

ISLAMIC SOCIAL FRAMEWORK

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by

Prof. M. RAIHAN SHARIF

M.A. (DAC.), M.B.A. (PENN.)



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O R I E N T A L I A
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TO
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PREFACE

WITH the establishment of Pakistan, a new era has begun. A new life is remarkably discernible in the country, permeating the warp and woof of the social and cultural texture. There is an irresistible urge to go forward. A rationalization of life is considered pressingly necessary and just worthwhile to attempt. And in contrast to the stage of stagnation and disillusionment preceding, the new rationalization may evidently appear to be radical or revolutionary. Be it what it may, the consciousness is there that new lamp-posts will have to be erected to mark the milestones of new Progress. The spirits are eminently high; the architects are ready. Yet there appears to be a lot of fumbling and faltering, groping and wandering for what is definitely to be built. The road is however decidedly uphill. But if the explorers can proceed with the right kind of props in their hands, there are clear prospects of success. Have our explorers got those right props?

It is common knowledge that Islam as a religion can hardly be understood in terms of rites and rituals; since in its real perspective, it serves as the motive-power to govern all sectors of life, individual and social. At the same breath, it may be emphasized that social evolution and cultural progress based on Islam cannot necessarily be isolationist in character. Our social and cultural life can hardly stand but on the foundations of the synthetic faith. The currents and undercurrents of that spirit and faith provide the best

feeders of the flow of life in any sphere. But—this is a very important 'but'—popular understanding stumbles and fumbles in this. For, ordinarily, what is found in practice is the bottling up of those currents and under-currents into two watertight compartments labelled 'religious' and 'social.' And the hidden (because general and underlying) broad currents of the 'social' stream are comfortably lost sight of, while the other current is given extraordinary formal attention and is made more and more spacious and embracing by constant dredging. So the latter appears to be the only manifest vital force which invites and warns every individual and institution; and, topping, all, it asks the social domain to build itself with this energy and no other and commends culture to derive its strength and beauty from this source and no other. It is here that a big bewilderment grows and serious hurdles are placed in the way of the architects of culture.

Can culture in its myriad wings of arts and literature, music and architecture and so on be given its true colour from the dyes of that onesided and narrow but apparently spacious stream? That gives a clue to the insignificant part played by Muslims even in that traditional patchwork of seeming cultural strides before August 14, 1947. What is definitely ours is unimpressive and cannot hope to stand world contests. Over and above, taking things as they are, prospects of spectacular achievements in cultural fields are hard to think of. For, social life is the real laboratory for inquiries into cultural progress; and it is through the right type of social evolution that remarkable cultural strides can be possible.

A searching self-analysis will show that there is

nothing wrong with Islam and Islamic principles vis-a-vis rich human culture. It is worthwhile to repeat that Islam stands for not merely religious doctrines but on the more important side of it, stands for a well-ordered social system having a rightful province for rich culture. A synthesis of the two main forces ensures real glory and real cultural stature. The glorious chapter of Islamic history bears witness to how that wonderful synthesis could be brought about in practice.

Muslim life in the subcontinent of India, it will appear from an analysis of our past, decayed and deteriorated in the real vitality of synthetic cohesion with an imperceptible gradualness till it was stunned by the loss of political sovereignty at last. That was a blow deadly enough to cut the disintegrating entity into two pieces. The religious force and the social force were thus cut asunder and sent adrift. But gradually the hold on the social sector was lost which was a death-knell for social evolution. Hence, by and large, Muslim life recoiled on the only piece left, viz., the religious force, and made it all its treasure. The leading groups and classes sought a corner with a sense of frustration and resentment; and that explains a great deal of the over-emphasis on the ostensible formalities of religion on the one hand and Sufism of various complexions on the other in the pre-Renaissance period. It was however tinged with some sporadic sparks of an awakening of the real self. The undercurrents of the Sepoy Mutiny and the Wahabi Movement are but the landmarks of that awakening which made Renaissance in its full vigour possible. The forces of Renaissance sublimating in the demand for a Muslim homeland in Pakistan were all echoing

and re-echoing the urge to recover the lost treasure ; and it is this urge that worked like Aladin's genii to earn and stabilize Pakistan within so unbelievably short a period as that.

Now, we have got back the lost treasure of the social force, indeed, along with the treasure island of independence itself. But obviously we do not seem to have succeeded in integrating the recovered piece with the piece in possession. As yet, it appears that the piece in possession is working as an isolationist, its jurisdiction to the borders of the frigid formalities of the 'oughts' and 'ought-nots,' of rites and rituals and hairsplitting controversies about doctrinaire subtleties. As against that, the new generation, very poorly convinced by that piece of religious onesideness, seems to be far more alienated now, on the first flush of independence by its excessive zeal for progress, which means to it—not unnaturally—the materialistic prosperity of the Western brand. As a result, it appears that the horses are drawing the cart each in the opposite direction.

The synthetic life of real progress is yet to be evolved ; the balanced outlook is yet to be cultivated. What has got to be realized is that social evolution is as religious as religion itself ; and progressive pursuits divorced from spiritual ends are hardly worthwhile. Islam, as is popularly known, is much too narrow for a synthetic life of progress and culture ; and the social life as we find today is ill-developed and hollow. The latter is without essential spiritual roots and hence unable to bear the desired fruits of rich culture ; and the former

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CHAPTER ONE

MUSLIMS IN THE WORLD OF TODAY

Foggy Outlook

TO THINK of the world nowadays presents a problem or a puzzle. It is passing through a critical stage: the outlook is bleak and grim—so they all say. That is all centering round the hypothesis that a giddy race has been whistled out between godless Russia and the heedless West—a race in which the needless rigours of the one and the heedless forces of the other provide weapons and counter-weapons for a deadly contest. Drums and trumpets are said to have been beating and blowing to score points on either side of the pot and the kettle. All the countries of the world, conveniently enough, are considered divided into two: the fish of the undemocratic and the fowl of the democratic; and that is because the division is made either by fish or by fowl. Be it what it is, some non-violent but colossal conflict is evidently in progress and has been termed “cold war” heavily charged with excessive chilliness at which the intellect shivers and the spirit of faith is shrouded in befoggedness. The common hearts cannot help gasp before being completely stifled and cry: “What’s behind this clap-trap wordy intellectual fog?”

That cry unheard, the big fog continues to gain density and awe, curiously blended though with vain cheers on the one side and sombre silence on the other. It does not help matters to count the failures of one side on the basis of “popularity contests” in some religions or successes of the other on the basis of the

first doses of the Marshall-brand ointment on some of the sick brows of Europe. The general bewilderment goes on as strongly as ever. And the intellectual and spiritual background stands deplorably blurred. Apparently, therefore, life in general seems to have been divorced from the receding background, as if to be ruled over by the high principles of materialistic economics.

Economic Plight and Communism

Hence now more than ever, the economic ills of the world are standing out extra-prominently. At present, there are too many economic sores to be healed up in the globe. The Western diagnosis of pure or mixed democracy is alleged to have ill-suited the needs of the war-scarred and backward territories, particularly in Europe and the East. In fact, the influence of Communism seems to have increased appreciably in such regions. Winning by benevolence had been the manifest policy adopted and it has ironically replaced the old "beggar-my-neighbour" attitude. In that "scramble" for benevolence, ravaged Europe was lucky enough to receive the first attentions of the West (now synonymous with America), while ruined and neglected Asia seemed to have fast receded from her. So new gestures, new policies, new plans, at least in theory, have naturally been adopted to meet this grave threat of easy walk-over in the East. The lessons of China are being underlined off and on; and precautions to tighten the girdle of security around South-East Asia are known to have been advanced by important circles.

In reality, the menace looms large. Unless positive efforts are made to give substantial relief to the

sickening economic plight of the peoples of the East, the potential menace can scarcely be disposed of by any comfortable pretext. When living standards are frightfully low, it is futile to persuade a people to refrain from seeking a short-cut to higher standards. Whether those tidal waves are likely to dash against the shores of India and Pakistan are, however, interesting, warning-provoking issues.

But by now it has become common knowledge that Islam has no quarter for the godless cult of Communism; and hence Pakistan is securely harboured in her spiritual fervour and faith. Faith and spirit might have been crucified somewhere else on the altar of reckless materialism, but not so in the Muslim countries.

Present Muslim World and Communism

But is that "the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth?" Are the Muslim countries completely free from the ill of poverty, avarice, exploitation and inequalities? We cannot probably utter an undoubted 'Yes.' The reasons are obvious.

Pakistan has only lately come out of the imperial orbit of Great Britain. And countries like Indonesia in South-East Asia are yet to stabilize the status of independence. One can hardly expect ready application of Islamic principles in such countries in the East including Pakistan.

What about the Middle East Muslim countries? Can they be said *par excellence* to have practically applied all the Islamic principles, exhibiting the perfect Islamic framework, nurtured by the genuine spirit of Islamic Socialism? Unfortunately, even to a casual observer, the general social and economic outlook of

these countries will appear to be far otherwise. Economic foundations of these countries are yet to be developed on sound lines ; since the living standards are unimpressive. Victims in the nice chessboard of " power politics," they can hardly present a lively picture of strength, unity and organization.

A realist knows that as an economic palliative, Communism grows in the filth and squalor of poverty and is promoted by the absence of a powerful synthetic faith. Can he feel safe to conclude that the Muslim world is most securely barbed-wired against the menace while the synthetic faith itself is just feeble in practice ? He has, however, no doubt that Islam translated into reality in full measure can serve as the surest bulwark against Communism. Why this contradiction then ?

Principles and Practice in Muslim Countries

The contradiction arises out of the difference between theory and practice as it is ordinarily understood. But there is no such thing as " theory and practice " in the Islamic way of life. Islam has given, as is well known, a good many fundamental principles touching different sectors of life ; these are not to be confined, in a theoretical fashion, to pious academic discussions but to be practised cent per cent with all the enthusiasm and love of living them through. Principles to be principles are to be transformed into actual applications in the desired spirit. Hence in Islam, principles and practice—*amal*—together form a common connotation at bottom. And in this the present Muslim countries are greatly lacking. That is why the present offers an awkward contradiction and

the past glorious era supplies the only source of inspiration and hope. The past is the proud heritage that demonstrated so fully the coherence between principles and practice.

The Islamic framework demands perfect development of individuality on the one hand and collective spirit on the other. In an economic environment freed from private landlordism, capitalism and economic exploitation, private enterprise and state undertaking provide the real economic props; but the collective spirit is so sweepingly pervasive that what has been called "social conscience" by English economists is but a hopeless match for it.

That collective spirit which is the crux of Islamic Socialism could be produced thirteen centuries ago, because no confusion was allowed to creep in between ends and means. Ends and means must be kept in their proper places; otherwise evaluation of social and moral values is likely to be ridiculously distorted.

In these days nobody hesitates, if luck favours him, to amass wealth for wealth's sake, pile up riches for riches' sake and hoard for hoard's sake, against which the Qur'an has sounded repeated warnings. But, after all, could such questions arise at all, had the means been closely guarded against their abuses as ends or the social ends against their surreptitious degeneration into private ones?

Take, for instance, money. When anybody is asked, "Tell me, is money a means or an end?" he is almost sure to reply, if at all he can reply, "Yes, it is only a means." But he will probably not hesitate to treat it as both. Why? Roughly, it may be said, what men

want to derive from money is happiness, called 'utility' in the economic jargon, which is bound to diminish with additional holdings of money. Yet, why do we pile up bags and bags of money and swell up bank balances? The reply may be: "Money seems to us a defence against 'the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,' and we try to pile it up as men pile up sand-bags against a river that threatens to rise and overwhelm them." This is a real paradox and originates from a wrong conception of standards of living, and happiness and security.

Happiness and Living Standards

A modern Western writer says: "Real happiness is a mysterious visitor whom only the very wise among us know how to invite but who sometimes drops in uninvited." The modern man does not take much notice of the pregnant proverb: "Much happiness is overlooked because it does not cost anything." All this, indeed, is closely linked up with general attitude to life. Is this brief span of life an end in itself or just a resting-place in that eternal journey of the soul to help enrich life in its evolution? Does a man pause to think :

From it (the earth) did We
Create you and into it
Shall We return you
And from it shall We
Bring you out once again ?

(The Qur'an, xx: 55.)

If no mistake is made in perceiving the goal of and attitude to life, there will be none but takes the wise or correct view of the sort of life to be led and the nature and measure of happiness to be attained.

And then, can money, among other things, be anything but a means or a device pure and simple ?

In the living present, when an old farmer in America expresses his notion of the high cost of living by saying: "Lady, look around you. It ain't the high cost of living. It's the cost of folks living too high," it may not evoke anything but laughter. But in the changed outlook of faith and in face of a modest but correct living standard popularly known as that of plain living and high thinking, such expressions are likely to be fundamentally real. If the "music of the spheres" is clearly visualized, the subordinate tunes will easily adjust themselves with given techniques.

Living standards, conceived in the Islamic organization, are necessarily interwoven with spiritual harmony and hence must needs be based on a rationalization of human wants. A rationalized modest standard will not leave room for "folks living too high." But high incomes or large acquisitions by honest enterprise are not to be banned; for they are not intended to promote "personal ornamentation" but the substantial "excess" is to be held as a liability trust for the social unfortunates and hence to be spent for their welfare (which is *fi sabili'l-Lah*).

Forces, Economic and Spiritual

We are living in a world which is said to be utterly gain-crazy under the sway of the mighty force of the economic motive. This economic motive has found in the scientific and technical progress the real Aladdin's genii to transform and shape out man's material destiny in a sea of miraculous plenty and power. The distance traversed by this motive so far has rendered it exceedingly remote from its mother, the spirit. And

many are naturally posing the interrogation: Can this distance be bridged now?

To my mind, there is nothing inherent in the economic force to run counter to the spiritual one, if only the spiritual force is given as free a play as the other. However material and dismal the scene of economics may have been dubbed, as yet it can never be condemned for confounding the means for the end. Has the economic force asked anybody to consider money as anything more than a medium of exchange? It has on the other hand pointedly defined it in a non-material fashion: "Money is what money does." Economics is fundamentally a rationalized attempt at meeting numerous ends with "scarce means that has alternative uses." Further, of late, human welfare has been very intimately associated with economic activity or enterprise. It requires one more step to rationalize the numerous ends with proper incorporation of the spiritual ones. If the spiritual ends lie veiled as yet, that is due to the lack of active faith and spiritual fire in the Western writers. It is the role of Islam to lift that veil and usher in a new order.

Islam's Role in the New Order of Balanced Life

What Islam aims at is a balanced life—a life representing the equilibrium of social forces. It is not an equilibrium between demand and supply merely, but a most satisfactory stage of balance and equipoise between the economic and spiritual forces. Left to itself, the economic force is likely to unleash the frantic fury of a fanatical devotion to gross material ends. Spiritual values are the only stabilizing factor that helps set things in a harmonious whole and flawless order. It

is left for Islam to supply the missing stabilizer.

There is, of course, a stage in which the economic force is bound to exert a preponderant influence in that social equilibrium; and other forces are likely to appear extinct. "Man," very aptly says George Bernard Shaw, "is at his most economic when hungry, cold and naked." When this stage of grim poverty is over, new influences begin to work actively. The reasons are beautifully put by Shaw again: "When you feed, clothe, and house him, however miserably, he ceases to be wholly economic and becomes a creature with aspirations and scruples, with a conscience, with 'views,' with passions and prejudices that are all immaterial and irrational, that is metaphysical." Hence as the development of a nation proceeds from the bottom stage upwards, the spiritual force may be called upon to play a progressively increasing part; for "poverty is dolefully satiable, prosperity is practically insatiable." Without the blissful control of the spiritual force, the "insatiable" craving for material prosperity can hardly be made to yield the glow of happiness. There is thus an unchallenged province for faith and amongst faiths Islam can most eminently fit into the social equilibrium.

It is really heartening that winds have started blowing to favour that new order. Changes in outlook are discernible: arrows of new light have begun to pierce the gloomy fog. The realization is dawning that so far there has been too much achievement of material strength and prosperity and too little of the real source of strength and happiness. Even the most prosperous part of the globe is fumbling with the words: "With enough of almost everything, what we have too little of is the personal practice of an action-

producing belief in Almighty God and a knowledge of the availability to us of His guidance.”

The potential dangers of an atomic war have pushed the possibility of one into the remotest future, and have convincingly driven home the futility of the wild technological and scientific research rushes and prosperity drives. Statesmen today stand stunned, and scientists alarmed. War has got to be avoided and enduring peace has got to be built up. So it appears that the material prosperity of modern standards is meaningless without the intentions of war.

The Soviet counterpart of the world contest is similarly embarrassed with a degree of reserve supported by regimentation processes and the “iron curtain.” Some individual freedom-lovers have voluntarily escaped the regime just because they are now with ‘views.’ The reserve and the regime without spiritual foundations are still associated with a measure of success, since they are a sequel to yet too low living standards in Soviet Russia, on which the economic force has a mightier influence than the spiritual. So spiritual revivalism and reorientation may here be submerged or suppressed or delayed, but not too long. And stirrings are known to have begun in the new direction. Again, understandably, it is just possible that the Muslim-dominated states at least will rally with the new forces of light; and in the fullness of time, the Muslim world seems to have grown alive to this. Welcome signs indeed.

Thus it appears that the perturbing aftermath of the war, rather than the war itself, has tugged the components of the world towards the final self-analysis of boundless hope.

Faith and Hope

For the cause of enduring peace, merely economic and political measures can at best be "indecisive palliatives." Refreshingly, the eminent scientist, Dr. Charles Steinmetz, when asked what line of research would see the greatest development during the next fifty years, said: "I think the greatest discoveries will be made along spiritual lines. Some day people will learn that material things do not bring happiness and are of little use in making men and women creative and powerful. Then the scientists of the world will turn their laboratories over to the study of God and prayer and the spiritual forces which, as yet, have been hardly scratched. When that day comes, the world will see more advancement in one generation than it has been in the last four."

A Muslim may confidently hope, when 'that day' comes, Islam will provide "the greatest discoveries." But before that conquest of faith, will it not be meet for the Islamic countries to revitalize themselves? Their living standards are yet to be raised to approximate the golden mean to which the overprosperous countries may condescend to drop for the sake of faith; and that has been echoed in the Qur'an:

Eat of the good
 Things We have provided
 For your sustenance, but
 Commit no excess therein. (xx: 81.)

When the demon of the economic force will be thus chained by shattering the chains of poverty and the real spirit of Islamic Socialism enthroned, it is then and not now that their examples will be "the external

expression of inner convictions." With faith and fortitude can be acquired concrete hope. Let Muslims develop themselves with unfaltering faith and fortitude and then hope while praying :

O my Lord, advance me
In knowledge. (Qur'an, xx: 114).

Then the world may come to their doors.

CHAPTER TWO

THE PART THAT ETHICS PLAYS IN SOCIETY

Idealism in Social Life

IN Plato's *Republic*, there was idealism that, like Shelley's skylark, could not drop down from the clouds. Aristotle's idealism in his conception of the ideal state was, however, tempered with realism and hence, like Wordsworth's skylark, could descend to the dusts of the mortal world. In the latter's scheme of things, good citizens by being good citizens are not enough for the purposes of the state; they are required to be good man, too. Hence, it may be said, from those days began the stages of true evolution of human sciences in definite relationship with ethical ends. Political administration and social organization, therefore, could hardly be conceived in isolation from ethics, nor could life itself be lived away from it.

Since then, blends of this approach to social life have tended to appear in different proportions, swinging, like pendulums indeed, between the extremes of aggressive abstractionism garbed in moral philosophies and unmixed materialism represented in the scientific social sciences. Kant, Hegel and others of their school are well-remembered for their pure ethical analysis, while Marx, Engels and Kropotkin for their pure material approach. Curiously, even in the eighteenth century, the renowned French philosopher Helvetius writes: "Morality is only a frivolous science, if it is not combined with politics and legislation." Even

recently, a notable American historian wrote a volume to prove that, "not only does moral progress constitute the very essence of the historical movement, but the ethical motive presents itself as the most constant and regulative force in the evolution of humanity."

Forces of history cannot be stemmed, indeed; and changes and counterchanges in techniques do characteristically follow. What the French thinker Helvetius brought to light was a fundamental discovery about human behaviour—self-interest, which, however strange at first, led to its logical conclusions at the hands of Bentham and Mill and came to be christened as utilitarianism. That again passed through various stages of the individualistic approach turning into capitalism in the economic sphere, later to give way to the recent approaches of 'welfare state' and planning in the most material sense.

But at whatever end we observe, it is a stark outstanding characteristic of modern days that ethics or judgment of value stands divorced from fact or concrete institutions of social life. This divorce between the two groups that specialize in each wing separately tends to appear rather highly anomalous when concrete details are faced. The social scientists, just as engineers, are now-a-days said to be equal to all types of herculean tasks of looking into *what is* and handle practical problems like soil erosion, nutrition, pest-control, flood-control, increasing productivity per acre of land. But they can, as even Marxists say, lead us nowhere when they are asked the institutions *ought to be*. The 'ought' has been completely divorced from the 'is' which is very alluringly called objective scientific analysis, and they seem irreconcilable.

Marxism as a Remedy

It has been aptly pointed out by Howard Salsam :
“ From Thomas Hobbes, inspired by seventeenth century physical science to construct a mechanics of human social behaviour, to Herbert Spencer in the nineteenth century, who sought to solve all ethical and social problems by the biological touchstone, survival of the fittest, there is a persistent attempt to free ethics from supernatural origins and sanctions and to root it in the nature of man and the world at large. Looked at historically, this whole movement promised much and achieved little!” It is supposed, it was only left for Marxism to offer the real basis for conciliation between fact and value making, as is argued, both fact and value scientifically determinable through ‘a scientific theory of history and society.’ A completely scientific materialist approach to human life is regarded as the magic-key for producing the miracle of adjustment between ethics and social sciences.

But can a doctrine, professedly materialist, appreciate the forces of historical movements, so constantly motivated by ethical non-material factors? Apart from the obvious fallacy of treating all needs of humanity to be passing through the single keyhole of materialism, is it scientific in any sense to observe all material and no moral forces in the historical changes of the world? It may be frankly admitted by these social scientists, if they care to, that moral and spiritual values cannot as easily be determined as commodity values. But that is hardly any justification for blindly writing off the former ones and pretending with consistent material needs of humanity. On the other hand, if Marxism seeks to analyze merely the

materialistic aspects of history, there can scarcely be any meaning in evolution. Evolution, however, may be understood in mechanistic terms which will be far away from the spirit of progress and can at most be a subhuman process without promises of ideal society.

Islam and Marxism

Contrastingly, it deserves notice and stands analysis that Islam provides the ^{*}real adjustment between the ethical and material needs ^{*}of life in which Marxism has naturally failed. Marxism, on its negative side, has taken a boisterous advantage of the conflicts of the capitalistic structure of society. But Islam has scientifically provided its social safety-valves in the wonderful principles to help a spontaneous absorption of any tension between interests. Islam will never allow the principle of competition to be used as a biological instrument, as was desired by Spencer and Bentham. Careful study of history shows that new approaches and new techniques were invented in the past in acknowledgement of the inadequacy or inefficiency of older ones, but they themselves in their turn were carried to logical extremes, giving rise to vicious excesses and gigantic social evils. Marxism is no exception to it, as is also capitalism, and hence is liable to be replaced, in consonance with historical force by some other technique or 'ism.' But Islam, in letter and in spirit, is a systematic and successful attempt at and ever-enduring balance of life, obviating the requirement of any pruning and replacement. When endeavours were made in the past 'to root ethics in the nature of man,' they proved abortive, since these experiments were made in the green-rooms of one-sided life—

one-sided because a part was consciously separated from the spiritual environment which is the vital soil for successful ethical experimentation. The environment of such success is rooted in the Islamic philosophy of life, which is both subjective and objective.

Laissez faire did not take along to spend its utility up and to invite modification, improvement and, in some cases, replacement. The force of unregulated competition is no more regarded as the determinant of all human relationships, social, economic and national. Clashes and conflicts in the sphere of these relationships are now sought to be removed by the deliberate creation of a moral atmosphere of cooperation, and achievements are made through careful planning. The Islamic framework, happily indeed, offers maximum scope for such deliberate planning by eliminating conflicts among competing interests and applying the real stabilizer of the spiritual-cum-moral force in all pursuits including material. Starting on a domestic basis, such needs of co-operation and planning have tended to extend increasingly to the international plane; political, social, economic, and cultural planning has been gathering momentum on a world basis, of which the myriad-winged U.N.O. is just a concrete beginning. In this context, it is to be observed that the universality of the Islamic principles suggests their general application to mankind as a whole and hence is based on the assumption of the world as a unit. If such compatibility with worldwide progress on all fronts can be combined with the pursuits of the ultimate objectives of human life as such, can the one-sided designed analysis of Marxism stand comparison with Islam as a comprehensive social science?

Islam and Level of Civilization

We are at one with Howard Selsam, an admirer of Marxism who in his *Socialism and Ethics* says: "No mechanical standard, such as an index of the industrial and agricultural output per worker, enables us to measure the level of civilization and thus the moral well-being of a people." It is only through the operation of the Islamic principles that the fullest development of 'man's varied potentialities' can be possible—not merely the static social stability conceived by Hobbes, nor the abstract and hedonistic goal of 'the greatest happiness of the greatest number,' nor even the mere material development of human life aimed by Marxism. The optimum level of civilization, embodying the maximum moral well-being, can never be aimed at without spiritual and moral development together with the basic material development of a people, nay, of mankind. Fundamentally, the Islamic approach is free from the mythical supernaturalness of old systems and equally from the medieval inexorableness of the laws of nature. It is just natural and human as also perfectly balanced and scientific.

Application of Principles

Paradoxically enough, the Islamic principles are not, by any stretch of imagination, associated with great achievements of modern standards on the material development front; but much of our pride is built upon the axiom that Islam, and hence its principles, represent a perfect religion (*innad-dina 'indallahil Islam*). The Islamic principles descending from Divinity are, indeed, perfect and absolute; for no conceivable measure of progress in civilization can hope to

dispense with them. But it should not be forgotten that the records or traditions of their application are, in fact, relative to the physical, social and economic environment of relevant times. Naturally, therefore, the applications of the past, standing as concrete institutions as they do, should not be confused with the actual principles, nor should they be treated as the only forms or alternatives of application possible.

Islam seeks to build an economy and society at a safe distance from colonialism, racialism, imperialism, narrow political nationalism, capitalism and all forms of exploitation and inequality. The broad principles of equality, brotherhood and social justice are certainly to be applied in raising the citadel of Islamic democracy. By that it can never be meant that these principles are to be adopted within the framework of monarchy or oligarchy alone, if they happened to be associated with monarchy and oligarchy in the past, and the evolution of democratic institutions of subsequent days to be unhesitatingly ignored. There is nothing particularly sacrosanct in the past as there is nothing particularly ominous in the present. If really progressive institutions can be well fitted in in conformity with the absolute principles, there cannot be anything more welcome and more beneficial. When the modern man has taken immense pains to evolve new institutions which, again, have to stand the test of time, and Muslims, in reality, gave up initiative, aversions to these new institutions, unless they are repugnant to Islamic principles, are simply meaningless. The spirit that has ever pursued the unknown with success, whether embodied in the conquests of the Antarctica or in the unmeasurable bulk of researches in human

knowledge deserves appreciation. We read the Qur'an and learn :

Do not the unbelievers see
That the heaven and the earth
Were joined together (as one
Unit of Creation), before
We clove them asunder ?
We made from water
Every living thing. Will they
Not then believe ? (xxi : 30.)

And, on analysis, we find these pregnant words of Allah to be directly related to the truths of physical science, referring to the mysteries of the solar system and the astronomical world, and also to the truths of biology, hinting at the mysteries of protoplasm and predominance of water in the evolution of life as a whole. Have the physical scientists and biologists done anything wrong to work up the labyrinth of details of the same problems as set out in broad outline above ? They have rather made the words of Allah and hence His creation more understandable. If, however, in the process of experimentation, the faith in the Creator is lost somewhere and definitely hinders His ' pattern of creation,' these are real lapses against which proper caution is required. And, frankly speaking, that is how Islamic principles can be brought in line with the modern sciences and arts ; which, however, means running the race of knowledge with progressive nations and excelling them in their evolution.

Apart from the domain of modern sciences and arts, we may refer to another instance of the broadness of Quranic guidance, and that is about ordinary

living in an ethical background. The Qur'an says :

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 God for which
He hath given no authority ;
And saying things about God
Of which ye have no knowledge. (vii : 33.)

The ethical principles embodied in these words are undoubtedly of universal appeal and above any scepticism from any quarter. But controversies are almost inevitably to arise when one proceeds to determine in concrete terms what are the 'shameful deeds' and what are the concrete modes of behaviour that can be treated as 'sins and trespasses against truth and reason.' It is no wonder, then, that wide differences of opinion had occurred among the orthodox schools of thought classified under the four heads of Hanafi, Shafi'i, Maleki and Hanbali, and they touch every minute detail of human conduct. What is striking is that even these differences of views are invoked so very profusely to settle the disputes of our contemporary life. It is yet to be shown if the voluminous details of injunctions and prescriptions are to be treated as a static code of rules for all times, stages, conditions and circumstances, or to be viewed in the light of their relativity to their own objective background in the past and to be interpreted in new terms of the changed background without any sacrifice of principles. Our new researches should indicate the highlights of the ways how this can be practically done. It is then that

therace for the fullest attainment of civilization (based on both material and moral development) can be run and the pride of the ideal heritage may be established.

✧ Goal of Ideal Civilization

Having thus conceived, it is not difficult to visualize the role the Islamic principles can play in the ethical perspective. It is a concrete plan for Islam, not merely Aristotle's philosophizing, that good citizens of a state ought to be good men, too. Each member of society, imbued with the right spirit of 'righteousness' (cf. Qur'an, ii: 177) is intended to develop a dynamic personality to justify the dictum, as Kant has put it, that 'man must be used as an end only, never as a means.' The Islamic blend of rich subjectivity and powerful objective urge will, therefore, guarantee not only the use of man as an end, but the reaching of the goal of ideal civilization. But before that much leeway has to be made up towards salvaging the guiding subjectivity from the morass of disuse and unmeaning use, and establishing convincing records of objective welfare. The Qur'an reminds us:

If God had so willed
He would have made you
A single people, but (His
Plan is) to test you in what
He hath given you: so strive
As in a race in all virtues. (v: 51.)

The different groups and nations of the world have, indeed, produced robust achievements on a level of civilization, never perfect though yet. Significantly, the directive comes from Islam to 'strive as in a race' to reach the goal of perfect civilization,

based on material welfare for all fed by spiritual and ethical motive powers. Hence it is a plain truth that Islamic idealism is not merely an 'ethereal minstrel.' This skylark does not drop from the clouds off and on, but dwells on the mortal earth to sing in 'full-throated ease.' And the melodies are hidden in our strivings.

CHAPTER THREE

SOCIAL ORDER

MUCH attention has been focussed in these days of Islamic revivalism on the proposition that Islam provides a code of social and individual behaviour and hence social and individual development, covering a very wide range of human knowledge, and fails in the provinces of a good many social sciences including ethics, politics, economics, sociology and others. Why is it, then, that social progress could not be maintained in the Middle Ages? And, can it be confidently expected that Islam has to contribute to the new progress of the new era?

Decline of Muslim Social Organization

The world has tasted many variants of culture and civilization and had been constantly in pursuit of goals to achieve real order. The goals as ends changed from time to time, indeed, but means changed spectacularly, marking victories and defeats of different sets of ideologies. In that history of ends and means, it can be remembered with satisfaction that Islam once led to the 'convulsion of the world,' in thoughts and philosophies, in ideal institutions and natural humanism. That code of social and individual behaviour and development invited all-sided cultural progress and immense advancement in social sciences and technology. Those monumental practical achievements, however, gradually went on declining and later tapered into insignificance. Some sort of a real vacuum resulted

from the stagnant stupor; and historical forces, hating any vacuum as they do, shaped out, in due course, new philosophies as practicable means to ends. It is a sad truth of history that, many centuries back, Muslims surrendered their initiative to newcomers and consequently have not only been outstripped by others but pushed behind. The door of *ijtihad*, as pointed out by the great seer Allama Iqbal, has been closed; the departure from real principle of Islam and decadence of Muslim social organization has been marked by an overwhelming tendency to hold fast to certain lifeless forms and formalities, if at all, to the skeleton of Islam and not to its spirit—that again more in the sphere of individual religious life than in other no less important spheres. Such mechanical adherence having failed to produce results, the worst evil followed: Muslims lost faith in themselves and in the efficacy of Islamic principles. On top of all, this meant not merely a disintegrating process in the invincible citadel of the Islamic world, but a very dangerous one of substituting the 'easily acquirable vices' of other cultures in its framework. The words of Mr. Tamizuddin Khan, President, Pakistan Constituent Assembly, are worth pondering:

“ Had Islamic society continued to play its leading humanitarian role as in the early centuries, corroding cults and ideologies like divorce of religion from politics, exclusive and aggressive nationalism, race superiority complex, colour mania, capitalism, communism, fascism, colonialism, and imperialism would perhaps have never been born, or at least we would have been saved the havoc that these and their repercussions have brought in their train,

because Islam, true Islam, is the surest preventive against as well as the master-remedy for all such ills."

Western Culture influenced by Islam

So long as the force of Islam continued to be powerful in world history, it worked out an expansionist order based on a new culture, a new philosophy of life, and hence a new civilization. The changes brought into being were tremendous in nature and appeared, in a great measure, entirely miraculous. Even Western culture was very deeply influenced, and the traditions of triumph entrenched far long into modern years, although the fifteenth-century medievalism could well be regarded as its stemming barrier. With the new world of Islam established on the Mediterranean shores, those influences could be believed to 'continue even to our own day.' Besides, the conquests of Islam, with spontaneous absorption of the conquered, on so wide a scale remain a historical wonder. The German became a Roman as soon as he entered Romania but the Roman became Arabized as soon as he was conquered by Islam. Why is this?

Mr. Henri Pirenne, in his renowned book *Mohammad and Charlemagne* answers this question:

"Here the great problem is to determine why the Arabs, who were certainly not more numerous than the Germans, were not, like the latter, absorbed by the populations of the regions which they had conquered, whose civilization was superior to their own. There is only one reply to this question, and it is of the moral order. While the Germans had nothing with which to oppose the Christianity of

the Empire, the Arabs were exalted by a new faith. It was this alone that prevented their assimilation."

Islam—a Moral Philosophy of Life

Mussolini and his co-thinkers once tried to glorify the cult of Italian Fascism with moral plasters in their so-called philosophy which 'conceives of life as a struggle, considering that it behoves man to conquer for himself that life truly worthy of him.' But its mask dropped down when the point of what is 'truly worthy' could be followed. The worth of life, according to this cult, lies in identifying an individual with nation and fatherland, and wanton sacrifice of life, unrelated with any semblance of spiritual idealism. They said :

"The man of Fascism is an individual who is nation and fatherland, which is a moral law, binding together individuals and the generations into a tradition and mission, suppressing the instinct for a life enclosed within the brief round of pleasure in order to restore within duty a higher life free from the limits of time and space—a life in which the individual, through the denial of himself, through the sacrifice of his own interests, through death itself, realizes that completely spiritual existence in which his value as a man lies."

This is at best a moral persuasion for an immoral end. And that is why it could be said to have been fated to fail. But Islam as a social order stood (as it will stand for ever) on a moral philosophy with proper weightage to the absolute truth and relative truths—a philosophy of dynamic spiritualism, not forgetful of the basic needs of materialism. Peoples and territories were physically conquered, socially won over, intellec-

tually captivated, spiritually emancipated and morally welded together into an uncommon fabric of spiritual nationality that knows no geographical boundaries. Such was the significant trend of fusion and assimilation under the levelling forces of Islam—a fusion in which not merely the soul received the overriding consideration as in Christianity. Naturally thus the element of idealism in Islam, supposed to be highly doctrinaire though, stands historically established. The influence of Christianity and Islam differed fundamentally, and this difference has been beautifully hinted by one Western writer thus :

“When it was converted to Christianity, the Empire, so to speak, underwent a change of soul ; when it was converted to Islam, both its soul and its body were transformed.”

Separation of Spiritual and Material Needs

Surprisingly enough, this unique process of transformation, too, got later stuck up to the soul merely and turned into one of passive conservation, hence slowly degenerating into positive decadence. Thus while Muslims lost initiative and confined themselves to quiet corners, the needs of ‘body’ fell out of tune. And the non-Islamic world, with the loosened strings of Christianity, found it really opportune to rise to the occasion, so to say. The new political consciousness of the times was a product of that. This, together with new discoveries, led in to the first throbs of a new vigorous life to meet primarily the needs of ‘body.’ The spadework, indeed, was done substantially by the religious Reformation which, however, can itself be said to have influenced deeply by the doc-

trines of Islam. The discovery of new trade-routes resulted in a new meaning of trade. Characteristically, the new nations, particularly of Europe, turned to foreign trade for building their material prosperity; and new philosophies began to be evolved in complete segregation to any spiritual moorings. Mercantilism was thus gradually wielding a greater force than all the soul-stirring sermons of Christianity.

The greed for overseas riches or the ill-conceived favourable balance of trade gave rise to a race for sea-power and a grab for colonies. This naturally brought into being, among the new nations, new commercial and colonial rivalries, though accompanied by essential fundamental changes in the internal economic set-up of the nations involved. In the new awakening after the Middle Ages of languid stupor, the sixteenth century belonged to Spain and Portugal, while the seventeenth belonged to Holland. By the eighteenth century, however, Spain and Portugal were entirely out of the picture; Holland declined into dimness and gave its place of pre-eminence to France; England only ranked second to France then. The nineteenth century, similarly, is pre-eminently that of Great Britain while the twentieth is undoubtedly that of America. Can it not be said that this whirling series of changing powers was started with the ominous segregation of ethics and religion from social sciences which resulted in a new valuation of values, including nationhood and power? Trade was followed by the flag; and the flag was followed by colonialism and imperialism with multifarious political and economic implications.

These forces of unblended materialism appealed strongly to minds that were left cold by the one-sided

abstract spiritualism of Christianity. New channels of life were now forcefully forged by blocked energy, and were soon raised to the dignity of high philosophies. These channels, however, in their turn produced conflicts amongst the new nations on the high roads of power-craze. It has got to be acknowledged that the power-race brought the ingenuity of man to work so wonderfully that the sum-total of that skill went far to constitute different branches of human knowledge and technology, while inventions and fundamental changes in approach seemed to be the determining factor to maintain the supremacy of a nation. That is why mercantilism was to be replaced by another body of thought and the latter again by another with variation, modification, differentiation, and sometimes with opposite reaction.

That mercantilism of some sort was a potent factor in the achievements of Islam in the early centuries is discernable in the paramount importance given to trade in Islam's palmy days. But it was a philosophy, if at all, one in modern terms, closely associated with preachings and principles of the Prophet Muhammad, and as such has to be treated as a part of an integrated whole. It was economics but with faith.

Unblended Materialism and Modern Civilization

Cut adrift from that anchor of faith, the mundane materialism of the recent centuries continued to be changed rapidly and to be clothed in various garbs and colours, though in a tremendous process of trial and error. Modern materialistic economics, whether of individualistic or socialistic brand, is

the culmination of that extravagant process of trial and error. And naturally, therefore, the structure of the giant industrial civilization bears the stamp of construction in haste, and it has had to expose its gaping gaps at numerous stages—gaps that could hardly be bridged with new palliatives and prophylactics like welfare economics, planned development, or any of the higher dilutions of socialism. “Everything that is done in a hurry,” says a writer, Mr. C.E. Montague, “is certain to be antiquated; that is why modern industrial civilization bears so curious a resemblance to barbarism.” Obviously, thus, capitalism, planned economy, socialism, marxism or communism can at best be the passing phases of an overall desire to overcome the traces of ‘barbarism’ in different magnitudes. But Islam provided a proved system in a harmonized order, and can never be antiquated.

Indeed, mankind has, ‘after long travail, acquired new powers, new instruments of understanding a finer sensibility.’ The educationists, the architects, the economists, the politicians, the sociologists, the business administrators are in fact the middlemen of this age who appeal to new powers, the new thinking and the new feeling to practical affairs; while the scientists are the ceaseless inventors of new ideas, powers, techniques and sensibilities. Yet mankind seems to be pining and groping for a changeless pole in this ceaselessly changing world. As Dr. Taylor says, the unconscious cry of all humanity is :

“Change and decay in all around I see
O Thou Who changest not, Abide with me !”

But changes, at the same time, are not unwanted

interruptions. They are highly salutary as marks of a dynamic world, and hence are in perfect consonance with a dynamic philosophy of life, motivated by a moving faith. When other codes of faith were harnessed to do the job as prime-movers of changes, the faiths themselves had to be sacrificed or thrown into the dark-room of oblivion on account of sad incompatibility troubles. Needless to say that codes for merely the conduct of the soul had necessarily to meet that unhappy end when they were called upon to meet the demands for the 'body' as well. But Islam, well-timed as it is with all tunes and rhythms of both body and soul, could serve as a most satisfactory balance between material and spiritual ends of life, in theory and in practice: and the wheels of progress and changes are well set to the prime-movers of the unchanging spirit. 'Old order changeth, yielding place to new' does not, therefore, apply to that natural order of things compatible with new powers and progress.

World Order and Muslim Countries

The industrial civilization of modern times has erred in raising its colourful edifice without building the foundations of spirit which, as the healthy balancing force, might have regulated the setting of the skyscrapers. The Muslim countries, on the other hand, proud of the past achievements in poise and balance, lost interest in skyscraping and confined themselves to the lowly earth of resigned prostration; but protracted prostration robbed them of the flights of the living spirit, and were hence 'bypassed by the recent centuries of progress and advancement.' The modern materialistic civilization will, indeed, do well to correct its

errors of haste by restoring the lost foundations of spiritualism on Islamic lines. In the same breath, we can ill-afford to forget that centuries of avidity and inactivity in the Muslim countries can hardly be made good without strongly emphasizing the materialistic aspects of Islam. For many centuries, indeed, it can hardly be said that Islam has been and is being practised in full. The feeling is, therefore, justified that 'a materialistic roofing' is to be added to the spiritualistic foundations of Islam, though in reality it means merely a restoration of Islam in its own place. The sure foundations of an enduring order cannot be possible without such a balanced integration which is the characteristic of the organic body of Islam.

It is all like the moon, so to say. The crescent appeared in the past in its full glory and glamour which went on increasing till the brightest phase of the full moon of Islamic civilization and culture, after which stage, however, the glory and beauty gradually waned away. The phases of the moon have, in the course of things, tended to vary with the proportions in which Islamic principles have been practised. Islam can as reasonably be blamed for inactivity and ill-development of the Muslim countries, in culture and in technological progress, as the moon can be for the varying phases of her visibility. Fortunately, signs are deepening that the crescent has reappeared and real endeavours will be made to get the full shine of the full moon. Such strides, however, represent the glowing streaks of light for the dawn of the new order—an order of common good and common aspirations for humanity.

Time to face Facts and Needs of Balancing Life

It is time to face facts and underline the needs of balancing life with an adjustment of ends and means. It is worthwhile to pause in the midst of the hectic haste of material and scientific progress to consider: Hasn't the unfortunate segregation of religion from progress in the past made man forget the limitations of his powers, and, what is more important, made him forget that his limited powers are derived from God? The present age has used its powers and knowledge in sealing the souls of great nations and employing them in deadly strifes among these nations, all in wild pursuits of more power and more possession. Obviously, they are producing not only ordinary consumer goods and goods-breeding goods in unimaginable volumes, but are fiercely competing with one another to produce and stockpile the monsters of atom bombs, hydrogen bombs and mass-killing devices of bacteriology. Let the civilized modern man be reminded by God :

“It is We who have
Placed you with authority
On earth and provided
You therein with means
For the fulfilment of your life :
Small are the thanks
That ye give !” (Qur'an, vii : 10.)

The existing dilemmas and clashes between powers and ideologies, being of a gigantic nature as they are, have, indeed, brought into limelight real doubts, now more than ever. Stirring scepticism is tending to raise its head against the wonted Western way as a means 'for the fulfilment of your life.' When the order and

civilization of so many centuries' toil has, according to the inexorable law of God, been thrown into the melting-pot, let the West retouch her powers and knowledge with the revelation :

“ To Him belongs what is
In the heavens and on earth
And all between them
And all beneath the soil.” (Quran, xx : 6.)

Only thus, the natural sciences and the mighty elements of nature can be dressed in faith and the path of self-destruction may be avoidable. The Qur'an has drawn the pointed attention of the world to the hollow surface-show of the Western order and has, times without number, warned it to take lessons from the past history of changing orders :

“ They know but the outer
(Things) in the life
Of this world : but
Of the End of things
They are heedless.” (Qur'an, xxx : 7.)

“Do they not travel
Through the earth and see
What was the End
Of those before them ?
They were superior to them
In strength : they tilled
The soil and populated it
In greater numbers than these
Have done: there came to them
Their apostles with clear (signs)
Which they rejected, to their
Own destruction: it was not

God Who wronged them but
They wronged their own souls.”

(Qur'an xxx : 9.)

“Many were the ways of life
That have passed away
Before you : travel through
The earth, and see what was
The End of those
Who rejected Truth.” (Quran, iii : 137.)

Evolution of the Correct Way of Life

Time is eternal as life is ; but life proceeds in a perpetual evolution—an evolution of both self and society. If the correct ‘way of life’ is not chosen by people, and faith is not pinned on Truth which ‘stands out clear from Error’ (cf. Qur'an, ii : 256), revolution is sure to be forced upon them by Time. The present economic and political plagues of the world, in general, and the Western hemisphere, in particular, are but the symptoms of that forced revolution. ‘Secrets of self’ are such as can enable man to reach the highest degree of development in character and to make him cry: ‘Catch God Himself in thy noose, O Manly Endeavour’ (Iqbal). The political philosopher and champion of liberty, John Stuart Mill, said: “The worth of a state, in the long run, is the worth of the individuals composing it.” When the individuals inhabiting the world are able to master the ‘secrets of self,’ will not the worth of the world reflect the greatness of God? The individual cannot afford to remain isolated as Robinson Crusoe. As has been so beautifully put by Allama Iqbal :

فرد تمام ربط ملت سے ہے تنہا کہ ہیں
“The individual exists as part of the nation ;
Alone he is nothing :

فوج ہے دریا میں ابیر من صیا کیو
The wave is a wave inside the river ;
Outside it is nothing."

And the idea of nation is spiritual as has been mentioned earlier. The world is the unit for it. Foundations of such an order, therefore, will have to be laid, saturating monumental materialism with the pervasive fire of spiritualism. The verse below embodies the principle for building such foundations :

"But seek, with the (wealth)
Which God has bestowed on thee
The Home of the Hereafter,
Nor forget thy portion in this
World : but do thou good
As God has been good
To thee and seek not
Mischief in the land." (Qur'an, xxviii: 77.)

CHAPTER FOUR

NATURE OF ISLAMIC SOCIALISM

LIBERTY and equality are hard-earned fundamental rights of human beings. But in the economic sphere these cardinal principles have appeared to be irreconcilable, baffling systematic analysis and the evolution of a sound social system. Attempts in this regard include a wide range of varieties between the two extremes of anarchy and collectivism.

Modern Socialism and the Soviet System

Modern socialism, in its various forms, is said to have taken up the challenge with results yet to be proved before the world. As for the Soviet system in particular, scepticism has tended to grow widely concerning its over-emphasis on regimentation and materialistic totalitarianism; and it is too early yet to say if the synthesis of liberty and equality has resulted from the novel experiment. Be it what it is, the trend of developments throughout the world, however, indicates greater appreciation of the socialistic approach than ever, in varying degrees. Eagerness to adopt socialistic methods is unmistakably clear, and clearer is the eagerness of the Soviet system. Hence a unique active interest has developed in the pursuit of a golden via media, if possible, between economic individualism and perfect socialism.

On the one side, the blind forces of economic competition have subordinated human weal and woe, with perilous disregard of the latter for which the

system is intended ; and on the other, collectivism in its universal sweep and sway tends to engulf the atoms of human beings, sacrificing the key of human progress—freest scope for the fullest development of individual selves.

The Age of Social Man

In such a context, it is worthwhile to turn back the pages of the history of thirteen hundred years to probe into the Islamic framework of social and economic life preached and practised by the Great Prophet and his Caliphs. Social thinkers have reached the conclusion: "We think and believe that the new epoch of civilization will be described as the age of social man in which society will be much more of an organized whole, tied together by the living relations of human beings, instead of mainly by the cold impersonal forces of profit and economic competition" (Julian Huxley); and a proper analysis of the outlines of the Islamic way of life will translate this abstract conclusion into reality. Let us here look into some of the broad features of that ever-new social and economic order.

Social Equality

The distinguishing feature of Islam lies in its complete human equality. Every individual, irrespective of origin, creed, wealth, position or sex, enjoys exactly the same status and privilege, socially, politically and economically. In any social behaviour, including religious ritual like holding prayer in congregation, there is no room for any special privilege for anybody, be he the Caliph or the slave. The position accorded to women and slaves is unparalleled and proverbial.

Slavery was countenanced because there was no tangible distinction between a slave and a master in the practical sense; the classification was maintained for sheer administrative convenience. Captives taken by conquest enjoyed without restriction the benefits of the state, including the right of emancipation. The slave could marry the master's daughter, and could lead the congregational prayer, if so qualified. Similarly all opportunities were open to women, even to slavegirls.

The dignity of labour was not only an article of faith but was universally practised; and the actual examples of the sharing of work by Caliphs with slaves are still told and retold as legends in all countries. This is how perfect equality of opportunity coupled with the dignity of labour and equality of responsibility could lay the foundations of an ideal system of social justice, inconceivable elsewhere even to this day. "There is no example," says a writer, "in human history of any other religion, civilization, commonwealth, which has done so much practically in the conquest of race, class and colour and the achievement of social justice for the poor, the weak, the orphans, the widow, the slave, the women and the depressed classes of humanity."

The Soviet system is said to have taken its cue from the levelling forces of Islam working with the dissolution of the Roman Empire, but it seems to have overdone the levelling role, ignoring the natural inequalities in human capabilities. Islam's steam roller of progress rolled in consonance with nature and levelled up instead of levelling down. That is why Islamic equality of opportunity resulted in a "convulsion of the world" and, in the words of Gibbon, every mem-

ber of a new society ascended to the natural level of his capacity and courage.

Absence of Exploitation

• One important function of the far-reaching conception of Islamic equality is to leave no room for any possibility of economic exploitation. Islam conceives a society immune from class distinctions and vested interests, and hence free from the virus of class conflict, which threatens modern countries, excepting Russia, with deep-seated economic maladies. The ordinary theory of landlordism that resulted in the development of feudalism and sub-infeudation, and the essential features of capitalism with private ownership of means of production and concentration of capital in a few hands are unknown to Islam. •

Feudalism has been observed to be a necessary adjunct to perverted political rule; and its relics are still to be found in the existence of numerous intervening links in the chain between the state and the ryot—whether dukes and barons or rajas, nawabs or zemindars (landlords). In Islam land belongs to none but God, and as such is to be treated as state property under the decree of the *Malikul Mulk*. Thus the absence of private landordism cuts at the root of exploitation that has bled many countries white. Similarly in the Islamic order of things there cannot be any exploitation of labour by capital, whatever the structure of industrialism, the distinction between a worker and a capitalist is simply unrecognized by Islam. Labour is not despised but idle finance capitalism is despised. • Islam provides an absolutely classless society from the standpoint of the scientific socialists who hail “class-war” for their

starting ground towards the formation of the idle society. What Soviet Russia achieved, in a limited measure, with the help of a violent revolution and ruthless extermination, was achieved in the fullest possible measure by the Islamic evolution of society.

Significance of Zakat

One of the pillars of Muslim society is the institution of *zakat*, for which the current practice of almsgiving is only a frail substitute. Zakat is, in fact, a tax which the rich have to pay towards the common welfare of the nation as a whole. The object of this institution has been laid down by the Prophet himself: "To take wealth from the rich and to return it to the poor" (*Bukhari*). In the light of such an explicit objective, Pigou's cry of welfare economics on the basis of transference of wealth from the rich to the poor has nothing original in it.

Evidently, zakat is some sort of an income tax paid at the rate of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent of one's income or possession above the specified limit of '*nisab*.' The proceeds of this tax pooled in the Baitul Mal were used as a mighty spring of social services in various ways to produce the effects of an all-round equality of incomes. The heads of expenditure under which this fountain of public funds shall be spent have been detailed in the Qur'an: (a) to relieve the distress of the poor whose incomes are less than their necessary expenditure; (b) to help the needy who possess no property; (c) to meet the cost of collection of zakat; (d) to help new Muslims; (e) to free captives; (f) to help travellers when in difficulty; (g) to spend in the way of God, *i.e.*, in the way of humanity, or to

defend the country against enemies., Can there be a more comprehensive scheme of social security? The erection of poor-houses, workmen's compensation, old age pensions, unemployment insurance, etc., are only a few of the numerous measures of the Islamic scheme of things recently adopted by some modern countries in order to neutralize the instabilities of the capitalistic framework. But, apart from abstract institutionalism, zakat in the Muslim constitution of the Caliphate days was so comprehensive and broadbased that it not only promoted socialistic redistribution of wealth but also tended to create a healthy non-capitalist frame of mind and a collective spirit.

Capitalism Condemned

Apart from the instrument of zakat, which releases positive forces of socialism, two more blows have been dealt by Islam at the roots of capitalism. The most stunning blow is delivered in the unqualified denunciation of *riba* (usury). *Riba* was a ruinous institution amongst the Arabs, which doubled and redoubled the capital in no time, bringing in early bankruptcy and the ruin of debtors. The lender could have advanced loans deliberately to dispossess others of their property, who were forced by straitened circumstances to seek his help. *Riba* could thus serve as a monstrous instrument of that social oppression which is in direct opposition to the socialistic spirit of Islam founded on peace and happiness for all. Hence the Qur'an has ordained: "O you who believe, do not favour usury, doubling and redoubling, and be careful of your duty to God that you may be successful" (ii: 129).

Those who were agitating against the oppressive

methods adopted by moneylenders in India to exact usurious rates of interest from the innocent cultivators, were simply echoing the Islamic spirit of approach, since Islam does not acknowledge any transaction that does not involve reciprocal benefit.

Is it not highly symptomatic that by forbidding usury, Islam should take away the life-blood of capitalism?

Right of Property and Standard of Living

Another blow to capitalism comes from the Islamic conception of the right of property and standard of living. Under Islamic law, an individual has the right to enjoy his earned income and property but only to the extent necessary for maintaining a reasonable standard of living. Hoarding of wealth to create inequality of status and artificial social stratification is denounced by the Qur'an in unequivocal terms: "And those who hoard up gold and silver and do not spend it in the way of God (*i.e.*, for the benefit of the nation or humanity) announce to them a painful chastisement" (ix: 34).

The Islamic conception of a reasonable standard of living refers to bare necessities of life (including necessities for efficiency). But excess over this standard is permitted by recognizing the right of private ownership of property and income with the proviso that the excess shall be distributed by the individuals amongst others who are below the standard. "The son of man," says the Prophet, "has no other right that he should have a house wherein he may live, and a piece of cloth wherewith he may hide his nakedness, and a clip of bread and some water" (*Tirmizi*). He

also prescribes the rule of individual distribution: "He who has an excess of transport animals, let him give it to him who has none; and he who has an excess of provision let him give it to him who has not." That is how voluntary individual charity and endowments were compulsory in effect and could be claimed by others in those days as a matter of right, without associating the odium of these days. If the individual method of distribution is likely to go wrong, the right of the state on behalf of the have-nots, to provide for the distribution of the collective excess, is also recognized, and the foundation is laid for a state distributive system. It is common knowledge that in those days of Islamic socialism, the excess or superfluity of incomes did not allow individuals to roll in luxury, but was readily transformed into public endowments through *waqf* and social services of various sorts; and man-made inequalities were kept at the level of the irreducible minimum. Can ever modern socialism go farther?

• Private Enterprise

The unique feature of Islamic socialism, as a synthesis of ideologies, is that it has not denied to private enterprise its due scope. A logical corollary of the right of private ownership and denunciation of usury is private initiative in the productive sphere of the Islamic economic life. There cannot be two opinions about the fact that private enterprise is the cornerstone of real progress, provided the excess of the private profit motive can be properly curbed. And one of the serious criticisms of collectivism is that the urge to work for society as a whole and not for one's personal income is too difficult and obscure a goal for

the individual to aim at; and hence lack of social spirit is prone to be the hardest stumbling-block of economic progress. Even Soviet Russia today is conscious of the effects of that unpractical attitude, and has had recently to restore the incentive of profit in a restricted form by reviving the cooperative system of production.

The partially socialistic country of Great Britain, too, is searching its heart and tossing between the "carrot before the donkey" economy and the "cane behind the donkey" economy. Soviet Russia seems to be gradually introducing the "carrot" as the "cane" is failing to produce the desired effect, while Britain tends to fall back on the "cane" since the "carrot" alone seems to be unsatisfactory. Nevertheless, each has an odd job to do with a queer combination. On balance, however, Islam seems to provide the best realizable synthesis of the two opposites; incentive to work is retained by recognizing restricted private ownership of property or means of production, but perfectly socialistic effects are produced by providing compulsory distribution of "excesses" of income and property. And the system is most harmoniously workable since it is part of a Muslim's faith never to think of waging a war against God and His Prophet.

Remedy For Ideological War

On the face of it, it will thus appear that the structure of Islamic economy is capitalistic in outline, though restricted very largely by socialistic institutions. But idle capitalism having been banned, individual enterprise—not any capitalist—is the pivot round which all economic activities will revolve here. Islam promotes, not "money breeding money," but actual

enterprise in all fields of activity. The ends have been cautiously safeguarded against their degeneration into means. With all this, the word capitalism will be some sort of a misnomer to describe the Islamic economy. We had better describe it the other way round, in terms of socialism.

One may hold Professor A.M.A. Shustery's view that "Islam inculcates moderate socialism and with it prescribes a rational and just mode of dealing as between members of the Muslim community." But this is "moderate socialism" on the surface, but beneath the crust the spirit of socialism goes so deep that virtually it builds an edifice of scientific communism minus the modern class-war jargon and the rigours and moral and spiritual lapses of Soviet Russia.

It is probably this aspect that gave rise to the archapostle of absolute collectivism in Abuzer Ghaffari, a companion of the Prophet, during the ideal socio-economic background of 'Umar's Caliphate. It may be the province of research to unearth the mystery about the authoritative interpretation of Abuzer Ghaffari. To a layman, however, the Islamic framework gives the impression of a code of natural socialism to suit the natural conditions of humanity at large. That is evident in the naturalness and international outlook, stressed so strong in all principles and institutions of Islam. And now significantly, when the world is torn between two ideological camps threatening a showdown in one more atomic war, it is the natural socialism of Islam that can perhaps venture to mediate and mitigate the challenge. It is something more than a pious hope with a Muslim that the Islamic conception of natural socialism can alone serve as a common meeting-ground for the warring

ideologies and hence as the surest basis of enduring peace.

Pakistan and Islamic Socialism

It has got to be acknowledged, indeed, that Pakistan is far away from that natural socialism which is basically the synthesis of capitalism and communism, but the birth of Pakistan simply makes it possible to aspire to that goal—a goal tried and perfected many centuries before the modern world could think of it. It is this goal that inspired the poet Iqbal to chastise and chasten the Muslims of this subcontinent into striving towards the fullest development of individuality and national socialism in the perspective of universal brotherhood, and made him regard Karl Marx, the father of scientific socialism, as revealing the Islamic spirit of social organization, though without its spiritual concomitants. It is, therefore, no wonder that our Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah should announce in the clearest terms: "Pakistan should be based on sure foundations of social justice and Islamic socialism—not any other 'ism'—which emphasizes the equality and brotherhood of man." But the pre-conditions of such an Islamic socialism will have to be constructed with our conscious care; and it is a happy sign that the Pakistan Muslim League in its new constructive role is intended to assume that onerous task of creating a classless society based on equality and fraternity, on which Islamic socialism stands.

A glow of hope has further appeared on the horizon with the formation of the Fourth Party by the Muslim members of the Bombay Legislature with the motto: "The earth and all that it contains are a

free gift of Providence to all mankind." The party will recognize the institution of property "but as a trust of which the owner and his dependents would be the first beneficiaries." Its programme is roughly one of Islamic socialism. Thus a good beginning seems to have been made, and, toiling our hardest during this transition period of reconstruction, we may look forward with confidence to giving a concrete shape to the true picture of Islamic socialism to accept the communistic challenge; while the world, of its own accord, may choose to escape between the horns of the modern dilemma.

CHAPTER FIVE

MEANING OF ZAKAT

WHEN the world, significantly, seems to be at the crossroads of ideologies, it is a happy turn that much attention has tended to be focussed on Islamic principles. Happier still is the modern tendency of inviting the analytical and critical mind more and more to appreciate and evaluate those principles. If Islamic principles, formulated thirteen hundred years before, can stand the fire of scientific analysis, and, what is more, offer positive improvement upon modern approaches in ways more than one, it is a pity that the odour of dogmatism as a rancour of religion should be unwittingly associated with them. Zakat is one such principle that need not be treated merely as an article of faith, but should be dispassionately examined with particular reference to its social and economic effects. I do not, however, mean that zakat has no significant content in terms of spiritualism. That aspect apart (truly an important aspect), the principle may very well be viewed, even by non-Muslims, as one leading to public policies with vital social objectives, and, as such, falling within the purview of social sciences like economics. Here I have endeavoured to deal with only one function of the principle of zakat in relation to saving and spending in society.

Need of Balance between Saving and Spending

Without going into economic jargon, one knows from experience and observation that saving and spending form two broad channels for the spontaneous

flow of all-round benefit in a country which is not planned on a collective footing. But the desirable relation between saving and spending has to be kept with care, either through economic dictatorship or through the provision of key principles that will themselves set in motion healthy and equilibrating forces contributing to the perfect adjustment between the two. Otherwise, loss of harmony in this sphere will gradually spread to all others of the social fabric and the body economic, giving rise to bristling problems of insoluble character.

Incomes are earned by men only to spend; for, spending is the key to satisfaction of wants. Obviously, indeed, the philosophy of "eat, drink and be merry; for, tomorrow we die" is likely to die hard. For, to the believers in such philosophy, a prejudice against saving is but natural, while an all-out campaign for cent-per-cent spending may be welcome. Some sort of economics may also be involved in aid of such a stand. Indeed, spending furnishes, in a sense, the real fuel and lubricant of the economic wheels. Spending makes up what is called effective demand, representing in its turn the potential markets for goods and services. A stimulus to spending, therefore, implies a stimulus to new employment, new incomes, new products, new services, new industries, new trades and so on. A rosy picture of progress and prosperity, smiles and cheers, hilarity and chivalry may also be drawn by the dainty brush of easy imagination. But when such believers pause a little to project their vision just a bit ahead towards the horizon, those smiles and cheers are likely to melt away in fear of the approaching

ghost of sorrow and sighs. If no care is taken to keep in their existing working condition the host of things like machines and equipment, godowns and warehouses, ports and docks, railways and steamship and so on, the wheels of continuous supply of goods will, one fine morning, stop moving. The flow of production, employment and income, and hence spending power, will lose its way in the desert of obsolescence of capital. In the beginning, crisis will develop on the supply side of consumer goods through difficulties of capital in those industries. In the next stage, spending itself will be affected through reduced incomes out of inhibited productivity. Accumulation of capital is thus indispensable for maintenance of capital goods in good order and for the continuity in supply of goods on which incomes are to be spent. How can that be possible without saving an appreciable slice of current incomes? Hence, in the interest of spending itself, saving is essential. If, again, the flow of goods on which to spend incomes is desired to be increased, this involves increased saving, though this conflicts with the desire to spend.

In the same way, there cannot be any one-sided philosophy of saving without spending. True, saving, and saving alone, can result in large-scale accumulation of capital and can help a country make big strides on the high roads of development, even to reproduce the miracle of industrial revolution. But it is common sense that the volume of savings in a country is conditioned by the ability of men to save, which itself depends on the average size of income and on what is called the propensity to consume. Maybe, a country is experiencing a rapid rise in the income per

head on account of a high degree of technical and scientific progress ; and it is just possible that her propensity to consume, in general, diminishes while the propensity to save increases. The tendency may, however, gather momentum ; and the community may be facing the crisis of reduced income through reduced spending, increased savings turning into hoards in the absence of outlets for investment. Oversaving is thus another malady as is overspending. Obviously, again, undersaving and underspending will also lead to perplexing stagnation. To maintain the balance between saving and spending is thus the problem and a dire necessity to keep the taps of activity, employment, income and happiness wide open.

✓ **The Role of Zakat**

Let us observe the implications of the principle of zakat in this context. Roughly speaking, zakat implies comprehensive taxation in kind and also in cash, which seizes for the state one-tenth of all agricultural produce, one-fifth of all mineral wealth, and means a steep rate of income tax or capital tax under various conditions. But in the sphere of saving and spending, which is our scope of study here, the principle, in the train of its economic effects, serves to act as a double-edged weapon to keep the disturbing forces underlying both saving and spending in healthy check. The immediate effect of zakat is, however, to reduce the propensity to consume in some degree, as is common to all forms of taxation. If a disproportionately large slice of this volume of income is saved, it may naturally result in undue hardship and general poverty following from low activity induced by small

spending. Zakat as a principle in itself carries a check against that. The stage is, however, set for it by the abolition of all forms of rate of interest in the Islamic economic order. The inducement to save, in so far as it depends on interest as reward for saving, is nil in such an economic order. In this background, the principle of zakat will be operating as a real deterrent against idle hoards, by taxing them at 2½ per cent above a low exemption limit called *nisab*. Investment is thus positively stimulated while hoarding is positively discouraged.

Controversy is, however, likely to arise about the application of zakat to invested capital, the lifeline of industrial progress. The opinion of 'Ulama (the Muslim savants) is divided on this issue. Some are strongly holding the view that the principle should be literally applied to all forms of wealth mentioned by the Prophet without exception. There are others who appreciate the modern forces of economic progress and are in favour of exempting invested capital by the exercise of what is called *ijtihad* (the logical deduction on a legal and theological question by the learned). The latter school also favour the application of zakat on industries in the form of income tax, not capital tax. To me, it appears that more caution in the exercise of *ijtihad* in modern times is desirable, while it is unthinkable nowadays that industrial progress under the Islamic order should be kept at a low ebb by discouraging investment together with hoarding. By freeing investment from taxation and taxing hoards, it might be possible to attain the ideal position of savings being equal to investment with zero hoarding, as dreamt by Lord Keynes. This is of paramount importance for

countries conspicuously undeveloped, and also for countries that are far behind the Islamic order. When the structure of society as a whole will have to be re-fashioned according to Islamic principles, the stage of development required for such success will also have to be consciously built. That is why under conditions of poor development and far below the Islamic order (that has an optimum stage of development for itself), *ijtihad* may be very fruitfully exercised in favour of freeing investment from the conventional method of applying zakat. But, for the matter of that, we cannot rule out the application of zakat as capital tax when capital accumulation is going too far. After an optimum measure of development, a stage may come in which over-accumulation of capital should also be checked. Zakat as a capital tax will then offer the remedy. Thus *ijtihad* in this respect is a weapon of expediency which has to be used with caution.

The distributive aspect of zakat is much more significant. Under the influence of this principle, the spending power of the community as a whole is widely and evenly distributed, eliminating the dreadful tendency of concentrating incomes in few and fewer hands. The state takes away by way of zakat a substantial portion of surplus spending power from wherever it exists, and distributes the pooled surplus over the have-nots to increase their spending power. Over and above, the compulsory obligation of each income-earner is highly reinforced by that of private charity. If construed in the spirit of the Quranic injunction, that part also becomes something like compulsory. The Qur'an has asked every earner to spend freely from his income in charity which has practically

no limit. The idea is very clear from the reported statement of the renowned Caliph 'Ali: "God has ordained that the rich are to pay out of their wealth to that extent which is sufficient for the needs of the poor: so that if they do not find food or clothing or they struggle (unsuccessfully for their living), it would be because the rich are not doing their duty, and God will take them to task on the Day of Judgment and will punish them." This, in fact, means that the objective of Islamic charity is not attained while a single poor soul is left wallowing in poverty (*i.e.*, without the necessaries for life). That, among other things, stands for the maintenance of an optimum level of spending power for all.

Is Full Employment under Capitalism possible ?

From even a cursory glance over the purposes to which the zakat proceeds are to be put, under the regulations of Islam, it will appear that the zakat funds involve a bold public works policy of the sort that is adopted by modern capitalistic countries to get rid of depression and unemployment. It is, indeed, like that but with a difference.

Capitalistic economy, as is well known, is inherently characterized by concentration of wealth in few and fewer hands and perpetuating inequality of incomes, which, however, tend to jeopardize economic progress within that framework. That is because a seed lies buried deep in the system, and a perplexing disease makes its appearance as a matter of course. Among other things, the health of an economic system depends directly upon the continuous investment process. Higher and higher incomes for just a few

make the volume of potential savings for them very high. But to make the economic stream flow on a high level and to make the system stand on an even keel, the portion of the national income that is saved must be returned to the system back through the door of investment.

Mr. David Lynch, following Professor Hansen of America, writes :

“Under our system of capitalistic individualism, with its mass production, high *per capita* income, unequal distribution and concentrated incomes, we have developed a high savings economy. This has given rise to problems never before encountered and has created an urgent need to find opportunities for continuous capital investment. The failure to accomplish this in the late twenties—in other words unplanned, unwilling and unforeseen hoarding—was the basic cause of the economic collapse.”

Admittedly thus, capitalism has, more than once, exposed its bankruptcy in achieving the continuous flow of investment on desired lines and in eliminating unhealthy hoarding. As a result, high savings coupled with low investment spelt ruin by creating the vicious circle of lower income, unemployment, poverty and reduced spending power. Social conditions, following from this unenviable state of things, are, unfortunately, grim, barring the unseemly contrast of the blessed ring of few high-pressure savers who enjoy a handsome return as interest on idle savings. In such circumstances, the ‘gadgets’ of a state policy of full employment through public borrowing and public investment are invoked to take up the unfulfilled task of private

investment. But has such a policy ever proved equal to the task? Even the warmest advocate of the policy, Lord Keynes, could not say, it had. For, the inherent unsettling factors remain. Public borrowing here only means postponement of greater inequality, which will follow through payment of interest and repayment of loans. It implies an unending chase between borrowing and the needs of investment, for which the former can never be adequate.

Zakat and Conditions in America

The richest sector of the globe—the land of the skyscrapers—is said to have been suffering from the interesting symptoms of such an economic sickness. In the immediate present, the symptoms have, however, been overshadowed and indeed largely offset by the hectic haste of the rearmament drive, changing the tide of economic phenomena not only within herself but widely affecting all others on the earth. But even before World War II, those symptoms appeared at least as unmistakably as could justify the appointment of an expert medical council called "The Temporary National Economic Committee." It is to this Committee that Dr. M. Ezekiel recommended a fivefold programme for achieving the lost balance between saving and spending:

1. Government spending as adequate as to counter-balance the excess savings. Such a public expenditure programme may be launched on the basis of public borrowing, interest-free money or on the basis of taxation.
2. Taxation to reduce the excess savings and

increase investment by reducing the willingness to save and increasing the willingness to invest.

3. Measures to increase individual security and reduce the pressure to save, such as, adequate social security against old age, unemployment, dependency and all forms of disability.

4. Modification of distribution of incomes to ensure that profits do not increase disproportionately at the expense of wages in particular.

5. Measures to increase the spending power of low income groups.

If one pauses for a moment to reflect on the functions of the institution of zakat, one can readily say that such an elaborate bundle of measures and policies, as suggested by Dr. Ezekiel, will simply be needless in an Islamic economic order. In it, zakat provides the balancing lever to keep the forces of spending and saving in harmony. The absence of the rate of interest together with taxation of hoards, significantly, leaves no room for excess saving, requiring large-scale public spending. The principle of zakat, *inter alia*, stands for aversion from excess savings and all kinds of hoards, and as such promotes the inclination to invest, while reducing the inclination to save. Individual security is also provided in the scheme of distribution of zakat proceeds, so specifically mentioned in the Qur'an and extensively elucidated by the Prophet Muhammad and his Caliphs. The Zakat Fund is, so to say, a Social Security Fund to insure against all kinds of accidents and disabilities that generally prompt a man to save

or hoard. Moreover, with no idle finance capital, wages, in such an order of things, will naturally assume a pre-eminent place in the scheme of distribution; and since real individual enterprise is the pivot and co-operation the key in the mechanism, labour may well be intimately associated with the productive enterprises and hence their profits. In the same way, no additional measures are called for to increase the spending power of the low income groups in an Islamic society. Through the operation of zakat, forces are set in motion to transfer a substantial part of wealth in possession of the high income groups to the low income groups. Over and above, the private counterpart of charity, which is practically as potent as the other, will also feed this vital flow of spending power to the less fortunate. That is to say, all these wonderful effects will tend, in the Islamic order, to flow uninterrupted by the capitalist brand setbacks of booms and depressions, themselves serving as checks and counterchecks against all deviations from the subtle position of balance between saving and spending.

There are some who seem to be reluctant to think of any limit to investability of new capital and hence to encouragement of saving. One such writer, Henry Hazlitt, says:

“There will not be a surplus of capital until the most backward country is as well equipped technologically as the most advanced, until the most inefficient factory in America is brought abreast of the factory with the latest and most elaborate equipment, and until the most modern tools of pro-

duction have reached a point where human ingenuity is at a dead end and can improve them no further. As long as any of these conditions remain unfulfilled, there will be indefinite room for more capital."

This sounds like the cry of a moneylender from his housetop that he can justifiably lend while a single poor soul remains to turn to him, assuming thereby that the social responsibility of removing poverty in entirety lies on his shoulders. In that sense, indeed, there cannot be any limit to new capital as there cannot be any to moneylending, which will never work to remove poverty but will rather increase it. True, America could, leaving aside the ghost of a new war, maintain quasi-boom conditions by turning herself into the workshop for backward countries in the spirit of international social service or charity (which is also a sidelight of the principle of zakat). But will America do it? If that is done, the limit, even in the international context, is likely to come soon. If, on the other hand, the backward nations are thrown into the nice cobwebs of loans with their meshes of voluminous interest payment and repayment of loans, the limit recedes farther and farther. If no demand is created in the backward countries for "the most modern tools" produced by America, a depression is bound to be created by her new capital. Had America been an Islamic country, she could have followed international zakat and world federation would not be as remote as it is today.

Zakat and Ethics of Economics

One merit of the principle of zakat is obviously that of avoiding the risk of locking the stable door after

the horse has fled. It has not to diagnose the depression after the depression had set in; but depression is spontaneously averted—averted without painful jerks of the capitalist system. Besides, the principle has a spiritual content which exercises a very salutary influence, particularly in the minds of the would-have-been tax-dodgers. Administration of the many-sided institution is thus rendered delightfully easy, the headache of tax evasion being unknown as an article of faith. Zakat, as a social spring of real economic welfare, is thus made an ethical and spiritual objective at the same time.

This brings in the issue of relationship of economics to ethics. We are at one with Mr. David Lynch who says :

“In nature, health and beauty are closely related; in architecture, engineering and athletics, symmetry and grace correlate with efficiency. Possibly there is an analogy. Apparently an economic system best adapted to serve the needs of the entire population will function most smoothly. It would appear that, when the economy fails to distribute its benefits widely we have collapse and depression; when it fails the ethical objective, it fails the economic objective.”

It is no wonder, therefore, that the principle of zakat, being fortified as it is by the anchor of ethical spiritualism, should achieve its economic objective most fully. Cut adrift from that anchor, too, the principle may, in a large measure, bear fruits, as far as is economically feasible. But tinged and finished by faith, the mellow fruits are likely to ripen to the core and the tree is likely to bear in the largest measure.

The largest measure was once the result of application of the principle, and, to use an expression of the late Mr. Marmaduke Pickthall, remains "the greatest astonishment of history." It is also a historical truth that very similar principles have been tried, knowingly, in social organizations unmingled by Islamic faith and a considerable measure of success has been attained. Mr. Pickthall bears testimony to this in inimitable language :

"Many writers have tried to explain away the amazing success of Islam by ascribing it to outside causes. But how will they explain the fact that so long as the Muslims implicitly obeyed a particular injunction of the Sacred Law, they succeeded in the sphere of that injunction, and whenever they neglected to obey it, they failed; and how will they explain it that non-Muslims, doing what the Muslims are enjoined to do, have always succeeded in that special direction, except by the supposition that the injunctions of the Qur'an and the Prophet Muhammad are laws for all mankind—natural laws which men transgress at their own peril or rather at the peril of their race."

Let sanity seek its shelter before such peril yawns. Full-bodied principles, not one-sided ones, may be applied in the sore world of today with equal fruitfulness, since the chiselling weapon of *ijtihad* is there to meet the exigencies of modern complications. Let the tune sing in every vein :

"On truths permanent stands our foundation of security,

"This life, not the magic philosophy of Plato."
(Iqbal.)

CHAPTER SIX

MAN AND EVOLUTION

UNFORTUNATE and unhappy paradoxes which characterize the existing civilization so boldly are but the logical corollaries of a wrong emphasis in valuations of life and man *vis-a-vis* wealth and material welfare. In its frantic effort to apply science with a view to getting the most out of the objective world, the civilized world of today has gone out of its way to lose the deeper connotation of life and man. That is why wrong conclusions do follow and when they are accepted as orthodox objectives, wrong and painful consequences are inevitable.

Man as an End

The modern science of economics is a great pillar of modern civilization. But what has science made of man in this field? Hasn't the exactions of scientific exactitude robbed the place man ought to occupy in the plan of worldly existence, of which economic plans seek to cover a part? Medieval economic thinking did not and could not appear to be scientifically systematic. But once the scientific attitude was applied with catholic zeal, forces were set on motion to carry research and knowledge away from the ultimate goal of man. That is, however, no argument that medievalism was better than modernism. Modern economics has achieved wonders in its own way but has, *inter alia* with other sciences, tended to lead the world away from the right way. Warnings were

echoed from time to time even in the voice of economists themselves. They stand out even today as lamp-posts that economics—a social science indeed—is, on the more important side, 'a study of man' (though essential) and, further, it should, as such, serve as 'a handmaid of ethics and a servant of practice.' Even that ray of hope had, of necessity, to be a faint patch in the gloomy horizon; for, it stressed only a part of human life and not necessarily a prominent part. This was but a natural outcome of apportionment of human life into watertight cabins of various sciences. Naturally, therefore, the effect of an isolated emphasis on man or human life had but to fade out like a stream finding its way to parts of a wide desert. The cardinal problem has thus been posed that numerous ends are to be met, as the province of economics as a science will suggest now, by scarce means that have alternative uses. An attempt is always made in that context to ration out the scarce means without rationalizing the ends which are sought to be, on the one hand, circumscribed by gross mundane needs, and to be multiplied and kindled in violent intensities within that range, on the other. Man and his goal had therefore to die an unnatural death under unnatural pressure of over-specialization and one-sided scientificization.

One scientist ventured to analyze man and prescribed a formula for mixing up ingredients in the right proportions and in the right way in order to produce the result—man. Such a ridiculous analysis can but aim the body of man. What about his mind and soul, then? Human life may be taken in pieces for purposes of analysis and the pieces will be the

provinces of separate sciences, individually and severally. From different angles of vision, man may be pictured and analyzed in terms of various sets of terminology. The physiological study will be in terms of tubes and pipes, nerves and bones and blood vessels; the chemical study will be in terms of molecules and elements; physicist's study in terms of electrons and protons while the psychological study is likely to refer to mental events, images, sensations, etc., coupled with the psycho-analyst's study of the unconscious sector of the mind, the ego of the libido and so on. Besides, man reveals various features in different roles as intended in the use of expressions like economic man, statistician, statesman, biologist, medical man and so on. But all these do not present a real picture of man in entirety. There is something more than what science can read and analyze in man. Even modern scientists have come to realize this immortal truth. Mr. C.E.M. Joad, a renowned philosopher, asserts :

“There is always, we shall insist, some factor in a human being which escapes from the meshes of the scientific net, and this is precisely the factor in respect of which he is more than the sum of the parts or aspects which the sciences study. It is also in virtue of this factor that he is free.”

The sciences have not paid heed to that factor that makes a man more than the sum-total of his parts or aspects and so too the social sciences. It is for this reason that the social science of economics that professed to study a part of man and his activities could so far neither lead to the whole of man's achievement, nor could maintain the essential link with it. Planning for man's

welfare from the compartmental ken of such economics can, therefore, hardly claim to be the panacea for the human ills of the present world. If the scientific approach to problems of human life is to be really pursued, mankind can hardly do without a comprehensive science that formulates a set of universal laws and indispensable postulates which could guide life in general (which is, however, always something more than the sum-total of the individuals as the constituent atoms of the body of mankind). If causal relationship between an All-Knowing Reality and the universe and life is not questioned, the Qur'an, and no other code, can claim to embody the requirements of such a comprehensive science that leaves no part of life and man untouched. It is within the framework of such a code that compartmental planning may be attempted. But specialized economic planning to suit such a framework should necessarily be different from what is observed in countries grouped Western Democracies and more so from that of Soviet Russia. For, here, too, there is need for taking the 'whole' of man and not a part, as is in fashion in the wide world now.

Progress and Evolution

Some scepticism may raise its head: How is it possible to maintain a rigid framework in a changing world? The force of evolution is, so to say, permeating historical processes; otherwise history would have been a reservoir of dead leaves. Social progress has therefore to be conceived as an evolutionary process in itself. How can such evolution be reconciled with a pre-existing code of knowledge? Frankly speaking, this seeming paradox has been the root of much mis-

conception and stagnation in thought and action amongst many, including even Muslims with modern knowledge.

Human society progresses via routes of assimilation and diversification. None would say 'No' to it. But, does it follow the irresistible urge of 'an advancing evolutionary purpose'? Can we say that development of human society has its own end in pursuance of a definite plan? An inquiry into the principles of change, decay and growth in human affairs alone can throw light on the issue. In the midst of the clouds of confusion on the problem, two opposite views peer out: (a) one view held largely by orthodox Muslim 'Ulama that there is no and will never be real fundamental change in human affairs demanding a revision of the codified laws of Shari'at. According to this school, the eternal principles formulated thirteen hundred years back can apply to all stages of development and in all human societies without modification. If at all there are changes, indeed, they are but waves on the surface of the eternal sea, caused by temporary winds. (b) The opposite view rules the West and particularly developed by communists to suit their interpretation of changes in material history. It is that the world is a cauldron of ceaseless change which is also the salient feature of human affairs or social conditions. This school denounces any established principle and denies the existence of any eternal truths and hence the necessity of religion. Truths meant for one age cannot, according to them, do any good to another age. The process of development and progress only makes this school of thought anxious for the latest change which is also to be superseded.

Apart from going into the inconsistencies of the dialectical method of communists, a dispassionate study of historical events leads to a conclusion different from both the views above. The dialectical formula seeks to prove that development and history or civilization takes place through the synthesis of contraries in which the inevitability of progress is supposed to produce a change for the better. History is replete with concrete negations of such a partisan view of events. In innumerable events, the conflict of contraries has not resulted in the establishment of a more developed system but the complete death of one of the opposing forces. Convincingly, the eminent philosopher, Bertrand Russell says :

“The barbarian invasion of Rome did not give rise to more developed economic forms, nor did the expulsion of the Moors from Spain, or the destruction of the Albigenses in the South France. Before the time of Homer, the Mycenacu civilization had been destroyed, and it was many centuries before a developed civilization again emerged in Greece. The examples of decay and retrogression are at least as numerous and as important in history as the examples of development. The opposite view which appears in the works of Marx and Engels is nothing but nineteenth-century optimism.”¹

On analysis, it will be found that this concept of development, unwarranted and dangerously subtle in itself, is but an ‘accident of history’ resulting from the evergrowing power-consciousness of man over forces of nature. In the nineteenth century, this accident gave

1. Cf. C.E.M. Joad, *Ethics & Politics*, p. 710.

revolutionizing inventions and techniques in the hands of man who used them for multiplying production of goods. Curiously enough, the system thus developed was called capitalism, the contrary to what has been sought by the new prophets of communism for their desired thesis of a higher synthesis. But was it a contrary system that they set up? Their object is also the same with regard to multiplication of material goods. Rather the immediate object of communism is, admittedly, to outstrip capitalism in production. The results of scientific research are sought to be utilized at least as effectively, if not more, as under capitalism, to increase wealth for the community as a whole. It may be true that they are in favour of a more equitable distribution of that increased wealth. But, what is more important, their overriding emphasis on material goods has not only meant no improvement on the capitalist's scale of valuation of 'ultimate values' but a decidedly retrograde step from whatever trace of valuation of real values could be observed in the nineteenth century.

It might savour of Platonism but would stand the test of real valuation from the perspective of life as a whole (not merely material development) inclusive of the continuation of existence in the Hereafter that both the attitudes of capitalism and communism are but a passing phase in the chain of historical changes. It is not the old odour of condemnation of the love of materialism associated with Greek thought or with mystic philosophies. The members of a society that value wealth or material goods as the only end in life can hardly escape the rugged struggle conceived by nineteenth-century sociologists and economists. Dis-

integrating forces will logically remain in operation, in such a system, in currents and undercurrents of struggle for larger and larger shares out of the accumulated national income. Such a state of society represents, so to say, a soul that is governed by appetites, not by reason, and as such will be a 'house divided' facing perpetual internal strife. This cannot also be escaped by the new prescription of communism which shares the same ends with capitalism. This is, however, the natural outcome of setting up false gods—gods of material objects, wealth and economic power—as the supreme ends of human endeavour and objects of human worship. Plato's 'wise man' does not desire material possessions for himself, nor does he value his fellows in proportion to those possessions. Balancing Plato's view with realism, we may add that man should not desire material possessions but as means to the realization of a higher self, mental, physical, moral and spiritual—during the probationary period of earthly existence with prospects of a permanent existence in the Hereafter.

When such an ideal is accepted, there is hardly any need for advance through development or history. There cannot be any improvement upon this ideal, however long the length of time or history may be. Some changes in society may appear to constitute an advance in the direction of an ideal only when the latter is narrower than the former, a comprehensive ideal mentioned above, and hence may at best prove arbitrary or irresponsible in the real social evolution. That, in a way, explains the cycles of change, recharge and comeback in the stages of dynamic civilization. Mr. Oswald Spengler, in his *The Decline of the West*, has

corroborated this point of view, by concluding that major movements of history had been cyclical in character, eras of stagnation, decay and relapse regularly following eras of progress. Mankind are almost helpless to check such cycles of changes and are therefore made to face the strain of a perpetual adjustment with the objective environment, a process likely to set new forces of a vicious circle in motion, unless eternal principles meant for all times, ages, stages and the whole of human life, are used as the subjective keys in it.

Unassailable subjectivity alone can prick the bubbles of new utopias of partisan idealism. Man, through that accident of history, learned to overpower his external enemies—fires and floods, disease and pestilence and all manner of material want, and his conquest of nature has led particularly the Western mind to think that expansion of similar progress would bring the millennium. But has the Western mind tempered its hopes and aspirations with its victories over self? Rather man's power over nature and over self, some may say, may vary inversely, as denotation and connotation of terms. Has man's new-found power over nature, as noticeable in the West, tamed the wild forces of uncontrolled passions and appetites in the inward world of self? On the contrary, the intoxicant of the new power has raked them up more violently and fed them with an unimaginable array of opportunities for their gratification. Man, to be really man, must balance his mastery of nature with that of his own self, which is however absurd without the subjective keys of a perfect religion. To be a full man, the economic man should also be a spiritual man at the same time. The world has receded too far to afford

to neglect the measured warning of Mr. R.H. Tawney:

“Religion has been converted from the keystone which holds together the social edifice into one department within it, and the idea of a rule of right is replaced by economic expediency at the arbiter of policy and the criterion of conduct. From a spiritual being, who, in order to survive, must devote a reasonable attention to economic interests, man seems sometimes to have become an economic animal, who will be prudent, nevertheless, if he takes due precautions to assure his spiritual well-being.”¹

Changes in the recent centuries have tended to be so far-reaching that ‘the economic animal’ seems to have been left with practically no scope to take precautions to assure his spiritual well-being. How can we adjust with such an alien environment, then?

Social and economic conditions do change and also recur. But the orthodox view of adhering to a system of codified law with meticulous details will appear to be wide of the mark on that ground of recurrence. Recurrence and relapse may be as true as change and growth, much of which may be sacrificed only at the cost of loss of richness in culture and civilization. Fundamentally human nature remaining the same, broad principles of human behaviour and ideals meant for all times need not certainly be changed, as true subjectivity transcends time, space and changes. But when the objective institutions have changed beyond recognition, application of those principles in real terms may have to be clothed in

1. Cf. Tawney, *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*, p. 273.

varying garbs, maintaining indeed the similarity of spirit which will reflect in the effects produced. That the rule of right or moral law with reference to the Quranic principles is required to be re-established may constitute the only right attitude to life. But a rigid code of law (in the orthodox view) is likely to fail to produce the desired effects. Evidently, life of a nation, as the life of an individual, can hardly be likened to a static pool but rather it flows like a river with a given purpose of retiring to the wide eternal sea in the end. Does the purpose of meeting the ocean stand prejudiced or condemned in any way by the river's curves and bendings irrigating the plains into smiles or by its plucking the leaves and flowers of plants and herbs in her natural youthful delight in the way? Where the flow is stemmed by a silted patch of intruding earth, the purpose certainly suffers until the service of the dredger restores the flow.

Evolution from the Islamic Standpoint

The evolution that is accepted by Islam started with the creation of the earth and the universe. But the first postulate of this evolution is the pre-existence of a Supreme Force who has to be accepted by all as the only source of creative power. That Power has planned the universe on a perfect and ordered basis of which the earthly existence is an essential part. That Power has extended the earth wide and has drawn out moisture therefrom and provided pasture in due course for utilization by man for him and his cattle. From that stage, the earthly existence of man has passed through phases of myriad colours and characteristics, depending on the utilization of what man has been

provided with, in ways varying from time to time in which man's intelligence and initiative have played their parts.¹ That process goes on unhindered and will go on till that Power again whistles it off. It is made abundantly clear that the process will come to an end, reaching the Ocean, the source from which the flow of creation and its evolution proceeded. But that comeback is not all in itself. A Day of Judgment to evaluate man's achievement down the currents of the earthly flow of evolution is also promised in no uncertain terms so that his achievements (for which he is supposed to strive on the earth) can determine his place and progress in the rest of the unending journey beyond the mortal world.

The conception of such an evolution of life is extremely broad and hence leaves much room for the intelligence and initiative of man to give a concrete look and shape. If however the intelligence and initiative of man elude him to a dreamland where the sweet murmur of the permanent brook is inaudible and man gets used to be content with pebbles and stones to construct roads leading to an isolated labyrinth shining with material towers and skyscrapers, it is undoubtedly an attempt to unplan the Supreme Plan. Viewed from that angle of vision, the broad principles of established Islamic laws (or Shari'at) cannot be said to have been abrogated by the time-factor. But in respect of details in an ever-changing background, there is definite scope for construction or reconstruction, modification or alteration, supplementation or replacement in conformity with the spirit of the Master's masterly plan, indeed. The Master has, indeed, embodied in the

1. Vide Qur'an, Sura Nazi-at, vv. 27-35.

Qur'an in the clearest terms that His plan was perfect.¹ Unfortunately, few amongst us like to get at the real import of perfection in a changing world subject to the full sweep of dynamism according to the Creator's plan. If perfection is construed in the narrow sense to imply a fixed bundle of conclusions that can be applied as ready-made remedies for all diseases, born and unborn, it will give the impression of a wholly finished structure, admitting of nothing but occasional repairs and continuous maintenance. In the process of repairs, the little adjustment that may be made might even appear foreign to the original structure. On the other hand, perfection may also be understood with reference to the dynamic growth of a living organism. Like a tree, such a system may be said to have been perfectly preplanned in a seed to reach a certain given objective, but the leaves and branches of the tree may be consciously pruned or promoted to suit new conditions, as it grows, with no prejudice, rather to promote more actively, the achievement of the given objective. Laws that have fundamental objective roots will be the decaying branches of the growing tree when the relevant objectivity has substantially changed, while new laws might sprout out in the shape of new branches when new objectivity demands it. But the sum-total of the laws, old and new, can live on the supply of moisture permeating the whole tree, root to leaves, fed by the universality of subjectivity, 'wholly' conceived in the 'whole' plan.

1. Vide *اليوم اكملت لكم دينكم* [This day We perfected your religion].

Meaning of Perfection for Islamic Law

Obviously, therefore, in the latter sense, perfection stands for perfection in order or harmony with the subjective ideal of Islam. For the matter of that, harmony will require harmonious adjustment demanding amendment or even abrogation of some old applications invalidated by historical forces, and this does not necessarily mean a change in the basic structure of Islamic law which should grow like a tree as long as the trumpet is not blown for the appointed Day of Judgment. When perfection is thus set against the background of evolution, prophethood will stand for a revolutionary warning against man's deviation from fundamental truth. A prophet's teaching, in this context, consists not in providing readymade solutions for every possible or conceivable situation in human life, but in emphasizing or re-emphasizing a world outlook (in conformity with the objects of the Creator's plan) and hence providing a synthetic and harmonious attitude to life as such which in concrete terms might reflect the historical background of the Prophet's days. That background may lose significance through time but not the synthetic attitude, which, because of its perfection, should guide all generations to the preconceived goal. It should not be forgotten that the system of Islamic law or Shari'at had itself to be evolved, starting with the broad injunctions of the Qur'an, supplemented by the voluminous Sunnah (varying in degrees of reliability though) and reinforced by other sources of *ijma'* (i.e., consensus of opinion of the nation or representatives) and *Qiyas* (or analogy and deductions). Nor can we ignore the elasticity of the system that offered scope for four dif-

ferent doctors of law to organize independent codes of law still held in high esteem as the orthodox schools of Hanafi, Maleki, Shafeyi and Hambali, so remarkable for their widely varying interpretations of law. Without allowing for change in circumstances or expediency demanded by historical changes, how can we explain the innovations that were introduced by Caliph 'Umar on his own authority? The farsighted 'Umar was the pioneer in establishing the public treasury, adopting the era of Hijrat, introducing prayers (salat-it-Tarawih) in the month of Ramadan and the system of going round for direct supervision at night. He was the first authority to punish lampooning, to order eighty stripes for indulgence in wine, to prohibit marriage for a limited term and the sale of female slaves who had borne children to their masters, and, above all, to constitute the poor-rate (*i.e.*, zakat) for use invariably in the service of God. It is he again who stopped the practice of permitting women in the mosques. But he did not derive any authority for these innovations either from the Qur'an or the Hadith and yet his decisions were regarded as expedient and upheld by his companions.¹ Similarly, Abu Hanifa, the renowned jurist, made a large number of departures in his lenient view of crimes and their correctives or punishment, one vital innovation being the identity of valuation of life, be that of a slave or a freed man. All this points to the fact that the system of Islamic law or Shari'at is also a product of history, limited though within the bounds of some unalterable basic principles. The continuity of that

1. Vide *History of the Caliphs* by J. Suyuti (trans. by Jarret), pp. 141-42.

process probably paled into insignificance with the decline in Islamic civilization, so much so that after a long spell of centuries' indifference, the continuity seems to have been altogether lost. But just for that to claim that the system inherited by us will have to be simply transplanted from the desert sands to the virgin soil of new Islamic countries in the wake of their renaissance, is to withhold the blessings of a developing system accommodating the historical changes as far as practicable within the sacred framework of proved integrity. That is why the talk of *ijtihad* is so very relevant and, for the matter of that, so very important these days.

Needless to say that none but interpreters armed with knowledge, both old and new, can be equal to the unique task of applying *ijtihad* to keep up continuity and catch up with the progress of the world. In the process of planning the 'brave new world,' care must be taken not to unplan the divine plan. The postulate of sovereignty of God and His law is hence required to be conceived in its right perspective by the planners and interpreters. Granted that, mastery of modern knowledge (sciences and arts) is sure to guide the architects to build on sound lines.

CHAPTER SEVEN

MAN'S FREE WILL & POWER

Role of Mind & Will

THE modern world has demonstrated the immensity of man's powers and the staggering magnitude of his success in the application of will to deal with the world as such. There is something like limitlessness about man's capacity to will and achieve but yet there are limits within which man has to thrive and strive. Without going into the subtleties of conflict between determinism and free will, it is possible to realize the elements of truth in both, but with an overriding influence of the latter over the former. Institutions, political or social, exist for man and not man for institutions, though the latter may form an environment, changeable and changing, in which man has to maintain himself and strive for all values distinguishing him from animal life thereby. Marx would say 'man makes his own history' and that out of the material conditions he finds himself in. The mind and will of man is subordinated, in Marx's scheming, to material conditions and changing history moulding them. The human will is regarded force only in so far as it affects the system of thought and desire (called an ideology) which reacts upon matter, but that is again on the basis of presupposition that human will has been conditioned by the existing material atmosphere. This is at best a simplified attempt to bring the baser aspect of mind and will in line with the material world with a view to serve the blunt purpose of fulfilment

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of only material wants of man. The cause-and-effect analysis of the material structure of society may indeed suit the partial analysis of mind and will, a reflection of the 'empirical self,' in contradistinction of what is known as real self.

Such a subordinate role of mind and will, conceived by Marx, is, to say the least, unbecoming of human life and farthest from the Creator's plan. As creature of desire (or material want), a man belongs to the empirical world and his feelings and actions may be as completely determined as the material changes in the physical world. But a man can also transcend his material world of cause and effect when he is guided by what is known as moral will (which Kant called 'transcendental self'). Moral law springs from man as a real and rational being and not as a member of the world of causes and effects. Even according to Western writers, obedience to 'material will,' if I am permitted to use the expression, is as real as obedience to moral law and hence the one-sided analysis of Marx is deprecated. But plainly speaking, Western critics of Marxian analysis also fail to explain why man should obey the moral law.¹

Concept of Limited Free Will

It is possible to explain the mystery only with the help of the Islamic approach to human life and its ends, which always emphasizes an undividedly whole view of things, men and laws governing them in the mortal world linked with continuation of life beyond. That approach assumes man as 'the viceregent of God' on

1. Vide C.E.M. Joad, *op. cit.*, p. 206. Cf. "This obedience to moral law, which is also moral freedom, is something which cannot be explained."

the earth and hence well-provided with moral law to guide him to the desired goal. In Kant's philosophy, moral will manifests itself in the acceptance of some universal principles which are intuitively understood and held as morally binding, irrespective of needs and circumstances. Kant commands: "Act only according to that maxim which you can at the same time *will* to be a universal law."¹ But will the individual man *will* it that way in a scheme of society that denies the moral or real will altogether (like the Marxist contention) or that bifurcates the wills into two, the moral will playing only an indirect role (like the modern Western democracies)?

Even Kant could not proceed far enough to explain the functioning of the moral will. That lying is wrong kindness is better than cruelty or honesty better than deceit, will be disputed by none. But how to ensure observance of this will in human life? Kant has appropriately asked to treat man both as a means and as an end in himself. Accordingly, we are forbidden to use human beings as merely means to serve ends beyond themselves, viz., the use of men in fulfilling others' ambitions, use of human beings as instruments for satisfaction of sexual desire or of sadistic instincts. In the same way, one state is also not justified to use its citizens as mere instruments to serve a purpose beyond them. But unless those who are likely to use men as mere means are themselves strictly observing the intuitively obtained moral injunctions, how can such immoral tendencies be prevented from widening and making rules of conduct by the backdoor of excep-

1. C. E. M. Joad, *op. cit.*, p. 208.

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tions and giving a seeming moral justification to a wrong basis? The modern Westerners regard Kant as too rigid an advocate of acquired or 'formed character' to allow retention of natural endowments, besides moral virtue, in the personality of man. The difficulties disappear only when it is assumed that man's gift of will and power is neither unlimited, nor is it exactly predetermined; and since it is not predetermined, it has the capacity to exceed limits imposed by moral law. Within the framework of moral law, man is certainly free to endeavour with choice and initiative in an unlimited field of progress and achievement, even though it is equally possible that the framework of moral law may be disregarded by those who will exceed the limits. Such a concept of limited free will is a better substitute for determinism or free will or an unbalanced combination of both. Man has been endowed with powers to utilize matter, the world or even the universe (created by God). But since utilization can take place in numerous alternative ways, there is need for warnings in favour of those alternatives that lead to the largest social and human good in relative and absolute terms. This, therefore, necessitates the guidance of a conscious will. The need of righteous deed is therefore as great as the conception of what is right. When man knows that seas have been subjected to him as also 'all that is in the heavens and on the earth' has been, he is likely to be power-corrupt unless he knows at the same time that he does not enjoy unlimited free will or power in their utilization since they are to be received 'as from Him.' There is nothing wrong in seeking 'His bounty' out of the entire universe, even rising to the highest development of progress and

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achievement of human feats on that basis, unheard or inconceivable now, but only man should know that his will is limited by the Overriding Will of God and hence he ought to be grateful.¹ 'Man should realize the pattern on which He has made mankind' and establish God's handiwork.²

Man may take initiative in knowing 'the signs of God' under all possible plans to overcome distance and to overcome even space contemplating journeys to the moon and the mars. Be it economics, physics, chemistry, astronomy or astronautics, man can think of miraculous inventions which can be applied as instruments of power—power to do immense good to society and creation as also immense harm. The concept of limited free will suggests use of power only in the former sense of good to society and creation in harmony with the comprehensive plan of God who plans for order and perfection. A deviation is naturally possible; for man has not been incapacitated to use his will and power for evil but has been provided with that too as the anvil of trial. It is here that the significance of individual responsibility lies. Good life is not good enough without the fortitude to withstand temptations and deviations. Each man is personally

1. Vide Qur'an (Sura Fatiha, vv. 12-14) together with A. Yusuf Ali's footnotes on them.

2. Vide Qur'an (S. xxx: v. 30). Cf. comments: 'As turned out from the creative hand of God, man is innocent, pure, true, free, inclined to right and virtue, and imbued with true understanding about his own position, in the universe and about God's goodness, wisdom and power. But man is caught in the meshes of customs, superstitions, selfish desires and false teaching. This may make him pugnacious, unclean, false, slavish, hankering after what is wrong, or forbidden, and deflected from the love of his fellowmen and the pure worship of one True God. The problem before spiritual teachers is to cure this crookedness, and to restore human nature to what it should be under the Will of God.'

responsible for his application of will and initiative. One who understands his limited will, which is limited by the Will of God, can execute his will and initiative in the interest of humanity as a viceregent of God.

Ultimate Values to Pursue

Such conception of human will is pre-eminently an ethical one. Negatively, it refers to some fundamental don'ts on moral grounds. But to suppose that it is merely that without the positive counterpart is but the opposite of God's plan. The viceregent's real function is to promote the forces of creation and all-round prosperity including his spiritual achievement. All knowledge or the 'know-how' of the fullest possible development of humanity will have to be acquired with a determined will, utilization of all forces of nature and materials will have to be effected with that resolute will and all the phases of endeavour are to be *pari passu* harmonized spiritually by that balanced will. In Islamic thinking, this concept of limited free will of man is as indispensable as faith in the Ultimate Values itself. Freedom of choice will have to be exercised by man to achieve the highest good in all respects, but, God forbid, not in one respect of material progress alone.

Philosophers have recognized four ultimate values that are objects of human endeavour, viz., happiness, beauty, truth and moral virtue, though they are not mutually exclusive. At bottom, they are all intermingled for which it is possible to cry "Truth is beauty, beauty truth!" Right action is judged on the tests of these values, and on the basis of best consequences. But the need of one unifying value was felt even by

non-theologians to control the concrete working of the four values, rendering them compatible to each other.¹ It is only the Islamic conception of limited will that supplies the controlling force of the unifying universal value for all stages and ages of civilization. Philosophically, right action is treated as 'willed action,' but to be properly right, it has to be willed by the will limited by the Universal Will, that should, in the ultimate analysis, guide the pursuits of beauty, truth, happiness and moral virtue. Construed in that sense, moral virtue as a separate value need not have any independent appeal.

The values may be, to some extent, real and objective. But the subjective element of intuitive perception of eternal principles cannot be ignored on that account. Some thinkers go to the length of even explaining man's spiritual aspirations and his intuitions of value as objectively as his sexual desires and physical movements. It is said that spiritual aspirations and intuitions of value may not have their counterpart in the external world, but they are also one of the forms of man's reaction to a world beyond himself. This naturalistic view of human life denies the power of spontaneous creation in man with which man is credited by those who deny the contention that man's intuitions reflect his reactions to the outer world. But the Islamic postulate of limited free will is based on the same power of spontaneous creation in man that

1. Vide Joad, *op. cit.*, p. 445. Cf. "It is sufficient for my present purpose to draw attention to the need for some unifying universal value, which is the source of the common quality possessed by the absolute values, as they are the source of the common qualities whether of beauty, of truth, or of moral virtue, possessed by the particulars in which they are manifested."

makes him the viceregent of God on earth. According to the Islamic outlook, man's intuitions of value are predominantly subjective, though capable of objective manifestations. The aberrations of such objective manifestation do not, however, warrant a wholly objective analysis of intuitions. Truth, beauty, happiness and good will therefore be required to be interpreted, as this viewpoint stresses, with reference to the overriding regulator of universal law at the outset and only in the next stages with reference to social and individual considerations of the objective world. Limited free will involving really 'willed action' will thus have to take note of these implications much more seriously than any ordinary concept of conscious will for right action.

CHAPTER EIGHT

NATURE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF ISLAMIC PLANNING

Age of Planning

WE LIVE in an age of planning, democratic or otherwise. We do not want to leave things to their own fate, but consciously to regulate and re-order them to desired lines for desired effects. Those who prize individual freedom are not, however, in favour of the extreme of Soviet brand totalitarian planning, appearing, indeed, as it does, like 'a road to serfdom.' But none would today seriously contest the hard truth that optimum social results can hardly be reaped in the modern world with a given amount of resources (that in themselves are not unlimited) via the road of pure *laissez faire*. It is no wonder, then, that the fiercest opponent of Soviet Russia, too, does not hesitate to sit on mountains of plans and projects—to say nothing about other countries with professedly socialistic leanings, like Great Britain. But what do they plan? Above the surface, it appears like a dramatic farce that the world has been split into two combating camps with almost the same sort of techniques and weapons which themselves, as they say, are the outcome of their ideologies. And yet they are said to be out to fight an ideological war. Is there anything wrong with planning then? Does not a planner, be he in America, in England, in Nazi Germany or in Soviet Russia, plan to produce 'y plus one' amount of wealth or welfare,

rather than only 'y' amount of wealth or welfare with a given 'x' amount of resources at his disposal?

Planning is, indeed, a tool, and may be handled by any workman, cultured or Philistine, with ends that may not agree. Disagreement of ends initiates loud conflicts, charged with potential sparks of disasters. Thus, harmony of ends, too, if possible, ought to be aimed at by real planning, not the narrow cribbed and cabined type of planning, designed to multiply goods, and goods to feed the mouths of men and cannon, but a wide farsighted planning that views ends in the context of life, both temporal and eternal. Should the planner plan to unplan the Divine Plan? Probably, if the question be faced squarely, everybody would reply in the negative. But the concrete bundle of planners' plans, observed or unobserved, certainly points to an implied affirmative. Such unfortunate and unhappy paradoxes that characterize the existing civilization so boldly are but the logical corollaries of a wrong emphasis on the valuation of life and man *vis-a-vis* wealth and material welfare. In its frantic effort to apply sciences with a view to getting the most out of the objective world, the civilization of today has gone out of its way to lose the deeper connotation of life and man. That is why wrong conclusions do follow and when they are applied as orthodox principles, wrong and painful consequences become inevitable.

The Islamic Viewpoint in Planning

Western social planners do not pay heed to the needs of the remote future, nor are they concerned about the needs of life beyond the grave and the rela-

tionship between that life and this life on the face of the earth. Obviously, material or economic planners have, more or less, confined themselves to the near future, and as such have aimed at production of quick results by setting targets for specified time limits. This is equally true of Russian planners as of the so-called democratic planners outside the Soviet zone. Even those who favour only half-hearted planning do not like to bother much about the long-term effects of plans. As eminent an economist as Keynes says : " In the long run, we are all dead," and hence urges immediate correction or modification of economic phenomena with the aid of appropriate economic policies. But a Muslim will be inclined to say : " Yes, in the long run we are all dead, and that is why we are all the more anxious to see how life can be planned successfully to meet the eventualities of life after death." By that, of course, it is hardly implied that the short run will have to be sacrificed. Rather, the question of sacrificing the one for the other is simply irrelevant; for, the short run has to run for the long run. " The last of life for which the first was made " has deep significance for real planning.

Think of a five-year plan or a six-year plan. Available resources and materials are calculated, specialized labour and technicians required in specific lines are considered with care, techniques and equipments are determined and provided, finance is arranged, be it internal, external or both. But the result in terms of a given amount of output is expected only after five or six years, provided the targets set have been achieved at the end of such periods. But this does not mean

that the end of planning has been reached. Other plans have to be adopted now to catch up with the trends of progress achieved so far. Suppose some other plans are adopted now in other directions, the objectives of which might not coincide with those of the previous ones. And if, in this way, independent short-term planning is relied upon, the targets may be achieved all right, but lack of coordination and harmony may nullify a considerable part of achievement. To achieve real success, therefore, planning proceeds in the manner of a linked chain, and the whole chain, covering several stages together may then well represent the nature of healthy planning on a really long-term basis. If the whole chain is not visualized in and from the very beginning, pitfalls and setbacks may almost invariably stand in the way of short-term plans. The desirable method of planning is thus to get the whole picture of development running far into the future and then to build edifices, step by step, in successive short periods, finally to complete the picture of the superstructure with the dream and design of which the planners laid the first brick. Otherwise, there will remain, in places, very real apprehensions of conflict between short-term and long-term planning.

The Islamic approach alone provides that healthy method of integrated planning, starting with the long-run picture of the whole chain that not only goes far but farthest into the future, including even the shadow of life beyond the grave. Islam aims, *inter alia*, at a planning of life, so to say, in an integrated chain of development and culmination. When the whole chain is visualized, there is nothing wrong in selecting individual links in the chain for specific planning on

the basis of requirements on those fronts. The spirit of wholeness of the complete chain is, however, a very important factor here, for the goal of life in the Hereafter (in spiritual terms) is embodied in the wholeness of viewing life in its entirety. With such an outlook, the long run cannot be underestimated, nor can the short run be ignored on any account. Without the final links of the Hereafter, planning of life is likely to culminate in chaos. On the other hand, the mere vision of the Hereafter is not enough, unless the individual links are, from their very inception, firmly built on the basis of immediate short-run planning, since these constitute the progressive rungs of the ladder leading to the final goal conceived.

The longest run of the Hereafter is, however, a matter of faith and a given postulate of Islamic thinking. In the light of such a postulate, again, many-sided short-run plans are to be adopted in an Islamic society, in particular, and in the world in general, that seems to be fumbling today for a satisfactory solution of a loud conflict of ideologies. Soviet Russia has frankly brushed aside all considerations of the Hereafter. So, in fact, have the Western democracies, though they do not dare confess the stark truth. Obviously, the battle of ideologies, so loud today, is on the basis of short-run plans alone. Let the parties on either side of the Iron Curtain modify their mode of planning and broaden it on postulates of peaceful and prosperous life in the mortal world as also in the Hereafter, and, then, contradictions will shed themselves on the altar of the ultimate values of life.

Secular Planning—its Shortcomings

It is clear now that Islamic planning is intended to

cover all aspects of life, not merely temporal affairs, as is usually stressed in the modern West, for secular planning, as is commonly understood without ambiguity, is necessarily partial. It is only unfortunate that after history has run a wrong course for some centuries, a peculiar charm is associated with secularism, which is treated, more or less, as one of the latest instruments of modern civilization.

Even at the beginning of the Reformation in England, economics could be regarded, by modern standards, as a branch of ethics and ethics as a branch of theology. All human activities could be treated as falling within a single frame, the character of which was determined by the spiritual destiny of mankind. Theorists in those days only appealed to natural law, and not to utility, to explain all kinds of phenomena. Those conditions would have probably continued for long but for the secularization of political thought in the next two centuries, culminating in the complete separation of affairs religious and temporal, with profound reactions in the economic sphere. The storm and fury of Puritan revolution was followed by 'a dazzling outburst of economic enterprise,' and between the old-fashioned denunciation of covetousness and the new-fashioned applause of economic enterprise a bridge was thrown by the argument that enterprise itself was the discharge of a duty to God. The march of external progress woke up sympathetic echoes in hearts which were already attuned to applauding its triumph. As a result, the tension between the claims of religion and the glittering allurements of a commercial civilization, which had grown by then, gradually died down. Thus were the poles cut asunder.

But today, even modernists agree that such an unnatural bifurcation of life and the affairs of life has tended to result in an unhappy extinction of the one and a disproportionate overemphasis of the other, threatening the world with utter ruin and destruction. And all this is due to the fact that the theorists of the crucial times of the history of England refused to revise old formulae in the light of new facts with a synthetic outlook demanded by circumstances. As Mr. R.H. Tawney has beautifully put the case: "They despised knowledge and knowledge destroyed them."

This is not, however, to underestimate the economic achievements of recent centuries, but to point to the deeper truth beyond. True, social development moves with a logic whose inferences are long delayed. The drift from the integrated system of old was led to the breaking-point by the mechanical nature of knowledge in the Restoration period, typically influenced by the dehumanized sciences of mathematics and physics. The tendency to inanimation was completed by the natural bias to interpretation of conditions in terms of forces and strains and to the analysis of complex phenomena into simple, constant and measurable forces. The object of such mechanical knowledge was "to express itself in terms of number, weight or measure, to use only arguments of sense, and to consider only such causes as have visible foundations in nature, leaving those that depend upon the mutable minds, opinions, appetites and passions of particular men to the consideration of others." The hold of moral principles had, therefore, to meet an unnatural death in that stifling atmosphere, and the traces of that hold appeared only like an echo of antiquated superstition

just unrelated to the needs of social and economic development over which it had so unassailable a sway previously.

There is none but will be struck with awe and admiration at the whirlwind speed of transformation of the economic structure of Great Britain in the wake of what is regarded as an industrial and commercial revolution in the nineteenth century. But what has that secular overemphasis, after all, produced in terms of ultimate values? Human forces, analyzed mathematically or statistically in a dehumanized manner, like the blind forces of nature, may be harnessed and tamed to yield the maximum fruit. But with what ends in view? "If, however, economic ambitions are good servants," so aptly adds Mr. Tawney, "they are had masters. Harnessed to a social purpose, they will turn the mill and grind the corn. But the question, to what ends the wheels revolve, still remains; and on that question the naive and uncritical worship of economic power, which is the mood of unreason too often engendered in those whom the new Leviathan has hypnotized by its spell, throws no light. Its result is not seldom a world in which men command a mechanism that they cannot fully use and an organization which has every perfection except that of motion!"

Role of Economic Progress

Sanity in thinking will not deny the rightful place to economic progress and efficiency, instrumental to the development of a balanced society. But to use economic efficiency as an end rather than a means is to destroy the utility of the instrument itself. In a

world of limited resources and increasing population with wide undeveloped regions, it is but essential that a standard of values will seek to adjust ends and means in relation to economic affairs, or, more particular, in relation to living standards. Without a secure foundation of an economic stability for collective and individual life, higher values of life can scarcely be aimed at as ends. Human life or rather human nature as such, endeavours to reach destinations of value in which satisfaction of economic need is a vital means, but it is only one of many. To those who prefer to have a low level of life meant for "economic animals" alone, fulfilment of economic needs might itself be the end which can, at best, be an anti-climax of the true conception of human life or human nature. Human nature demands not only satisfaction of economic needs but also of other needs which are, at least, as important, if not more, and a rational planning not only takes note of this whole truth but keeps them all in their appropriate places, maintaining the relative position intact. As against this, secular economic planning or the frank materialistic planning in Russia is bound to produce grave reactions of a peculiar kind. Overstressing only a part of the whole, as it does, partial planning, by virtue of its deliberate neglect of the spiritual and moral values of life, has been digging its own grave in mountainous projects of using man as a means to material ambitions alone, which, in its turn, has already set in motion counter-reactions to save the soul of man and regain the status of man as an end. Let me quote Mr. Tawney's pregnant words:

"A reasonable estimate of economic organization must allow for the fact that, unless industry is to

be paralyzed by recurrent revolts on the part of outraged human nature, it must satisfy criteria which are not purely economic. A reasonable view of its possible modifications must recognize that natural appetites may be purified or restrained, as, in fact, in some considerable measure they already have been, by being submitted to the control of some larger body of interests. The distinction made by the philosophers of classical antiquity between liberal and servile occupations, the medieval insistence that riches exist for man, not man for riches, Ruskin's famous outburst, 'there is no wealth but life,' the argument of the socialist who urges that production should be organized for service, not for profit, are but different attempts to emphasize the instrumental character of economic activities, by reference to an ideal which is held to express the true nature of man."

For civilization is something artificial, as says Clive Bell.

Islamic Synthesis of Social Principles

That being so, it will be needless to say that natural appetites are sought to be drilled and perfectly disciplined, as they should be, in an Islamic society, faithfully adopting the synthetic social principles and moral standards, fundamental to Islam, in a clear perspective of ultimate values of life, subject to an un-sparing audit of all earthly accounts in the Hereafter. Broadly, the principles of equality and social justice, sweeping in nature as they are, in the pervading atmosphere of Islamic socialism, have provided such a social framework with all that is necessary to meet

the needs of man in his truest nature. Thanks to the innate nature of Islam, it has not failed, and it will never fail, to accommodate the evolutionary changes in history and to neutralize the conflicts and tensions involved therein in the smoothest possible fashions. Christianity could not play this difficult role and broke down, as a guiding gospel of social growth, on the hard rock of history. It is interesting, indeed, that Christianity's refusal to relax orthodox formulae with a view to meeting the fundamental changes in social order made way for secularization from the back door. Islam is not likely to face such a crisis. If, however, we allow the dynamic and synthetic forces of Islam to fall into disuse in a spirit of indifferent complacency, and let things be judged and shaped on the Procrustean table of onesided conservative interpreters, God forbid, we run the same risks as Christianity did in the Reformation period.

Islam is intended for fullness of man and is prescribed "mercy of both the worlds" for this ideology-torn mortal life. The evolutionary ideal of Islam is compatible with all healthy developments, touching all ranges of varying human life, provided they do not imply a fundamental departure from Islamic postulates; as, for example, secularization itself constitutes a fundamental departure from the Islamic set-up of social life. Hence the challenge of planning the whole, not a part, of human life can, in the fitness of things, be accepted by only the dynamic creed of Islam, if at all, with its principles to guide activities on all planes, material and non-material.

But centuries of disuse of the dynamic Islamic "planning" in the desired spirit, in an ever-changing

world, constitute a factor deserving meditation and caution. Islamic planners in the living present may find themselves rather more remote than they should have been from real application of principles. The unfortunate vacuum resulting from disuse has been a tempting invitation to static fanaticism and orthodox conservatism, which tend to offer stiff opposition to the evolutionary dynamism which is to be reinstated in the social planning to keep the door open for objects of civilization aimed at by Islam. World forces today are actually driving us to that deliberate planning, beginning with the crucial transition and finishing with the re-enthronement of the whole type of planning of life, not by fumbling trial and error, but with sustaining zeal to set the boat on an even keel, to advance the living forces of social equilibrium in full. The prevailing outlook is wide enough, as far as it descends from the window of the partial planning laboratory to the Broadway of material blocks. Such planning is, therefore, not merely for wealth or comfort, but for values that do not die. Planners may thus derive much inspiration from the guidance :

“But seek, with the (wealth)
Which God has bestowed on thee
The home of the Hereafter,
Nor forget thy portion in this
World : but do thou good
As God has been good
To thee and seek not
Mischief in the land.”

(The Qur'an, xxviii : 77.)

CHAPTER NINE

THE BASIS OF ISLAMIC STATE

Organic Character of Culture

THE SUITABLE laboratory for the unique experiment of regaining the lost horizon is, to a balanced and dispassionate mind, an Islamic State, the features of which, again, are both interesting and important for analysis and consideration.

The conception of a state in Islam, as a modern sceptic would have us believe, is not organic, but, I would add, not organic in the narrow sense which permeates Western political science. Islam, as a comprehensive philosophy, may indeed be treated as a body of principles, deductive in nature and as such standing largely as exponents of ideas, rather than interpreters of actual conditions. An Islamic principle is, more or less, an exponent of an idea, capable of determining a programme of action. But does that mean that the state conceived by or following from such principles should be other than organic?

In some quarters, it is pleaded that non-Islamic cultures are wholly organic, like trees for which it is absurd to predict which direction their branches will take but Islamic culture is not organic in that sense; for, it is essentially the instrument of an idea symbolizing a postulate and a programme.¹ On the basis of such contention, one non-Muslim political thinker has laboured hard to construct the theory of 'one umma,

1. The Islamic Culture, January 1937, p. 9.

one state.' Since Islam represents one idea, and politics and religion are inextricably mingled in that idea, there cannot be, according to him, more than one umma (or common entity of Muslim brotherhood), nor can there be more than one state, called Islamic State.¹ The theory is, on the face of it, a plausible one, but seems to have been overdone to the extent of rendering it a bad-intentioned one, particularly in the practical part of the muddled analysis.

In fairness, the organic character of Islamic culture cannot be ignored by a scientific observer and analyst without qualms within. To take the same analogy, other cultures may appear to be like the banyan or oak tree, for which it may be difficult to predict which direction its branches will take. But doesn't it imply a clear sense of frustration and helpless surrender on nature—that unexplained Sphinx, putting an end to sound planning of the growth of the tree, if and when necessary, and as far as practicable? Islamic culture, on the other hand, may be likened, if at all, to a date or palm tree—indeed remarkably reminiscent of Arab civilization—the directions its branches will take being roughly of a predictable nature. While unpredictability may mean frustration, predictability may be a positive asset for human planning in conformity with the spirit of nature. Should we, then, deny the conception of organic growth to a date or palm tree, simply because of the predictable nature of its branches?

A Non-Muslim Theory

Now, coming down to the premises proper, it may be possible, philosophically and historically, to build

1. The Islamic Literature, September 1951, art. "One Islamic State" by Ajit Kumar Sen, pp. 497-502.

up the concept of 'one umma, one state'; but what is very important to remember is that it is hardly an invariable conclusion. Two postulates are, indeed, very fundamental for an Islamic order, political, social and economic: (a) one faith should lead to one Muslim brotherhood, (b) the link between politics and religion is indissoluble. In the light of these two postulates, it is possible to fashion up the concept of one political entity out of the common Muslim brotherhood, and an ideal of one Islamic state. It is also possible to argue that a concrete picture of such an ideal is hard to imagine, unless on the basis of a rigid levelling down of all differences and peculiarities of the distinct individual entities, formed and in the process of formation, on the globe today. Further, if the Muslim jurist Mawardi's fourteenth-century researches promote the construction of such an ideal, there is, in fact, nothing unusual or revolutionary in it. Mawardi's, however, was a spectacular achievement in substantially contributing to the fixed political system which characteristically resulted from the intensive endeavours of juristic scholars under the first Abbasids. But it is not fair to assume that the final say in matters of political institutions, or constitutional features for all times to come, has been embodied in Mawardi who might have dismissed, *inter alia*, the idea of co-existence of more than one Caliph or Imam. For, that is not all that history has to tell any expounder of new theories.

Lessons of Islamic History

Let us look to history and the evolution of the principle of election in Muslim political life. It is well-known that the Prophet did not name his

successor. On the death of the Prophet, the issue of the election of a Caliph assumed a paramount importance. When there was a seeming schism between the supporters of Abu Bakr whom the Prophet gave the leading position in spiritual and religious matters, and the supporters of Sa'id ibn-i-'Ubaidah who sought the leadership of Medina for their leader, 'Umar's weighty support in the general meeting of all tribes in favour of Abu Bakr imparted the decisive effect and carried away the majority on his side. All then agreed to elect Abu Bakr as the representative of the Prophet. The following day, a general election took place in which the entire community elected Abu Bakr. Thus the first election, crucial in nature, created a momentous precedent for the subsequent history of Caliphate and later led to the cardinal principle of constitutional law, e.g., the principle of free election by the assembled community and its confirmation by general homage.¹ The importance of this institution of election is clear, even in the Omayyad days of degeneration, and amply proved by the fact that out of fourteen Omayyad rulers, only four could have their sons as successors and that, again, on the basis of plebiscite on the recommendation of the Caliph. It is reliably narrated that 'Umar I once said: 'If the election of a Caliph is effected without all Muslims taking part in it, the election is null and void.'² Can democracy of modern origin go farther than this? To make the picture complete, I cannot resist the temptation of quoting here the inaugural caliphal address, ascribed to Yazid III, handed down to us as an outstanding docu-

1. Khuda Bakhsh, *The Orient under the Caliphs*, pp. 7-9.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 247, footnote.

ment of explanation of the position of the chief executive, Caliph:

“ O people, I pledge myself to erect no buildings, to let out on lease, none of your rivers, to build no palace, to hoard up no riches, to enrich neither wife nor child. From me is due to your annuity year by year and provisions, month by month, so that prosperity among Muslims may increase, and those who live far away participate in it just as well as those living near. Should I keep my promise, you are in duty bound to listen to me and cheerfully obey me, to support and protect me. If on the other hand I do not keep my word, you are at liberty to depose me; only you should give me timely warning; and were I to mend my ways, then accept my apology. Should you, however, know a man of tried temper, who willingly offers what I have offered to you, choose, then, such a one, and if you so desire, I shall be the first to do him homage and render him obedience.”¹

The ultimate sovereignty in an Islamic state, in the past too, was vested in the general assembly of the people that had, strikingly indeed, the power of deposition, too. Since the second Caliph ‘Umar’s assumption of the title of *Amir-ul-Mu'minin*, i.e., commander of the faithful), the idea of representative of the people was shaped gradually to have a rightful place in the concept of the representative of the Prophet. The extreme view of the Kharijites was a part of that evolution; according to them, even the meanest of all

1. De Goeje, *Fragments of the History of Arabs* (quoted in Khuda Bukhsh, p. 250).

Muslims could have the right to be elected Caliph, though a section of this school, again, went so far as to deny the need of any sovereign or Caliph. But the orthodox school, however, succeeded to have a consensus of opinion and established the principle that the highest authority, in all such issues, rested with the community as a whole; and this is in consonance with the traditional dictum: 'It is not permissible to hold that the entire community can commit an error of judgment.'

The practicable formulation of the principle is to depend on the judgment of the representatives of the community in the place of that of the assemblage of the entire community which is absurd in the present days of big states with crores of people living in far-flung areas. But a vital issue, even in modern days, can be made the issue of a general plebiscite or referendum. Suppose, the judgment of the entire Muslim population in a Muslim country or in the Muslim world as a whole is called for now or in the near future. Is it likely, then, that the verdict of the plebiscite will invariably coincide with Mawardi's ruling of 'one umma, one caliph' or invariably again with the Kharijite demand for 'one umma, no caliph'? Departure from either Mawardi or from the radical wing of Kharijites does not involve sacrifice of the indispensable in Islamic principles. On the other hand, it is just possible that the judgment of the community may also coincide with Mawardi's, provided other things are equal, or, at best, when conditions justify the coincidence. And if at all, political conditions permit, the coincidence of that judgment will rather be highly desirable. That is the historical truth to keep in mind,

if one cares for history at all. Blended with the philosophical counterpart, the conclusion of 'one umma, one state' cannot logically be an invariable one ; the above analysis leads us to this conclusion of inconclusiveness in the theory advanced by the non-Muslim theorist.

Practical Difficulties Examined

It is, however, as wonderful as wonder itself that the conception of 'one Islamic state' could be supposed—by what stretch of imagination, we can't say—to throw 'a bombshell in the Islamic world.' We shall briefly discuss the gloomy practical consequences depicted by the said theorist.

(a) It is apprehended that creation of one Islamic state for the Muslim world will involve political uncertainty and extensive warfare in the geographical belt from Morocco to Indonesia. Such fears are based on complete ignorance of Muslim brotherhood, called umma, be it confined to a compact territory, or be it widely dispersed in the world, covering the present political frontiers of Morocco, Tripoli, Egypt, other Arabian states, Persia,³ Afghanistan, Pakistan, Malaya and Indonesia. The question of Muslim minorities in China, India and the USSR is, of course, entirely different, and as such should not, in fairness, be mixed up with the issues arising out of the concept of 'one Islamic state.' The creation of one Islamic state can, by no means, stand any parallelism with imperialistic or any other sort of territorial expansionism that is, often, fraught with political chaos and bloody warfare ; for simply the question of conquest for subjugation does not arise. This implies some sort of an internal readjustment in the political organizations required by

the change. The conception of a farflung belt government will necessarily be federal or confederal in nature that has a large degree of elasticity to accommodate the differences of details. There cannot be any appreciable practical difficulty of organizing a large federation constituted of sovereign or semi-sovereign states. When the British Commonwealth of Nations, apart from its present expanded form, could function with similar administration and to the best interests of the dissimilar peoples concerned, what earthly reasons can prevent spiritually similar peoples of a large belt from integrating politically? Political history has proved, time and again, the outcome of a common political consciousness. Provided such consciousness grows in a region, however wide that be, the political alignment can only be a matter of course. Even in ordinary political jargon, religion is regarded as a very powerful factor in the growth of political consciousness. Leaving aside the issue of the dynamic faith of Islam in which individual, social, political and spiritual consciousness is wedded together in the nature of warp and woof, even ordinary partial analysis of political fact in the wide region leads irresistibly to a common political entity.

Some barriers to that commonness of all-sided consciousness may, however, remain in the transitional period. It will be the responsibility of any individual states within the hypothetical belt, desirous of initiative to remove those barriers at the outset. The President of the Muslim League of Pakistan might have anticipated things a bit too fast in pleading for diplomatic non-recognition of the present Muslim states by Pakistan as independent sovereign entities.

In the immediate present, supposing Pakistan to take an initiative, there is probably more need for cultural, religious and social understanding, collaboration and cohesion among the Muslim states; and, in this, Pakistan is required to play an active role through either existing agencies of diplomatic links or otherwise. Undoubtedly the barriers of common understanding and consciousness should be consciously removed as a preparatory stage for closer economic and, if possible, political cooperation amongst the Muslim states of the world. At length, the birth of one Islamic state, constituted of them or others, may follow in the natural course of things. In a world that is thinking profoundly of surrendering a part of the political sovereignty enjoyed by individual states in the interest of building permanent peace, is it impracticable to have one political organization for one Muslim brotherhood?

(b) Fortunately, the possibility of such an Islamic state is frankly admitted by the non-Muslim author who, however, apprehends the second practical difficulty in the nomination of the chief executive, Caliph. The question of one or more Caliphs, as has been analytically shown earlier, remains open for decision by the commonwealth of Muslims on the strength of traditions and political expediency. It has also been shown earlier that the institution of election is not incompatible with the position of a Caliph. Islamic history has amply refuted the contention—'An elected Caliph is hardly feasible in the Islamic state.'

Differences in the size of territory and population in the constituent units can hardly be made the ground for not electing an executive in a state, when

the principle of election is accepted. On the other hand, it should be stated that the Islamic way of nomination is also tantamount to election by representatives or by representatives of representatives, who should be the best elements of the entire state, so that, in the ultimate analysis, there is no incompatibility between election and nomination. Hence, depending on expediency, the judgment of the community of Muslims will have a wide scope and may turn this way or that.

(c) It need not be denied, there were controversies in the past among Shi'as and Sunnis, the former believing in hereditary caliphate while the latter opposed to the principle of hereditary caliphate. Conflicts and contentions were rife in favour or against deposition of a Caliph. But even Mawardi, whose reasoning has helped the non-Muslim theorist, established the doctrine of replacement of a sinful Caliph by a worthier one. Another jurist of the contemporary period ibn-i-Jama', on the other hand, gave his judgment against Mawardi's doctrine, on grounds of practical difficulties.¹ But, in fact, the absence of the doctrine of deposition proved disastrous in practical politics resulting in insurrections and assassinations of Caliphs. Constitutionally, therefore, it will not be expedient for an Islamic state to ignore the provision for deposition of the chief executive in the present age. Controversies or conflicts, if any, have not persisted hard. If their traces are still noticed, they are not indelible.

(d) It is contended that the theory of Islamic state precludes the idea of full-fledged citizenship of non-

1. Khuda Bukhsh, *op. cit.*, p. 270.

Muslims. Indeed, it is true that in the largest interest of a state, its highest executive should belong to the majority community or majority party in a modern state. There is nothing peculiar about the Caliph of an Islamic state being chosen from Muslims alone. There is no country in the world today that has set the political precedent of democratically choosing the highest executive from amongst the minorities. The meaning of equality of political rights can hardly be identified with merely the holding of the highest post of executive, who, being held as the defender of Islam, has essentially to be a Muslim in an Islamic state.

But, to all intents and purposes, non-Muslims, who are not inimical to Muslims, have been allotted a privileged position of 'sacred trust' over and above their political rights they deserve. The Qur'an has asked the Muslims to be generous and to deal justly and kindly with such non-Muslims (ix: 8). One saying of the Prophet is known to be: 'They (Zimmis) enjoy the same rights which we enjoy, and have the same responsibilities. They are citizens and they must participate in both rights and duties, prosperity and adversity.'¹ It is also said that the last words on the lip of the Prophet were: 'Take care of the rights of women, slaves and Zimmis.' Hence, in the light of such a position accorded to non-Muslims, it is amazing to suggest that they are debarred from enjoying equal political rights in an Islamic state. Even if the constitution of an Islamic state does not debar a non-Muslim from being elected Caliph or Imam, will it in fact be practicable to have a non-Muslim to shoulder the res-

1. *The Islamic Literature*, May 1950, p. 438.

possibility of a Caliph without the necessary fitness of faith ? A secular state like India or China or Russia may only ambiguously say that there is no bar to Muslims, who are a minority there, to be the highest executive, only to mean within themselves that Muslims will never be able to hold that position in fact.

(e) It has been contended that in the scheme of a practical Islamic state, the Caliph cannot be a real Caliph, nor can there be real provincial autonomy in the federal framework. Nothing can be hollower than such a claim, when the concrete demonstration of the magnificent functioning of a federation composed of farflung regions separated by long distance has already proved it otherwise, in no uncertain terms in Pakistan. Can't the executive in Pakistan be a real one in two distant wings ? Rather, due to the farflung character of the federation, it should be appreciated, state autonomy is likely to be more real than usual, with no decline, of course, in the position of the executive.

(f) The problem of Isma'ilis, as a separate sect with their own Imams, has been also advanced as a practical difficulty for an Islamic state. Further, it has been urged that the Islamic state cannot copy the USA or the USSR in having one state and many churches. It should be known that an essential commonground exists even between Isma'ilis and the Sunni Muslims, beyond which a little more autonomy to the Isma'ilis may easily solve the problem. Or, if that does not suffice, there may be even an independent organization to suit their otherwise uncompromisable doctrines of faith in the body politic in the transitional period ; and this may even take the form of separate sovereign state,

when there is no clear prohibition of more than one Caliphs or executives for a divided community. In the ultimate resort, such divisions are likely to be eventually wiped out by efforts of unification. Granting, then, the separate existence of a sect like Isma'ilis, links of confederation are almost sure to be maintained by the essential commonness of outlook and attitude to life.

One Islamic State Possible

More appropriately, I should think, these difficulties should be straightened out in the very process of building the preconditions for the establishment of one Islamic state. The Qur'an has held out an unmistakable call to humanity for organizing conferences of all sects and shades of opinion to achieve a common understanding in religion (xvi: 125). No difficulties are formidable enough to refuse to melt in the fire of urgent need. If Western Europe, consisting of a medley of heterogeneous elements, could think of a common Parliament, if the UNO could come into being from the deliberation of the Dumbarton Oaks or if the IMF and the World Bank could grow out of the Bretton Woods parleys to look to ordered development and stability in the monetary and economic systems in the world, it is but many times less difficult to throw a bridge of common understanding amongst the so-called groups of Shi'as and Sunnis, Mu'tazzalites, Kharijites and Isma'ilis. In that event, problem of having more than one Islamic state and more than one chief executive for common community is likely to disappear within a reasonable length of time. For, the foundations of common understanding are already

postulated in all Islamic societies irrespective of sect, differences of views, and differences of so-called nationality and outlook. One eminent writer has remarked :

“Muhammad was the first to see the stupendous power of public prayer as a unification of culture and there can be little doubt that the power of Islam is due, to a large measure, to the obedience of faithful to this inviolable rule of five prayers. The giving of alms to the poor is also a means of developing a sense of brotherhood. So, likewise, the annual pilgrimage to Mecca, which entailed so much hardship in the beginning, proved in the end a great aid to unification ; for men of different tribes and races met at Mecca with a common purpose and in a common worship and a feeling of brotherhood is but engendered in the process.”¹

Disciplined in these processes of unification, is it difficult to originate a World Muslim Congress following the holy pilgrimage each year at Mecca or by rotation in the important Muslim states, to mark the milestones of progress towards the goal of political unification? — Such a possibility is a sure one and suggestions of ‘bombshell’ designed to deter or delay it are rather likely to impart a wholesome effect on more serious thought to Islamic consolidation, and unification, eventually leading to the establishment of the Islamic state earlier than anticipated.

But it should be clearly known that the birth of Islamic state, in the modern context, signifies several

1. *Emotion as the Basis of Civilization* (as quoted in *The Islamic Literature*, November 1949, pp. 169-70).

steps forward from the existing forms of government that have made a meaningless distinction between public and private life and have accepted the responsibility of public life alone for realizing shortsighted objectives. Citizens in an Islamic state are guided by lasting principles. Only one of which consists in the organization of public affairs including the form of government on the basis of 'mutual consultation.' This principle, an important one in itself, was the keystone of progress in the glorious past. It was applied fully by the Prophet in his private and public life and was also considerably acted upon by the early rulers of Islam. Modern varieties of representative democracy are but an attempt to apply the same principle, one-sidedly though, on state affairs.

Guiding Principles

In view of the higher ideal of life, conceived in Islam (which I have termed longterm planning of life), organizing the public life alone is not enough. In a community that plans for the longterm objective of God's pleasure, not only the leaders but the led too should be thoroughly disciplined, both for public and private behaviour. In such a scheme of things, the few spiritual gymnasts who might make big strides in disciplining themselves and reach high grades of achievement and development cannot compensate for low and inhuman development of the common run of the people. The common run is also subjected to the rigid tests of application of nine principles, in a general way, for right conduct, in private and in public.¹

1. The Qur'an, xlii 36-40. A. Yusuf Ali's commentations may be noted alongside:

1. *Principle of Faith.*—The first step towards developing a personality to suit the real kind of planning of life conceived in Islam consists in faith—faith in the kindness and powers of an All-Knowing, All-Powerful, Omnipresent Divinity that appreciates good and despises evil.

2. *Principle of Trust.*—In the search for real values, people of faith should trust on that Divinity as a finality of all values. In a labyrinth of false standards, they will otherwise fumble, falter and fret without the real light of guidance. All other truths should, therefore, be reconciled to and controlled by the supreme truth.

3. *Principle of Morality.*—God's fundamental laws should be obeyed by one and all; otherwise, the moral development of a person is not possible. In general terms, major breaches of God's law will have to be consciously avoided as a first measure which will qualify a man for subtler pursuits of God's directives in every sphere of life in the next stage of development. It should be noted that even in the first stage, meant for the average man, offences against sex are to be avoided. A careful study of the relation between man and woman will reveal the ideal golden mean struck by the Quranic laws of legitimate restraint, to be observed both by man and by woman. It is hardly necessary to point out that Islam neither aims complete segregation with the 'iron-girdle' brand chastity, nor unbridled promiscuity of the Western brand false freedom. Rules of definite nature have been provided, at least for this issue, in Islam, and these human beings will violate only at the peril of their own balanced development.

4. *Principle of Forgiveness.*—Every man must weigh himself, and that particularly before weighing others. Realizing one's own deficiencies and imperfections, one should be able to interpret others' pitfalls in a right way. Even though one is severely tried by provocation and anger, it is right to forgive others, provided forgiveness does not imply encouragement of a wrong cause. Such a principle gives ability to a person to face situations of life, public and private, in a becoming and just manner.

5. *Principle of Knowledge.*—The ordinary man and woman must be ready for acquisition of knowledge that is too robust to shut the longterm aspect of life and its relation to God's plan. The sources are 'God's signs' interpreted in the nature of various sciences and arts. But the interpretations must not be one-sidedly mundane.

6. *Principle of Prayer.*—Everybody must establish prayers regularly by way of a personal communion with the Ultimate Reality. This helps an individual to develop inner powers of reception of right knowledge and protects him or her from unseemly behaviour, individual or social. When publicly organized, prayer implies a great cementing force for the entire community.

7. *Principle of Mutual Consultation.*—The conduct of an individual in an Islamic society is essentially of an open character, leaving no scope for insincerity or its sweeter cousin, diplomacy. Their conduct should, in the best interest of social welfare, be determined by mutual consultation in all common affairs, in the household as between members, in business

affairs as between partners, parties or body of shareholders, or in state affairs as between the rulers and ruled ; or government administration as between the various departments to preserve unity of purpose. This symbolizes the democratic attitude to all common problems of life, be it political, economic, moral, spiritual or anything else.

8. *Principle of Charity.*—Every individual must also practise charity out of all kinds of endowments. Poorer and weaker sections of society have a claim over others to be helped and strengthened by unlimited charity, out of wealth or gifts or talents or opportunities. Payment of zakat is based on this principle and is enjoined on all with specific rules of guidance for various kinds of wealth. But everybody is asked to spend in charity, voluntarily beyond the obligatory payment of zakat without any limit, to wipe out poverty and remove the distress of the needy.

9. *Principle of Self-Preservation.*—When an oppressive wrong is inflicted, individuals—men and women—should be able to depend on self-help and self-defence. This principle speaks of a very high value of individualism in the Islamic framework and excels even Mill's Postulate of Democracy that it is possible to get the best of democracy only when the individuals themselves are ready to stand up to safeguard their rights and interests. The individual may have to stand up, as Allama Yusuf Ali points out, against an oppressor—(a) for his own rights that are trampled, or (b) for the rights of others within his knowledge ; and similarly a community may be required to stand up against an oppressor, (c) for its own rights

collectively, or (d) for the rights of other communities or groups that are threatened or molested. According to this principle of Islamic society, people can never be cowed down to submission against their will; and, as such, it is firmly opposed to the idea of compromise with a wrong or ignoble cause. ✖

Their Applications : Why and How

It will be clear from a close study of the principles enunciated above that 7th and 9th principles have formed the foundation of modern democracy with which the great powers of the world today are priding over the perfection of their political creed. But leaving other important aspects of life alone, modern secular democracies can hope at best to achieve a limited measure of success. That is why the whole armoury of nine principles has been provided, in Islam, in the natural fitness of things to enable a human society to achieve the fullest measure of it. Divorced from other principles, simple secular democracy, in any form, so deplorably falls short of the real goal that Iqbal's cry should be treated, only as a mild warning :

جلال پادشاہی ہو کہ جمہوری تماشا ہو
جدا ہو دین سیاست سے تو رہ جاتی ہے چنگیزی

[Be it the splendour of monarchy or show of democracy,

On separation of religion from politics, remains
Chengezi.]

When, therefore, social planning is based on the above nine principles taken together, the social organization is likely to stand on the surest foundations of

solidity and perfect development of society. In the actual ordering of concrete institutions or policies, there may indeed be variations in the past applications and the present or future ones; but the principles as such are to be treated indispensable in themselves.

✓ System of Law in an Islamic State

The laws for an Islamic state that is planned on the basis of the above principles will be derived and deducted from the four sources : (a) Quranic Principles and Regulations, (b) Traditions of the Prophet called Sunnah, (c) Ijma' or the unanimous agreement of the community or Doctors of Law, and (d) Qiyas, or reasoning by analogy or deductions. The entire system of law has been called Shari'at or Shar', and may well be adopted for present and future purposes of a modern society with the real perspective of balanced social planning. For, the system is not, as is ordinarily supposed, a rigidly fixed one to defy adjustment with new conditions and situations of life. Dr. I.H. Qureshi remarks :

“The Shar' included within its fold three main principles, two immutable and one mutable, The immutable principles are the Qur'an and the authentic Hadith of the Prophet ; the latter, according to the Muslims, is not so much an enlargement as an interpretation of the principles enunciated in the revelation. The mutable factor is the interpretation of these principles, which has been arrived by human reason to apply them to the changing needs of humanity in different conditons. It is wrong therefore to say that Shar' is entirely immutable. The first two principles of it certainly are immutable but the third principle which is so necessary for the

application of Islamic principles to our own lives must necessarily be progressive. In the body of Islamic Law known to us today, there is a considerable contribution of this third principle and it needs reconsideration for being applied in circumstances which have so considerably altered . . . However, after a lapse of many centuries, with changing conditions whereas the immutable principles upon which the Shar' is based continued to be valid, the line of reasoning which led to the interpretation of those eternal principles was not always in keeping with the progress that human knowledge has made. To leave the courts to decide what is in accordance with Islamic Law it is necessary to define Islamic Law properly and to separate the grain from the husk."¹

As a matter of fact, Ijma' and Qiyas are too important processes of interpretation and application of Islamic Law. These processes have formed, and are to form, the keynotes of real progress in the system of law for an Islamic state, nay for mankind as a whole. For, these two processes have *ipso facto* recognized the vital importance of human reasoning. But since human reasoning, divorced from the principles of faith and trust, does not lead to the desired goal, it should be properly related with the eternal principles revealed in the Qur'an. Otherwise, human reasoning is only likely to produce philosophical anarchism, speculative sectarianism and legal illegalism. To base law on undiluted human reasoning is but a deliberate planning for pushing the social system permanently away from

1. Pakistan (quarterly journal, vol. I, No. 6, vide Dr. Qureshi's art. on "Sovereignty in Islamic State," p. 7)

the desired equilibrium. Keeping the basis intact, there should, however, be scope for rational inquiry into law and its interpretations. Needless to say that scientific inquiry into law was long established by learned doctors led by Abu Hudhifa; and since then, the Hanafi attitude has been playing a dominant role. One learned doctor has very correctly remarked:

“By far the greatest portion of Muslim Law is the outcome of true inquiry; for the actual passages of the Qur’an and the Sunnah have not contributed even a hundredth part to it.”

This tendency of rationalization is but natural and the uncertainty factor involved particularly in discriminating between different types of traditions of varying degrees of reliability, has got to be met by *ijtihad* (or application of reasoning), which the Prophet himself preferred. The very basis of the third process of law that is *Ijma'* is said to be the Prophet's saying that the community of people (or their representatives) cannot agree on going astray, or on an error. A further tradition states that the Prophet, while sending *Mu'ad* for collection and distribution of the poor tax, asked him: “O *Mu'ad*, by what rule will you act?” “By the law of the Qur’an was the reply. He asked again: “If you find no direction therein?” “Then I will act according to the Sunnah,” replied *Mu'ad*. “But even if that fails?” questioned the Prophet. “Then I shall make an *ijtihad* and act on that” was the reply. On this the Prophet was satisfied and prayed to God by way of gratitude.²

1. Nawawi, p. 237, as quoted in Khuda Bukhsh, op. cit., p. 408, footnote.

2. Klein, *Religion of Islam*, p. 31.

Evidently thus, our seventh fundamental principle of mutual consultation can appropriately guide even the present world to evolve a sound system of law. For, it implies the sovereignty of the people in all spheres. But the exercise of sovereignty is to be guided by the nine keys. An Islamic state is thus characterized by legal, political, or popular sovereignty, understood in the sense hinted above; and its prerequisite consists in balanced knowledge as stressed by the fifth fundamental principle.

Part to be played by Education

This leads to the importance of a proper system of education in which not merely modern sciences and arts with the peculiar Western outlook should be imparted but such studies and researches should be properly integrated with the immutable doctrines of Islam. Mere mundane knowledge might enable a man to fly to the moon or the mars in jet planes, but is simply unable to lead his spirit *pari passu* to the universe of God. An Islamic state necessarily demands a replanning of education on the lines of the nine fundamental principles referred to above. "In a ceaselessly changing world, man seeks a changeless pole" and "O thou who changest not, abide with me!" are regarded as the unconscious cries of humanity. Modern sciences have failed to supply a changeless pole and rather they have shoved humanity farther and farther away from "the pole." When education and knowledge are tied together with the "changeless pole," the contact of the rope, however long or short it may be, will give man the consciousness of 'the pole.' It is then that man's tremendous powers of knowledge can be used

rightly and real welfare of humanity can result from such use of knowledge. The new planning of education suitable for an Islamic state, therefore, presupposes new researches to bring modern knowledge into proper relationship with faith and trust in God. In short, really progressive knowledge, which does not leave aside any part of human life vis-a-vis its goal, should be the aim of a balanced system of education; that is what has been postulated in an Islamic state. Masters of such knowledge will have the "know-how" of new planning and new interpretations.

The wrong emphasis on knowledge for progressive material power has made the system of Western education unequal to its real objective. A Muslim, educated in the right way, may be more progressive than, or at least as progressive as, a perfect Westerner; but he will have something else. He will be able to know the 'secrets of his self' better than anybody else, and will be able to utilize the powers, myriad-winged in nature, arising out of such knowledge. He will thus realize development of himself to exclaim in an ecstatic joy:

"Venus I hold in thrall; the pearly moon
Doth worship me; and Reason's own great self
To master and control the world I forged.
Deep down within the solid earth I went,
And thence shot up with winged speed until
The azure lay beneath my flaming feet
A carpet rich and velvet-smooth to tread.
Sand-grains and the effulgent sun himself
Obey me as the genii the magician." (Iqbal).

But he is not powerdrunk; for, he is not forgetful of his source of power. Those who want to bring in

the millennium through the keyhole of human reasoning alone should listen to the subtle hints of a Western educationist:

“A measure of the folly of the world is gauged when we realize that it need not require religion or morality to reform it; reason alone, if reason were powerful, could do all that is necessary to make of the earth a paradise for us all. Human reason alone, however, in face is weak and becomes the prey of one or the other of the less noble passions. The urgent need is for the education of noble sentiment to put spurs to the reason and force her to mend her paces.”¹

To conclude, in a word, ‘one umma, one state’ is an ideal, and, above all, a realizable ideal. ‘One world’ is only one more step from that. Islamic planning, if at all, should aim at the realization of the ideal, in stages, in the imaginable future. Strivings in the Muslim world should but promote the process of progressive approximation to that politico-economic realization.

1. “Education in Pakistan” by Prof. J.S. Turner (of the Dacca University), published in a series of articles in Pakistan Observer, vide that of October 1, 1951.

CHAPTER TEN

ECONOMIC POSTULATES OF ISLAMIC SOCIETY

IN THE foregoing pages an attempt has been made to bring to light, in a general way, the contradictions of onesided planning and contrastingly to put the picture of a broadbased system of planning human life in its entirety which in fact the Islamic planning involves. In such a scheme of things, economic planning must essentially play a very important part, though it has got to be acknowledged at the same time that it has to function only as one of the links in the integrated chain. Islam has denounced monasticism in emphatic terms. Economic development, individual, national or international, should therefore be the direct objectives of the Islamic life—objectives that have both short-term and long-term implications. Islam, as is well known, stands as a perfect ideal, embodying matter and spirit fastened together in right proportions. But, unfortunately, it is possible to point out, emphasis on the side of spiritual development almost eclipsed the material aspect of the problem, after the decline of Islam as a political force. It is quite likely that political reverses made Muslims more and more inured to the onesidedness of spiritual life and interpretation and reinterpretation of old scriptural formalities or ritualistic controversies. As a result, it will not possibly be far wrong to emphasize the other aspect, viz., material development, now, although it is equally necessary to maintain the relation between the two,

without which the superstructure of Islam too crumbles down to the mortal dusts of mundane material science. Rather, we should have, on the sure spiritual foundation of Islam, a good deal of material rooting today. This makes the use of economic planning imperative in the highest degree in all Muslim countries of the world now, that are, to put it mildly, only inadequately developed.

Nature of Economic Postulates based on Islamic Principles

But, what are the economic postulates, either enunciated by Islam or reconcilable to the Islamic attitude to life? Without a clear idea of these postulates, it is not possible to risk any concrete economic planning on the lines of Islamic principles. There are two schools of thought on this particular issue, among Muslim thinkers. One school imbued with the spirit of Western sciences cannot think of application of Islamic principles to the economic sphere of life, although, according to Islam, these principles might be really perfect or eternal for purposes of spiritual guidance. According to this school, some social behaviour of economic significance may be traced in the teachings of Islam but has, through the natural process of disuse and obsolescence, fallen out of gear and cannot be fitted into any modern framework. This school is therefore in favour of blindly copying the Western methods of planning social life in which economic planning has necessarily to be very prominent.

The other school, overzealous of the application of Islamic principles to all aspects of life, assumes that

Islam has already formulated a body of settled economic principles and as such determined the structure of economic society that can give the highest degree of economic progress to Muslims under all circumstances. It is only left for man, as this school would have us believe, to apply the settled principles or policies and reap the harvest in this world and in the next (since the two worlds are interrelated in the application of Islamic principles). The time factor is not a disturbing factor, according to them, even in this finished structure and, for the matter of that, no new interpretation is called for towards its adjustment with the modern life. Aladin will simply rub his lamp and his tame genii will bring the finished palace absolutely intact and set it on this soil a thousand miles away.¹

It has already been made clear that Islam has not given us a perpetually fixed code of rules for human behaviour in all conceivable directions and for all conceivable situations of life, although the eternal nature of its principles can hardly be questioned by a sober pursuer of truth. In consonance with the spirit of evolution as acceptable to Islam, Islamic principles can only be of a general nature, the detailed workings of which are to be

1. Cf.—“ Indeed, it is very wicked on the part of some people to try to infuse poisonous elements in the Islamic ideology which is fundamentally pure and simple, by way of explanation and interpretation, however good-intentioned it may be. They should give up trying to introduce interpretations that may diverge to even millionth and billionth of a degree from the original objective. If the purity of the religion is to be retained, as it has been done in all the crises, it can be retained only through a strict discipline on our part, by refraining from admitting into the domains of Islam any fraction of the prevalent ideologies and also blocking their entry into its shrines through a backdoor, although those ideologies may appear to bear some stamp of or as deformed and degeneratad crossbreeds of the pure religion.”—Dr. A.R. Alavi, *The Islamic Literature*, March 1950, pp. 371-72.

left in the hands of the right type of planners who are required to exercise both caution and discretion. In the Islamic set-up, it is certainly important that branches of human knowledge like economics, politics and morality are to be considered emanating from one source and defy perfect separation. But from that it does not follow that separate treatment of either economics or politics is absurd even from the Islamic point of view. Even in modern scientific analysis it is very often acknowledged that many vital problems of economic and politics are intimately intermingled. The world has reached such a stage of development as demands systematization of knowledge in all branches to have any appeal to reasoning and faith. It is futile to expect that Mawardi or Abu Hanifa, or Malik or any other doctor of Islamic knowledge, would have taken pains to systematize the sciences of economics, politics, or physics and chemistry long, long ago to make the modern researches entirely useless. Were they to live in the present world, they would have probably thought earlier than Westerners to keep up research and systematize the social sciences in their own way, adding indeed the originality of the Islamic point of view which might have made the sciences look different from what they are. Frankly speaking, Muslims lost their initiative in this vital regard of seeking truth and knowledge for which the limitlessness of scope was suggested by the popularly known saying of the Prophet that the duration of learning is from the cradle to the grave. Unfortunately, close-minded contentions of possessing a pre-settled, systematized knowledge for all spheres of life have greatly contributed to a self-

complacency which has deepened stagnation. And stagnation in a progressive world means retrogression.

What is, however, vital is to maintain the Islamic point of view in the present imperative needs of systematization of knowledge to initiate a new world order and it is precisely here the zealots of Western knowledge, even amongst Muslims, are likely to err. The element of flexibility may be misunderstood in some quarters, but the idea of synthetic dynamism in Islamic principles should not give rise to any misgivings. It is that sort of dynamism that makes the absolute character of fundamental principles reconcilable to assimilation of newer generalizations based on environmental changes. We have noted earlier how the Islamic concept of law has provided for *ijma'* and *Qiyas*, demanding human reasoning, to equip the principles with the synthetic role. In view of such an approach, both the orthodox and purely unorthodox schools should merge themselves into the middle course, so significantly hinted in the Qur'an itself: "And seek to pursue the middle course" (*و ابتغ بين ذلك سبيلا*).

With that end in view, it is necessary to remember the whole chain of which economic planning is only a part, and indeed a very important part. It is then possible to compartmentalize economic planning by way of specialization against the background of the integrated planning encompassing all human affairs. To serve such a purpose, we have attempted in the foregoing chapters to build that background. We shall now proceed to analyze the important economic postulates obtainable from Islamic sources and applicable to an economic order.

It is necessary to note that even economists agree that there is a good deal of relativity in the science of economics. "Though economic analysis and general reasoning are of wide application, yet every age and every country has its own problems; and every change in social conditions is likely to require a new development of economic doctrine." Something more has to be added in it that new formulation is required by a change in the intellectual and spiritual background, too. Provided the moral, mental and spiritual background is maintained without changes, there is likely to be little change in the economic problems that may be governed by the said background. A change of standpoint will involve a change in the concepts held valid so far. For example, the concepts of wealth, capital or money can be said to be relative to standpoints and stages of social development. When we bring in the Islamic standpoint in the place of the prevalent mundane standpoint of analysis, differences are therefore bound to arise in the connotation or import of wealth, capital or money. What is wealth to a pure materialist who wants to satisfy and multiply wants, will not be wealth exactly in the same sense to a Muslim imbued with the spirit of combining material and spiritual wants for satisfaction as a means to an all-embracing end. Wine and pork may be considered as good an item of wealth in America as cloth of ordinary wear but wine and pork will not be treated as wealth in an Islamic country where no wants will exist for them. Similarly, what is regarded as capital for which a legitimate return called interest is emphasized in modern countries will hardly have that connotation and return in an Islamic framework.

In this way, on the basis of Islamic rules of behaviour, it is possible to formulate new economic postulates for purposes of economic order. But it is not to be supposed that all economic laws or principles are to be remodelled to suit this purpose. For, even in the existing set-up of the economic science, there are elements of universalism that will hold good in all circumstances. Economics has tried to probe into fundamental reasoning in some sectors. For example, the law of diminishing utility applies to all human beings whenever the question of satisfying any particular want arises; and its application will be independent of social institutions, spiritual predilections or religious persuasions. At the same time, economics also draws some inferences deductively which become universal and axiomatic; as for instance, from the very definitions of value and production will follow the axiomatic inferences that a general rise of values or a general over-production is absurd. Hence, in our search for new economic postulates, the prevalent universals or axioms which do not militate against the spirit or principles of Islam would hardly be required to be scrapped. Will the operation of the law of diminishing utility or that of diminishing returns be denied under conditions of its operation, be it a capitalistic country or a socialistic one, or be it an Islamic country or a non-Islamic one?

Postulate of Economic Trusteeship of Man

(a) As for the new economic postulates, hitherto unknown in and unconnected with prevalent dogmas, the fundamental one is that economic trusteeship of man which follows from the general concept of limited will

of man discussed earlier. The gifts of God, *i.e.*, resources of numerous kinds on the earth or in the sky, have been delivered as a trust in the hands of man, the trustee, who is to utilize them in the most efficient manner to produce the maximum output out of minimum use and to fulfil God's Plan of establishing prosperity here on this earth and, more fittingly, there in the Hereafter—a goal to be achieved for himself and all others at the same time. Such an idea has implications of vital importance on ownership, either of wealth or of means of production. Self-interest as the cornerstone of classical economists is diametrically opposed to this idea of economic trusteeship in which man has to engage in economic activity, actuated by a somewhat impersonal motive of fulfilling his obligation of trust. I say 'somewhat' since the limitation works only spiritually which however can be said to be, strictly speaking, indispensable for Muslim life, maybe in the economic sphere, too. But to conclude from this that the exclusive right of ownership is denied by Islam and hence exchangeability is not a feature of wealth in Islam is only too much to stand any systematic enquiry.¹ For, obviously, conceptions of buying and selling or trade transactions, so familiar in Islamic history and philosophy, can hardly proceed a step without the inherent concomitant of individual ownership of wealth or means of production.

Precisely, this postulate of economic trusteeship of man has given a large degree of elasticity in the economic system in consonance with the principles

1. Cf. Dr. Alavi's views in *The Islamic Literature*, March 1950, p. 378.

of Islam. This postulate admits of varying applications determining the possibilities of systems between the extreme poles of capitalism and socialism, in the popular economic jargon. When the spiritual content of trusteeship is likely to be extensively maintained because of mental, moral and spiritual discipline outside the purview of economic enquiry but essential for healthy economic life, maximum economic benefit for all could not probably be ensured by any other means than entrusting all individuals with freedom of enterprise and utilization of means of production. Islam indeed attempts to make man mentally, morally and spiritually equipped for economic trusteeship on the basis of freedom of enterprise and utilization of resources. But for a stage of development, expressly far lower than the requisite level of mental, moral and spiritual development aimed by Islam, the prescription of unrestricted private enterprise will be out of tune with the spirit of economic trusteeship. For, in the latter case, the trusteeship may be widely misused in the interest of individuals or groups. Depending on the degree of that mental, moral and spiritual development as a prerequisite, freedom of initiative and enterprise should be restricted with a view to fulfilling the same objectives by a novel institution, provided that institution at least can be manned by a few persons who have in fact satisfied the prerequisite condition. In this case, it may be essential to have collective enterprise in certain spheres, while leaving some others to individual initiative. In the extreme case, however, if it can be supposed that no justification exists for leaving any sector of economic life to private initiative, since zero

development is presumed morally, mentally and spiritually, all economic affairs may be assumed by the collective organization of the state or government provided the latter is constituted with a body of men alive to the postulate of economic trusteeship intimately related with its spiritual content. And that was precisely the idea of Caliphate in the early stage of Islamic history. If all men can be the viceregents of God, no rule, no government, no economic guidance will be required. Islam certainly aims at that goal of universal viceregency, as far as practicable.

But granting human limitations and frailties and the scope of operation of the forces of evil on them, it is simply natural and human to temper that idealism with a dose of realism. And in so far as incapacities to hold the position of trust as viceregents can be presumed, there is a prima facie case for economic interference by government, whatever the form of it. Things may be justifiably planned for those who are individually incapable by those who are capable to assume trusteeship. For all practical purposes, the legislators of an Islamic state at least should be an aristocracy of intellect and spiritual training, and a small committee of legislature may act as the Planning Commission to work out the details of specific plans. Corruption, nepotism and inefficiency may, in such a scheme of things, be the logical byproducts of the inability to satisfy this condition.

Considered on these lines, the postulate of economic trusteeship is one single instance of a special elasticity granted to economic propositions that can set the stage for different economic systems within the four

walls of other rigid principles like discouragement of idle savings and prohibition of all forms of interest. It is due to this characteristic that it is hardly possible, under the aegis of Islam, to fix upon a neat, perpetually determined economic system like the one conceived by the classical economists, or by neo-classical thinkers, or by Keynesian economics or by frankly socialistic economics. The general pattern has been, indeed, very clearly indicated by Islam but the details will have to be worked out on the basis of the stage of development and requirements of particular social entities without prejudice to the Islamic principles applicable, in general or in particular, to economic life of man. Interpreted like this, there are no grounds for self-complacency in economic pursuits of Muslims, nor is the complex of apprehensions of obsolescence relevant to the application of Islamic principles in practical economics.

Postulate of Economic Cooperation

(b) Another fundamental economic postulate on which the Islamic economic structure has to stand is that of 'economic cooperation.' The classical economists based their theories largely on postulates borrowed from mathematics and physics, that is to say, from sciences unrelated to human life. Struggle for existence, accepted as a postulate, could not but lead to the gigantic social turmoils, out of which recovery-work was started by different groups of economic reformists in numerous garbs, e.g., Benthamism, Utilitarianism, Owenism, Fabianism, Guild socialism, Syndicalism, Collectivism and Marxism. It is immensely interesting that the latest brand of reforming gospel, Marxism,

instead of correcting the wrong postulate, chiselled and finished it in a masterly fashion to get the most aggravated result out of it. The finished postulate has taken the shape of the dilectical formula of contraries that jostle violently with one another to deserve the technical epithet of 'class-war.' Without dilating farther on the matter, it should be obviously clear to economic and social thinkers that there cannot be, both philosophically and practically, any end to the vicious circle of creating social problems and adopting counteracting formulae to produce further social problems, unless the vicious postulate in all complexions is abandoned for good. Is it not a social boon, then, that Islam provides an alternative economic postulate to replace the old one of struggle for existence or formula of contraries?

The postulate of economic cooperation is of far-reaching implications. The strictest adherence to this postulate implies only a simple classification of factors of production as between resources and man, and artificial division of contributors to production into land, labour, capital and organization is foreign to it. Cooperation between man and resources will result in productivity without conflicts, frictions or class-wars. It is degrading to man to treat him as an impersonal agency called labour apart from problems of human life. Similarly, it is mischievous to separate the entrepreneur from labour to make him a demi-god whose exploitation of ordinary labour is not to be questioned. In the same way again, by creating the class of land-owners and capitalists by wickedly defining land and capital in classical terms of exclusive ownership by possession, not by production, the classical economists

have unwittingly played themselves in the hands of their strongest opponents who profited by class-conflicts to build up the demolishing weapon of class-war. The bad odour of capitalism has originated from a wrong definition of capital and, due to that wrong definition, opposition between labour and capital could be conceived under capitalism. Needless to say, Islam has deliberately shunned that wrong track from the very starting point of economic combination of agencies of production. The technique of opposites has been replaced by the technique of cooperative forces, and competition has been supplanted by cooperation.

Think of the theory of value, for example. The competitive system of economy assumes the opposite forces of demand and supply and more particularly those of utility and cost of production and reliance is placed on the chance agreement on a hypothetical common point of equilibrium with even association of ideas like fair price and maximum satisfaction for all concerned. The Marxist theory of value is much more aggressively classical in the sense that the labour theory of value which has long been discarded by even the followers of classical writers or neo-classicists has been made the foundation of it. (The labour theory has indeed a great influence upto now in the explanation of international values.) A shift of emphasis from labour costs on the supply side to various forms of marginal utility on the demand side has characterized the later stage of classicism and neo-classicism. At any rate, the change in the value theory from the emphasis on supply side to the emphasis on the demand side or at best on "the pair of scissors" notion (in which however much more cutting capacity has

been attributed to the demand blade than to the supply blade), has not affected the fundamentals of the economic theory of value based on opposites. But this is an attitude of making the most of the weakness on the side of buyers and hide it behind catchy principles of marginal utility or marginal preferences of consumers. Alfred Marshall brought into prominence his technique of consumers' surplus and rather suggested a further potential field of exploitation by the supply side to the extent of the hypothetical magnitude of the volume of consumers' surplus which was really taken advantage of particularly in the case of monopoly value. Now, Islam demands that the approach via conflict of opposites will have to be replaced by one via cooperation of the parties involved. When buyers themselves may be sellers in a different market and sellers themselves may be buyers in a different market, it is arbitrary to draw a line between buyers and sellers and suppose that they are jostling with each other. Cooperation is the right spirit for satisfactory give-and-take of goods or services or factors of production. This may be possible either through cooperative organization of enterprise, cooperative buying and selling, or even ordinary private buying and selling with the principle of cooperation guiding the buyer and the seller. It is to be clearly understood that such a spirit of cooperation justifies profit within reasonable limits alone and scarcity value of necessaries without a shift in cost conditions is alien to such a principle. In some quarters, there is a misconception that Islam has not put any limit to profit and hence has not condemned profiteering. It is for such quarters to understand the logical corollaries of cooperation which implies

cessation of opposition, cessation of even cutting each other's throat implied in cut-throat competition. Cooperation, if anything, has to aim at elimination of intermediaries, reduction of profit on costs and distribution of profit on an even basis. A theory of value reconciled to these objectives is likely to present altogether a different picture from the traditional demand and supply or 'pair of scissors' theory of value.

Such a miraculous economic postulate we have got in the Quranic injunction: "Let there be amongst you traffic and trade, by mutual good will" (iv : 29). The key lies in 'mutual good will' or cooperation. Provided the implications of such a postulate are laboriously worked out in all aspects of economic life, the largest number of headaches faced by the Western capitalistic countries are likely to disappear, with a revolutionary bearing, particularly on the scheme of distribution of national income. The theory of wages, in particular, passing through various phases of wages-fund, brazen law of wages, Malthusian repercussions of population on wages, marginal productivity of labour and marginal disutility of labour and so on, will have to undergo a radical change in view of the Islamic standpoint which cannot justify a transfer of a part of wages to the share of entrepreneurs simply due to the employment of one more unit of labour which is involved in the prevalent marginal productivity doctrine.¹

Postulate of Limited Private Property

(c) Another dominant economic postulate of the Islamic economic standpoint lies in the right to earn and

1. Cf. Keynes, *General Theory of Employment*, p. 17, footnote.

the right to private property (growing out of earnings) within certain limits. Such a significant postulate can be deduced from the Quranic injunction: "To men is allotted what they earn, and to women what they earn" (iv: 32). Remarkably, the right to earn is assumed both for men and women and the enjoyment of earnings is also safeguarded for both. None need be told much about the far-reaching implications of such a fundamental postulate. Taken in the right spirit, this postulate should also indicate the way to planning for full employment when the right to employment involved directly in it cannot otherwise be accorded in full. On the guidance of this postulate, a policy of full employment is, at least, justifiable even though in an otherwise individualistic framework. Maybe, the concepts of national minimum wage-level and schemes of social security (which are, in fact, intended by the principle of zakat and private charity) will have to be incorporated to the policy of full employment to the fullest possible extent. And this implies a good deal of planning in modern days of mixed economy.

The right to earn for man and woman is based on opportunities of full employment which however cannot be supposed to be automatic and spontaneous as the classical economists made the mistake to suppose. Long ago, J. B. Say gave his 'market theory' in which production (or supply) is shown as automatically leading to its demand. And, on that basis, "the economists constructed a model economic system which was in perfect equilibrium, the incomes paid out to the factors of production just sufficing to clear the market of everything that was produced, at prices which just

covered costs at the margin, and gave superior returns to the more efficient factors in proportion to their superior productivity. In this imaginary economic world, there was no unemployment, either of human beings or of other factors that could be used in conjunction with human beings." This static system assuming full employment could not recognize any degree of unemployment except what they called 'frictional'; and technical inventions, changes in population and changes in working hours or efficiency were treated as disturbing forces which deserved, if at all, a segregated treatment in a separate system, often called a dynamic one, but resented all the while. But such a view of economic equilibrium could not work in the world of reality in which unemployment of men and materials progressively assumed colossal magnitudes and was peculiarly undulated by the waves of trade cycles. That is why in the twentieth century it could be stressed thus:

"The classical theorists resemble Euclidian geometers in a non-Euclidean world who, discovering that in experience straight lines apparently parallel often meet, rebuke the lines for not keeping straight as the only remedy for the unfortunate collisions which are recurring. Yet, in truth, there is no remedy except to throw over the axiom of parallels and to work out a non-Euclidean geometry. Something similar is required today in economics."¹

Something like a revolutionary change was therefore sought to be worked by Keynesian economics which frankly admitted the existence of involuntary

1. Keynes, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

unemployment as distinguished from frictional unemployment, under pressure of which the whole edifice of classical economics collapsed like a house of cards. Keynes constructed his new thought on the central theme of employment and made it crystal clear that, while to classical economists, equilibrium would invariably mean full employment, equilibrium could in fact be at any level from full employment to no employment and full employment could at best be accepted as a long-term objective rather than an assumption. Achievement of the objective could not be left to the care of the blind forces of supply and demand but involved planning. According to Keynes, it will be the state's business to maintain conditions of full employment, that is to say, to ensure adequate effective demand in the market to clear the entire assortment of supply at reasonable prices covering costs including normal profit.

But all this triumph over classical or traditional economics can be claimed by Keynes by virtue of a very small trick of "throwing over the second postulate of the classical doctrine." The classical theory of employment stood, as Keynes explains, on two postulates: (a) The wage is equal to the marginal product of labour and (b) The utility of the wage when a given volume of labour is employed is equal to the marginal disutility of that amount of employment. The second postulate made the supply of labour an invariable function of wages and as such could only admit of full employment at equilibrium. This postulate was broken down by Keynes but not the first one which on his own admission involves the vicious circle of transferring part of incomes of those previously employed, in the

event of an additional employment to the entrepreneur.¹ Planning for full employment may therefore mean much harm to workers employed with the first postulate intact. Plainly speaking, thus, Keynes has not built a 'non-Euclidean geometry in a non-Euclidean world' but a half-Euclidean one which might carry us only half way. The Islamic approach has to dispute the marginal productivity theory left in its full swing by Keynes.

Some observations may also be made, at this stage, on the second part of the Islamic economic postulate of right to earn and to property (growing out of earnings). In respect of property, Islam forges a universally acceptable golden mean between unrestricted accumulation of wealth or property in few hands qualifying capitalism of all descriptions and levelling down of all possessions of wealth or property irrespective of abilities typifying pure socialism. Islam does not make any distinction between wealth and property and hence its unambiguous denunciation of idle wealth or idle property to serve as a basis of further income should be enough to confine property to reasonable limits which, again, are justified by differences in natural abilities calculated under the broad head of 'God's gifts.' Man has been asked 'not to covet those things in which God hath bestowed His gifts more freely on some of you than on others' (Qur'an, vi: 32). Such differences, legitimate on social and economic grounds, may be even essential for efficiency. But indeed in the name of efficiency illegitimate unevenness in possession of property should never be justified.

1. Keynes, *op. cit.*, p. 17, footnote.

Strictly personal enjoyment of property with merely individualistic ends is relentlessly despised by the Quranic injunction: "O ye, who believe, eat not up your property among yourselves in vanities, but let there be amongst you traffic and trade by mutual goodwill" (iv: 29). This determines the role property has to play, in the large interest of national economic life, as productive capital in trade, traffic, commerce, industry and so on with a view to increasing the volume of national dividend and thus to raising the per capita income of each individual. This tendency together with the radically distributive nature of the Islamic law of inheritance sets into operation a continuous flow of socialistic forces to offset the nauseating evils of the capitalistic conception of property. The spirit that permeates the whole scheme of Islamic distribution is echoed in the pregnant expression: "In order that it (*i.e.*, wealth or property) may not make a circuit between the wealthy among you" (Qur'an, lix: 7).

It should be noted that even the present-day socialists, professedly the opponents of capitalism, do not favour the idea of stream-rolling all inequalities, conscious as they are of the problem of incentive at the same time. They profess three principles: (1) The system should provide a minimum living income for all, subject to the acceptance of the social obligation by all to serve the community in return; (2) The system should provide adequate incentives to effort, including the effort needed to acquire skill or qualifications for higher posts; (3) The system should also have scope for considering the special claims. Emphasis on any of these principles will naturally have to depend on existing conditions and requirements of a particular

community. If unlimited priority is given to the first principle, it may lead to a general wiping out of the other two principles ; for no society has as yet reached the stage of development to guarantee a really satisfactory living income for all and still have a surplus to consider the special claims and also the claims of necessary incentives with higher incomes above the minimum level. As Prof. G.D.H. Cole says :

“ There is at present in all advanced communities, a sentiment in favour of inequality, as well as a sentiment in favour of a national minimum. This may always continue to be the case ; for even if the sentiment against privilege becomes general, the sentiment in favour of unequal rewards for unequal services may remain. In that case, the desire of some socialists—e g., Bernard Shaw—to advance towards complete equality of incomes may never be realized ; for such equality would be practicable only if it were generally felt fair, and it could hardly be so except in a society wealthy enough to set its national minimum at a level high enough to cover all reasonable wants.”¹

In the light of such trends of thought, too, the Islamic concept of property, as related with the requirement of a national minimum wage-level, can hardly be questioned. It is however necessary to stress that the labour theory of value as the premise of ‘ property is theft ’ has been long discarded by economists, having no relation with the modern economic thought ; and that position is unacceptable to the Islamic basis of value. A national wage policy called upon to ensure equitable

1. G.D.H. Cole, *Socialist Economics*, pp. 65-68.

distribution has but to work as a halting measure in a capitalistic society due to already existing inequality which tends to perpetuate with the forces of law and tradition ; but it will not have much to do in an Islamic society. The extremely socialistic influence of the distribution of the entire amount of public revenues, after meeting defence expenditure, over the Muslim population of early times, particularly during the sovereignty of Caliph Abu Bakr and Caliph 'Umar should never be lost sight of in the estimation of Islamic society in old times. This was however treated as a natural consequence of the socialistic practices of the Prophet Muhammad. In the beginning of Abu Bakr's government, the share out of the State Treasury (Baitul Mal) was small due to small proceeds. According to Sprengler, the renowned Orientalist, men received in the first year 10 dirhams and in the second year 20 dirhams per head ; and even women and children received the same amount.¹ Von Kremer suggests that this system of annuity-award was perfected and incorporated to the body of constitutional law by 'Umar I on improved scales. Such methods can however be treated as going to the utmost length of providing for a basic minimum living wage for every man and woman, and speak exactly like population budgets of full employment or perfect social security.

Postulate of State Enterprise

(d) Still another economic postulate of the Islamic society consists in the common ownership and management of common economic affairs. It has got to be acknowledged that even in a *laissez-faire* economy of

1. The Islamic Literature, October 1949, p. 123.

the nineteenth-century brand, some common economic affairs had to be looked after by the state and were given the apt name of 'public utilities.' The experience of a century has gradually but very widely extended the field of these public utilities. From the stage of public supply of water, gas, electricity or postal or railway service, the idea of common state-ownership and management has proceeded very far to engulf central banking and essential key industries, like iron and steel, coal, etc., as is evidenced in the British economy today.

Such a principle involves nationalization of industries or undertakings of great significance of common benefit, left in the hands of private entrepreneurs in the existing system ; and it involves at the same time deliberate public enterprises in the direction of public benefit in the production of goods or service for which private initiative is either wanting or inadequate or monopolistic. Modern countries are found grappling hard with the problems arising out of nationalization after allowing a free long rope to private enterprise in important lines of production. They are, of necessity, to find it hard to face the problems of trusts, cartels or giant monopolies. Could the economic system be organized on definite principles of not allowing private enterprise in the fields that are likely to develop into monopolies but are of common benefit to the people, it would not have been necessary to fight obstinate social ills after allowing them to grow.

Understood in the right way, Islamic principles have provided that timely precaution and ensured public ownership and management of all public utilities

in the broadest sense. The principle to be applied here is obtained from one authoritative saying of the Prophet: "People have common rights in regard to water and pasturage and fire." The application of the principle is also found in the Prophet's own decision with regard to a water spring sanctioned as a jagir to a companion. It is said that the water spring allotted to Ayaz b. Hammal was taken back for common use, while it was pointed out that the said spring in Yemen was a perennial one.¹ Historically, for a simple society without real division of labour and giant machines, what more could be said but the common affair of 'water, pasturage and fire.' But the principle established involves universalism for all similar things. One can realize the vital nature of water in the deserts of Arabia though it is quite likely that water in, say, East Pakistan, does not raise a vital issue. Similarly, pasturage is only reminiscent of a pastoral civilization. For countries that are primarily agricultural, pasturage may, in the changed background, stand for agriculture or extractive industries, in general. The spirit of the principle applied by the Prophet demands that all extractive industries relating to production of food, mining, fishing, etc., should be treated as state enterprises. The Physiocratic school of the French economists pointed out that the extractive industries alone yield a 'net produit,' a contribution from nature or gifts of God with which private ownership and management can hardly be reconcilable. Fire, as mentioned by the Prophet, may be taken to be a generic term to include all kinds of fuels, domestic and industrial.

1. *The Islamic Literature*, October 1949, p. 123.

Electricity, thermal or hydro, of modern days cannot justifiably be left in the hands of private entrepreneurs.

Further, the interests of common economic welfare, in modern times face grave setbacks in the economic phenomenon of monopoly and imperfect competition. Uncontrolled monopoly is unknown even to modern capitalism but the hotch-potch of control, particularly in the case of monopoly, as experiences shows, always stops short of positive remedying the social ill and the purpose is defeated via legal and illegal leakages. Socialization is therefore essential for key industries that enjoy the economies, internal and external, which, added with those of rationalization and combination, nurture the potential of formidable monopolies—cartels, trusts and combines. Healthy economic atmosphere demands freedom from the poisonous economic tangles that do arise politically—and that again nationally and internationally out of the seemingly imperceptible tendencies of cartelization or trustification.

It is worthwhile to note that the forces of cartelization operating on a world basis helped the German economy within a few years of defeat in the First World War, restore her economic sinews and build strong ties with the new cartel structure which made the strange bed-fellows of German, French, British and American monopolists sleep together. The role that was played by cartels in abetting Hitler's seizure of power has been only too apparent to escape notice. It is said that "Krupp, Thyssen and other powerful figures on the industrial scene provided both financial support and political influence for Hitler"; and after the Wall Street crash in America, Germany was striving to form

"an economic combine from Bordeaux to Odessa as the backbone of Europe."¹ The World War II was only the political sequence of the economic logic developed. Who knows if the same economic logic is being followed by America now to ward off the Third World War with economic strength?

Pressure of realities will therefore suggest an economic postulate guiding the elimination of monopolies of any description, root and branch. The Islamic economic postulate of socialization of basic or key industries with potentialities of monopoly is thus likely to satisfy the crying need of world economy for objectives of peace. The UNO's efforts without this economic disinfection do not appear to be enough for any objective of peace. The Anglo-Iranian Oil Company's withdrawal from Iran, though after passing through unusually strained moves and countermoves, may sanely be treated as an economic step forward to stabilization of peace rather than "a menace to peace," as alleged. This, however, peaks of the dogged tenacity of the diehards of the cartelized world. Islam, intending a different world economic order as it does, will like to nip the evil in the bud and hence the economic postulate of public ownership and management of essential industries and potential monopolies is incorporated to steer it clear of the tentacles of the monopoly-octopus.

1. Kilgore Committee's findings as quoted in James S. Allen's *World Monopoly and Peace*, p. 19.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME

WE HAVE already hinted that it will be too much to expect the formulation of the economic theory of production and distribution in terms of the simplified classical division of all ingredients or participants in production into abstractions like land, labour and capital, in the old Islamic conception of economic life. But yet a picture, fundamentally simple but far-reaching, even revolutionary for modern complications and consequences, can be made out of the system contemplated in the past.

Land & its Use

Contemporary modern writers of this age are increasingly finding fault with the classical methods of over-simplification, in which the division of agencies called factors of production was a very important one. Writers like F. Benham, Cairncross and others are pointing out that an analysis based on an imaginary segregation and unification of forces or agencies can hardly lead to any practical value. But apart from analysis of practical value, the hypothetical assumptions in uniformity while there is no uniformity and applications of generalizations or economic laws on the basis of an imaginary uniformity can well be held responsible for the social paradoxes of gross inequality of incomes and shivering economic fevers of booms and slumps.

In the Islamic sense, land as a factor of production

may be understood, as in the economic sense, to cover all free gifts of nature in any form. The surface of the earth including the forests, mines and fisheries may be land as unquestionably as the forces of water, winds, climate, sunshine, rainfall, etc. Before appropriation by man or before human effort is applied to all such items of natural gifts, none can place any claim of ownership over them. Only the ownership of nature (and to Muslims it is ownership of God) can be assumed in all these cases and appropriation of these sources of wealth can appropriately be placed in the hands of the state, and to no other agency. The state may indeed plan the utilization of these resources as means to production of wealth, either through her own appointed body of public personnel or through private initiative. But whatever it is, no transfer of ownership is involved either way, the unquestionable right of ownership being vested in the state. When the adventurous spirit of man conquers the ordinarily unconquerable and appropriates the ordinarily unappropriable for increase of wealth in the country, the state may just permit it tacitly but it can never abrogate its own right of ownership. And in the absence of clear policies, confusions may, however, arise and cloud the basic position. A class of landowners, not utilizing land but living on rents paid by actual utilizers, is thus a conceptual absurdity, though promoted under the peculiar circumstances of feudalism and traces of the same are not an insignificant reality.

Permanent settlement, a peculiar feature of the Indo-Pakistan land tenure system, was a historical and conceptual blunder committed by Lord Cornwallis to offset the then administrative bankruptcy. Could

Cornwallis dream in 1793 that zamindaris or jagirs were stopped in the seventh century by Caliph 'Umar with a revolutionary farsight from which he deviated so miserably? If the process of creation of idle classes or parasites goes on unchecked, any state's economy, however productive that may be, is likely to give way beyond certain limits. The proprietary rights on land may however be temporarily delegated to people in general and not a small group of them, for periods sufficiently long to bring forth the best of their enterprise on land, provided the state adopts a policy of free economy on the basis of private initiative. Or, alternatively, the state may follow state-farming or collectivization of agriculture that frankly asserts the ownership of the state over land. Islamic tradition has of course leaned positively on the side of individual or private farming but technically has not closed the doors to state-farming. The vital issue of the Islamic approach lies, however, in the non-recognition of original proprietary rights of individuals or groups, which implies the non-recognition of all feudal or intervening links between the state and the individual that feed themselves fat on the sweat of the underdog's brow. It is however true that bad administration of finance, in course of Islamic history of later caliphs beginning from 'Uthman, was also responsible for bringing into being the vicious system of distributing big estates as fiefs free of rent to the fighting services, since permanent annuity or salary could not be provided to them. And it is this system of awarding estates or fiefs in contrasting opposition to 'Umar's bold policies that may be treated as a single factor responsible for the catastrophic decline of

Muslim power and with it the end of economic justice. As Von Kremer says :

“Just before the Crusades, the East, like the West, was divided into a number of greater or smaller states and fiefs at the head of which, as the common religious chief like the Pope in Europe, stood the Caliph . . . Every member of the ruling family, every Amir, received a town or a district, as a fief, in which he exercised unlimited powers and the privileges of feudal lord. He had the manorial jurisdiction, and the peasants had to do husbandry services for him.”

The seeds of disintegration were thus dangerously un-rtured in the unsocial feudal system which developed with greater and greater virulence as time wore on. But that is a lesson of history—a price for the unwarranted deviation from a fundamental Islamic principle. The Muslim countries must have learned this lesson, at so heavy costs though, never to forget again.

It should be remembered that the system of fiefs was, in those eays, only an attempt to reward the fighting services that could not be otherwise remunerated out of public funds. Provided the services of defence can be met from the public treasury, the necessity of such rewards simply disapears. In modern days of public finance, defence is regarded as the first charge on the public treasury. After giving the required slice of the cake to defence services, whatever remains will only discharge other functions of the state for which, however, the need of increasing revenues is necessarily on the increase to meet increasing demands of public welfare on the civil side. In the modern con-

text, apart from the issue of social consequences of feudalism born of fiefs, any brand of feudalism, be it zamindari or jagirdari, is thus entirely out of all relevance with the social framework.

It was a wise stroke of interpretation, on the part of Second Caliph 'Umar, of one Quranic injunction (lix : 3) that had all the promises to save humanity from all the gruelling and excruciating social consequences of feudalistic exploitation. On the conquest of Syria and Iraq 'Umar had the opportunity to apply his interpreted policy of collective possession of land which was ultimately upheld by his colleagues and companions. Even in respect of lands already in possession of individuals, he applied the strict policy of utilization of land in the collective interest which is evinced in the fact that he took away the part of landholdings, lying unutilized in the possession of Belal, for redistribution to other cultivators who could use it productively.¹ Needless to say that only such an attitude to land use is in consonance with the concept of proprietorship of land vested in the Malikul Mulk who has placed man in authority to provide for all alike in the pursuit of objectives of life. This attitude not

1. Maulana Hifzur Rahman, *Islam ka Iqtisadi Nizam*. On the authority of Baladhuri, it is related that Caliph 'Umar promised the chief of the Bajila tribe one-fourth or one-third of the conquered territory of Iraq for the military assistance of the tribe in the conquest. On actual conquest, however, 'Umar was confronted with difficulty to satisfy the land-hunger of the Arabs and the Bajila tribe. To arrive at a correct decision, 'Umar ordered land survey and census of population. Then in consultation with the leading men, he decided to declare Sawad (Greater Babylonia) as an inalienable state property for all time, the revenue of which was to be employed for the benefit of the state. The chief of the Bajila tribe was indeed induced to retire from the land, already in his possession, and was presented 400 dinars while each member of his tribe was given an increased annuity of 2,000 dirhams. The inhabitants were left in possession of land as against a poll-tax and the usual land-tax. (Vide Khuda Bakhsh, op. cit., pp. 85-86.)

only covers the issue of land in the narrow sense but also mines and fisheries, forests on the one hand, and natural forces of all kinds like sunshine, rainfall, water power, wind power, etc., on the other. In the modern world, equal distribution of land in the narrow sense of agricultural lands is not enough for multiplying humanity dependent on a fixed supply of cultivated and cultivable land. Land in this narrow sense is directly sought by individuals due to the relative ease of appropriation and advantage of food and primary products. In given circumstances of equal distribution of land and full technical knowledge of productive use of land, private farming may be enough for economic prosperity. But the state will have to guarantee the conditions of equitable distribution of landholdings and provision of full knowledge about the art of agriculture. The state must discharge this responsibility keeping in view the dynamic nature of the state of knowledge or technique agriculture which changes with new inventions and improvements that have far-reaching implications on the concept of an economic holding, the basis of distribution of land. The State Acquisition of Landholdings Act of 1950 of East Bengal may, in this sense, be treated as an Islamic step but it is not likely to carry us far unless, at the same time, the state guarantees the conditions and discharges the responsibilities involved in the right way.

Role of State in Land Utilization

But what is more important, in the case of mines, fisheries and forests, appropriability and other advantages are relatively less attractive for which individual initiative may be wanting. If private initiative is very satisfactory in this field, too, there is no immutable

injunction that it cannot be left in the hands of private entrepreneurs. When, however, initiative is halting and remarkably inadequate, it is but imperative that the state should not only own these natural resources but also manage and utilize them in the most productive manner for maximum social benefit.

It is particularly in the third sector of harnessing natural forces like rainfall or sunshine, wind power or water power that individual initiative is likely to prove, from the nature of the enterprises, extremely inadequate and unsuitable. Endeavours of adventurers or zealous scientists, even in this field, are highly valuable and should be encouraged by all means; since these endeavours open up new avenues of knowledge to tackle nature and her mysterious and risky forces. But methodical utilization of a natural force, with even given techniques, can hardly be expected from the ordinary tillers of soil. Can a cultivator get hold of an aircraft and go up to "seed the clouds" in the Australian or American way to bring out some more rain while rain is insufficient and on other occasions to disperse the vapour-charged clouds to offset rain while rain has already been adequate? Can an individual, again, construct a dam across the flowing streams of a powerful river with the available engineering skill in order to fight out floods and irrigate his lands,—and just incidentally—to produce hydro-electricity which will be of use to him and his neighbours? Frankly speaking, such problems can never be dealt with by individuals with any economic benefit worth the name. Collective enterprise or state undertaking of these affairs is thus a logical necessity.

We need not bring in the Ricardian theory of "original and indestructible powers of the soil" to justify a permanent return for the use of land to the landlord on the basis of producers' surplus—a concept originating from the Physiocratic concept of 'net produit' ascribed to land. For, it is that theory that sought to establish the claim of the idle class of landowners on a share out of national income without contributing economic effort (or labour). Economic rent which is conceived as arising out of natural differences in the fertility of land or in other aspects like situational advantage, etc., should properly belong to the state, the ultimate trustee of lands. Unearned increment due to lands in general and urban sites in particular arising out of the forces of change like changes in population, development of cities, application of improvements and inventions, should also, in fairness, be treated as the state's claim, claims of individuals being considered strictly on the basis of application of effort as a contributory factor, if at all.

Problem of Land Tenure

Granting of proprietorship to individuals under temporary settlement of direct relationship with the state, however, endows the individual tenants with the right to enjoy the economic rent in part resulting from the inherent natural properties of lands and increase their fertility or productivity by their own efforts to enhance the volume of yield from nature, subject to the surrender of a part of the produce to the state for the delegated right of proprietorship and possession. Islamic principles did not, however, disallow private ownership of lands in Arabia proper and land-tax had to be paid by cultivator-owners of

landholdings, Muslim and non-Muslim. But the emergence of a non-cultivating class holding lands for leasing to cultivators was certainly what was denounced by Islamic principles during the early period of Islamic administration.

The problem of land-tenure was dealt with in three ways, in those days: (a) acceptance of peasant-proprietorship principle for Arabia; (b) ryotwari system for non-Arabian territory declared as state property and (c) special treatment of non-Muslims in respect of holding of land. Land revenue was paid by Muslims as peasant-proprietors in the nature of a land-tax *in natura*; and for land under the natural irrigation of rainfall, the land-tax was 10% and for lands under artificial irrigation, it was 5% of agricultural yield (called 'ushr). This was a settled policy for treating Muslim peasants within Arabia.

The principles of assessing ryotwari areas were evolved in Iraq, Syria and other Babylonian regions (called Sawad by Arabs); and all credit for such a settled system is due to the Second Caliph 'Umar who however found the practice pre-existing under Persian rule. In Iraq, after extensive land survey, the land-tax for each jarib (*i.e.*, 3,600 sq. yards) was fixed at one kafiz and one dirham. On the conquest of Babylonia 'Umar fixed the land-tax on the basis of thorough survey as follows: (a) for lands periodically flooded, it was one kafiz and one dirham for each jarib; (b) for meadow land 5 kafiz and 5 dirhams for each jarib; (c) for lands with tree plantations 10 kafiz and 10 dirhams for each jarib. Various scales of payment were fixed for different plantations like vineyard or palm-plantation, sugar-cane, wheat-lands and barley-fields. A

close study of these disclose a scientific principle of assessing the land-tax according to the nature of soil and mode of cultivation. Variations in land-tax imposed in Syria and Egypt were also to meet different conditions of agriculture.

Some tracts of land were directly held by the state and even ryotwari settlement was not adopted for them, but rents were realized from occupants through contracts. This was an example of rent, pure and simple, depending, however, on contract with parties, and was called Kira'ul Arz. This is analogous to contract rent, in modern terminology, with the difference that modern contract rent is supposed to be the outcome of demand and supply in which the private landlords can exploit the situation to the utmost while here it is necessarily a contract between the state and private parties precluding the monstrous exploitation by private landlords.

Non-Muslim cultivators were to pay rent for the use of lands, not owned by them, in cultivation, and this payment was called Kharaj. But since the non-Muslims had not to pay zakat (*i.e.*, poor-tax) on agricultural lands, rent for lands held by non-Muslims had to be settled with a view to compensate the loss of revenue to the state due to non-application of the poor-tax to some extent. That is why Kharaj (or land revenue paid by non-Muslims) assumed a special character in the administration of state affairs under Islam.

At any rate, the above analysis points to the fact that Islamic history has admitted of a diversity in land-tenure but has unequivocally intended the elimination

of a leisurely class of landlords. Depending on economic exigencies, therefore, an Islamic approach in the modern world can also tackle the tangled problem of land reform in three ways : (a) peasant-proprietorship with consolidation of holdings ; (b) nationalization of land with collective farming and (c) nationalization of land with cooperative farming. A combination of any or all of these methods might lead, in consonance with the Islamic spirit, to the solution of the land problem not only in the Muslim world but the world as a whole.

Collective farming, to be economic, is dependent on large tracts of land as units of cultivation and as such can be experimented in countries where extensive lands are yet unutilized, waiting for reclamation by the state. For lands already under cultivation, such a method can hardly be applied with ease and economy. Such collective farming may even be without nationalization ; for example a number of joint stock companies may be endowed with the ownership of big estates for development and productive utilization. But a country with a large landless population can ill-afford to allow such big enterprises in agriculture without increasing social ills. By way of experiment, the state may, however, apply the principle of collectivization on certain tracts directly held by the state after reclamation of waste lands. In old countries where *per capita* landholding is tending to be smaller and smaller, peasant-proprietorship with cooperative farming is likely to be most fruitful. The anathema of the landlord class may be removed by state acquisition of their estates and distribution of the transferable excess on the basis of economic holdings over peasants

with little or no land. Consolidation of holdings as a principle was working behind Caliph 'Umar's policy of land distribution and is still relied on as one of the correctives of subdivision and fragmentation of land-holdings. Voluntary consolidation has not so far borne much fruit. It is therefore advisable to have a policy of consolidation by the state *pari passu* with the elimination of the idle landlord class, which itself involves redistribution of lands on an equitable basis. Thus reorganized, peasant-proprietorship will bid fair to contribute substantially towards national income through cooperative farming.

It should however be borne in mind that in the densely populated countries like Pakistan, even this mild method of reform, viz., peasant-proprietorship with cooperative farming, will involve dislodging surplus manpower that can either turn themselves into occasionally demanded landless labour or fully employable industrial or trade workers. This indicates the paramount importance of the measures of industrial or other economic progress for absorbing the surplus human capacity unabsorbable in agriculture alone.

Problems of Labour & Capital

In regard to labour, the Islamic approach will not materially vary from the views of modern economists. An Islamic society, manifestly opposed as it is to idle labour, rather assumes that men and women of working age should work and contribute to the economic progress of the nation. This can be said to be implied in the Quranic injunction; "To men is allotted what they earn, and to women what they earn" (iv : 32). Avenues of earnings are thus open to both men and

women who, by their productive economic effort, are expected to raise their living standards. Mobility of labour is a logical sequence of such a postulate and the so-called *purdah*, in so far as it stands in the way of natural mobility of labour or free seeking of earning opportunities by women, seems to have been condemned, at least by implication. Earnings will, however, differ in different occupations due to differences in abilities of workers, male or female, or due to the causes enunciated by Adam Smith (*viz.*, agreeableness or disagreeableness of work, etc.) or due to relative immobility of labour.

The very fact, on the other hand, that no return to capital in the form of rate of interest is admissible for the use of capital in an Islamic society, indicates the importance of enterprise and labour rather than that of capital as borrowable funds. The aim is to eliminate another class of social parasite, *viz.*, capitalists who can be assured of a steady income without really contributing productive economic effort and hence taking a share of the national income without contributing to it. Curiously indeed, even Adam Smith, the originator of the economic science, so to say, distributed national dividend in the forms of rent, wages and profits to the complete elimination of interest. It is the later writers who founded the capitalistic economy on the superstructure of capital, assigning a stable and sizable slice of the national dividend for capitalists. The rate of interest brought into existence in the interest of capitalists has gradually engulfed the entire world like an inextricable cobweb, so much so that any proposal of elimination of it is received with horror.

Principle of Zero Interest & Banking

The basic idea behind the Islamic concept of zero interest for capital lies in the fact that investment of capital must share the risks of an enterprise and accordingly capital will earn profit, positive or negative, depending on the nature of the net income of an enterprise; and as such a constant income for capital irrespective of loss or gain of the enterprise in question, is unwarranted by economic logic. For, a constant income of the nature of the prevalent system of charging interest implies a transfer from the share of other factors (primarily the entrepreneur) which is one form of un-social exploitation, under certain circumstances. Zero interest is intended to work as a spur to entrepreneurs (including the capitalists) who will bear the risks and uncertainties of real business in an animated spirit for enjoying the profits arising out of successful operations. This principle discourages the lazy and indolent type of savers but stimulates active savings that seek profitable investment in industrial and business enterprises. Savers themselves may start small enterprises or may combine with partners to organize a bigger concern or subscribe towards the large capital of a joint stock company. Shares rather than bonds will tend to predominate in a financial market under zero interest. There is no bar, under such conditions, for a government to raise funds for productive public enterprises by issuing shares rather than bonds and dividend rather than a fixed rate of interest can be declared for such shares as justified by circumstances. Temporary accommodation for the government may be available from the central bank of the country, obviating the necessity of issuing Treasury

Bills or Certificates. In the United States Savings Banks that pool together people's savings and invest them in profitable mortgages, usually offer a rate of dividend to the depositors. It is one step more to extend the proposition of dividend to mortgages and other securities out of which the banks derive their income. Cooperative banking on a profit-sharing basis¹ can, with little difficulty, be designed for such an economic environment. Insurance companies, with their long-run investment policies, can more easily adapt themselves to no-interest environment, if they desire; for, they also offer dividends to their policy holders. Above all, the additional uncertainties with which banks and insurance companies may be faced under changed conditions, may be adequately taken care of by schemes like the Federal Savings and Loans Insurance Corporation, etc., organized by the Federal Government of the U.S.A. to protect the interests of depositors, savers, home-owners and so on in the wake of the emergency of the thirties.

The real difficulty of translating these principles into concrete economic institutions lies in the practical limitations in view of the international content of financial operations. Human nature being as it is, it has the ingenuity of making use of situations arising out of differences in rates of interest for identical investments and differences in rates of exchange, provided human efforts, in this regard, are not otherwise rendered abortive. Under certain circumstances, even law cannot adequately prevent such human activities, however detrimental to the system adopted in a parti-

1. Cf. *Shirakat Banking* referred to in Shaikh Mahmud Ahmad, *Economics of Islam*, pp. 169-174.

cular country. The problem is all the more perplexing when the wide outer world is not influenced by the same ideology and unable to lend its moral support behind the implementation of a plan or a principle.

But once a new environment is provided somewhere, the healthy winds will flow in all directions of the globe, changing, bit by bit, the hostile atmosphere all around. There is already prevalent a strong aversion to modern ways of banking that nourishes the greatest destabilizing factor for the economic swingings of instabilities so patent in capitalistic economies. Beginning from the hundred per cent reserve plan down to the latest attempts at basing bank loans on net worth of the borrower are just the new fumbblings which, I believe, may deflect to the right diagnosis provided the atmospheric pressure is exerted by the Islamic economic environment.

Era of Tribulation & Shaping Things to Come

Despite the discouraging inadequacies of Muslim countries in shaping policies, applying principles and above all in forming the balanced type of character needed for optimum economic and other progress, there is reason for hope. Re-affirmation of Islamic principles and application of them wherever and whenever possible with renewed faith are bound to produce results. Even economists like Alfred Marshall agree that England's industrial revolution was immensely influenced by the spirit of the Reformation. Marshall says :

“Meanwhile the English character was deepened.”

ing. The natural gravity and intrepidity of the stern races that had settled on the shores of England inclined them to embrace the doctrines of the Reformation; and these reacted on their habits of life, and gave a tone to their industry. Man was, as it were, ushered straight into the presence of his Creator, with no human intermediary; and now for the first time large numbers of rude and uncultured people yearned towards the mysteries of absolute spiritual freedom. The isolation of each person's religious responsibility from that of his fellows, rightly understood, was a necessary condition for the highest spiritual progress. But the notion was *new to the world*, it was bare and naked, and yet overgrown with pleasant instincts; and even in kindly natures individuality showed itself with a hard sharpness of outline, while the coarser natures became self-conscious and egotistic.

"... The first growth of strength had then something in it that was rude and ill-mannered; but that strength was required for the next stage upwards. It needed to be purified and softened by much tribulation; it needed to become less assertive without becoming weaker, before new instincts could grow up around it to revive in a higher form what was most beautiful and most solid in the old collective tendencies... Holland and other countries shared with England the great ordeal which was thus opened by the spiritual upheaval that closed the Middle Ages. But from many points of view, and especially from that of the economist, England's experiences were the most instructive and the most thorough; and were typical of all the rest. England led the way in

the modern evolution of industry and enterprise by free and self-determining energy and will." ¹

The notion of individual responsibility was not, in fact, new to the world, as Marshall thinks. It was the cornerstone of the Islamic policy thirteen centuries back and is still supposed to be one of the mainsprings of Islamic character; and because of the co-existence of other finer instincts disciplined by spiritual development, coarser natures of Muslims need not become self-conscious and egotistic justifying branding the type of selfishness of the nineteenth century as 'rugged individualism.' That rugged individualism of England had to be polished and refined in later stages to make it yield the bliss of economic prosperity through the functioning of free and self-determining energy and will. An Islamic society has already in it the fund of free and self-determining energy and will to turn the wheels of economic progress along with other types of progress. Centuries slept over such treasure secrets. Guiding principles of revolutionary character fell into disuse. All that is a big black chapter of history. We have paid the price of such a colossal indolence in terms of poor social, political and economic development in the international race for progress. A happy reawakening is, however, tending to gather increasing momentum in the contemporary age. The reawakening should necessarily emphasize a reaffirmation of those dynamic bundles of principles that have rusted a little by long disuse but can yet, properly used, produce wonders in social and economic life. But with this starts the period of tribulation, serving, as it will, as the living

1. A. Marshall, *Principles of Economics* (8th edition), App. A.

laboratory of social and economic researches and their applications, and as the hard anvil on which the shape of things to come will shape itself out.

The Islamic social framework, in general, bids fair to evolve round about a mixed economy, but with a difference. As is well known, the "carrot before the donkey" economy typically represented by the United States and the "cane behind the donkey" economy expressly represented by the USSR have paved the way for the so-called via media between the two in the new brand of mixed economy in Great Britain. But while the British brand is a mixture of capitalism and socialism, the foundation of Islamic social framework is laid on a mixture of individualism (and not capitalism) and Islamic socialism in ideal proportions. The jerks and shocks loudly appearing, in the British system, in the monstrosities of social and economic exploitation, although combined with some tit bits of socialism, are deliberately eliminated in the sort of mixed economy, planned under Islamic principles, for the building up of the real golden mean required for the most balanced and socially logical framework. But the framework has yet to be formed or re-formed.

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by

Prof. M. RAIHAN SHARIF

M.A. (DAC.), M.B.A. (PENN.)



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