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MISTREATING MUSLIM AMERICANS - PAGE 10

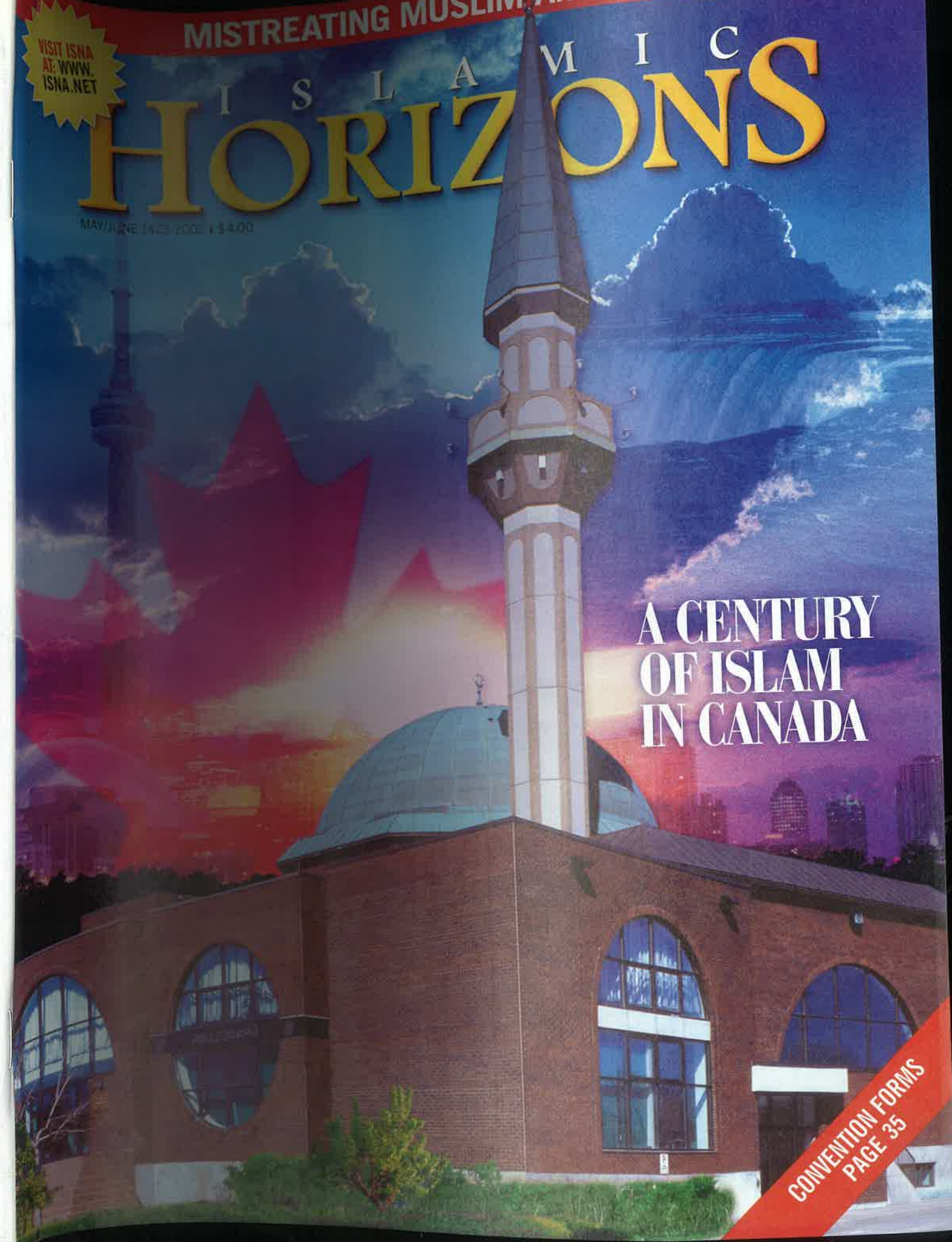
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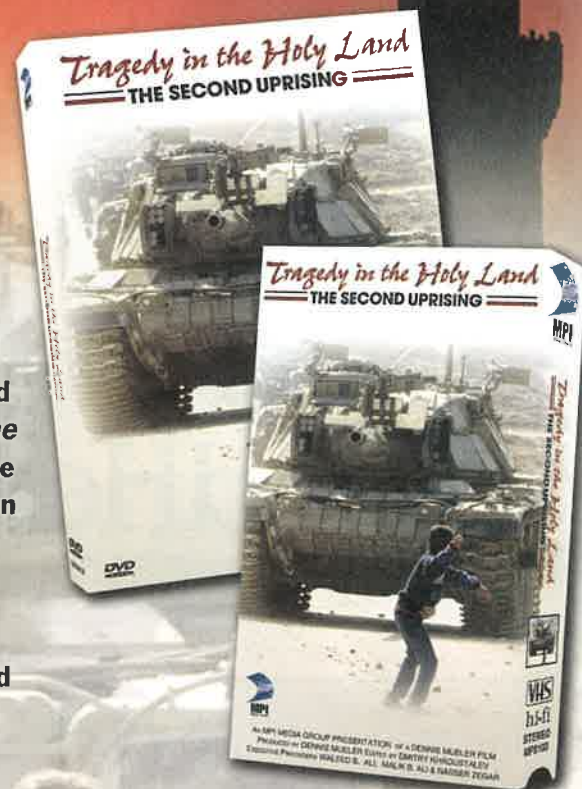


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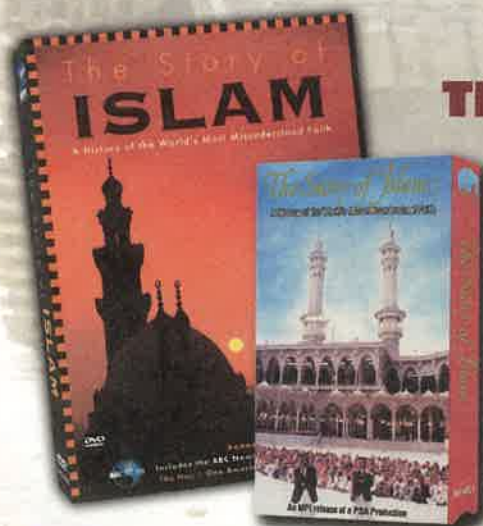
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The views expressed in *Islamic Horizons* are not necessarily the views of its editors nor of the Islamic Society of North America.

All references to the Qur'an made are from *The Holy Qur'an: Text, Translation and Commentary*, Abdullah Yusuf Ali, Amana, Brentwood, MD.

COVER: Ottawa Mosque, photo by Michael Bowie/Lux Photographic Services Inc., Ottawa.

Is neo-McCarthyism Taking Root?

Armed federal agents with search warrants based on sealed evidence forcefully raided Muslim American citizens, their think tank, school, businesses, and homes in Virginia and Georgia on the 20th of March. The raids have effectively disrupted and confused the Muslim American community. Now, as those subjected to these raids are able to tell their story to other American communities, the raids are generating outrage from all Americans who treasure their Constitution.

When trusted American Muslim institutions that have also worked with the Government are raided by the U.S. Treasury Department, with no regard for their cooperation and openness, when prominent American Muslim citizens in the forefront of the national effort following the September 11 tragedy, assisting wherever and whenever they can, and religious and educational Muslim American institutions that train and provide chaplains to the military are raided, the Muslim American community is rightly alarmed into asking "Where do we go from here?"

It was the first such search and seizure operation in the Muslim American community and the way it was conducted made it very clear that the method of operation henceforth will be in the spirit of the USA-PATRIOT Act. Many Americans are fearful of its effects, as the Act is authorized in all criminal investigations, not just those opened to fight terrorism. Sweeping aside Fourth and First Amendments to the Constitution in this manner in the name of national security has had a chilling effect in all communities. It has become clear that bad law does not make our nation more secure, but sends us in directions that disenfranchise American citizens.

The March 20 raids were allegedly conducted to gather information, and authorized by a federal magistrate who acted on evidence that remains sealed and inaccessible to the victims. However, the media was "tipped" and set up outside some of the search areas to intimidate with cameras and microphones, and indeed some of this "secret" evidence was not so secret for some publications. Understandably so, the raids have caused a loss of business and clientele who were confused and misdirected by those who seek to create distrust and disruption of the American Muslim community.

We only hope that such terror was not perpetuated under official directives but is the work of some irresponsible elements in the bureaucracy who regrettably act out of racial, ethnic, and religious bias. In response to an article by attorney Raymond Busch in the Washington Post, Fairfax Extra section, on the 11th of April, a law enforcement official said that they were only going where the evidence leads them. It seems as if there were a gigantic hound of state that follows a scent, true or false, and when it arrives at its destination, it jumps into the life of Americans with teeth bared and bad breath and proceeds to terrorize and wreak havoc in the lives of the unfortunate Americans. American justice is supposed to function with professional guidelines and sound judgment at all levels, and not be reduced to being a bounding hound. Letting the dogs of intimidation loose domestically will be an American tragedy of our own making.

Muslim Americans are asking for a Congressional investigation and an internal inquiry based on conscience and professionalism. We must police the police, if we expect respect and cooperation for those who seek to protect and serve us. The very communities who could do the most to help will be intimidated and reluctant to communicate with those who condone unprofessional conduct and foster the image of a Government targeting communities and individuals on the basis of race, religion, and ethnic background. The Qur'an's guidance is true for all humanity when it says: "O you who believe! Stand out firmly for Allah as witnesses to fair dealing, and let not the hatred of others to you make you swerve to wrong and depart from justice. Be just: that is next to piety, and fear Allah. For Allah is well acquainted with all you do." (5:8)

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ISNA MATTERS

Washington Gearing Up for ISNA Convention

Muslim communities in the Greater Washington Metropolitan area and beyond are working together to host the 39th ISNA Annual Convention, the first one to be held in the nation's capital.

The steering committee draws its members from Washington, DC, Maryland, and Virginia. Each person has experience with coordinating such large-scale local events as 11 annual Eid celebrations (e.g., multiple Eid



Rizwan Jaka

prayers, carnival, bazaar, and community festival). The Eid al-Fitr in Dec. 2001 had an attendance of 20,000, and the Eid al-Adha in Feb. 2002 had 12,000 attendees. Both were covered by the national mainstream media.

The steering committee has established many committees, from media relations to babysitting. Each committee blends youth and experience, contains ISNA and MSA veterans, and features senior Islamic workers serving as advisors and consultants.

Steering committee chair Rizwan Jaka said that his committee will supplement and support ISNA's headquarters and convention department to ensure a great convention. This year's event is being held in conjunction with the MSA and MYNA annual conferences.

Jaka said that Muslims of the Greater Washington Metropolitan area are striving to host a memorable convention and are confident that the nation's Muslim community will help make the first ISNA convention in the nation's capital a befitting one. For more information, e-mail: cisna2002@yahoo.com.



Agriculture Leaders Visit ISNA Headquarters

On March 19, some 33 fellows in the California Agricultural Leadership Program visited the ISNA headquarters. This 2-year program, which prepares and motivates those involved in the agricultural sector for more effective leadership, emphasizes the disciplines of government, economics, communications, sociocultural understanding, and global and domestic concerns.

ISNA secretary general Dr. Sayyid M. Syeed explained ISNA's work and the contributions being made by Muslim scientists to make a better America. He also expounded upon the Qur'anic view of proper resource utilization.

Muslims Rally for Victims

The recent communal violence in India has led North American Muslim organizations to organize relief drives. ISNA's Indian Muslim Relief Committee (imrcofisna.org) and Human Concern International (www.humanconcern.org) have launched fundraising appeals for victims in the Indian state of Gujarat. The fundraisers said that survivors are too scared to return to their homes and villages. They have lost all their material possessions, for homes, businesses, and farms were reduced to ashes.



Violence in India

Tainted Justice..

Imam Jamil Abdullah Al-Amin, 58, has been given a 20-year term without parole for a crime he says he did not commit. Superior court judge Stephanie Manis added another 30 years for other allegations, effectively meaning that he will spend the rest of his life behind bars.

The state alleged that Al-Amin killed Fulton County sheriff's deputy, Ricky Kinchen, 35, and wounded his deputy, Aldranon English who tried to serve him with an arrest warrant. The prosecutors, despite witnesses and forensic evidence that didn't match the account of their star eyewitness, prevailed in their contention that Al-Amin alone killed Kinchen and wounded English. The twisted judgment has been met with dismay among Muslims and civil and human rights workers.



Imam Jamil Al-Amin

State witness, forensic biologist Jennifer Crockett testified that blood found near the crime scene was not human blood. Atlanta homicide investigator Brett Zimbrick admitted that the evidence was not "pristine" because the crime scene had not been secured. The shell casings from the gun allegedly used by Al-Amin weren't found on the sidewalk but in the middle of the street, indicating another person fired the shots from the street.

Al-Amin, who reverted to Islam in prison, settled into

Atlanta's mostly African-American neighborhood, sprouting a small Muslim community around the mosque he founded—starting neighborhood patrols and converting drug users to Islam. Al-Amin, spiritual leader of the National Community, has consistently insisted that there is a government conspiracy against him dating to his days as the black activist H. Rap Brown, believes that the murder charge was part of that persecution to justify all the investigations and the money: "More than anything else, they still fear a personality, a character coming up among African-Americans who could galvanize support among all the different elements of the African-American community."

CORRECTION

The author of "Being a Muslim Physician in America," (Jan./Feb. 2002) the late Dr. Mamoud Abu-Saud died in 1994 (may Allah bless his soul. Ameen).

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MISTREATING Muslim Americans

Federal raids sweep Muslim Americans as neo-McCarthyism takes hold.

On March 20, 2002, federal agents raided Northern Virginia Muslim organizations and homes, removing computers and personal items. Outraged local Muslim Americans immediately demanded town-hall meetings with Rep. Frank Wolf (R-VA).

At the Herndon, VA-based International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT), a respected Muslim think-tank, employees were sequestered in the library. Two born-in-America employees eventually were escorted into the hallway and told they could leave. Only one left. The comment of the Nigerian-born INS officer collecting ID information that his job was to "identify foreigners" drew immediate angry responses.

Later that night, federal agents raided the home of Dr. Iqbal Unus, a IIIT director. His born-in-America teenage daughter and wife, born overseas but a US citizen, were at home. His daughter was calling 911 to report the presence of armed men dressed in black knocking on the door. They were handcuffed and mistreated for not opening the door quickly enough. Mrs. Unus said: "They broke down the door and rushed into my home and told my daughter to put down the phone. The gun was pointed towards her. They asked her to raise her hands that were then handcuffed behind her. Then they handcuffed me." Only after 3 hours were they allowed to put on their hijab, although one female local law enforcement officer tried to help them do so earlier. "We feel the system has humiliated us. As American citizens we deserve better," said Mrs. Unus.

Apparently, "foreign-looking" naturalized citizens and born-in-America people who look "foreign" now raise concern in certain government circles. One IIIT employee wondered how "foreign-looking" was being defined, since only American



MPAC director Mehdi Bray addressing the town hall meeting held to protest the March 20 raids, warns about the impending demise of civil rights under the USA-PATRIOT Act.

Indians are not "foreign." Is it a matter of race, language, religion, culture, clothing ... or something else?

Dr. Louay Safi, IIIT's director of research, said the agents showed no search warrant and allowed no calls to attorneys. Employees were threatened with various penalties if they did not "cooperate." Citing their constitutional rights, they refused to do so—even the women, who were not allowed to make other arrangements to pick up their children from school. About 4 hours later, all demands were dropped and the employees were allowed to leave.

Dr. Mona Abul-Fadl, who teaches political science and women's studies at the Graduate School of Islamic and Social Sciences (GSISS) in Leesburg, VA, told Judith Miller of *The New York Times* (Mar. 22, 2002) that she felt as if she had been raped. Federal agents stormed into her Herndon home at 10:30 p.m. Alone and asleep, she woke up as they broke down the front door with guns drawn. "They claimed to have knocked," she said. "Normally, if one is in that situation, one

would call the police ... But now there is something ironic, even pathetic about it. What police would you call now?" Interestingly, GSISS is licensed to train Imams for the U.S. military.

A Muslim school located on the same floor but not affiliated with IIIT also was raided, although it was not listed on the search warrant. One school official said that the children's records were removed. Mohammed Magid, Imam for ADAMS, related how he had been summoned without explanation, met with drawn guns, and then had to follow officers upstairs. He called the resulting search a "drama," with agents drawing guns before entering any classroom and other activities associated with TV dramas.

American-born Laura Jaghli, a Muslim high school English teacher, said agents "rifled through everything we owned." They took the home computer, all passports, some credit cards, bank information, and one of her daughter's wedding invitations.

The U.S. Treasury Department says it suspects the raided organizations of laundering money for "terrorist" groups. This raid, part of "Operation Green Quest" and coordinated by the department's counterterrorism taskforce, is part of the effort to stop the flow of money to alleged

terrorist organizations. The department's one-page press release provided little other information.

The Muslim-owned companies located in Herndon were the main targets. SAAR Foundation, a charity supported by Saudi banker and financier Suleiman Abdel Aziz al-Rajhi, had an office there until 1994. SAAR was dissolved in 2000. Federal agents also raided its affiliated Piedmont Poultry, located in Gainesville, GA. Also raided was the Falls Church, VA office of the International Islamic Relief Organization (IIRO), which is connected to the partially Saudi-government funded Muslim World League (MWL).

The targeted organizations are not radical. IIIT, which has branches in 12 countries, is "an intellectual forum working from an Islamic perspective to promote and support research projects, organize intellectual and cultural meetings, and publish scholarly works." Officials say that the government has been investigating IIIT for at least 3 years.

One allegation is that IIIT made large financial contributions to the Tampa, FL-based World Islamic Studies Enterprise (WISE), an academic institute affiliated with the University of South Florida. The Justice Department calls WISE a "front organization that raised funds for militant Islamic-Palestinian groups such as the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) and Hamas." Federal agents searched its office in 1995 and froze its assets.

Susan Taylor Martin of the *St. Petersburg Times* (Mar. 22, 2002) pointed out that even Khalil Shikaki, one of the Middle East's most respected pollsters, a pro-peace Palestinian who works with an Israeli university, writes for a U.S. magazine, and has twice been a Jewish organization's guest speaker, was targeted. She asked: "So what is Shikaki's name doing on a federal search warrant that calls him a terrorist?" She also quoted Gideon Rose, managing editor of *Foreign Affairs* magazine, who said: "If (the warrant) was produced by the same kind of federal bureaucracy that gave visas to terrorists six months after they died, this is the flip side."

The media's sole source for quotes was Steven Emerson, the self-proclaimed journalist and "terrorism expert." In his recent *American Jihad: Terrorists Among Us*, he focused on the Herndon companies, including SAAR Foundation and Safa Trust (also raided), as financing groups and individuals "connected" to terrorism. "It is part of the ongoing problem of nonprofit humanitarian groups commingling their funds with support for terrorist groups," he said. Such cases are very difficult to prove and prosecute, he admitted. Emerson, who declared the Oklahoma bomb-

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Groups Raided

■ The MWL and its affiliates: Muslim World League (MWL) is a UN-recognized NGO with cultural and religious activities and services worldwide.

■ Safa Groups and others, including the International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT), an organization with offices and affiliates around the world. IIIT, well known for its mainstream teachings and positions, organizes educational and intellectual workshops and symposiums, research, and publishes books and papers.

■ The North American Fiqh Council, a national group composed of leading Muslim American scholars and jurists that provides interpretations, guidelines, and positions on religious issues.

■ The Graduate School of Islamic Social Sciences, which has established business relations with some government agencies and departments and trains imams for the American armed forces.

■ The American Muslim Foundation

■ SAAR Foundation

■ SAAR International

■ Safa Trust

■ Mar-Jac Holdings, Inc.

■ Mar-Jac Investments, Inc.

■ Mar-Jac Poultry, Inc.

■ Mena Corporation.

■ Sterling Charitable Gift Fund

■ York Foundation

■ York International

■ The International Relief Organization (IRO)

■ The International Islamic Relief Organization (IIRO)

■ The Success Foundation: An American charitable organization

■ The African Muslim Agency

■ Humana Charitable Trust

■ Aradi, Inc.

■ Grove Corporate Inc.

■ Heritage Education Trust

■ Reston Investment Inc.

■ Sterling Management Group, Inc. (SMG)

The following residences were raided:

■ Dr. AbdulHamid AbuSulayman, President, IIIT

■ Dr. Ahmad Totonji, Vice President, IIIT

■ Dr. Jamal Barzinji, Director, IIIT

■ Dr. Hisham Altalib, Director, IIIT

■ Dr. Mohammad Jaghliit

■ Dr. Taha al-Alwani, President, GSISS

■ Dr. Iqbal Yunus, Director, IIIT

■ Tarik Hamdi, Researcher, IIIT

■ Dr. Yaqub Mirza, President, SMG

■ Muhammad Ashraf, Legal Advisor, SMG

■ M. Omar Ashraf, Vice President, SMG

ing the work of Muslims, has long railed against Muslim American organizations.

Jason Erb of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) said the raids were unrelated to the Justice Department's national call for voluntary interviews with 3,000 mainly Middle Eastern people. He said: "This is part of a policy of disruption, and they are after innocent people and destroying people's lives. We are trying to cooperate, but we are tired of being targeted." He told a packed Capitol Hill news confer-



PHOTO BY THE OREGONIAN NEWSPAPERS

ence: "The Muslim community is deeply concerned about what appears to be a fishing expedition by federal authorities using McCarthy-like tactics in a search for evidence of wrongdoing that does not exist."

"Unfortunately, investigators are well aware that in the current climate of fear and prejudice, few people will ask the tough questions about why these respected individuals and groups were targeted. Vague and unsubstantiated references to 'links' or 'ties' to infamous names and organizations should not be a substitute for credible evidence."

"As in past incidents targeting American Muslim institutions, no one is being given their day in court to confront accusers or refute allegations. Where then does one go to retrieve a reputation damaged by an irresponsible and out-of-control investigation?"

"All Americans have a justifiable desire to feel secure in this time of international crisis. But security need not be gained by destroying the civil liberties and standards of due process that we all hold dear."

Sobhi Ghandour, executive director of al-Hewar Center and publisher of *al-Hewar* magazine, said: "It is unclear what the government seeks to accomplish by treating such good American citizens and well-re-

spected thinkers with such disrespect."

Attorney Raymond W. Busch, AMC's director of government affairs, asked Americans to contact their representatives and demand a halt to these violations of civil and constitutional rights. He said: "Such covert activities cause instability in American educational institutions that have been serving to educate the American community for two decades. We are deeply concerned about the degradation of the American justice system."

ADAMS activist Jafar Imam questions Rep. Frank Wolf (R-VA) over the mistreatment of Muslims by federal agents.

Manal Omar, an ADAMS volunteer, said the raids have created a sense of intimidation and confusion: "For American Muslims, a new day is etched in our hearts and minds—March 20." Mehdi Bray, political director of the Muslim Public Affairs Council, called the raids a "misuse of tax dollars." Kit Gage, executive director of the First Amendment Foundation, said: "Seizing and freezing assets, taking property, making people prove their innocence—it is an indefensible position," reminding the government not to mix dissent with crime.

A Muslim American drew his community's attention to Pastor Martin Niemoller's statement: "First they [the Nazis] came for the Communists, but I was not a Communist so I did not speak out. Then they came for the Socialists and the Trade Unionists, but I was neither, so I did not speak out. Then they came for the Jews, but I was not a Jew so I did not speak out. And when they came for me, there was no one left to speak out for me."

Muslim Americans have become a target of neo-McCarthyism. The fear is already taking hold. ■

A Muslim school located on the same floor but not affiliated with IIIT also was raided, although it was not listed on the search warrant.

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Educating Among the Challenges

Muslim educators and community leaders strive to build on new opportunities. BY MOHAMED ELSANOUSI

Imparting an Islamic education to Muslim Americans began in 1934 when, according to Dr. Abdalla Idris Ali, a group of Muslim African Americans established the nation's first Islamic school in Atlanta, GA. Dr. Ali, a former ISNA president and education activist, also mentioned during his inaugural speech delivered at the third annual Islamic Education Forum, that Islamic education became a real movement during the 1970s-80s.

The theme of the conference, held in Chicago on March 29-31, 2002, was "Islamic Schools Contributing to a Better America."

Safaa Zarzour, forum program chair, stressed the role of Islamic schools in educating Muslim children to become tools of change. ISNA president Mohamed Nur Abdullah asked Muslim Americans to convey a true picture of Islam to the general public through various outreach activities. Dr. Ali and ISNA secretary general Dr. Sayyid M. Syeed led sessions on sharing lessons learned from the aftermath of 9/11. Dr. Syeed pointed out that the tragedy has resulted in an increased desire for spirituality and urged Muslims to help end their fellow citizens' "innocent ignorance" of Islam and their neighbors. He asked Muslim educators and community

leaders to embrace the challenges and opportunities of the day to help build a better America.

Zarzour said that 9/11 revealed that Muslims have not informed their neighbors about Islam, and that it is sad that they hear of Islam only in connection with this horrendous experience. Dr. Abidullah A. Ghazi, executive director of the Chicago-based Iqra' International Education Foundation, said that Muslims must participate in mainstream life if they want to interpret Islam to America. He called upon Muslims to discuss it within the American framework.

Kamran Memon, a civil rights attorney and a former editor of Islamic Horizons, remarked that while Americans have discovered Islam and Muslims have discovered America, Muslims must discover Islam and work to heal America's social ills. He pointed out that non-Muslims who offered support after 9/11 did so because of who they are, not because of who the Muslims are.

The town-hall style sessions allowed attendees to address 9/11's positive aftereffects. The general consensus was that Muslims had to reach out to mainstream America and to all constituencies within the Muslim community itself. Among those who addressed the sessions were Dr. Marcia Hermannsen (Loyola University), Dr.



Imam Benjamin Perez reciting the Qur'an to inaugurate the conference; (top) Audience at the conference; Dr. Abdallah Idrees Ali, Safa Zarzour

Abdalla Idris Ali, Cynthia Suleman (Muslim Home-schooling Network), Aneesah Nadir, Dr. Anas Malek (DePaul University), and Khadija Haffajee (ISNA Majlis ash-Shura member). A group of administrators and teachers from the Sister Clara Muhammad School System also participated in the forum.

Educators Network. The Education Forum allowed teachers and administrators to learn and share.

Muslim Americans must get involved in grassroots political activity, for elected judges and officials are conscious of political pressure.

Zarzour and Basharat Saleem of the ISNA conventions department discussed building a shoestring office into sustainable model. Zarzour also dealt with legal concerns for Islamic schools. Dr. Yasmin Qadri, a University of Central Florida professor and founder/principal of a full-time Islamic school in Orlando, spoke about the challenges facing school principles. He also analyzed the schools' administrative and financial structures stressing that Islamic schools have the wherewithal to transform society based on Islamic principles. Dr. Ghazi pointed out that the madrasah system has preserved the most authentic and valuable Islamic tradition in its purity, and that those being accused of terrorism came from Western educational institutions instead of madrasahs. Dr. Ali focused on technology in Islamic schools, and Chicago State University professor emeritus Dr. Waheed

Fakhri surveyed Islamic schools governance models. Sima Sroufi (Universal School) and Dr. Mamdouh N. Mohamed (American Open University) offered practical tips for teaching Arabic. Fatma Anwer al-Lawati, an Omani doctoral student at Utah State, discussed her study on the Islamic theory of gifted education.

Several workshops and panels touched upon professional issues of interest to educators and administrators, such as grant writing and fundraising, curriculum development, career choices, and accreditation practices.

LaDalle George, a Chicago-based Muslim attorney, spoke on the implications of 9/11-related laws for Muslims in America. He mentioned that the continuing growth in interfaith dialog will help reduce any anti-Muslim backlash and urged Muslim Americans to get involved in grassroots political activity, for elected judges and officials are conscious of political pressure. George spoke about the evolving Muslim Legal Defense Fund, which will help Muslims seek legal redress.

Promoting Harmony. The various Community Development conferences included Muslims against domestic violence, conflict resolution training, marriage counseling training, the Islamic perspective on counseling, and imam training.

Najeeba Syeed-Miller, executive director of the Los Angeles-based Asian Pacific American Dispute Resolution Center, and Dr. Amr Abdalla (Graduate School for Islamic Social Sciences) spoke about conflict resolution in American Muslim communities. Bonita McGee, chair of the domestic violence conference, analyzed the legal aspects of domestic violence. Social worker Aneesah Nadir spoke on preventing and intervening in family violence situations. Syeed-Miller, who also spoke on Islamic paradigms of conflict resolution, joined Mohamed Magid, director of the All Dulles Area Muslim Society (ADAMS), to discuss marriage mediation.

ISNA president Nur Abdullah, ISNA Majlis ash-Shura member Dr. Jamal Badawi, and Dr. Adam ElSheikh addressed the session devoted to the Fiqh Council of North America. ISNA vice president Dr. Ingrid Mattson addressed a group of ISNA affiliates. Over 600 professionals and academicians attended the conference, which received considerable media coverage. CBS's "60 Minutes," which plans to air a program on Islamic education, filmed the opening session, and Morley Schaefer interviewed Dr. Syeed, Dr. Ghazi, and Zarzour. Chicago's ABC News Channel 7 covered the conference and interviewed Dr. Syeed and Shariq Siddiqi, director of ISNA's community development department. Indonesian TV covered a segment for its "Islam in America" program and interviewed Dr. Syeed. The Los Angeles-based IIS provided comprehensive coverage in their weekly international "American Muslim Hour." Local Chicago-area newspapers and radio shows also provided coverage. ■

Mohamed Elsanousi is ISNA media relations coordinator.

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Faisal Winners Pick Awards

Sheikh Sultan ibn Muhammad al-Qasimi, ruler of Sharjah, garnered this year's King Faisal International Prize for service to Islam. Al-Qasimi was recognized for the educational, social, healthcare, and housing projects that have benefited Muslim communities around the world.

Saudi defense minister Sultan bin Abdulaziz distributed the awards on March 9, 2002, in Riyadh.

The 25-year-old prize, consisting of \$200,000 cash and a pure gold medallion, is granted annually to scholars and scientists who make significant contributions toward the spread of Islam and welfare of Muslims, Arabic literature, medicine, and science.

American Dr. Peter Williston Shor of the Shannon Research Laboratory shared the prize for science (mathematics) with Prof. Yuri Manin, director of the Max-Planck Institute for Mathematics, Bonn.

The prize for medicine was shared by Prof. Eugene Braunwald, professor of cardiology at Harvard Medical School, and Prof. Finn Waagstein, professor of cardiology at Sahlgrenska University Hospital, Sweden.



Sheikh Ahmad Deedat, the renowned da'wah personality, author and a winner of the Faisal Prize for service to Islam. Sheikh Deedat is suffering from Alzheimer's disease. Photo: Deedat at home in Verulam, South Africa, with his son Yousif and granddaughter Nasreen; Sept. 11, 2001.



Enforcing Secularism

Turkish security personnel forcibly taking the hijab off the head of a Muslim student entering her Imam-Khatib school. According to a new regulation, the girls are not allowed to enter the premises of their "Islamic" school with the headscarf. An earlier state edict forced students to take off their headscarves after entering classrooms. More than 70 students were handcuffed and detained throughout several demonstrations against the current anti-hijab law.

Imam-Khatib schools are public high schools that also offer an Islamic curriculum in addition to the regular school curriculum. For many years, students graduating from the hundreds of Imam-Khatib schools have been very successful in entering universities. Turkey is often cited by Western leaders and opinion-makers as an example of an "emancipated" Muslim country, and in fact they are advising Muslim countries to follow Turkey's lead.

Waagstein discovered the potential benefit of beta-adrenergic-blocking agents in congestive heart failure. His pursuit of beta-blockers led to a landmark mortality trial,

and is the greatest recent breakthrough in heart failure therapeutics.

In recognition for their outstanding contributions to the study of contemporary Palestinian literature, the prize for Arabic literature was awarded to Prof. Husamuddin al-Khateeb, professor of Arabic literature at Damascus University, and Professor Husni Mahmoud Hussain, professor of Arabic literature at Jordan's Yarmouk University.

The King Faisal Foundation was established by the sons of late King Faisal to commemorate their father's efforts in the service of Muslims, and for reviving the Islamic heritage and promoting the development of humanity. The foundation also is involved in charity work, investment projects, scholarships, and health projects in more than 29 countries.

Tired of Bias Against Muslim Women

Western society must change its negative image of Islam, concluded the World Congress of Muslim Women, held in Cordoba, Spain, the historic capital of the western Islamic empire, March 2-4, 2002. The conference, attended by some 200 delegates, pointed out that Islam's image had worsened since Sept. 11 and the U.S.-led war on terrorism, and that much of the criticism stems from misconceptions. The conference concluded that it was up to Western societies to change their views of Islam and to counteract negative images of Islam in the media.

The delegates said Muslim women were tired of being portrayed as timid and downtrodden, and declared that wearing hijab often is portrayed as their central preoccupation when, in reality, they have many other concerns. There was strong condemnation of such un-Islamic practices as domestic violence, female genital mutilation, and continued discrimination in work, pay, health, and education, regardless of race or religion.

There was one sour moment when Spanish security guards forced a group of about 20 delegates to break their prayer inside Cordoba's Great Mosque, which was converted into a Catholic cathedral during the 13th century. The guards said it was forbidden for Muslims to pray within the property of the Catholic Church.

Yusuf Fernandez of the Spanish Federation of Islamic Groups said Muslims are campaigning to restore the mosque to its original purpose.

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A CENTURY OF ISLAM IN CANADA

ISLAM IS NOW VERY MUCH A CANADIAN RELIGION, AND THE MUSLIM COMMUNITY IS A MICROCOSM OF CANADA'S MULTICULTURAL MOSAIC AND A REFLECTION OF ISLAM'S UNIVERSALITY. BY DAOOD HASSAN HAMDANI

For a century, from 1871 to 1971, Canada's religious map changed little. However, dramatic shifts have occurred during the last 3 decades: The number of Roman Catholics surpassed Protestants for the first time, people unaffiliated with any institutionalized religion replaced the United Church in the second place, Baptists surged past Presbyterians and Lutherans, and the number of Pentecostals rose rapidly. In addition, Islam became the principal minority religion of the country.

Most of these changes made no waves, for they were considered interesting but not particularly exciting. Churchgoers noticed the change mainly because of the empty pews, and the general public took note of the dwindling flock only when some churches were put up for sale.

But the rise of an "eastern" religion on the horizon was a different matter. The findings of this author's 1996 study, "Counting the Muslims in Canada," caught the media's attention, and every major newspaper in the country reported its results. The largest-circulation daily newspaper, *The Toronto Star*, covered it in a 5-column piece entitled "Muslims now outnumber Jews in Canada." *The Windsor Star* weighed in with "A Rising Force: Muslims have replaced Jews as Canada's largest non-Christian community and will soon overtake Presbyterians and Lutherans."

Canada's First Muslim. This enormous expression of interest was surprising because, after all, Islam is not new to Canada. Thirteen years before the Fathers of Confederation conceived the idea of Canada in 1867, a young woman of Scottish ancestry gave birth to the first Muslim born in the territory that would later constitute a part of Canada: James Love, born to James and Agnes Love and

the oldest of eight children, born in Ontario during 1854. They and another couple, John and Martha Simon, of English and French origins respectively, formed almost the entire Muslim Canadian community in the 1850s.

Over the years, the Muslim community has continued to grow. From 1971 on, the increase has been particularly strong. By 1991, Muslims were the principal non-Christian community in 10 of the 25 metropolitan areas and in Alberta province. In 1996, according to a study of the Muslim demographics and estimates obtained from the Canadian Jewish Congress, more Canadians affiliated themselves with Islam than any other non-Christian faith. In light of these early 1990s demographic trends, the 2001 census likely will show that Islam is Canada's principal non-Christian religion and ranks among the five largest Christian denominations. According to the 1931 Censuses of Canada, the Muslim population was 645, growing from 478 in 1921. The 1981 census figure was 98,165, and 1991 figure stood at 253,260. It is estimated that Muslim Canadians now number over 650,000.

Muslims are no longer outsiders. They are colleagues, neighbors, friends, and even spouses. The first mosque was built in Canada (1938) was more than a tangible manifestation of the Edmonton Muslims' deep faith—it was a public announcement that the community of believers in Islam had laid its roots in Canada.

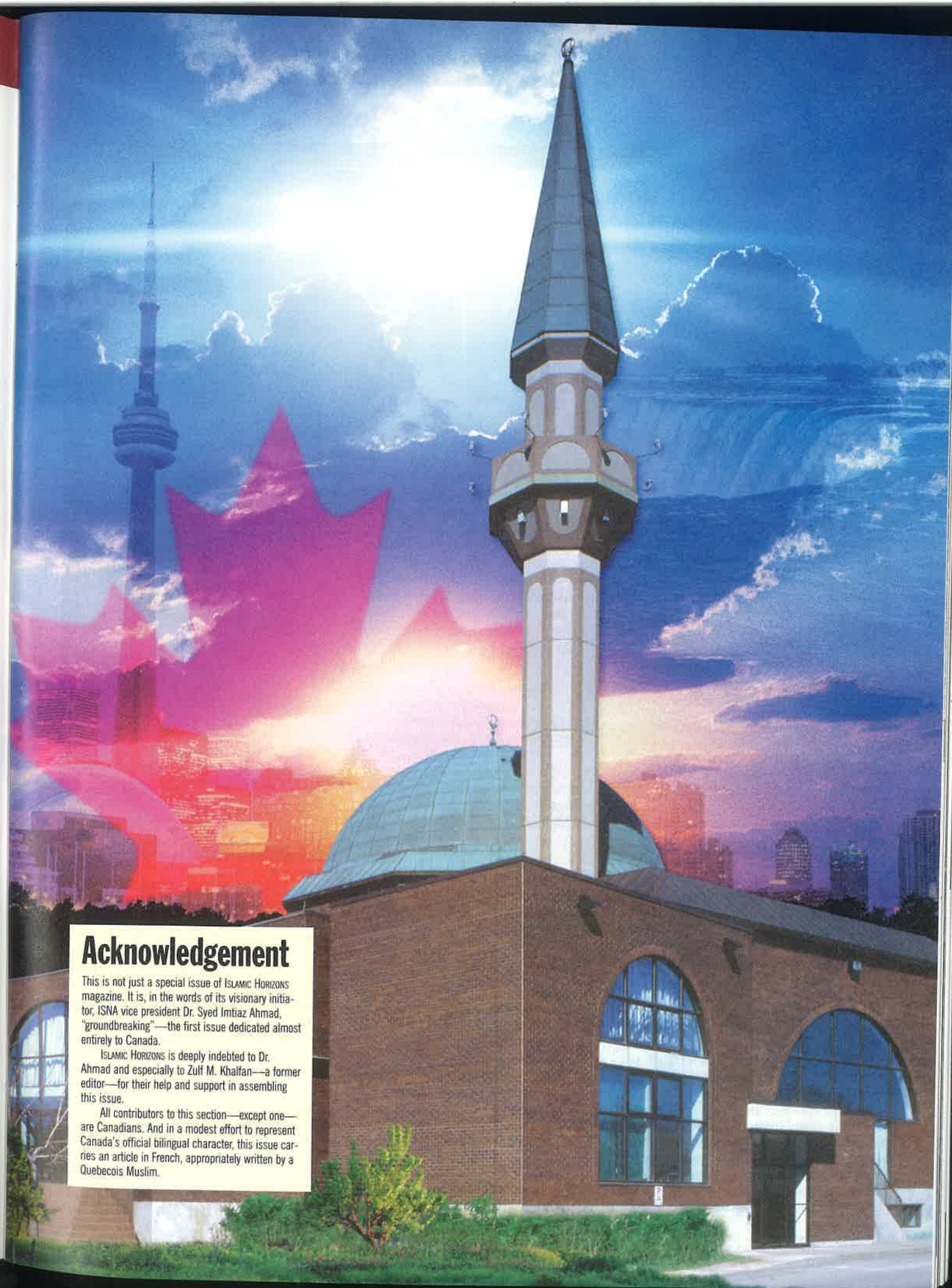
Adjusting. Like any other immigrant group, Muslims have made some adjustments. For example, their language retention rates are no higher and, in many cases, are lower than those of people with European ancestries. Three-fourths of the Muslims speak English at home, and 14 percent speak both official languages. According

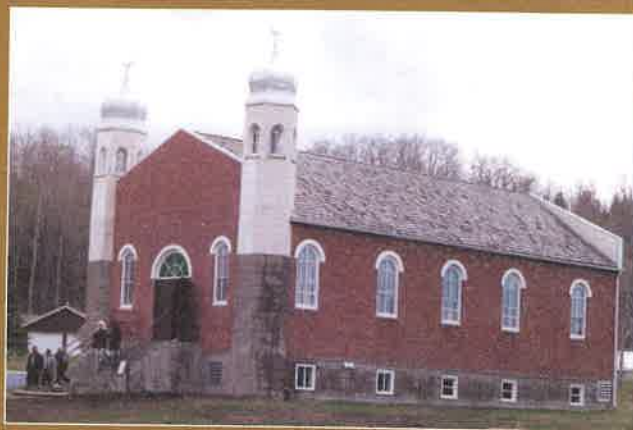
Acknowledgement

This is not just a special issue of *ISLAMIC HORIZONS* magazine. It is, in the words of its visionary initiator, ISNA vice president Dr. Syed Imtiaz Ahmad, "groundbreaking"—the first issue dedicated almost entirely to Canada.

ISLAMIC HORIZONS is deeply indebted to Dr. Ahmad and especially to Zulf M. Khalifa—a former editor—for their help and support in assembling this issue.

All contributors to this section—except one—are Canadians. And in a modest effort to represent Canada's official bilingual character, this issue carries an article in French, appropriately written by a Quebecois Muslim.





First Mosque in North America

In the early 1930's in Edmonton, a group of Muslim women requested Mayor John Fry for a lot for a mosque for the growing Muslim community. The land for what would be the first mosque built in North America cost \$CD5000. The official opening of the Al Rashid Mosque on Dec. 12, 1938 was attended by several prominent figures including Abdullah Yusuf Ali, author of the renowned English interpretation of the Qur'an.

The mosque served as a religious and community center, and attracted many Muslim families to Edmonton. Over the years as the community continued to flourish. Their numbers grew to over 16,000 by the early 1980's,

necessitating a new mosque. In Nov. 1982 the new Al Rashid mosque opened its doors to serve over 20,000 Muslims in Edmonton. The Canadian Islamic Center/Al Rashid Mosque offers many services including housing, funeral services, educational programs, an accredited private school for grades K-9 and much more. Today the Muslim community boasts over 30,000 members of over 62 ethnic backgrounds served by 6 mosques.

The old mosque would remain empty for another 10 years until the expansion of the neighboring Royal Alexandra Hospital jeopardized the future of this historical landmark. Lobbying by the Canadian Council of Muslim Women saved it from the wrecking ball and in 1992, it was moved and preserved as an historical building in Fort Edmonton Park and reopened its doors to the public on May 28, 1992.



A national treasure, the Al Rashid Mosque now welcomes visitors in Fort Edmonton Park (top left), while its successor, the spacious new Al-Rashid Mosques serves the community (above).

to government figures, a Muslim immigrant takes up Canadian citizenship within 3 to five years of arrival—the minimum qualifying period. By comparison, immigrants from West European countries may take up to 25 years.

Islam is now very much a Canadian religion, and the Muslim community is a microcosm of Canada's multicultural mosaic and a reflection of Islam's universality. One-quarter to one-third of Muslim Canadians were born here. During the 1970s and 1980s, when many young people left the Church because they felt disenchanted, some turned to Islam to find a consoling, all-embracing explanation of life. Nearly 60 percent of Muslims are Canadian citizens. While many Muslims speak Arabic, Persian, and Urdu, in that order, Polish, German, Ital-

ian, Chinese, Japanese, and dozens of other languages also are spoken in Muslim households.

While some Muslim immigrants came to Canada to flee religious and ideological persecution and escape the occupation of their homelands, the vast majority came to seek a better life. They had the skills and qualifications and were looking for opportunities, and Canada needed their knowledge and know-how.

Given this reality, Muslims have played a part in every epoch of Canada's economic history. They hewed rocks, laid tracks, and struck nails to build the Canadian Pacific Railway in the late nineteenth century, an event that historians have dubbed the "national dream." Muslim farmers and farm workers were among the pioneers who opened up Alberta and

Saskatchewan for cultivation and settlement during the early years of the twentieth century. Skilled and professional Muslim immigrants kept up the tempo of economic growth in the post-war period, and Muslim educators responded to the need for teachers and professors as the baby boom rolled into grade schools and then graduate schools.

Partly because of the national immigration policy's emphasis on education and skills during the selection process, and also because of the new immigrants' need to acquire high education levels to succeed here, Muslims are among the most highly educated groups in Canada. Twenty-seven percent of those working in what economists call the "prime labor force group" have university degrees, compared with 17 percent of the gener-

al population. Since Muslims are mainly in the working age population, they contribute far more to sustain and strengthen the social security system than draw from it. While five workers support one retired person in Canada as a whole, Muslims have 15 people in the working age group to support each retiree.

Higher levels of education are reflected in their incomes. In 1990, the year for which the last census provided information, the average annual salary of a Muslim was more than \$CD33,000 (\$US20,800), with 7 percent earning more than \$CD50,000 (\$US31,512). While most of the high wage earners were men, 2 percent of the female workers also reported an annual salary above \$CD50,000.

Community Organizations. Local community associations are the primary expression of Muslim identity in Canada. They typically focus on such local concerns as providing premises for prayers and imparting Islam's basic teachings.

The evolution of national organizations was somewhat checkered in the early stages. Among the early organizations, the U.S.-based Islamic Federation of America (IFA) had only a nominal presence in Canada. The Council of Muslim Communities of Canada (CMCC), established in the early 1970s, folded a decade later. ISNA, which is headquartered in the U.S. but maintains an office in Canada, and the Organization of North American Shia Ithna Asheri Muslim Associations (NASIMCO) are the two oldest national organizations. The Toronto-based Ahlul Bait Assembly of North America is a relatively new national organization. There also is an Ahlul Bayt Center in Gatineau, Quebec, across the river from Ottawa. They primarily concern themselves with building and providing the infrastructure needed to develop the community, and over the years have taken on such additional functions as providing financial intermediation services, housing cooperatives, travel agencies, and bookstores to help ease community's adjustment to Canadian life.

In addition, several niche organizations deal with specific issues or certain segments of the community. The Canadian Council of Muslim Women focuses on issues of concern to Muslim women.

The Canadian Islamic Congress (CIC) and the Council of American-Islamic Relations Canada (CAIR Canada), both relatively new, are concerned with the media's portrayal of Muslims and deal with political matters affecting the community. Meanwhile, the Association of Progressive Muslims of Ontario (APMO) interacts with policymakers and decisionmakers, largely by holding Eid dinners in the Parliament buildings, which attract politicians—including senior cabinet ministers and, on occasion, the prime minister himself.

Canada's First Mosque. As the community grew, institutions flourished with it. First of all came the mosque, which serves multiple functions in any Muslim society: a place of worship, school, court of law, and as a town hall. But in a non-Muslim society, it takes on additional functions to make up for the absence of social and family support institutions. In recognition of its pivotal role as a transmitter of religious values and a socializing agent, the construction of mosques was the community's first priority.

The first mosque in Canada was built in 1938. It was a modest one-room structure, elegant in its simplicity, located at the corner of 102nd Street and 111th Avenue in Edmonton until 1946, when it was physically moved to another location to vacate land for a school. A few years later, it was relocated again to accommodate a neighboring hospital's expansion. Subsequently, the government declared it a historical building, and it now serves as a museum of Islamic artifacts.

There was a long pause before more mosques were built. As life returned to normal after WW2 and more Muslims arrived, the need for religious institutions became pressing. Many mosques of this era—1950s and 1960s—were converted church buildings and parish halls, as erecting new buildings required dealing with zoning bylaws, obtaining various licenses, permits, and architects familiar with Islamic architecture were not always easy to obtain. The Jami Mosque, one of Toronto's large mosques, is housed in a converted church.

The last two decades saw a boom in mosque construction, with the result that almost every city has one and large cities

may have dozens. Not only have they increased in numbers, but they also have become larger and house many more facilities than earlier mosques. Notably, they are attuned to the community's educational and social needs. The two largest projects so far—the Islamic Center of Canada and Toronto's Islamic Education and Community Center—are both multi-purpose and will have a mosque, a school, meeting rooms, and offices.

Family Institution. The Canadian Muslim family continues to function efficiently. However, there are various strains and stresses, such as young women trying to fulfill their potential both inside and outside the home while dealing with the pressures of family life. This is an enormous burden to bear without an adjustment in traditional husband-wife roles. Nevertheless, some women are trying—either forced by economic necessity or driven by the desire to develop professionally. More than half of all women with preschool age children at home work or are actively looking for employment. While some of these children are looked after by their grandparents, others have to be left in the care of nurseries and babysitters.

In 1990, census information revealed that there was one divorced or legally separated Muslim for every 10 married people. A study based on the 1981 census data showed a significant number of interfaith marriages. These are more common among Muslims born or raised in Canada, and these women are more likely to marry non-Muslims than vice versa. Further, most of the children with non-Muslim fathers are being raised as non-Muslims. Interfaith marriages are inevitable, partly because of the lack of opportunities for young people to meet. Repeat ads appearing in matrimonial columns indicate the difficulties faced by some young people. During the first half of the 1990s, women placing ads in the *Islamic Horizons* matrimonial column were, on average, 31 years old—already two years older than the first-time bride in Canada.

A Stake in Education. Education, the most vital element in any community's life, is more crucial for Muslims because of their particular demography. The Muslim population is concentrated in the working-age and school-age groups. One-third of all Muslims, compared with one-quarter of Canada's overall population, are under 17 years of age. Some are already in and others will soon enter schools. Therefore, they have a much larger stake in the quality and financing of education.

While some Muslim immigrants came to Canada to flee religious and ideological persecution and the occupation of their homelands, the vast majority came to seek a better life.

After building mosques, providing facilities for the children's education has received the highest priority. Significant progress has been made since the early days, when Sunday schools held in mosques represented almost the only facility. While they still exist and are the only educational facility in very small communities, primary schools are now run in all cities. High schools (grades 9 thru 12), however, are only found in large cities, such as Toronto and Montreal, with significant Muslim populations. The community has taken a rational approach to developing higher education institutions. In the beginning, a school offers three or four grades, and then adds more as the students progress. It is a somewhat long but logical process, because neither the financial nor human resources are easily available to launch high schools.

At present, Muslim educational institutions accommodate only a tiny fraction of school-age Muslim children. The rest attend public or other private schools. As Canada's religious makeup is changing, public schools are adapting to the new reality. Many religion-based practices that once drew their inspiration from Christianity have either been adapted or dropped alto-

gether. However, the question of financing schools remains unresolved. Ontario's exclusive funding of Roman Catholic schools, where 60 percent of all Muslims live, has been the subject of considerable controversy. Attempts led by the Jewish community to seek a judicial or legislative solution have been unsuccessful. A recent proposal to subsidize children attending private schools has been welcomed by most religious communities—whether it is implemented remains to be seen.

The Quest for Cohesion. The quest for community cohesiveness within the larger society continues. The uncertainties, self-doubts, and social solecisms that were pervasive in the early phases of settlement lingered on for a long time. Mosques provided some reassurance in earlier years, but by the 1980s a new era had begun. The sense of familiarity and comfort provided by a small community with a common and familiar language began to erode. Languages and traditions became diverse. Islam was no longer primarily the religion of African and Asian immigrants. Second- and third-generation Muslims, and Canadians who had turned to Islam to seek meaning and fulfillment in their lives,

became significant forces. Above all, Canadian-born children did not speak or understand their parents' and grandparent's mother tongues.

Moreover, society has been undergoing a period of rapid change. Social and technological changes challenge established lifestyles, institutions, and traditions. And yet, in some respects, society is not changing fast enough. Despite their many contributions and long history, Muslims and Islam remain misunderstood.

When the first mosque was built, the people's hopes and aspirations were simple. Subsequently, the growing social and education needs meant that the search for identity required a broader base. From the early years of self-preservation, manifested in the formation of local community associations to identity revolving around the mosque, only recently have Muslim Canadians begun to establish themselves as an entity in the country's educational, political, and economic institutions. ■

Daoud Hamdani, an economist and chief of technological innovation at a large institution in Ottawa and an acknowledged world authority on innovation, serves as advisor to the U.S. National Science Foundation. He is an honorary citizen of the Tennessee. A pioneer in the study of Islam in Canada, he is the author of many articles on Muslim Canadians. E-mail: daoud.hamdani@statcan.ca.

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CANADA CHALLENGES MUSLIMS

ISLAM IS NOW VERY MUCH A CANADIAN RELIGION, AND THE MUSLIM COMMUNITY IS A MICROCOSM OF CANADA'S MULTICULTURAL MOSAIC AND A REFLECTION OF ISLAM'S UNIVERSALITY. BY MUHAMAD HOSSAIN

Muslim Canadians live in what is often described as the world's best country in terms of freedom of religion; political, social and economic rights; standard of living; access to education and medical care; and a caring society characterized by the rule of law, equality for all citizens, a relatively low crime rate, acceptance and even respect by other Canadians, and a Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms that many non-Canadians envy.

When Canada's restrictive immigration laws were relaxed in the 1960s, large numbers of Muslims began coming primarily for economic reasons and to give their children a better future. They struggled to get settled and help their children surpass them. Their main worry was that children remain Muslim while growing up in a non-Muslim society with very different and even conflicting values.

These worries are now on the backburner, however. A significant number of Muslims now lives in Canada, meaning that Muslim children are growing up with non-Muslims and with Muslims. Technological advances give them access to Islamic sites or programs on the Internet, TV, cassettes, and videocassettes from Muslim countries and institutions, literature on Islam, and conferences at which they can meet and learn from other Muslims. In addition, they can visit their ancestral countries and make hajj or 'umra. One result of this influx is that mosques now dot Canadian cities. Schools and universities make prayer rooms available to Muslims, and radio and TV stations carry Muslim programs regularly. Even more surprising, Islamic schools are encouraged by the authorities. Islamic non-interest housing and investment have already attained impressive results. Muslim dinners are held in the House of Commons. There has been a Muslim cabinet member in a provincial cabinet, and Muslims have been elected to the House of Commons.

About 700,000 Muslims now live in Canada, and more are coming every day. In addition, about half of the 45,000 or so asylum-seekers are Muslims. Roughly half of all such claimants are accepted. And of course the number of Muslim Canadians is increasing through births and conversions. Observant Muslims are making sure that their children understand and live according to Islamic beliefs, as now they have the means to do so. This is a stark contrast to the situation faced by immigrants of a century or so ago, who were isolated and had no access to their native language, culture, people, co-religionists, and were totally cut off from their religion and countries.

Daunting task. Ironically, early immigrants and Muslims found little acceptance from Canadian society. Sikhs, Chinese, and other Asians were unwelcome, Jews fleeing Nazi Germany were forced to return to Europe, and Japanese-Canadians were interned during WW2 and forbidden to return to their homes until many years later.

Muslims today have much to thank Allah (*Subhanahu wa Ta'ala*) for in terms of their potential to have the best of both worlds. The challenges they face today are how they view Islam, Muslim countries, relations between Muslim and other countries, their rights and duties in Canada, their relations with non-Muslim Canadians, and the future of their coming generations. These challenges are the result of Canada's growing Muslim community, their acceptance as equals by other Canadians (especially by the governments that have welcomed them), and technological breakthroughs that ended their isolation from their relatives, religion, and culture.

The late Prime Minister Trudeau once stated that living in the shadow of the U.S. made Canada very vulner-

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From far left: Iqra Islamic School students perform a nashid in front of students of Surrey Christian School who were visiting to show support after the September 11 attacks; students playing on the junior playground; Iqra School entrance.

Muslims in Toronto reach out to educators for mutual benefit. BY MALIHA CHISHTI

Muslim-friendly Education

Toronto has been internationally recognized as among the world's foremost multiethnic, multilingual, and religiously plural cities. With over 200,000 Muslims living in the Greater Toronto area, there is increasing awareness among Muslims of the need to institutionalize their presence within Canada's political, economic, and social landscape. A critical starting point for many Muslims is engaging the public school system after realizing that it is not a neutral process in the socialization and education of Muslim students. There is a sense that their difference and diversity as Muslims can no longer be "tolerated" in public schools, but that they must work toward the greater inclusion and recognition of their presence in school policies, practices, and curriculum.

This decision led to the 1996 founding of the Toronto-based MENTORS—the Muslim Educational Network, Training, and Outreach Service—which advises the public school board on issues impacting Muslims and articulates the needs and experiences of Muslim parents and public school students.

MENTORS is made up of Muslim scholars, educators, and activists that recently have made significant

inroads working with the Toronto school board. MENTORS advocacy efforts include developing a religious accommodation document that was integrated into official policies to safeguard Muslim students' religious freedom (e.g., the right to pray, holidays); sponsoring a petition campaign to support a draft policy on anti-racism and ethno-cultural equity; meeting with school officials to discuss health and sexuality curricula; and working on a pilot project with the Black, Somali, Portuguese, and Chinese communities on an alternative suspension program that allows suspended students access to counseling and academic support.

The ongoing dialogue with the public school system is imperative to prevent current and future Muslim students from being alienated and marginalized from their schooling experience. In some parts of Toronto, almost 60%-70% of all students are new immigrants and some schools have a Muslim majority. The public school board has been unable to deal successfully with such rapid student population change, a recently sought to evolve the European-centered curriculum into one that more accurately reflects the contributions and experiences of non-Europeans.

MENTORS president Jasmine Zine worked with Pathway president Suzanne

Muir to develop a curriculum unit on Islam during Europe's Middle Ages to serve as a companion to the traditional European-focused curriculum of that era taught in most primary schools. This Islamic unit is being implemented in up to 1,000 public schools throughout Ontario and is a step toward a more integrated and inclusive curriculum that highlights Islamic knowledge and contributions to world history.

Some of the lessons discuss the contributions of such early Muslim scientists as Ibn Sina (Avicenna) and his contribution to medicine as well as Ibn al-Haytham's renowned work with optics and light. Muslim and non-Muslim children are learning together about caliphs and wazirs, alongside kings and knights, as they experience the tremendous cultural interaction that occurred between the Islamic world and Europe in the medieval period.

Although working to make the public school system more inclusive and responsive to the Muslim community's needs is critical for the community's future, MENTORS also is aware of the increasing presence and importance of Islamic schools. Muslim families are sending their children to Islamic schools to acquire a strong Muslim identity and achieve scholastic excellence. However, resources and training for schoolteachers is minimal in Toronto Islamic schools due to limited community resources and the lack of government funding. In response, MENTORS organized a teacher education institute with the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE)/University of Toronto in August 2001 for

the professional development of teachers working in Islamic schools and also for creating a greater partnership and cooperation between Islamic schools.

Over 150 Islamic schoolteachers attended the summer institute, for it provided them with opportunities to enhance their practical skills related to various areas of teaching and learning. Some of the workshops included effective classroom management, creating a cooperative child-centered classroom, Islam and the visual arts, and developing critical literacy. The institute also encouraged Islamic schools to integrate Islamic arts, by featuring storytellers and Islamic singers and artists, to facilitate a more creative learning environment. The institute highlighted the transformative potential of Islamic education to encourage students to be productive members of their society as faith-centered, dynamic, and critical thinkers.

MENTORS continues to prioritize education's fundamental importance and to ensure that the current and future needs and expectations of Toronto's Muslim students and families will be realized. For information, call 416-279-0285. ■

Maliha Chishti, a doctoral candidate at OISE/University of Toronto, an educator and activist working with national and international social justice organizations, is a former director of the Hague Appeal for Peace United Nations Office in New York.

able to its giant neighbor, for the two nations' geographical, historical, military, political, security, economic, trade, investment and cultural ties are extremely intertwined.

In the aftermath Sept. 11, Prime Minister Chretien visited the Ottawa mosque and stated that Canada respected Islam and its Muslim citizens and did not hold them accountable for the actions of misguided zealots. Similarly, provincial premiers have visited mosques. The same message came from average Canadians. Muslim Canadians condemned the Sept. 11 attack, held open houses at mosques and discussions with their neighbors and other citizens, and explained Islamic principles to other Canadians. Canada, however, also faced U.S. charges that its immigration and refugee laws were lax and permitted alleged terrorists to cross the border. While this is a baseless charge, some of Canada's 700,000 Muslims may be critical of U.S. policies or their donations to charities may or may not have been misdirected.

Canada also saw attacks on Muslims or Arabs and property destruction. Even bearded Sikhs were attacked in some cases on the assumption that they were Muslims. Canada also toughened its security laws, which could be directed at innocent people suspected because of their looks or origin. Muslims likely will remain under some scrutiny because of Sept. 11 and because some Muslim Canadians or immigrants, students, or visitors have been implicated in alleged terrorist activities.

Civilized treatment. Muslims in Canada and the U.S. are fortunate, because in less tolerant and less civilized societies they would have been victimized on a mass scale, as is a common occurrence in other countries. In Canada, Christian, Jewish, Hindu and other groups, neighbors and fellow workers, and government institutions, including police and educational institutions, offered their support and assistance. Neighbors and friends came to mosque open houses.

Some in the media have been fair to Muslims and to Islam, especially CBC, *The Toronto Star*, a *Toronto Sun* columnist, *The Montreal Gazette* (before the new owners fired its fair-minded publisher), and to some extent *The Toronto Globe and Mail*. However, other media sources, though

they occasionally allowed Muslims to respond, mainly joined the racists in maligning Islam and demanding that Muslim Canadians condemn the alleged terrorists even more loudly. No such demands are made to Canadian Jews due to Israeli attacks. Many see this as an attempt drive a wedge between Muslim and non-Muslim Canadians by portraying Muslims as hidden internal threats. Racism and bigotry are not foreign to Canada, although thankfully confined to a few, as shown by the desecration of some Jewish cemeteries and synagogues. But to portray Muslims as potential fifth columnists is a terrible abuse of the media's power.

Actions speak louder. As in the U.S., Sept. 11 sparked interest in Islam among Canadians. While reading the Qur'an and Hadith will probably be limited to a few Canadians, most probably will judge Islam by how they see Muslim Canadians act, how Muslims in general act, and how Muslim Canadians react to those acts.

Muslims in Canada and the U.S. are now under and will remain under media and other scrutiny indefinitely. How Muslims will be judged and treated in the long run depends upon what Muslims do overseas and what they do in North America, including how they react to events overseas. This is not a question of presenting an attractive image of Islam to others, but of defining their own self-identity as Muslims. Do we believe that Allah is One and created all humans, regardless of religion, color, or country, as well as animals, trees, and everything else? If so, we are doing so because this is what Allah says. If we try to be honest, caring, neat, compassionate, and tolerant, we are doing so because this is what Allah teaches us and how Prophet Muhammad (*salla Allahu 'alayhi wa sal-lam*) lived. But people will judge Islam based upon our actions.

Duties and rights. If Muslims consider Canada their country, they are obliged to participate in it at all levels, as other minorities have begun to do. Living in Canada does not mean merely making a living, sticking to one's community, reaping the benefits of residence, and forgetting about the obligations of good citizenship. Muslims have to decide whether they have only rights or duties as well.

Prime Minister Chretien visited the Ottawa mosque and stated that Canada respected Islam and its Muslim citizens and did not hold them accountable for the actions of misguided zealots.

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Young Muslims have started to become active in community work. But generally Muslims have concentrated only on their own home or, at the most, on the mosque or their former country's cultural association. Other communities have ventured out. A Lebanese-Canadian has been the premier of Prince Edward Island. A black Canadian has served as the lieutenant governor of Ontario. An Indian Sikh has served as premier of British Columbia. A Chinese-Canadian has served as lieutenant governor of British Columbia, and another one currently serves as Canada's governor-general. Several blacks and persons of Indian origin are in the Canadian parliament. An Indian-Canadian serves in the Canadian cabinet as a senior minister, and a Filipino-Canadian is a junior minister in the same cabinet.

In contrast, only one Muslim has served in the Alberta provincial cabinet. An Ismaili Muslim is in the Parliament and another member of the same sect is a senator. These are all good steps, but increased participation from the mainstream Muslim community would show Muslims' commitment to Canada and reap the rewards of such service. In addition, they would show their loyalty to Islam by abiding by its principles, serving their country, and making it a better place for its citizens.

It is natural for Muslim Canadians to identify with Muslims overseas. But they do little justice to themselves as Muslims, to Islam, and to the contribution they can make to Muslims' welfare if they keep silent in the face of wrongdoing, or try to whitewash it, or assume that Muslims are right because they claim to be Muslims.

A National Voice. The new international scene imposes new challenges on Muslim Canadians. They have grown considerably in numbers, built mosques, and initiated radio and TV projects. Young Muslims are confident and reaching out to other Canadians, and some Muslims have attained relatively high positions in life. But Muslim Canadians still have a long way to go. Put plainly, they are disorganized and have not thought through their understanding of Islam; their position in relation to Canada, other Canadians, and Muslims; and how they perceive their role in Canada.

The biggest shortcoming is that there is no Canadian national organization speaking for Muslim Canadians, linking them from coast to coast or planning their future. Moreover, no national magazine or journal links them to each other, to non-Muslim Canadians, or to Canadian authorities. Such organizations as

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Muslims in Canada - Coast to Coast



ISNA-Canada, Reflections on Islam, the Canadian Islamic Congress (CIC), and CAIR-Canada perform some useful services, but there is little cohesion or mutual cooperation and none can speak for all Muslim Canadians.

ISNA is a society for North America, whose elected or appointed Canadian officials are not answerable to Muslim Canadians and are not elected by them exclusively. ISNA is like a branch-plant in Canada, with the head office in the U.S. Moreover, very few Muslim Canadian organizations have affiliated themselves with it, and perhaps only a very few Muslim Canadians have joined it.

CIC has tried to fill the void by working for the cooperation (and membership) of Muslim organizations and individuals. Success has been limited. Other Muslim organizations have gone their own way, oblivious to the benefits of cooperation, if not unity of purpose, between Muslims on a national level. Undaunted, CIC continues to press its viewpoint on the media and federal and provincial governments. It issues a most useful electronic newsletter and initiates cooperation with other groups. Although productive, CIC is not yet a national organization and will

not become one unless several representative Muslim organizations and significant numbers of Muslims in the major provinces join its fold.

In the 1970s-80s, a Council of the Muslim Communities of Canada was formed. It did pioneering work in reaching out to women and youth, interacting with Canadians of other faiths, holding conventions in different parts of Canada, starting a Muslim charitable organization, preparing Islamic books, and facilitating youth summer camps. But this excellent work foundered because its leaders flouted its constitution, ignored constructive criticism and suggestions, and considered themselves not accountable to the member organizations on whose behalf it acted.

Dinner at Parliament Hill. The community's disorganization is displayed during the Eid dinners arranged on Parliament Hill. This event started about 5 years ago,

when Toronto MP Dan MacTeague took the lead, in cooperation with Muslims in his constituency. Several government ministers and other public figures attended. Finance Minister Paul Martin often made great speeches, lauding Islam's contribution to civilization and knowledge and that of Muslim Canadians to Canada.

At first, some Toronto Muslim organizations joined as sponsors, as did the Ottawa Muslim Association. But then the dinner was shifted to the provincial legislature in Toronto while Eid al-Adha dinners were held in Ottawa. Soon the function was sponsored mainly by the Ismaili community, to the exclusion of the mainstream organizations of Ottawa, Toronto, and nearby Kingston and Montreal. About 3 years ago CIC started its own annual dinner on Parliament Hill. It is a start, but the attendance is sparse, both by Muslims and by MPs, government officials, and the

Although productive, CIC is not yet a national organization and will not become one unless Muslim organizations and a significant numbers of Muslims in the major provinces join its fold.

Muslim Canadians in the Halls of Power

BY ABU AMAL HADHRAMI

Muslim Canadians are doing more than just taking an interest in their country's affairs: they are stepping forward to share governance and becoming political role models seeking to serve Canada in the national political arena.

LEADING THE WAY

RAHIM JAFFER, a 29 year-old entrepreneur from Edmonton and graduate of the University of Ottawa, became the first Muslim parliamentarian. Jaffer, who was elected to Parliament from the Edmonton-Strathcona constituency in 1997 as a Canadian Alliance nominee, came to Canada to escape persecution in Uganda, when the dictator Idi Amin confiscated their business and their home and sent them as penniless refugees to a new country. Jaffer, who turned a coffee shop into a successful business, is active in his community and is a member of the Old Strathcona Foundation and the Edmonton chamber of commerce.

Jaffer, who previously served as a legislative assistant in Ottawa, is currently the deputy leader for the Canadian Alliance and an active member of the standing committee for finance and public accounts.

SENATOR MOBINA JAFFER, 53, an avowed Liberal Party member, who represents British Columbia, became the first Muslim in the upper house. Sen. Jaffer (no relation to parliamentarian Jaffer) was born in Kampala, Uganda, earned an LL.B from London University, and completed the executive development program at Simon Fraser University. A practicing attorney and a partner in a law firm, Sen. Jaffer, who was made a Queen's Counsel in February 1998, has served as vice chair of the Canadian membership committee for the Association of Trial Lawyers of America. A member of the board of governors of the Trial Lawyers Association of British Columbia, she has been working

with the immigration and refugee board on gender and race issues. In 1994-95, she was a member of the Canadian bar association's multicultural committee.

Senator Jaffer, who is married with two children and speaks seven languages, has several awards to her credit and serves on the board of several civic and professional organizations.

A PIONEERING MUSLIM

MOHAMMED AZHAR ALI-KHAN, a pioneer among Muslim journalists in Canada, joined the *Ottawa Citizen* in 1965, becoming its editorial board member and foreign affairs editorial writer 1967. Ali Khan wrote extensively and openly on the Third World, Muslim countries, Islam and international topics at a time when the doors of Canadian media were shut to Muslims and to Third World journalists, says Nazira Naz Tareen, president, Ottawa Muslim Women's Organization and a trustee of the Ottawa Muslim Association. The *Citizen's* editorial pages, with Ali-Khan as op-ed page editor, began to reflect Canadian diversity, she adds.

He has served as the past president of the Ottawa Muslim Association (OMA) and the pioneer who started the *Canadian Muslim* magazine, and has also served on the editorial board of *Islamic Horizons* magazine.

In 1990, Ali-Khan took early retirement to join the Citizens' Forum on Canada's Future, a royal commission to seek Canadians' views of their vision of Canada in the 21st century. As director chief of media relations in the department of multiculturalism, he encouraged Canadians of all backgrounds to participate actively in the affairs of the country. In 1996, Ali Khan's professional ties with journalism and the media came to an end when the governor-general appointed him a member of the Immigration and Refugee Board.

When his two-year term ended in 1996 he was reappointed for 5 more years as a refugee judge.

AN OUTSTANDING MUSLIM CANADIAN

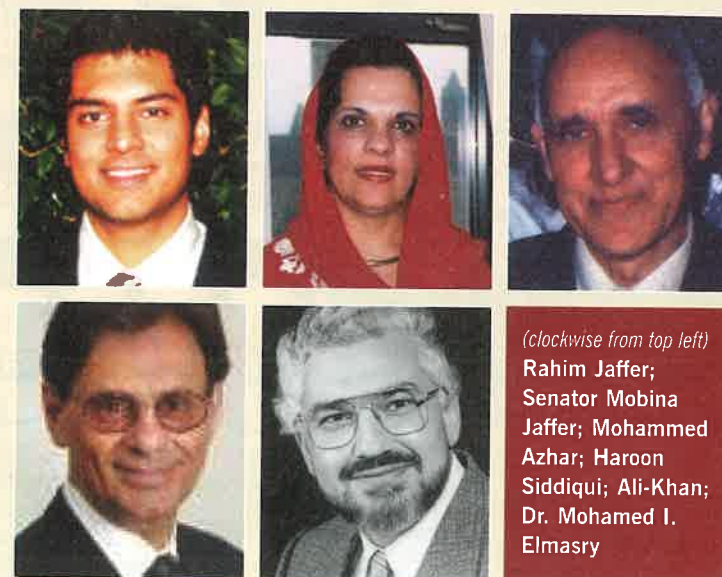
Last year, Governor-General Adrienne Clarkson named HAROON SIDDIQUI to the Order of Canada, the country's leading honor, for journalistic excellence and volunteer work. York University recently awarded him an honorary doctorate.

Siddiqui, who came to Canada as a 25-year old from Hyderabad, India, says perhaps it was Canada's high commissioner to India, Roland Michener's exhortation to him to "Go to Canada" that

ing demographics in Ontario and Canada and developed a rapport with new Canadians. He understands their participation and contribution to Canada."

In an interview with the *South Asian Outlook*, Siddiqui said: "What I'm trying to do is make Canada an even better place. That means sometimes criticizing, analyzing, or prodding. I also try to bring an international perspective to Canadian affairs and a Canadian perspective to international affairs."

He added: "I want to infuse people with my enthusiasm about Canada. The battle for equality never ends and yet, at the end of the day, we have to celebrate Canada. And if we are critical, it



(clockwise from top left)
Rahim Jaffer;
Senator Mobina
Jaffer; Mohammed
Azhar; Haroon
Siddiqui; Ali-Khan;
Dr. Mohamed I.
Elmasry

brought him to the country in time for Expo 1967 in Montreal.

His campaign to find a journalistic job bore results in 1968 when he was hired by *The Brandon Sun*. By 1970 he was its city editor, and by 1974 its managing editor.

In 1978, Haroon got his break at *The Toronto Star*, when the publisher (the late) Martin Goodman hired him as a copy editor. He was often sent to report from the Middle East. From 1985-90, he was its national editor. As its editorial page editor, from 1990 to 1998, Haroon expanded the letters to the editor section to its current full-page size, the first large circulation Canadian daily newspaper to do so.

Former Ontario premier Bill Davis said: "Mr. Siddiqui has demonstrated a sensitivity to chang-

is because of the high standards we have set."

A SCIENTIST & ACTIVIST

DR. MOHAMED I. ELMASRY, a professor of electrical and computer engineering at the University of Waterloo, Canada, earned a singular honor when he was made a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada. He is a member of the International Institute for Electrical and Electronics Engineers, and the Canadian Academy of Engineering. He is author of "1,000 Questions on Islam," "Islamic Spirituality," and "Spiritual Fitness (TM) For Life." He is also founding national president of the Canadian Islamic Congress, which is focused on the representation of Islam and Muslims in the Canadian media. ■



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media. No other Muslim organization has joined CIC in sponsoring this event.

These dinners, however welcome, reflect the community's disorganization and scattered efforts rather than the vibrancy of a community spread across Canada that could work closely together through cooperation, consultations, and preferably a national organization.

Our duty and role. It is unlikely that Muslims Canadians will face internment, as Japanese-Canadians did during WW2 or will soon acquire the clout of the Jewish Canadians. But they now number some 700,000 and this number is growing. Their youth are showing considerable promise as individuals. They have many opportunities before them and live in a country where they just have to look around to see the benefits of living in a society that values human rights, honesty,

dignity, freedom, the rule of law, accountability, fairness, justice, compassion, tolerance, charity, peace and cooperation with neighbors, support for U.N., and the impulse to try to help build a better world for itself and all people.

Given that Islam espouses these very qualities, Canada is an ideal country for Muslims and is closer to the core values of Islam than are many self-proclaimed Muslim countries. But living in such a privileged position imposes obligations toward one's family, Muslim Canadians, Canada at large, Muslims the world over, and humanity. By practicing their religion correctly, Muslim Canadians can improve their situation, make Canada a better country for all of its citizens, and build a better world for Muslims and humanity. Are we up to meeting this challenge? ■

Muhamad Hossain is a thinker and freelance journalist.

ISLAM AND THE CANADIAN MEDIA

ACTIVISM HELPS KEEP TAB ON MAINSTREAM MEDIA AND SERVES TO INFORM AND EDUCATE. BY MOHAMED ELMASRY

A popular and largely media-created belief that Islam condones and encourages violence has led to significant societal anxiety among Canadian Muslims. This troubling phenomenon, called "image distortion disorder" (IDD), is particularly dangerous in a pluralistic country like Canada, with its diversity of neighboring ethnic, religious, and cultural populations. The likelihood that most Canadians who have not knowingly met a Muslim in their daily lives would reveal a distorted (negative) perception of Muslims and Islam if asked is, unfortunately, high.

This situation exists mainly because the Canadian media, particularly *The National Post* in recent years, are creating an imaginary national crisis based on an inaccurate understanding of Islam. While most Canadians do not consciously reflect on it, Canadian Muslim communities do. IDD manifests itself in the loss of identity and self-esteem, feelings of inferiority, and even suicidal tendencies, especially among emotionally vulnerable teenagers. Even worse, IDD has caused societal and institutional discrimination, hate crimes, and false accusations and intimidation by government and local authorities.

Vulnerability. Young dark-complexioned Muslim Canadians, especially women who wear the hijab or males with full beards, are particularly vulnerable to anxiety, fear, and discrimination because society perceives their religion to be inherently violent, backward, restrictive, fundamentalist, and intolerant of opposing or alternative viewpoints. Even more serious since the tragedies of September 11, 2001, is the portrayal of Muslim Canadians as potential terrorists, posing such a serious "danger" to the country that CSIS (Canadian Security Intelligence Service—Canada's CIA), the RCMP (The Royal Canadian Mounted Police—Canada's FBI), and local law-enforcers at all levels have stepped up means of targeting them, even to the point of revoking their citizenship or deporting them if they are not full Canadian citizens.

Many Canadians choose to ignore the fact what the media depicts is not the reality of Islam. There appears to be little or no balance of coverage regarding news and views related to Islam and Muslims, and certainly very little that shows Muslims in a positive light. Not surprisingly, this media-generated anti-Islam has had a dev-

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astating effect on every Canadian who cares about the well being of this country. In fact, it has insidiously undermined efforts to sustain our social and civil peace.

Treating the media's entrenched anti-Islam disease will not be easy, especially when publications like *The National Post* refuse to recognize that this problem even exists. Moreover, Muslim Canadians are not likely to own media outlets that are large or influential enough to counteract the toxic effect that media distortion and bias have had upon non-Muslims' understanding of Islam. Those of us concerned about social harmony must react promptly and decisively to all media distortion and bias by raising our voices in protest. We must never forget that IDD is real in the Canadian media, and that it creeps subtly into our collective consciousness. Only if all of us point out and acknowledge its existence can we begin to deal effectively with it and isolate those who live in denial, insisting that it does not exist.

Four years ago, the Canadian Islamic Congress pioneered a research project to evaluate and rank some of Canada's highest-circulating newspapers for their anti-Islam content. The CIC's annual *Anti-Islam in the Media* report is published and distributed to the national media, schools of journalism, Canadian social justice and faith groups, and posted on the CIC website (www.cicnow.com).

To accurately process and compare changing levels of anti-Islam usage in Canadian newspapers, a 10-level numerical grading system is used. For example, identifying Muslims involved in violent acts by their religion is graded as most seriously negative and given 100 points. Additionally, to reflect the impact of a published item according to its degree of public exposure, weighting factors were given based on when and where it appeared. Front-page items are given a multiplying factor of 2, while a weekend edition is weighted at 1.4. A newspaper's circulation is also factored in to reflect the harmful impact on readers of misleading or distorted media images. Grading without the circulation factor gives an overall measure of anti-Islam, while grading with the circulation factor gives a more accurate picture of the harmful impact on readers. Therefore, the higher the circulation, the higher the weighting factor.

CIC's anti-Islam media watch is a year-long daily endeavor in which more than 3,000 issues of Canada's 9 most influential dailies are separately examined and analyzed in detail. After 4 years, this pioneering quantitative and qualitative

study, the first and only one of its kind, shows a modest 17% improvement overall in Canadian media coverage of news and views related to Muslims and Islam. But the study continues to find and cite examples of extreme bias in reporting. Among some typical examples, protesters in Israel were called "Ultra-Orthodox Jews" (*Globe and Mail*, Feb. 26, 1999) while protesters in South Africa were called "militant South African Muslims" (*Globe and Mail*, January 16, 1999). In reporting the involvement of IRA and Real IRA members in killing 28 people, the news media reported it as the "worst terrorist attack," the "worst bombing in Northern Ireland history," and that prime suspect Colm Murphy, 48, "a building contractor, was charged with being a member of the Real IRA, a breakaway

Irish Republic Army faction." Neither Murphy, the IRA, or the Real IRA were termed "militant", "terrorist", "radical", or "extremist," although the event itself was called the "worst terrorist attack."

The study also highlights examples of news-making events in which reporters did not consider religion's positive influence to be "relevant," as in the case of a Canadian Muslim hero who saved the life of a Toronto police officer.

The CIC regularly initiates meetings with the editorial boards of the dailies it studies in order to convey and discuss its findings. In 2002, anti-Islam research is being expanded to include television evening news programs. ■

Prof. Mohamed Elmasry, CIC's national president, is an electrical and computer-engineering professor at the University of Waterloo and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada (np@cicnow.com).

THE PRECURSOR OF RIGHTS

ISLAMIC PRINCIPLES ARE REFLECTED IN THE CANADIAN CHARTER OF RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS. BY HAROON SIDDIQUI

With the current heightened interest in Islam, but also much misunderstanding between the West and Muslims following Sept. 11, it is useful to recall the final message of Prophet Muhammad (*salla Allahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) delivered 1,370 years ago.

The year was CE 632 and he was 63 when Muhammad, the only prophet to have founded his own state, performed his first and last hajj, and spoke to a then-record crowd of 140,000.

The short sermon—in effect, his last will and testament—was a balance between the spiritual and the temporal, just like the Qur'an, the 88,000 words of Allah (*Subhanahu wa Ta'ala*) that Muslims believe were revealed through him.

Prophet Muhammad had been a radical reformer who had overturned an existing order. He chose the sermon to encapsulate the principles of equality, social equity, justice, and religious and women's rights. These ideals are, unfortunately, missing in most Muslim states but are, happily, present in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

"Hear me, O people, for I know not if ever I shall meet with you in this place after this year," Muhammad began,

intending his words for more than those present. He eschewed the salutation O Muslims, using instead O People and O Mankind a total of eight times.

To emphasize the plurality of humanity, he cited the Qur'an: "O People, we created you from one male and one female, and made you into tribes and nations, so that you may know one another," an injunction that scholars have invoked through the ages to remind intolerant Muslims that if God had intended all mankind to be Muslims, he would surely have made them so.

Prophet Muhammad immediately launched into a covenant of civil conduct, starting with the principle of equality beyond color, creed, ethnicity or race—a precursor, if you will, of Sections 15 and 27 of the Charter: "There is no superiority for an Arab over a non-Arab and for a non-Arab over an Arab, nor for the white over the black, nor for the black over the white except in piety."

Muhammad spoke of the sanctity of human life and the need to end tribal savagery—an early version of Section 7's right to life, liberty and security of person: "The blood revenges of pre-Islamic days are over. Every claim arising out

CONTINUED ON PAGE 40



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Fees All fees are in US\$. If you are organizing a large group to attend the convention, please call us for special discounts. Families who have an annual household income less than \$20,000 may take advantage of the special discount indicated at the end of the Registration Fees section. People who have dependent, elderly parents who have no independent sources of income may also calculate the additional fees for their parents using this section.

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MYNA Scholarship Fund Contributions to this fund go to a special endowment of the Muslim Youth of North America which will award scholarships to college freshmen who have been actively involved in Islamic work, have significant academic achievement and who demonstrate financial need. Please donate generously and contact Riyadh Shamma at 7855 Loveland Madara Rd., Cincinnati, OH 45243 for more information and other application materials.

Literature & Materials Distribution of unapproved literature or other materials or solicitation of any kind during the convention is strictly prohibited.

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A CENTURY OF ISLAM IN CANADA

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 34

of homicide is henceforth waived."

To set a personal example, Muhammad waived off one such claim of his own clan.

He spelled out an economic manifesto: the right to private property (now an American constitutional right); the obligations to pay off debts and stand by one's financial guarantees; a ban on usury; and a warning against economic exploitation:

"All interest and usurious dues accruing from the pre-Islamic age stand waived," he said. Again, leading by personal example, he said he would pay back all the interest charged by a money-lending uncle of his.

"Your capital and your property are sacred and inviolate and yours to keep. You will neither inflict nor suffer injustice.

"All debts must be repaid, all borrowed property must be returned, all gifts must be reciprocated, and all financial losses compensated by the guarantors."

Then a statement on women: "O People, you have certain rights over your women and your women have certain rights over you ... It is for them not to commit acts of impropriety, which if they do, you are authorized to separate them from your beds and chastise them, but not severely ...

"My dictum to you is that you treat women well and be kind to them for they are your partners."

The words, in part jarring to today's ears, were revolutionary for the times, as noted by Karen Armstrong in her current bestseller, *Islam, A Short History*. "The emancipation of women was a project dear to the Prophet's heart. The Qur'an gave women rights of inheritance and divorce centuries before Western women were accorded such status."

Prophet Muhammad's next admonition, regarding the treatment of slaves, was similarly pioneering: "See that you feed them with such food as you eat yourselves and clothe them with the clothes you yourselves wear. If a black slave is appointed your emir (leader), listen to him, and obey him."

After reminding the believers to adhere to the teachings of the Qur'an, including giving charity regularly and performing the hajj once in a lifetime, he called for a steadfast brotherhood of Muslims, one that can be detected today in times of trouble, from Bosnia to Palestine to Chechnia. Prophet Muhammad put it this way:

"Muslims constitute one brotherhood. Nothing of his brother is lawful for

a Muslim except what he gives willingly. So do not wrong yourselves."

He was about done.

The narrative at this point is best picked up by Martin Lings in *Muhammad, His Life Based On The Earliest Sources*, the most authoritative and evocative of the Prophet's biographies:

"The Prophet ended his brief sermon with an earnest question: 'O People, have I faithfully delivered unto you my message?' A powerful murmur of assent, 'O God, Yea!' arose from the thousands of throats, and the vibrant words rolled like a thunder throughout the valley. The Prophet raised his forefinger and said: 'O Lord, bear witness.'"

"The ritual prayers were said and the rest of the day was spent in meditation and supplication. But as soon as the sun had set, the Prophet mounted his camel followed by his fellow pilgrims. It was the tradition to ride quickly at this point, but at the first excess, he cried out: 'Gently, gently! In quietness of soul! And let the strong among you have a care for the weak.'"

Haroon Siddiqui is *The Toronto Star's* editorial page editor emeritus. His column appears Thursday and Sunday. (Reprinted with the author's permission.) (c) *The Toronto Star*.

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REVITALIZING ISLAMIC WORK IN CANADA

ISNA CANADA STEPS TOWARD REVITALIZING ITS WORK AND CHARTING A NEW ORGANIZATIONAL DIRECTION THROUGH CONSULTATION AND COOPERATION. BY SYED M. AFAQ MOIN & SYED IMTIAZ AHMAD

Since its formative days in early 1980s, ISNA Canada has grown in parallel with the continental Muslim community. In the 1990s, however, ISNA Canada ran into organizational challenges: its national constitution lacked a hierarchy for Canada; the Canadian component operated with only one elected official, ISNA vice-president for Canada, several appointed officials, and the employee-based ISNA Canada headquarters.

Among the factors hindering effective Islamic work in Canada were declining attendance rates at the ISNA annual conference in the Greater Toronto area, a dwindling membership base, and a philosophical shift from a da'wah-education directed and a membership-centered mandate to a business-service oriented institution.

Although organizational change is common, moving toward desired goals and reengineering it in the face of internal and external changes requires thoughtful and deliberate actions based on consultations with all stakeholders, foresight, vision, commitment to excellence, and persistent endeavor. The need for organizational change was felt acutely in 1998, and ISNA Canada started paying attention to the demands of its primary stakeholder: the general members.

A Process in Motion. A special meeting of the general membership held in 1998 to begin the process of consultation established a 9-member restructuring committee (RC) to review the structure and organization of ISNA Canada's institutions and committees and to define relationships among them (including responsibilities and accountability and follow-up procedures). This committee, also responsible for developing a legal framework for ISNA Canada's executive and shura coun-

cils, adopted a consultation-based approach. The multi-pronged consultation process designed to reach past and current members had three key components: a membership survey of over 800 past and current members and associates, one-on-one personal interviews with ISNA workers (past and current employees and volunteers), and information gathering by contacting

The survey had three parts: the recommendation made and proposals adopted at the general membership meeting; an evaluation of ISNA services; and solicited input on the status of membership, volunteerism, connectivity through the Internet, and so on. Responses were valuable in assessing ISNA Canada operations as well as for preparing a blueprint for the future. Of the 822 questionnaires mailed out, only 60 had bad addresses; however, only 84 (11%) returned the completed survey. Over 100 (14%) renewed their membership—paid membership in 1998 was less than 200.

Forty-two percent of responses were from the Greater Toronto area, 17% from Ontario outside of the GTA, and 41% from other provinces except PEI and Newfoundland.

The responses demonstrated an overwhelming endorsement of the resolutions adopted at the meeting. Some 96% endorsed a Muslim youth-focused outreach program; about 87% endorsed counseling, conflict resolution, crisis prevention, marriage counseling, and other types of training sessions for Imams and volunteers; over 81% agreed to having training sessions for non-Muslim organizations and social workers to educate them on Islam and Muslim cultures; 84% wanted to establish social services in their own cities and network those services under an existing umbrella organization; over 89% wanted an active volunteer and membership coordina-

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Guilt Free Homes

BY NAUFIL BAIG

Some 400 home-owning Muslim Canadian families have financed their homes through the non-interest financing offered by ISNA Canada's Islamic Cooperative Housing Corporation Ltd. (ICHC), which has sold housing shares worth more than \$CD27 (\$US17.2) million since its inception.

ICHC president Pervez Nasim says that the Mississauga-based cooperative has sold and transferred some 175 homes to members who had purchased the entire required shares equal to their property's cost.

"At present our membership, totaling more than 2,400, stretches from St. Johns, Newfoundland to Vancouver, British Columbia, and some even in the U.S. and other parts of the world," says Nasim.

Any Muslim can join ICHC by paying a \$CD75.00 (\$US47) membership fee plus \$CD600.00 (\$US378) for a minimum of six shares, and by agreeing to buy at least six shares of \$CD100 (\$US63) each during each calendar year. These shares can be sold or transferred to any ICHC member.

Nasim reminds Muslim that: "Allah permits trade and forbids usury" (2:275). He says that ICHC can help existing mortgage holders exit the interest-based system by paying off the bank loan. In order to qualify, "you will need shares equal to 10% of your outstanding mortgage balance in ICHC for at least 6 months," he adds.

Instead of banking their savings, potential homebuyers can purchase ICHC shares while waiting their turn to buy a house. Moreover, their investments receive a dividend until they move into their house. Investors' funds are assured, because the legal title of all housing units remains with ICHC until homebuyers' /members' acquire all of the required shares.

Homebuyers are required to own shares equivalent to at least 20% of the first \$CD100,000 (\$US63,024) of

the house's value and 40% of the difference between \$CD100,000 (\$US63,024) and the actual price (up to \$CD200,000-\$US126,047). Homebuyers pay a fair and mutually agreed occupancy charges (rent) to ICHC in proportion to both parties' ownership of the house. These monthly occupancy charges are reduced the following month in proportion to the additional shares purchased during the year.

If, at that time of sale or transfer, the member has more than a 50% share, 10% of the gain/loss goes to ICHC and 90% the member. However, if the member has 50% or less shares, ICHC gets 20% and the member gets 80%. The capital gain or loss will be shared after adjusting for authorized improvements, expansions, and legal expenses incurred by the member. To complete ownership, the member has to accumulate shares equivalent to the house's cost plus one Class "G" Preferred Share. This share value will be determined by the board as 10% of the difference between the present fair market value of the said housing unit minus the actual cost, the cost of authorized major improvements and expansions, and legal expenses.

Nasim says that investment can be made on behalf of children so that they will be able to purchase a house when they want to live on their own. In addition, money can be invested for their college education and marriage expenses.

ICHS, using the same principles as their housing program, also offers car and equipment leasing through Ansarco Inc. and registered retirement savings plans (RRSPs) through Al-Amin Association. These are the first-generation Islamic financial services offered to Canadian Muslims and, no doubt, will be joined by other services as the community grows, adds Nasim.

For information on the ICHC project, call (905) 403-8406 or (416) 971-6058. E-mail: ichc@isnacanada.com. ■

Naufil Baig is a freelance writer.

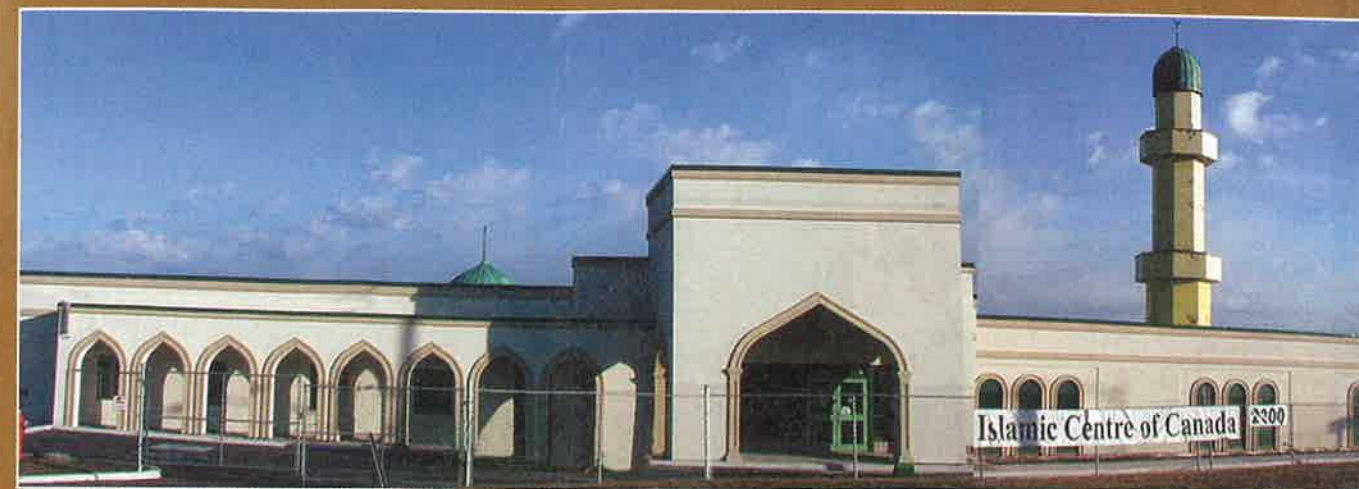
tor to recruit and train volunteers, strengthen contact between the volunteer base of MSA/MYNA, facilitate ISNA membership, increase member benefits, and establish an ISNA summer student internship program. About 80% wanted to appoint a public relations coordinator to increase the communication and decrease misunderstandings between ISNA, its members, and non-members; and to have website coordinator to construct a site featuring membership sign-up, information on resource organizations, resource people in various fields, current events, advertisements for Mus-

ISNA Canada is rebuilding momentum, an upsurge of attendance at the annual conference, and a membership that has reached a very respectable level.

lim businesses, mailing list of Muslims in Canada, newsgroups, international chat rooms, fiqh questions, and other matters. Over 83% agreed on the need for a fundraising coordinator to increase contacts with businesses for resource sharing and exchange, set up specialty funds to invest charity money for future growth, and initiate specific sponsorship programs for specific projects. Over 84% wanted to set up an inter-organization council to better relations with other organizations.

Evaluation of ISNA Canada. The results also showed that about 55% were satisfied with the level of ISNA office services, 49% viewed the ISNA leadership positively, 36.5% reported that ISNA presence was felt positively in their communities, and about 47% approved of the shura process. While over 50% approved ISNA Canada's publication and information function and 70% were satisfied with ISNA conferences and workshops, only 34% said that da'wah and training provided by ISNA was adequate. ISNA Canada did not score well in community services, for while over 51% approved the financial services provided by ISNA Canada, only 20% approved of the community and social services provided.

Of the respondents, 48.7% agreed to volunteer and 51.3% declined at that time. Also, 68.4% of respondents were current ISNA members while 31.6% were



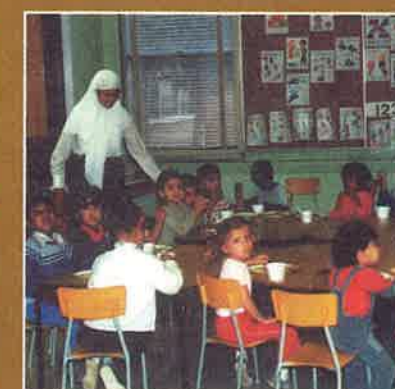
A Gateway to Islam in Canada

The headquarters of ISNA-Canada in Mississauga, ON, is home of the Islamic Center of Canada (ICC), a 7-acre multipurpose facility costing C\$3 million, with a covered area of 60,000 sq. ft.

Mississauga, with its 25,000 Muslim population, has the second largest concentration of Muslims in the Greater Toronto Area after Scarborough. An estimated 150,000 Muslims live in the Greater Toronto Area.

The ICC, located close to Queen Elizabeth Way, is among the busiest highways, offers easy access to the residents of Mississauga as well of Oakville, Etobicoke, and Malton. The ICC's centerpiece is large mosque that is open for daily, Jumu'ah and Eid prayers. ICC is also home to ISNA high school (Grades 9-12), which has its own classrooms, science and computer laboratories, gymnasium, library and administrative offices.

ICC also houses the Islamic Housing Cooperative, ISNA Travel Service, and Islamic Book Service Canada, has da'wah and training facilities, a library, and arranges lectures, and seminars. ICC also offers funeral services.



The Islamic Center of Canada has emerged, capping the united efforts of Muslim Canadians, providing them a spacious and central location for congregational prayers, education, social and community events. The pioneering Islamic school in North America also shares the ICC campus.





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former members who had allowed their membership to lapse.

Among the ISNA member respondents, about equal numbers chose receiving *Islamic Horizons*, attending conferences, and the desire to support work of ISNA as incentives to become and remain members. For those with lapsed membership, about equal numbers cited inadequate ISNA service, poor accountability, poor leadership and/or lack of communication. The survey made it quite evident that ISNA Canada needed improvements in many areas.

This information was analyzed and synthesized, and considered together with the opinions expressed at the August community input session. Among the concerns was the need to elicit regional input, greater transparency, increased communication with the membership, broader representation on the Majlis as-Shura, a more defined role for women and students, that elected officials should take charge and be responsible for setting the directions for ISNA by obtaining feedback at regular intervals and taking corrective actions as required.

Recommendations. The RC used this information to develop a model for the desired organizational skeleton. The key recommendations were that ISNA membership will elect/appoint an 11-member Majlis as-Shura responsible for setting the organization's direction, and Majlis members will be responsible for budget administration and management and for developing legislation, regulations, and policies. It was recommended that the president, in consultation with the Majlis, will appoint an executive council—comprising the president and three council members—to implement the ISNA Canada mandate, manage ISNA Canada office operations and the general secretariat, and prepare its annual operational budget.

After these recommendations were presented at the 1999 annual conference and received unanimous approval, the ISNA Canada council established an implementation committee. A document on the revised constitutional framework and by-laws has been prepared, and the ISNA Canada legal adviser is reviewing it for registration with the government of Canada.

Other positive signs are that the organization is rebuilding momentum, an upsurge of attendance at the annual conference, and a membership that has reached a very respectable level. ■

Dr. Syed M. Afaq Moin and Dr. Syed Imtiaz Ahmad, ISNA vice president for Canada, are members of the ISNA Canada restructuring/implementation committee.

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A CAPITAL PRESENCE

OTTAWA'S MUSLIM COMMUNITY CONTINUES TO GROW AND PROSPER, MAKING ARABIC THE CITY'S THIRD LANGUAGE. BY ZULF M. KHALFAN

About a century ago, Canada's capital city of Ottawa contained only one Muslim family—the Lebanese Wahab family, who prayed and taught its children the Qur'an in the mainly immigrant quarters, now the city's bustling Byward Market area.

Today, some 50,000 Muslim Canadians are making their mark on Ottawa, the nation's fourth largest urban area. A former mayor once quipped that Arabic is the city's third language, after English and French. In the last published census, Arabs formed about 33%, Somalis about 20%, and Indo-Pakistanis about 12% of the Muslim population. They come from everywhere: Somalia, Lebanon, Egypt, Pakistan, Palestine, Syria, Guyana, Iran, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia, France, England, Africa (North, South, West, and Afro-Americans), Turkey, Eritrea, Ethiopia, India, Bosnia, Afghanistan—a true microcosm of the Ummah.

Muslims have spent decades establishing institutions and providing services to transform themselves into a viable community.

Many Muslims work for the government, several of them in senior positions. Carleton and Ottawa university campuses host Muslims from many Muslim countries, and Muslims are active in campus da'wah activities.

Throughout the process of establishing themselves in Canada, the core of a cohesive vision and direction has persisted: preserving the faith and meeting the religious, educational, social, and cultural needs of current and future generations. In promoting Islam, they seek to strengthen their common public identity. Major results of this have been the purchase and construction of permanent facilities and the provision of educational and social services.

Social Needs. In 1962, Ottawa Muslim women were in the forefront of setting up the Ottawa Muslim Association; two years later, they formed the Ottawa Muslim Women's Auxiliary (OMWA), which was affiliated with but financially independent of the association. In 1977, they formed a Standing Social Services Committee to manage a Zakat Committee (ZC) to disburse zakat funds. They were active in most of the early fundraising drives and other cultural activities.

Although the ZC still works, the OMWA has been inactive for a while now. Some of its past members and other active workers recently formed the Ottawa Muslim Women's Organization (OMWO), a religious, charitable, social, and nonprofit organization. Headed by Nazira Tareen, a past trustee council chairperson, OMWO cooperates with other Muslim associations and organizations that share its goals.

Ottawa has three mosques, with the fourth—and largest—due to be completed, which are located in central, east, west, and south Ottawa. Some have become permanent landmarks: the imposing Ottawa Mosque (capacity: 500) with its dome and minaret close to downtown; Masjid Bilal (capacity: 100) in the east; Jami Omar (capacity: 200) in the west; and the Ottawa Muslim Non-profit Housing Corporation in the city's Laurier Avenue. Also located downtown is the Islamic Information and Education Center (IIEC), popularly known in the community as the Da'wah Center, situated across from Bible House. An offshoot of ideas from the long-running, now dormant, *fajr halaqah* at Ottawa Mosque and ISNA conventions, it was started 4 years ago by Sulaiman Khan. In his capacity as chairman and correctional counselor, he says: "We were becoming more and more visible, and needed to connect with the mainstream."

Ottawa also contains over 20 *musallahs* and 12 weekend Islamic schools. Dr. Gamal Manaa Solaiman, the Ottawa Mosque's resident Imam, has run a successful Sunday *madrasah* for nearly 3 decades. Another old weekend school, started in 1974 by Dr. Qasem Mahmud, is the Islamic School of Ottawa. It has an enrollment of 300 and holds a Muslim summer youth camp at Long Bay Camp—which it owns—just a 90-minute-drive from Ottawa.

The increasing demand for Islamic education in Ottawa has led to two full-time schools. The Ottawa Islamic School (1987) has 330 students and 38 staff members. The city's largest Islamic school, it provides a fully accredited Ontario province education ministry's public school courses and a full Islamic and Arabic studies curriculum. In Sept. 2000, a team led by Dr. Ekram Beshir, author of several childcare books, established Abraar (pre-K-6),

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which started its 2000/2001 scholastic year with 90 students and 16 staff members. Current enrollment stands at about 150, and there are 18 staff members. Abraar also emphasizes Islam in the students' everyday life and intellectual growth.

Rahma Islamic School, formed in 1994 as an offshoot of a Saturday school, grew from about 50 to 300 students by 2000.

According to the Islamic Schools Federation of Ontario, there are nearly 10,000 Muslims in Ottawa's public and private

schools, almost 10 percent of their total numbers in the entire Ontario province.

Community Associations. The first (1962) and largest Muslim association, with a fluctuating membership of around 1,000, is the Ottawa Muslim Association (OMA), led by Abdul Waheed Syed. Its 9-member council of trustees, chaired by Syed Misbahuddin Ahmed, oversees the association's assets—the Ottawa Mosque and other properties. A 15-member board of

directors manages its day-to-day activities. OMA, which is creating a full-time office for the imam, is working on two major projects—a community center on a 5-acre lot in the eastern Gloucester suburb, and the community's second body-washing facility located close to the Ottawa Mosque.

In the east, the Islamic Society of Cumberland administers Masjid Bilal, which is led by its amir Fazal Khan. It publishes a community directory and is currently replacing its present building. Out in the

A Muslim nonprofit housing corporation offers quality living that respects cultural values. **BY ZULF M. KHALFAN**

Beneficence from the Lord

Ottawa is home to perhaps the only building in North America whose façade bears a message: The Kufic script reads, *Hadha min fadli Rabbi* (This is from my Lord's beneficence). The color combination of the exterior's bricks reflect Earth rising and sky descending. The shapes and patterns in the cast-stone recall the symbolism of Persian carpets. The three-story *mashrabiyya* and enclosed balcony over the entranceway recalls those found in the Middle East.

Inside this melding of the practical and symbolic is an activity room that doubles as a place for congregational prayer and other community activities. Its wooden shutters feature geometric latticework that provides privacy and adds to the presence of Islamic architectural traditions. On the ground-floor wall facing the elevators is a piece of excellent calligraphic work depicting Qur'an 49:13 (O people. We created you of a man and a woman and made you into nations and tribes so that you may know each other. The most honored person before God is the one who guards himself/herself the most (against evil). God is All-knowing, All-aware) by one of the tenants.

The Islamic calligraphic design is the work of Prof. Gulzar Haider, dean of the School of Architecture at Ottawa's Carleton University



The 11-storey 57-apartment building on Laurier Avenue is the only housing project conceived, developed, and constructed by Ottawa's Muslim community. The building, a melding of the practical and symbolic. The color combination of the bricks on the outside of the building reflect earth rising and sky descending. Inside, the activity room—whose wooden shutters featuring geometric latticework not only provide privacy but also adds to the presence of Islamic architectural traditions—doubles as a place for collective prayer and community activities. The wall in front of the elevators on the ground floor has a piece of calligraphic work by one of the tenants.

and architect of the ISNA headquarters in Plainfield, IN, who enjoys international recognition for his contribution to Islamic architecture.

In 1988, the Ottawa Muslim community created the Muslim Housing Corporation (MHC) in

response to the urgent need for affordable housing. The MHC is led by a volunteer board of directors with skills in a broad range of occupational and volunteer activities. The employees and tenants are involved in its management as well, which enables shared responsibility, communication, and participatory decision-making. The MHC mission statement emphasizes responding to community needs, quality housing, service, and respecting cultural values.

MHC, which leased the land from Ottawa City, started construction during March 1992. The first residents moved in by late November 1992, and a month later it was formally inaugurated by the Ontario minister of housing. The Canadian Ministry of Housing, under its "Homes Now Program," funded the building and MHC had a limited budget based on strict standards and guidelines. The challenge was to maximize the number of units, incorporate an Islamic flavor, and design the units within the established budget and restrictive lot sizes. Consultants and volunteers helped to meet the challenge.

The building's apartment units were designed with Islamic cultural traditions in mind.

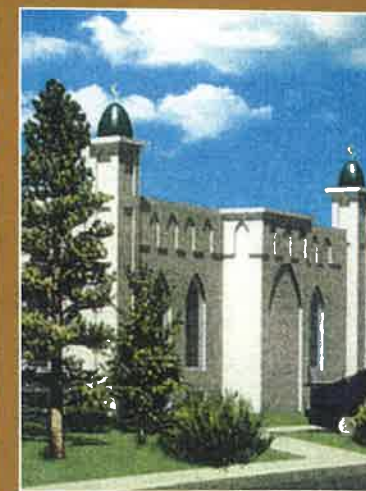
Attempts were made to provide sufficient privacy areas, such as in the kitchen and bedroom. The design and size dimensions of units for the disabled are based on established standards. However, as with most apartment dwellings, there is no full conformity to cultural standards.

The 11-storey 57-apartment building on Laurier Avenue is the only housing project conceived, developed, and constructed by Ottawa's Muslim community. Thus, those involved in it feel that it is imperative that the rest of the community commit itself to making it successful.

"Social housing, irrespective of its origins or identification with specific community groups, already has some negative connotations with the public at large," says its president, Abu Nazir. He adds: "The Muslim community is endeavoring to demonstrate that they can live in harmony with themselves and others in the neighborhood."

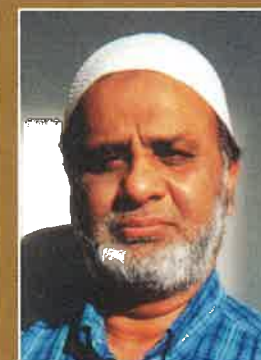
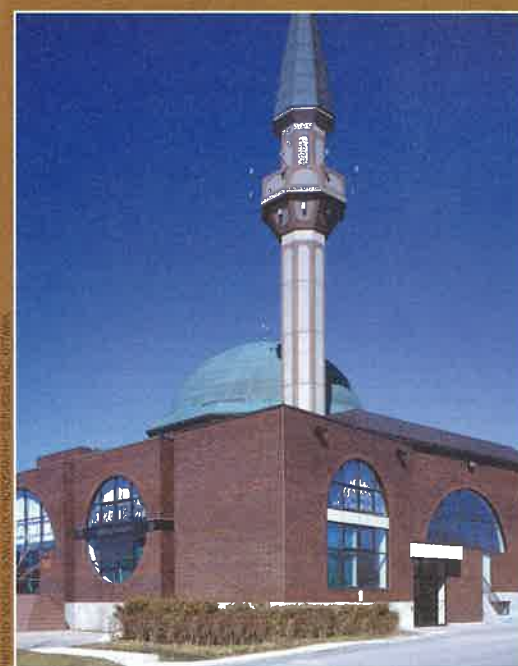
If it is managed well, he argues, the project can play a positive advocacy role in providing affordable housing. As the MHC mission statement says: "We must work to promote positive public perceptions of social housing. We must be good citizens and support good works." Today, that challenge rests mainly with its beneficiaries—the residents. ■

Zulf M. Khalfan, a former editor of *Islamic Horizons*, is a writer based in Ottawa. He is an OMA board member and a past co-editor of its *Canadian Muslims* and *OMA Newsletter*. He is now one of CIC's regional directors. His articles on Muslims have been published in Africa, the UAE, Europe, and North America.



A Growing Muslim Community in Ottawa

Photographs by Zulf M. Khalfan



(clockwise from top left) Ottawa Islamic School, a full-time schools with 330 students and a staff of about 40; How the proposed Masjid Bilal will look when built (Courtesy Masjid Bilal); Masjid Bilal; Dr. Gamal Manaa Solaiman, Imam of the Ottawa Mosque (left); Hafiz Anver Malam, Amir of Jami Omar (center); Fazal R. Khan, Amir of Masjid Bilal; The Islamic Information Center; Abraar School, located east of Ottawa; The Ottawa Mosque, draws most of the city's Friday congregation.



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* National Headquarters Offices of ISNA Canada and its affiliates, such as Islamic Housing Cooperative Corporation Ltd., Sheridan Development & Management Ltd., Takaful Canada, ISNA Travel Service, Islamic Book Service, Offices of Islamic Centre of Canada, and other affiliates.



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4th of Rabi' ul Akhir, 1422 / June 26, 2001

Dear Brothers and Sister in Islam:

Assalam 'alaikum wa rahmatullah wa barakatuh

The Islamic Centre of Canada (ICC) is a project of the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA) Canada that will include an Islamic High School, a Masjid and a Da'wah Centre. It will also house offices for the ISNA Canada Headquarters, Islamic Cooperative Housing Corporation (IHC), ISNA Travel Service and the Islamic Book Service (IBS) of Canada. The project is of immense importance for the future of our children, Da'wah work and for continuity of ISNA services to the Muslim community in Canada.

This important project is at a very crucial stage at the present time. Additional funds are needed urgently to pay for the construction work that is proceeding at full speed. Over half of the funds required for the ICC project are already available. Al-Hamdulillah, however the project is still short of the target by about \$1,500,000. The project needs our financial and strong moral support.

I, as the current President of ISNA, Br. Abdalla Idris Ali as our immediate past President, and Dr. Syed Imtiaz Ahmad, former ISNA President and currently ISNA Vice-President Canada, we all strongly urge and request each and every one of you to donate generously for this project. May Allah (swt) reward you abundantly for your support.

Jazakum Allah Khair. Wassalam Alaykum wa Rahmat Allah

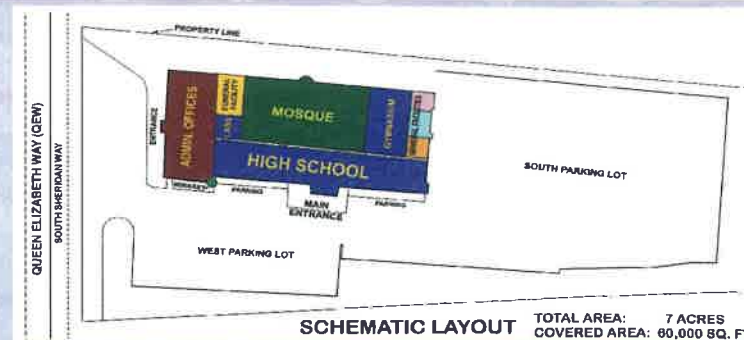
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HIGHLIGHTS



Project Cost Analysis (1996-2002)

a) Expenditure

Purchase Price of Property \$ 1,600,000
Development/Construction \$ 600,000

TOTAL COST INCURRED: \$ 7,600,000

b) Funds Available

rental income \$ 900,000
donations/Pledges and investments \$ 5,700,000

TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE \$ 6,600,000

URGENTLY NEEDED FUNDS: \$ 1,000,000

APPEAL

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قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ: مَنْ بَنَى مَسْجِدًا يَتَّبِعِي بِهِ وَجْهَ اللَّهِ بَنَى اللَّهُ لَهُ مِثْلَهُ فِي الْجَنَّةِ

The Prophet (SAW) said: Whoever built a mosque, with the intention of seeking Allah's pleasure, Allah will build for him a similar place in Paradise



(left to right) "Salam Ottawa" co-hosts and organizers, Aisha Aghliw, Eiman Zarrug, Farhia Ahmed, and Hadeel Al-Shalchi in the CKCU 93.1FM studio

Salam Ottawa..

Every Monday evening at 7 p.m., *as-salamu alaikum wa rahmatu Allahi wa barakatuhu* rings out from Carleton University's radio station CKCU. This is when members of the Muslim Students Association (MSA) welcome listeners to another edition of "Salam Ottawa"—CKCU's Muslim radio program.

For the next hour, a group of dedicated Muslim women take over the radio station and discuss issues varying from hijab to how to deal with the media.

Since summer 2001 this show has been run by women, even though it was originally started by MSA men in 2000. Women now dominate the technical editing, pitching ideas and script writing, and hosting the show (either pre-taped or live).

One of the show's objectives is to dispel misconceptions about Islam and to bring a Muslim flavor to all current topics and breaking news stories. Thus the hosts present at least one or two world news stories from the Muslim perspective by interviewing at least one guest on each show to add variety and different point of views, or other methods.

"The show tries to be as balanced as possible in covering a little bit of everything for everyone," says Farhia Ahmed, a co-host. She says that although the show's main focus is Ottawa's Muslim community, "we try to make it comprehensive by covering topics that help other Ottawa

communities understand what Muslims are all about." This was evident for example, when "Salam Ottawa" covered "Jesus in Islam" on Christmas Eve 2001. By interviewing a former Christian who embraced Islam when he was 13, the hosts relayed an understanding of what Muslims really think of a figure sacred to many Canadians.

Entertainment is another important element. The organizers believe strongly in listener interaction since "it gives us a feel for what our audience is thinking and what they want to hear. It's their show after all!" says Aisha Aghliw, another co-host. Thus, besides the frequent *anasheed* breaks, the show features a weekly riddle that is read at the end of the show and usually corresponds to the show's topic of the week. Attentive listeners can e-mail their answers for a chance to win such prizes as gift certificates and Islamic books. In February 2002, this concept of listener interaction was taken to the next level by the addition of "Dear Abeer." Here, the hosts dispense advice or guide them to places and people who can help them further. Also, a Reflection Corner allows the hosts to share personal and listener's reflections and thoughts on how certain Qur'anic verses and Hadith have special meaning in their daily lives.

"Salam Ottawa" airs at 7pm on Monday evenings on CKCU 93.1FM Ottawa and can be heard on the Internet on www.ckcufm.com

west, Jamiatul Muslemeen of Ottawa-Carleton, led by its amir Hafiz Anver Malam, manages Jami Omar; established in 1993, offers full funeral-related services, and has a *madrassah*.

Other organizations include the Guyana-Caribbean Muslim Association, the Gloucester Muslim Society, the Ottawa Muslim Community Circle, the Ismaili Muslim Community, Dar Assunnah, the Iranian Community Association, the Turkish Islamic Foundation, the Sudanese Muslim Association, and the Muslim Association of Canada. More recently, several Muslim organizations have formed the Muslim Community Council of Ottawa (OMCC), chaired by Mumtaz Akhtar, to coordinate their activities and projects.

Interfaith Outreach. Ottawa Muslims have been active participants in Christian-Muslim dialogue for nearly 10 years now. Khadija Haffajee, an *Islamic Horizons* editorial board member, leads a group of 30 participants that occasionally hosts journalists or members of Parliament.

A leading Muslim member of the city's Capital Region Interfaith Council is Abdul Rashid, who also is on the city's imam roster and a regular columnist in *The Ottawa Citizen's* weekly "Ask the Religion Experts," which features a rabbi, an archbishop, and a reverend or a Buddhist monk.

The Ismaili Muslim Community coordinates an Eid reception and a Milad an-Nabi on Parliament Hill for, among others, invited MPs, diplomats, and other religious leaders. The Canadian Islamic Congress (CIC) also holds its annual dinner there. A former OMA president, Sattar Bhatti, is one of three Muslims on the city's community-police action committee.

Media Relations. Some Ottawa Muslim organizations have been active in public affairs to ensure the spread of proper knowledge and media coverage of Islam. IIEC has led the way for 4 years and provides Islamic information to government agencies, the media, universities, and curious non-Muslims. It also sells books and Islamic items, is active in correctional service, and holds information sessions in schools. Its activities are supplemented by the OMA Mosque Library, Dar Assunnah Islamic Library, Maktaba as-Sahaba Library, and the new Reflection Bookstore.

Both the CIC and Council on Arab and Islamic Relations-Canada (CAIR-CAN) have chapters in Ottawa with full-time executive directors who actively interact with the media. In cooperation

with Human Concern International, they advocate for parliamentary bills affecting Muslims, such as Bill C-16 (charitable organizations suspected of having links with terrorist groups) and Bill C-36 (introducing sweeping anti-terrorism legislation).

CIC also has an outreach program for multi-faith communities, issues an electronic *Friday Bulletin*, monitors media, and publishes studies of "anti-Islam" coverage. This last item has been mentioned in major Canadian newspapers and is used in two universities. In Ottawa, CIC is planning a pilot project for producing programs on social issues analyzed and viewed Islamically. CAIR-CAN, which has a ready audience through its parent North American electronic media communications and alerts, holds media seminars in Ottawa, Toronto, and Montreal.

OMA recently formed a steering committee, chaired by Saeed A. Bokhari, to recommend how the community can monitor and respond to negative local media coverage of Islam and Muslims.

Several local Muslim websites have been initiated, such as: www.ottawamuslim.net, Ottawa (MC) yahoo group and www.ec2m.net.

Ottawa Muslim Cemetery. As there is no exclusive Muslim cemetery or funeral service in Ottawa, Muslims purchase plots in non-Muslim cemeteries. At present, only Jami Omar offers complete funeral service and facilities: documentation, transportation, *taghseel* (washing), *takfeen* (preparation), basic coffin, cold storage (if unavoidable), and *kafan* (clothing).

In 1994, Kemal Ally, Abu Nazir, Muhammad Ashraf, Mohsen Ismael, and other com-

munity members formed the nonprofit and charitable Ottawa Muslim Cemetery corporation. Headed by Dr. Alauddin Ahmed, it seeks to establish a Muslim cemetery that will be an accessible community resource and provide complete and affordable service—less than half of the commercial concerns. Another goal is to provide education and training in Islamic funeral rites, pre-funeral planning, and related information.

Ottawa Muslims can claim to be meeting their responsibilities. So far, the journey has been—and continues to be—thoughtful, insightful, and visionary. The Ottawa Muslim community has become one that consciously tries to shape itself within the city's environment. ■

Zulf M Khalfan, a former editor of *Islamic Horizons*, is a writer based in Ottawa. He is an OMA board member and a past co-editor of its *Canadian Muslims* and *OMA Newsletter*. He is now one of CIC's regional directors. His articles on Muslims have been published in newspapers and magazines in Africa, the UAE, Europe, and North America.

Muslim Canadians Find A Happy Center

BY ZULF M. KHALFAN

Muslim Canadians in Toronto finally established a major Eid congregation when Toronto's Jami Mosque and more than 40 Islamic organizations joined together for the first-ever large-scale event at the National Trade Center at Exhibition Place. Among the thousands of congregants was Toronto Raptors star Hakeem Olajuwon.

The event was covered by electronic and print media outlets, and *The Toronto Star* carried news stories in both its Saturday and Sunday editions.

In Ottawa, the Association of Progressive Muslims of Ontario (APMO) held its seventh annual Eid al-Adha celebrations on Parliament Hill on Feb 27, where Canadian finance minister Paul Martin was feted for his outstanding services to Canada as a cabinet officer and "a true friend of the Muslim community." APMO Presi-



Moin Khaja presents a gift to cabinet minister Paul Martin as a token of his service to the Muslim community

dent Mobeen Khaja said Martin's "understanding and encouragement have helped Muslims from all over the world feel welcome and an integral part of Canadian society."

The guests included ministers, MPs, senators, provincial politicians, diplomats, religious leaders (e.g., Imam Suleyman Demiray of Ottawa's Turkish community, and Imam Sayed Mesbah

Moosavi of North York's Islamic Iranian Center of Imam Ali), the press, and Muslims from other cities. In his keynote address, Martin said Canada resisted the attempt of industrialized countries to become insular by choosing to be the first

country of the twenty-first century to acknowledge the fundamental changes in the global community. The presence of a multiethnic and multi-religious community in Canada has changed the core definition of what Canada is, he said, and Muslims in Canada "represent the model of what the world is about."

Haroon Siddiqui, an Order of Canada member and *Toronto Star* columnist, told guests that Prophet Muhammad's (*salla Allahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) last sermon is echoed in the Canadian Charter of Rights, which stipulates equality, justice, and individual rights. Still, he said, Canada is imperfect because there is still prejudice, poverty, and unemployment among minorities. On employment equity, he said even the federal government's employment practice

is not a model based on meritocracy or non-partisanship, adding that unemployment figure for Muslim Canadians is bound to be higher than that of other minorities.

Over 500 Pakistani-Quebecois and guests celebrated this year's Eid al-Adha in Mount Royal City, with an Eid reunion hosted by the Pakistan Association of Quebec (PAQ) and addressed by PAQ president Intizar Zaidi. Guests included Brossard-La Prairie MP Jacques Saada, Quebec National Assembly members Christos Sirros and Fatima Houada-Pepin, Quebec citizenship minister's representative Marie Therese, Montreal mayor's special advisor on multicultural diversity Alan DeSouza, and federal representatives. Other guests included the Ismaili Community of Quebec and Maritimes president Munira Lalani, Srivastava of Bharat Bhavan's Dr. Uma Shankar, Centre Etudes et Resources Asie du Sud President Delores Chew, NACOI President Ghirdari Kheterpal, and Quebec Bangladesh Community president Dr. Muhammad Hedayatullah.

THE MAKING OF A MUSLIM COMMUNITY

A SMALL MUSLIM COMMUNITY PLANNED AND WORKED ITS WAY

My wife Soraya and I were raised in Ontario, where we lived for 10 years after marriage before relocating to Kelowna, British Columbia, in 1997. Our daughter Shaira was 10 and son Zayn was 7. The possibility of relocating to the beautiful Okanagan Valley in BC's southern interior, known as a deep-rooted Christian area, appealed to us since we considered moving to a smaller community. The fact this area has mild winters was also a big bonus. However, we had concerns about how this move might affect our Islamic way of life, and so decided to do some research before moving. Our real estate agent stated that no mosque or Islamic center existed there, but he was able to find a Muslim woman there to contact. Soraya, who communicated with her, found that Kelowna had a small Muslim community, approximately 200, and that a Muslim association organized some activities. After much thought, we put our faith in Allah (*Subhanahu wa Ta'ala*) and moved.

We quickly noticed that there was little Islamic presence in the city, and discovered that the only way to meet other Muslims was to search the telephone book. By the grace of Allah, we made contact with the Intikhab Ahmed family. They invited us to dinner. Intikhab, then president of the local Muslim Association, informed us that Jum'ah prayers were held at Abdullah Hair's residence above their family-operated store and gas station. During the next few months, I attended the association meetings and was asked to become its secretary. The community activities consisted of Eid gatherings. During our meetings and gatherings, the major topic of discussion was the absence of a permanent place to pray and meet.

In order to create a permanent home for our community, we sought help from Vancouver's BC Muslim Association (BCMA), which has existed since 1966 and is a well-established and respected organization. In the spring of 1998, the members of community decided to

land area. By January 14, 2000, we had collected over C\$140,000 and BCMA provided us with an interest-free loan to cover the balance. The possession date fell on a Friday, and a handful of brothers and sisters were able to make this Jum'ah a very memorable one for the Kelowna Muslim community.

On December 16, 2001, after a final fundraising push during Ramadan, we achieved our objective to eliminate the debt on the property.

We are now attempting to establish regular salaah and to provide Islamic education for our children and youth. We are planning to have the center open and attended on a regular schedule for da'wah purposes. We have purchased burial plots and have an area dedicated to meeting our specific needs. Another priority for us is to find an Imam to provide us with the necessary leadership, guidance, and education. We have much more work to do in Kelowna.

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These past years have been a most interesting and fulfilling experience for my family and me. We consider ourselves truly blessed by Allah to be given this opportunity to be active contributors to Islam in Kelowna, even though our contribution has been small. We can now look back and know that this move was

meant to be. We pray that other small communities across North America will be able to put Islam in the view of others. The reality is that if smaller communities in the heartland are provided with an opportunity to have access to Islam, many more Canadians and Americans will be made aware of the straight path.

Muslims will not consider living in a town or city that does not have a mosque or an Islamic center. This is justifiable concern; however, when Muslims come together as a community and with the help of Muslim associations, Allah will reward their efforts. ■

Michael Wiwchar is secretary Kelowna chapter of the BC Muslim Association.

L'islam a le Vent Dans les Voiles

ÉCRIT PAR RENÉE RIVARD (RADHIATOU AL-ISLAM)

Radhiatu al-Islam. Celle qui a accepté l'islam. Je suis celle qui a accepté l'islam... C'était il y a longtemps, c'était il y a 21 ans... Aujourd'hui, après toutes ces années, il ne fait aucun doute que l'islam est la religion qui se propage le plus en Amérique du Nord et à un rythme fulgurant de surcroît. On dit qu'aux États-Unis, c'est la religion qui occupe la deuxième place après le christianisme et qu'elle compte le plus grand nombre de convertis chaque année. Le phénomène couvre l'ensemble de la planète car il semble se manifester également en France, au Québec et dans d'autres pays francophones. Il semble d'autant plus intéressant maintenant car j'ai appris qu'après les événements du 11 septembre, le nombre de personnes qui embrassent l'islam augmente de jour en jour. Les gens sont donc à la recherche d'une vérité; ils ont ce besoin de combler un vide spirituel et plusieurs d'entre eux ont trouvé des réponses à leurs questions dans la voie de l'islam.

Suite à de nombreuses journées « portes ouvertes » organisées dans les mosquées en Occident, à la publication toujours grandissante d'ouvrages en français (et dans d'autres langues) sur l'islam, à la conception de sites Web de plus en plus nombreux sur le sujet, les gens qui s'intéressent à l'islam et les nouveaux musulmans ont maintenant les outils nécessaires en main pour répondre à leur quête de spiritualité et combler leurs besoins sur le plan intellectuel.



Eid celebration at ISNA-Canada headquarters in Mississauga, ON

English Abstract:

New Reverts Will Strengthen Islam

This article refers to the rapid growth of Islam in North America as a current phenomenon. It describes in a simple way the reasons why some people would choose that way of life. It goes a little further to explain that once a person accepts Islam that person will mostly feel that he or she needs to learn more and consequently, a thirsting for knowledge will emerge. The author also believes that with the new generation of reverts, Islam will become stronger and more genuine. This article is written by a native French-speaking revert, and obviously it is from her experience that it should be interpreted. Situations and circumstances can vary from one person to another.

Chercher la connaissance. Mais après avoir accepté l'islam, qu'est-ce qui se passe ensuite? Bien entendu, tout ne s'arrête pas là. Le cheminement ne fait que commencer et il serait

intéressant de mentionner que le Prophète Mohammed (paix sur lui) a dit de chercher la connaissance à partir du berceau et ce, jusqu'au tombeau. Nous avons donc du pain sur la planche et la beauté de l'islam réside justement dans le fait que nous devons sans cesse aller chercher cette connaissance; ce qui signifie que nous évoluons sur tous les plans, qu'il s'agisse du plan spirituel, intellectuel, moral ou social. N'est-ce pas merveilleux de savoir qu'à partir du moment où nous acceptons l'islam, nous avons tout un monde, tout un univers à découvrir et à approfondir? Un univers sans fin sur lequel méditer?

Ce que j'ai toujours remarqué chez les convertis de tous les pays à travers toutes ces années était justement leur soif d'apprendre. Nous avons donc affaire à des êtres curieux, profonds et souvent, d'une extrême sensibilité. Il serait d'ailleurs intéressant de s'arrêter et de leur demander ce qui les a amenés à l'islam. Les réponses sont toujours plus surprenantes

les unes que les autres. Ce sont bien souvent aussi des idéalistes, qui travaillent pour bâtir un monde meilleur. Par conséquent, il s'agit d'une énergie positive. C'est encourageant.

Pouvons-nous maintenant nous permettre d'espérer ce monde meilleur en dépit des conflits et de la terreur qui règnent en ce moment partout sur la planète? J'ai foi et espérance en cette nouvelle génération qui accepte l'islam, non seulement comme style de vie mais également comme cheminement personnel, car son énergie et sa contribution positives pourraient nous surprendre au niveau des grandes réalisations à venir. À mon humble avis, les convertis à l'islam joueront un très grand rôle dans l'islam de demain; de plus, ils redonneront à l'islam son authenticité et ses valeurs véritables, depuis longtemps envolées en raison de traditions et de croyances trop souvent obscures et imposées.

Née au Québec, Renée Rivard est traductrice et membre de l'Association des traducteurs et interprètes de l'Ontario. Elle a embrassé l'islam en 1981. Elle vit à Ottawa avec son mari, qui participe activement au travail communautaire de l'école islamique, et ses trois enfants depuis 1989. Elle a traduit le livre de Carol Anway sur les femmes américaines converties à l'islam et qui s'intitule: "Daughters of Another Path". ■

Renée Rivard, a translator and member of the Association of Translators and Interpreters of Ontario, embraced Islam in 1981. Born in Quebec, she lives in Ottawa with her husband, who is active in Islamic school and community work, and their 3 children since 1989. She translated into French, Carol Anway's book, *Daughters of Another Path*, on American women who reverted to Islam.



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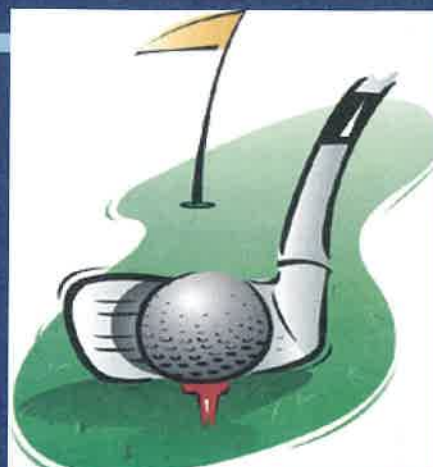
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Comparative Desegregation

Muslim societies need to practice the social integration that Islam enjoins

BY ALI A. MAZRUI

The U.S. now houses the most diverse population in the world. Having absorbed members of every race, it is on its way to incorporating members of almost every tribe and becoming the Universal Nation.

If the American population is the world's most diverse, Islam is on its way to becoming the most diverse religion in history. The religion that started in a small trading post called Makkah now has well over 1 billion members scattered all over the world, with major concentrations in the two most culturally diverse continents: Africa and Asia. Just in Africa alone, Muslims speak more languages than Christians speak in Europe and North America combined.

Christianity has had a relatively limited impact in Asia, except for the Philippines, and yet Asia is another great arena of diverse cultures and languages. Today there may be as many Christians as there are Muslims, but Muslims are spread across a wider spectrum of cultures and languages. By definition, the Muslim world is more diverse than the Christian world. If the U.S. is the most diverse country in the world and Islam is the most diverse religion, are their forms of diversity segregated or integrated?

The U.S. started as a highly segregated society. As it has become more diverse in the composition of its population, it has ironically become less segregated. Today, the U.S. has more races within its borders than it had 100 years ago, yet is a more integrated society than it was a century ago. Another irony is that churches have proved to be the hardest American institution to

integrate. According to NPR (Sept. 2, 2001), less than 10 percent of American churches are truly racially integrated. Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. used to say: "The most segregated time in the U.S. is 11 o'clock on Sunday morning when the U.S. is at prayer." President Carter lamented that during his term his own church in Georgia was still segregated. The wider society was becoming more integrated, but the religious institutions were not.

In the Muslim world, the problem is the exact opposite. Mosques were racially integrated from the beginning. The first caller to prayer (muezzin) appointed by Prophet Muhammad (*salla Allahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) was his African companion Bilal ibn Rabah (*radi Allahu 'anh*). While the U.S. has been integrating society and not the churches, the Muslim world has been integrating mosques but not the wider society.

In the past, Muslim history integrated diversity through both doctrine and practice. The doctrine of Ahl al-Kitab (the People of the Book) helped integrate Muslims, Christians, and Jews by allowing Muslim men to marry Christian or Jewish women. The strong patrilineal system and the acceptance of regulated polygamy resulted in racial intermarriages and the mixing of colors and races.

Arabic's ritual monopoly ran counter to linguistic diversity but fostered other kinds of diversity. Native speakers of Arabic became Arabs regardless of color or mixed parentage. Since Egypt's 1952 revolution, that country has had 4 presidents—two of them had black African blood (Mohamed Neguib and Anwar Sadat). Although Sadat had many enemies and critics in Egypt and the Arab world, none of them held his mixed blood against him. Arabs' skin color varies from white Lebanese and Syrians to black Sudanese.

The Arabic alphabet also helped to literate languages in Africa long before the arrival of European colonialists—Hausa, Wolof, and Kiswahili have legacies of poetry going back hundreds of years. Kiswahili was written with Arabic letters until the 1970s, when the military dictator enforced the Roman alphabet despite popular opposition. Arabic, Farsi, Turkish, Malay, Somali, and Urdu enriched each other and produced galaxies of writers and poets. It was a form of integrated diversity at the level of the arts—poetry, rhetoric, architecture, calligraphy, and branches of aesthetic experience.

There is little doubt about the integrative power of Islam and Arabic on different areas of Muslim diversity. Diversity, like unity, can be a source of strength if it is an integrative rather than a segregated diversity.

The question persists in the twenty-first century: If the U.S., the most diverse nation in history, is integrating society but not the churches, is Islam integrating the mosques but not society? Do the different races in Muslim societies do enough mixing, socializing, inter-marrying, or show each other sufficient respect? Indeed, we hear that Muslims in Mauritania or Sudan allegedly still practice slavery or a kind of caste system. Whether these stories are true or not, are they referring to Muslims who are at least being racist toward other people?

The balance of history shows that Muslims have avoided some of the worst features of other civilizations. There are no Muslim equivalents of Nazi concentration camps, Stalinist terror, genocidal conquests of entire continents (North and South America), or the atrocities endured by Rwanda in 1994. Although Muslims have inherited the most race-neutral religion in history, there is no room for complacency.

The U.S. is integrating society but not the churches, and the wider Muslim world has integrated the mosques but not society. Muslims in America have a dual mission to further America's integration of its churches and complete its revolution, and to help the Muslim world integrate society. This is what Islam was all about in the first place. ■

Dr. Ali A. Mazrui, director, Institute of Global Cultural Studies, SUNY Binghamton, NY. Condensed from "American Pluralism & Islamic Diversity: Comparative Desegregation" presented at the 38th ISNA Convention.

ISNA Commitment to a Mission

The Islamic Society of North America (ISNA) serves the diverse needs of Muslims in North America, and provides a unified platform of expression of Islam in all areas of life from da'wah to education to community development.

ISNA strives to serve Islam and Muslims today and laying foundations for the future in partnership with you. Prophet Muhammad (*salla Allah 'alayhi wa sallam*) said: "When a human being dies his deeds end except in 3 things: sadaqah jariyah (ever flowing charity), knowledge that will be benefited from, and a righteous child who prays for him/her."

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- ISNA is working with communities, helping raise funds for their activities and projects.
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- ISNA's flagship bimonthly publication *Islamic Horizons* magazine goes to 60,000 homes, libraries, and institutions.
- ISNA is reaching out to all areas: da'wah in prisons and among Latino Americans; helping the development of Islamic schools; training of imams; and community development.

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Eid al-Adha with the Hajjis

Eid al-Adha has been celebrated unconnected from the Hajj, and the Shari'ah does not change with technology. BY KHALID SHAUKAT

CELEBRATING EID in North America in conjunction with Saudi Arabia remains an open question, despite the efforts of Muslim scientists and scholars to explain that national moon-sighting is the way to go. As always, ISNA moon-sighting consultants

received e-mail messages that can be categorized as follows: Muslims always celebrate Eid al-Adha on the day after 'Arafah; what happened to the trust that a Muslim who swears that he/she has sighted the moon is sufficient evidence?; if two Muslims see the moon then the Ummah must follow them; and did Saudi Arabia make a mistake, since science said it was impossible to see the moon there at that time?

Most communications were emotional and contained no Shari'ah-based evidence. Asserting that Muslims always celebrate Eid al-Adha on the day after 'Arafah is incorrect, for when that day fell was known only to pilgrims. Only modern technology has made this information available to everyone. Thus, for about 14 centuries, most Muslims have always celebrated it on Dhu al-Hijja 10, not on the day after 'Arafah. If we say that modern communications causes Eid to be celebrated on a different day than it would have been without such communications, something is wrong, for the Shari'ah cannot change based on scientific development.

The question of trusting a claimed moon-sighting and its applicability to the Ummah has been discussed in *Islamic Horizons* many times. It is not a question of trust, but of understanding that Muslims have made mistakes since the time of Sahabah. To overcome this problem, Imam Abu Hanifah, Imam Abu Yusuf, and Imam Muhammad suggested that 50 or more Muslims from each locality must confirm the sighting. This was the most logical method available, given their level of expertise. Today, ISNA uses appropriate scientific methods for the same reason.

Insisting that a new-moon sighting anywhere on the globe is binding on the Ummah is unrealistic. The moon seen in Hawaii cannot be binding on Japan, which is 20 hours ahead in time. If the moon is seen in the Middle East, why is it



The insistence that sighting anywhere on the globe is binding on the entire world Ummah is not based on reality. The moon seen in Hawaii cannot be binding on Japan that is 20 hours ahead in time.

invisible in the U.S.? Science has proven that if a moon is seen in one place, it becomes easier to see in places located to the west of it. Other Muslim scientists, for instance Dr. Monzur Ahmad of the U.K. and Mohammed Odeh of Jordan, do further checks on the relevant moon-sighting calculations and agree with the above-mentioned scientific fact.

A common question is that if they did not see the crescent in Saudi Arabia, what did they see? Unfortunately, Saudi announcements often contradict the results of the official Saudi moon-sighting committees. Saudi scientists with whom we are in touch say that this happened again

this year and that moon-sighting was impossible there on February 12. Mistaken sighting claims make it difficult for the juridical council to rule on the matter. We should realize that Saudi Arabia uses a pre-calculated Islamic calendar (*taqweem*) for their civil life. As this is based on the new moon's birth and on the 29th day of this calendar, it usually is the 28th day of actual sighting. Thus it is impossible to see the moon. Until their civil calendar is calculated based on sighting possibilities, this disparity will continue.

ISNA believes that local moon-sighting should be used for all 12 months, with the aid of astronomy to negate errors. Scholars like Sheikh Al-Othaimeen of Saudi Arabia and Dr. Yusuf al-Qaradawi support this position. Sheikh Al-Othaimeen's fatwa is available at <http://moonsighting.com/saudalim.html> or <http://www.jas.org.jo/~hilaal/>. ISNA and the Fiqh Council of North America posted their Eid al-Adha position on the ISNA website in November 2000. *Islamic Horizons* published an article on this subject in its Nov/Dec 2001 issue.

Hajj and Eid al-Adha are separate 'ibadah. Hajjis do not celebrate Eid. In fact, Eid al-Adha was prescribed several years before Hajj was made obligatory. A global celebration of Eid al-Adha after the day of 'Arafah is not supported by the Qur'an, Hadith, Sahabah, or as-Salaf as-Saleheen. ISNA has an open invitation for anyone who can dispute this to present their Shari'ah-based information, and will not hesitate to reconsider its position if the case is valid.

Muslim unity consists of following the Prophet and his Sahabah and controlling emotionalism. Remember that just 50 years ago even Muslims in Riyadh did not know when the day of 'Arafah fell. Unity is not having Eid on the same day; it is having it according to the practice of the Prophet, the Sahabah, and the consensus of the community on Dhu al-Hijja 10. ■

Khalid Shaukat is an ISNA moon-sighting consultant.

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Islam Plays in Peoria

A Midwestern Muslim community continues its progress and development. BY MIR MOHAMMED ALI

Will it play in Peoria? The old vaudeville line refers not only to the demanding audiences in this Midwestern city, but also to the fact that Peoria is the heartland's heart. If people like it here, there's a good chance that plenty of others will like it too.

Peoria, the oldest community in Illinois, is equidistant from Chicago and St. Louis. It derived its name from the original inhabitants encountered by the first wave of French explorers. Peoria, site of the world headquarters of Caterpillar, Inc. and long considered a blue-collar town, is a three-time All American city that lately has begun to diversify its economy with information technology industries. But tractor pulls are still featured at the local fairs, for Caterpillar remains a major economic force.

Islam is playing in Peoria—and playing well. The growth of Islamic awareness has been impressive, despite many obstacles and difficulties. Even though the city's Muslim presence has been irregular since the late 1950s, my recollection only goes back to 1966, the year I came to Peoria's Bradley University and found only a handful of Muslim students on campus. Muslims have been attracted to Peoria by such institutions as Caterpillar and Wabco, as well as local hospitals and Bradley University, which provides higher education in engineering, science, and business management.

Bradley's first Islamic organization was the Muslim Student Association (MSA), and I was privileged to be its president. During the 1960s-70s, North American university Muslim student organizations were called MSAs and operated under the national umbrella of the MSA of U.S. and Canada (now known as ISNA).

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, Peoria's minuscule Muslim community conducted their religious activities in apartments or in one or two houses—and mainly on weekends. Student activities, however, took place in a campus building's basement, which also served as the Peoria community's place for the Jumu'ah prayer until the mid 1980s, when the ISS Mosque came into existence. Still located conveniently across the Bradley campus, it has been producing leaders who are playing important roles in their current communities.

The early 1980s also saw the rise of the Muslim Association of Greater Peoria,



A thriving community continues to transform the scene. The Islamic Center of Peoria refashioned out of a former church building

(Bottom) The ICP basement comes alive on weekends with the Islamic school that strives to empower the future generations.

which in 1982 put up the first purpose-built masjid on a 4.75-acre lot on Spring Creek Road in Washington, IL. This center serves the Greater Peoria community and such neighboring communities as Bloomington, Flanagan, Ottawa, Eureka, Galesburg, Canton, and Springfield. This facility offers a children's weekend school and adult education in Qur'an and Hadith. Allah (*Subhanahu wa Ta'ala*) has blessed this community with financial resources and many volunteers to keep it operating as a model community.

The Islamic Center of Peoria. In the late 1990s, a larger place was needed to accommodate the huge influx of Muslim students and professionals. Consequently, the community purchased an out-of-use church to establish the Islamic Center of Peoria (ICP). The Jumu'ah prayer was shifted to ICP, to the relief of Muslims who could now park and pray at ease. The ICP can hold 300 people for Jumu'ah prayer. In addition to the daily and Jumu'ah prayers, the mosque holds Eid prayers, weekend education programs, and monthly community dinners. ICP also provides services to community members and Bradley students. In keeping with its objectives, ICP does da'wah work in and around Peoria, including area prisons.

The story of Islam in Peoria can only be completed by mentioning the vital role played by other organizations serving Peoria and the surrounding communities. In the mid 1990s, the Muslim Educational and Cultural Association (MECA) Center was started as an Islamic educational organization. By late 1990s, the increased numbers of young Muslim families in northeastern Peoria resulted in the Islamic Foundation of Peoria (IFP), established in 2000.

A Blessing Arrives. This year has brought yet another blessing: Imam Abu Usama ath-Thahabi who has helped the region's Muslims understand Islam at a deeper level. He is doing a great job of educating all Muslims and of bringing many central Illinois inhabitants into Islam's fold.

Islam is playing well in Peoria, and the Muslims of Greater Peoria continue to achieve their personal and community development goals. ■

Mir Mohammed Ali is a Peoria, IL-based investment advisor and ISNA financial consultant.

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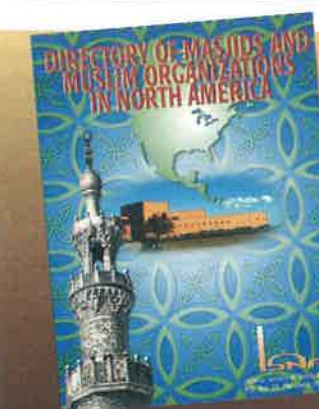
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Matrimonials

And of His signs is this; He created for you spouses from yourselves that you might find peace in them, and He ordained between you love and mercy. Lo, herein indeed are signs for people who reflect. (Qur'an 30:21)

Allah (Subhanahu wa Ta'ala) in His infinite Wisdom and Mercy has created for us mates with whom we may find peace and share love and mercy. Prophet Muhammad (salla Allah 'alayhi wa sallam) may Allah grant him eternal peace, said, "Those of you who can afford to get married must marry, for it is the best protection against a lustful eye and a strong shield for your chastity" (Bukhari and Muslim). On another occasion, the Prophet, peace be upon him, said that when a man marries he has fulfilled half of his duty; so let him fear Allah regarding the remaining half (Bukhari). In these messages from our Creator and our beloved Prophet (salla Allah 'alayhi wa sallam), it is clear that the institution of marriage is of vital importance.

The Islamic Society of North America offers its matrimonial service for Muslims. This service has been in operation since the early 1970s and has, praise Allah, assisted many Muslims in finding a suitable mate. The service is more important due to the ever-growing numbers of Muslims living in the West. Therefore, in an effort to help brothers and sisters who are currently looking for a Muslim spouse, the following list has been provided.

For information,
please go to:
www.isna.net

SEEKING WIFE

B032 May/June 2002 * Sunni Muslim Pakistani doctor, working as psychotherapist. 40 years old, 5' 9", fair, good family background, seeks good-looking wife, any nationality, write with phone number and returnable photo. Dr. F. Hafeez, 2201 Wyoming Ave. NW, Washington, DC, 20008. Or e-mail fazalhafeez@hotmail.com

B037 May/June 2002 * Parents looking for North American raised and educated, moderately religious, outgoing Muslimah for our 31-year-old financial analyst son raised/educated in America. Likes traveling, skiing, kayaking, reading Islamic history, economics, and fiction by Tom Chaney and Jhumpa Lahiri. Respond with details and photo to afazlullah@msn.com (PA)

B042 May/June 2002 * Semi retired educator, 61, Ph.D.; Arab origin, Canadian citizen, divorced; seeks a righteous wife as defined in Qur'an and Hadith. Will even consider a committed partially handicapped or new Muslimah. To save time, please reply in details and several photos. (Canada)

B043 May/June 2002 * Sunni Muslim Bangladeshi origin, engineer, seeking beautiful Muslimah bride. U.S. citizen/immigrant, e-mail sofiqulb@yahoo.com or please send photo and resume. (TX)

B044 May/June 2002 * Indian Sunni Muslim, 24, 5' 10", charming personality, kind and generous. Good-looking, following all Islamic principals. Holding computer-engineering diploma. Seeking pleasant Indo/Pak, U.S. citizen Muslimah, kindly contact (941) 747-2786 or e-mail mrdarsot@AOL.COM (FL)

B045 May/June 2002 * Religious, educated, government employee, 54, divorced, seeking Urdu-speaking, seeking practicing Muslimah, unassuming, homeloving, without encumbrance. Arabic-speaking encouraged. (IL)

B046 May/June 2002 * Practicing Sunni Muslim, U.S. citizen, well settled in U.S., MS, 41, 6', great personality. Seeking practicing, educated Sunni Muslimah between 28-36, tall, single, widow or divorcee. Contact aalikum@yahoo.com (IL)

B047 May/June 2002 * Sunni Muslim parents of a US born and raised son, 26, medical resident in Chicago, invite correspondence from US raised, well-educated professional women. Please reply with details. E-Mail: rusun76@hotmail.com

B048 May/June 2002 * Matrimonial for 31 year old, 5' 7", college educated Sunni Muslim with Bangladeshi origin. Looking for an educated person with good morals. Contact raqub@aol.com (TX)

SEEKING HUSBAND

S024 May/June 2002 * Muslim parents invite correspondence from highly educated professional for their attractive, 36 year old daughter, U.S. citizen, never married, MBA, currently employed as a senior office in an international bank. Please send photo and resume. (IL)

S084 May/June 2002 * Pakistani, Sunni Muslim family seeks match for daughter, 27, 5' 1", dentist-completing DDS from Ivy League dental school. Call (425) 747-2589 (WA)

S086 May/June 2002 * Sunni Muslim parents of Pakistani background invite correspondence from U.S. educated MD of Pakistani origin, 28-30 years old in residency at prestigious university hospital. (IL)

S087 May/June 2002 * Muslimah, 26, 5' 2", view photo at zlatforislam.org. Permanent resident. Divorced, no kids. BA, pursuing Registered Nurse license. Seeking practicing Muslim with refined manners and education, of Indo-Pakistani, or Middle Eastern descent, permanent, resident, or citizen from NJ/NYC.

S089 May/June 2002 * Sunni Muslim Hyderabad origin parents invite correspondence for their daughter (24 yr, height 5' 8", 2nd yr law student), from MD, lawyer, and other professionals of Indo-Pak origin residing in U.S. Please call (813) 971-6577 after 6 pm. (FL)

S095 May/June 2002 * Beautiful, intelligent, loving, loyal, Caucasian-American physician, revert to Islam, seeks trustworthy, affectionate, professional man, 35-50, for monogamous Islamic marriage. Reply to wali, MFM@HeartcareMW.com (IL)

S096 May/June 2002 * American Muslimah seeks "Andy Griffith" type professional Muslim, 44 to 50. Must be U.S. citizen. Prefer kind-hearted with sense of humor. (CA)

S097 May/June 2002 * Indian Sunni Muslim parents seeking match for charming daughter, 26, 5' 2", never married, pharmacist, Canadian citizen, from educated, Indian, North American, permanent resident or citizen, Sunni Muslim, photo, resume. (Canada)

S098 May/June 2002 * Pakistan Muslim parents invite correspondence from well-educated and established professionals for very attractive, fair, 32-year-old Canadian immigrant daughter pursuing MBA. Please send photo and resume. (IL)

S099 May/June 2002 * Sunni Muslim U.S. citizen parents from Pakistan seeking suitable, educated match for their 2 daughters. (1) law student: 23 years old; (2) master's student: 22 years old. (LA)

S0101 May/June 2002 * Indian Sunni Muslim parents invite correspondence from U.S. born or raised, religious, well-educated professional, 25-30, of Indo-Pakistan origin. Daughter is U.S. born, completing MA degree, 25, 5' 4", caring, outgoing, and attractive with good family values and wears hijab. Contact (501) 224-1913.

S0102 May/June 2002 * Sri Lankan Sunni Muslim parents, U.S. citizens seeking doctor or medical student under 28, for their beautiful and charming daughter, 21 years old, 5' 2" senior in college. (CA) ■

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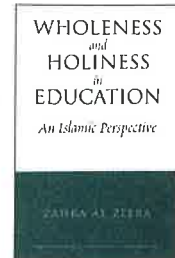
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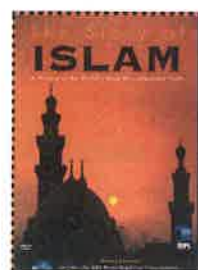
www.uaftampa.org

REVIEWS

SHORT TAKES



Wholeness and Holiness in Education: An Islamic Perspective
Zahra al Zeera
2001. Pages 186+xxviii. PB.
The International Institute of Islamic Thought, Herndon, VA

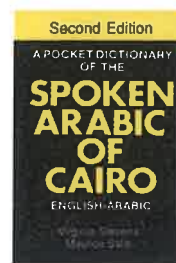


The Story of Islam: A History of the World's Most Misunderstood Faith
2001. 138 minutes. DVD. Color.
MPI Home Video.



The Art of Reciting the Qur'an
Kristina Nelson
2001 (1985). Pages 246+xxviii. PB. \$24.50.
The American University in Cairo Press, Cairo and New York

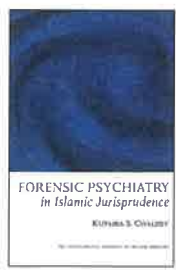
This updated edition of the author's well-received 1985 book focuses on the significance of Qur'anic recitation and provides a deeper understanding of the Qur'an as a fundamentally oral phenomenon.



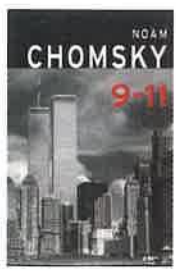
A Pocket Dictionary of the Spoken Arabic of Cairo: English-Arabic (Second Edition)
Virginia Stevens and Maurice Salb
1998. pp 204. PB.
The American University in Cairo Press, Cairo and New York



Tragedy in the Holy Land: The Second Uprising
71 minutes. Color. VHS.
MPI Media Group
This video, using rarely seen archival footage, offers a view of Middle East history through the lens of the Palestinians—the people at the heart of the events.



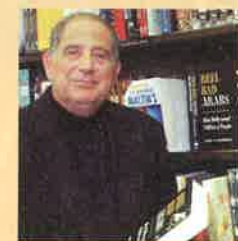
Forensic Psychiatry in Islamic Jurisprudence
Kutaiba S. Chaleby
2001. Pages 189+ xxix. PB.
The International Institute of Islamic Thought, Herndon, VA



9-11
Noam Chomsky
2002. 125 pages. PB. \$8.95
Seven Stories Press, New York

A collection of Chomsky's post-9/11 interviews with the European press, where the scholar offers his insights into events that led to the tragedy.

Ugliness beneath the Tinsel



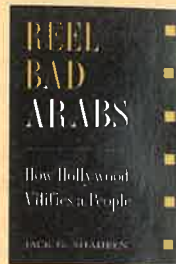
Dr. Jack Shaheen

Southern Illinois University, points out to Hollywood where it has gone wrong and what corrections need to be made.

Shaheen's even-handed critique shows how movies slander Arabs and Muslims and how they present Arabs as normal people. This documents the experience that many other ethnic groups have gone through in America. Perhaps moviemakers, as well as the general public, would become more aware of their insensitivity if they read this book.

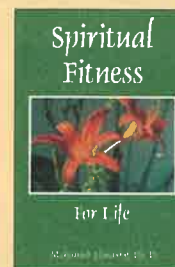
Shaheen surveys a century of Hollywood productions and grades them for the questionable content: "I'm not saying an Arab should never be portrayed as a villain. What I'm saying is that almost all Hollywood depictions of Arabs are bad ones. This is a grave injustice [because] repetitious and negative images of the reel Arab literally sustain adverse portraits across generations."

Indeed, Dr. Shaheen's work can serve as text material for students of filmmaking.



Reel Bad Arabs: How Hollywood Vilifies a People; AUTHOR: Dr. Jack Shaheen; PUBLISHER: Olive Branch Press, Northampton, MA; 2002.; PAGES: 92 pages; PB; \$25.00

Guiding Spiritual Uplift



Spiritual Fitness™ for Life; AUTHOR: Mohamed Elmasry, Ph.D.; PUBLISHER: www.pandorapress.com PAGES: 214 pp. \$23.95

The author, a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada and world expert in digital technology, applies a structured approach to the topic of human spirituality. This book, the culmination of a 7-year project to find and share common truths of the global community, draws from the spiritual and philosophical treasures of Islam, Judaism, Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, and humanism.

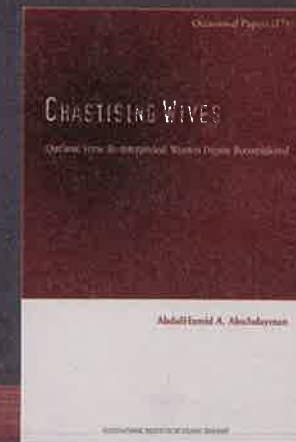
Intended as an inter-religious overview of accessible and meaningful ways in which to nurture and care for the soul, this reader-friendly guide is aimed at people who follow a specific faith and at those of all backgrounds who seek ways and means to explore the world of spirituality in a practical and gently disciplined manner.

IIIT PUBLICATIONS

إصدارات حديثة للمكتور عبد الحميد أحمد أبو سليمان
New releases by Dr. AbdulHamid A. AbuSulayman

CHASTISING WIVES

Qur'anic Verse Re-interpreted:
Women Dignity Reconsidered

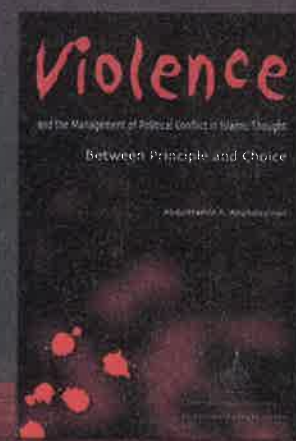


32 pp. \$5.00

The book examines the question of marital discord and discipline, and revisits classical interpretations of the Qur'anic and Prophetic guidelines. The author demonstrates that corporal punishment (darb) was never intended as a means for handling spousal discord.

VIOLENCE

and the Management of Political Conflict in Islamic Thought
Between Principle and Choice



140 pp. \$9.95

The book takes an overall assessment of the position of Islam towards the use of violence to solve societal conflicts. The author argues that both Islamic ethos and Prophetic experiences stress the importance of employing peaceful means to resolve disputes.

العنف

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140 pp. \$9.95

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