*

The national secretary of the Call of Islam (COI), Ebrahim Rasool, responded that while Muslims should strive to attain the goal of a united regional force, 'we need to come to a greater consensus about our role in South Africa as Muslims.'

NO UNANIMOUS INTERPRETATION

‘We’ve been clear in our minds that Muslims are not an undifferentiated amorphous community. However, much one may not want to admit this, there has never been a unanimous interpretation of what Islam means for us in South Africa.’

Rasool said the COI’s practical approach was two-fold. Firstly, to seek an alliance with like-minded organisations based on the fact that Islam was complete.

‘Secondly, the realisation that Islam has to be practised within the context of inter-action with non-Muslims and the unfolding political process.’

The COI added that before unity could come off the ground, ‘the process needs a pre-phase of exploration so that we could come to some consensus on interpretations.’

On the question of Muslims constituting a political grouping that would outnumber other groups, the COI said this should be seen in proper perspective.

‘Political groupings are voluntary associations. We are Muslims based on involuntary association. We may carry an Arabic name and share a common culture. However, these are not factors that would influence the direction of the liberation process.

In the report dealing with I.C.S.A. in *Al-Qalam* (May 1992), it is stated under the aims of I.C.S.A.:

I) ‘Restore ICSA as the “Ummah’s organisation” - broad-based, professionally administered umbrella body, with specific emphasis on grassroots organisations.’

II) ‘Seeks to influence negotiations for a new constitution and focus and articulate Muslim religious, educational and social interests.’

III) ‘Sees itself as framework for the coalescence and representation of Muslim civic society and as such, offering both alternative economic and social models to the process of state formation.’

In pursuance of these aims, ICSA has ‘petitioned CODESA for Muslim representation.’

In the same report attention is paid to the MJCs initiative as follows:

I) To create a formal Ulama Council encompassing entire Cape Town, including non-aligned councils.’

- II) Institute a provincial executive council to be elected in terms of Muslim voter role and further democratise the process of representation.
- III) 'Rationalise training programs and appointment of Imams.'
- IV) 'Make the management of Muslim affairs more efficient and systematic so as to guarantee an enhanced role in the merging political scene.'

An initial Ulama Conference was held in George in October 1991 as a first step towards establishing a provincial body. This of course was not a 'unity' conference because Majlis Ashura and ICOSA were not invited.

And as stated in Muslim Views (February 1992), the idea that a united Muslim body would be able to directly influence the present political process was, however, dismissed by the MJC as '**far-fetched and irrelevant at this stage**'. [*Author's emphasis*]

In the same report (Muslim Views - February 1992), the Jamiatul'Ulama of Natal noted that: 'He must be made to realise that **it is not easy to unite the Muslims until and unless the basis of unity has been decided upon**.' [*Author's emphasis*]

In the AI-Qalam report dated May 1992, it is stated the aims of Jamiatul 'Ulama Transvaal and Natal are:

- I) Carve out observer status for religious leaders of all faiths at CODESA.
- II) Ensure full recognition of Muslim personal law.
- III) Be consulted by the state in matters relating to Muslim affairs and human rights issues.

CONCLUSION

Against this background of diverse opinions, interpretations, speculations and analyses one factor stands out clearly - these are the opinions, interpretations, speculations and analyses of MUSLIMS.

And as Muslims they must obviously be conversant with Quranic criteria. That in the final analysis is what counts, at least for Muslims.

THE INVITATION BY QIBLA

The following invitation was despatched under certified post to hundreds of Muslim organisations. At this point in our history it is a necessary step towards unity.

We do not view the objection that 'If all Muslim organisations met together they still could not claim to represent the entire community,' as a serious objection - if it is in fact an objection.

Muslims are supposed to be involved at mass level; Jumu'ah is one such mass level; Hajj is another.

"Assalaamu Alaikum!

Dear Beloved Brother in Islam

In order for the unity of Muslims to materialise, a consistent, dynamic programme has to be initiated. From our most recent contacts with the leadership in the various organisations and the 'Ulama (Scholars) generally, it has become evident that there is not only a desire for national unity, but a NECESSITY for it.

WHAT DO WE PROPOSE TO DO?

We want to defeat those who are negative and cynical about achieving unity amongst Muslims. We want to strengthen and consolidate those who are striving to achieve unity. And we want to succeed, Insha'Allah.

Those who want to retain disunity must provide ONE proof from Qur'an, Sunnah or Ahadith which justifies disunity amongst Muslims.

We, on the other hand, who strive for unity, support unity and who want to establish unity and maintain it, do so for one significant and fundamental reason only; that is, **UNITY AMONGST MUSLIMS IS AN OBLIGATION ON ALL MUSLIMS.**

'O ye who believe! Fear Allah as He should be feared and die not except in a state of Islam. And hold fast altogether, by the rope which Allah (stretches out for you) and DO NOT BE DIVIDED AMONGST YOURSELVES.....'

[Qur'an 3:103]

The Ummah must, therefore, in all places and under all circumstances, whether in prosperity or adversity, be vigilant about our unity, and especially our unity in action.

PROPOSED METHOD TO BRING ABOUT UNITY

We know, appreciate and understand all the efforts that have been made previously. We propose that ALL Muslim organisations JOINTLY CONVENE the next National Unity Conference for Muslims.

Our immediate objective is to get all or most of the Muslim organisations to endorse this proposal.

WHO IS INVITED?

Every single Muslim organisation in South Africa. This will include every Masjid committee in the country as well as all National and local organisations.

PROCEDURE

As initiators of the concept of joint convenorship we are prepared to attend as observers only.

We will also impose a moratorium on all our members to prevent them from serving, in any official capacity in the proposed unitary structure, for a period of 12 months.

Once the Conference is convened, the delegates will then elect their chairperson as well as a Steering Committee which will draw up an agenda for the Conference.

The proposed Conference should take place as close as possible to Eid ul-Adha this year.

Please complete Annexure 'A' as soon as possible and forward it to the above address.

Please do not hesitate to contact us for any further particulars. We thank you in anticipation.

Yours in Islam

Achmad Cassiem

QIBLA

AIMS

1. To seek and disseminate the Truth.
2. To strive for the eradication of oppression of man by man.
3. To propagate, implement and defend justice.

IMMEDIATE OBJECTIVES

1. To mobilize, stimulate, activate and motivate the entire Muslim population, (which is in fact a population which is expanding daily) to join Qibla.
2. To make the message of Islam known and understood throughout the land.
3. To lay the foundation for and develop in embryo the social order of Islam, in other words, to put into practice collectively what we have been doing individually or separately.

In the name of Allah,
Most Gracious, Most Merciful

RAMADHAN

THE MONTH OF HIGH
INTENSITY TRAINING

Achmad Cassiem

RAMADHAN: THE MONTH OF HIGH INTENSITY TRAINING

شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنْزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ
وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِّنَ الْهُدَى وَالْفُرْقَانِ

'Ramadhan is the (month) in which was sent down the Qur'an, a guide to Mankind, and also clear (Signs) for guidance and judgement (between right and wrong).'

[Qur'an 2: 185]

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ
عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ

'O ye who believe! Fasting is prescribed to you, as it was prescribed to those before you, that ye may (learn) self-restraint, -'

[Qur'an 2: 183]

NIYYAH FOR FASTING

'I intend to fast for the coming day in order to perform my duty towards Allah in the month of RAMADHAN of the present year.'

نَوَيْتُ صَوْمَ غَدٍ عَنْ أَدَاءِ
فَرَضِ رَمَضَانَ هَذِهِ
السَّنَةِ لِلَّهِ تَعَالَى

DUAH FOR BREAKING FAST

'O Allah, for Thy glory have I fasted, and now I break the fast with food that cometh from Thee.'

اللَّهُمَّ لَكَ صُمْتُ وَعَلَى رِزْقِكَ أَفْطَرْتُ

DUAH FOR LAYLATUL QADR

'Say: O Allah! Thou art the one who grants pardon for sins, Thou lovest to pardon, so pardon me.'

اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّكَ عَفُوفٌ كَرِيمٌ تُحِبُّ الْعَفْوَ فَاعْفُ عَنِّي

INTRODUCTION

'O ye who believe! Fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, that ye may learn self restraint.'
[Qur'an 2:183]

'Whoever did not give up lying and practising falsehood, Allah is in no need of his giving up food and water.'
[Hadith]

There is no profession, craft, art, trade or occupation which cannot be perfected with understanding and practice. Just as a person cannot be a surgeon without studying, understanding and practising surgery, so a person cannot be a Muslim without studying, understanding and practising Islam. For after all, Islam is a way of life, of living and of dying. We note that the ayah in this introduction refers specifically to "O ye who believe!" - that is, to those that have attained a certain level of consciousness. Fasting, therefore, is not just for anybody. Fasting is also by implication - a means, a method, a technique for EVOLVING a higher level of awareness, of alertness, of attentiveness and of receptiveness.

This selectivity about who are the actual persons who benefit from Fasting is clarified in the following two Ahadith:

- 1) 'Whoever did not give up lying or the practising of falsehood,

Allah is in no need of his giving up food and water.'

II) 'Many are the tasters whose fasting does not bring them anything except hunger and thirst, and many are those who keep standing in the night but their standing does not bring them anything except being awake in the night.'

The first Hadith reminds us of two very familiar ayaat from the Qur'an:

'And cover not truth with falsehood, nor conceal the truth when ye know what it is.'

[Qur'an 2:42]

AND

'He who brings the Truth and he who confirms (and supports) it - such are the men who do right.'

[Qur'an 39:33]

In other words, the month of Ramadhan was the month in which this powerful Truth - the Qur'an - was manifested. Thus in a certain way we are celebrating the anniversary of this most momentous event in the history of mankind.

We must at all times remember that the Qur'an is a Book of Instruction and this definitely means it is our duty to obey these instructions; for it is after all we, the Muslims, who say the Kalimah and understand the Kalimah.

Ramadhan, historically speaking, was the month of truth-manifestation, truth-dissemination, truth-absorption, truth-elaboration, truth-confirmation and truth-implementation.

Fasting is for those who want to improve themselves - improve their bodies, their emotions, their mentality, their morality and their spirituality.

Westoxicated individuals think that if they improve their circumstances; increase their comforts, conveniences and leisure and ensure their safety and security, that that will be enough.

It is not enough to change our circumstances, we have to purify and develop ourselves.

Fasting is therefore an extraordinary educational experience which covers social, hygienic, economic and spiritual dimensions.

For example, fasting is an effective treatment for certain psychological and emotional disorders. It assists people to be more resolute; strengthen their convictions and curbs rashness and frivolousness.

During the month of Ramadhan especially we should try to comprehend the verses of the Qur'an and teach them to others. But mere understanding without practical application is futile.

WE CHANGE OURSELVES IN ORDER TO CHANGE THE WORLD

'Verily Allah does not change the condition of a people until they change their own condition.'

[Qur'an 13:11]

It is impossible to change our mode of action unless and until we change our mode of thinking. The common factor in all learning situations is the human mind; the quality of these minds is therefore of the utmost importance.

The most important function of consciousness is intentionality, that is, the willing and conscious formulation of an intention.

By making it obligatory (Fard) upon us to state an intention (Niyyah), Islam makes it obligatory upon us to **think** before we act. And it makes it obligatory upon us to act **consciously and purposefully**.

Fasting is a process for developing our power of intention, for acting consciously and purposefully. This is definitely an effective and an efficient way of cultivating self-discipline.

POSITIVE THINKING PRODUCES POSITIVE ACTION

Fasting triggers off a dynamic and continuous process of self-education. Not only are we in full control of this process, but we are also the only ones who can evaluate our progress.

All of us are aware that we can only evaluate our progress if we have a standard or criterion against which to measure it.

The following is a useful guide for students and teachers:-

Fasting - Level One:

Abstaining from food, drink, sex, smoking, etc.

Fasting - Level Two

Keeping ones ears, eyes, tongue, hands and feet - and all organs - free from blameworthy actions.

Fasting - Level Three

Keeping the heart and mind free from all unworthy concerns.

This is very aptly explained in the following Hadith:

'Five things break a man's fast: lying, backbiting, scandalmongering, perjury and a lustful gaze.'

It is quite evident that a fasting person is in a state of alertness, a heightened state of consciousness. One should therefore guard one's tongue from talking nonsense, lying, backbiting, scandalmongering, obscenities, rudeness, vulgarity, wrangling and controversy.

Everything which is unlawful to utter is unlawful to listen to. That is why the Hadith emphasizes it in the following manner:

'The backbiter and his listener are co-partners in sin'

It is meaningless and senseless to abstain from lawful food only to break one's fast on what is unlawful.

The ultimate purpose of fasting is to acquire Taqwa. The Qur'an states:

'O ye who believe! Fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you that you may become God-fearing.'

[Qur'an 2:183]

This must therefore be our objective, because if a goal has not been attained, then an action has not been executed correctly.

A person who fasts must therefore undergo a qualitative change in his thinking and in his behaviour.

'How many of those who fast get nothing from it but hunger and thirst.'

[Hadith]

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

The question of personal responsibility is fundamental to Islam. This activates and cultivates self-discipline. Every Muslim thereby becomes a unit of order and a unit for order. And every Muslim becomes a unit of social change and a unit for social change.

During Ramadhan especially, Muslims become more conscious of their duty towards themselves, towards their communities and towards mankind in general.

'Be one of two: either one who educates himself or one who concerns himself with the education of others. Never, however, concern yourself with reforming others before you have first reformed yourself.'

[Imam Ghazzali]

Fasting is not intended to be of benefit only to oneself because it is meant to have profound effects on the social order

A community which fasts collectively enjoys all the individual and collective benefits and joys of fasting. This community consolidates itself and directs its members to constructive efforts.

We feel a sense of responsibility towards each other based on mutual co-operation, unselfishness and complete trust. Such a community is free of crime, hatred, and general corruption. Such a community is a pleasing sight for mankind. Such a community is of benefit to mankind.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF FASTING?

a) To Demonstrate our Obedience

The most important purpose of fasting is to demonstrate our obedience to the Commands of Allah. We submit willingly and enthusiastically to the principles of Islam. Once we have made clear our obedience to Allah then a definite pattern of growth and development emerges. And the Qur'an states very clearly:

'He that obeys Allah and His Rasul has already attained the highest achievement.'

[Qur'an 33:71]

During Ramadhan Muslims are prohibited from partaking in that which is Halaal. This lasts from dawn to sunset for a period of 29 to 30 days. This prohibition on what is Halaal makes it easier for us to obey the prohibition on what is Haraam.

b) To Develop the Consciousness (Awareness) of Muslims

All our actions are preceded by a niyyah (a statement of intention). Intention is the most important criterion for judging actions. We also know that intention is a function of consciousness because an unconscious person cannot state an intention.

The more we use our power to state intentions (that is, to make decisions), the more we demonstrate our freedom to choose. And the more we use our minds the sharper they become. All other instruments become blunt with use but the mind is the only instrument that becomes sharper the more we use it.

This awareness (consciousness) we are talking about is not just self-awareness but also social awareness and spiritual awareness.

c) To Cultivate and Develop Self-Discipline

'O ye who believe! Fasting is prescribed to you as it was to those before you, that ye may (learn) self-restraint.'

[Qur'an 2:183]

'Leave those alone who take their Deen to be mere play and amusement, and are deceived by the life of this world. But proclaim (to them) this (Truth): that EVERY SOUL DELIVERS ITSELF TO RUIN BY ITS OWN ACTS.'

[Qur'an 6:70]

The Qur'an is in fact establishing the law for personal and collective success - for anything to succeed the human being must strive to make it succeed. Success as we know requires intelligence. By intelligence we understand the ability to **apply knowledge**.

It is an indisputable fact that self-discipline and the development of intelligence are inextricably linked. The less self-discipline we have the more unintelligent our actions become. A necessary factor, therefore, for the development and blossoming of intelligence is self-discipline. Need we stress the fact that in Islam we have enormous opportunities to cultivate self-discipline? Ramadhan is but one of these opportunities.

It is remarkably clear to Muslims that we change ourselves in order to change the world. The first instrument of change is, therefore, self-awareness. And during Ramadhan we are acutely aware of ourselves, our hunger pangs, our thirst, our behaviour, our tongues and our very thoughts. In brief, we have assumed control over them. We always use the mind to serve the body, now the body must serve the mind.

'Whether ye show what is in your minds or conceal it, Allah calleth you to account for it.'

[Qur'an 2:284]

'A Muslim is he whose tongue and hands are not annoying to other Muslims.'

[Hadith]

Let us be quite frank and demonstrate the difference between regimentation and self-discipline.

REGIMENTATION	SELF-DISCIPLINE
<p>1) One obeys out of fear. There is the threat of punishment or there is actual punishment.</p>	<p>One obeys out of love -there is the desire to please and to find satisfaction in performing a task.</p>
<p>2) Regimentation is difficult because there has to be constant supervision and external control. Remove the supervisor or controller then discipline collapses.</p>	<p>Self-discipline is relatively easy because one is in constant control of oneself and is not in need of a supervisor or a controller.</p>
<p>3) Regimentation is temporary because once the need for regimentation is no longer required, the discipline disintegrates.</p>	<p>Self discipline is permanent because it is structured in the mind and therefore in the lifestyle of the individual.</p>
<p>4) Regimentation is imperfect - and is only satisfactory for limited purposes.</p>	<p>Self-discipline is perfect as well as perfectible. And it is desirable at all times and satisfactory under all conditions.</p>
<p>5) Regimentation implies being controlled and manipulated by an external source.</p>	<p>Self-discipline implies mind-control by the person himself. It is therefore an intellectual and conscious assessment of behaviour.</p>
<p>6) Regimentation does not require understanding but merely submissiveness and servile obedience.</p>	<p>Self-discipline requires understanding and a critical consciousness.</p>

Islam is totally committed to self-discipline and personal responsibility. Self-discipline and personal responsibility are but two ways of looking at the same thing.

The Qur'an on personal responsibility:

- I) *'On no soul doth Allah place a burden greater than it can bear. It gets every good that it earns, and it suffers every ill that it earns.'*

[Qur'an 2:286]

- II) *'Leave those alone who take their Deen to be a mere play and amusement, and are deceived by the life of this world. But proclaim (to them) this (Truth): that every soul delivers itself to ruin by its own acts.'*

[Qur'an 6:70]

- III) *'Verily We have revealed the Book to thee in Truth, for (instructing) Mankind. He, then, that receives guidance benefits his own: but he that strays injures his own soul. Nor art thou set over them to dispose of their affairs.'*

[Qur'an 39:41]

These ayaat make it crystal clear that accountability for one's actions is the most important psycho-dynamic aspect of Islam. It is for this reason that intention (niyyah) in Islam is such an important aspect of Emaan. This really means that thought or consciousness is the essence of Emaan. And in order to convince us of the seriousness of our decisions the Qur'an states:

- IV) *'Whether ye show what is in your minds or conceal it, Allah calleth you to account for it.'*

[Qur'an 2:284]

- V) And the Hadith states:

'Actions will be judged according to intentions.'

A Muslim therefore, obeys an instruction or command in such a way that he is always held personally responsible, personally accountable, personally liable for his actions. We may not be called to account by any authority here in this life, but we shall definitely be held accountable on the Day of Judgement. And moreover our own minds shall bear witness because all our actions are recorded by our minds.

The Ummah is therefore, a global community of responsible people because they are a global community of self-disciplined and super-conscious people.

d) To Develop our Will Power and Endurance

A person who is fasting is unlike a person who is suffering from enforced starvation. We choose to fast, but we do not choose to starve or to suffer from enforced starvation. We choose to fast but we do not choose to starve or to suffer from malnutrition.

The decision, the niyyah, the willing participation in the collective 'Ibaadah requires resolution. This is a demonstration of will-power, and a decision of this nature ensures that we develop endurance to hardships. We become tempered like steel in fire.

This realisation that we have an inner strength, which if called upon, will always serve us well. The spirit of man always rises to the occasion. Note that this is one of the main reasons why Islam is still in force in Southern Africa, and in the world at large.

Muslims never abandon their obligations and commitments for Allah requires of us:

'O ye who believe! When ye meet a force be firm; and call Allah in remembrance much (and often); that ye may prosper, and obey Allah and His Rasul and fall into no disputes, lest ye lose heart and your power depart; AND BE PATIENT AND PERSEVERING: FOR ALLAH IS WITH THOSE WHO PATIENTLY PERSEVERE'

[Qur'an 8:45-46]

'O ye who believe! Fear Allah with His due fear and die not save as Muslims.'

[Qur'an 3:102]

e) We Fast in Order to Develop Noble Qualities

By fasting everyone in the global Ummah comes to understand the true nature of this unique brotherhood. At the same time those that have never known hunger come to understand the reality of hunger. Hunger then ceases to be a statistic or a report in a newspaper.

But this does not mean that Muslims **automatically** understand starvation and malnutrition. For at sunset we are assured of food and drink. But the person who is starving does not know when he'll have his next meal; and the person who suffers from malnutrition won't ever recover from the damages suffered.

Muslims, therefore, should not allow any human being to go without food for more than 12 hours. And we cannot allow nor tolerate that starvation and malnutrition occur over large areas of the world while a minority of the world's population is wallowing in vanities and luxury.

If Ramadhan be a month of truth, of refinement of character, of compassion, of kindness, of consideration and generosity then our compassion, kindness, consideration and generosity must be geared to eradicate hunger, starvation and malnutrition.

f) Fasting is a Gauge to Test our Emaan

By fasting, the integrity of the individual is established. In other words, he gauges his own sincerity and commitment. And this degree of sincerity must reach the stage where we can proudly be of those who execute the demands of the following ayah:

'O ye who believe! Stand out firmly for justice, as witnesses to Allah, even as against yourselves, or your parents, or your kin, and whether it be (against) rich or poor; for Allah can best protect both.'

[Qur'an 4:135]

Emaan cannot remain a closed personal secret. Sooner or later it attracts attention, although it never advertises. The question is bound to be asked: What type of people are these who pray five times per day, don't drink, don't gamble, don't take or pay ribah, don't oppress and neither allow themselves to be oppressed? And on top of this they stay without food, water and pleasure for 29 to 30 days from dawn to sunset?

The answer is - these are Muslims and there are no other people like them for Allah describes them as:

'Ye are the best of peoples evolved for mankind, enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong, and believing in Allah.'

[Qur'an 3:110]

g) Fasting is an Efficient Method of Collective Training

In Islam we strive to achieve personal security by establishing collective security. This implies that Muslims are organised in such a way that they do collectively what they are trained for individually.

Concepts in Islam like Jama'a, Zakaah, Sadaqah and Hajj all emphasize the fact that humans are social beings. Therefore, the most important aspect of education in Islam is that it teaches human beings how to live with other human beings. This aspect of education is known as 'fard ain' i.e. knowledge, understanding and obligations which must be performed by **everybody in the ummah**.

In Western society they have failed in this respect and that is why

corruption, conceit, vulgarity and selfishness is the order of the day.

In performing Salaah, in giving Zakaah, during Jumu'ah and especially during Ramadhan, we get the opportunity to set **the global training camp of the ummah** into top gear. And this global training camp must produce the type of people of who the Qur'an says:

'O ye who believe! Fight the Unbelievers who gird you about and let them find firmness in you: And know that Allah is with those who fear Him.

[Qur'an 9:123]

h) Ramadhan - The Month of High Intensity Training

In everything that man does he experiences fluctuations. There are times when he performs exceptionally well, and there are times when his performance is not up to scratch. This happens to athletes, to typists, to architects, to housewives and scientists.

Now if we can establish under what conditions we give our best performances then we can repeat these performances. Ramadhan - as we have already pointed out - is the month for such high intensity training during which we work in the best possible conditions for making us aware of our 'Ibaadah. And by 'Ibaadah we mean ceaseless and continuous super-conscious action in the Cause of Islam.

During Ramadhan we wake up earlier than usual; stay without food and water for longer than usual; spend more time in Salaah than usual; become more conscious of our obligations than usual; engage in less vain talk than usual and recite Qur'an more than usual. The most important lesson we learn from this is that we must at all times be prepared to 'travel another mile'. Which means that our best is never the best; there is always room for improvement. And this we can only do if we exert ourselves to the utmost.

A long distance runner who practices by running 20km will have no difficulty in running 10km. For these people everything that they do becomes easy because they go through periods of high intensity training.

The 60 year old man, therefore, who started fasting at the age of 10 will have had 1500 days (about 3 years) of high intensity training. He might not be aware of this, but the person who did not undergo such training cannot be his equal in terms of self-discipline, endurance, sacrifice, preparedness and general level of consciousness.

We have stressed time and again that no army can go into battle without discipline, training, co-ordination and high morale. If we are the Mujahideen that Islam requires and prepares, then we must take Ramadhan very seriously.

CONCLUSION

The time to train is **now**: the time to learn self-defence is **now**; the time to co-ordinate our action is **now**; and the time to mobilize the Ummah is **now**.

And we repeat for the sake of those who hear but do not listen; for those who listen but do not understand; and for those who know but do not enact:

‘Leave those alone who take their deen to be mere play and amusement, and are deceived by the life of this world. But proclaim (to them) this (Truth); that every soul delivers itself to ruin by its own acts.’

[Qur’an 6:70]

‘O ye who believe! When ye meet a force be firm, and call Allah in remembrance much (and often); that ye may prosper: and obey Allah and His Rasul; and fall into no disputes, lest ye lose heart and your power depart; and be patient and persevering for Allah is with those who patiently persevere.’

[Qur’an 8:45]

Insha’Allah! The clarion call of the Athaan will be sounded on the first day of Ramadhan and that is the call which leads every Muslim in the land to his Qibla - and **we all have one goal!**

Once on the advent of Ramadhan, Rasullulah (SAW) delivered the following Khutbah:-

‘O People! the month (Ramadhan) of Allah has come with His mercies, blessings and forgiveness. Allah has decreed this month the best of all months. Its days are the best among the days, its nights are the best among the nights and its hours are the best among the hours. This is a month in which you have been invited by Him (to fast and to pray). Allah has honoured you in it. In it, every breath you take is (has the reward of) ‘Tasbih’ (the praise of Allah), your sleep is worship, your good deeds are accepted and your invocations answered.

‘Therefore, you must invoke your Lord in right earnest with hearts that are free from sin and evil, and pray that Allah may help you to keep fasts, and to recite the Holy Qur’an. Indeed! miserable is the one who is deprived of Allah’s forgiveness in this great month. While fasting, remember the hunger and thirst on the Day of Judgement. Give alms to the poor and the needy. Pay respect to your elders, have sympathy for your youngsters and be kind towards your relatives and kinsmen. Guard your tongue against unworthy words, and your eyes from scenes that are not worth seeing (forbidden) and your ears from sounds that should not be heard.

'Be kind to orphans so that if your children become orphans, they will also be treated with kindness. Do repent to Allah for your sins and supplicate with raised hands at the times of prayer as these are the best times, during which Almighty Allah looks at His servants with mercy, (He) Answers if they supplicate, Responds if they call, Grants if they ask, and Accepts if they entreat.

'O people! you have made your conscience the slave of your desires. Make it free, by invoking Him for forgiveness. Your back is breaking under the heavy load of your sins, so prostrate yourself before Him for long intervals and make it lighter.

'Do understand fully well that Allah has promised in the name of His Majesty and Honour that He will not take to task such people who perform Salaah and Sajda (prostration), and that He will guard their bodies against the fire of hell on the Day of Judgement.

'O people! if anybody amongst you arranges for the iftar (food for ending of fast at sunset) of any believers, then Allah will give him the reward as if he had set free a slave, and He will forgive his previous sins.'

Then the companions of the Prophet (SAW) asked:

'But everybody amongst us does not have the means to do so.'

The Prophet replied:

'Keep yourself away from the fire of hell, though it may consist of only half a date or even some water if you have nothing else.

'O people! anybody who in this month cultivates good manners, will walk over the Sirat (bridge leading to Paradise) on the day when feet will tend to slip.

'Anybody who in this month may take light work from his servants, Allah will make easy his accounting, and anybody who does not annoy others in it, Allah will keep him safe from His wrath on the Day of Judgement. Anybody who respects and treats an orphan with kindness in it, Allah shall look at him with kindness on that Day.

'Anybody who treats well his kinsmen in it, Allah will bestow His Mercy on him on the Day of Judgement, while anybody who maltreats his kinsmen in it, Allah will keep him away from His Mercy.

'Whoever offers recommended prayers in it, Allah will save him from hell, and whoever serves in it obligatories, his reward will be that of seven such obligatories that were observed in other months.

'Whoever recites repeatedly blessings (Salawaat) on me in it, Allah will keep the scales of his good deeds heavy (on Judgement Day) whilst the scales of others will be tending to lightness. Whoever recites in this month, an Ayah (verse) of the Holy Qur'an, his reward will be that of reciting the whole Qur'an in other months.

‘O people! the gates of Paradise remain open in this month. Do pray to your Lord that they may not be closed for you. While the gates of Hell are closed, do pray to your Lord they may never be opened for you. Satans have been handcuffed, invoke your Lord not to let them dominate you.’

Amir Al-Mu'mineen Ali (a.s.) said:

'I asked, "O Messenger of Allah, what is the best of deeds in this month?" He replied: "O Abu'l Hassan, the best of deeds in this month is to be far from what Allah has forbidden."

[Sheikh Saduq-Uyun Akhbar ar-Rhida]

SELECTED DU'AHs

It is recommended to recite the following two supplications after every prayer during Ramadhan

يَا عَلِيُّ يَا عَظِيمُ يَا غَفُورُ يَا رَحِيمُ أَنْتَ الرَّبُّ الْعَظِيمُ الَّذِي لَيْسَ
كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ وَهَذَا شَهْرُ شَرَفِهِ وَعَظَمَتِهِ وَكَرَمَتِهِ
وَقُضِيَّتِهِ عَلَى الشُّهُورِ وَهُوَ الشَّهْرُ الَّذِي قَرَضْتَ صِيَامَهُ عَلَيَّ وَهُوَ شَهْرُ
رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنْزِلَتْ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ هُدًى لِلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِنَ الْهُدَى
وَالْفُرْقَانِ وَجَعَلْتَ فِيهِ لَيْلَةَ الْقَدْرِ وَجَعَلْتَهَا خَيْرًا مِنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ فَإِذَا أَلَمِنَ
وَلَا يُمْنُ عَلَيْكَ مِنْ عَلَيَّ بِفِكَالِكَ رَقِّنِي مِنَ النَّارِ فَيَمْنُ تُمْرُ عَمَلِيهِ
وَأَدْخِلْنِي الْجَنَّةَ بِرَحْمَتِكَ يَا أَرْحَمَ الرَّاحِمِينَ

‘O High, O Great, O Forgiver, O Merciful, You are the Great Lord, Whom nothing can resemble, and is All-Hearing, All-Seeing. And this is the month which You have honoured, exalted, glorified and excelled over other months. And it is the month in which You prescribed fasting for me. And it is the month of Ramadhan, in which You sent down the Qur’an as a guidance to people, and clear signs of guidance and Furqan (distinction between right and wrong). And You have made in it the Night of Qadr, and made it better than a thousand months. O One Who favours all and is favoured by none, favour me from Hell as You have favoured others. Admit me into Paradise through Your Mercy. O Most Merciful of the Merciful.’

اللَّهُمَّ ادْخِلْ عَلَى أَهْلِ الْقُبُورِ السُّرُورَ اللَّهُمَّ اغْنِ كُلَّ فَقِيرٍ اللَّهُمَّ
 اشْبِعْ كُلَّ جَائِعٍ اللَّهُمَّ اكْسُ كُلَّ غَرَبَانٍ اللَّهُمَّ أَقْضِ ذَيْنَ كُلِّ مَدِينٍ
 اللَّهُمَّ فَرِّجْ عَنْ كُلِّ مَكْرُوبٍ اللَّهُمَّ رُدِّ كُلَّ غَرِيبٍ اللَّهُمَّ فَكِّ كُلِّ أَسِيرٍ
 اللَّهُمَّ اضْلِعْ كُلَّ فَاسِدٍ مِنْ أُمُورِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ اللَّهُمَّ أَشْفِ كُلَّ مَرِيضٍ
 اللَّهُمَّ سُدِّ فَقْرَنَا بِعَنَّاكَ اللَّهُمَّ غَيِّرْ سَوْءَ حَالِنَا بِحُسْنِ حَالِكَ اللَّهُمَّ أَقْضِ
 غَنَا الدَّيْنَ وَأَغْنِنَا مِنَ الْفَقْرِ إِنَّكَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

'O Allah, let happiness enter (the hearts of) those who dwell in the graves;
 O Allah, grant affluence to all the poor;
 O Allah, satisfy the hunger of all the hungry ones;
 O Allah, clothe all the naked ones;
 O Allah, help all debtors to pay their debts;
 O Allah, relieve the sufferings of all those in distress;
 O Allah, straighten out all the defects (that have developed) in the affairs of Muslims;
 O Allah, restore to health all those who are sick;
 O Allah, ease our poverty by Your (unlimited) wealth;
 O Allah, change our difficult state by the excellence of Your state;
 O Allah, help us to pay our debts and free us from poverty.
 Surely, You are able over everything.'

It is also recommended to recite the following supplications which for the benefit of our readers have been classified according to each day of Ramadhan.

FIRST DAY

اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْ صِيَامِي فِيهِ صِيَامَ الصَّائِمِينَ وَهَبْ لِي جُزْمِي فِيهِ يَا إِلَهَ
 الْعَالَمِينَ وَاعْفُ عَنِّي يَا عَافِيَا عَنِ الْمُجْرِمِينَ

'O Allah, accept my fast in it (Ramadhan) as the fast of those whose fast (is acceptable to You.) Forgive my sins in it, O the Lord of the Universe. Pardon me, O the Pardoner of sinners.'

SECOND DAY

اَللّٰهُمَّ قَرِّبْنِيْ فِيْهِ اِلَى مَرْضَاتِكَ وَجَتَّبْنِيْ فِيْهِ سَخَطَكَ وَنِقَمَاتِكَ
وَوَفِّقْنِيْ فِيْهِ لِقَاءَ اَبَاتِكَ بِرَحْمَتِكَ يَا اَرْحَمَ الرَّاحِمِيْنَ

‘O Allah, in it bring me near Your good pleasure and keep me away from Your anger and displeasure. Guide me to recite Your revelation (the Qur’an) through Your Mercy, O, the Most Merciful One.’

THIRD DAY

اَللّٰهُمَّ اَرْزُقْنِيْ فِيْهِ الذَّهْنَ وَالتَّنْبِيْهَ وَابْعِدْنِيْ فِيْهِ مِنَ السَّفَاهَةِ
وَالنَّمُوْهِ وَاجْعَلْ لِّيْ نَصِيْبًا فِيْ كُلِّ خَيْرٍ اَنْزَلْتَهُ فِيْهِ يَا اَجْوَدَ الْاَجْوَدِيْنَ

‘O Allah, in it grant me wisdom and awareness. Keep me away from ignorance and pretension. Award me a share from all the blessings that You bestowed in it (Ramadhan); O the Most benevolent of all benevolents.’

FOURTH DAY

اَللّٰهُمَّ قَوِّنِيْ فِيْهِ عَلَى اَمْرِكَ وَاَوْزِعْنِيْ لَادَاءِ شُكْرِكَ بِكَرَمِكَ
وَاحْفَظْنِيْ بِحِفْظِكَ وَسِتْرِكَ يَا اَبْصَرَ النَّاظِرِيْنَ

‘O Allah, give me strength to observe Your orders. Encourage me through Your kindness to thank You. Keep me under Your protection: O One Who seeks everything.’

FIFTH DAY

اَللّٰهُمَّ اجْعَلْنِيْ فِيْهِ مِنَ الْمُسْتَغْفِرِيْنَ وَاجْعَلْنِيْ فِيْهِ مِنْ عِبَادِكَ
الصّٰلِحِيْنَ وَاجْعَلْنِيْ فِيْهِ مِنْ اَوْلِيَائِكَ الْمُتَّقِيْنَ بِرَأْفَتِكَ
يَا اَكْرَمَ الْاَكْرَمِيْنَ

'O Allah, place me in it among the ranks of the repenters, and make me among Your good servants. Make me one of Your pious devotees through Your Mercy; O Most Generous of the Generous.'

SIXTH DAY

اللَّهُمَّ لَا تَخَذُلْنِي لِتَعَرُّضِ مَعَاصِيكَ وَأَعِزَّنِي مِنْ سَيَاطِئِ نِقَمَتِكَ
وَمَهَاطِيكَ وَأَجِرْنِي مِنْ مُوجِبَاتِ سَخَطِكَ بِمَتَكَ وَأَيَادِكَ يَا مُنْتَهَى
رَغْبَةِ الرَّاعِبِينَ

'O Allah, do not abandon me to be overcome by sins. Grant me refuge from Your wrath and anger. I appeal to Your kindness and bounty; O the last refuge for those who crave for help.'

SEVENTH DAY

اللَّهُمَّ أَعِنِّي عَلَى صِيَامِهِ وَفِيَامِهِ وَجَنِّبْنِي فِيهِ مِنْ هَفَوَاتِهِ وَآثَامِهِ
وَارْزُقْنِي ذِكْرَكَ وَشُكْرَكَ بِدَوَامِ هِدَايَتِكَ يَا هَادِيَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

'O Allah, help me to keep fasts and to offer prayers in this (month). Protect me in it from errors and sins. Bestow on me Your remembrance and thanks through Your continuous guidance. O Guide of the Believers.'

EIGHT DAY

اللَّهُمَّ ارْزُقْنِي فِيهِ رَحْمَةَ الْأَيْتَامِ وَإِطْعَامَ الْقَطْعَامِ وَإِفْشَاءَ السَّلَامِ
وَارْزُقْنِي فِيهِ صُحْبَةَ الْكِرَامِ وَمُجَانَبَةَ اللَّسَامِ بِظُلْمِكَ يَا أَمَلُ الْآمِلِينَ

'O Allah, make me kind towards orphans and to feed the hungry and say greetings. And grant me the company of the righteous and to shun the evil-doers through Your benevolence. O Hope of the hopeful.'

NINTH DAY

اَللّٰهُمَّ اجْعَلْ لِيْ فِيْهِ نَصِيْبًا مِّنْ رَّحْمَتِكَ الْوَاسِعَةِ وَاَهْدِنِيْ فِيْهِ
بِرَآهِمِكَ الْقَاطِعَةِ وَخُذْ بِنَاصِيَّتِيْ اِلَى مَرْضَاتِكَ الْجَامِعَةِ بِمَعْنِكَ
يَا اَقْلَ الْمُتَنَاقِيْنَ

‘O Allah, bestow on me a share out of Your ample Mercy. Guide me to understand Your clear proofs and lead me towards Your good pleasure through Your love. O Hope of the seekers.’

TENTH DAY

اَللّٰهُمَّ اجْعَلْنِيْ فِيْهِ مِّنَ الْمُتَوَكِّلِيْنَ عَلَيْكَ الْفَائِزِيْنَ لَدَيْكَ الْمُقَرَّبِيْنَ
اِلَيْكَ يَا غَايَةَ الْقَاطِلِيْنَ

‘O Allah, make me among those who trust You, successful in Your estimation, near to You. O Besought of the beseechers.’

ELEVENTH DAY

اَللّٰهُمَّ حَبِّبْ لِيْ فِيْهِ الْاِحْسَانَ وَكَرِهْ لِيْ فِيْهِ الْفُسُوْقَ وَالْعِصْيَانَ
وَحَرِّمْ عَلَيَّ فِيْهِ السَّخَطَ وَالتَّبْرَانَ بِقُوَّتِكَ يَا غَوْثَ الْمُسْتَغِيثِيْنَ

‘O Allah, incline me towards good deeds and make me to dislike transgression and disobedience. Protect me from Your wrath and the fire through Your power. O the Support of those who seek help.’

TWELFTH DAY

اللَّهُمَّ ارْزُقْنِي فِيهِ السَّرَّ وَالْعَفَافَ وَالْإِسْنِي فِيهِ لِبَاسَ الْقُنُوعِ
وَالْكَفَافِ وَنَجِّنِي فِيهِ مِمَّا أَخَذَرُوا أَخَافَ بِعِصْمَتِكَ يَا عِصْمَةَ الْخَائِفِينَ

‘O Allah, grant me refuge and chastity in it, and make me contented, and save me from what I fear through Your protection. O Shelter of the scared.’

THIRTEENTH DAY

اللَّهُمَّ ظَهِّرْني فِيهِ مِنَ الدَّنَسِ وَالْأَفْدَارِ وَصَبِّرْني عَلَى كَائِنَاتِ
الْأَفْدَارِ وَوَفِّقْني لِلتَّقَى وَصُحْبَةِ الْأَبْرَارِ بِعَوْنِكَ يَا قَرَّةَ عَيْنِ الْمَسَاكِينِ

‘O Allah, cleanse me of all impurities and foul practices, give me the strength to bear all the events ordained by You. Guide me towards piety and the company of the good-doers through Your sustenance. O the Comforter of the eyes of the destitute.’

FOURTEENTH DAY

اللَّهُمَّ لَا تُؤَاخِذْني فِيهِ بِالْعَثَرَاتِ وَأَقِلْني فِيهِ مِنَ الْخَطِيئَاتِ
وَالْهَفَوَاتِ وَلَا تَجْعَلْني غَرَضًا لِلْبَلَاءِ وَالْآفَاتِ بِعِزِّكَ يَا عِزَّ الْمُسْلِمِينَ

‘O Allah, do not take me to task for my errors. Pardon my sins and unspeakable deeds. Let me not be the target of evil and vicissitudes through Your honour. O One Who honours Muslims.’

FIFTEENTH DAY

اللَّهُمَّ ارْزُقْني فِيهِ طَاعَةَ الْعَابِدِينَ وَاشْرَحْ فِيهِ صَدْرِي بِإِنَايَةِ الْمُخْبِتِينَ
يَا أَمَانَ الْخَائِفِينَ

‘O Allah, bestow on me the sincerity of the worshippers. Expand my breast for sincere repentance. O Shelter of the scared.’

SIXTEENTH DAY

اَللّٰهُمَّ اهْدِنِيْ فِيْهِ لِعَمَلِ الْاَبْرَارِ وَجَنِّبْنِيْ فِيْهِ مُرَافَقَةَ الْاَشْرَارِ وَاَدْخِلْنِيْ
فِيْهِ بِرَحْمَتِكَ دَارَ الْقَرَارِ يَا هَيْتَكَ يَا اِلَهَ الْعَالَمِيْنَ

‘O Allah, guide me towards the deed of the righteous people and keep me away from the company of the wicked. Admit me by Your mercy to the permanent abode, through Your Divinity. O Lord of the Universe.’

SEVENTEENTH DAY

اَللّٰهُمَّ اهْدِنِيْ فِيْهِ لِصَالِحِ الْاَعْمَالِ وَاَقْضِ لِيْ فِيْهِ الْحَوَائِجَ وَالْاَمَالَ
يَا مَنْ لَا يَخْتَاجُ اِلَى السَّوَالِ يَا عَالِمًا يَا فِي صُدُوْرِ الْعَالَمِيْنَ

‘O Allah, guide me towards good deeds. Grant my needs and wants. O One Who needs no reminders. O One Who is aware of what passes in the hearts of the beings.’

EIGHTEENTH DAY

اَللّٰهُمَّ تَبَهِّئْ فِيْهِ لِبَرَكَاتِ اَسْحَارِهِ وَنَوْرِ قَلْبِيْ بِضِيَاءِ اَنْوَارِهِ وَخُذْ
بِكُلِّ اَعْضَائِيْ اِلَى اَتْبَاعِ اَنْارِهِ يَا مُنَوِّرَ قُلُوْبِ الْعَارِفِيْنَ

‘O Allah, awake me up to get the blessings of its Suhour (before the formal start of a fast) and fill my heart with its lights. Make all my organs to follow its obligatories. O One Who enlightens the hearts of the knowing people.’

NINETEENTH DAY

اَللّٰهُمَّ وَفِّرْ حَظِّي بِبَرَكَاتِهِ وَسَهِّلْ سَبِيْلِيْ اِلَىٰ خَيْرَاتِهِ وَلَا تَحْرِمْنيْ
قَبُوْلَ حَسَنَاتِهِ يَا هَادِيًا اِلَى الْحَقِّ الْمُبِيْنِ

‘O Allah, Let me have an ample share of (this month’s) blessings, and make easy for me the path of righteousness and deprive me not of its bounties. O One Who guides to the right path.

TWENTIETH DAY

اَللّٰهُمَّ افْتَحْ لِيْ فِيْهِ اَبْوَابَ الْجَنّٰنِ وَاغْلِقْ عَنِّي الْبَرَآئَةَ وَوَقِّفْنِيْ فِيْهِ
لِتِلَاوَةِ الْقُرْآنِ يَا مُزَكِّ السَّكِيْنَةِ فِي قُلُوْبِ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ

‘O Allah, open for me in (this month) the gates of paradise and close the gates of hell. Give me strength to recite the Qur’an. O One Who brings satisfaction to the hearts of the believers..’

TWENTY FIRST DAY

اَللّٰهُمَّ اجْعَلْ لِيْ فِيْهِ اِلَىٰ مَرْضَاتِكَ ذَلِيْلًا وَلَا تَجْعَلْ عَلَيَّ فِيْهِ
لِلشَّيْطَانِ سَبِيْلًا يَا قَاضِي حَوَائِجِ السَّآئِلِيْنَ

‘O Allah, lead me in (this month) to win Your good pleasure and not let the devil have access to me in it. O One Who fulfils the needs of the needy.’

TWENTY SECOND DAY

اَللّٰهُمَّ افْتَحْ لِيْ فِيْهِ اَبْوَابَ فَضْلِكَ وَاَنْزِلْ عَلَيَّ فِيْهِ بَرَكَاتِكَ وَوَقِّفْنِيْ
فِيْهِ لِمَوْجِبَاتِ مَرْضَاتِكَ وَاَسْكِنْنِيْ فِيْهِ بُحْبُوْعَةَ جَنّٰتِكَ يَا مُجِيْبَ دَعْوَةِ
الْمُضْطَرِّيْنَ

‘O Allah, open for me in (this month) the Gates of your bounty and bestow on me Your blessings. Encourage me to gain Your pleasure and admit me to enter Your paradise. O One Who answers the supplication of the oppressed.’

TWENTY THIRD DAY

اللَّهُمَّ اغْسِلْنِي فِيهِ مِنَ الذُّنُوبِ وَطَهِّرْنِي فِيهِ مِنَ الْعُيُوبِ وَاَفْتَحْنِي فِيهِ
قَلْبِي بِتَقْوَى الْقُلُوبِ يَا مُقِيلَ عَثَرَاتِ الْمُذْنِبِينَ

‘O Allah, cleanse me in (this month) of all sins and purify me from all defects. Test my heart and see if I abstain from what is forbidden. O One Who overlooks the shortcomings of the sinners.

TWENTY FOURTH DAY

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ فِيهِ مَا يُرْضِيكَ وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ فِيهِ مِمَّا يُؤْذِيكَ بِأَنْ
أُطِيعَكَ وَلَا أَغْصِبَكَ يَا عَالِمًا بِمَا فِي صُدُورِ الْعَالَمِينَ

O Allah (this month) I beg for that which pleases You and for protection against that which displeases You. Teach me to obey Your commands and refrain from disobedience. O One Who is aware of what passes in the hearts of the beings.’

TWENTY FIFTH DAY

اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْنِي مُحِبًّا لِأَوْلِيَايَكَ وَمُعَادِيًّا لِأَعْدَائِكَ وَمُتِمِّتًا بِسُنَّةِ
خَاتَمِ أَنْبِيَائِكَ يَا عَظِيمًا فِي قُلُوبِ النَّبِيِّينَ

‘O Allah, make me love those close to You and an enemy of those who are Your enemies. Make me follow in the footsteps of the last Prophet (SAW). O the Exalted in the hearts of all the prophets.’

TWENTY SIXTH DAY

اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْ سَعْيِي فِيهِ مَشْكُوراً وَذَنْبِي فِيهِ مَغْفُوراً وَعَمَلِي فِيهِ مَقْبُولاً
وَعَنِي فِيهِ مَسْتوراً يَا أَسْمَعَ السَّامِعِينَ

‘O Allah, let my good efforts in this month be fruitful and my sins pardoned and my actions accepted and my defects concealed. O the Most Hearing.’

TWENTY SEVENTH DAY

اللَّهُمَّ وَفِّرْ حَظِّي فِيهِ مِنَ النَّوَافِلِ وَأَكْرِمْني فِيهِ بِإِخْصَارِ الْأَخْرَازِ مِنَ
الْمَسَائِلَةِ وَقَرِّبْ وَسْبِلِي إِلَيْكَ مِنْ بَيْنِ الْوَسَائِلِ يَا مَنْ لَا يَشْغَلُهُ الْحَاجُّ
الْمُلْتَاحِينَ

‘O Allah, let me make a greater effort to Nawafil (recommended prayers) in this month. Grant me through Your kindness to do good deeds which save me on the Judgement Day. Guide me to the best means which lead me towards You. O One Who doesn’t get bored from the insistence of the supplicants.’

TWENTY EIGHTH DAY

اللَّهُمَّ غَشِّنِي فِيهِ بِالرَّحْمَةِ وَالتَّوْفِيقِ وَالْعِصْمَةِ وَطَهِّرْ قَلْبِي مِنْ عَائِبَاتِ
الشُّهْمَةِ يَا رَؤُوفاً بِعِبَادِهِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

‘O Allah in (this month) shower Your mercy upon me. Bestow on me Your Blessings and keep me away from sins. Cleanse my heart of all impurities. O One Who is Merciful on His believing servants.’

TWENTY NINTH DAY

اللَّهُمَّ ارْزُقْنِي فِيهِ لَيْلَةَ الْقَدْرِ وَصَبِّرْ لِي كُلَّ غَسِرٍ إِلَى يُسْرِ وَأَقْبَلِ
مَعَاذِيرِي وَحُظِّ عَنِّي الْوِزَرَ يَا رَحِيماً بِعِبَادِهِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

‘O Allah, bestow on me the blessings of the Night of Qadr. Let my difficulties and problems be overcome. Accept my repentance, free me from my sins and evil acts. O One Who is Merciful towards the virtuous.’

THIRTIETH DAY

اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْ صِيَامِي فِيهِ بِالشُّكْرِ وَالْقَبُولِ عَلَى مَا تَرْضَاهُ وَبِرِضَاهُ
الرَّسُولِ مُحْكَمَةً فِرْوَعَهُ بِالْأُصُولِ بِحَقِّ مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِهِ الطَّاهِرِينَ

‘O Allah, perfect my faults to the stage which is acceptable to You and to Your beloved Messenger, in a way that the results of my fasts may lead me to a life of purity and righteousness, for the sake of Muhammad (SAW) and his progeny.’

IMPORTANT EVENTS DURING RAMADHAN

EVENTS	DATES
1. The Ramadhan Fast prescribed. It was during this very first Ramadhan fast that the Holy Prophet and his companions fought their first major military battle; the Battle of Badr .	2 A.H. (623A.D.) 17 Ramadhan 2A.H. (623A.D.)
2. The death of Sayyidatunnisa Fatima	Ramadhan 11 A.A.H.. (632A.D.)
3. Conquest of Makkah	20 Ramadhan 8A.H. (629A.D.)
4. Martyrdom of Sayyidena Ali (R.A.)	21 Ramadhan 40A.H.(660A.D.)
5. Laylatul Qadr - ‘seek for the Night of Power in the odd-numbered nights of the last 10 nights of Ramadhan.’ (Hadith)	21 / 23 / 25 / 27 / 29 Ramadhan

EID MESSAGE:

THE INTELLECTUAL ROOTS OF THE OPPRESSED AND ISLAM'S TRIUMPH OVER APARTHEID

By Achmad Cassiem

*Dedicated to all the slaves, freed slaves and
the present generation of the oppressed who
keep the flame of liberation burning so that
we may establish a just social order.*

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious Most Merciful

INTELLECTUAL ROOTS OF THE OPPRESSED

INTRODUCTION

An in-depth analysis of the intellectual roots of the oppressed peoples in Southern Africa reveals the influence of three streams of thought - that is of three cultural patterns:

- I) The indigenous African culture, whether it be of the San, Khoi-Khoi, Xhosa, Zulu, etc.;
- II) The Western, colonial, capitalist, Christian influences that arrived with the conquerors and settlers;
- III) The influence of Islam that arrived with the political exiles and slaves.

In the majority of historical texts, the first two influences are not only acknowledged but even lauded. But the third influence seems to be totally ignored.

This third influence, when passing reference is made to it, is seen as Eastern or Malay but never as Islamic.

The emphasis then falls on food, dress, etc., all the superficial by-products of culture. The dynamics of ideas, values and ideals are never analysed in detail. And yet, we shall discover, these are by far the most important contributions of Islam to the oppressed people in this part of the African continent.

This revolutionary intellectual heritage of Islam can mean the difference between genuine revolutionary change and foreign power hegemony under various labels.

If this struggle of the oppressed people has a history then the Muslims are at the focal point of that history. They were enslaved and in exile whilst they were on board the ships of the conquerors. They arrived in chains whilst the indigenous Africans were still to be chained.

It is obvious that much of the history of the oppressed has been distorted by the oppressors; much has been ignored and a great deal has been reconstructed from the viewpoint of the conquerors. The slaves and the political exiles were already a cultural force in the world.

They had resisted European colonialism with armed force. And when they arrived at the Cape they were prepared to do so again. The revolutionary historical momentum in Azania can be accelerated by

cognisance of this fact - and by a real appreciation of the social dynamics of the ideology of the slaves.

Any sincere historian would therefore want to know the precise nature of this revolutionary ideology. Amongst all the oppressed people in Southern Africa, these slaves had the most dynamic revolutionary ideology, tested and enriched over many centuries and in various communities of oppressed peoples.

All the other ideologies of a liberatory nature still had to be articulated, formulated and propagated. But even at this early stage, the adherents of the revolutionary ideology of Islam faced a number of obstacles:

- I) **they were considered infidels**; that is, they were not Christians;
- II) **they were slaves**; that is, they had no rights;
- III) **they were not indigenous slaves**; they were political exiles;
- IV) **they were black**; that is, they were not Europeans.

DEATH SENTENCE

Now these oppressed people, as handicapped as they were, were so feared that the death sentence was imposed for propagating the ideology of Islam in public.

The colonialist conquerors feared these slaves because:

- I) **they had ideological clarity**, that is, they understood the dynamism of the ideology of Islam;
- II) **they were fearless**; this moral obligation to be fearless was and still is one of the most important obligations on its adherents;
- III) **they were experienced in liberatory warfare** against the colonialist conquerors in other parts of the world.

These three qualities in a landless, property-less, oppressed and exploited people were a formidable combination. And it is this same formidable combination that the present generation of oppressed people so sorely need.

At this moment we are governed as a conquered people because the conquerors control the government, the economy, the police and the army. No amount of eye-wash or euphemism can disguise this fact.

We are a nation of oppressed people and not a nation of oppressed and oppressor. The most important factor in the history of a conquered people is the ways and means that must be employed to liberate themselves. All other questions are of secondary importance.

Under no circumstances whatsoever have the conquerors by some magic formula become the liberators of the conquered. The perpetuation and the

tenacity of apartheid must dispel any illusions of a compromise with the conquerors.

If there are sections of the oppressed people who are willing to be misled by euphemisms - i.e. calling the conquerors settlers - then that is their problem.

The majority of the landless peasants, the dispossessed, the exploited and the oppressed are under no such illusions.

Racist inspired solutions are originated by racists for the benefit of racists. The only thing worse than white racism is white paternalism.

When we consider the ways and means of liberating ourselves we must not be drawn into controversies about the technical preparation for revolution, for there can be no technical preparation unless we are prepared psychologically, ideologically and politically for revolution.

Our duty as revolutionaries is **not** to assert our standpoint, but to **demonstrate** it. Broad general principles must be defined in terms of **daily political application** in the oppressive society. Islam as a revolutionary ideology, we said, does this in very precise and uncompromising terms. And this daily political application is daily **practical application**.

The so-called authority of the oppressors and exploiters must be negated. This can be done by theoretical analysis or by practical defiance, without an explicit ideological framework. Islam negates the 'authority' of all oppressors and exploiters by making the first part of the Kalimah one of negation.

This is immediately followed by affirmation of the authority of man's Creator only.

It is therefore correct to say that apartheid as a systematised form of oppression was negated even before it came into existence. But it was the practical negation which had to be demonstrated and still needs to be demonstrated.

The historical records of the Muslims show that the greatest resistance to colonialism was encountered in those countries inhabited by Muslims. And in the contemporary situation it is again the Muslims in Iran, Afghanistan, Palestine and Lebanon who are rising successfully against the super-powers.

What we are emphasising is that ideology, and especially the ideology of Islam, encourages and creates social consciousness, identity, solidarity and inspires positive action on a scale which no other ideology has done or can do.

Historians are fond of repeating the statement that we must look at the objective factors which in most cases simply means that when you do not agree with them then you are not being objective. Two important questions deserve our attention:

a) Why did Islam become the dominant revolutionary force in the 7th century?

b) Why has Islam become the dominant revolutionary force at the end of the 20th century?

ISLAM: LOST PROPERTY OF AZANIANS

What those who profess to be Muslim have lost is a **correct understanding** of Islam. Many know the letter of Islam but the spirit of Islam has been lost.

This has given rise to a host of 'Muslim academics.' We dare not call them 'academic Muslims' because the word Muslim does not require any adjective. It is the academics who have changed the word and concept Muslim from a noun-agent to an adjective. 'Muslim academic' therefore stresses the fact that they are first and foremost academics.

Muslims talk Islam and 'Muslim academics' talk **about** Islam. This is also the difference between those who merely read and write biographies of great revolutionaries but they themselves are not inspired by these revolutionaries.

Our aim is to show how the broad general principles of Islam are defined and implemented in daily political application in the oppressive society.

The thinking patterns of Muslims are unlike the thinking patterns of any other ideological unit. It follows that the behaviour pattern is also unlike the behaviour patterns of any other ideological unit. Let us look at two important examples.

ANTI-RACISM IN ACTION

Whereas all other ideological units take great pains to stress the fact that they are non-racial or multi-racial, Muslims do not even have to articulate this fact because the social realities in which they engage is sufficient evidence that they are anti-racist.

Since the arrival of the first Muslims as chained and shackled slaves in the holds of the conquerors' ships they have never once tried to combat racism with anything except anti-racism. True to their ideological commitment since then they have retained this anti-racist ideology in thought and in action. This means that any human being who responds positively to the ideology is welcome.

This is seen in admission to madressas and all other educational institutions; this is seen in the five times daily Salaah in the more than 200 Masajid in Azania; this is also seen in the defiance of the so-called Mixed Marriages Act. The state does not recognise Muslim marriages and Muslims see no necessity for having their marriages solemnized (desecrated?) by the oppressors.

In a very positive sense, Islam triumphs over apartheid, racism and racialism. Islam does not tolerate racism, nor does it advocate peaceful co-existence with racism. Neither does it ignore racism. Islam declares war against racism and racialism. This is more than a mere battle of words. As proof we offer Muslims as the only truly consolidated anti-racist force in the country. This has been historically maintained for 300 years because it is an **ideological unit** and not a nationality, tribe, race or class.

An important factor here is the sincerity of the people who embrace Islam. Many, after embracing Islam, have had to abandon their original residences (even though more privileged than the oppressed) and migrated in order to become part of the Ummah, the most dynamic ideologically oriented unit of the oppressed people.

Muslims have been doing this for three centuries in Azania and are still doing it. Now surely this has produced an ideological community that does not think with racist blinkers. Even multi-racism (many racists, racism multiplied) is a swear word amongst Muslims. If racism is absurd, then multi-racism is absurdity multiplied.

Because Muslims have **one** ideological textbook, **one** method, one Qibla and **one** destiny, they are of a necessity a united Ummah. Whoever disturbs this unity deliberately and maliciously, must find himself another ideological home outside the Ummah.

There are of course very prominent people in the community - usually university products - who are fussing and fuming because certain organisations and the leadership in such organisations are stressing the importance of Islam in combating racism, oppression and exploitation. These critics accuse these dedicated people of knowing nothing about the spiritual aspects of Islam. Let us categorically state that Muslims perform acts of justice **in order to develop spiritually**. They do not develop spiritually in order to perform acts of justice.

Now Islam's concept of anti-racism is revolutionary (especially in the Azanian situation) because:

- I) **It makes it a moral obligation on its adherents not to obey racist authorities and laws and it encourages all oppressed people to do the same;**
- II) **It goes to the assistance of any victim of racist oppression;**
- III) **It attacks and sets out to destroy and eradicate racism.**

We therefore submit that each and every attempt to bring together races as races is reactionary and is a betrayal of the revolutionary heritage of Azania.

ALCOHOLISM: UNDERMINING MORALE

Frustration is a great destroyer of revolutionary potential. Especially when a struggle for liberation not merely spreads over decades but centuries, there must be a cohesive cultural force which sustains that struggle.

Obviously, the more distinctive the cultural force is from that of the conquerors, oppressors and exploiters, the easier it is to prevent co-option and distortion of revolutionary values.

When one speaks about morale, many think that it only refers to a highly motivated fighting spirit. But morale also refers to discipline and confidence.

The greatest underminer and saboteur of discipline and confidence is alcoholism as well as so-called social drinking. No person can have intellectual independence if he is alcohol-dependent. No matter what the intellectual status or achievements of certain people are - the moment they become alcohol-dependent, they simply become drunks.

No amount of rationalisation is going to change the fact that alcohol is the curse of the oppressed people and a boon for the oppressors.

Not only is the oppressor making enormous profits from liquor but it also totally immobilizes and paralyses the critical faculties of the oppressed.

Ironically, even socialist countries are on the list of countries with alcoholism as a national problem.

If we are going to argue that the oppressed people drink because they are oppressed, then we can argue that they will remain oppressed if they continue drinking.

The slaves who arrived in the hold of the conquerors' ships were teetotallers **by ideological conviction**.

Their plight was such that if we justify drinking under our present conditions, then surely they had more reason to drink.

We submit, therefore, that it isn't only an obligation on Muslims to be teetotallers, it is **the revolutionary duty of all the oppressed people to refrain from:**

- I) Producing liquor ;
- II) Distributing liquor;
- III) Consuming liquor.

A drunk person is useless as a revolutionary; he becomes part of the problem instead of being part of the solution.

The wisdom of slaves is still the revolutionary heritage of Azania. And it is far more applicable now than it was then. Let us not then squander our revolutionary heritage because of sectarian and egoistic occupations.

An ideology must define the line between oppressor and oppressed; it must not only help identify the system of oppression, but it must also define the ideals for which the oppressed people are striving and provide the people with the methods of struggle in order to achieve these ideals.

The serious students of history and ideology will definitely ask the following questions:

- I) **Does Islam identify and critically analyse the problems facing the oppressed people in Azania?**
- II) **Does Islam portray and propagate an alternative social order to the ones popularised at the moment?**
- III) **Does Islam furnish the oppressed people with the method(s) of struggle in order to eradicate the present minority racist regime and to establish a just social order?**

Yes, Islam definitely provides this in very precise and practical terms.

The extra-parliamentary opposition of Islam is always revolutionary and never reformist. This cannot be otherwise because the ideological premises of all other ideologies are in direct contradiction to the Kalimah.

The Ummah is therefore in constant, persistent and perpetual conflict with all unjust social orders and ruling classes and the ideological perspective of Islam is such that it is of **immediate relevance** to the problems of the oppressed. It is, therefore, literally the Deen of the oppressed.

And it was as the Deen of the oppressed that Islam first made its impact on the soil of Southern Africa.

The mere existence of haves and have-nots has never and will never bring about a revolution. Ideology, as the most important weapon of the oppressed, conscientises them. That is, it makes the oppressed people aware of the conflicts and contradictions between truth and falsehood and incites them to social action in the cause of truth.

Only those who suffer from enforced intellectual paralysis or choose to be intellectually paralyzed are incapable of distinguishing truth from falsehood.

TUAN GURU AND THE SUNNAH

When Tuan Guru² wrote the Qur'an from memory, whilst imprisoned on Robben Island for 11 years, he was following the same revolutionary tradition (Sunnah) that started with the founder of the Ummah.

All things begin with knowledge, for nothing can start or be achieved with ignorance. Hence Iqraa! Islam begins with knowledge.

And on the release of Tuan Guru from Robben Island he immediately organised a Madressa (that is, an ideological school) for slaves and 'freed' slaves in Dorp Street, Cape Town.

Yet, today many of our ideological schools (madressas) have become institutions not for producing revolutionaries, but for reproducing the knowledge of the teacher. The first people therefore who are squandering the revolutionary heritage of Islam are the Muslims themselves.

The same Qur'an that produced the giants in world history like Hazrat Ali (RA), Imam Husain (RA), and more recently, Syed Qutb, Ali Shariati and Imam Khomeini (to name but a few), must produce our giants. Where then are the flowers of our ideological schools?

² **Imam 'Abdullah ibn Kadi [Qadri] Abdus Salaam**, known as Tuan Guru, was a political captive held on Robben Island. He was born in 1712, a Prince from Tidore in the Ternate Islands [of Indonesia]. His geneology is traced to the Sultan of Morocco and his ancestry to that of the holy Prophet Muhammad [salla Allahu 'alayhi wa sallam]. He was brought to the Cape on April 06, 1780 as a "state prisoner" along with several others by the Dutch colonial powers. Tuan Guru was a pioneer among the Cape 'ulema being the first qadi to settle at the Cape of Good Hope, as well as founding the Awal Masjid i.e. the first mosque in the area.

None of the great men mentioned above ignored the social, political and economic conditions of their times. It was because they were so concerned with those conditions and became involved with the issues confronting the oppressed people that they became great leaders and outstanding Muslims, even martyred in the cause.

The present Imams and Sheikhs must realise that Islam has a revolutionary tradition, a magnificent heritage which cannot be allowed to be squandered, wasted and ignored. If they do have ideological proficiency then it is their duty to supervise and monitor the proper and correct implementation of the ideology of Islam.

Ideological clarity and proficiency therefore means clarity and proficiency in our methods of struggle. In Islam, to know means to know **how to do!**

HERITAGE OF THE SLAVES

The intellectual roots of the oppressed in Azania do not stem from the 18th and 19th century ideologies of Europe but from the intellectual heritage of the slaves. And the heritage of the slaves is Islam.

Islam, the Deen of the oppressed, is the ideology of liberation against which any other 'isms' pales into insignificance. These 'isms' are no threat to Muslims at all - they are only of nuisance value.

Islam, the revolutionary heritage of Azania is the heritage of all the oppressed people in Azania - the dead, the living, and the unborn.

A community whose members are sober from birth to death, seekers of knowledge from birth to death, who prefer truth to falsehood at all times, and who invite to martyrdom rather than survivalism, is already a liberated community.

We humbly submit that this Ummah, the global community of truth, action and justice is the vanguard of the oppressed. This ideological unit has been sharpened, tested and steeled over centuries - uncompromising against the enemy and compassionate amongst the oppressed.

The new social order is already being developed in embryo but unless we remove the pious frauds from the mimbars and mihrabs, our heritage - the heritage of the oppressed - is being defiled and misappropriated.

The dawn of the Islamic Revolution in Azania is on the agenda of the oppressed and there are many forces - racists, Zionists and imperialists - who dread the rise of Islam in Azania.

As for the members of this unique ideological unit, they welcome the opportunity to serve the Cause of Allah and the Cause of the oppressed for struggle in Islam is the practical means for purifying the ranks of the Ummah.

ISLAM'S TRIUMPH OVER APARTHEID

INTRODUCTION

It is yesterday's racists who are celebrating the arrival of the new South Africa. What they should be celebrating is their newly found sanity.

The oppressed people have nothing to celebrate. And the celebrations must end not with a bang but with a whimper; the whimper of those upholding a lost cause.

The Eid celebration is the climax of a month of sacrifice, self discipline, training and co-ordination. It has been aptly described as a month of high intensity training. We certainly appreciate that there is always reason to celebrate a genuine achievement, a genuine victory.

The most striking aspect of the Eid celebrations is the exuberant spontaneity and enthusiasm with which it is anticipated and enjoyed. And yet in an oppressive Jahili environment like ours the question immediately arises: How do we find it possible to celebrate at all?

WHY MUSLIMS REJOICE

'Allah hath purchased of the believers their persons and their goods; for theirs (in return) is the Garden (of Paradise): they fight in His Cause, and slay and are slain: a promise binding on Him in Truth, through the Law, the Gospel, and the Qur'an: and who is more faithful to his Covenant than Allah? THEN REJOICE IN THE BARGAIN WHICH YE HAVE CONCLUDED: THAT IS THE ACHIEVEMENT SUPREME.'

[Qur'an 9:111]

During the month of Ramadhan, Muslims were fully engaged in 'Ibaadah, that is, ceaseless and continuous super-conscious action in the Cause of Islam. How is this at all possible in an environment which is distinguished for degradation, brutalisation and dehumanisation?

The answer lies In the nature of the Message and the Method of Islam. Let us have a critical glance at Islam in this Jahili environment.

THE UMMAH VERSUS RACISM

The most obvious factor about the system of oppression in this country is its Racist and Racialistic ideology. Or should we rather call it a non-ideology because an ideology at least consists of ideas, ideals and values!

Islam, on the contrary, is anti-racist; it definitely does not tolerate racism, neither does it espouse peaceful co-existence with racism, nor does it ignore racism. Islam has declared war against racism and therefore it is not merely non-racist but anti-racist. In other words we do something practical against and about racism everyday of our life. This is evidently something different and more dynamic than periodic protests and theatrical militancy.

Racism and Racialism is, by definition and in practice, discriminatory. The entire legislative, executive and judiciary of the country is organised around this discrimination. This, in spite of the fact that 'blacks' form 87% of the population.

Islam's original nucleus was not only anti racist but anti discriminatory.

Rasulullah (SAW) and his Companions, were anti-discrimination because the ideology of Islam is anti-discrimination. The Qur'an declares:

'O Mankind, Reverence your Guardian-Lord who created you from a single Person (Nafs), created, of like nature, his mate, and from them twain scattered (like seeds) countless men and women.'

[Qur'an 4:1]

'O Mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of male and female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other (not that ye may despise each other). VERILY THE MOST HONOURED OF YOU IN THE SIGHT OF ALLAH IS (HE WHO IS) THE MOST RIGHTEOUS OF YOU.'

[Qur'an 49:13]

'There is no superiority for Arabs over non Arabs and for non-Arabs over Arabs, nor for White over Black or for Black over White for all of you are children of Adam. And Adam was created out of dust.'

[Hadith]

Racism and Racialism are divisive and disruptive forces. They not only disintegrate and devastate individuals but also families as well as entire communities. Racism is therefore a chaotic force. Note the agony of family disruption caused by the migrant labour system and pass laws; note the disintegration of families when one half is classified as white and the other half as coloured. Disunity is written large over families, communities, educational institutions as well as economic and political institutions.

Islam, on the contrary, has Tauheed as its most important concept; and amongst other things it means the unity of life and therefore the cosmological perspective which encompasses all existence and being. Because Muslims have one origin, one textbook, one method, one Qibla and one destiny, they are of necessity a united Ummah.

'Verily this Brotherhood of yours is a SINGLE BROTHERHOOD and I am your Lord and Cherisher; therefore serve Me (and no other).'

[Qur'an 21:92]

And the invitation is to all mankind to join this unitary and universal force.

A Muslim does not care two hoots about the racial classification of the person who performs Salaah next to him; neither do the Muslims care two hoots about the nationality of the person who makes tawaaf with them, neither do they care about his social class.

What we must also bear in mind is that the exploiter and the exploited, the oppressor and the oppressed are not brothers; and the ruling class and the subservient class are not brothers. They cannot be because it is the oppressor, the exploiter and the ruling class that create class divisions, racist cliques, and establish oppressive regimes and thereby alienate man from man. And by doing this they force the subservient people to obey and worship them.

THE UMMAH VERSUS NATIONALISM

Nationalism states that the nation-state must be the main object of our loyalties, and that this loyalty overrides all other loyalties.

This means that approximately 150 states in the world have their own idea of loyalty. And this idea of loyalty reaches absurd proportions when patriots even say: 'My country right or wrong.'

We do of course know that every country has a capital offence called treason. Now treason is defined as violation of allegiance to a sovereign of the nation-state - that is to the leader of the nation-state or the state itself. This means that if the nation-state does something obviously wrong (like discriminating against the mass of the people on the basis of their skin colour), and we oppose them and denounce them and organise their removal, then they accuse us of treason. Treason then, according to the oppressors, means to oppose what is wrong!

In Islam, on the contrary, we are told:

'Ye are the best of peoples, evolved for mankind, ENJOINING WHAT IS RIGHT, FORBIDDING WHAT IS WRONG, and believing in Allah.'

[Qur'an 3:110]

Muslims are **supra-nationalists**, that is, they are above nationalism. We are not interested in a person's allegiance to a nation-state but in his allegiance to his Creator and the Cause of Islam.

And this means that a Muslim is always loyal to what is right, truthful and just. And a Muslim commits treason when he is loyal to or pays allegiance to what is wrong, false or unjust. The Qur'an is emphatic about this loyalty:

'Whosoever helps and recommends a good cause becomes a partner therein: and whoever recommends and helps an evil cause, shares in its burden: And Allah hath power over all things.'

[Qur'an 4:84-85]

'Help ye one another in righteousness and piety, but help ye not one another in sin and rancour: Fear Allah: for Allah is strict in punishment.'

[Qur'an 5:3]

'O ye who believe! BETRAY NOT THE TRUST OF ALLAH AND HIS RASUL, nor misappropriate knowingly things entrusted to you.'

[Qur'an 8:27]

THE UMMAH VERSUS ABSURDITY

When one enters the realm of racism one enters the realm of the absurd. The biggest falsehood of the century is that Blacks are inferior to Whites. This falsehood is in essence the infrastructure of Racism. Apartheid is, therefore based on untruths. And more stunning is the fact that it is maintained by untruths and the suppression of truths.

Islam on the contrary, is based on truth and its immediate and long term goals are defined in terms of it. The major and fundamental concept in the social order of Islam is truth. The following ayah hardly needs any elaboration:

'And cover not truth with falsehood, nor conceal the truth when ye know what it is.'

[Qur'an 2:42]

'And he who brings the truth and he who confirms it (and supports) it - such are the men who do right.'

[Qur'an 39:33]

'Say: The truth has arrived, and falsehood neither creates anything new nor restores anything.'

[Qur'an 34:49]

'Nay, We hurl truth against falsehood, and it knocks out its brain, and 'behold, falsehood doth perish.'

[Qur'an 21:18]

'And say: Truth has now arrived and falsehood perished, for falsehood is [by its nature] bound to perish.'

[Qur'an 17:81]

From experience and from reflection we know that the very nature of oppression stems from the suppression of truth. And a sane social order cannot develop on the basis of lies, ignorance and indoctrination, because lies, ignorance and indoctrination form the womb and nourishment of oppression, exploitation and injustice; these are the characteristics of the abnormal and insane society.

The cohesive force, the catalyst, the dynamo in Islam is truth. It is falsehood that carries within itself the seed of its own destruction; and the truth carries within itself the seed of its own formation and development.

The biggest falsehood must of necessity crumble before the smallest truth. For need it be stressed that a truth can never be negated by an untruth, but an untruth can and will always be negated by a truth.

Of what use is one's reasoning if the premise is false? Apartheid, by having as its premises the superiority of whites over blacks, has produced a type of argument and a type of reasoning which is unique to the thinking processes of racists. It is this type of thinking which has produced the Population Registration Act, the Group Areas Act, the Immorality and Mixed Marriages Act. These monstrosities are unparalleled in the history of human thought.

Islam on the contrary states categorically:

'Say: The things that my Lord hath indeed forbidden are: SHAMEFUL DEEDS WHETHER OPEN OR SECRET; SINS AND TRESPASSES AGAINST TRUTH OR REASON, assigning of partners to Allah for which He hath given no authority; and saying things about Allah of which ye have no knowledge.'

[Qur'an 7:33]

By separating educational facilities for the various races and by the creation of ethnic colleges, the proponents and exponents of Apartheid have exposed themselves as being anti-intellectual and anti-scientific. This is not only borne out by appointments at universities but also by the fact that semi-literate whites have the franchise while black intellectuals are excluded en masse.

This illustration does not mean that we support or advocate that only black intellectuals should be enfranchised.

Outside universities, colleges and schools Apartheid as a monolithic system of unreason and unreasonableness dominates the lives of millions of oppressed people.

Islam on the contrary, by basing the social order on truth and by outlawing crimes and trespasses against truth and reason has laid the most stable and progressive foundation for effective social organisation.

THE UMMAH VERSUS DEHUMANIZATION

Apartheid is insensitive to the real needs and wants of the oppressed people: mass removals; 18 million imprisoned for pass law offences; 100,000 dying from malnutrition; 7 million squatters; the enormous discrepancy between expenditure on Black and White education and the indiscriminate killing of the oppressed people is sufficient proof of this insensitivity. Callousness of this nature is definitely not a manifestation of intelligence, but of gross idiocy, arrogance and hardheartedness. There is no milk of human kindness in Apartheid; only venom.

Islam, on the contrary, is a mercy unto all mankind. This mercifulness is propagated, adhered to and defended even during war-time. Compassion, kindness and generosity are the undeniable characteristics of the Ummah. Muslims are not just sensitive to the needs of Muslims but also supersensitive to the needs of mankind. A few ayaat and Ahadith will suffice as elucidation:

'And they feed, for the love of Allah, the indigent, the orphan, and the captive, - (saying) we feed you for the sake of Allah alone: no reward do we desire from you, nor thanks.'

[Qur'an 76:8-9]

'They ask thee how much they are to spend; Say: What is beyond your needs.'

[Qur'an 2:219]

'That a Muslim is not a perfect Muslim who eateth his fill, and leaveth his neighbours hungry.'

[Hadith]

'Feed the hungry and visit the sick, and free the captive if he be unjustly confined; assist any person oppressed, whether Muslim or non-Muslim.'

[Hadith]

'None of you has Imaan unless he loves for his brother what he loves for himself.'

[Hadith]

We have no other option but to realise and declare that Apartheid is not only inhumane but also dehumanising. It is not only the oppressed who are dehumanised but also the oppressors. The oppressor, of course, doesn't realise this because a point is reached where it becomes impossible, and therefore unnecessary to prove to the insane that we are sane.

Islam, on the contrary, is the fountain of inspiration for humanism. Islam is meant for human beings here and now, in this day and age.

'The best man is he from whom good accrues to humanity'
[Hadith]

'Ye are the best of peoples, evolved for mankind, enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong, and believing in Allah.'
[Qur'an 3:110]

Apartheid is criminal in its intentions; it commits crimes not only against the oppressed in this country but against the whole of humanity. No crime against humanity is confined within certain geographical or political boundaries. No valid idea nor a verifiable truth can be so confined either.

The Qur'an explicitly declares:

'Thus have we made of you an Ummah justly balanced, that ye might be witnesses over the nations, and the Rasul (SAW) a witness over yourselves.'

[Qur'an 2:143]

Muslims are therefore entrusted with being the standard-bearers of humanity.

THE UMMAH VERSUS OPPRESSION, EXPLOITATION AND INJUSTICE

Is there any need to stress that Apartheid is an organised system of oppression, exploitation and injustice? No facet of life is exempt from the tentacles of this oppressive system and this system of oppression.

Islam has as its main objective the liberation of man and ending the domination of man by man. This care and concern which Muslims have for one another and for suffering humanity in general is termed social responsibility in Islam. Our social responsibility stems from our social consciousness and evolves into a social conscience. But the most important fact about this development is that our social responsibility, which is universal, gives rise to **social action**.

If we survey the rise and fall of cultures, we will be able to draw a distinction between a culture of liberation and for liberation, and a culture of domination and for domination. A culture of liberation and for liberation is also a shared culture and a culture of sharing. But a culture of domination and for domination is a culture of servility and for enslavement.

Islam, since its humble beginnings, has been and still is a culture of liberation and for liberation as well as a shared culture and a culture of sharing.

And the command to do justice cannot be more explicit than in the following ayah:

'O ye who believe! STAND OUT FIRMLY FOR JUSTICE AS WITNESSES TO ALLAH, EVEN AS AGAINST YOURSELVES, OR YOUR PARENTS, OR YOUR KIN, AND WHETHER IT BE AGAINST RICH OR POOR: for Allah can best protect both. Following not the lusts (of your hearts), lest ye swerve, and if ye distort (justice) or decline to do justice, verily Allah is well acquainted with all that ye do.'

[Qur'an 4:135]

'Allah doth command that you render back your trusts to those to whom they are due; AND WHEN YE JUDGE BETWEEN MAN AND MAN, THAT YE JUDGE WITH JUSTICE: verily how excellent is the teaching which he giveth you!'

[Qur'an 4:58]

WHY DO WE CELEBRATE EID

By taking this brief survey of Islam operative in an oppressive Jahili environment, we have at least obtained an inkling why Muslims are exuberant and enthusiastic about Eid-ul-Fitr.

We are not just celebrating our personal victories over greed, selfishness, arrogance and indiscipline, but also the victory of truth over falsehood, justice over injustice, and the triumph of reason over idiocy.

The social dynamics of Islam indicate that Islam is intended as the force which will end the domination of man by man. And in order to do this, Islam treats the cause first and then the symptoms. And in order to sustain social changes it is necessary that we possess not only political and economic power but also moral and intellectual power. In fact, political and economic power without moral and intellectual power is useless and self-defeating.

It is for this reason that we say we do not dress up politics in religious robes, neither do we dress up religion in political robes - we have Islam and that is all we need to have.

Rasulullah (SAW) spelt out the Muslims attitude to oppression very clearly:

'A Muslim is a brother to every other Muslim; he does not oppress him, neither does he abandon him when he is oppressed.'

[Hadith]

'Do not do injustice unto others, nor let injustice be done unto you.'

[Hadith]

"Help your brother, whether oppressing or oppressed." People asked: "O Allah's Apostle! It is all right to help him if he is oppressed, but how should we help him if he is an oppressor?" The Prophet (SAW) said: "BY PREVENTING HIM FROM OPPRESSING OTHERS"

[Hadith]

Let it be universally known that those in possession of the truth are in possession of a most powerful instrument, a most effective instrument for dynamic social action.

If truth did not bring about practical results, then there would be no sense in choosing truth rather than falsehood.

The total liberation of mankind is the immediate task of the present generation. And the Qur'an not only furnishes us with the authority but also with the method for this radical social transformation. And the command is very clear:

'And WHY SHOULD YE NOT FIGHT IN THE CAUSE OF ALLAH AND OF THOSE WHO BEING WEAK, ARE ILL-TREATED (and OPPRESSED)? - Men, women and children, whose cry is: Our Lord! Rescue us from this town whose people are oppressors and raise for us from Thee one who will help!'

[Qur'an 4:75]

Is it, therefore, surprising that Muslims have been celebrating Eid for more than one thousand four hundred years! And the joy is spontaneous and enthusiastic because:

'He that obeys Allah and His Rasul (SAW) has already attained the highest achievement.'

[Qur'an 33:71]

When the Eid celebrations are over in their outward manifestations, then those who have imbibed the inner manifestations must remember: We, as Muslims, have a tremendous responsibility to eradicate oppression, exploitation, racism and all forms of injustice, and replace it with a universal system of social justice.

In South Africa we shall not be found wanting; in fact here we have an even greater responsibility and we shall, in a true spirit of universal brotherhood, respond to the call. O Muslims!

'Be not weary and faint-hearted, crying for peace, when ye should be uppermost, FOR ALLAH IS WITH YOU AND WILL NEVER PUT YOU IN LOSS FOR YOUR (GOOD) DEEDS.'

[Qur'an 47:35]

APPENDIX A:

UNITY LETTER 3:103

CHARTER 3:103: A Call for Muslim Unity

Sign the Charter and support Muslim Unity against sectarianism, nationalism, racism and all division in the ummah.

CHARTER 3:103: A Call for Muslim Unity

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Islam,

Assalaam alaikum wa rahmatullah wa barakatuh,

We are writing to introduce to you CHARTER 3: 103, a document which outlines simply the Qur'anic verse which calls for unity amongst Muslims. As you must be well aware, there has been a violent and marked increase in disunity between Muslims, including sectarian strife between different 'sects' in recent times. In countries like Pakistan and Afghanistan there has been senseless carnage and destruction.

The Charter, established in 1997, has been organised by the Islamic Human Rights Commission, with the support of other organisations, as a means for concerned individuals and organisations to show their commitment to unity between the different schools of thought, and to condemn all forms of disunity, including sectarianism, racism and nationalism.

The matter is now so serious, this Charter is being circulated to Muslim groups, inviting them to support this initiative. Disunity is a scourge, which benefits no-one except the enemies of Islam. This should be clear to all those Muslims who genuinely wish the plight of the Ummah to improve. In inviting the support of different organisations, we note that those who do not respond, or wish not to be involved are in fact choosing to oppose the Islamic call for unity by default. All schools of Muslim thought believe in the Qur'an and the tradition of the Holy Prophet, may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. Both give clear injunctions for unity amongst the believers whatever their differences. They also call for the believers to have courage in the face of adversity to call for justice in the face of attacks by the hypocrites.

May Allah s.w.t. reward all your efforts. Amen.

Your brothers in Islam,

Muhammad Al-Asi

Elected Imam

Washington Islamic Centre

Massoud Shadjareh

Chair

Islamic Human Rights Commission

Faiz Siddiqi

President

International Muslim Organisation

APPENDIX B:

In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

“And hold fast by the covenant of Allah all together and be not disunited and remember the favour of Allah on you when you were enemies, then He united your hearts, so by His favour you became brothers; and you were on the brink of a pit of fire, then He saved you from it; thus does Allah make clear to you His communications that you follow the right way”

(Holy Qur'an 3: 103).

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Islam,

Assalaam alaikum wa rahmatullah wa barakatuh,

We are writing to introduce to you CHARTER 3: 103, a document which outlines simply the Qur'anic verse which calls for unity amongst Muslims. As you must be well aware, there has been a violent and marked increase in disunity between Muslims, including sectarian strife between different 'sects' in recent times. In countries like Pakistan and Afghanistan there has been senseless carnage and destruction.

The Charter, established in 1997, has been organised by the Islamic Human Rights Commission, with the support of other organisations, as a means for concerned individuals and organisations to show their commitment to unity between the different schools of thought, and to condemn all forms of disunity, including sectarianism, racism and nationalism.

The matter is now so serious, this Charter is being circulated to Muslim groups, inviting them to support this initiative. Disunity is a scourge, which benefits no-one except the enemies of Islam. This should be clear to all those Muslims who genuinely wish the plight of the *Ummah* to improve. In inviting the support of different organisations, we note that those who do not respond, or wish not to be involved are in fact choosing to oppose the Islamic call for unity by default. All schools of Muslim thought believe in the Qur'an and the tradition of the Holy Prophet, may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. Both give clear injunctions for unity amongst the believers whatever their differences. They also call for the believers to have courage in the face of adversity to call for justice in the face of attacks by the hypocrites.

May Allah s.w.t. reward all your efforts. Amen.

Your brothers in Islam,

Muhammad Al-Asi

Elected Imam

Washington Islamic Centre

Massoud Shadjareh

Chair

Islamic Human Rights Commission

Faiz Siddiqi

President

International Muslim Organisation

"Jihad is an effort, an exertion to the utmost, a striving for truth and justice. The purpose of Jihad is to stop, remove, destroy and eradicate injustice and not to replace one unjust system with another, or to replace one dominant group with another dominant group. **Jihad is therefore a ceaseless, continuous, super conscious and effective struggle for justice.**"

Achmad Cassiem

Leader of the anti-apartheid movement Qibla, senior member of the Pan African Congress, founder and Chair of the Islamic Unity Convention and veteran anti-apartheid activist, Achmad Cassiem has written, taught and acted upon Islamic concepts since his teenage years as one of the youngest detainees on Robben Island.

This publication brings him to a new audience based outside his home of South Africa. His works reproduced herein, though referring to an era where South Africa faced enormous transformative change, remain relevant to Muslims and those of other faiths and none in their struggles to achieve justice.

An Imam and scholar, Achmad Cassiem brings concepts like jihad and tauheed to both practical and radical application. His words on the Islamic injunctions to unite in brotherly love and support not just each other but to battle injustice wherever it is found, are more pertinent now, in an age of sectarian violence than when he first preached them.

This is a must read for anyone wanting to locate their yearning for justice for all peoples in the context of a spiritual and practical journey of emancipation.

ISBN 978-190751700-6



9 781907 517006



www.ihrc.org.uk